

Annual Accountability Report For
WIL LOU GRAY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL
3300 WEST CAMPUS ROAD
WEST COLUMBIA, SC 29170
2005-2006



DIRECTOR, PAT G. SMITH

Section I – Executive Summary
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:

1. Being retained in their grade in school.
2. Dropping out of school and not completing their education.
3. Not making the transition from public schools to the workforce.
4. 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 | 2. Pre-Vocational Training |
| 3. Pre-Employment Training | 4. Career Guidance and Job Placement |
| 5. Counseling | 6. Healthcare |
| 7. 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.

Section I – Executive Summary

Major Achievements from Past Year

- Received legislative budget support for much needed renovation of campus-wide HVAC system.
- Highest year of applications received with 861.
- Highest female acceptances since the beginning of the program.
- Successfully contracted with the Town of Springdale Police Department for police assistance in the absence of campus public safety officers for the third consecutive year.
- “No Report” audits for five consecutive years.
- Fifth consecutive year agency has achieved 90% or better from Human Affairs Commission for equal opportunity employment.
- Second 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.
- Revamping of the Wil Lou Gray website better enables prospective students, parents, and members of the community to explore the opportunities available at Wil Lou Gray, as well as, downloading required admissions documents.
- Continued implementation of an inmate work contract with the South Carolina Department of Corrections
- Recipient of Palmetto Gold Award for Excellent rating on the annual School Report Card.
- Received the Partnership Award from the Midlands Workforce Development Board for our efforts in enhancing employability and training opportunities for youth in Richland, Lexington and Fairfield Counties.

Key Strategic Goals for Present and Future Years

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:

- Register 160 students per cycle the first year with a five percent increase per year for the next four years.
- 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.
- 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.
- Eighty percent of the students to complete the program in the first year with an increase to ninety percent within five years.
- Maintain and improve current attrition rate.

Section I – Executive Summary***Opportunities and Barriers Affecting Successful Outcome of Mission and Goals***

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 six fiscal years and the current fiscal year without any negative impact or reduction-in-force despite budget reductions of 20% since FY 01.

Over the past six 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 continue along this path will force us to consider limiting enrollment to curtail the financial stress we now experience.

Because of the high 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.

Section I – Executive Summary*How is the accountability report used to improve organizational performance?*

The accountability report is used to improve organizational performance by keeping vital statistical information on student enrollment, graduates with or without GED, TABE test results, student community service hours, and needs assessments of the students we serve. These statistics assist the staff in pinpointing areas that need improvement as well as areas that are doing well but need to be maintained. Student placement data assists in determining areas of study or new areas of vocational training that can be offered to the students. 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, several new surveys to measure different areas of the agency performance have been designed and implemented this 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 it gives an opportunity for employee feedback on possible work place improvements. The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School Employee Satisfaction Survey is attached on the following page and is given to all teachers, staff, and faculty at the end of the fiscal year (see survey on page 5).



Cadets with House member Lewis Pinson at the annual Legislative Breakfast held in the Capitol Complex.

Example Survey:

**WIL LOU GRAY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL
ANNUAL EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION SURVEY**

Please answer each of the following questions by indicating the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements about the agency. Check the box under the statement, which comes closest to describing your feelings. Please feel free to comment on any or all of the questions in the comment box below.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
You have been provided with the necessary training and tools to perform your job efficiently.					
You feel as though the agency provides a safe working environment.					
Your supervisor is accessible when you need him/her.					
When you have a concern, your supervisor showed a sincere interest in resolving it.					
The agency is consistent with the enforcement of policies and procedures.					
The agency allows you to participate in continuing education courses and training.					
You feel as though your salary adequately reflects your ability, education, and experience.					
You are kept abreast of pertinent information pertaining to changes/events within agency.					

Please list any improvements or changes to the agency that could be implemented to maintain and ensure employee satisfaction.

COMMENTS:

Section II – Business Overview

Enabling Statute, Factual Description, Expenditures/Appropriations Chart

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 prevocational and vocational courses for persons with disabilities.

The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School in 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, classroom building with library and medical office, cafeteria, auditorium, administration building, gymnasium, maintenance shop, and staff housing. Currently, there are fifty-four WLGO employees and twenty-nine YCA employees. This is the only location for the Opportunity School; however, there is another smaller Youth ChalleNGe Academy in operation in Allendale that is not affiliated with WLGO.

The Opportunity School 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 and family members served are key customers along with the Board of Trustees, legislature and citizens of South Carolina. The outcome of services we provide to these students will directly and indirectly affect all citizens of this state and nation.

Key stakeholders are the employees that work at WLGO to help these young people become 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.

Section II – Business Overview

Accountability Report Appropriations/Expenditures Chart Example

Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations

	04-05 Actual Expenditures		05-06 Actual Expenditures		06-07 Appropriations Act	
<i>Major Budget Categories</i>	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds
Personal Service	\$2,209,028	\$1,728,746	\$2,209,890	\$1,758,900	\$2,589,17	\$1,975,281
Other Operating	\$1,160,166	\$273,062	\$1,292,545	\$579,023	\$1,294,399	\$559,878
Special Items	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Permanent Improvements	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Case Services	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Distributions to Subdivisions	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Fringe Benefits	\$598,780	\$465,779	\$600,716	\$456,206	\$773,529	\$590,090
Non-recurring	\$1,500	\$	\$	\$	\$275,000	\$275,000
Total	\$3961,474	\$2,467,587	\$4,103,151	\$2,794,129	\$5,431,845	\$3,400,249

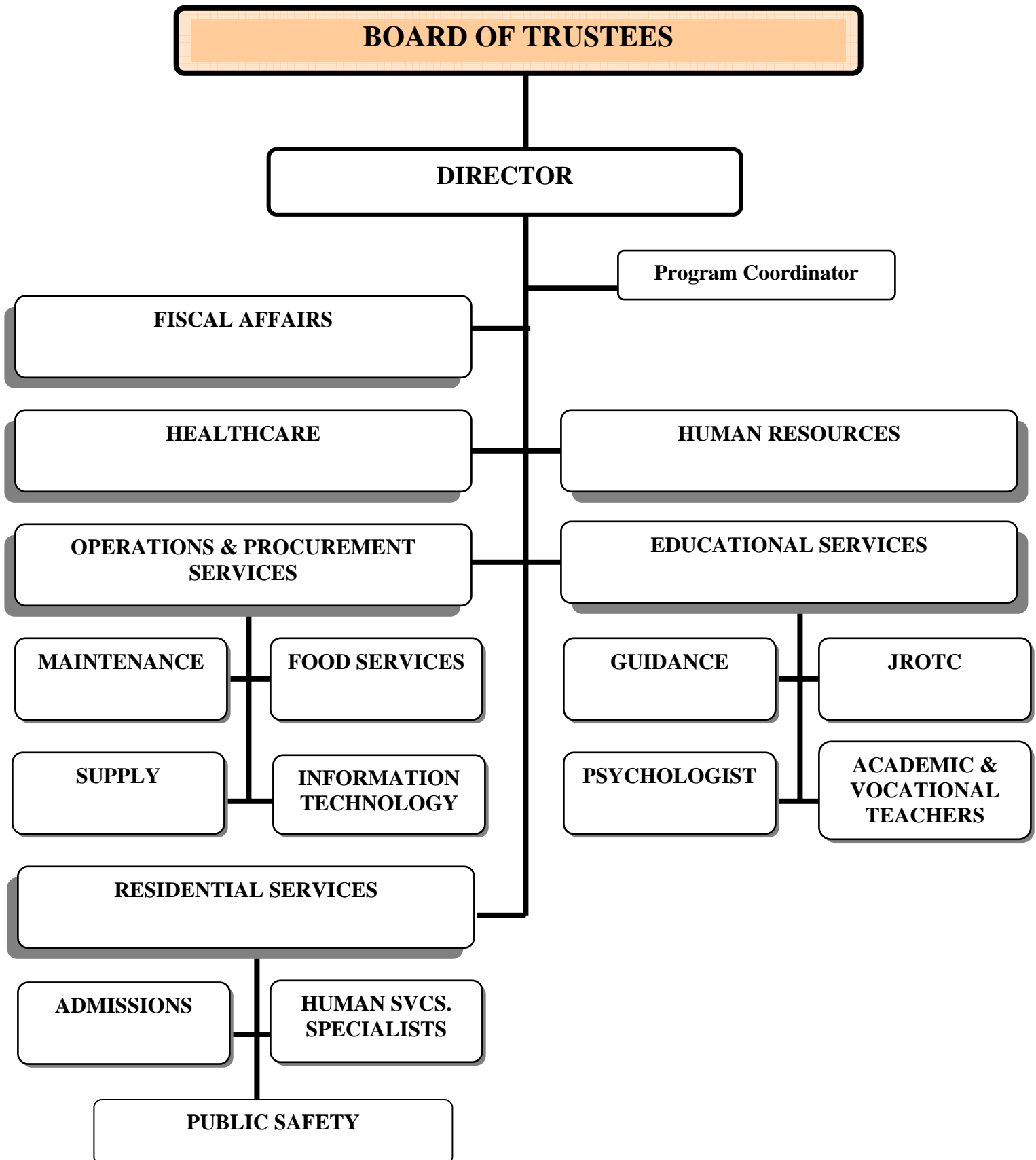
Other Expenditures

Sources of Funds	04-05 Actual Expenditures	05-06 Actual Expenditures
Supplemental Bills	\$1,500	\$10,246.00
Capital Reserve Funds	\$0	\$1,985,954
Bonds	\$0	\$0

Section II – Business Overview

Major Program Areas Chart.
See Attachment

Section II – Business Overview



Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

Category 1. Leadership**1.1 Senior Leadership Direction**

The agency director, appointed by the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School Board of Trustees, serves as the chief executive officer and implements the mission as approved by the Board of Trustees. The policy-making responsibilities reside with the Board of Trustees who charts the mission and provides guidance through their policy role. The Board meets four times each year to receive progress reports on established goals and to adopt supporting policies.

Division directors comprise the executive staff that report to the director and provide direct leadership for each of their functional areas. They provide direct links to respective staff between their department and the agency director. This group of five division directors meets bi-monthly to discuss issues related to the day-to-day operation of the school. Through formal and informal communication and meetings, the information is disseminated throughout the agency. An informal environment is nurtured to ensure access to communication and information. Division directors are empowered to seek solutions for all barriers and opportunities they encounter in order to meet agency goals.

The director's door is open to all staff and students at the school as its programs and services are developed, revised and updated to better serve all constituent groups. Other informal meetings, as needed, for functional areas such as operations and program development are conducted to focus discussion on a departmental theme. Every other Friday, the director meets over lunch with the Teacher Council to review, discuss, and receive suggestions related to improvement of the academic program. This brief summary illustrates how the Opportunity School collects communication and then translates that communication into the school's values and expectations. The director also meets with Wil Lou Gray department heads and a member of the Youth ChalleNge staff every Tuesday and Thursday morning at 9:00 am to consult, evaluate, and maintain effective communication between each department within the agency.

1.2 Focus on Customers

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 17 months after graduation. This is key to ensure that each customer (student) reaches his or her full potential after graduation.

1.3 Key Performance Measures

The Opportunity School is unique in that it is the only school operating in partnership with the Youth ChalleNGe Academy in the United States, therefore, comparisons to other institutions is very difficult. However, current measures are taken from applications, enrollment, graduation and graduation with GED to compare with previous years progress to insure improvement. Measures are also taken from student satisfaction with living environment, facilities, discipline code, teachers, scheduling, curriculum and materials as well as reasons for enrolling. Postgraduate results are measured to assess student progress once they have graduated from the residential phase. All graduating students are administered a customer satisfaction survey to determine whether or not they believe their needs have been satisfactorily met. (See Graphs 7.1-1, 7.1-2 and 7.1-3) Frequent parent conferences are held with students and parents, as well as, numerous telephone updates to parents help in building a customer focused relationship.



Students taking the GED test.



Ms. Chestnut meeting with a student and her parent on Family Day.

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

Category 1. Leadership**1.3 Key Performance Measures (Continued)**

The Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Survey Level A Form 7 (pre-test) is administered to registered students during the first week of the program. Scale Score, Grade Equivalent, National Percentile and National Stanine scores are obtained for each student in the areas of reading, math computation, applied mathematics, total mathematics, language and total battery. This profile provides instructors with information on the student's strengths and weaknesses. TABE Survey Level A Form 8 (post-test) was administered upon the student qualifying for participation in GED testing. Students who did not qualify to participate in GED testing were administered the TABE at the end of the cycle. Results of the post-test were compared to results of the pre-test to assess the academic progress made by the student. (See Graphs 7.2-6 and 7.2-7)

Constant self-assessment, audits of procedures, and the Employee Performance Management System are all used as valuable tools to measure performance. Additional key performance measures are in the design process for future use to enhance academic performance as well as the delivery methods.

1.4 Performance Review/Feedback

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.

1.5 Impact on the Public

Part of the Opportunity School's mission is to prepare and assist our students in attaining independence and employability once they graduate from the program. 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 advance their grade level. 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 Wil Lou Gray Award is presented twice a 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.

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

Category 1. Leadership**1.6 Priorities for Improvement**

Established priorities for improvement were developed by senior management and staff in a planning meeting hosted by the University of South Carolina Center for Governmental Services, Institute for Public Policy and Policy Research. Continuing incorporation of these plans into the seven Baldrige Criteria categories is underway.

1.7 Supporting the Community

Senior leaders 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 sixty-five percent completed more than sixty-one hours of community service while another thirty-five percent completed forty-one to sixty hours of community service.

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

Category 2. Strategic Planning Process**2.1 – 2.5 Strategic Planning Process**

Each year the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School undertakes a series of planning sessions designed to develop agency goals and strategies. This process considers current mission, service delivery and data measurements. The premise for this strategic planning begins with our core strengths, which are:

- 1) a residential setting
- 2) individual specialized counseling available
- 3) alternative instructional programs that may be different than in any school
- 4) the opportunity for the student to begin in a new structured environment

From these planning sessions, an annual planning process is adapted for a five-year period and is subject to annual update and progress measurement and performance. Goal areas are set at the beginning of each fiscal year, mid-year data is analyzed, and year-end reporting completes the process at a Board of Trustees meeting. This plan identifies the most important programmatic and operational activities that represent the strategies necessary to accomplish annual and long-range goals.

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

Category 2. Strategic Planning Process

Strategic Planning Chart
See Attachment

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

Category 3. Customer Focus**3.1 – 3.5 Key Customers and Stakeholders**

External key customers and stakeholders include:

- Students 16 to 18 years of age and their families.
- High schools, guidance counselors, teachers and others that refer students to the Opportunity School.
- Taxpayers.
- Members of the General Assembly.
- Other state agencies.
- Business and industry partners that provide job shadowing opportunities and supplies to the school.
- Board of Trustees.

Our 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 the state. Their success and satisfaction with the educational and residential experience, while enrolled at the Opportunity School, is our primary focus. To gauge and assess that satisfaction, each graduating student is given a graduate exit interview survey that solicits responses on a host of topics ranging from academics, residential, food service, recreation, and most importantly, our staff. This instrument is used exclusively to design and implement improvement strategies in service delivery. The 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.

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.

Quality is our primary focus. Therefore, in order to reach that goal, customer satisfaction and the desire to constantly seek ways to improve our services offered for the benefit of the students will always be emphasized. Due to recent budget cuts, it is more important than ever to ensure top customer satisfaction because the success of each student is our best advertisement.

Some of the results from the survey given to the students at the end of each cycle are shown in Graphs 7.1-1 and 7.1-2. Information compiled from these surveys is useful for identifying areas that may need improvement, as well as, areas not needing improvement. Graphs reflecting the reasons why students choose to enroll at Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School along with a map displaying the many counties in South Carolina that are served by the Opportunity School are located in Graphs 7.1-3 and 7.2-5. Upon completion of the residential phase of the program, a follow-up during the year is performed to see how and what the students are doing. (See Graph 7.2-8) These current measures are in the process of being updated and revised to improve accuracy and widen the scope of performance measures.

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

Category 3. Customer Focus**3.1 – 3.5 Key Customers and Stakeholders (Continued)**

The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School hosts a 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. The staff is available at the breakfast to answer any questions or concerns that may be brought up by assembly members concerning the Opportunity School. Cadets are chosen to attend from the different counties across the state to afford assembly members a chance to meet some of their young constituents.

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 are sent to members of the general assembly and the WLGOS Board of Trustees.



A cadet presents a plaque to Lieutenant Governor Andre Bauer in appreciation for being the guest Speaker at the spring Military Ball.

Category 4. Information and Analysis**4.1– 4.4 Determination of Measures**

Information and analysis is collected and evaluated by the various functional groups as a basis for measuring and comparing trends for improvement. 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. Each student is required to complete a minimum of forty hours of service learning for graduation. Each student's progress is monitored through a database to ensure completion, and periodic reports are published to administrators for analysis. Student discipline history is tracked through a database and monitored daily to determine the appropriate referral. This information is used in placement and counseling decisions as an intervention strategy.

Category 5. Human Resource Focus**5.1 – 5.6 Employee Motivation to Achieve Potential/Key Developmental and Training Needs Identification/EPMS**

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. An exit survey is given to staff members leaving the employ of the Opportunity School. The results from these exit surveys guide changes for human resource recommendations. 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 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.

The Opportunity School follows the same guidelines as all South Carolina 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.

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

Category 6 Process Management

6.1 Key Design and Delivery Processes

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

1. Student Education, Food Service, Housing
Education = Curriculum, Team Teaching/Support
Food Service = Nutrition, Variety
Housing = Dormitory Life
2. Support and Internal Support
3. 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. This past year we experienced a seven percent increase in special education students that attributes to the slight decrease in students graduating with a GED. Special education enrollment continues to rise, 20% of student population, requiring more intensive remediation in order to prepare them for the GED. Thereby resulting in a slight decrease in those passing the GED.

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.



Students receive three meals a day plus one snack.

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

Category 6 Process Management

6.1 Key Design and Delivery Processes (Continued)

Support and Internal Support – Wil Lou Gray consists of eighty-nine acres of campus with one hundred thousand seventy-four 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 is 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 Daily Operation of Key Production/Delivery Processes meeting Key Performance Requirements

Key production requirements are supported in our day-to-day operations through standardized indicators that allow 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.

6.3 Key Support Processes

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 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 requirement.



The WLGOS Color Guard performs at a NBA basketball game in Charlotte, NC.



Cadets participate in daily structured drills

6.4 Management and Support of Key Supplier/Contractor/Partner Interactions

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 is 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 60-year-old boiler system, which is very costly to maintain and operate, the agency successfully obtained state financial assistance for installation of a new centralized HVAC system. The new system will have a substantial positive effect on energy savings and maintenance repairs totaling an approximately \$100,000 annually.

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 significant annual savings.

The agency director and Board of Trustees manage partnerships that bind the agency to a larger, more collaborative relationship. Vertical and horizontal communication is an active ingredient in determining improvement performance.

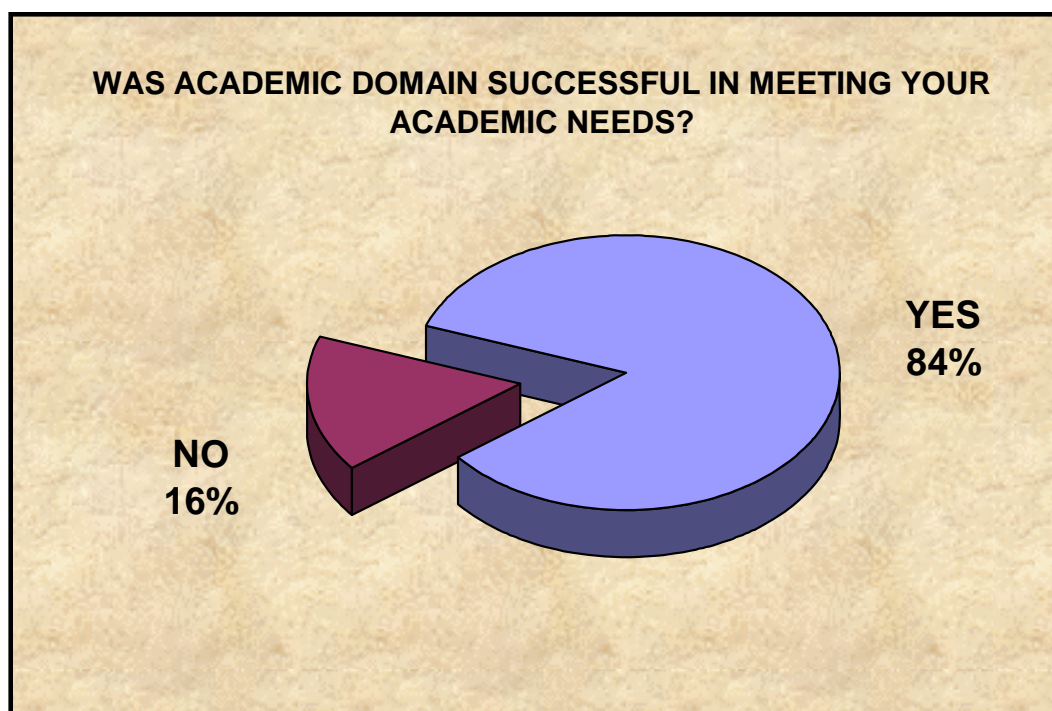


Ms. Marshall, a teacher, with students from her class.

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria**Category 7. Business Results****7.1 Customer Satisfaction**

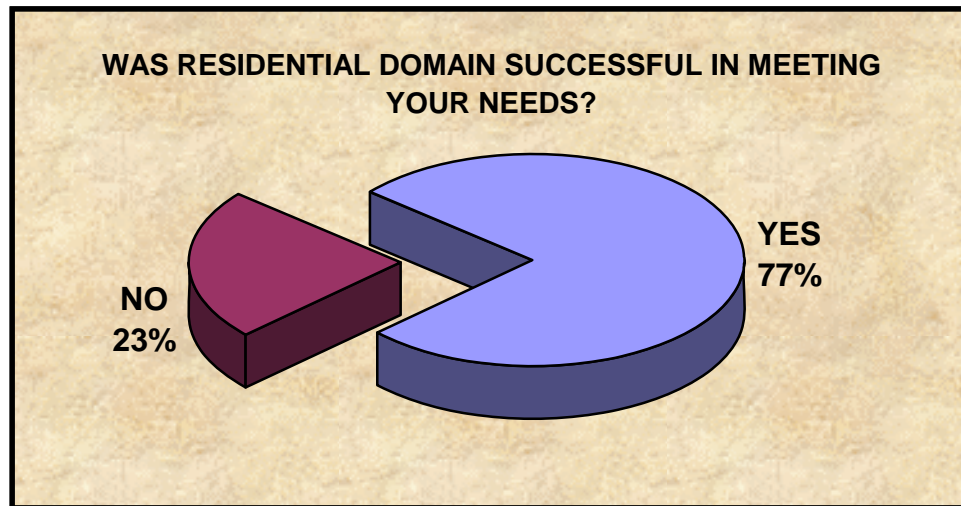
The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School's role is to serve as many of the state's undereducated, at-risk students as possible during each school year. As this is our agency priority, attention is given to the highest level of enrollment within our ability to support the demand for admission versus our ability to satisfy that demand. Several factors are critical in determining customer satisfaction. Parental interest and student achievement rank as the major measures of customer satisfaction. Both groups provide significant input into program satisfaction through personal interviews and instrument exit surveys, graduation rates and GED performance. As demand for admission has sharply increased over the last three years, the agency's management team has responded through consistent communication at all levels of the organization in order to address issues of satisfaction and performance. Employee involvement is also solicited in that they are responsible for the framework of programmatic delivery and must be active elements in accomplishments of the agency objectives and mission.

The graph below measures student satisfaction with such items as teachers, scheduling, curriculum and materials. As reflected below, eighty-four percent of the students were satisfied in this area.

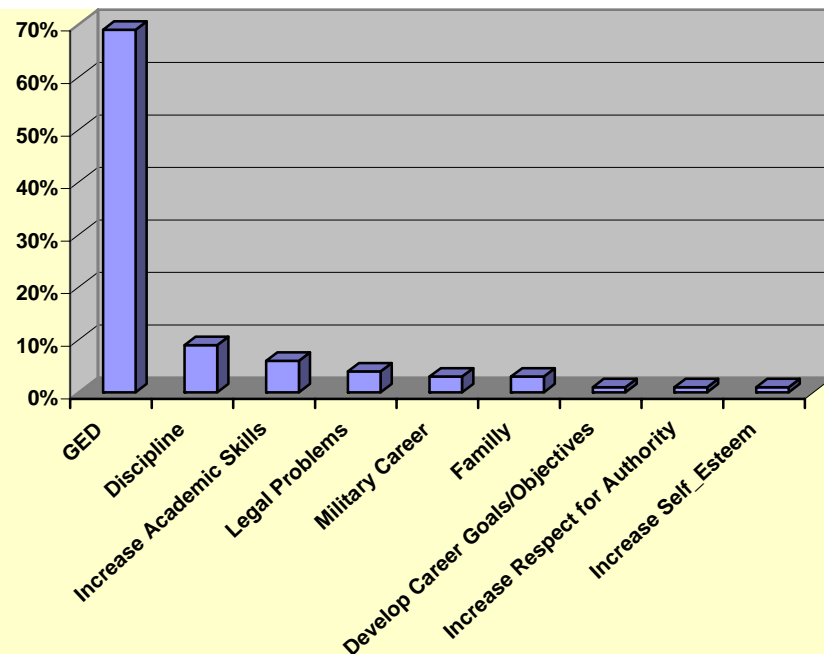
Graph 7.1-1

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria**Category 7. Business Results****7.1 Customer Satisfaction (Continued)**

The graph below measures student satisfaction with such items as living environment, facilities and rules. As reflected below, seventy-seven percent of the students were satisfied in this area.

Graph 7.1-2

Below are the results from a survey of students attending the Opportunity School as to the reason or reasons they enrolled into this program. The majority of the students enroll to obtain their GED and increase their academic skills. Graph 7.1-1 reflects the student's high satisfaction in meeting their academic goals while attending the Opportunity School whether or not they obtained their GED.

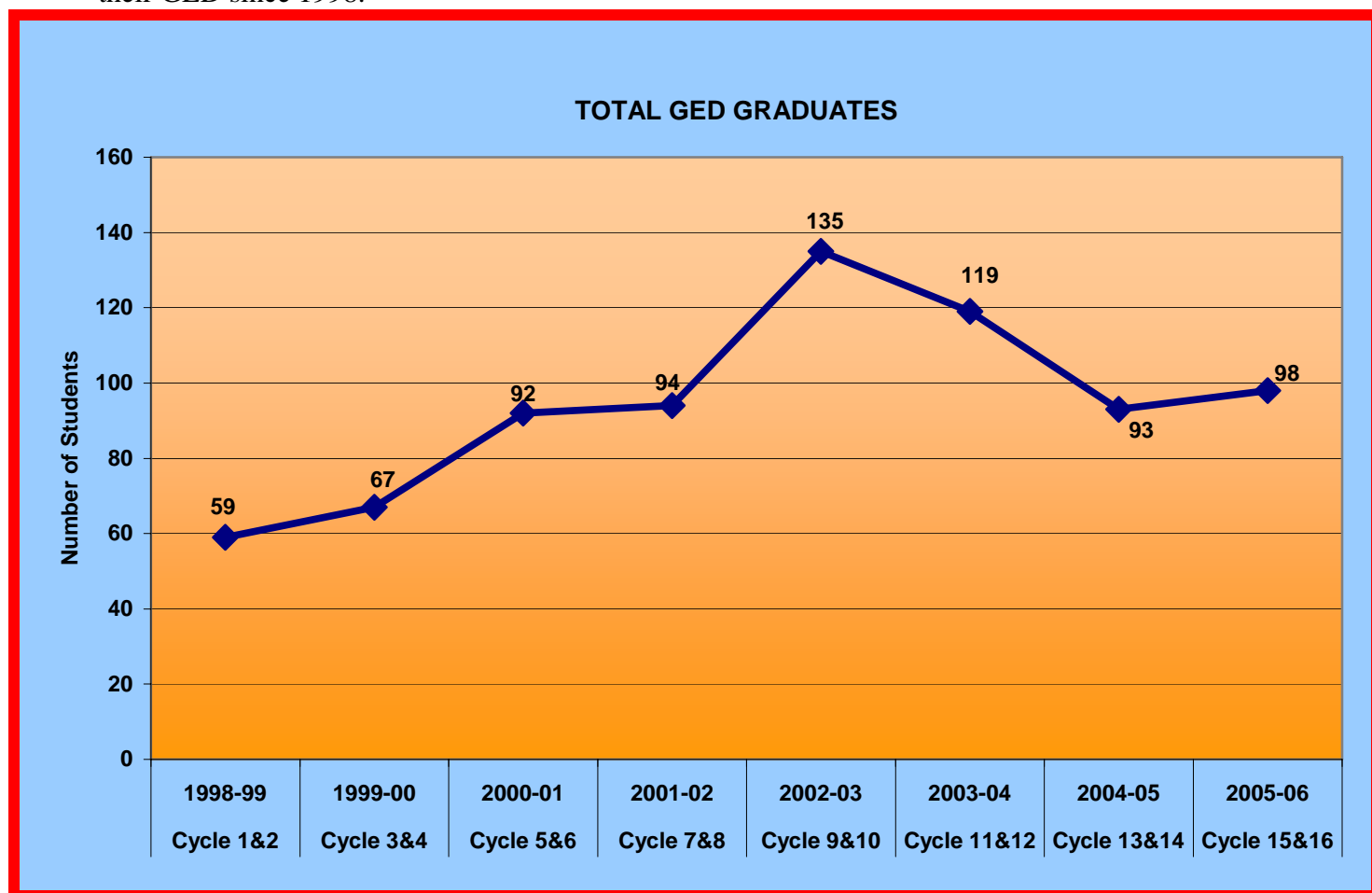
Graph 7.1-3 (Note: Students could indicate more than one reason.)**WHY DID YOU ENROLL IN THIS PROGRAM?**

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria**Category 7. Business Results****7.2 Mission Accomplishment Measures**

The number of students served throughout the year determines mission accomplishment. As a result, the agency is constantly seeking ways to streamline and customize the admissions process so that an applicant's request for admission is responsive, expedient and a seamless process that invites attendance. Another key measure of performance is the academic performance of our students that is measured by the increase in GED results and TABE improvement. Enrollment and academic performance represent the two most important accomplishments that we measure.

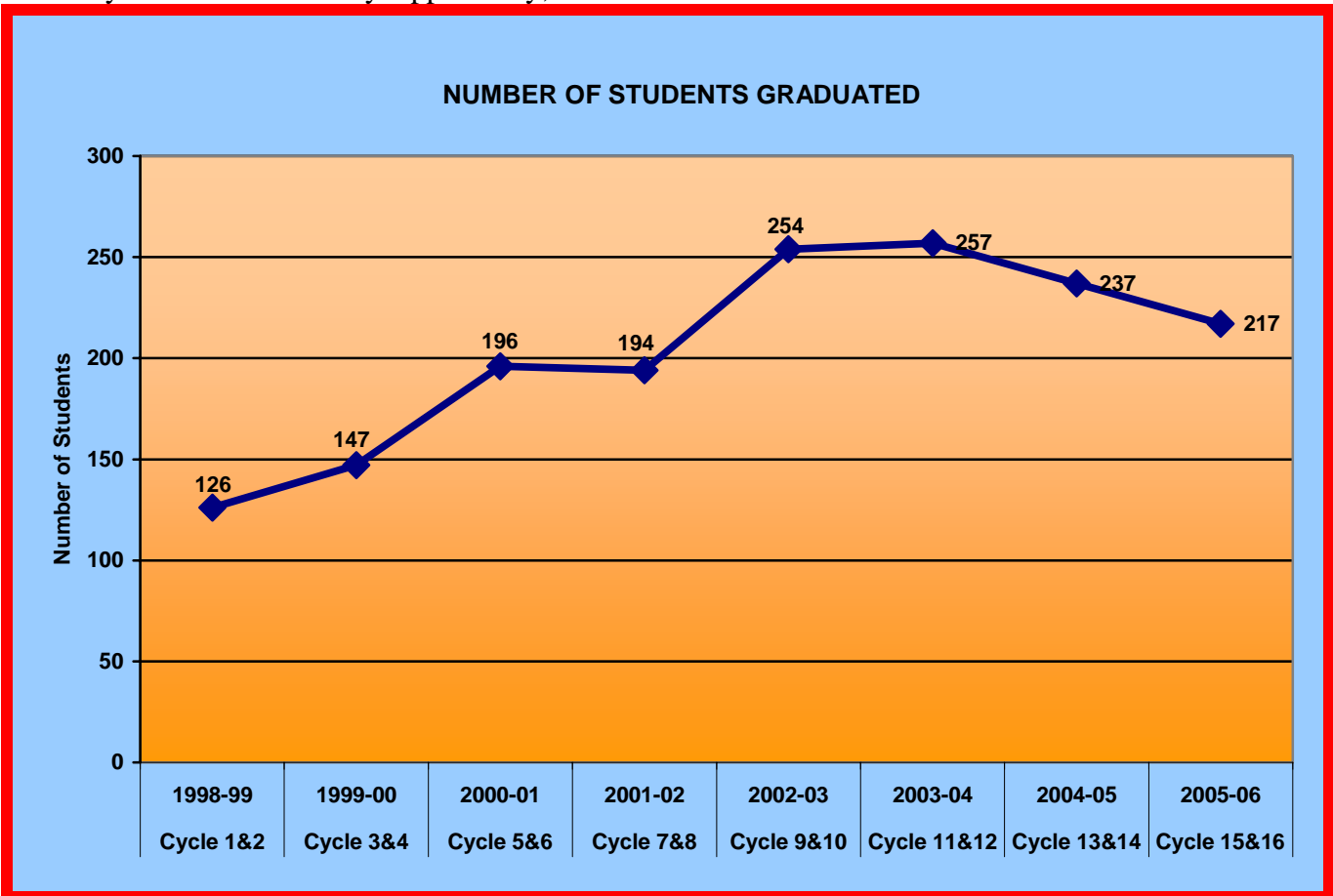
Graph 7.2-1

The graph below represents the number of students from 1998 until 2006 that have successfully completed the GED test and received GED certification. A total of 757 students have received their GED since 1998.



Graph 7.2-2

The graph below represents the number of students that have graduated from the Youth Challenge Academy at the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity; a total of 1628 students since 1998.



Students have allotted study time everyday for homework and test preparation. A student studying in the campus library.

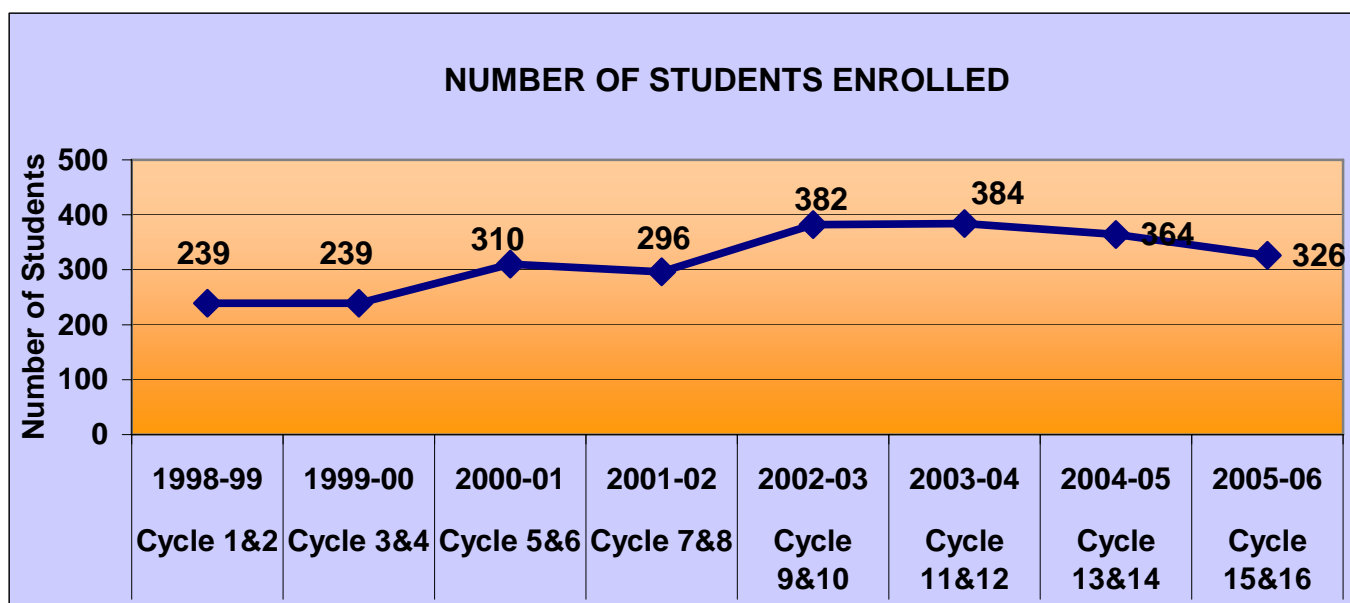
Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

Category 7. Business Results

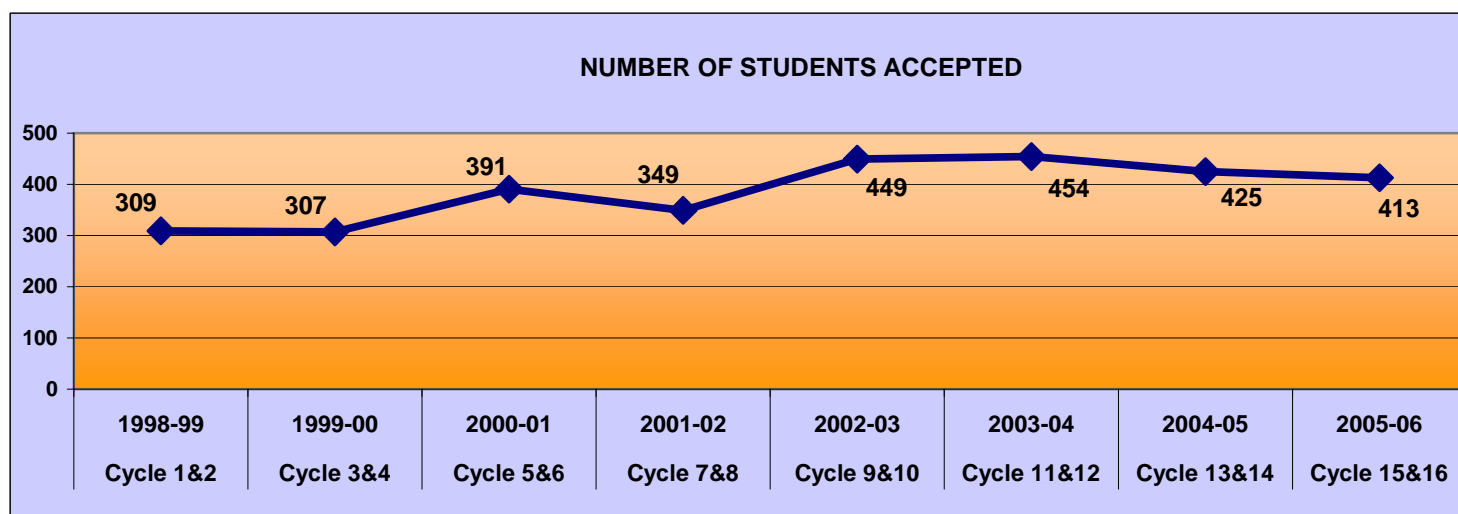
7.2 Mission Accomplishment Measures (Continued)

Graph 7.2-3

The graph below represents the number of students that enrolled in the Youth Challenge Academy at the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School between 1998 and 2005.

**Graph 7.2-4**

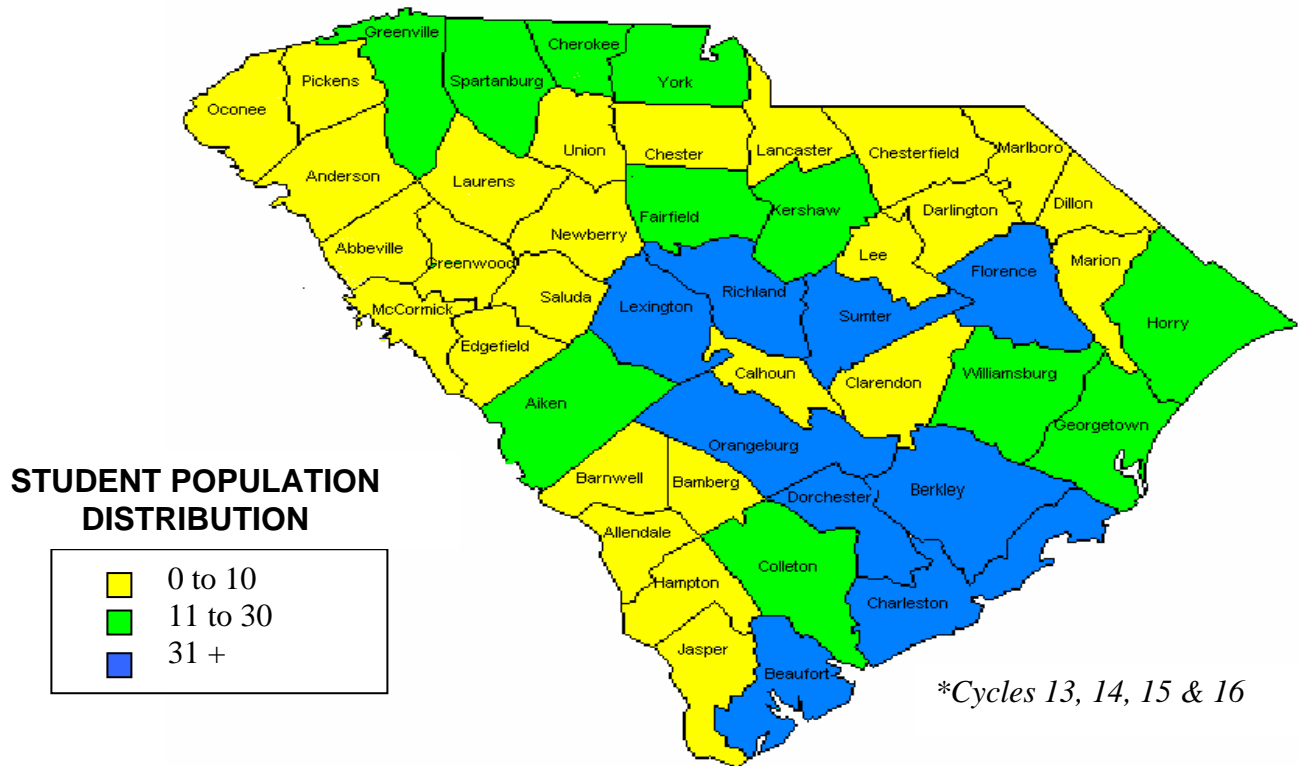
The graph below represents the number of students that were accepted into the Youth Challenge Academy at the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School between 1998 and 2005.



7.2 Mission Accomplishment Measures (Continued)

Graph 7.2-5

WIL LOU GRAY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT BY COUNTY FOR 2004-2006



Abbeville	1	Dillon	5	Lexington	58
Aiken	24	Dorchester	50	Marion	14
Allendale	1	Edgefield	1	Marlboro	2
Anderson	10	Fairfield	14	McCormick	5
Bamberg	4	Florence	45	Newberry	4
Barnwell	2	Georgetown	20	Oconee	6
Beaufort	72	Greenville	30	Orangeburg	51
Berkeley	46	Greenwood	8	Pickens	4
Calhoun	12	Hampton	3	Richland	133
Charleston	104	Horry	23	Saluda	0
Cherokee	24	Jasper	5	Spartanburg	22
Chester	2	Kershaw	30	Sumter	75
Chesterfield	6	Lancaster	11	Union	4
Clarendon	9	Laurens	6	Williamsburg	16
Colleton	31	Lee	9	York	9
Darlington	11				

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

Category 7. Business Results

7.2 Mission Accomplishment Measures (Continued)

Students are accepted into the program every cycle and are given a registration date. All students are to report on the registration day to be enrolled into the program. Upon enrollment the two-week Challenge Phase begins in which the students are acclimated to the military and dormitory life style. Once the Challenge Phase ends the students, now considered cadets, begin classes in preparation for the GED test. All cadets graduating from the program will earn a Youth Challenge Academy certificate whether or not they successfully pass the GED.

Table 7.2-1

ADMISSIONS PROFILE					
Class/Cycle	Accepted	Enrolled	3 rd Week Enrollment	Graduated	GED
Class 98-01 Cycle 1	150	126	94	61	
Class 98-02 Cycle 2	159	113	97	65	59*
Subtotal Cycles 1&2	309	239	191	126	59
Class 99-01 Cycle 3	153	107	93	62	
Class 99-02 Cycle 4	154	132	106	85	67*
Subtotal Cycles 3&4	307	239	199	147	67
Class 00-01 Cycle 5	233	186	151	110	
Class 00-02 cycle 6	158	124	101	86	92*
Subtotal Cycles 5&6	391	310	252	196	92
Class 01-01 Cycle 7	173	148	125	100	
Class 01-02 Cycle 8	176	148	128	94	94*
Subtotal Cycles 7&8	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
Subtotal Cycles 9&10	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
Subtotal Cycles 11&12	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
Subtotal Cycles 13&14	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
Subtotal Cycles 15&16	413	326	296	217	98
TOTALS	3097	540	340	628	757

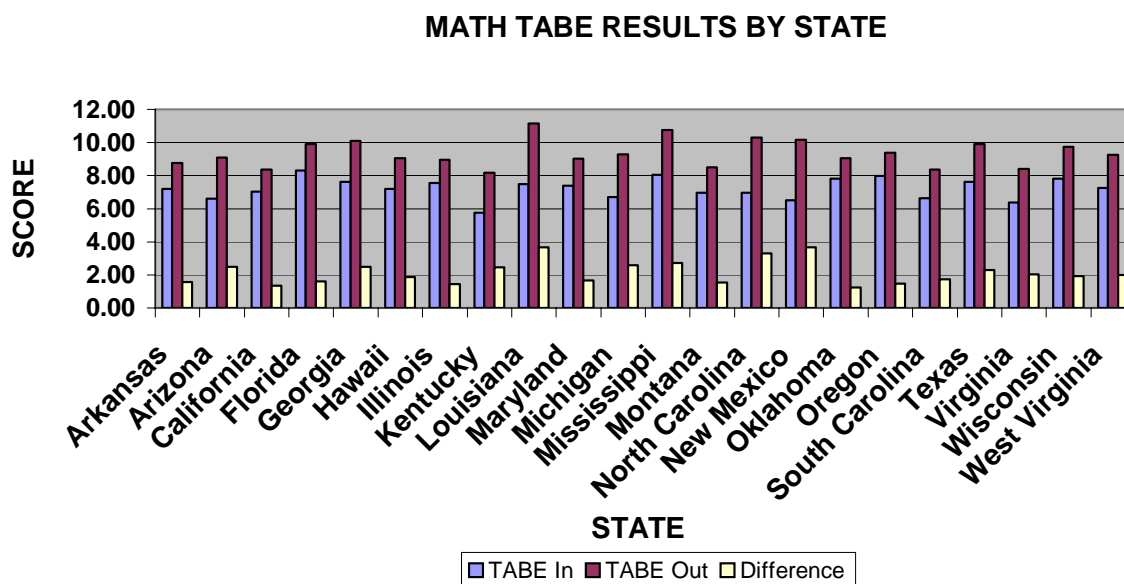
*Combined GED totals for these cycles.

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

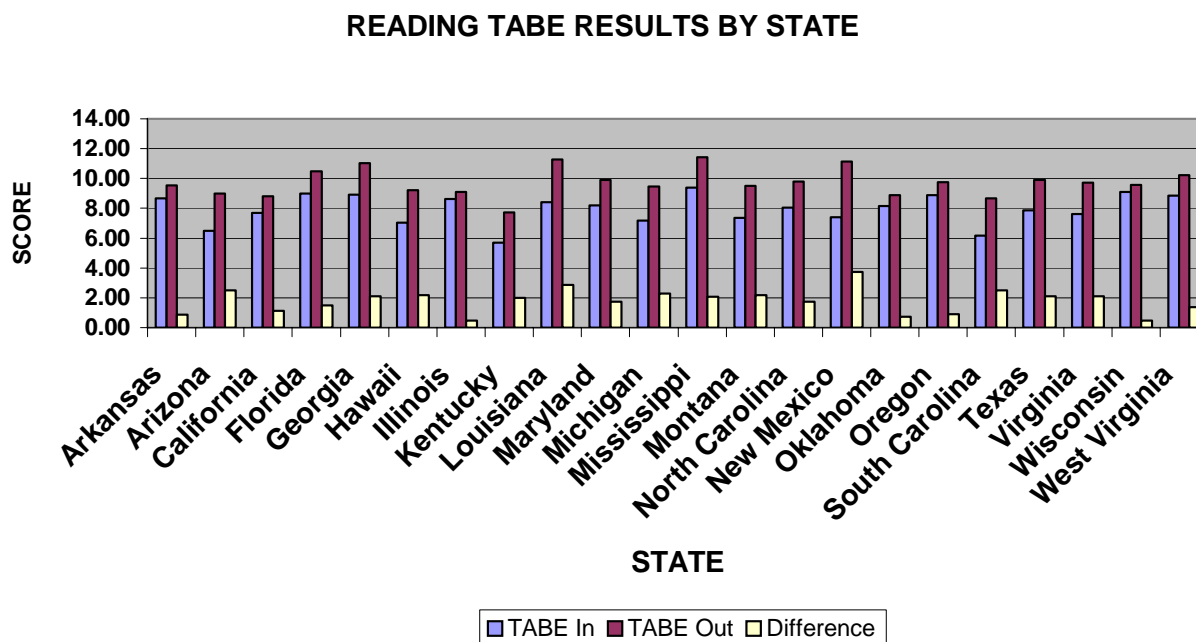
Category 7. Business Results

7.2 Mission Accomplishment Measures (Continued)

Graph 7.2-6



Graph 7.2-7



Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria**Category 7. Business Results****7.2 Mission Accomplishment Measures (Continued)**

The TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) graphs on page 25 (Graphs 7.2-6 and 7.2-7) 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 are suspect.

The math and reading TABE 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 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.

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 the 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. 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.

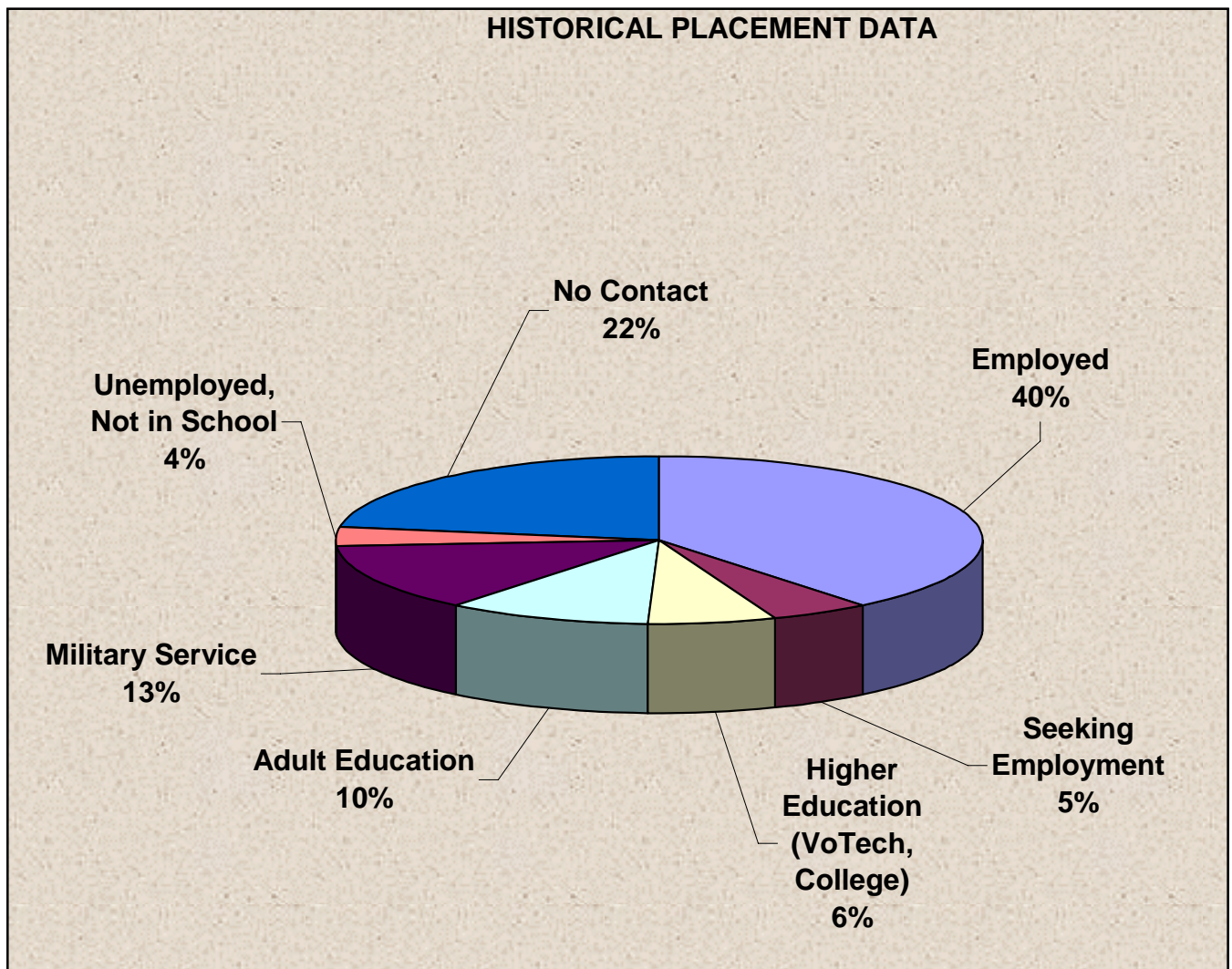


Dr. Lewis, pictured to the left, and Gloria Robinson, Medical Director, right, assist a cadet in the campus medical facility.

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria**Category 7. Business Results****7.2 Mission Accomplishment Measures (Continued)**

The graph below shows the placement of our students after they have completed the residential phase of the program.

Graph 7.2-8



Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

Category 7. Business Results**7.2 Mission Accomplishment Measures (Continued)**

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 68 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 13,455 hours of service learning during the last year. If translated into dollars, these hours multiplied by \$5.15, current minimum wage, equate to \$69,293.25 of investment in our community. Since the program began in 1998, 1628 students have graduated, each of which completed an average of 60-community service hours; totaling 98,115 hours. 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.



Students also participate in helping out around campus.

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. It measures the "real world" skills employers believe are critical to job success. The WorkKeys assessments present workplace situations, reading materials, problems and messages for the employee to respond to and/or resolve. Since the partnership began, 188 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.

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria**Category 7. Business Results****7.2 Mission Accomplishment Measures (Continued)**

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: \$150.00 for passing the GED, \$50.00 for improvement on the TABE test and \$50.00 for improvement on the WorkKeys Assessment. Last cycle, forty-eight students graduated with a GED, WorkKeys Job Ready card and a \$250.00 incentive check from the Youth WIA program for achieving their goals while at the Opportunity School.



The Midlands Workforce Development Board wrapped an RTA bus with pictures of Wil Lou Gray students holding their Job Ready WorkKeys card they earned while at the Opportunity School.

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

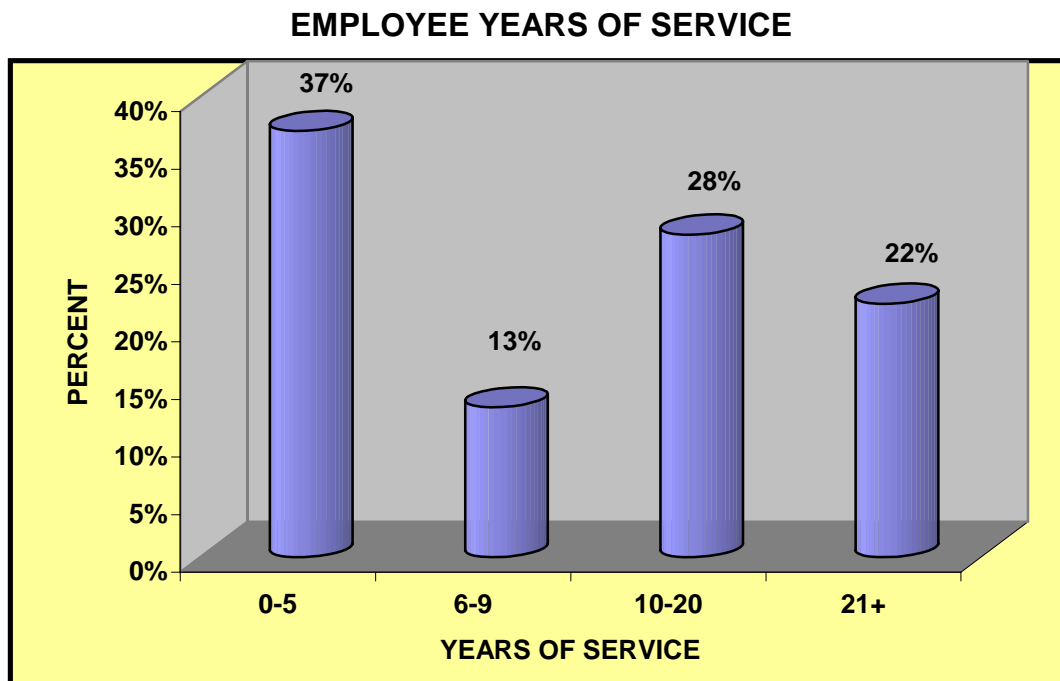
Category 7. Business Results

7.3 Key Measures of Employee Satisfaction, Involvement and Development

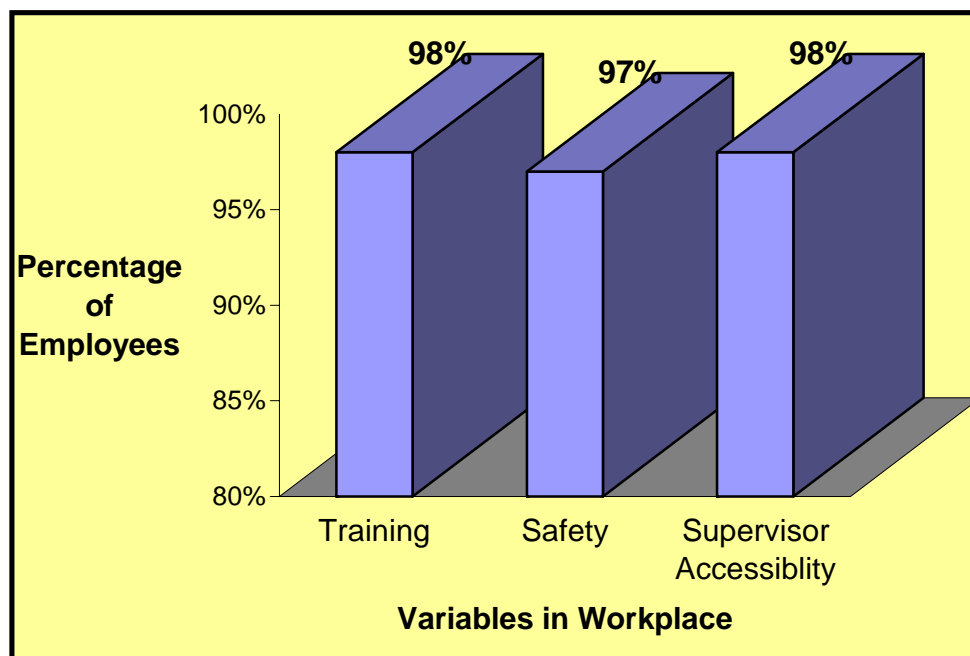
All employees at the Opportunity School are encouraged to continue their education and development of their job skills through training, seminars and continuing education courses offered by technical schools in the area. Employees are also encouraged to become involved in their respective communities through clubs, charitable organizations, churches or civic clubs.

This was the first year the Opportunity School administered Employee Satisfaction Surveys to all employees. The results proved the statistics to be correct with ninety-eight 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. Ninety-six percent of employees demonstrated that they are satisfied with their employment at the Opportunity School. Currently there are sixty 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. 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 7.3-2.

Graph 7.3-1



Graph 7.3-2

Employee Satisfaction Survey**Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria (continued)****Category 7. Business Results****7.4. Key Measures of Supplier/Contractor/Partner Performance**

In the process of maintaining relationships with multiple vendors, sometimes situations arise concerning substandard vendor performance. The agency's policy is to follow the guidelines set in place by the Materials Management Office concerning vendor complaints, if and when they may occur.

Partnerships that are outsourced must meet performance expectations as established by specifications or customer requirements. Several relationships exist between our academic program and job shadowing worksites. Performance in these areas are monitored through site visits, lesson planning and student satisfaction.

7.5 Key measures of Regulatory/Legal Compliance and Citizenship

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.

7.6 Financial Performance

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. This continued process has led to our fourth consecutive fiscal audit of “no findings” and a higher procurement certification that signifies our ability to acquire services through compliance and competitive bidding. The Opportunity School consistently ranks as the top two or three agency reporting the lowest energy cost per square foot. 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.