

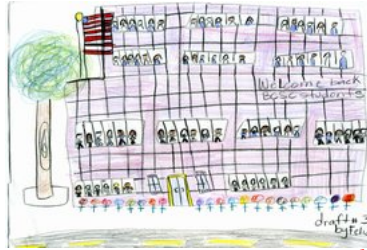


The Bronx Charter School for Children

Press Release

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A RENEWED BUILDING FOR A NEW SCHOOL YEAR



Turning the page to a new chapter of academic success.

The Bronx Charter School for Children Evolves and Expands to Better Serve Students and Families Residing in America's Poorest Congressional District

BRONX 6 September 10, 2008 -- On **Wednesday, September 24th** officials will join 396 **Bronx Charter School for Children** (BCSC) students, families and staff to mark a new chapter for the five-year-old school. A ribbon-cutting ceremony will commemorate the expanded and renovated building, located in the Mott Haven community of the South Bronx (the poorest congressional district in the nation).

WHAT: A Celebration to Commemorate the Expansion and Renovation of the BCSC Facility

WHEN: 10:30a.m., Wednesday, September 24th

WHERE: 388 Willis Avenue, Bronx, at East 143rd Street

DIRECTIONS: *By car:* take Willis Avenue Bridge and proceed to East 143 Street
By subway: #2 or #5 to 149th St. & 3rd Avenue, walk south to East 143rd Street

In 2004, when the Bronx Charter School for Children first occupied this 18,000 square foot Willis Avenue building, it was a perfect fit and a perfect location. However, within a few years, as the school grew to serve more students, classrooms were opened in the basements, resource rooms and offices became scarce and the need for a larger space became apparent. Through a creative partnership with the school's landlord, the existing facility was more than doubled in size over the past year to serve all 396 K-5 BCSC students.

This addition of two floors and the renovation of two existing floors has allowed for a larger cafeteria, and for the first time, a gymnasium, a music room and an art studio. Plans are in the works for a library and media center as well. All classrooms are at least 800 square feet in size, and are filled with natural light and color.

"This expansion and renovation provides our students with a learning environment that supports rigorous academic work and celebrates community. Every child deserves to have an educational home that ensures he or she becomes a life-long learner." explains Karen Drezner, Executive Director, BCSC.

"Now that all of the kids are together in one building, it feels more established, like the school will be in existence for many years to come. The rooms are so much bigger; there are so many windows, which is important. I now look forward to the day my son returns as an adult to the BCSC to share his great accomplishments, and talks to little kids about the essential foundation he received as a student here," says Sabrina Torres, BCSC parent of 4th grader and BCSC Family Staff Association President

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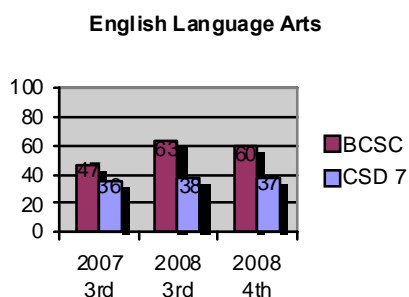
Facts about the Bronx Charter School for Children:

- is a high-performing, K-5 public charter school located in Mott Haven in the South Bronx.
- provides children with opportunities to succeed academically and develop leadership skills.
- breaks the cycle of poverty that plagues the surrounding community by ensuring students make a lifetime commitment to learning.
- has made significant impact, forging meaningful partnerships with families and providing an intellectually challenging, safe, and nurturing educational community to 396 students.

The Mott Haven Community: BCSC students reside with their families in Mott Haven, the poorest congressional district in the nation. Additionally,

- Only 6 % of men and 7 % of women graduate from high school and complete college.
- Over 73% of the births are to unmarried mothers with 19% of these to mothers under the age of 20.
- Factors such as inadequate health care and child care services, unsatisfactory housing, and a range of safety concerns (such as environmental issues, drug and gang activities) contribute to an intense degree of stress.

STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT



- On the 2008 NYS English Language Arts assessment, BCSC students *considerably outperformed* students in surrounding public schools (Community School District 7), surpassing district results by an average of 24 percentage points.
- BCSC 3rd graders demonstrated significant gains on the 2008 NYS Mathematics assessment, with results a full 16 percentage points above last year's results at the same grade level and 17 percentage points above the district.

EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY SUPPORT AND INVOLVEMENT

- Student attendance has been better than the district and NYC and improved every year, with a rate of 94 % in 2008.
- Ninety-five percent (95 %) of BCSC families are present at parent/teacher conferences, which occur twice a year.
- Parents and guardians consistently express satisfaction with the BCSC on annual surveys; in 2008 the average approval rating was 86 %.

STUDENT RETENTION AND COMMUNITY INTEREST

- Student retention is above 95 % every year, and in 2008 was 97 %.
- The community interest in BCSC is demonstrated by a healthy waitlist; this year 723 children applied for 66 available slots.

BACKGROUND: The Bronx Charter School for Children is a small, K-5 public charter school that provides an academic curriculum supplemented with enrichment activities and services that meet a broad range of student needs. The BCSC provides all children with the tools necessary for a lifetime of learning, including a strong foundation of literacy and mathematical skills and opportunities to think critically, research, explore and develop the capabilities to solve problems. Small class size (22 students per class) and an extended day / extended year program (operating from 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., 190 school days per year) positively contribute to the development of a cohesive and supportive school.

The Bronx Charter School for Children empowers children to meet and exceed high academic standards, develop a life-long passion for learning, make healthy choices and become community leaders.

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