

# WIL LOU GRAY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL

## A PALMETTO GOLD SCHOOL

3300 WEST CAMPUS ROAD  
WEST COLUMBIA, SC 29170



### *Accountability Report*

### **2010-2011**

PAT G. SMITH  
*DIRECTOR*



# Executive Summary

**“Why Stop Learning?”**

## **1. 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-nine 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 nineteen years of age who are most at-risk of:

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

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## 2. **MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS FROM 2010-2011:**

- Implemented new data base software to allow for efficient admissions process.
- Completed online admission application.
- Enhanced admissions process with upgraded hardware and campus wide accessibility.
- Installed video surveillance campus wide.
- Incorporated OSHA readiness class in academic curriculum.
- Incorporated forklift training in vocational curriculum.
- Partnered with Town of Springdale Police Department for five consecutive years.
- “No Report” audits for six consecutive years.
- Sixth 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.
- Received Palmetto Gold Award for sixth consecutive year, indicating an Excellent rating on the annual School Report Card.
- Partnered with Workforce Investment Act for the ninth consecutive cycle.

## 3. **KEY STRATEGIC GOALS:**

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 young students in South Carolina as possible. The main objective is to provide each student with all avenues of assistance whether the goal is to acquire a GED, secure a permanent job, enlist in the military or continue their education to become a more productive member of today’s society. This equates to an enrollment goal of 220 students, graduating 180 students and, of the 180 students who graduate, 61 to 80 percent graduate with a GED.

Current and future goals include:

- **ENLIGHTENED VISION.** Objective set of measurable standards, essential to the success of the agency comprised of innovation, customer service, leadership, employees, students, budget, continuing education and academics. The agency initiated this model in 2007.
- **STUDENTS.** Provide all resources needed to assure supervision, food service, service learning, health care services, recreational activities and position direction of student population on a 24 hour basis.
  - Register 85 students per cycle the first year with a five percent increase per year for the next four years
- **ACADEMICS.** Provide instructional program with individualized GED clusters for all students by grade level using TABE instrument. Incorporate college skills through College 103 class at Midlands Technical College.
  - 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.

**“Why Stop Learning?”**

- Increase TABE improvement in math and reading – 65% 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.

- **VOCATIONAL.** Expose all students to computer literacy course, job shadowing, auto technology, life skills and building construction.

- **SUPPORT SERVICES.** Provide all resources needed to assure adequate supervision, service learning, recreational activities and positive direction of student population. Establish and set goal and life plans for each students.

#### **4. OPPORTUNITIES/BARRIERS THAT MAY AFFECT SUCCESS:**

The efficient use of the agency's our budget has been and continues to be a priority. Budget requests are based on essential need to effectively serve young people of 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 this year despite a total budget reduction of \$1,133,580.

Over the past eight years, the agency has blended 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, the agency's fiscal management is struggling to find the necessary budget to fulfill a continued high-level of public demand for our services. The Opportunity School considers this to be our biggest threat to the agency's mission and our ability to meet the state's demand for a large population of undereducated, at-risk youth.

At a time when demand for services is increasing and funding decreasing, we have faced that challenge with an assortment of cost containment and reduction strategies to the point we are now limited in program strategy development. This path will force us to limit enrollment in order to lessen the current financial stress.

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 modified, 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.

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## **5. USE OF ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT:**

The Accountability Report is used to improve organizational performance by keeping vital statistical information on student enrollment, graduates with or without GEDs, TABE test results, student community service hours and needs assessments. These statistics facilitate in the analytical evaluation of each student's strengths and weaknesses. This placement data is essential in determining which area of studies or new vocational training each student should be offered. 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, numerous surveys were originated in order to evaluate the effectiveness of changes during the previous 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 also allows for employee feedback on possible improvements in the work environment. The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School Employee Satisfaction Survey is given to all staff and faculty at the end of the fiscal year.

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# Organizational Profile

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The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School is the most unique alternative educational institution in the State of South Carolina. It's original purpose was to educate young adults through academics as well as practical arts in everyday living. Dr. Wil Lou Gray rallied the necessary support to acquire a permanent home for the school in 1947. Motivated by the pioneering spirit of its founder, the Opportunity School still aspires to continually develop the academics in order to accommodate the educational needs of young adults in South Carolina. With the assistance of the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School, these young adults are enabled to become productive citizens of this state and also this nation.

## 1. ***MAIN PRODUCTS, SERVICES AND DELIVERY METHODS:***

➤ 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 Area 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.

## 2. ***KEY CUSTOMERS AND THEIR REQUIREMENTS/EXPECTATIONS:***

- **Primary Customer:** The Opportunity school is an educational institution that exists to serve the citizens of South Carolina between 16 to 19 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, as well as their family members, are the key customers at Wil Lou Gray.
- **Secondary Customers:** The Board of Trustees, taxpayers, Legislators and citizens of South Carolina are also customers of The Opportunity School. The outcome of services we provide to these students will directly and indirectly affect all citizens of this state and nation.

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### 3. ***KEY STAKEHOLDERS:***

- **Primary Stakeholder:** Key stakeholders are the employees that work at WLGOS. The employees are directly involved in transforming these challenged students into 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.
- **Secondary Stakeholders:** Every individual involved in the process of this educational institution is a secondary stakeholder; to include but not limited to our Legislators, the Board of Trustees, taxpayers, donors and citizens of South Carolina.

### 4. ***KEY SUPPLIERS AND PARTNERS:***

- The children and families of South Carolina
- State, county and local elected officials.

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**5. OPERATION LOCATIONS:**

■ Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School is physically located on 88 acres at 3300 West Campus Road, West Columbia, SC 29170 (see map below).



**6. EMPLOYEES AND CATEGORY:**

Classified	36
Unclassified	13
Grant	1
Temporary	2

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## **7. *REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT:***

The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School follows the regulatory requirements of the following South Carolina entities:

- ✓ Department of Health and Environmental Control
- ✓ South Carolina State Auditor's Office
- ✓ Department of Health and Human Services
- ✓ Department of Education
- ✓ OSHA
- ✓ Materials Management Office

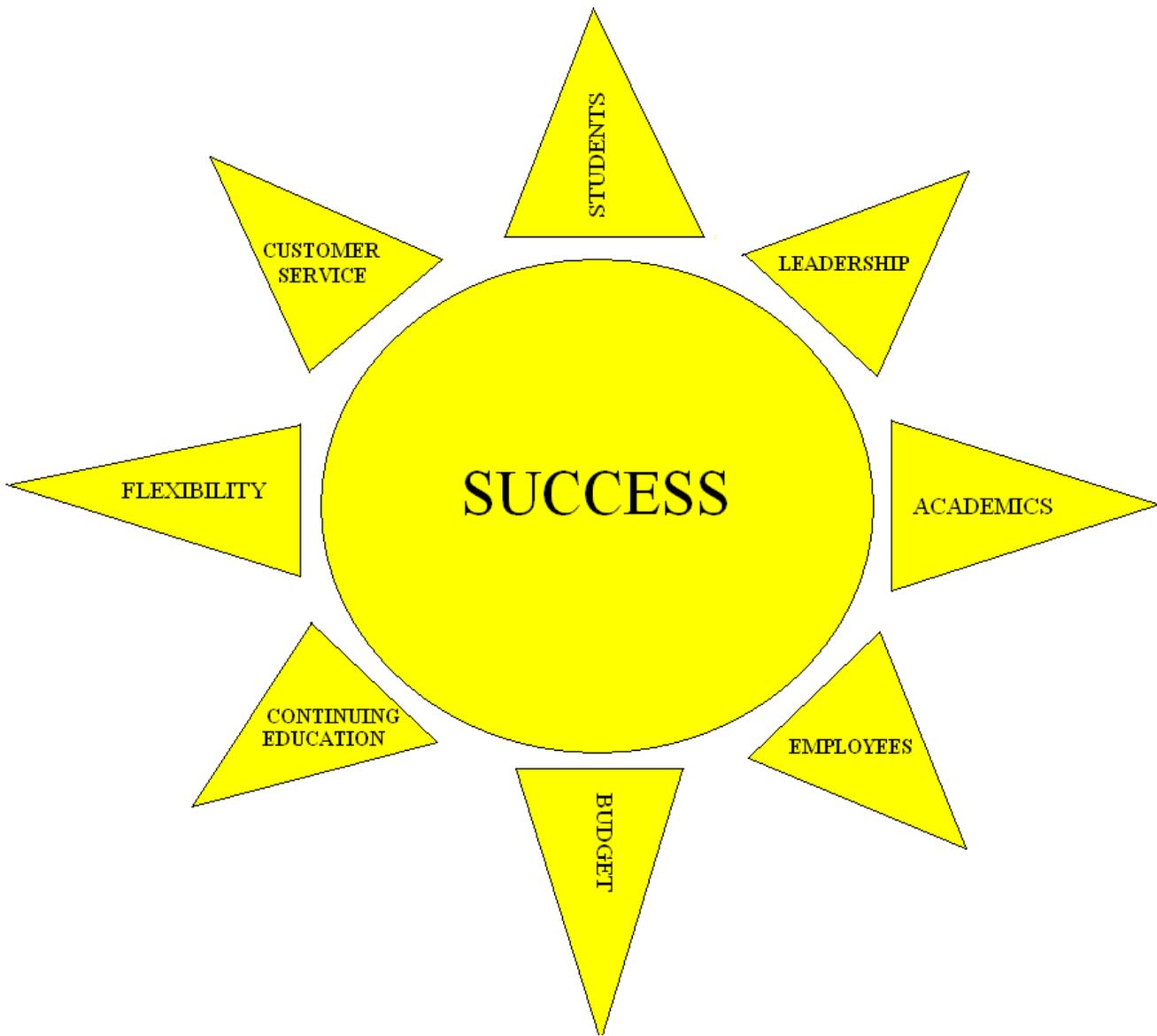
## **8. *PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM (S):***

In 2007 the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School implemented "ENLIGHTENED VISION" as the agency's performance evaluation and improvement system (see page 12). "Enlightened Vision" represents the model the agency employs to define the standards with which WLGOS aspires to achieve and maintain for success. The eight components are innovation, customer service, leadership, employees, students, budget, continuing education and academics. Through internal and external audits and surveys, the agency is equipped with a substantial amount of pertinent information essential in analyzing the effectiveness of the program. Bi-weekly meetings among department leaders allow positive collaboration, which subsequently fosters creative discussions involving program development and improvements. Through informal discussions and meetings, the staff is permitted to vocalize and/or scrutinize policies, issues, or changes, which are applicable to their departments. This method of collecting information encourages and promotes a more accurate analysis of current issues within departments. The agency also uses a variety of state mandated processes to further examine and report on the status of its mission and success.

## **9. *ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE:***

See page 13.

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## **ENLIGHTENED VISION**

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# Board of Trustees

Director

FISCAL AFFAIRS

HEALTH CARE

OPERATIONS & PROCUREMENT  
SERVICES

MAINTENANCE

FOOD SERVICES

SUPPLY

INFORMATION  
TECHNOLOGY

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

ADMISSIONS

HUMAN  
SERVICES

PUBLIC SAFETY

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

HUMAN RESOURCES

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

GUIDANCE

JROTC

PSYCHOLOGIST

ACADEMICS

**10. BASE BUDGET EXPENDITURES AND APPROPRIATIONS:**

<i>Major Budget Categories</i>	<b>09-10 Actual Expenditures</b>		<b>10-11 Actual Expenditures</b>		<b>11-12 Appropriations Act</b>	
	<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>General Funds</b>	<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>General Funds</b>	<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>General Funds</b>
Personal Service	\$2,180,092	\$1,646,251	\$2,028,080	\$1,503,560	\$3,691,298	\$3,060,568
Other Operating	\$637,277	\$600,071	\$895,754	\$454,155	\$1,537,318	\$747,797
Special Items	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Permanent Improvements	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Case Services	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Distributions to Subdivisions	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Fringe Benefits	\$708,965	\$541,924	\$678,654	\$512,211	\$1,282,999	\$1,077,635
Non-recurring	\$507,767		\$82,354			
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,034,101</b>	<b>\$2,788,246</b>	<b>\$3,684,842</b>	<b>\$2,471,326</b>	<b>\$6,556,615</b>	<b>\$4,886,000</b>

**Other Expenditures**

<b>Sources of Funds</b>	<b>09-10 Actual Expenditures</b>	<b>10-11 Actual Expenditures</b>
Supplemental Bills		
Capital Reserve Funds	\$3,230	\$1,501
Bonds	-	-

## 11. MAJOR PROGRAM AREAS:

### Major Program Areas

Program Number and Title	Major Program Area Purpose (Brief)	FY 09-10 Budget Expenditures	FY 10-11 Budget Expenditures	Key Cross References for Financial Results*
I. Administration	Provides executive leadership, support, policy development, personnel, financial, procurement, and other related administrative services. Includes reception and switchboard duties for the entire campus.	<b>State:</b> 321,049.98 <b>Federal:</b> 0.00 <b>Other:</b> 0.00 <b>Total:</b> 321,049.98 <b>% of Total Budget: 9%</b>	<b>State:</b> 309,359.31 <b>Federal:</b> 0.00 <b>Other:</b> 0.00 <b>Total:</b> 309,359.31 <b>% of Total Budget: 9%</b>	Page 14
II.A Academic	Individualized course of study in academics to prepare students for GED exam. Includes JROTC program & 24/7 medical center. Provides guidance counselors that meet with each student privately to guide them through education and employment goals.	<b>State:</b> 731,661.97 <b>Federal:</b> 22,720.82 <b>Other:</b> 607,742.88 <b>Total:</b> 1,362,125.67 <b>% of Total Budget: 39%</b>	<b>State:</b> 631,661.84 <b>Federal:</b> 23,175.24 <b>Other:</b> 562,855.79 <b>Total:</b> 1,217,692.87 <b>% of Total Budget: 34%</b>	Page 14
II.B Vocational	Provides vocational training, life skills and preemployment training. Includes a mandatory basic computer literacy course. Provides students with job shadowing and on-the-job training opportunities.	<b>State:</b> 113,919.71 <b>Federal:</b> 0.00 <b>Other:</b> 56,015.67 <b>Total:</b> 169,935.38 <b>% of Total Budget 5%</b>	<b>State:</b> 93,615.33 <b>Federal:</b> 0.00 <b>Other:</b> 55,839.92 <b>Total:</b> 149,455.25 <b>% of Total Budget 4%</b>	Page 14
III. Student Services & Residential	Admissions, community service work, student transportation, & dorm supervision 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Provides disciplined, structured & positive community for students where goals, achievement & independence are nurtured.	<b>State:</b> 566,115.22 <b>Federal:</b> 0.00 <b>Other:</b> 0.00 <b>Total:</b> 566,115.22 <b>% of Total Budget 16%</b>	<b>State:</b> 628,028.60 <b>Federal:</b> 0.00 <b>Other:</b> 0.00 <b>Total:</b> 628,028.60 <b>% of Total Budget 17%</b>	Page 14
IV. Support Services	Building & grounds maintenance & cafeteria operation for a school that operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Technology staff operate & maintain computer, telephone and keyless entry systems.	<b>State:</b> 1,015,946.94 <b>Federal:</b> 2,160.78 <b>Other:</b> 6,791.91 <b>Total:</b> 1,024,899.63 <b>% of Total of Budget 29%</b>	<b>State:</b> 772,201.42 <b>Federal:</b> 224,215.41 <b>Other:</b> 216,721.08 <b>Total:</b> 1,213,137.91 <b>% of Total of Budget 34%</b>	Page 14
<b>Below: List any programs not included above and show the remainder of expenditures by source of funds.</b>				
II.C Library Program				

	FY09-10	FY10-11
<b>State:</b>	36,813.30	36,458.20
<b>Federal:</b>	0	0
<b>Other:</b>	41820.56	40914.69
<b>Total:</b>	78,633.86	77,372.89
<b>% of Total Budget</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>2%</b>

\* Key Cross-References are a link to the Category 7 - Business Results. These References provide a Chart number that is included in the 7th section of this document.

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# Malcolm Baldrige

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# LEADERSHIP

The continuous evolvement of the elements in today's educational environment requires extremely strong leadership skills. The agency director and department managers constantly monitor and analyze daily procedures as they are applied to internal and external factors associated with the progress of the students and welfare of the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School. Through extensive informal and formal collaborative efforts, as well as comprehensive evaluations and tests, the leadership qualities of the agency director and managers continuously produce the best indication of success for Wil Lou Gray-productive and responsible citizens of South Carolina.

## ***1.1 How do Senior Leaders set, deploy and ensure two-way communication:***

- A. *Short and Long Term Direction:*** The WLGOS Board of Trustees provides policy direction but the agency director and managers set, deploy and communicate short and long-term direction through a variety of mechanisms, all based on the model "ENLIGHTENED VISION". The Board of Trustees meets quarterly to review current and future policies and to chart the mission of the agency. The agency director serves as the chief executive officer and implements this mission to managers and staff. On a bi-weekly basis, the agency director meets with all managers to consult, evaluate, and maintain effective communication between each department. Through both formal and informal collaborative efforts, the managers disseminate this information to their respective staff. Of all mechanisms utilized in WLGOS's communication techniques, the most effective is the Director's Open-Door-Policy. This avenue of informal communication renders productive staff and student involvement, which creates an atmosphere of parity throughout the agency.
- B. *Performance Expectations:*** The bi-weekly meetings allow all managers to review, assess and discuss performance expectations among all departments. The Employee Performance Management System ensures performance measures are established and attained by all WLGOS staff. Along with these internal measures, WLGOS also implements a mandated performance measurement system, required by the South Carolina Department of Education, to review and measure academic achievements within the education department. Additionally, performance expectations are reinforced on an individual or group basis as needed.
- C. *Organizational Values:*** The agency director is highly involved with all aspects concerning organizational values. An asset most influential to daily involvement among all employees is the size of the agency. The director encourages and schedules numerous staff appreciation days throughout the year in order to acknowledge his gratitude for the continuous dedication and achievements of the staff.
- D. *Empowerment and Innovation:*** Empowerment and innovation are nurtured through the continuous efforts of the agency director and managers. Encouraging and permitting all levels of staff to participate at bi-weekly meetings creates a productive atmosphere which is beneficial to both the students and staff at Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School. Other tools, such as

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Employee Appreciation Days and employee incentives, are used to promote empowerment and innovation as well.

- E. *Organization and Employee Learning:*** While all departments require certain minimum detailed skills, there are some positions that involve more specific expertise. These departments would include, but are not limited to, employees in Health Care, Education, Food Service, and Maintenance. The agency director encourages and allows all staff to participate in any seminar, training or continuing education, which would enhance or expand their knowledge in their current positions.
- F. *Ethical Behavior:*** The quality of leadership at WLGOS exemplifies the ethical standards by which all staff are to adhere. Through collaborative efforts between the Director and Managers, as well as Human Resources, the agency establishes, maintains and updates policies as deemed necessary. All ethical standards are communicated through policies, procedures and handbooks.

### ***1.2 How do senior leaders establish and promote a focus on customers and other stakeholders:***

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.

The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School hosts many functions that focus on the customers and stakeholders. These activities include, but are not limited to, the Legislative Luncheon, Family Day, Field Trips and Employee Appreciation Day.

### ***1.3 How does the organization address the current and potential impact on the public of its products, programs, services, facilities and operations, including associated risks:***

In an effort to continuously provide outstanding service to the customers and stakeholders of South Carolina, WLGOS uses "ENLIGHTENED VISION" as the key measurement in assuring the products, programs and facilities and operations of the agency remain effective. These eight components reflect the standards by which the agency aspires to achieve and maintain. Through departmentalized surveys, meetings, brochures, on-site tours, and audits, the agency is equipped with enough information to analyze and project changes necessary to address current and future public awareness, concerns and issues. Local and state governments also supervise the agency's progress to ensure adequate public awareness and risks are addressed.

### ***1.4 How do senior leaders maintain fiscal, legal and regulatory accountability?***

All fiscal, legal and regulatory accountability is maintained by communication efforts between the Board of Trustees, agency director and managers. Any significant initiative or change must be implemented by the agency director through the direct leadership and guidance of the Board of Trustees. The agency director and managers are responsible for monitoring and maintaining

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accountability for state and federal regulations through continuous review of operations, ongoing legal consultation, continuous contacts with accountability personnel from regulatory agencies, attention to high standards of operation, implementation of accountability systems through technology utilization and review of internal and external audits. Fiscal accountability is accomplished by adherence to state laws and measured through an annual state audit. Policies, procedures, and state regulations also guide the direction of the agency.

### ***1.5 What performance measures do senior leaders regularly review to inform them on needed actions?***

All key performance measures are associated with the mission of WLGOS, which is to educate the undereducated through the motto of “Why Stop Learning?” The agency director and managers constantly evaluate the components of ENLIGHTENED VISION in order to measure program performance in all eight categories. Through a variety of surveys, tests and compliance reviews the agency is equipped with enough data to analyze and project achievements and performance quality. These eight measurements are calculated twice a year and provide a definitive index of performance results. The agency also adheres to many local and state measures as a guide to regularly evaluate program performance.

- ▶ Students: Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Survey Level A Form 7 (pre-test)  
Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Survey Level A Form 8 (post-test)  
General Education Diploma (GED)  
Quarterly Student Survey
- ▶ Leadership: Annual EPMS (Employee Performance Management System)  
Annual Agency Head Performance Evaluation  
Employee Satisfaction Survey
- ▶ Academics: South Carolina Department of Education--Annual School Report Card  
Quarterly Student Survey  
Quarterly Parent Survey
- ▶ Employee: Annual Employee Satisfaction Survey  
Annual EPMS (Employee Performance Management System)  
South Carolina Department of Education
- ▶ Budget: South Carolina Appropriations Act
- ▶ Flexibility: Quarterly Student Survey  
Quarterly Parent Survey  
Employee Satisfaction Survey

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- ▶ Continuing Education: South Carolina Department of Education  
Employee Satisfaction Survey  
Office of Human Resource Training Program
  
- ▶ Customer Service: Quarterly Parent Survey  
Quarterly Student Survey  
Employee Satisfaction

**1.6 *How do senior leaders use organizational performance review findings and employee feedback to improve their own leadership effectiveness and the effectiveness of management throughout the organization? How do their personal actions reflect a commitment to the organizational values?***

Organizational performance and potential are monitored through ENLIGHTENED VISION measures. The resulting data from ENLIGHTENED VISION is used to guide WLGOS in establishing objectives to improve agency performance or meet organizational needs. 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.

**1.7 *How do senior leaders promote and personally participate in succession planning and the development of future organizational leaders?***

The agency succession plan is discussed and set at quarterly meetings by the WLGOS Board of Trustees. The agency director and managers are then responsible for establishing the capacity of roles for the staff with which they provide leadership. All levels of staff are encouraged to expand their leadership qualities and skills by participating in educational classes or seminars focused on job related issues.

**1.8 *How do senior leaders create an environment for performance improvement, accomplishment of strategic objectives and innovation?***

ENLIGHTENED VISION serves as the measurement tool used to assess performance accomplishments and improvements throughout the agency. The agency director and managers prioritize objectives and communicate guidelines to their immediate staff. These guidelines include, but are not limited to, WLGOS policies, EPMS goals, state and federal audits, Employee Satisfaction Survey, parent and student surveys and other formal and informal communications.

**1.9 *How do senior leaders create an environment for organization and workforce learning?***

All senior leaders are required to attend weekly meetings with the Director in order to discuss

**“Why Stop Learning?”**

organizational development and departmental transitions. It is the departmental leaders that provide the necessary training for the workforce. Meetings are informal so that employees are comfortable with the learning environment and responsive to innovative procedures and guidelines. Allowing the workforce substantial time to absorb and utilize new measures encourages a positive environment for employees as well as senior leaders.

***1.10 How do senior leaders engage, empower, and motivate the entire workforce throughout the organization? How do senior leaders take an active role in reward and recognition processes to reinforce performance throughout the organization?***

Senior leaders, through participatory management, actively solicit employee input into decisions and strategic planning so that our staff develops a sense of ownership in the organization. Traditional rewards and incentives have been replaced with appreciation lunches, staff recognitions and promotions when appropriate.

***1.11 How do senior leaders actively support and strengthen the communities in which your organization operates?***

Part of the Opportunity School's mission is to prepare and assist our students in attaining independence and employability once they graduate. 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 improve several grade levels.

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.

Managers 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 as well as involvement with various civic organizations.

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# STRATEGIC PLANNING

Program	Supported Agency	Related FY 10-11	Key Cross
Number and Title	Strategic Planning Goal/Objective	Key Agency Action Plan/Initiative(s)	References for Performance Measures*
Enlightened Vision	Enlightened Vision is an objective set of measurable standards, essential to the success of the agency, comprised of innovation, customer service, leadership, employees, students, budget, continuing education and academics.	Assemblage of measurable results comprised to evaluate agency performance among all customers and stakeholders. Resulting data used to analyze internal and external goals as well as continuous improvement.	All Section 7 Page 12
Students	Provide all resources needed to assure supervision, food service, service learning, medical services, recreational activities & positive direction of student population on a 24 hour basis.	Distribute post-residential survey to all students and family in order to assimilate relative data to actual performance of agency.	7.1-1 ■ 7.1-2 ■ 7.1-7 ■ 7.1-8 7.1-9 ■ 7.1-10 ■ 7.2-1 7.2-2 ■ 7.2-3 ■ 7.2-4
Academics	Provide lucrative instructional program essential to acquire a GED. Increase student TABE results by 24 months progress in Math and Reading through individualized instruction.	60% of students taking GED will successfully complete the test. 75% of graduating cadets will achieve at least 1 yr. progress in reading & math during 5 months of instruction per post-TABE test results	7.1-3 ■ 7.1-4 ■ 7.1-5 ■ 7.1-6 7.1-7 ■ 7.1-8 ■ 7.1-9
Employees	Maintain positive reinforcements in work environment to promote employee satisfaction and retention. Employ and retain qualified individuals who aspire to contribute 100%.	Establish and maintain employee satisfaction through constant collaborative efforts, surveys and bi-weekly meetings. EEO performance results. Recognition of Employee Appreciation Day and encouragement through agency incentives.	7.2-5 ■ 7.3-2 ■ 7.4-1 7.4-2 ■ 7.4-3
Support Services	Acquire all applicable resources needed to assure academic, employment, life skills and vocational success of each WLGOS student.	Incorporate WIA, OSHA 501, Junior Achievement, and College 103 into academic curriculum for qualified students. Establish scholarships for students. 100% of students completed 40 hours or more of community service.	7.1-7 ■ 7.1-8 ■ 7.1-9 7.1-10 ■ 7.1-11 ■ 7.3-1

\* Key Cross-References are a link to the Category 7 - Business Results. These References provide a Chart number that is included in the 7th section of this document.

**“Why Stop Learning?”**

**2.1 *What is your Strategic Planning process, including KEY participants, KEY process steps, and how does it address:***

Each year the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School addresses the past, present and future goals and strategies of the agency. The key objectives integrated into the strategic plan are derived from the core strengths of WLGOS, which include:

- Alternative instructional programs
- Residential Setting
- Support Services
- Structured Environment

Through various efforts of the Board of Trustees, Director and managers, the key objectives are incorporated into student, staff and agency development and training. Quarterly Board of Trustee meetings and bi-weekly staff meetings allow for contribution and continuous updates to measure progress and performance. This approach identifies the most important programmatic and operational activities that represent the strategies necessary to accomplish annual and long-range goals. See the Strategic Planning Chart.

**2.2 *How do your strategic objectives address the strategic challenges you identified in your Executive Summary?***

The strategic challenges are addressed in the overall action plans, which identify specific actions steps for each goal/objective. A continuous evolution in the planning process by senior leaders, identifies relevant trends for programmatic adaptations. Allowing WLGOS to respond to strategic challenges with creative initiatives fostered by a strong desire to meet our mission based on that focus.

**2.3 *How do you develop and track action plans that address your key strategic objectives and how do you allocate resources to ensure the accomplishment of these plans?***

Our core mission, which is providing an alternate education supplemented with employability skills, receives the largest percentage of resources.  
See 2.1.

**2.4 *How do you communicate and deploy your strategic objectives, actions plans and related performance measures?***

Communication of strategic objectives, action plans and performance measures occur at many levels at WLGOS. The quarterly Board of Trustee meetings provide the setting for the initial collaborative efforts to establish agency objectives. Once established, the objectives are then deployed through bi-weekly meeting between the agency director and managers. The most effective communication efforts would consist of informal discussions, printed manuals and surveys and the open-door policy of the agency director.

**2.5 *How do you measure **“Why Stop Learning?”** progress on your action plans?***

Quarterly meetings among the Board of Trustees, agency director and managers ensure that the agency action plans are progressing accordingly. The eight components of ENLIGHTENED VISION include key performance measures for tracking progress on action plans. Feedback from students, family and employees, through surveys, seminars and meetings, allows the action plans to be thoroughly analyzed in order to measure progress.

## **2.6 *How do you evaluate and improve your strategic planning process?***

The strategic planning process is evaluated on a quarterly basis by the Board of Trustees. All suggested improvements are approved by the Board of Trustees before being integrated into the planning process. The agency director provides further information to the managers, who disperse pertinent information to their staff through formal and informal collaborative efforts, policy updates and meetings.

## **2.7 *Agency Website?***

The agency website address is [www.willougray.org](http://www.willougray.org) and the student website address is [www.wlgosstudents.com](http://www.wlgosstudents.com)

### **3.1 *How do you determine who your customers are and what their key requirements are?***

The primary customer of the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School, and their specific requirements, are defined by the State of South Carolina:

- \* 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 pre-vocational and vocational courses for persons with disabilities.

Our primary customer focus is the student who attends the Opportunity School and their families. The Opportunity School serves a student population, sixteen to nineteen years of age, which is admitted voluntarily from every county in South Carolina. Their success and satisfaction with the educational and residential experience, while enrolled at the Opportunity School, is our primary focus.

External key customers include:

- Taxpayers
- Members of the General Assembly
- Board of Trustees
- Citizens of South Carolina

**“Why Stop Learning?”**

**3.2 *How do you keep your listening and learning methods current with changing customer/business needs and expectations?***

In 2007, WLGOS implemented ENLIGHTENED VISION as an internal tool to evaluate and improve agency performance. Each measurement contributes to the agency as a whole. Numerous surveys and informal discussions, relative to customer service, assist in the internal evaluations necessary to improve customer needs accordingly.

**3.3 *How do you use information from customers/stakeholders to keep services or programs relevant and provide for continuous improvement?***

Attention to changing customer and stakeholders needs is vital to the success of the agency. The post-residential survey distributed to all students and parents offers WLGOS the opportunity for formal input. The annual Employee Satisfaction Survey and Employee Exit Survey permits each staff member to anonymously express opinions and ideas. Through collaborative efforts between the Board of Trustees and the agency director, all suggested improvements and program changes are approved and implemented. It is the responsibility of the managers to enact improvements and changes specific to their departments.

**3.4 *How do you measure customer/stakeholder satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and use this information to improve?***

To gauge and assess that customer satisfaction and needs, each graduating student is given a graduate exit interview survey that solicits responses on a host of topics ranging from academics, residential life, food service, recreation, and most importantly, our staff. This instrument is used exclusively to design and implement improvement strategies in service delivery.

Additionally, customer input is sought on a daily basis through informal conversations with teachers, staff and the director. Each trimester 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.

**3.5 *How do you use information from customers/stakeholders to keep services or programs relevant and provide for continuous improvement?***

Continuous communication between the workforce and customers is essential to the agency providing constant improvement. The academic department uses student and parent surveys in the development of educational tools to enhance learning techniques. Residential leaders also rely on stakeholders to enhance the quality of residential environment.

**3.6 *How do you build*** **“Why Stop Learning?”** *positive relationship with*

***customers and stakeholders to meet and exceed their expectations? Indicate any key distinctions between different customer groups.***

The agency 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. The open-door policy of the director allows all students, staff and managers the opportunity to contribute ideas and solicit opinions in an informal atmosphere. The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School hosts a Legislative Luncheon once a year to provide the members of the General Assembly an opportunity to see firsthand the accomplishments and progress made by the cadets. A select staff is available at the luncheon to answer any questions or concerns that may be brought up by legislative members concerning the Opportunity School. A diverse group of cadets are chosen to represent different counties across South Carolina to afford legislative members the opportunity to meet some of their young constituents and future, productive citizens.

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 ceremony are sent to members of the General Assembly and the WLGOS Board of Trustees.

Many functions are hosted by the school in order to encourage positive relationships between our stakeholders/customers and the workforce. Our JROTC program allows many opportunities for the students to actively participate in competitions and parades. In an effort to promote parent involvement, emails are distributed regularly for program updates and student affairs. The Wil Lou Gray website also provides a calendar of events which are open to family and friends.

Throughout the term, staff are constantly in direct contact with parents through phone calls and parental surveys that links WLGOS, families and cadets. Each trimester, we hold Parents Day that provides the opportunity for families to visit the campus, thereby experiencing daily life in the classroom, dormitory and healthcenter. Offering a snapshot of their cadets routines and a chance to meet with and speak to all staff.

***“Why Stop Learning?”***

# MEASUREMENT, ANALYSIS AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

## ***4.1 How do you decide which operations, processes and systems to measure for tracking financial and operational performance, including progress relative to strategic objectives and action plans?***

WLGOS uses a variety of performance measures to accomplish the mission of the agency. Internal, external and state and federal mandated standards provide specific information needed to assist the agency in establishing which operations, processes and systems to measure the performance in areas of finance and operations.

“ENLIGHTENED VISION” equips the agency with internal objectives directed at evaluating and improving standards with which WLGOS aspires to achieve and maintain for success. This model is comprised of eight components, which include innovation, customer service, leadership, employees, students, budget, continuing education and academics. Through internal and external audits and surveys, the agency establishes which performance measures are essential in tracking the finances and operations of WLGOS.

Processes mandated by state and federal entities include SC Budget and Control Board, Office of Human Resources, Education Accountability Act, Department of Education, Education Oversight Committee, Governmental Accepted Accounting Practices, Occupational Safety and Health Act, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Equal Employment Opportunities Act and No Child Left Behind Act.

## ***4.2 How do you select, collect, align and integra data/information for analysis to provide effective support for decision making and innovation throughout your organization?***

Information resulting from performance measurements, directly associated with ENLIGHTENED VISION, is analyzed thoroughly to aid the agency in designating specific strengths and weaknesses needing particular attention. Data collected from surveys and audits assists the Board of Trustees, director and managers in projecting improvements necessary to provide effective support for decision-making processes.

## ***4.3 What are your key measures, how do you review them, and how do you keep them current with organizational needs and direction?***

All eight components of ENLIGHTENED VISION reflect the standards by which the agency measures performance in innovation, customer services, leadership, employees, students, budget, continuing education and academics. Detailed information on each measurement allows the Board

**“Why Stop Learning?”**

of Trustees, director and managers to review and adjust organizational needs and direction of WLGOS.

**4.4 *How do you select and use key comparative data and information to support operational and strategic decision making and innovation?***

As previously mentioned, all “ENLIGHTENED VISION” components are considered exceptionally vital because they reflect agency performance in the key areas of innovation, customer service, leadership, employees, students, budget, continuing education and academics. Comparative data and information, resulting from feedback associated with surveys, meetings and informal discussions, is used to evaluate present and future measurements associated with the success of operational and strategic decision making processes.

For example, 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.

**4.4 *How do you ensure data integrity, timeliness, accuracy, security and availability for decision making?***

In November 2007, the agency was streamlined with the South Carolina Enterprise Information System (SCEIS). This Statewide system allows all agencies to be networked in order to increase efficiency in Finance and General Accounting, Payroll and Human Resources, Purchasing and Inventory Processing and Document Management.

**4.6 *How do you translate organizational performance review findings into priorities for continuous improvement?***

Performance review findings, identified through measurements of “ENLIGHTENED VISION”, are communicated through meetings, policies and collaborative efforts among the Board of Trustees, agency director, managers and staff. Improvements are prioritized according to organizational importance.

**4.7 *How do you collect, transfer, and maintain organizational and employee knowledge (your knowledge assets)? How do you identify and share best practices, as appropriate?***

Organizational and employee knowledge is identified through department specific standard operation procedure manuals. In addition, senior staff members and managers contribute to the transfer of knowledge assets through training activities and supervision skills. Best practices are acknowledged through various audits and procedural evaluations and disseminated through departmental managers.

**“Why Stop Learning?”**

# WORKFORCE FOCUS

**5.1 *How do you organize and manage work: to enable employees to develop and utilize their full potential, aligned with the organization’s objectives, strategies, and action plans; and to promote cooperation, initiative, empowerment, innovation and your desired organizational culture?***

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.

**5.2 *How do you achieve effective communication and knowledge/skill/best practice sharing across departments, jobs and locations?***

Effective communication is achieved through bi-weekly meetings and informal discussions among departments. These meetings are devised to discuss and address problems, procedures and daily routines of each department. A summary of these discussions is regularly emailed in order to attain consistency among departments. An open-door policy allows every employee to voice ideas or opinions to senior leaders or the agency director. At the end of each session, senior leaders participate in an after action review. Discussion is centered on what worked best and what needs improvement.

**5.3 *How does management recruit, hire, place and retain new employees? Any barriers?***

All available positions are posted on [www.sc.gov](http://www.sc.gov). Each position has detailed information regarding work experience, education and other specific requirements. Credentials are evaluated by human resource personnel, senior leaders and the Director before interviews are scheduled. Qualifications of the applicant are aligned with the requirements of the position and are hired accordingly. New employees are given a period of adjustment while attaining meticulous instruction from co-workers and senior leaders. An onboarding orientation and new employee mentor program increases their success.

The attrition rate of the Opportunity School is directly related to salaries, which is determined by the yearly budget. Due to budget cuts and economic strategies of the agency, retention increases and other employee financial incentives are currently not a tool for use in employee discussions.

**“Why Stop Learning?”**

**5.4 *How do you assess your workforce capability and capacity needs, including skills, competencies and staffing levels?***

Various indicators and predictors are used to evaluate employee skills depending upon their job classification. For instance, all teaching staff must have the appropriate certifications to be considered for employment. Staffing strategies and shifts vary between departments. A skilled workforce that is prepared for today's workplace requires constant evaluation in order to meet the demands of the modern workplace.

**5.5 *How does your workforce performance management system, including feedback to and from individual members of the workforce, support high performance work and contribute to the achievement of your action plans?***

WLGOS uses the EPMS process as its foundation for planning work priorities, professional development, and evaluation of employees in order to align job functions and goals with the mission and strategic plan of the agency.

**5.6 *How does your development and learning system for leaders address the following:***

***a. Development of personal leadership attributes***

***b. Development of organizational knowledge***

***c. Ethical practices***

***d. your core competencies, strategic challenges, and accomplishment of action plans.***

All senior leadership is judged on their understanding of the organization through shared information about WLGOS as changes to our mission evolve. Senior leaders serve in a constant apprenticeship through assigned training opportunities and specific leadership roles identified by the agency director. All senior leaders and managers understand that ethical learning is a part of the WLGOS fabric and help perpetuate the longstanding tradition of compliance and conduct as a member of the WLGOS family. As a small agency, it is expected that leaders have a strong commitment to our mission, annual measured improvement and awareness of the state priorities through long term planning.

**5.7 *How do you identify and address key developmental and training needs, including job skills training, performance excellence training, performance excellence training, diversity training, management/leadership development, new employee orientation and safety training?***

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 promote employee satisfaction and assist in WLGOS maintaining a quality workforce. As our school motto is "Why Stop

**“Why Stop Learning?”**

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.

### **5.8 *How do you encourage on-the-job use of new knowledge and skills?***

Departments are dependent upon each other in order for the agency to run effectively, so establishing the effectiveness of a programmatic change is vital. As our motto proclaims "Why Stop Learning" all employees are expected to participate in continuing education and exchange. New employees contribute their knowledge and skills so that WLGOS is constantly experimenting.

### **5.9 *How does employee training contribute to the achievement of your action plans?***

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. A skilled workplace is essential to all results indicators.

### **5.10 *How do you evaluate the effectiveness of your workforce and leader training and development systems?***

The Opportunity School, as all state government, has faced a deep and sustained budget reduction that resulted in training and development funding loss. To offset a formal process, we have focused on giving employees the tools needed to learn the skills involved to help them reach their full potential. Typically, performance evaluations are used to measure workforce development followed by training programs. One of our most valued tools is an internal training program whereby senior managers participate in a formal mentoring relationship. As a small agency, there is more opportunity for "hands-on" development when implementing new trends and techniques. Effective communication among all staff is the most vital tool in the development of positive feedback within the agency.

### **5.11 *How do you motivate your workforce to develop and utilize their full potential?***

As mentioned above, tuition assistance and flexible work schedules encourage employees to develop and utilize their full potential at the agency. Employee satisfaction is the key factor 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.

***"Why Stop Learning?"***

Recognizing Employee Appreciation Day and providing personal expressions of encouragement increases employee motivation and development. The agency also strives to recognize all employee results with approved incentives.

**5.12 *What formal and/or informal assessment methods and measures do you use to determine employee well being, satisfaction and motivation? How do you use other measures such as employee retention and grievances?***

Employee satisfaction is assessed through many avenues. The Annual Employee Performance Evaluation is the official and formal measurement by which employee satisfaction and motivation is analyzed. Daily communication among all employees is also an informal method of determining satisfaction and motivation. Allowing open discussion meetings helps management address issues that may otherwise lower morale among employees. Periodic agency events such as, Employee Appreciation Day, cookouts and staff/student events help maintain employee satisfaction by fostering a family atmosphere. Our motivational system is tailored to the diverse nature of our organization so that ability and motivation will equal performance.

**5.13 *How do you manage effective career progression and effective succession planning for your entire workforce throughout the organization?***

Effective career progression is managed through annual performance evaluations and customer based surveys. Open discussion forums are held after every trimester in order to evaluate the effectiveness of program changes and customer feedback. As decisions are made, departmental managers facilitate all the necessary adjustments to staff and personnel effected by modifications in program changes.

**5.14 *How do you maintain a safe, secure, and health work environment? (Including workplace preparedness for emergencies and disasters.)***

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

**“Why Stop Learning?”**

# PROCESS MANAGEMENT

## **6.1 *How do you determine and what are your organization's core competencies, and how do they relate to your mission, competitive environment and action plans?***

The core competencies of WLGOS are defined by our mission:

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-nine 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 nineteen years of age who are most at-risk of:

- ✓ Being retained in their grade in school.
- ✓ Dropping out of school and not completing their education.
- ✓ Not making the transition from public schools to the workforce.
- ✓ 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.

## **6.2 *How do you determine, and what are your key processes that produce, create or add value for your customers and your organizations? How do you ensure that these processes are used?***

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

- ❖ Student Education, Food Service, Housing  
Education = Curriculum, Team Teaching/Support  
Food Service = Nutrition, Variety  
Housing = Dormitory Life
- ❖ Support and Internal Support
- ❖ 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.

***"Why Stop Learning?"***

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 and noticeably more positive self-esteem.

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.

*Support and Internal Support* – Wil Lou Gray consists of eighty-eight acres of campus with 174,000 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 are 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.

### **6.3 *How do you incorporate organizational knowledge, new technology, cost controls, and other, and other efficiency and effectiveness factors, such as cycle time, into process designs and delivery?***

The incorporation of “ENLIGHTENED VISION” has allowed the agency to monitor key processes every cycle. Problematic areas are easily defined and analyzed. Each of the eight components of “ENLIGHTENED VISION” serves as a guide to better serve the key customers and stakeholders of the agency. Collaborative efforts, surveys, meetings and seminars assist the Board of Trustees, agency director and managers in projecting present and future trends needing closer attention.

WLGOS has a dedicated Information Technology Manager who is instrumental in the continuous improvement processes. Within the past few years, the advances in technology have permitted all staff members to interact through a variety of avenues, which include WLGOS website, MS Outlook email/planners, Internet, HR and procurement documents, and electronic forms.

**“Why Stop Learning?”**

**6.4 *How does your day-to-day operation of these processes ensure meeting key performance requirements?***

Key production requirements are supported in our day-to-day operations through a standardized indicator, “ENLIGHTENED VISION”, that allows 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.

**6.5 *How do you systematically evaluate and improve your key product and service related work processes?***

The TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) assists in the measurement of student progress. During the first week of attendance, students are tested in math and reading in order 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. All staff members are evaluated annually via the EPMS. Surveys are distributed to students and family each cycle in order to measure customer satisfaction and delivery of services.

**6.6 *What are your key support processes, and how do you evaluate, improve and update these processes to achieve better performance?***

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 and 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 support.

**6.7 *How does your organization determine the resources needed to meet the current and projected budget and financial obligations?***

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 are 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.

**“Why Stop Learning?”**

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 experienced significant annual savings and cost avoidance in personnel budgeting.

**“Why Stop Learning?”**

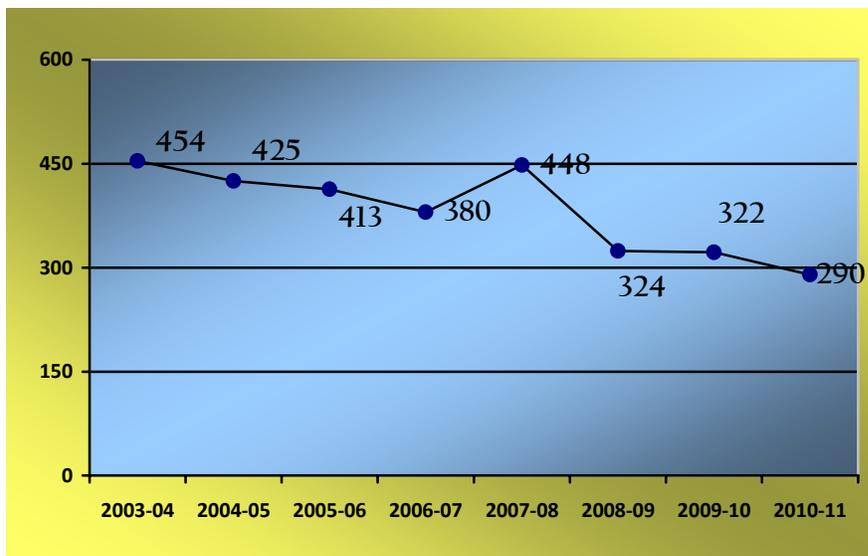
# RESULTS

**7.1 What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures of mission accomplishment/product and service performance that are important to your customers? How do your results compare to those of comparable organizations? and organizational effectiveness.**

The mission of the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School is to serve the citizens of South Carolina between sixteen and nineteen years of age. As stated in Section I, there are a variety of services that WLGO provides to our students. These services are the basis of mission accomplishment by which WLGO measures results and determines success.

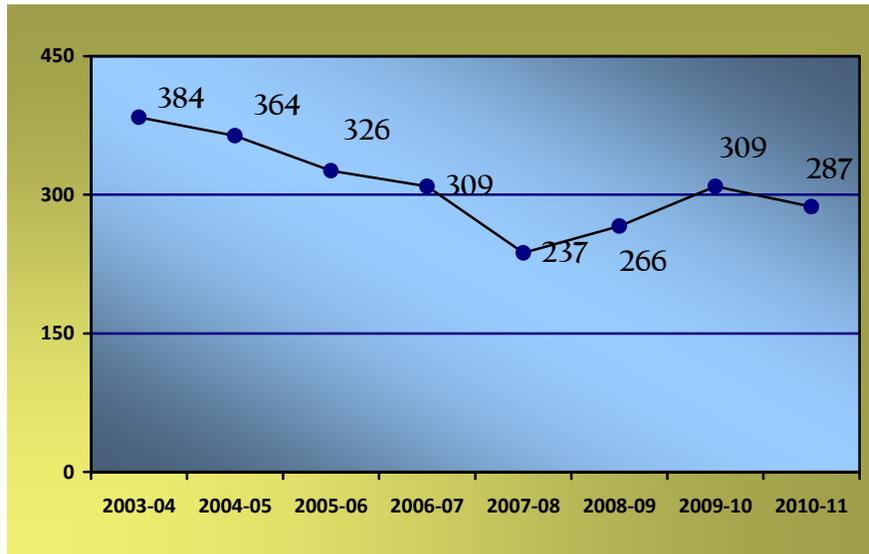
Admissions: Students are accepted into the program every cycle and are given a registration date (Graph 7.1-1). All students are to report on the registration day to be enrolled into the program (Graph 7.1-2).

**Graph 7.1-1  
Students Accepted**



**“Why Stop Learning?”**

**Graph 7.1-2  
Students Enrolled**



Education: Providing the students with remarkable educational services increases academic success. For the sixth consecutive year, WLGOS was honored a “Palmetto Gold School” award by the Education Oversight Committee, as shown in chart 7.1-3.

**Chart 7.1-3  
Annual School Report Card**

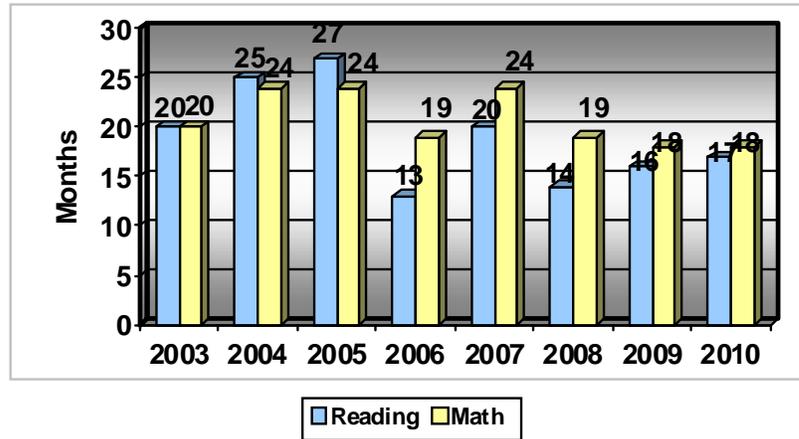
Education Accountability Act State Report Card Data – Palmetto Gold School						
Description	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Absolute Rating	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent



**“Why Stop Learning?”**

The math and reading TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) 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 each 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. Graph 7.1-4 represents the TABE improvements for WLGOS students since 2003.

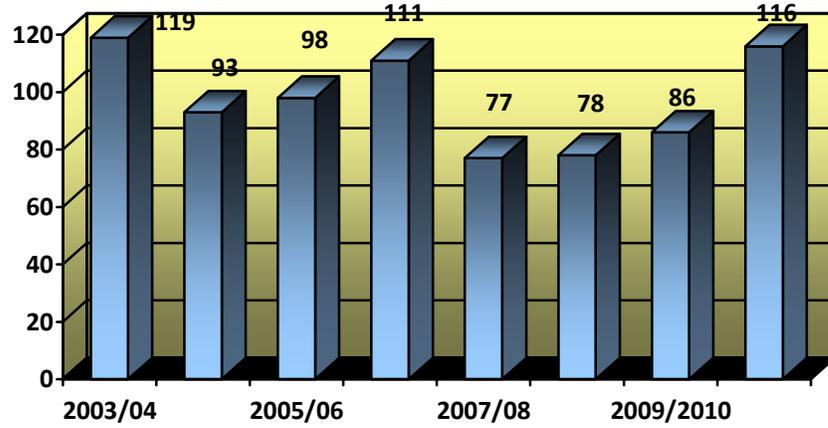
**Chart 7.1-4  
WLGOS Student TABE Gains**



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. All cadets graduating from the program will earn a Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School Certificate whether or not they successfully pass the GED. Graph 7.1-5 represents the number of students from 2003 until 2010 that have successfully completed the GED test and received GED certification. A total of 898 students have received their GED since 2002. The admissions profile (Table 7.1-6) compares all cycles since 2003.

**“Why Stop Learning?”**

**Chart 7.1-5  
GED Graduates**



**“Why Stop Learning?”**

**Table 7.1-6  
Admissions Profile**

	Accepted	Enrolled on Registration	Graduated	GED
<b>Class 03-01/Cycle 11</b>	229	191	130	58
<b>Class 03-02/Cycle 12</b>	225	193	127	61
<b>11&amp;12 Total</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>Class 04-01/Cycle 13</b>	226	189	132	49
<b>Class 04-02/Cycle 14</b>	199	175	105	44
<b>13 &amp; 14 Total</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>Class 05-01/Cycle 15</b>	231	184	123	50
<b>Class 05-02/Cycle 16</b>	183	142	94	48
<b>15 &amp; 16 Total</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>Class 06-01/Cycle 17</b>	187	145	102	47
<b>Class 06-02/Cycle 18</b>	193	164	92	64
<b>17 &amp; 18 Total</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>Class 07-01/Cycle 19</b>	175	137	87	51
<b>Class 07-02/Cycle 20</b>	127	101	62	26
<b>19 &amp; 20 Total</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Trimester 09-01</b>	148	108	82	39
<b>Trimester 09-02</b>	86	77	55	18
<b>Trimester 09-03</b>	91	82	48	21
<b>2009 Total</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Trimester 10-01</b>	108	88	54	24
<b>Trimester 10-02</b>	108	89	53	40
<b>Trimester 10-03</b>	106	96	62	22
<b>2010 Total</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>Trimester 11-01</b>	113	104	72	49
<b>Trimester 11-02</b>	96	90	58	35
<b>Trimester 11-03</b>	100	93	57	32
<b>2011 Total</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>116</b>

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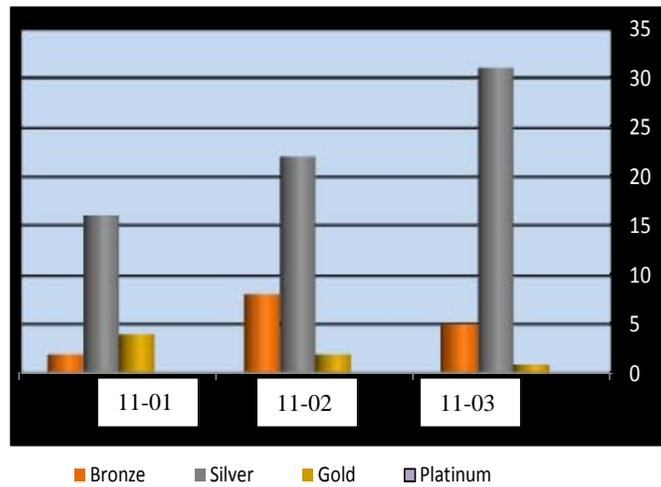
Employment:

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. The WorkKeys assessments present workplace situations, reading materials, problems and messages for the employee to respond to and/or resolve. Since the partnership began, 583 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. The results for the 2010-2011 are presented in Graph 7.1-7

**7.1-7**

**Work Keys Results**



**2010-2011**

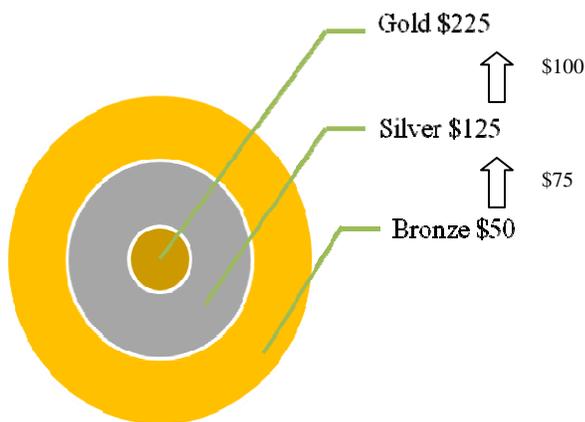
	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Platinum
11-01	2	16	4	0
11-02	8	22	2	0
11-03	5	31	1	0

**“Why Stop Learning?”**

The Youth WIA program encourages students to perform well academically through cash incentives. Some of the incentives students can earn are: \$500 for passing the GED, \$50 for improvement on the TABE test and \$50, \$75 or \$100 for improvements on the WorkKeys Assessment. See Graph 7.1-8. During 2010-2011, one hundred sixteen graduated with a GED and \$500 incentive checks and ninety one students received WorkKeys Job Ready cards while at the Opportunity School.

### Graph 7.1-8

#### WorkKeys Incentives



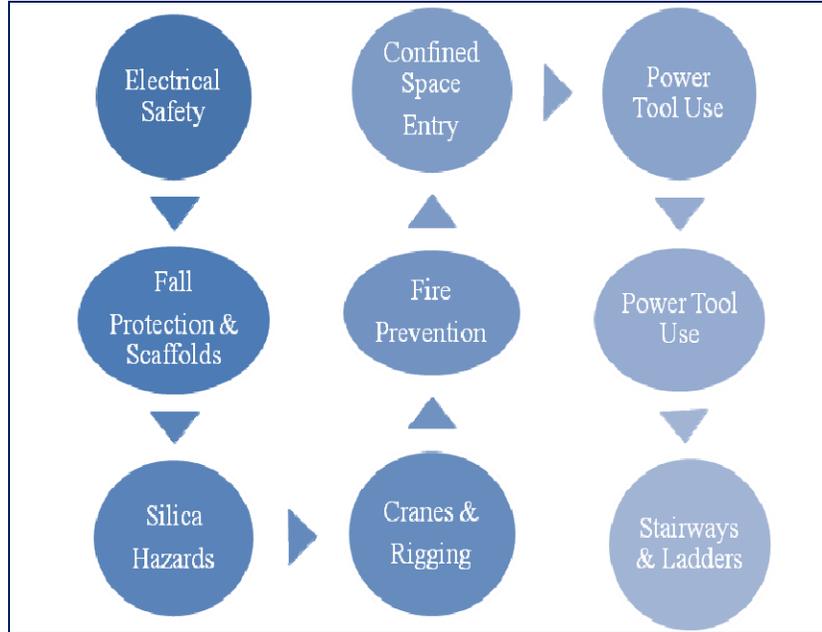
The Vocational Department incorporated the OSHA 501 Construction Safety Course to assist those students who intend on pursuing a career in the construction field.

The OSHA 501 course consists of a variety of safety features relating to many areas of tools and electrical equipment. See Chart 7.1-9. Each student is provided ten hours of intensive training in construction knowledge and then tested on the basic OSHA standards. As indicated in Chart 7.1-10, 543 cards have been issued to date and the breakdown of 2010-2011 is presented in Graph 7.1-11. In 2010 we incorporated forklift training to our vocational class curriculum. This class is offered to those students over eighteen years of age. See Graph 7.1-12.

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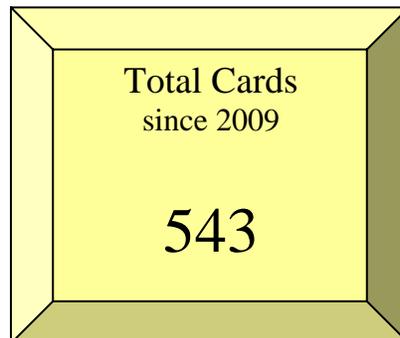
## Chart 7.1-9

### OSHA 501



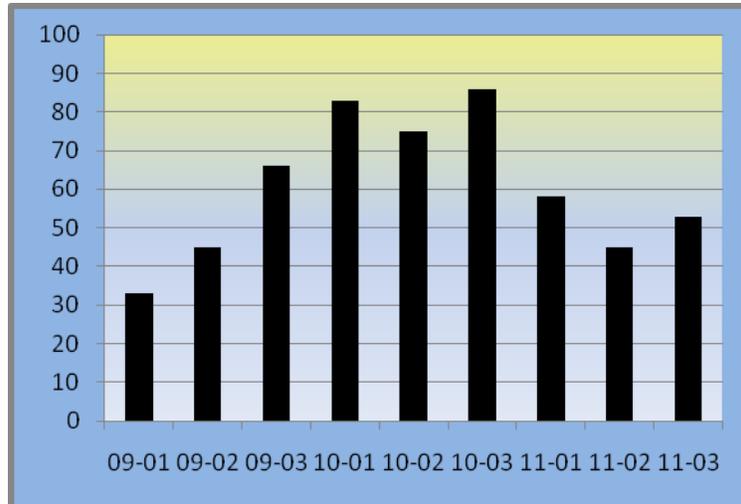
## Chart 7.1-10

### Total OSHA 501 Cards

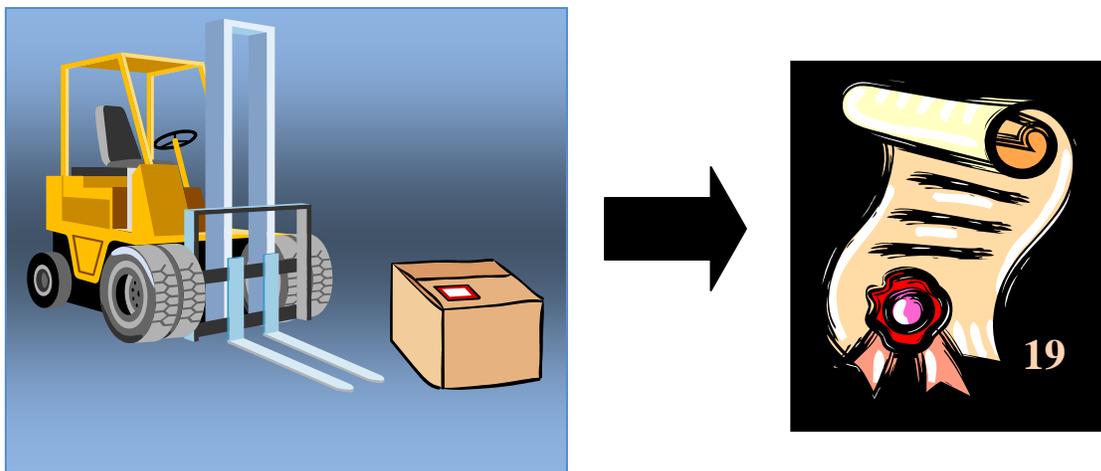


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**Chart 7.1-11**  
**OSHA Cards by Class**



**Chart 7.1-12**  
**Forklift Training**



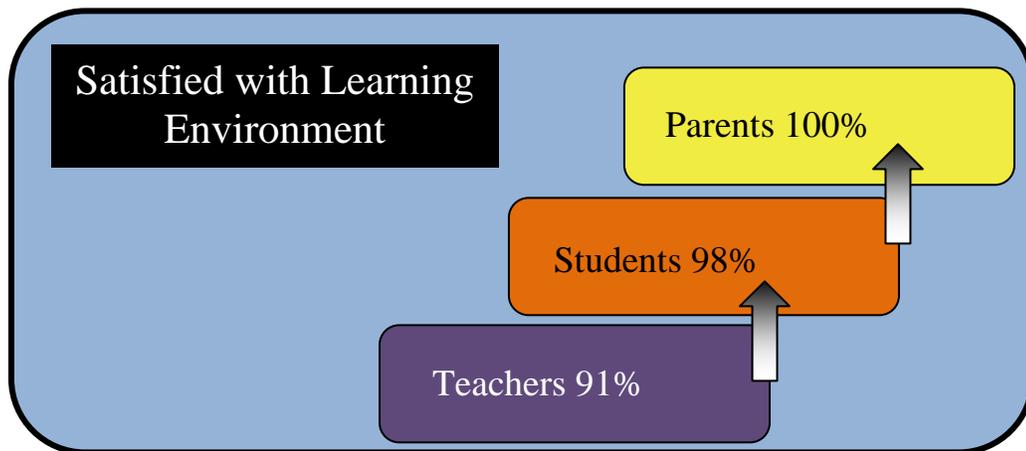
**“Why Stop Learning?”**

**7.2 What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures on customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction? How do your results compare to those of comparable organizations?**

The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School conducts surveys and interviews annually to measure customer satisfaction in key areas as determined by the agency’s mission and Strategic Plan. As a public education agency, the Opportunity School is required by the School Report Card process to solicit feedback from parents, students and teachers. These questions consist of a variety of topics so that customer satisfaction can be measured and improvements implemented, all applicable to the elements of Enlightened Vision.

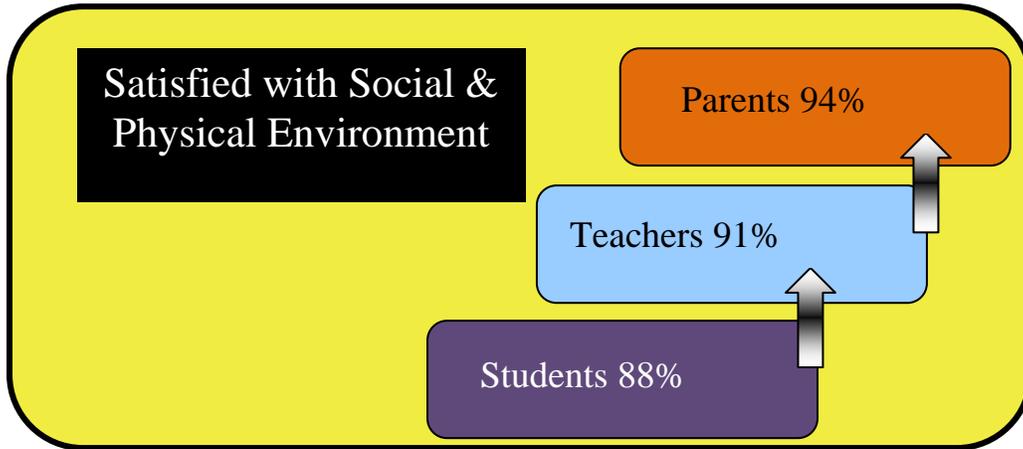
Increased enrollment is also an indirect measure of customer satisfaction. This interpretation is a strong indicator of how our customers view our product. The primary role of WLGOS is to serve as many of the state’s undereducated, at-risk students as possible during each year. As this is our agency priority, satisfaction of our students is of the utmost importance. Upon graduation, an exit survey is given to all students. In addition, a survey is given to the teachers and parents. Graphs 7.2-1, 7.2-2 and 7.2-3 reflect an overall satisfaction on the academic and residential environment, as well as home-school relations.

**Graph 7.2-1  
Learning Environment**

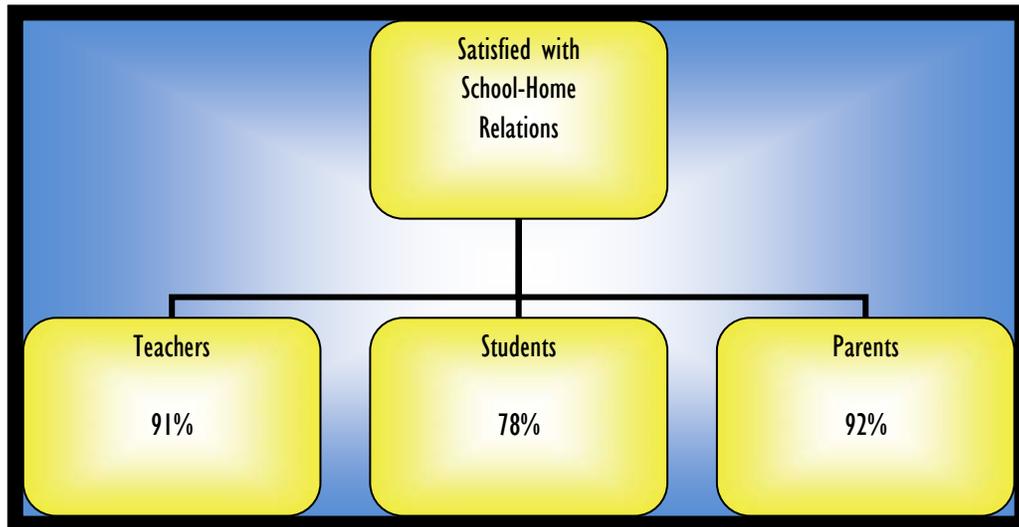


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**Graph 7.2-2  
Social and Physical Environment**



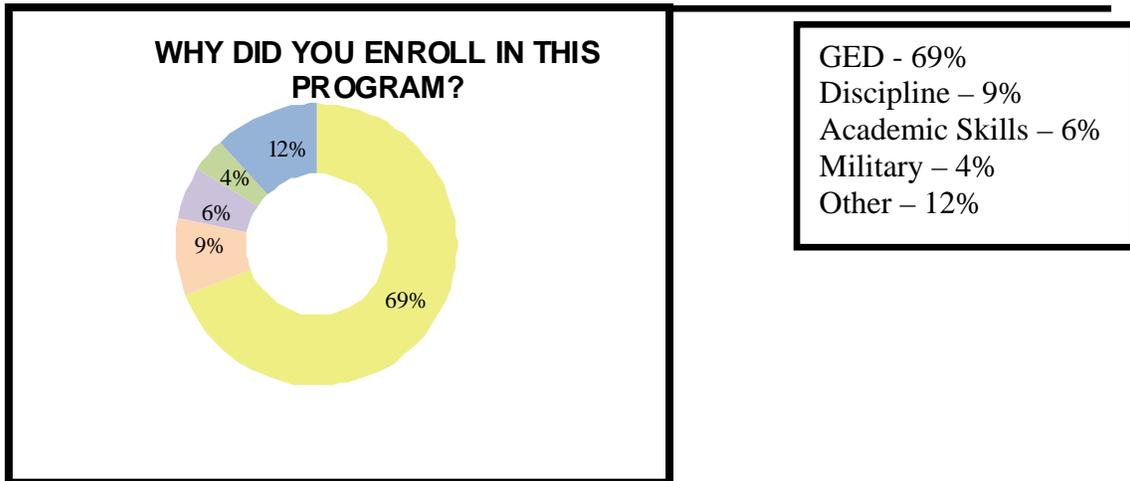
**Graph 7.2-3  
School-Home Relations**



Students enroll to obtain their GED and increase their academic skills. Graph 7.2-4 reflects the student's high satisfaction in meeting their academic goals while attending the Opportunity School whether or not they obtained their GED.

**“Why Stop Learning?”**

## Graph 7.2-4 Enrollment Survey



The Board of Trustees, considered a secondary customer, are surveyed every year as part of the Agency Head Performance Evaluation. The questions asked that focus on customer satisfaction include:

- **The agency head keeps the board informed about matters affecting the agency.**
- **The agency head communicates and demonstrates a clear understanding of the goals and mission of the agency.**
- **The agency head promoted efficiency and effectiveness.**
- **The quality of programs administered by the agency head equals or exceeds the needs of the community.**
- **The agency head practices a high degree of ethics in leading his or her agency.**
- **The agency head anticipates problem areas and makes decisions regarding the solutions.**

Since 2002, no result has been less than 99.4%. Results of the 2011 Agency Head Evaluation are reflected in 7.2-5.

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## Chart 7.2-5 Agency Head Evaluation

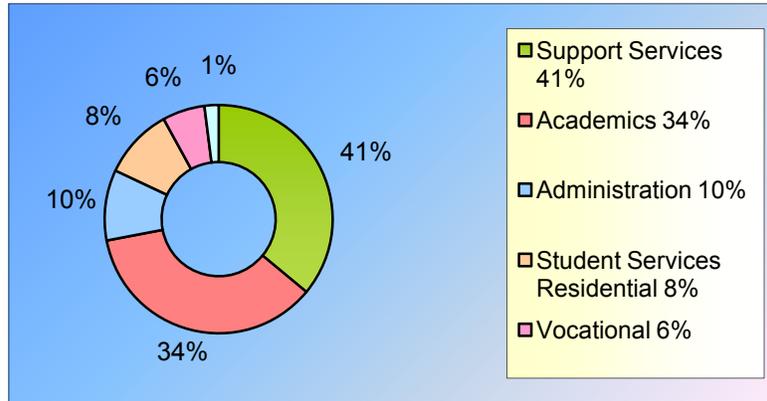


### 7.3 *What are your performance levels for your key measures of financial performance, including measures of cost containment, as appropriate?*

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. Chart 7.3-1 indicates the financial structure of WLGOS essential to acquiring and maintaining agency objectives. This continued process has led to our seventh consecutive fiscal audit of “no findings and a higher procurement certification that signifies our ability to acquire services through compliance and competitive bidding. 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.

**“Why Stop Learning?”**

**Chart 7.3-1  
WLGOS Program Areas**

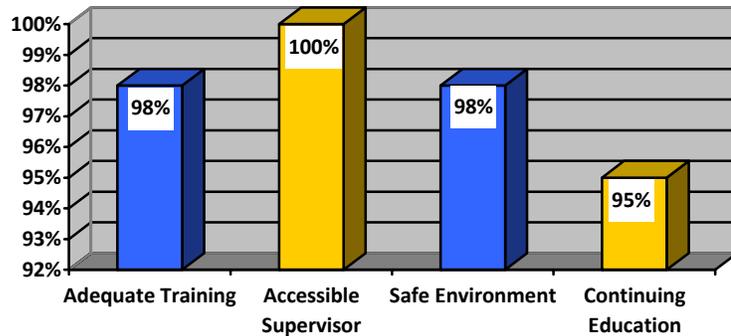


**7.4 What are your performance levels and trends for the key measures of workforce engagement, workforce satisfaction, the development of your workforce, including leaders, workforce retention, workforce climate including workplace health, safety and security?**

This was the third year the Opportunity School administered Employee Satisfaction Surveys to all employees. The results proved the statistics to be correct with one hundred 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. Currently there are fifty two employees at the Opportunity School with seventy two 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. As employee retention is the most critical issue facing us, an emphasis is placed on being sensitive to people’s needs and demonstrating various strategies to improve five concerns common to all employees: environmental, relationship, support, growth and compensation. 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. The results of the Employee Satisfaction Survey are shown in graph 7.4-1.

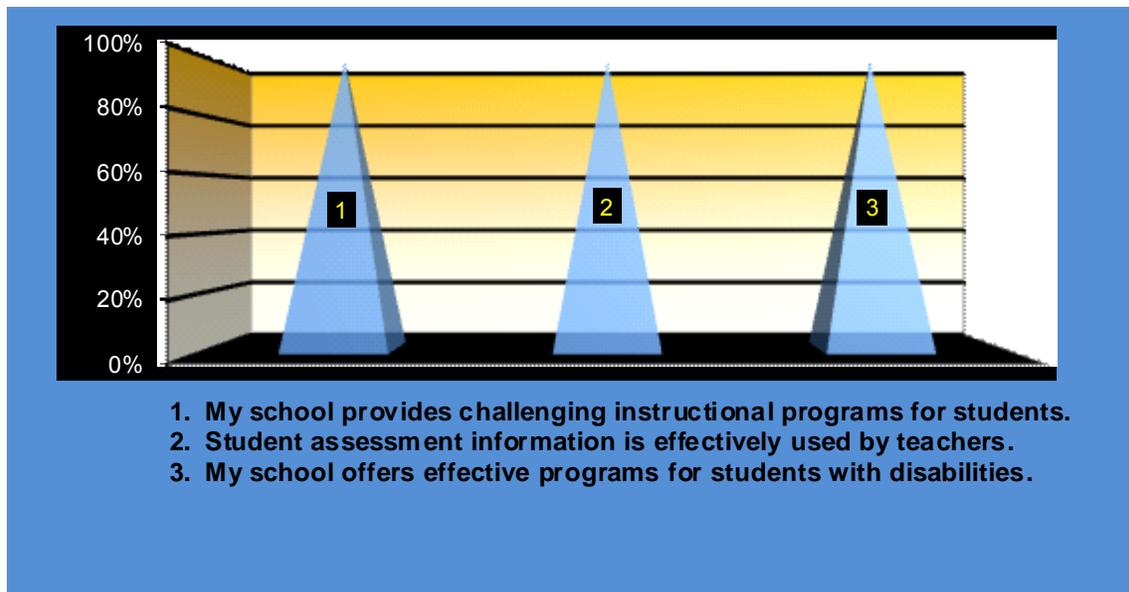
**“Why Stop Learning?”**

## Graph 7.4-1 Employee Survey



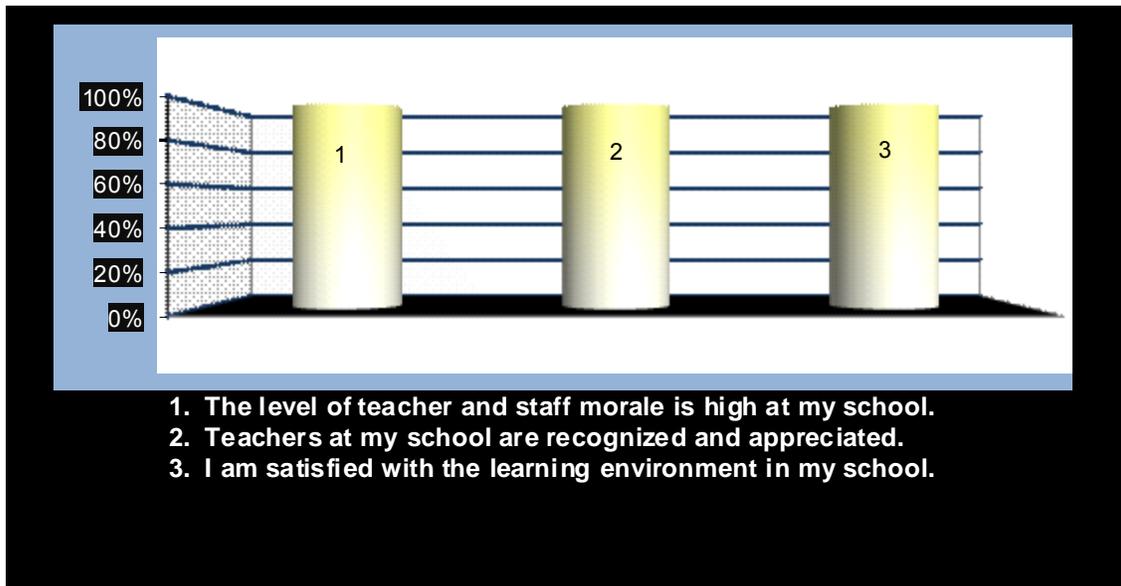
Each year the teachers of WLGOs are asked to respond to a survey from the Department of Education, Education Oversight Committee for the School Report Card. The following graph displays specific questions asked regarding the environment, academics and students at WLGOs. See graphs 7.4-2 and 7.4-3.

## Graph 7.4-2 Teacher Survey on Learning Environment



**“Why Stop Learning?”**

**Graph 7.4-3  
Teacher Survey on Morale**



**7.5 *What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures of organizational effectiveness/operational efficiency, and work system performance?***

As an agency of state government, greater efficiency is a prime goal for WLGOS, especially as funding and reorganization has intensified competitive challenges. At the Opportunity School, a five prong strategy is employed to improve our basic organizational effectiveness. These strategies include: analyzing current benchmarks, our processes, modernation of all assets, remaining flexible and maximizing opportunities. These strategies, combined with strategic workforce alignment, create a sustainable advantage to serve our customers with the most current business strategy implementation.

**7.6 *What are your performance levels and trends for the key measures of regulatory/legal compliance and community support?***

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.

**“Why Stop Learning?”**