

ANNUAL REPORT

2007-2008

The Integrated Day Charter School

IDCS, Inc.
68 Thermos Avenue
Norwich, CT 06360
Phone: (860) 892-1900
Fax: (860) 892-1902

INTEGRATED DAY CHARTER SCHOOL
68 Thermos Avenue
Norwich, Connecticut 06360
(860) 892-1900

Rosemarie Rose
Director
Roser@idcs.org

Carl Davis
Business Manager
CarlD@idcs.org



2007-2008 Board of Trustees & Affiliation

Rosemarie Rose	Director
Carl Davis	Business Manager
Dr. Stuart Deglin, Chair	Parent Member
Tony Joyce, Treasurer	Community Member
Sheri Cooke, Secretary	Teacher Member
Matt Curtiss	Community Member
Melissa Dearborn	Teacher Member
Janine Guillet	Teacher Member
June Morrone	Teacher Member
George Rezendes	Community Member
Lynsey Teixeira	Teacher Member

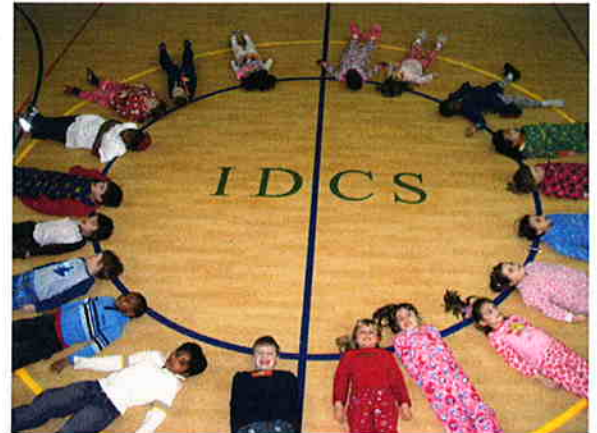
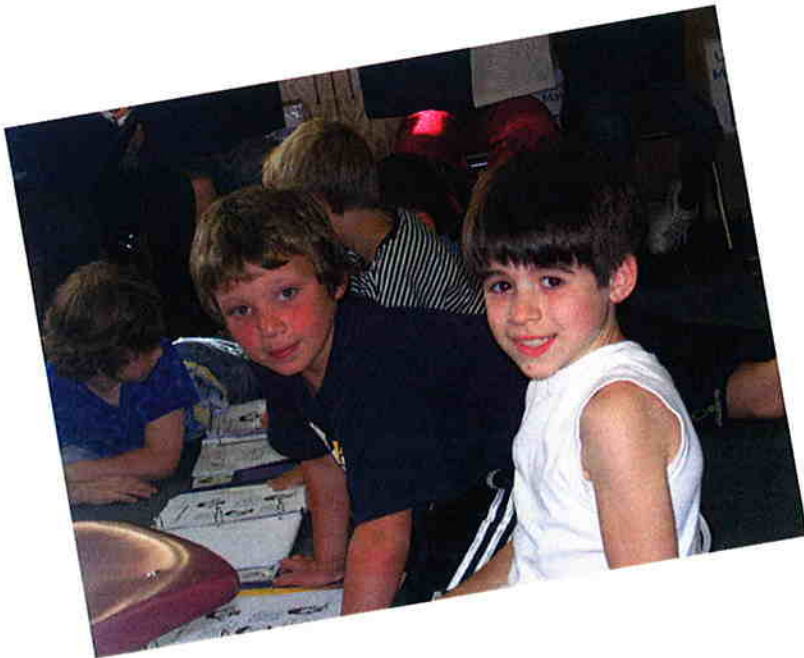


Table of Contents

Board Members & Affiliation	3
The Mission	5
Letter from the Chairperson and Director	6
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
School Environment	7
Brief History	7
Parental Involvement	8
Academic Performance	8
School Management and Staff	10
Achievements	11
About our School	12
About our Students	14
About our Staff	15
Curricular Design & Teaching Methods	16
SCHOOL GOALS	
Educational Progress of Students	18
Accomplishment of Mission, Purpose and Specialized Focus	24
Summary of Other Key Accomplishments	30
Grant Awards	32
Financial Information	33
Best Practices at the IDCS	35
Governance	37
Service Learning	38
Community Building and a Positive School Climate	39
Home School Contracts	40
Attachments—Map, Calendar, Student and Parent Surveys, CMT Scores, News Clippings, Technology Plan	

THE MISSION

The mission of the Integrated Day Charter School is to provide a flexible and academically challenging atmosphere, which allows for the individual differences of the learners. Parents, students and instructors will work together to establish a developmentally appropriate program for each student. Character development and direct instruction in a social curriculum are an integral part of the program. A commitment to and involvement in the school community, as well as the larger Norwich community, are fostered.



A Letter From the Chairperson and the Director

Dear Commissioner McQuillan,

After a celebration of Ten Years of Excellence in 2007, the 2007-2008 academic year at the Integrated Day Charter School included the inauguration of a new gymnasium and kitchen. Staff and parents planned several events which focused on community engagement, such as, the Multicultural Fair, the Bread Feast, an artistic residency with Flock Theatre and our Research Night. These events culminated in June with a celebration and annual picnic at Harkness Memorial Park for all staff, parents and students.

As we look back on those first eleven years, several accomplishments stand out. Through careful planning and resourceful management, we paid back \$950,000 in building renovation loans in five years. We also purchased the building and two parking lots and initiated a renovation and expansion of our school. This was accomplished in spite of charter school funding that falls significantly behind that of other public schools.

In addition, a year round childcare center for children 6 weeks to 4 years old was established in 2005. Although the center operates independently of the school, it provides a much needed service to IDCS staff and parents alike.

The IDCS has been recognized with numerous awards, including the Vanguard Award for Excellence by the Connecticut State Board of Education and the Connecticut Business and Industry Association. During the coming year, we will receive a grant from the National Association of Elementary School Principals for community engagement, a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities which focuses on American artists and culture, and state recognition from the American Heart Association for our work with Jump Rope for Heart. Our waiting list of over 500 students attests to the fact that the IDCS stands out in the community as a sought after public education alternative. Test scores, particularly with students who have been at the school for a number of years, show 79% of our students are at Proficient or above on the CMTs.

Parent and student surveys conducted each year continue to show that the IDCS is an outstanding school with dedicated teachers and staff as well as involved parents. Students feel safe, work hard and enjoy building a community where individual efforts are valued and all stakeholders work together in a spirit of making our school the best that it can be. The entire school continues to reach out to the community, as it has for the past eleven years, through service learning and IDEA (Integrated Day Education Alliance) events.

We will continue our efforts to stay true to our mission and vision driven by what is best for all students.

Sincerely,



Dr. Stuart Deglin, Chairperson
IDCS Governing Board



Anna B. James, Director

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

School Environment

Imagine that you enter a school where you are welcomed with a smile and called by name. You look down the hall and see children sprawled on the floor reading books or drawing a picture. The walls are adorned with original artwork and every flat surface displays three dimensional project work. There are adults and students scattered about a cavernous media center equipped with computers and an abundance of books. They all seem content.



Brief History

The integrated day program was initially established within the existing public school system in 1989. When the charter school legislation passed in 1997, veteran teachers, Joan Heffernan, June Morrone and Joyce Werden were poised and ready to create an alternative school, providing free public school choice for all members of the Norwich community and surrounding areas. These founding teachers, along with parents of students in the program and citizens supporting the idea of school choice, joined forces and were granted a charter to establish the Integrated Day Charter School.

As you stroll into a classroom, you admire the majestic view of the Thames River, noticing that the students are too engaged in their activities to appreciate its splendor. Trains rumble by the school, but the students take no notice. The room is not silent. Instead, it is filled with the buzz of busy learners. All are engaged and everyone, even the teacher, is smiling.

We at the Integrated Day Charter School feel that students learn best in a disciplined, yet relaxed atmosphere, more like a family than an institution. The community of learners at the school strives to strike a balance and develop a sense of ownership among all stakeholders.



The charter was awarded in February 1997. The school opened its doors in August 1997 with 175 students and a sizable waiting list. IDCS is truly a community school. Parents, community members and teachers worked together to insure that the school would open on time, and, against all odds, it did just that. The school has been at full enrollment and boasts a significant waiting list since its inception. The waiting list now exceeds the enrollment.

In 1999 the school expanded its numbers to 240 students in grades kindergarten through grades 8, and in 2000 increased enrollment to 264 and 286 in 2001. Early renewal was awarded in June 2001. IDCS is now at full capacity with 330 students in grades prekindergarten through grade 8. Child care is provided through the Early Childhood Education Program established in September of 2005.

Parental Involvement

At the Integrated Day Charter School we firmly believe that parents and caregivers are the first teachers. They are an integral part of the educational process and are represented on the Board of Directors and the School Council. Parents are involved in a multitude of projects including arranging after school activities for students, volunteering in the classrooms and on trips, contributing to and chaperoning at school socials, providing tours during

Open House, interviewing prospective parents, mentoring new parents, planning special events, participating in the hiring of new teachers and executing fund raising activities to pay for field trips and other needs at the school. Volunteers, including parents, family members and friends of the IDCS, continue to make a valuable contribution to the success of the school.



Academic Performance



The professional staff at IDCS holds high expectations for all students. It is our objective to have all students reach level 3 (proficiency) or above in all areas of the Connecticut Mastery Test, as required by the No Child Left Behind legislation. Progress is being made toward reaching this goal.

Grade 3 at Proficiency or Above

Math 76% Reading 85% Writing 79%

Grade 4 at Proficiency or Above

Math 73% Reading 73% Writing 85%

Grade 5 at Proficiency or Above

Math 67% Reading 85% Writing 82%

Grade 6 Proficiency or Above

Math 82% Reading 85% Writing 82%

Grade 7 Proficiency or Above

Math 97% Reading 94% Writing 91%

Grade 8 Proficiency or Above

Math 82% Reading 82% Writing 63%

Close scrutiny of the test scores helps teachers focus instruction and plan professional development. The first Friday of each month is an early dismissal day for students and professional development workshops are planned for teachers. In addition, each teacher attends at least one off-site workshop and takes part in collegial discussions. The objective is to ultimately have all teachers BEST trained to support novice and student teachers. Eleven teachers were BEST trained and able to act as mentors or have student teachers during the 2007–2008 school year. Connecticut College, Three Rivers Community College, Mitchell College and Sacred Heart University have placed student teachers or interns at the IDCS.

The entire student body, beginning in prekindergarten, takes part in personal research projects. Students incorporate various areas of the curriculum to create a visual display, oral presentation and written product around the topic of their choice. The

presentations are video taped and shared with parents. As student research is the hallmark of this charter school, the staff created a longitudinal rubric designed to assess student progress over time. This tool is used at all grade levels. Feedback from students, family members and teachers on use of the instrument has been positive.

There is a strong focus on community at IDCS. All teachers at the school have taken part in community building workshops during the summer months. Students have input into class and school rules. Surveys show they feel their voice is heard and that they feel a sense of responsibility for their school and their peers. Veteran teachers at IDCS conduct action research to perfect the art and craft of teaching.

“There’s an overall feeling that people really care—students staff and parents. I love the fact that my child is learning how to be involved in the community from PreK on up.”

from: Parent Survey, Spring 2008

All students at IDCS take part in service learning projects. Teachers display lesson plans, planning sheets, artifacts and photographs of projects completed during the year. Students, teachers and the director are on hand to answer questions and explain the process. A compilation of lesson plans and information about successful projects has been published and distributed to fellow educators wishing to incorporate service learning into the curriculum.

In an effort to insure that families are kept well informed and realize they are an integral part of the IDCS community, each household is provided with a voice messaging system installed at IDCS. Teachers can leave messages in a coded “mailbox” which can be accessed at any time. The family can in turn leave messages for the classroom teacher or administrative office. Weekly bulletins announcing

special events or meetings are posted to all families. The director also hosts a coffee hour on the second Tuesday of each month. The coffee hour is informal and allows parents to suggest new ideas, ask questions or simply visit with the director.

All members of the learning community appreciate technology as a useful and powerful tool. Teachers are provided with laptop computers to help gather data and create individualized narrative report cards. Classrooms are networked and there is e-mail and Internet access in all classrooms, as well as in the media center. In a 2007 survey of students in grades three through eight, 100% reported being comfortable using word processing, including formatting and the use of tools such as the spell checker, for a variety of assignments, including personal research. In addition, 94% of K-8 students reported using the internet or CD ROM to locate information and 83% of K-8th graders used technology to create a visual display or math facet. Such statistics illustrate that, not only have the students at IDCS been

provided with technology instruction, they know how to put the skills taught to good use and to use technology as a tool to facilitate learning.

The primary focus of any school is to provide quality education for all students and to insure that all children reach their full potential. It is interesting to examine CMT scores each year to find trends or patterns and to compare the same students over time. Individual students' test scores are tracked to better address individual needs. Grade level classes are also scrutinized. In 2004 the IDCS applied for and received the Reading 1st Grant to focus on literacy skills in grades K—3. In 2006, the grant was reapplied for and awarded for three more years. The impact has been positive (see pages 19-20). The levels of achievement on the 2002 CMT were adjusted from four to five bands, making grade level comparisons over time more cumbersome; however, some interesting patterns of success have emerged. Generally scores improve as students spend more time at our school.

CMT Scores Same Students Over Time*

Grade	Year	% at or Above Profecient	Average DRP	Average Holistic Writing Score
3	2007	Writing 78 Math 61		8.2
4	2008	Reading 52 Writing 84 Math 73	45	
		Reading 73	60	
3	2006	Writing 79 Math 66		7.7
		Reading 67	49	
4	2007	Writing 79 Math 55		9
		Reading 70	57	
5	2008	Writing 82 Math 67		7.8
		Reading 85	60	
4	2006	Writing 88 Math 73		
		Reading 76	60	
5	2007	Writing 88 Math 79		8.6
		Reading 79	60	
6	2008	Writing 82 Math 82		7.5
		Reading 85	66	
5	2006	Writing 74 Math 91		6.8
		Reading 84	64	
6	2007	Writing 94 Math 94		8
		Reading 94	73	
7	2008	Writing 91 Math 97		
		Reading 94	72	
6	2006	Writing 83 Math 80		8.2
		Reading 80	70	
7	2007	Writing 91 Math 88		8.3
		Reading 84	74	
8	2008	Writing 63 Math 82		7.4
		Reading 82	72	