



**Charter Schools Institute**  
**State University of New York**

**EUGENIO MARIA DE HOSTOS CHARTER SCHOOL**  
**THIRD YEAR INSPECTION REPORT**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The third year inspection is part of a comprehensive accountability system for New York State charter schools sponsored by the State University of New York Charter Schools Institute. The visit during the school's third year of operation provides an independent assessment of the school's progress toward its academic and organizational goals as defined in its accountability plan.

The third year inspection complements the yearly reviews conducted by CSI staff and corroborates the school's annual reports of progress toward the targets it defined in its accountability plan. The visit provides an independent assessment of the school's progress and provides recommendations to the school as it prepares to apply for charter renewal in its fifth year of operation. The recommendations represent the experienced opinions of the inspection team and are intended to offer the school guidance for enhancing the evidence base for its renewal application.

## **II. CONDUCT OF THE VISIT**

The third year inspection of Eugenio Maria de Hostos was conducted on February 26-27, 2003 by an independent team of experienced educators contracted by SchoolWorks, Beverly, MA.

- Dr. Karen Laba, Project Manager, SchoolWorks; former middle and high school science teacher, preservice science teacher educator and supervisor, and consultant in accountability system design and implementation for SchoolWorks.
- Aretha Miller, Program Manager, Center for Youth Development and Education; former middle and high school literacy specialist, special education and humanities teacher, and consultant for SchoolWorks.
- Dr. Craig P. Flood, Director, CFlood Associates: Educational Consulting & Program Development; former elementary school teacher and director of a residential program for at-risk youth, and consultant for SchoolWorks.

The team used the school's accountability plan goals as the guide for the examination along with the set of framework questions included in the site visit protocol to assess the school's academic and organizational effectiveness. Prior to the one-and-a-half-day visit, the team reviewed the school's documents including its annual *Accountability Progress Report*, the original charter application, and reports from previous informal site visits by the Charter Schools Institute. At the school, the team interviewed school administrators, Board representatives, staff, parents, students, and visited classes to understand the efforts the school is making to achieve its academic and organizational goals. Before their departure, the team offered a brief oral summary of its findings and recommendations to school leaders and invited them to ask for clarification as needed.

This report is organized into two parts. *Part I: School Progress Report*, offers the team's judgments about the school's effectiveness at meeting the broad goals defined in the charter school law (Education Law §2850(2) (a-f)):

- improving student learning and achievement;
- increasing learning opportunities for all students (particularly students at risk of academic failure);
- encouraging the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
- creating new professional opportunities for teachers, school administrators and other school personnel;
- expanding parental choice in public schools; and
- moving from a rule-based to performance-based accountability system by holding schools accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.

The judgments of the team are organized into the same three categories as the school's other documents: academic program, organizational viability, and unique programmatic areas. The framework for the progress report discussion is shown in **Appendix A**.

The second part of the report, *School Accountability Plan: Assessment and Recommendations*, reports the team's assessment of the quality of the school's own measures of its progress, and offers suggestions for enhancing the evidence base on which renewal decisions will be made at the school's fifth year of operation. A brief rationale for the inspection team's recommendations is presented in narrative form along with a summary table in **Appendix B**.

### III. SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

The Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School was established in 2000 in Rochester, NY and currently enrolls 198 students in grades K-4. EMHCS is located in a former Roman Catholic elementary school building. The school's major focus is dual language instruction. The classrooms, except for the kindergarten classes, are designed in pairs which make it possible for the Spanish and English classes for each grade level to be located next to each other. Students alternate between English and Spanish classrooms each day, with teachers continuing the common curriculum in core academic areas for each student group.

The original design of the charter anticipated an enrollment that would reflect the dual language focus of the school's mission, expecting approximately 50 percent Spanish dominant speakers and 50 percent English dominant students. However, the majority of students enrolled at the school are English dominant African-Americans. Nevertheless, EMHCS continues to be committed to its goal of ensuring that its students become bilingual and biliterate in both Spanish and English. The EMHCS school day runs from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with its tutoring program built in for the last half hour of the day and extended programming continuing until 5 pm.

The academic program at Eugenio is developed around the *America's Choice* school design. The *America's Choice* designated reading program including leveled readers and the hands-on *TERC Investigations* are being used across all grade levels for both ELA and math instruction. Currently, two teachers are attending workshops to learn how to implement the *Investigations* math curriculum in the school. According to the principal, the *America's Choice* design will

provide the school with a coherent math framework that will serve to strengthen the math instruction throughout the school. The teachers are using the Core Knowledge sequence for the social studies and science curriculum.

The Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School's sponsoring organization is the Ibero American Action League, Inc., a nonprofit community based organization that primarily serves the Puerto Rican/Hispanic community in Rochester. According to the president of the sponsoring organization, who is also the president of the Board of Trustees, the school was created in response to the poor performance of children, especially Hispanic children, in the traditional district public schools. In addition to providing families in the Rochester area with options for educating their children, the sponsors of EMHCS wanted to create a school that would make the local school district "pay attention to the way in which it is educating children." To accomplish this, the sponsors of EMHCS felt that they had to set high expectations for student performance and take a more innovative approach to teaching and learning. Consequently, they developed the dual language model as the basis for the educational experience for the students enrolled at EMHCS. According to the Board's president, the EMHCS approach to bilingual education is conceived as an enrichment for students versus the compensatory vision that the local school district has for such a program.

A Board of Trustees governs the school whose members represent various educational and civic organizations in the Rochester area. Three of members of the Parent Teachers Organization are also on the board. The school's administrative team includes the principal, secretary, parent coordinator, extended day director, and bookkeeper.

Students are served by ten classroom teachers and ten paraprofessionals, one English and one Spanish for each of grades K-4. A full-time literacy coordinator, and part time staff including two Title I teachers, three special education teachers, speech and occupational therapy providers, a social worker, and an art and music teacher also provide enrichment and remedial services to Eugenio students.

## PART I: SCHOOL PROGRESS REPORT

### I. ACADEMIC PROGRAM

#### QUESTION 1: To what extent have the students attained expected skills and knowledge?

1. According to the results on the Stanford 9, students at the Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School (EMHCS) are performing at or below the NCE\* average range.

The tables below show the Stanford 9 results for the May 2002 administration of the test at EMHCS. Normal curve equivalent scores on the reading subtest range from a high of 46.1 for first graders to a low of 38.1 for third graders.

**TABLE 1: Eugenio Maria de Hostos 2001-2002 Stanford 9 Reading**

| Grade | # of students tested | Average NCE score |
|-------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1     | 38                   | 46.1              |
| 2     | 38                   | 39.6              |
| 3     | 40                   | 38.1              |

The NCE reading score for the continuing students now in the second grade (true cohort) is above the national mean (50<sup>th</sup> percentile) while the score for the third grade cohort is below the national mean.

**TABLE 2: Eugenio Maria de Hostos 2001-2002 Stanford 9 Reading, Cohort Group Only**

| Grade | # of students tested | Average NCE score |
|-------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 2     | 30                   | 56.4              |
| 3     | 32                   | 41.4              |

The NCE scores on the math subtest range from a high of 49.2 for first graders to a low of 34.3 for third graders.

**TABLE 3: Eugenio Maria de Hostos 2001-2002 Stanford 9, Math**

| Grade | # of students tested | Average NCE score |
|-------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1     | 40                   | 49.2              |
| 2     | 40                   | 35.9              |
| 3     | 40                   | 34.3              |

The NCE math score for the second grade cohort is at the national mean (50<sup>th</sup> percentile) while the score for third grade cohort is below the national mean.

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\* Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) is a standard score (a score that is expressed as a deviation from a population mean) with the lowest score being 1, the highest being 99 and the mean (arithmetical average) of 50. NCE's may be added, subtracted and averaged and may be used to represent how a student or group of students performed in comparison to the mean. For example, a drop in scores over time means the students are being passed by their peers nationwide and an increase in scores over time means that students are passing their peers nationwide.

**TABLE 4: Eugenio Maria de Hostos 2001-2002 Stanford 9 Math, (Cohort only)**

| Grade | # of students tested | Average NCE score |
|-------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 2     | 32                   | 50                |
| 3     | 32                   | 36.4              |

The 2002 second grade students ranked at the national mean, but the third graders ranked well below the average.

**2. No data is available to assess whether EMHCS students are achieving proficiency in state standards for expected skills and knowledge.**

The New York State Assessments are administered to fourth grade students and EMHCS has enrolled its first class of fourth graders this year (2002-2003). Data on the achievement of the first group of EMHCS students on the state assessment will be available at the close of the 2002-2003 school year.

**3. There is evidence of growth in students' writing based on the local internal writing test that is administered to students.**

Assessment data from the internal rubrics\* that staff use to evaluate student written product show that about half of EMHCS students are making progress towards meeting the writing standards that are established for the school.

**TABLE 5: Internal Writing Assessment-Percentage of Students scoring level 3 or 4**

| Grade | Level 3 | Level 4 |
|-------|---------|---------|
| 1     | 47.2    | 8.3     |
| 2     | 43.8    | 3.1     |
| 3     | 53.1    | 0       |

The results are as follows: 48 percent of students in grade one through three scored a three and 3.8 percent scored a four for a total of 51.8 percent. Overall, over half of Eugenio first and third graders have met the standard for writing on the internal assessment while slightly less than half of second graders met the standard.

**4. Data on the Second Language Acquisition Stages (SLAS), show that students are making good progress toward dual language acquisition.**

Eugenio administers the Second Language Acquisition Stages (SLAS) assessment to track progress toward Spanish proficiency among its English dominant students. Changes over two administrations of the assessment show a high percentage of students in kindergarten, grade 1 and grade 3 making strong progress, with the second grade group not meeting expectations.

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\* (\*The rubrics that are used in the school are aligned with the NYS Writing Standards. Students must receive a score of three or above to be considered "meeting standards.")

**TABLE 6: Eugenio Maria de Hostos: Second Language Acquisition Stages**

|                             | Kindergarten | Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 |
|-----------------------------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Improved at least one stage | 87.2%        | 62.5%   | 15%     | 82.5%   |

**QUESTION 2: What progress have students made over time in attaining expected skills and knowledge?**

- 1. The limited Stanford 9 data available, changes in NCE rank from May 01 to May 02 show improvement in both reading and math for the current third grade students and decline for the current fourth grade students.**

The table below shows the NCE rank for the two administrations available for the Stanford 9: May 01 and May 02. Change in rank is shown in the appropriate columns. The Reading NCE scores for students who were first graders in 2001 increased by 5 when they took the test as second graders in May 2002. There was also an increase in the math NCE score for this group of students, that is, it increased by 4.1 NCE.

The Reading NCE scores for students who were second graders in 2001 decreased by 1.2 NCE when they took the test as third graders in May 2002. The math NCE score for this group was decreased by 7.7 NCE.

**TABLE 7: Stanford 9 Reading and Math, Cohort (Continuing) Students**

|             |         | 2001 | 2002 |                    |
|-------------|---------|------|------|--------------------|
| Grade Range | SubTest |      |      | Across Year Change |
| <b>1 2</b>  | Reading | 51.4 | 56.4 | 5                  |
|             | Math    | 45.9 | 50   | 4.1                |
| <b>2 3</b>  | Reading | 42.6 | 41.4 | -1.2               |
|             | Math    | 44.1 | 36.4 | -7.7               |

- 2. The DRA results show steady growth in fluency and comprehension, with the second grade cohort making the strongest gain.**

In general, students at Eugenio are making strong progress toward reading proficiency as measured by the DRA. The strongest performance was among the second graders, with just over 90 percent moving more than one stage in reading. Seventy-seven percent of first graders advanced more than one stage, but third graders were not as accelerated, with only 28.1 percent moving more than one stage.

**TABLE 9: Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA) – 2001-2002 All Students in Grade Level**

| <b>Grade</b> | <b>%of students moved one stage on the reading continuum</b> | <b>% of students moved more than one stage on the reading continuum</b> |
|--------------|--|---|
| 1            | 97.2   | 77.8  |
| 2            | 100  | 90.6  |
| 3            | 93.8   | 28.1  |

In examining the results on the DRA of only those students continuing at Eugenio, the second grade cohort made strong gain in fluency and comprehension with an additional 60 percent of students moving two reading levels or more on the DRA. As first graders in 2001, 100 percent of the students moved at least one reading level while 31 percent moved two reading levels. As second graders in 2002, 100 percent moved at least one reading level while 91 percent moved two reading levels or more. The DRA scores for the third grade cohort did not show as strong a gain as the first-second grade group. As second graders in 2001, 83 percent moved at least one reading level while 58 percent moved two reading levels. As third graders in 2002, 83 percent moved at least one reading level while 25 percent moved two reading levels or more.

**TABLE 10: DRA Cohort Assessment**

| <b>Grade Range</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>2001</b>  |  | <b>2002</b>  |  |
|--------------------|----------|--|--|--|--|
|                    |          | <b>% of students moving at least 1 reading level</b> | <b>% of students moving 2 reading levels or more</b> | <b>% of students moving at least 1 reading level</b> | <b>% of students moving 2 reading levels or more</b> |
| <b>1 2</b>         | 38       | 100  | 31   | 100  | 91   |
| <b>2 3</b>         | 32       | 83   | 58   | 83   | 25   |

### **3. Data from the school's internal writing assessment shows that students at EMHCS are making steady gains in writing.**

The percentage of students performing at a level 3 or higher in writing increased by 4.6 percent.

**TABLE 11: Eugenio Writing Assessment: Grades 1 through 3 Combined**

|                          | <b>2001</b> | <b>2002</b> |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Level 3</b>           | 43.1 %      | 48%         |
| <b>Level 4</b>           | 4.1%        | 3.8%        |
| <b>Level 3 + level 4</b> | 47.2%       | 51.8%       |

Team member observation and teacher anecdotes provide evidence of student growth as writers. From an informal review of writing folders, team members noted that students at EMHCS are expected to revise their written products so that they meet the standards that are outlined in the writing rubrics. In the samples examined, each draft of students'

writing product contains pertinent teacher commentary about what they need to do to improve their work.

### **QUESTION 3: Does the school's instructional program meet the needs of diverse students?**

#### **1. The staff at EMHCS uses a variety of strategies to support the needs of diverse students.**

EMHCS works with the Individual Education Plans (IEPs) generated by the local Rochester Public School district to schedule speech and language specialists to work with the one student who needs this service. The Title 1 and special education teachers provide academic support to students through either a "push in" or "pull out" model. In the "push in" model, the Title 1 and the special education teachers go into the classrooms to work with students. They only use the "pull out" model with students who are having difficulty learning math in the Spanish class. During this time, the students are given the support they need to learn the math concepts that are being covered in the class. This makes it possible for them to access the math content without having to deal with the challenges of learning in a foreign language.

The special education and Title 1 teachers also work with the regular education teachers to modify the rubrics and test formats that are used to assess student performance while maintaining consistent standards. Teachers, especially the Spanish teachers, use a lot of gestures and speak slowly to help students access the content that is being covered in their classes. A paraprofessional is assigned to each class and they are responsible for providing additional academic support to students. There seems to be consensus throughout the school that teachers will do whatever is necessary to help all students to access the general education curriculum.

#### **2. The school leader and teachers clearly articulate the school's goal of teaching students at their particular instructional levels.**

In conversation with team members, EMHCS's teachers and administrator consistently reiterate the school's philosophy of supporting students where they are as learners and creating opportunities in the classroom that complements their learning styles. As one teacher puts it, "If a child cannot learn the way we teach, then we will learn to teach the way the child can learn." This has resulted in teachers using a variety of instructional strategies to address the needs of the students in the school. Class visits by the inspection team lends credence to the teacher's assertion, as well as comments from students and parents during focus group interviews.

The inspectors observed teachers using a variety of instructional strategies to address the needs of the students in the school. During the inspection visit, team members observed students working independently, in pairs or small groups, at computers, and participating in hands-on activities after the teacher completed her lecture. In the classes that were visited by team members, the teachers and the aides were seen moving among the students as they check for individual and whole class comprehension of the concepts that were being taught for the day.



The system that EMHCS has put in place to address the needs of diverse students seems to have made its mission to “increase learning opportunities for all students and, if applicable, with a special emphasis on expanding learning opportunities for children at risk of academic failure” a reality. This was evident in the classes that were observed by team members. In almost every class, the teacher and aide—and when present, the Title 1 or special education teachers—were observed working one on one with students to help them master the academic content that was being covered in the class. One student said, “I like this school because the teachers help me when I don’t understand the lesson.” In interviews with team members, the parents reiterated this point, as well.

### **3. The extended day program provides students with additional academic support.**

The tutoring program at EMHCS is made available to every student and takes place every day between from 3-3:30 p.m. During this time, teachers and paraprofessionals work with those students who have been identified as “not meeting the standards” to help them gain the necessary skills and knowledge that will ensure their success at the school. The school brings in college tutors to work with those students who are considered to be “meeting the standards” on enrichment activities. Since the session is within the school day, teachers can reach every child needing assistance without concerns about transportation, and proficient students can participate in enrichment activities to enhance their experience at the school. The school has not yet measured the impact of the tutoring sessions on student achievement.

### **4. The school seems to have operationalized its mission statement.**

The system that EMHCS has put in place to address the needs of diverse students seems to have made its mission to “increase learning opportunities for all students and, if applicable, with a special emphasis on expanding learning opportunities for children at risk of academic failure” a reality. This was evident in the classes that were observed by team members. In almost every class, the teacher and aide—and when present, the Title 1 or special education teachers—were observed working one on one with students to master the academic content being covered in the class. One student said, “I like this school because the teachers help me when I don’t understand the lesson.” In interviews with team members, the parents reiterated this point, as well.

## **QUESTION 4: Do the school’s standards reflect implementation of high academic expectations?**

### **1. The school’s use of the America’s Choice school design represents high academic standards.**

According to teachers and the principal, the *America’s Choice* design helps them to develop coherent curriculum for both math and English Language Arts which are aligned with the NYS learning standards. This alignment to the NYS learning standards makes it possible for the EMHCS staff and students to articulate clearly the expected learning

outcomes that students must achieve at each grade level. Students are assessed frequently to determine whether they are making progress towards meeting the learning standards that are covered in the school-wide curriculum. Their performance on these assessments is then used to inform future instructional practice. For example, the Reading Running Record is administered frequently to track student progress as readers. The teachers use students' results on the test to plan guided reading groups and to provide students with materials that are either at their independent or instructional reading levels. One teacher mentioned that she uses test results to determine whether she should reteach or review content topics that she had covered in her class or to move on to the next unit of study. Teachers will also use information from the internal writing assessment in their conferences with students to help them strengthen their written products so that they can meet the school's writing standard

**2. The school's instructional practice promotes higher level thinking in some classes, encourages students to set goals, and challenges students to select materials to promote new learning.**

The high expectations of the written academic program are translated into classroom experiences with similarly high expectations at Eugenio. Teachers were observed encouraging students to participate in high level thinking in the classrooms. In some instances, rather than answer students' questions the teachers would return the question either directly back to the student or to the larger class to get them to try to arrive at the answer on their own. They also ask the students guiding questions so that they could focus their thinking around the question that they are trying to answer. To reinforce the learning that is taking place in the classroom, some teachers strongly encouraged students to select and read new materials that would deepen their understanding of the content that is being discussed in the class. Students are able to do this because all the classrooms at EMHCS are well stocked with a variety of materials and resources to enhance the learning experience for students.

Both teachers and students reported that sometimes students are encouraged to set academic goals for themselves. These goals are communicated to parents who work with the teachers to help the students attain their goals. Once students achieve these goals, they then set new ones for themselves.

**3. The school's commitment to continuous improvement makes it possible for them to set and maintain high standards for student achievement.**

The teachers have reported that the principal is the driving force behind the school's continuous improvement initiative and that she has articulated very clear expectations for its successful implementation. For example, she makes frequent classroom visits and gives teachers immediate feedback about their instructional practice with the expectation that they will make the necessary changes for the future. She also created common planning time in the school's schedule so that teachers, especially the grade level English and Spanish teachers, can work collaboratively together to reflect on and plan their lessons. The principal strongly believes that the adults in the school should be role models for the students. Consequently, they all are participating in the school's "25 Book

Campaign” to promote literacy among the students. Teachers’ progress toward the 25 book goal is posted in the hallway alongside student progress charts. In interviews with team members, the teachers have commented that there is a strong collegial and supportive atmosphere throughout the school because they are expected to work collaboratively to provide students with consistent and clear learning experience.

To maintain high academic standards throughout the school, the EMHCS staff hangs exemplars of student work in the classrooms and hallways. This serves to make the academic expectations transparent to all of the stakeholders at the school because they remind teachers, students, and parents—whenever they are in the building—of the school’s academic expectations. Posted student work is mounted alongside scoring rubrics showing why, for example, a particular piece of work earned a “3” rather than a “4.”

High expectations apply to all stakeholders at Eugenio. Parents are expected to play an active role in preserving the school’s high expectations for students. They are expected to monitor their children’s participation in the school’s 25 Book Campaign by making sure that they actually read the books. One parent commented that he has to be home by 6 o’clock every evening because that is the time that his daughter reads to him. Other parents concurred that their children, too, have clearly articulated the things that they are expected to do at home to meet the school’s learning standards. These instances offer evidence of the school’s success in maintaining a culture of achievement among its students and have engaged the support of the families in that pursuit.

## II. ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY

### QUESTION 1: Are students and parents satisfied with the work of the school?

#### **1. The small sample of parents participating in the focus group declared strong support for the work of the school. Parent survey results confirm the perceptions of the focus group.**

Parents at EMHCS are very satisfied with the work of the school. They concur that they have seen their children “thrive during the time that they have been enrolled at EMHCS.” They are particularly pleased and appreciative of the many opportunities that the school provides students to learn beyond the classroom. For example, they believe that the school’s partnership with the YMCA, the Strong Museum, and the Hochstein Music School have made it possible for their children to participate in activities that they normally cannot afford.

In interviews with team members, the parents agreed that the school has made tremendous effort to keep them informed of their children’s progress as well as about any major developments within the school. They were able to describe the different strategies—the use of the red folder, the newsletter, etc—that the school employs to actively communicate with them.

All the parents in the focus group believe that the teachers and principal welcome their input/feedback about their child's progress and about school, in general. According to the parent coordinator, "Parents see this as an elite school and they are proud to have their children here." This is evident in the fact that some parents have their children travel from far—over an hour—to attend EMHCS.

Parent surveys were distributed last year, with sixty-nine returned. The school earned high rates of positive responses from the parents represented by the returned surveys. In addition to reviewing the aggregate results, the school reviewed the response by grade level to discern patterns and noted one grade level earned scores significantly lower than the average. In response, the school increased its attention to assuring all classroom teachers make consistent efforts to communicate with parents effectively.

**Eugenio Parent Survey, 2002,**

| <b>Paraphrased survey item</b>                  | <b>Affirmative Response (%)</b> |
|---|---------------------------------|
| The school communicates information effectively | 85%                             |
| I understand the school's program.              | 91.1%                           |
| I am pleased with my child's progress.          | 81.8%                           |
| I am pleased with my choice of EMHCS.           | 87.5%                           |

**2. Students at EMHCS are pleased with their experience in the school and have a strong sense of their accomplishments as learners.**

It was clear from classroom observations that students are familiar with the routines and expectations that teachers have for them in their classes. They were, for the most part, on task with their class assignments and were responsive to teacher feedback on how they could improve their work. Teachers at EMHCS seemed to focus on students' positive behavior rather than the negative ones and this seems to help students stay connected to the learning that is taking place in the classroom.

The students who participated in the focus group, like the parents, were appreciative of the additional learning opportunities that they have in the school. They all spoke fondly of taking swimming lessons at the YMCA, visiting the Strong Museum, taking music lessons, and learning Spanish. When asked how they felt about being students at EMHCS, one student responded by saying, "I feel special because I know more than my friend who's in a higher grade than me in regular public school."

**QUESTION 2: Are systems in place to promote the efficient operation of school functions?**

**1. There appears to be a strong behavior management system in place at EMHCS.**

During the visit to the school, team members did not observe any behavioral problems in the classroom or anywhere else in the school. Students were respectful to one another and to the adults and engaged in the tasks at hand. Both the teachers and students knew the daily routines and went through the business of learning with enthusiasm and genuine

pleasure in the challenge of the work. It appears that a part of the behavior management strategy that the school uses is to focus on the positive behaviors that students exhibit in class. Students who were having difficulty following directions were given many redirections and opportunities to remain connected to the class.

Each classroom has a STOP LIGHT that is a part of the behavior management system. Each Stop Light has clothespins with students' names written on them and they all start off at the green light. Based on the severity of a student's behavior the clothespin with his/her name is moved to either the amber light or the red light. According to students, the consequence for not following directions is to get extra work. One team member observed a student moving his clothespin to the red light because he was not following directions. The teacher did not stop the work that she was doing with the class, but made sure that he got back on task with the class assignment.

## **2. The Board of Trustees has a well-defined role for monitoring the performance of the principal and the overall progress of the school.**

In an interview with team members, the Board of Trustees made it clear that their primary role is to develop and implement policies that are designed to ensure the long-term success of EMHCS, to provide fiscal oversight, and to resolve the school's personnel issues. They are aware of the challenges that the school faces in hiring qualified Spanish teachers who are dually literate and competent to provide academic instruction in all content areas. They were very clear in stating that they have no interest in getting involved with the day to day operations of the school. A brief review of minutes of Board meetings confirms that their attention is focused on overarching concerns including budget, student performance targets, and parent participation.

The Board is also responsible for evaluating the principal. They assess her performance based on the eight or nine "Key Result Areas" that she targeted to work on for the school year. They stated many times that they have tremendous confidence in the school's leadership and that they know everything that they need to know about its daily operations because the principal has worked to make things transparent to them.

One Board member is also a parent and pays careful attention to his need to maintain a distinction between his parent role and his Board role in his contacts with the principal and with teachers. Several Board members also serve as Board members for other civic and social organizations throughout the city, and their experience enhances their understanding of their policy-making role

## **3. There is a clear system for communication between school and home.**

The school uses a variety of strategies to communicate with parents. They send the red folder home with students when they need to communicate an important matter to parents. They also send emails, flyers, and newsletters with curriculum updates. Many teachers make phone calls to parents to not only inform them of their child's negative behavior in school, but also when they are doing well.

The parent coordinator organizes a series of events to get the parents to become more actively involved with the school. Both students and parents talked about the Family

Game Night and Winter Program that were organized by the PTO to showcase student work at EMHCS. They reported that they got tremendous turnouts for both events and the principal sees these events as another way to communicate with parents about the things that are happening at the school.

**QUESTION 3: Are systems in place to monitor the effectiveness of the academic program and modify it as needed?**

**1. A diagnostic system for assessing student performance in reading and writing is firmly in place.**

The use of Reading Running Records (DRA) along with the application of local internal rubrics has made it possible for the EMHCS staff to accurately track student progress in reading and writing throughout the school year. The Reading Running Records are administered three times a year—some teachers have reported administering them quarterly—to help teachers identify the areas where students made progress. According to some teachers, they use this information to modify their instructional strategies so that they can better address the learning needs of their students as they evolve as learners throughout the year.

**2. The school's principal and leadership team regularly reviews the effectiveness of the school's educational program.**

As mentioned earlier, the principal is the driving force that ensures the effectiveness of the school's academic program. She sets a target for herself to get around the school every day, and to sit in classes for a time at least once if not more times per week. Teachers reported that her feedback is very helpful and presented in a supportive way. While some young teachers were nervous at first when the principal would observe, they indicated that the manner in which feedback was offered has made her visits welcome events in the day. The principal's adherence to her own standard to provide frequent classroom visits and feedback to teachers serves to reinforce the culture of high academic expectations that she wants to see implemented throughout the school.

The principal has also scheduled monthly meetings for the leadership and language teams. During these meetings the teachers and the principal assess the impact of the school-wide curriculum on student learning. According to one member of the leadership team, the school is always using data on student progress to inform the way they educate children and that it is an iterative process. New strategies are implemented, students are tested, results are reviewed, and strategies refined or revised to better meet identified needs.

**3. The school's commitment to ongoing professional development plays an important role providing high quality academic program.**

The school's commitment to professional development creates the opportunity for teachers to reflect on their individual and collective practice. By participating in a

professional development workshop every six days, the teachers are able to share ideas and strategies for improving instruction and student performance. The paraprofessionals are expected to participate in these professional development opportunities because the principal believes that by raising the proficiency level of the adults in the classroom the school will be able to improve student outcomes. This serves as another way to maintain high expectations for everyone in the school.

Participation in professional development also gives teachers opportunities to take on leadership roles in the school by developing local expertise. For example, the two teachers who are participating in the off-site *America's Choice* math curriculum workshops and those attending the literacy sessions are expected to share what they learn with the full Eugenio faculty when they return and to provide some oversight for its successful implementation in the school. In this way, the school hopes to develop its own collection of curriculum experts.

### III. UNIQUE PROGRAMMATIC AREAS

#### QUESTION 1: Are the school's mission and vision clear to all stakeholders?

**1. All the EMHCS stakeholders are very knowledge of the school's mission and vision.**

Parents, teachers, administrators, students, and Board members consistently and clearly articulate the school's mission to help all students learn by providing them with a variety of instructional opportunities that complements their learning style and to help them become bilingual and biliterate in Spanish and English. Many parents also see the school's mission as giving them the option to provide a solid education for their children.

#### QUESTION 2: Are the school's special programs meeting expected targets?

**1. The school's dual language program is making strong progress toward its ambitious targets.**

Both quantitative and qualitative reports indicate that the students at Eugenio are developing proficiency in the Spanish language. In its original design, the founders of the Eugenio anticipated attracting a large percentage of Spanish dominant students. Despite enrolling a population far more English dominant than expected, and the additional challenge of finding quality teachers, the Board and school leaders maintain their focus on a dual language program.

Extensive anecdotal and observational evidence shows that EMHCS students are steadily working towards proficiency in Spanish. While they do not have the vocabulary to respond to teacher's content questions in Spanish, students are able to follow directions in Spanish and actively participate in class activities and assignments. Many samples of

written work for students at all grade level display a mix of Spanish and English, with those more proficient in the language writing more involved and complex ideas in Spanish. Spanish teachers conduct lessons solely in Spanish, accepting English responses from students but immediately providing the Spanish terminology. Parents reported amazement at their children's facility in Spanish.

The school is making strong progress toward achieving its unique goal of preparing students to be biliterate as well as bilingual.

**2. The school's partnership with YMCA and the Strong Museum enhances the learning opportunities for its students.**

All students at Eugenio attend gym and swim lessons under contract with the YMCA at least once every six day cycle. Students and parents enthusiastically praise this aspect of the school's program. Similar praise was offered for the monthly visits by each class to the Strong science Museum. Teachers with limited background in science can rely on this additional support to enrich their students' science background.



## PART II: SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN: ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### I. ACADEMIC PROGRAM GOALS

**Goal 1: “Students at the Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School will become proficient readers of the English Language.”**

*Measures proposed by the school:*

*measure 1:* By May of each year, 90 percent of our Kindergarten students will recognize 49/54 letters as measured by Marie Clay’s Observation Survey.

*measure 2:* Using Reading Running Records, ninety percent of our students in grades first through third will move at least one reading stage each year on the reading continuum.

*measure 3:* Using the Stanford 9 our students in grades 1,2,3,5, and 6 will increase an average of at least four NCE (normal curve equivalents) per year. (Fourth graders will take the ELA Exam).

*measure 4:* Using the New York State ELA Grade 4 Exam, ninety percent of our students, who have attended our school for at least three years, will score a three and above and will outperform students from schools with similar demographics.

**Goal 2: “Students at the Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School will become proficient writers of the English Language.”**

*Measures proposed by the school:*

*measure 1:* Using rubrics developed by the EMHCS leadership team, based on the writing standards, ninety percent of our students will achieve a three or above on a narrative writing piece written in May. A score of three indicates that student meets standard. Writing pieces will be evaluated by a team of teachers. Teachers will not evaluate their own students’ work.

**Goal 3: “Students at the Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School will demonstrate mastery of mathematical concepts.”**

*Measures proposed by the school:*

*measure 1:* Using the Stanford 9 our students in grades 1,2,3,5, and 6 will increase an average of at least four NCE (normal curve equivalents) per year. (Fourth graders will take the New York State Math Grade 4.)

*measure 2:* Using the New York State Math Grade 4 Exam, ninety percent of our students, who have attended our school for at least three years, will score a three and above and will outperform students from schools in the Rochester area with similar demographics.

**Goal 4: “Students at the Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School will demonstrate mastery of science concepts.”**

***Measures proposed by the school:***

***measure 1:*** Using the New York State Science Grade 4 Exam, ninety percent of our students, who have attended our school for at least three years, will score a three and above and will outperform students from schools in the Rochester area with similar demographics.

**Goal 5: “Students at the Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School will demonstrate mastery of science concepts.”**

***Measures proposed by the school:***

***measure 1:*** Using the New York State Science Grade 4 Exam, ninety percent of our students, who have attended our school for at least three years, will score a three and above and will outperform students from schools in the Rochester area with similar demographics.

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAM GOALS—RECOMMENDATIONS**

The school might consider the following recommendations to enhance the quality of evidence to be used to assess its progress its own goals.

*For Goals 1 (Reading) & 3(Mathematics)*

1. Be careful about claiming improvement when comparing different groups of students. Currently, the *Accountability Progress Report* documents the reading scores for different groups of kindergarten students to show student progress in reading.
2. In addition to comparing year to year progress, consider comparing the beginning and end of year reading and math scores for the same students to clearly document progress over time. This is helpful for students who have entered the school within the year and for whom you have baseline/ entry assessment information as well as end of the year results. Currently, the *Progress Report* only documents end of year assessment results that do not clearly reflect the progress of new entrants. The school could also create tables/charts in which it documents the reading scores for each class as a way of using class profile data to show evidence of student growth within the year as well as year to year.
3. Clarify the table to show the Stanford 9 score for each grade level group as well as for each cohort group of students for each school year. Reporting whole grade level scores in separate tables along with cohort scores may help the school to effectively show its impact on student performance on the test. The school should always include the number of students for each grade level and cohort in the table so that external evaluators know how many students are being assessed each year.
4. Since percents are used in the measure, make sure that percents are used in the report table to document student progress toward the target. This will make it possible for the school and external evaluators to assess accurately student attainment of the target.
5. Explain what a “reading stage” is and how it is measured.

6. Use weighted average to determine the “school average” since the school will be using the scores of different groups of students at the end of the year to assess its overall performance in reading and math.
7. Since the 2002-2003 fourth graders will be the first group taking the NYS ELA, Mathematics and Science assessments, there will be 40 students making up the baseline group for EMHCS. This is a small group on which to base assessment of the school’s performance in comparison to state averages or those of local schools. Caution is advised when drawing inferences about the school’s achievement of its Accountability Plan goals using this data.
8. Identify the “similar schools” that will be used to compare students’ performance data. EMHCS should consider researching the results for these schools on the NYS assessments. This will allow them to be aware of the targets that the “similar schools” have set for their students. This will make it possible for EMHCS to make valid comparisons of their students’ performance to those of students at these other schools.

*For Goal 2(Writing)*

1. Include a detailed description of how the “monthly reviews” of student work are conducted and how the student conferences are being implemented by the classroom teachers. This will help external evaluators to understand better how the writing curriculum is being implemented and assessed throughout the school.
2. Again, use weighted average to determine the “school average”. (For a weighted average, multiply the group’s average times the number of students in the group; total the products and divide by the total number of tested students.)

*For Goal 4 (Science) & 5 (Social Studies)*

1. List the tool to be used to measure student performance—which is probably the NYS Science assessment. If possible, the school should consider selecting an assessment tool that can be used to track student progress as they work towards proficiency in both science and social studies as they prepare for the NYS assessment. Perhaps there are assessments with curriculum materials that parallel the NYS tests, or teachers can construct sample NYS tests using released items provided by the State Education Department.
2. As in the previous goals, the school should identify the similar schools that it will be using in its comparison data. If the entire district will be the comparison group, indicate that in next year’s report.

## II. ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY GOALS

**Goal 1: “The Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School will have an effective, responsible decision making and financial management plan and will make effective use of financial resources.”**

*Measures proposed by the school:*

*measure 1:* Comparison of budget to actual results of operation for the most recent completed fiscal year will show a balanced budget.

*measure 2:* The proposed budget for the following fiscal year will show alignment between expenses and instructional impact.

*measure 3:* Balance sheet for the most recently completed fiscal year will demonstrate responsible management.

*measure 4:* Results of an independent yearly audit will show responsible spending and financial management practices.

*measure 5:* Statement of Accounting Practices will show proper documentation of expenses and receipts.

**Goal 2: “The Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School will have an effective, responsible decision making plan with parental support.”**

*Measures proposed by the school:*

*measure 1:* Board of Trustees will reflect three parent representatives.

*measure 2:* Quarterly enrollment data will reflect ninety-eight percent enrollment slots filled. On a yearly basis, enrollment data will reflect ninety-eight percent of enrollment slots filled.

*measure 3:* Attendance data will reflect ninety-five percent daily average attendance.

*measure 4:* Annual parent survey (given to all parents) will reflect that ninety percent of parents feel that the school communicates information effectively, that they understand the program and that they are pleased with their child’s progress.

*measure 5:* Students’ reading logs indicate that ninety percent of the families have signed and monitor their child’s home reading program (25 book campaign).

*measure 6:* Annual staff survey will reflect that ninety percent of the teachers feel valued and supported.

## ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY GOALS—RECOMMENDATIONS

*For Goal 1*

1. Since the readers of the school’s *Accountability Progress Report* are not always financial professionals, it would be helpful for the school to include its own definition of “effective and responsible” in its discussion of its financial management plan. The definition could reflect priorities among the Board or school personnel for percentage of resources allocated for professional development or instructional materials.

*For Goal 2*

1. Provide evidence of the trends in enrollment and attendance by documenting the average daily attendance and enrollment for each year of the school’s operations in a chart or table. The staff may also consider discussing the changes in enrollment and attendance as a way of explaining the trends that exist at the school.

2. Indicate what percent of the parent population returned surveys and chart the results on the three response items for each year. This will provide the school with more accurate information as to whether it is successful in meeting its parent satisfaction target.
3. In addition to the measures included in the approved accountability plan, the school might want to provide in an addendum or other report a chart of the yearly results of the 25 Book Campaign as a way of capturing student and family participation in the school's literacy initiative.
4. Since the school has a small number of teachers, the leadership should try to assure a higher return rate for the teacher survey. Also, the leadership may want to consider using the results from the teacher survey to discuss the effectiveness of the school's improvement efforts in next year's progress report.

### III. UNIQUE PROGRAMMATIC AREA GOALS

**Goal 1: "English dominant students of the Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School will become proficient speakers of the Spanish Language."**

***Measures proposed by the school:***

***measure 1:*** Using Second Language Acquisition Stages, ninety percent of our students will move at least one to two stages each year on the continuum. Teachers will, on a quarterly basis, place students on the continuum based on anecdotal records.

***measure 2:*** After five years in the program ninety percent of our students will score a four and above on the LAS (Language Assessment Scales). The LAS measures growth over time in oral language skills. The LAS will be administered by the paraprofessional and scored by the Literacy Coordinator. A score of four indicates that the student is fluent in the language.

### UNIQUE PROGRAMMATIC AREA GOALS—RECOMMENDATIONS

*For Goal 1*

1. Create a chart that documents the test results of each grade and cohort for each year to show student progress towards attaining proficiency in Spanish.
2. Even though the school has not reached the 'five' year criteria for this goal, consider reporting the results of student performance on the LAS for the first three years to show trends toward achievement of this target. Use tables similar to those used for other test results to report the class and cohort results clearly and simply.

**APPENDIX A: FRAMEWORK FOR THE ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL PROGRESS**

| <b>Category</b>                 | <b>Criteria</b>  | <b>Evidence Sources</b>  |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Academic Program</b>         | To what extent have students attained expected skills and knowledge?                               | School's Accountability Plan and Progress Report(s)                            |
|                                 | What progress have students made over time in attaining expected skills and knowledge?             | School's Accountability Plan and Progress Report(s)                            |
|                                 | Does the school's instructional program meet needs of diverse students?                            | Class visits, interviews, data review, Accountability Plan Progress Report     |
|                                 | Do the school's standards reflect implementation of high academic expectations?                    | Review of curriculum documents; confirmation of implementation by class visits |
| <b>Organizational Viability</b> | Are students and parents satisfied with the work of the school?                                    | Interviews, survey review  |
|                                 | Are systems in place to promote the efficient operation of school functions?                       | Interviews, observations<br>Staffing history                                   |
|                                 | Are systems in place to monitor the effectiveness of the academic program and to modify as needed? | Personnel evaluation policies, minutes and agendas of board, staff meetings    |
| <b>Unique Aspects</b>           | Are the school's mission and vision clear to all stakeholders?                                     | Interviews, document reviews   |
|                                 | Are the school's special programs meeting expected targets?  | Accountability Plan, Progress Reports, other docs unique to each school        |
| <b>Financial Accountability</b> | Is enrollment stable and sufficient to provide the financial foundation of the school?             |  |
|                                 | Does the school's financial management serve the needs of students?                                |  |
| <b>Legal Compliance</b>         | Is the school in essential compliance with legal and regulatory requirements?                      |  |

**\*\* Sections assessing Financial Accountability and Legal Compliance will be provided by the Charter Schools Institute and amended to this report as available.**

## APPENDIX B: SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EUGENIO MARIA DE HOSTOS CHARTER SCHOOL

### I. Academic Program Goals

| <b>Goal 1: Students will be proficient readers of the English Language</b>  |  |
|---|--|
| <b><i>Proposed Measures</i></b>   | <b><i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i></b>  |
| -- 90% K students recognize 49/54 letters via Marie Clay Observation Survey   | -- caution against claiming improvement when comparing different groups of students.<br>-- consider comparing beginning and end of year for same group of students if want to show growth/improvement.   |
| -- 90% gr. 1-3 move one reading stage/year, using DRA, Running Records  | (achieved this target)<br>-- if using percents in the measure, include percents in the table<br>-- capture data in class profiles by creating tables/charts by class, showing growth throughout the year<br>-- add more detail on what a "reading stage" is and how measured |
| -- gr. 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 increase ave. 4 NCE points per year on Stanford 9  | -- clarify table to show which score reflects which grade/year, indicate change over time<br>-- include the "n" for each cohort group<br>-- use weighted average for "school average"<br>-- report whole grade level scores in separate table along with cohort scores       |
| -- 90% gr. 4 at EMHCS 3+ years score level 3 or above on NYS ELA assessment<br>-- as above, plus, outperform students from similar school   | -- 2003 will be first year for fourth graders to be tested<br>-- name the "similar schools" and research their results, be aware of the target you need to meet.   |
| <b>Goal 2: Students will be proficient writers of the English Language</b>  |  |
| <b><i>Proposed Measures</i></b>   | <b><i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i></b>  |
| -- 90% students score 3 or above on narrative writing, using local rubrics  | -- elaborate on "monthly reviews"<br>-- explain how the "student conferences" are being implemented<br>-- use a weighted average to calculate "school average"   |
| <b>Goal 3: Students will demonstrate mastery of mathematical concepts</b>   |  |
| <b><i>Proposed Measures</i></b>   | <b><i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i></b>  |
| -- gr. 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 increase ave. 4 NCE points per year on Stanford 9  | -- include the "n" for each group of students<br>-- clarify what grade/year scores refer to<br>-- use a weighted average for "school average"  |
| -- 90% gr. 4 at EMHCS 3+ years score level 3 or above on NYS math assessment<br>-- as above, plus outperform students from similar schools. | (first group of 4 <sup>th</sup> graders this year)<br>-- name "similar schools" and investigate their results to identify their target   |
| <b>Goal 4: . Students demonstrate mastery of science concepts</b>   |  |
| <b><i>Proposed Measures</i></b>   | <b><i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i></b>  |
| -- 90% gr. 4 at EMHCS 3+ years outperform Rochester students from similar schools   | -- list the tool to be used to measure<br>-- identify the similar schools<br>-- if possible, designate/select/adopt an assessment tool that can serve to demonstrate science proficiency leading up to NYS assessment  |

| <b>Goal 5: Students demonstrate mastery of social studies concepts</b>            |  |
|---|--|
| <b><i>Proposed Measures</i></b>   | <b><i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i></b>  |
| -- 90% gr. 4 at EMHCS 3+ years outperform Rochester students from similar schools | -- name the tool for the measure (e.g. NYS SocSt = gr. 5)<br>-- identify the “similar schools” and research the target   |
| In addition:  | -- if internal assessments can be validated/correlated/made consistent/report student progress over time (e.g. rubrics and scored anchor paper samples in appendix to progress report) |

## II. Organizational Viability Goals

| <b>Goal 1: EMHCS will have effective, responsible decision making and financial management plan, make effective use of financial resources</b> |  |
|--|--|
| <b><i>Proposed Measures</i></b>  | <b><i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i></b>  |
| -- balanced budget   | -- define “effective” for your purpose   |
| -- alignment between expenses and instructional impact   |  |
| -- balance sheet demonstrate responsible management  |  |
| -- independent yearly audit  |  |
| -- proper documentation of expenses and receipts   |  |
| <b>Goal 2: EMHCS will have effective, responsible decision making with parental support</b>  |  |
| <b><i>Proposed Measures</i></b>  | <b><i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i></b>  |
| -- 3 parent representatives on Board of Trustees   | -- met goal  |
| -- maintain 98% enrollment   | -- show enrollment over time<br>-- helpful to discuss withdrawals, note changes over years of operation  |
| -- maintain 95% average daily attendance   | -- chart or table for results per year   |
| -- parent survey=90% communicate effectively, understand program, and pleased with their child’s progress                                      | -- indicate what percent of parent population returned surveys<br>-- chart results for each year on each of the three response items to show changes, trends |
| -- 90% parent signed and monitored child’s home reading program  | -- chart results for each year of the book campaign  |
| -- on teacher survey 90% teachers feel valued and supported  | -- assure higher return rate from teachers<br>-- consider discussing effectiveness of improvement efforts in next year’s progress report                     |

## III. Unique Programmatic Area Goals

| <b>Goal 1: English dominant students will become proficient speakers of the Spanish Language</b>            |  |
|---|--|
| <b><i>Proposed Measures</i></b>   | <b><i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i></b>  |
| -- using Second Language Acquisition Stages, 90% of students will move at least one to two stages each year | -- create a chart in parallel form to earlier test results (e.g., particular cohort over two, three years)                   |
| -- after 5 years, 90% students will score 4 or above on Language Assessment Scales (LAS)                    | (not measurable during this charter term)<br>-- track data over first five years to show trends toward achievement of target |