

John de la Howe School

2010-2011

Accountability Report



192 Gettys Road
McCormick, South Carolina 29835

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Section I – Executive Summary

1. Mission and Values

Mission

- To strengthen children and families of South Carolina who are experiencing difficulties to the extent that a planned separation is necessary.

Values

- **Advocacy:** By protecting their rights and striving to meet their needs, John de la Howe School serves as a strong advocate for the children and families served.
- **Excellence and Creativity:** John de la Howe School holds in high regard an environment, both physical and emotional, that fosters creativity and results in positive outcomes through service excellence.
- **Honesty, Truth and Integrity:** John de la Howe School regards honesty, truth and integrity as essential ingredients for the positive growth and development of the children and families served.
- **Responsibility and Accountability:** John de la Howe School attaches great importance to responsibility and accountability as means to ensure children and families served receive the highest quality of care possible and as maintenance of public trust in the use of taxpayer dollars.

2. Major Achievements from Past Year

- Accreditation
John de la Howe School retained its accreditation through the Council on Accreditation (COA). Accreditation signifies an agency has achieved a high level of operating effectiveness and efficiency.
- New Model of Care
On-going implementation of a new model of care (Collaborative Problem Solving) represents a paradigm shift to a more current methodology of addressing the behavioral issues presented by our students and providing new tools for agency direct-care providers and families to address the cognitive factors contributing to the child's learning disability (lagging skills) in the domains of flexibility, adaptability and frustration tolerance. The resultant impact for the students we serve is the benefit of targeted training/education the areas of their lagging cognitive skills.
- Day Student Enrollment
A partnership with a bordering school district to accommodate their alternative school students provides funds to be leveraged toward the agency education program. Other local school districts have expressed an interest in establishing a similar partnership arrangement.

- Professional Development/Training
All direct-care staff participated in over 30 hours of training in the new “Collaborative Problem Solving” model of care. This training exposed the direct-care staff to the model concept and the means and methods to begin initial enterprise implementation of this model designed to target the lagging cognitive skills of our student population.

All agency staff received Procurement 101 Training through the State Budget and Control Board’s Materials Management Office.

The agency transitioned to a Universal Review performance model with all staff receiving appropriate training. This model will serve to better align individual objectives with the overage strategic objectives of the agency.

- Service Learning Component
Historically, children served by John de la Howe School have failed in traditional education environments. In response, the agency continues a non-traditional approach by the inclusion of a Service Learning component in the curriculum. Service Learning incorporates concepts learned in core courses with real-world application.
- PACE Learning System and Virtual School
Students at John de la Howe School arrive throughout the year, and function at various skill levels. The agency now provides individualized instruction through the PACE Learning System and Virtual School. Utilizing computer and web-based applications; students are able to self-pace their lessons which encourages academic success. Additionally, it provides an opportunity for students who had fallen behind to excel to their appropriate grade level.

3. Key Strategic Goals for the Present and Future Years

- Strengthened Partnerships with Department of Social Services, Department of Juvenile Justice and School Districts Statewide
John de la Howe School is determined to strengthen and expand its relationships with the state departments of Social Services (DSS) and Juvenile Justice (DJJ), and school districts across the state to better leverage state resources.
- Explore Out-of-State Student Admissions
The agency will seek to diversify its revenue stream through acceptance of out-of-state students into the Wilderness/Experiential Learning program. These students would pay a cost-plus tuition differential from in-state students. In-state students and families would retain priority status for admissions over out-of-state applicants. The vast acreage of the campus will allow for rapid expansion of the wilderness camp program at minimal costs. The agency will also explore how the out-of-state student model might be implemented within the residential program.

- Expand Charitable Giving Program
A Director of Development and Advancement has been engaged to more fully implement a charitable giving program. Committed effort in the present will lead to future benefits, with a major emphasis on being able to ease dependence on taxpayer support while being able to maintain the standards of high quality care.
- Deploy an Enterprise Customer Relationship Management (CRM)/Electronic Health Record (HER) System
Recognizing the importance of resource conservation, the agency will implement an enterprise solution for student records retention, data collection and analysis and information sharing across functional areas and for families to access on-line as a means to directly monitor student progress.
- Cottage Renovation/Deferred Maintenance
Continue John de la Howe School's plan of cottage renovation/deferred maintenance for the student residences. As previously mentioned, this project is vital to maintain a living environment that will help promote the healthy development of children served.

4. Key Strategic Challenges

- Financial
Reductions in the agency's budget posed the greatest challenge in FY11. However, through program changes such as 24-hour awake staff and expanded use of community resources, John de la Howe School has managed to limit the impact on service capacity and quality.
- Access
The resultant impact of reductions in agency general fund appropriations for FY11 had a direct and negative impact on our ability to provide access to children and families from across the state.
- Deferred Maintenance
The resultant impact of reductions in agency general fund appropriations for FY11 had a direct and negative impact on our ability to adequately maintain residential cottages and other facilities.

5. Agency's Use of The Accountability Report

- John de la Howe School utilizes the Accountability Report to evaluate the agency's effectiveness in, and to provide direction to, its services to meet the ever changing needs of the students and families we serve.

Section II – Organizational Profile

1. Main products and services and the primary methods by which these are delivered.

- *Behavioral Health Services* addresses the individual emotional and mental health needs of the children in the agency's care through the use of traditional and non-traditional interventions. Traditional interventions include individual, family and group counseling provided by behavioral health professional staff and supportive counseling provided by behavioral health paraprofessional staff. Non-traditional interventions include activity-based experiential learning. Such activities occur in the Wilderness, Farm and Equine programs. The agency's challenge/ropes course is also used as an activity based intervention method.
- *Daily Living Skills Development* occurs at the residential, or cottage-life, level. Through instruction by paraprofessional behavioral health staff, children learn skills required for independent living including, but not limited to, nutrition and meal preparation, money management, personal hygiene, laundry, decision making, problem solving, team work and cooperation. Instruction in daily living skills development occurs on an individual level to help a child in a particular area in which he/she needs emphasis, and at a group level incorporating the entire cottage through specific activities aimed at specific goals.
- *Academic Instruction* provides all children in care at John de la Howe School learning opportunities they may not have in their home environments when other presenting problems hinder the opportunity for academic development. Students receive instruction in all core subjects as well as ancillary subjects at the L.S. Brice School. John de la Howe School holds its students to the same standards as public school students. Students in grades 6 through 10 attend school on-campus. Through a longstanding partnership, students in grades 11 through 12 attend McCormick County public high school as a step toward reintegration into the community. All teachers at John de la Howe School meet or exceed the professional requirements established by the State of South Carolina.
- *Job Skills Training* is a critical component of the treatment process at John de la Howe School. Because not all children in care are college-bound, it is incumbent on the agency to provide children with skills which may be used in the job market. Therefore, by engaging children in food service, landscaping, clerical, horticultural and agriculture related activities supervised by John de la Howe staff, children learn skills that may benefit them following discharge from the agency. John de la Howe School staff partner with children to mentor them in the aspects of their work at the school. Students gain additional skills by job shadowing their mentors.
- *Primary Health Care* is provided to children while in care at John de la Howe. Services such as medication administration, monitoring of chronic illness or disease such as diabetes and obesity, and provision of minor first aid are provided by the agency's healthcare professionals.

2. Key customer groups and their key requirements/expectations

- *Children* of South Carolina in care at John de la Howe School, as students, who require services necessary to address their individual treatment needs
- *Families* of children in care at John de la Howe School who require specialized and consistent assistance in addressing the child's at-risk behaviors so they may develop into healthy, productive adults
- *Referral Sources* such as schools, the Department of Social Services, the Department of Juvenile Justice, Family Courts, and healthcare professionals who seek placement of children separated from family and who expect level of positive impact and outcomes associated with the provision of high quality service

3. Key stakeholder groups (other than customers)

- *Taxpayers* of South Carolina who expect a positive return on investment, demonstrated by positive treatment outcomes, lowered rates of juvenile incarceration, and lowered school drop-out rates.
- *Employees* of John de la Howe School who expect a healthy, wholesome work environment absent of barriers preventing the fulfillment of job duties
- *Local Community Members* who expect an agency which may be regarded as an asset to the community

4. Key suppliers and partners

- John de la Howe School partners with families from across South Carolina. Families in potential need of services may receive recommendations from other state agencies, and school districts such as the departments of Education, Social Services or Juvenile Justice, to seek out the John de la Howe School as a last resort for their child before other, more stringent and costly services are required.
- John de la Howe School partners directly with the Department of Social Services (DSS) and Department of Juvenile Justice for direct placements on a 24/7, 365 days per year basis.

5. Operating location

- John de la Howe School is located at 192 Gettys Road, McCormick, South Carolina, 29835. Situated on 1216 acres in Northwest McCormick County in the midst of the Sumter National Forest, John de la Howe School is surrounded by beautiful lakes and woodlands; an environment conducive to focused instruction and learning.

6. Number of employees, segmented by employee category:

- Through June 30, 2011, the John De La Howe School employed a total of 70 employees; 9 unclassified FTE positions, 59 classified FTE positions and 2 temporary positions. These positions included administration/managerial, teaching faculty, human service, and support staff.

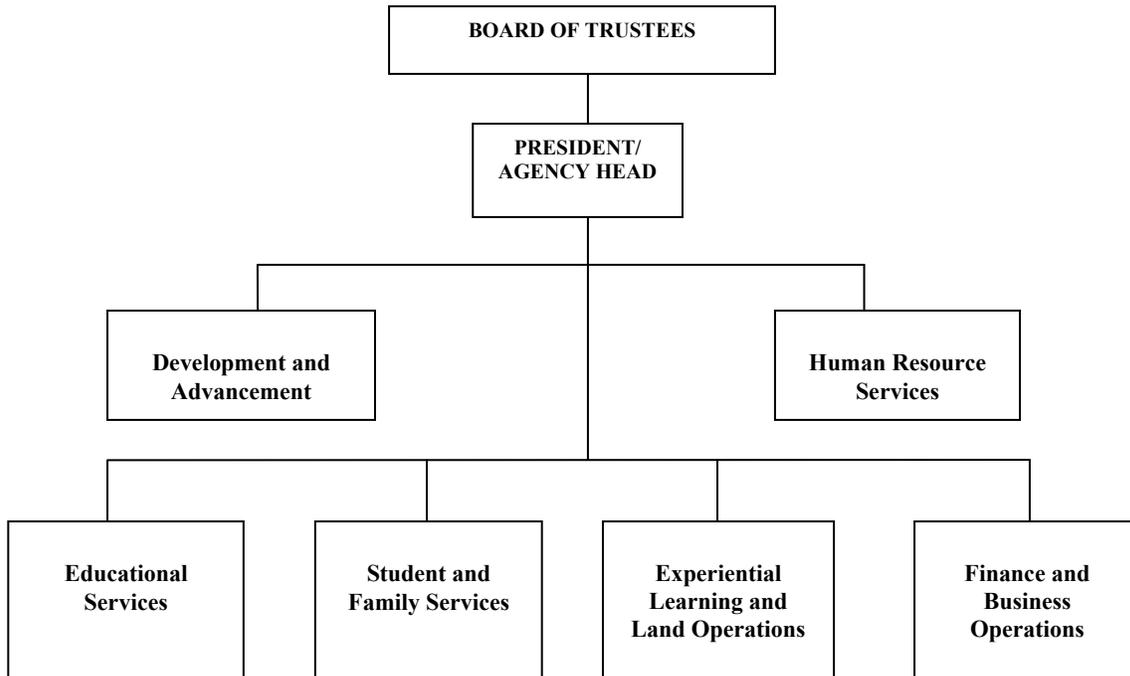
7. Regulatory environment under which the organization operates:

- South Carolina Department of Education
- South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
- South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
- South Carolina Department of Social Services
- South Carolina State Budget and Control Board
- Council on Accreditation (COA)
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)

8. Performance improvement system(s)

- John de la Howe School utilizes a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process as its performance improvement system. Within this approach, necessary components include: data inputs, needs identification and analysis, action plans for improvement, monitoring mechanisms for outcomes measurements, and feedback reports.

9. Organizational structure:



10. Expenditures/Appropriations Chart:

Accountability Report Appropriations/Expenditures Chart

Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations

| Major Budget Categories | FY 09-10 Actual Expenditures | | FY 10-11 Actual Expenditures | | FY 11-12 Appropriations Act | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| | Total Funds | General Funds | Total Funds | General Funds | Total Funds | General Funds |
| Personal Service | \$ 2,352,913 | \$ 2,181,439 | \$ 2,157,415 | \$ 2,001,801 | \$ 2,983,463 | \$ 2,734,102 |
| Other Operating | \$ 763,146 | \$ 420,036 | \$ 938,062 | \$ 352,540 | \$ 690,170 | \$ 452,976 |
| Special Items | | | | | | |
| Permanent Improvements | | | | | | |
| Case Services | | | | | | |
| Distributions to Subdivisions | | | | | | |
| Fringe Benefits | \$ 899,737 | \$ 857,819 | \$ 812,095 | \$ 731,566 | \$ 1,154,570 | \$ 1,031,017 |
| Non-recurring | \$ 547,110 | | | | | |
| Total | \$ 4,562,906 | \$ 3,459,294 | \$ 3,907,572 | \$ 3,085,907 | \$ 4,828,203 | \$ 4,218,095 |

Other Expenditures

| Sources of Funds | FY 09-10 Actual Expenditures | FY 10-11 Actual Expenditures |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Supplemental Bills | | |
| Capital Reserve Funds | | |
| Bonds | | |

11. Major Program Areas Chart

| 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 and policy governance for the agency, fiscal, human resource, advancement and development and procurement services as well as overall strategic direction. | State: 208,068.00 Federal: Other: Total: 208,068.00 % of Total Budget: 5% | State: 162,851.00 Federal: Other: 2,000.00 Total: 164,851.00 % of Total Budget: 5% | Section III 7.3 – 7.6 |
| II. Education | Accredited school providing middle through high school educational services to students in a residential treatment setting. | State: 322,308.00 Federal: 68,402.00 Other: 28,713.00 Total: 419,423.00 % of Total Budget: 10% | State: 437,533.00 Federal: 90,596.00 Other: 254,614.00 Total: 782,743.00 % of Total Budget: 18% | Section III 7.5 – 7.6 |
| III. Student and Family Services | Provides for the overall student safety and security, therapeutic counseling for students and families and mental and general healthcare. | State: 1,905,799.00 Federal: 15,040.00 Other: 495,077.00 Total: 2,415,846.00 % of Total Budget: 52% | State: 1,564,346.00 Federal: Other: 793,533.00 Total: 2,357,879.00 % of Total Budget: 53% | Section III 7.1,, 7.2, 7.5, 7.6 |
| IV. Business Operations | Maintenance of physical plant including facilities and grounds to established standards/code. Fleet management, Food Service operations, and Housekeeping. | State: 167,661.00 Federal: Other: 7,284.00 Total: 174,945.00 % of Total Budget: 4% | State: 703,254.00 Federal: 90,000.00 Other: 253,864.00 Total: 1,047,118.00 % of Total Budget: 24% | Section III 7.3 |
| | | State: Federal: Other: Total: % of Total Budget: | State: Federal: Other: Total: % of Total Budget: | |

Below: List any programs not included above and show the remainder of expenditures by source of funds.

| | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| Remainder of Expenditures: | State: 855,458.00 Federal: 8,764.00 Other: 480,402.00 Total: 1,344,624.00 % of Total Budget: 29% | State: Federal: Other: Total: % of Total Budget: |
|----------------------------|---|---|

*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.

12. Principal factors that determine John de la Howe School's competitive success:

- A sound reputation for positively impacting the lives of students and families from across the state who have had need of the services provided.
- Access to services. John de la Howe School is primarily funded through state appropriations, allowing families in South Carolina access to a level of care that provides affordable counseling and therapeutic care to address severe at-risk behaviors and family crisis. John de la Howe School uses a sliding tuition scale based upon household income. For families that qualify for Medicaid, the monthly tuition can be waived allowing the availability of the agency's services to low income families.
- John de la Howe School is an open campus located on 1216 acres of woodland surrounded by lakes and farmland, providing an atmosphere of openness and warmth while avoiding an "institutional" feel when serving the children in care. John de la Howe School's location allows the capability for additional outdoor activities, such as fishing, hiking through nature trails, and horse-back riding, that are not readily available to other facilities with limited acreage or in urban settings.
- John de la Howe School is able to provide a differentiation of programming capability beyond standard residential care through its Experiential Learning Programs. Students are able to gain practical hands-on experience in areas that include; farming, equine handling, landscaping, greenhouse operation, forestry preservation, and challenge course completion.
- John de la Howe School also provides a Wilderness Program in addition to its group living residential program. The Wilderness Program utilizes intensive group interdependency as students also focus on their individual treatment needs.
- John de la Howe School leads its students to develop a strong work ethic and vocational skills through meaningful work programs that include administration services, food services, and housekeeping services. Employees mentor students that show a particular interest or aptitude in a vocational area in which the employee works within the agency.

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Criteria

Category 1 – Senior Leadership, Governance, and Social Responsibility

- 1. How do senior leaders set, deploy, and ensure two-way communication throughout the organization and with customers and stakeholders, as appropriate for: a) short and long term organizational direction and organizational priorities, b) performance expectations, c) organizational values, and d) ethical behavior?**

John de la Howe School's senior leadership is vested in the vision and mission of the agency. As senior leaders, gaining an understanding of the history, mission, and vision of the agency is paramount. Taking advantage of leadership development opportunities, exemplifying professionalism, and maintaining the highest ethical standards allows leaders to demonstrate the characteristics that John de la Howe School expects of all its employees. In doing this, senior leaders instill a feeling of moral importance to the services provided at John de la Howe School.

To accomplish the mission of John de la Howe School, staff work with the children in care and their families to create open involvement in the therapeutic learning process. The agency's vision and values are communicated to families as they are seeking help for their children, and once in care, children and families are provided the opportunity to affect agency change through advisory councils and satisfaction surveys.

- 2. How do senior leaders establish and promote a focus on customers and other stakeholders?**

Outreach efforts with families, referring agencies and other customers, and stakeholders are embedded in our work process. A continual communication stream exists with all customers.

- 3. How does the organization address the current and potential impact on the public of its programs, services, facilities and operations, including associated risks?**

By remaining current on customer needs and public awareness and by maintaining solid working relationships and open communications with the agency's stakeholders, John de la Howe School is able to anticipate and discover adverse impacts. Stakeholder relationships include parents/guardians of children served, referral sources such as the Department of Social Services and the Department of Juvenile Justice, regulatory bodies, and the General Assembly. Regarding compliance matters, fiscal, human resource, treatment, academic and clinical record keeping are considered critical to the agency's success.

Strategic plans take into consideration the present status of the agency and trends around the state and nation. Issues that may impact our programs and services are reviewed for understanding, potential benefit and level of impact, fiscal consideration, and effectiveness.

4. How do senior leaders maintain fiscal, legal, and regulatory accountability?

Through personal supervision, and internal and external audits, monitoring and response mechanisms are in place to ensure fiscal, legal, and regulatory compliance, and the highest ethical standards.

The agency works with the following agencies individually throughout the year to ensure appropriate laws and regulations are adhered to: the Department of Social Services for licensure regulations; the State Fire Marshal's Office and the Energy Office for facility safety; the Department of Health and Environmental Control for health and sanitary issues; the State Auditor's Office, and the Comptroller General's Office and various offices of the Budget and Control Board for financial, procurement and facilities accountability.

5. What performance measures do senior leaders regularly review to inform them on needed actions?

Performance measures used by senior leaders include update reviews of the agency strategic plan, exit interviews, customer satisfaction and staff satisfaction survey results, children's treatment outcomes collection and reporting system, academic outcomes, staff productivity reports, and agency department and fiscal performance. In addition, the results of external audits and assessments that are directly related to the performance of staff and departments provide the agency additional feedback mechanisms.

6. How do senior leaders use organizational performance review findings and employee feedback to improve their own leadership effectiveness, the effectiveness of management throughout the organization including the head of the organization, and the governance board/policy making body? How do their personal actions reflect a commitment to organizational values?

The Superintendent is annually evaluated by the Board of Trustees. The achievement of strategic initiatives directly relates to the performance assessment of the Superintendent. Each senior leader meets weekly with the Superintendent to assess their performance. The leadership team meets bi-weekly to share information and to assess performance against objectives.

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

Through assessment coaching, mentoring and enforcement of core competency skills. The development of future organizational leaders occurs through the assignment of special projects which foster the development of leadership skills, through mentoring by supervisors, and through participation in professional development opportunities. All of which provide the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to be successful in the specific job assignment. Additionally, cross-training is promoted across the organization.

8. How do senior leaders create an environment for performance improvement and the accomplishment of strategic objectives?

The senior leadership of John de la Howe School leads by example, thus creating a sustainable organization with a focus on action. Bi-weekly meetings are held to address agency issues related to policy, vision, strategic planning, safety and performance. Because therapeutic residential care places tremendous demands on employees, senior leaders continually and consistently provide counseling and assistance to subordinate staff. John de la Howe School's emphasis is providing services needed by at-risk youth and their families, to make opportunity for these youth to become productive members of their communities.

Senior leadership works to create ownership of the agency's strategic plan by the workforce through their active involvement in and periodic reporting on progress in achieving strategic initiatives. Regular departmental meetings allow the development and implementation of action plans that focus on the accomplishment of goals. Sustainability is achieved through the utilization of the quality improvement plan.

9. How do senior leaders create an environment for organizational and workforce learning?

Through active listening of employee needs and remaining current on best practices and proven service delivery models. While certain skills are required of all staff, regardless of position, other skills are position specific. For example, all staff must meet minimum training requirements as directed by licensing rules such as Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR); however, direct care providers receive intensive training in behavioral and treatment models. In addition, specialized training opportunities are encouraged for staff to increase expertise in different skills so that, as a whole, John de la Howe can provide the most current level of services. Departments also utilize a mentoring approach, providing an extra level of support and development to promote workforce learning.

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 high performance throughout the organization?

Senior leaders communicate with, engage, empower and motivate the workforce through various means. Making the effort to get to know employees, modeling themselves as vested in the agency, and allowing their subordinates the freedom to utilize their proven skills and to achieve their program goals are just a few ways senior leaders take an active role in inspiring the workforce.

John de la Howe School continues to carry an agency theme of “Selfless Service to Others” as a means to recognize the exemplary and exceptional performance of employees in their job performance. Through meetings, employee newsletters, and performance reviews, the agency communicates its appreciation and recognition of employee accomplishment.

11. How do senior leaders actively support and strengthen the communities in which your organization operates? Include how senior leaders determine areas of emphasis for organizational involvement and support, and how senior leaders, the workforce, and the organization contribute to improving these communities.

John de la Howe School’s greatest impact on the public is manifested in the healthy behaviors and lifestyles demonstrated by the children in its care. This impact is communicated in a number of ways. For example, the children in care at John de la Howe participate in a number of community events including the McCormick-Abbeville County Extension Office Farm City Days held annually at John de la Howe School. Our students serve as guides to hundreds of elementary school students and their teachers from surrounding counties. In addition to Farm City Days, the students at John de la Howe School are active participants in community events such as Relay for Life in McCormick County and Habitat for Humanity programs.

John de la Howe School hosts an annual Dairy Festival, providing community outreach for the county. Hundreds attend the festival where crafts are sold, entertainment is provided, basic health screenings are provided, and children enjoy recreation in an environment of fun and learning.

In addition to student participation in community events, the message of the impact of the services delivered at John de la Howe is shared through scheduled presentations and on-site visits and tours. The Superintendent regularly speaks to service groups as well as to referral source groups regarding the services provided at John de la Howe School and its impact of those services on the community. In tandem with group presentations, John de la Howe School hosts on-site visits and tours for referral sources.

John de la Howe School partners with the federal prison in Edgefield in its Project Wake-Up program. This program takes youth at-risk of entering the criminal justice system and partners them with current inmates. This mentoring program takes place at the prison, so students are exposed to the harsh reality of prison life. This involves inmates sitting down with the student and sharing what happened in their lives that led to their incarceration, and attempts to motivate them to avoid the same mistakes.

Category 2 – Strategic Planning

| Strategic Planning Chart 2010-2011* | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| Program Number and Title | Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective | <u>Related FY 10-11 and beyond</u> Key Agency Action Plan/ Plan/Initiative(s) and Timeline for Accomplishing the Plan (s) | Key Cross References for Performance Measures* |
| I. Administration | Increase external revenue streams. Provide exemplary leadership and effective management. | Aggressive grants research and writing, expansion of facility leasing opportunities. Partnership with Foundation for fundraising activities and charitable giving programs. Explore acceptance and provision of services for out-of-state students. On-going projects with quarterly reviews/ reporting. | Section III 7.3 – 7.6 |
| II. Education Services | Improve student academic achievement while in placement. | Minimum ½ grade level improvement in Math and Reading. Facilitate parental involvement in the learning process through use of Power School and Best Notes to provide for parent access to grades, progress reports, and behavior issues via on-line access. | Section III 7.5 – 7.6 |
| III. Student and Family Services | Improve student treatment achievements/success. Provide quality student life services that enrich the treatment milieu and broadens support of student academic success. | Enhance parent education and family sessions, increase home visits and deploy Think:Kids model across campus and with families. On-going with quarterly reviews/reporting. | Section III 7.1, 7.2, 7.5, 7.6 |
| IV. Business Operations | Process improvement reviews and redesign. | Lead the agency in business process review and redesign to ensure compliance with all applicable laws, rule, regulations, and policy. | Section III 7.3 |
| | | | |

1. What is your Strategic Planning process, including key participants, and how does it address:

- a. your organizations' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats;**
- b. financial, regulatory, and other potential risks;**
- c. shifts in technology, student and community demographics, markets, student and stakeholder preferences, and competition.**
- d. workforce capabilities and needs;**
- e. organizational continuity in emergencies;**
- f. your ability to execute the strategic plan.**

John de la Howe School's strategic planning process is developed and implemented through the efforts of all agency staff. Senior leadership works within their departments building the departmental goals that support the achievement of the overall agency goal. During senior leadership meetings, these department goals are combined into a fluid agency strategic plan. Individual plan components are assigned target quarters for completion based upon estimated time required for completion, prioritized need, and placement in the overall process of the agency's efforts.

Strategic planning addresses strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the agency. Efforts are made to keep at a minimum any potential financial risk. For strategic actions that may require any licensing or regulatory impact, the actions would require approval from the licensing or regulatory body prior to implementation.

John de la Howe School attempts to stay abreast of shifts in technology, demographics, and competition. Being a specialized service provider, changes in trends of residential care and the acuity of children entering into that care are monitored to continue offering services and programs relevant to the needs of our customers.

Human resource staffing in a residential care/human services setting continuously presents challenges to the successful completion of strategic goals as turn-over from what can often be a stressful environment challenges the organization in the maintenance of a well qualified and trained staff.

Though rich in history and grounded in the hearts of South Carolinians, John de la Howe School realizes that emergencies and catastrophes can occur, and have been experienced. The agency strives to maintain its long-term sustainability and continuity through routine execution of drills, tests and maintenance of critical support equipment, and on-going training of staff.

Every effort is made during the strategic planning process to develop goals that are, at minimum, reasonable and obtainable. Strategic goals are reviewed during senior leadership meetings to maintain organizational focus on the achievement of strategic targets.

2. How do your strategic objectives address the strategic challenges you identified in your Executive Summary? (Section I, Question 4)

John de la Howe School's strategic plan contains several initiatives that address strategic challenges presented in the Executive Summary. Continuation of the cottage renovation program is a priority, and an assessment of all campus facilities, will be assessed for repair and upgrade needs.

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 your action plans.

Development of action plans is the responsibility of those assigned to achieving specific initiatives identified in the strategic plan. The progress of strategic initiatives is monitored on a regular basis. The strategic plan is included as an agenda item during senior leadership team meetings, at which time resource requirements are monitored and reallocated as necessary based upon impact and priority. It is during this time that updates on each initiative are provided, revisions are made to existing initiatives and new initiatives may be added.

4. How do you communicate and deploy your strategic objectives, action plans and related performance measures?

John de la Howe School communicates information regarding implementation of the strategic initiatives with employees through various channels. The agency director provides reports of the agency's accomplishments. These reports consist of information regarding the state of the organization, and progress on strategic initiatives. Periodic e-mail communications, newsletters, and the Accountability Report serve as primary communication vehicles for all stakeholders.

5. How do you measure progress on your action plans?

Each strategic initiative is assigned a targeted completion date. Progress is measured according to the completion of tasks and/or initiatives within the time constraints identified in the planning phase.

6. How do you evaluate and improve your strategic planning process?

The leadership team reviews the strategic plan to ensure goals and objectives are current, relevant and achievable. During reviews, aspects of the process are evaluated for their

effectiveness as well as the achievement of the initiatives. When initiatives are not achieved as targeted, the process is again reviewed to determine if the process placed unreasonable expectations on the initiatives. This is also considered when initiatives are completed much ahead of schedule.

7. If the organization's strategic plan is available to the public through the organization's internet homepage, please provide an address for that plan on the website.

The agency is currently updating/enhancing its internet homepage and the organization's strategic plan will be added for public viewing and feedback.

Category 3 – Customer Focus

1. How do you determine who your customers are and what their key requirements are?

John de la Howe School is an agency providing specialized services in either a group living setting or a wilderness camp setting based upon the placement needs of clients. John de la Howe School serves at risk students, between the ages of 12 and 21 who are experiencing difficulties at home to the extent that separation from the family is necessary. Our market segment is clearly defined and our customers are known to us.

John de la Howe School assesses the needs of our customer base through regularly scheduled face-to-face interaction. The agency conducts assessments of every client that enters into care at John de la Howe School to individualize his/her program. Additionally, John de la Howe School maintains routine contact with referral sources such as school counselor groups, the Department of Social Services, and the Department of Juvenile Justice to stay abreast of their changing needs. As well, we remain apprised of changes in law and best practices that impact our service delivery.

2. How do you keep your listening and learning methods current with changing student and stakeholder needs and expectations?

John de la Howe School personally engages customers in order to determine their needs and expectations within the programs and services provided. This has proven to be an effective means to successfully identify customers' new and/or changing needs and expectations. Periodic surveys are conducted to provide customer feedback, ideas and recommendation for improvement.

3. What are your key customer access mechanisms, and how do these access mechanisms enable customers to seek information, conduct business, and make complaints?

As part of the accreditation process with the Council on Accreditation, John de la Howe School developed and implemented a new student/family grievance procedure. Resolutions of grievances for actively served student clients are attempted at the direct care management level. If resolution does not occur, then the process allows for progression to the agency director.

When a student is administratively discharged from the agency, the student and/or family has the right of grievance of the discharge by submitting a request through our Director of Student and Family Services. A review committee is formed with equal representation from all direct-care department areas of the agency and a formal meeting is held with the grieving party. If the initial decision is upheld, the party then has the right to formally appeal to the agency director, who may convene a second review committee if the party's appeal presents information not available at the time of the first meeting.

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

John de la Howe School has protocols during in place that allow customers to provide feedback of their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the services provided. During FY 11, John de la Howe targeted specific areas identified so that the agency and its programs of service can be strengthened and adapted to meet the ever changing needs of the families of South Carolina. The ultimate benefit of these mechanisms occurs when a child successfully completes his/her program of treatment at John de la Howe School and returns home as a positive and productive citizen of the state.

5. How do you use information and feedback from current, former, and future students and stakeholders to keep services and programs relevant, and provide for continuous improvement?

John de la Howe School appreciates the feedback received from stakeholders. With the implementation of the quarterly parent/guardian surveys, the agency has been able to see areas of strength and areas needing improvement. While overall John de la Howe School is proud of the responses of the surveys, the agency recognizes that there are areas where improvement can take place. With the accomplishment of receiving COA accreditation, John de la Howe School is committed to provide the best services possible to its students and their families.

Additionally, John de la Howe School continues its commitment to strengthen relationships with the Department of Social Services (DSS), and the Department of Juvenile Justice. During the challenges of current economic conditions, John de la Howe continues to seek areas or service provision that these agencies can utilize, thereby easing the financial burden of the state in providing incarceration services to South Carolina's juvenile population.

6. How do you build positive relationships with customers and stakeholders to meet and exceed their expectations? Indicate any key distinctions between different customer and stakeholder groups.

John de la Howe School's services are highly personal and confidential in nature. To be successful, we must maintain frequent, open communication with our customers and stakeholders. In addition, the active participation of our clients and their families is paramount. We utilize the treatment process to engage the children, parents, and referral sources as well as maintain open communication with them. This system fosters progress in treatment as well as the added benefit of strengthening relationships.

Category 4 – Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management

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

Cost centers and critical success areas are known and prioritized for monitoring. However, because the agency is a relatively small operation, this allows the opportunity to maintain a manageable and relatively inclusive measurement of all facets of the organizational performance. Additionally, guidelines from regulatory and accrediting agencies guide our metrics processes.

2. How do you select, collect, align, and integrate data/information for analysis to provide effective support for decision making and innovation throughout your organization.

John de la Howe School takes into consideration data and other information collected that provide supportive evidence for the decision making process. For example, census data that is collected drives decisions relative to cottage assignments and referral development efforts. Likewise, billing and collection data is considered when making financial decisions, particularly those involving fixed costs.

3. What are your key measures, how do you review them, and how do you keep them current with organizational service needs and directions?

John de la Howe School provides a specific array of services to its clients. Our key measures include, but are not limited to, enrollment, behavioral health treatment progress, academic progress, budget, and staffing levels. Senior leadership and management teams review these measures on a weekly or monthly basis, according to each measure's frequency of reporting. In response to discoveries, developmental tasks are assigned to appropriate staff members to keep the agency current with service needs and directions. A dashboard of key indicators is being developed for access from each senior manager's workstation that will provide real-time data and information to drive sound decision making across the agency.

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

John de la Howe School utilizes comparative data when considering adjustments in the agency's operation. For example, when making decisions regarding tuition, rates of similar agencies are taken into consideration. Similarly, when making decisions regarding programming, e.g., treatment models, data reflecting the effectiveness of models under consideration is taken into account.

Utilizing a variety of communication options, John de la Howe School presents information and data that is timely and appropriate for its target audience. To make accessibility of data within the agency easier for the workforce to acquire, the agency capitalizes on its intranet capabilities. Through the use of email and the posting of relevant information on its network, staff can have instant access to data on a daily basis. Regular meetings occur within each department that allow departments to share and process information specific to their area, and expand on their role as part of the overall agency. A bi-monthly employee newsletter is distributed to keep employees abreast of activities around the agency, spotlighting and recognizing employees for their contributions and dedication, and providing a general sharing of life events with the members of the "de la Howe family". Quarterly all-staff meetings are held with the entire workforce to share agency wide information, such as budgeting and agency goals, and to share cross departmental information such as specific business initiatives occurring in the departments.

John de la Howe School also keeps stakeholders informed through a quarterly bulletin. The bulletin is made available, via the agency website, for broad access and awareness for individuals, families and referral sources. An annual update is prepared by the agency director summarizing the year's accomplishments and activities.

5. How do you ensure data integrity, timeliness, accuracy, security, and availability for decision-making?

John de la Howe School maintains a secure internal network for its data needs. This network is monitored daily for any security breach or threats.

6. How do you translate organizational performance review findings into priorities for continuous improvement?

John de la Howe School utilizes performance review findings to identify areas requiring continuous improvement focus. Those areas are prioritized according to the impact on the children in care and available funds.

7. How do you collect, transfer, and maintain organizational and employee knowledge (knowledge assets)? How do you identify, share and implement best practices, as appropriate?

Organizational and employee knowledge is managed through resources such as position specific operating procedure manuals. For example, as a staff development tool, direct care staff are provided a residential services handbook. John de la Howe School is a formally accredited agency through COA. Additionally, cross-training is used as a key vehicle for the maintenance of knowledge transfer and sustainability.

Category 5 – Workforce Focus

1. How does management organize and manage work to enable your workforce to: 1) develop to their full potential, aligned with the organization’s objectives, strategies, and action plans; and 2) promote cooperation, initiative, empowerment, teamwork, innovation, and your organizational culture?

Due to licensing and accreditation requirements, employees of certain department areas require different levels of development and ongoing training than employees from other departments. As a cost saving measure, the agency emphasizes in-house training to provide staff development, and then seeks opportunities to provide enhanced development opportunities through outside sources; as necessary and required by accrediting and/or regulatory bodies. In order to achieve a diverse offering of program elements when utilizing fee based development opportunities provided outside the agency, the individuals selected to attend these sessions are held to a minimum; with the events carefully approved based upon the potential positive impact to service provision. As a result, staff are given the opportunity to specialize and receive training in specific areas, and then return and become part of the agency’s development program by sharing their expertise with the remainder of their team. The agency also partners with other state agencies for the trade of professional development services.

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

John de la Howe School accomplishes the achievement of effective communication and knowledge sharing in several ways. An extensive use of the email system allows for immediate communication and the sharing of knowledge. Minutes of meetings are broadcast via e-mail to effectively communicate across the agency updates on the achievements of the strategic plan, upcoming events, training opportunities, and special recognitions.

3. How does management recruit, hire, place and retain new employees? Describe any barriers that you may encounter.

John de la Howe School utilizes the E-recruitment system as its major means of recruiting new staff. All available agency positions are posted on bulletin boards across the campus. Designated personnel attend job fairs and visit colleges to promote John de la Howe School to prospective individuals desiring to enter the field of social work/human services. A formal application and interview process is conducted for any open position. John de la Howe School is an equal employment opportunity agency. Being a residential care provider, all offers of employment are contingent upon the results of a drug screen, physical exam, criminal history background check, and sexual offenders' registry check. The agency provides orientation to all new employees, and, depending upon the specific position, a specialized orientation for that position. For example, our Youth Counselor position requires the completion of a 40 hour orientation before a new hire is assigned the supervision of a cottage. This intensive training is provided to equip new hires and also to encourage staff retention. Our rural setting, while conducive to the effective education and behavior therapy service offerings for our students and families, is sometimes problematic in attracting the skills sets and core competencies required in our workforce.

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

As a residential services provider, John de la Howe School maintains workforce levels that meet or exceed regulatory requirements. Depending on the position, specific requirements involving the skill and competencies of staff must be maintained. The Human Resource Services Office work with division heads to assess their unique workforce needs.

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?

Linking job functions and goals to the mission and strategic plan of the agency are of primary importance when considering position performance. Developing clear measures for success and providing verbal and written feedback regarding progress through regular supervision helps all staff and all divisions achieve their goals.

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?**

John de la Howe School requires all employees placed into a supervisory role to receive supervisory practices training through the Office of Human Resources of the State Budget and Control Board. The agency also makes available specific training opportunities to benefit leaders in their specific roles within the agency. Ethical practices is paramount to the effectiveness and fidelity of John de la Howe School as demonstrated by a presentation of practices and expectations in preparation for achieving accreditation through the Council on Accreditation (COA). The agency maintains ongoing development of its leadership through formal and informal means for leaders to be empowered to face challenges and accomplish action plans for which they are accountable.

7. How do you identify and address key developmental training needs for your workforce, including job skills training, performance excellence training, diversity training, management/leadership development, new employee orientation, and safety training?

Key developmental and training needs are identified through staff survey, identified industry trends, as well as through the extensive field experience of members of the senior leadership team.

For example, the direct care staff, known as Youth Counselors, have historically been regarded as unskilled, non-professional “house parents”. However, the acuity of the children and families presenting for care has required a transition to a “paraprofessional clinical staff” with the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully deploy our service model. To that end, direct care staff are provided extensive behavioral health training which includes effective interventions for behavioral disorders such as conduct disorders, depression, and anxiety.

Agency leaders are expected to remain abreast of legal, regulatory and/or policy changes that impact their areas and to provide for any necessary training required to develop the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities related to the changes.

8. How do you encourage on-the-job use of new knowledge and skills?

For our direct care staff, their first week of employment at John de la Howe School is spent living in a cottage just like the children in care at the agency. During this orientation, the staff are provided hands on training of the key requirements and duties of their positions. The knowledge gained during this week is immediately transferred to use on the job.

9. How does employee training contribute to the achievement of your action plans?

Employee training in the human services field and in those supporting competencies across the agency is of paramount importance to the successful achievement of agency action plans.

10. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of your workforce and leader training and development systems?

John de la Howe School utilizes feedback mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of workforce training and development. Personnel receiving training are asked to complete an evaluation of the training at its conclusion. The trainer and the information presented are evaluated as to presentation and relevance to the performance of duties.

11. How do you motivate your workforce to develop and utilize their full potential?

Frequent expressions of encouragement and appreciation by members of the senior leadership to employees are a key component in employee motivation. Likewise, instances of “Selfless Service to Others”, an ongoing agency theme, are shared with all staff in various communications.

Opportunities for training are provided and participation encouraged; if not mandatory. Employees are assessed on their interest, skills, education and personal and professional goals. Likewise, employees are encouraged to apply for job opening opportunities that match their interest and skills inventory as a means to leverage existing agency knowledge.

12. What formal and/or informal assessment methods and measures do you use to obtain information on workforce well-being, satisfaction, and motivation? How do you use other measures such as employee retention and grievances?

Assessment methods used to obtain information on workforce well-being, satisfaction, and motivation include survey, one-on-one interaction with senior leadership, maintaining an atmosphere of openness and responsiveness, and the creation of an environment in which concerns may be openly shared and discussed.

When staff choose to separate from the agency, exit interviews are offered. The information collected during those interviews is then used to determine areas requiring attention and to develop corresponding action plans. Areas that present an emerging pattern or trend are given a high priority.

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

John de la Howe School's Knowledge Transfer Plan aids in accomplishing effective succession planning. Part of this plan incorporates a temporary succession plan, or transfer of duties, in the event a key position becomes vacated in a planned or unplanned way, or the position will be vacant for an extended period of time. Through the continued implementation of this plan, cross training takes place for staff in key positions to develop other staff, teaching additional skills that may be required if they had to take responsibilities of a higher level position.

14. How do you maintain a safe, secure, and healthy work environment?

John de la Howe School strives to maintain a safe and healthy work environment. An "open door policy" is maintained for the reporting of any practices that may be considered unsafe to any member of management. First Aid/CPR and Blood Borne Pathogens classes are provided to all employees on an annual basis. Efforts to provide a safe environment for students and staff are continually encouraged.

John de la Howe uses Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) as a prevention and intervention tool for acute behaviors. TCI was developed by the Residential Child-Care Project of Cornell University. TCI training is designed to help staff communicate effectively, intervene appropriately, and de-escalate a student in a crisis situation. It also teaches a safe and therapeutic process to use physical intervention as a last resort. The course focuses on communication skills and techniques to listen and assist young people with decision-making and anger management.

Category 6 – Process Management

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?

John de la Howe School's core competencies include expertise in the treatment process and the academic/vocational instruction process. The treatment process includes the full continuum of behavioral health treatment a child receives while in care at John de la Howe School. Included in the process is the child's individualized assessment and treatment plan, interventions provided to assist the child with achieving his/her treatment plan goals and the regular review of progress toward the treatment goals. Specific interventions include, but are not limited to, individual counseling, family counseling, group counseling, behavior intervention, daily living skills training, medication management, case management, and parenting education.

Academic instruction encompasses all aspects of the child's formal academic and vocational education. This process includes instruction in core subjects such as math, science, language arts, and social studies and supplemental subjects such as health education, physical education, and computer skills training. The school continues to use a service learning component and the PACE Learning System, a self-paced learning program, for our students, strengthening the educational service offerings during the school day. In addition to instruction, a regular assessment of a client's education progress, including standardized testing, is included in the education process.

2. How do you determine and what are your key work processes that produce, create or add value for your customers and your organization and how do they relate to your core competencies? How do you ensure these processes are used?

John de la Howe School's key work processes and core competency areas include:

- structured group living in a cottage or camp environment, depending upon program assignment
- individual and group therapy sessions
- academic instruction of core subject material
- service learning and experiential learning opportunities
- development of independent living and appropriate social skills

These processes are integral to the system of care provided by the agency to its customers.

3. How do you incorporate organizational knowledge, new technology, cost controls, and other efficiency and effectiveness factors, such as cycle time, into process design and delivery?

John de la Howe School incorporates organizational knowledge, technology considerations, and cost controls during planning processes through the agency's continuous quality improvement process. Through the use of action plans, various elements of process design and delivery are stepped out, culminating into an effective and efficient means of development and implementation.

Instances of such activity include the utilization of the agency's management information system. Collecting and reporting data aids in making admission decisions and cottage assignments, as this makes possible the tracking of changes in the characteristics and needs of our customers.

Similarly, the agency's budget process is departmentalized so that those held accountable for expenses can be provided with the data necessary to make informed and appropriate decisions.

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

These processes drive the day-to-day operations of the agency and provide insight into process improvement requirements.

5. How do you systematically evaluate and improve your key product and service related work processes?

John de la Howe School routinely evaluates the learning centered and service related processes through the continuous quality improvement process. The agency is in the process of implementing an enterprise solution designed specifically for residential treatment facilities with an education component and links to the state Department of Education's Power School platform to provide needed outcome measures to evaluate our effectiveness.

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

John de la Howe School's key support processes include Information Technology, Human Resources, Finance, and Facilities Maintenance. Information Technology supports all of the departments of the agency and plays a special role in tracking the behavioral improvements of our students. Our rural location provides challenges in attracting outside vendors to perform maintenance activities. Therefore, our maintenance staff must stay abreast of developments regarding the upkeep of facilities and they provide routine preventive maintenance to prolong the life of equipment and structures on the campus. Facilities must be in to code and structurally sound in order to ensure a safe environment for the students we serve. In addition a deferred maintenance plan is projected for a five-year period. Permanent improvement expenditures are based on the greatest need, which is determined by the condition of the structure and impact on the agency's programs.

7. How does your agency determine the resources needed to meet current and projected budget and financial obligations?

John de la Howe School assesses and reviews the operating needs of the agency on a regular basis to ensure that adequate financial resources are available to support our operations. During the agency's budget submission process, projections of fixed costs and new initiatives are made to provide a responsible request for appropriations. Following the agency's approved budget, resources are monitored on a daily basis to make sure all financial obligations are met and that resources remain to meet the on-going obligations throughout the budgetary year.

New initiatives are prioritized and are incorporated only when appropriate funding is available. John de la Howe School attempts to subsidize its regular funding through alternative funding sources such as grants, foundation and alumni support.

Category 7 – 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 the results compare to those of comparable organizations?

John de la Howe School's Group Living Program measures a child's progress in six areas: cottage life and behavior, academic performance, school conduct, progression through counseling, Homestay events and evaluations, and activity therapy. These six domains are then combined to provide an overall progress in treatment score for the child.

Parents/guardians do not place their children at John de la Howe School with the intent that the child will remain until adulthood. Preparing for the return home begins with the first day of placement. A Homestay calendar is prepared annually so parents/guardians can be prepared for the specific times that the child will return home for an assessment period to determine their functioning in their home environment. Parents/guardians are partnered with John de la Howe School, and this is seen through the evaluations that the families complete on their child for each Homestay that occurs.

Activity Therapy incorporates participation, behavior, and sportsmanship through the various service learning and recreational activities provided through the Activity Therapy section of the Experiential Learning Department of John de la Howe School.

The overall progress of a child is calculated based upon the six aforementioned domains. This becomes a significant factor when determining how close a child is in completion of their goals, and discharge can be considered.

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?

A major indicator for customer satisfaction is reflected in the number of referrals received through the course of the year.

Having a child complete its program does not mean the agency has forgotten him/her. John de la Howe School works with the family to prepare them for their child's return to the home and local school environment, and recommends local sources of support in their home community.

Comparative data is difficult to assess as the agency is unique in its provision of services.

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

John de la Howe School remains committed to sound fiscal stewardship. Even as the agency had to endure the reductions that affected all state agencies, John de la Howe kept its commitment to being a best practices provider of quality services. Available funds are targeted to the priority areas of direct care, the safety and security of the students in our care and toward family centric counseling and activities.

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

Despite budget reductions, John de la Howe School has maintained its performance level in servicing the children and families of South Carolina.

John de la Howe School accepts into placement children that need moderate managed care. As a result, every effort is made to ensure a safe environment for students and staff. The agency routinely communicates the importance of safety among the workforce.

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

John de la Howe School considers its key measures for organizational effectiveness to be the academic achievement of children while in care, the overall number of children served, and the amount of referrals received for placement.

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

John de la Howe School incorporates its treatment processes within the time frames of the academic year, yet the agency receives placement year round. As such, the needs of the children in care will at time overlap into another academic cycle. Consequently, a number of discharges may occur at the conclusion of an academic cycle, and as a result, the following year may experience an increase in the number of children needing to remain in care.

