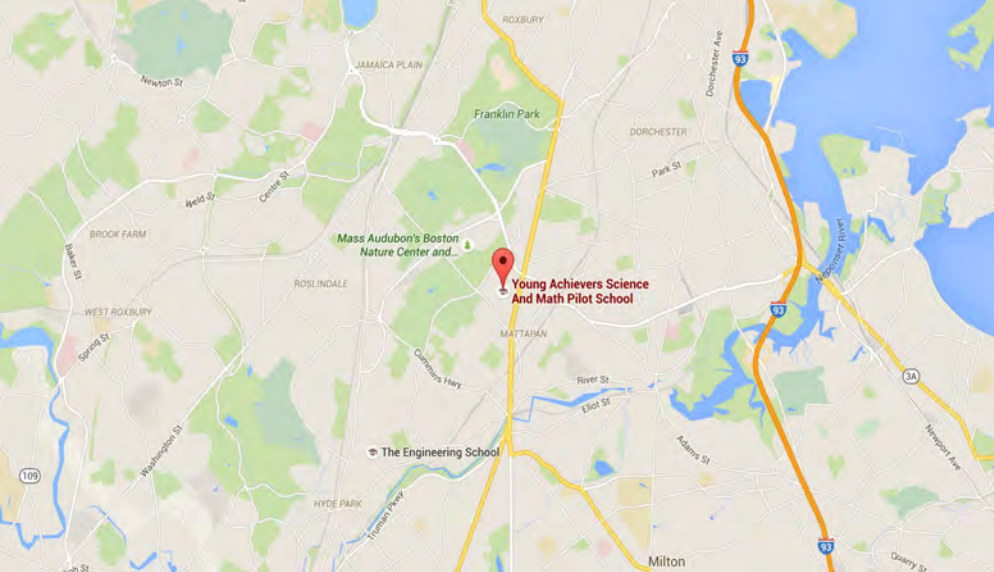




The Young Achievers Science and Mathematics Pilot School

Mattapan, Massachusetts



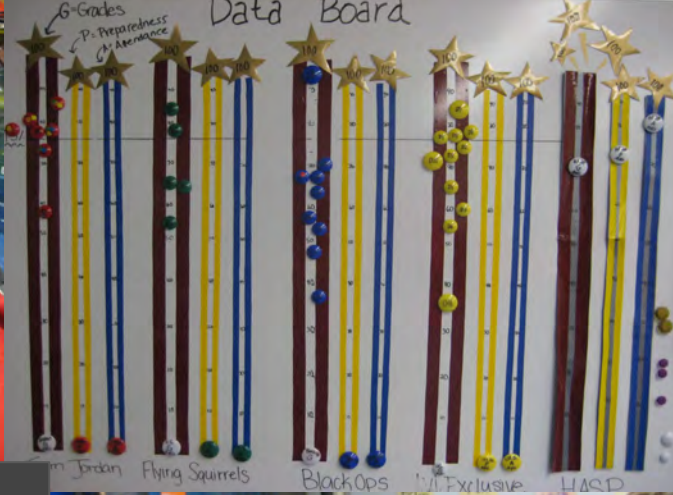
Young Achievers is pilot school located in Mattapan, MA and was founded in 1993.





Abstract

The Young Achievers Science & Mathematics Pilot School serves 526 students from PK through K-8, that are selected in a lottery system. Young Achievers one of eleven pilot schools in Boston that were founded in response to the Massachusetts Educational Reform Act of 1993. The goal of the Pilot school program is to develop pioneering models of education within the Boston Public School district and to disseminate best practices to other urban public schools.



A Case for Community Schools
Young Achievers serves 526 students from PK through K-8 who are selected in a lottery system. The school is one of eleven pilot schools in Boston that were founded in response to the Massachusetts Educational Reform Act of 1993. The goal of the school is to develop pioneering models of education - one that values academics, community activism, and partnership with the city - and disseminates these best practices to other urban public schools.





Mission and Goals

Focused on fostering academic excellence. Every child *can* be interested in math and science provided the subjects are taught in a manner that capture the imagination and range of students in the class. That means, to YA, that there must be some traditional *and* experimental modes of teaching, that it must be dynamic and fun, and inclusive and fulfilling the active-learning ethos. YA say math and science can lead to a successful life and the YA goal is to set their students up for college level math and science. They also say that cultural relevance is important, as are individual needs. Experiential learning, although it's not explicitly defined, is critical as is social justice which they define as inclusive and diverse culture, stewards in the natural environment, active in social issues, and community oriented.



Origins, Organization, and Operation

Young Achievers was founded in 1993 by community leaders, parents and teachers called Friends of Young Achievers (FOYA). The FOYA Board is made up of folks from the business, education, and social service sectors, families and the community. Fees are on a sliding scale and childcare vouchers are accepted.

Partners are very important to Young Achievers and the following organizations currently support the school:

Children's Services of Roxbury,
Boston Teacher Residency,
The City School,
Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound,
Full Service Community School Round Table,
Mattapan Community Health Center,
Berklee College of Music,
Playworks,
Sportsmen's Tennis & Enrichment Club,
Friends of the Children





Oo observe



Young Achievers has the following programming:

- Seven and a half hour extended day for all students
- 12:1 student-teacher ratio
- Inclusive special education program
- A family & community outreach coordinator (FCOC) who facilitates family involvement in governance and the school community
- School based health center from Mattapan Community Health Center
- Active wellness initiative
- Home visits to each new kindergarten and first grade student
- Homework help and daily interventions to help children master grade level standards
- Music, art, technology physical education, chess, martial arts, dance in every school day
- Sheltered English Instruction (SEI), K1-grade 4
- Environmental literacy included in curriculum from Boston Nature Center, the Harvard Arboretum, Franklin Park Zoo and Forest Hills Cemetery. Objective is to have each Young Achiever become stewards of the environment, translating the school-wide pledge “to make a difference in our school, our neighborhood, our city” into a reality of environmental activism.

OUR POWER Chart

Strengths

- Ranked 177th of 1,042 for diversity in state public elementary schools
 - Ethnically representative
 - A- culture and diversity grade
- Majority of students are have free or reduced lunch rates
- Gender balanced
- Students are environmentally literate
- Leadership is advocated and supported
- Partnerships are diverse and strong

Weaknesses

- Academics aren't as strong as other schools
- Funding isn't secure
- The structure of a pilot school is experimental so it's unstable.

Opportunities

- Partnerships can be developed further
- Community School
- As a pilot school it has the opportunity to be a model to other schools

Threats

- Limited facilities
- Partnerships are only on a year by year basis
- Dependent on partnerships for large portion of programming
- In constant financial deficit
- Capacity is limited

INDEPENDENT LEARNER!

GOING FOR GREEN!

Jonny

Emorey

Marlon

Kiya

Ashley

Sophie

Carmelina

Emmeline

Felicity

Willie

Jayden

Ms. Colon

Tyrese

Iyana

Joseph

Isiah



Lessons for Philly

- Partnerships are critical.
- Diverse partnerships with local and national organizations can help diversify the curriculum, extracurricular activities, and
- Partnerships around the city exposes students to different ways of living, thinking, and approaching the world.
- Full commitment from faculty and staff is critical.
- Active citizen with environmentalism and spiritualism
- Allowing students to have time out of classes to gain firsthand experience of surrounding “green spaces”
- Looking for donations from local or chain businesses and/or community members
- Building support from **community for curriculum changes**
- **Include community as part of the curriculum process**
- **Working with programs like *Green Schools Initiative* to help build coalitions of green schools working on projects**

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