

# EXCEL ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

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## Excel Scholars Grow and Blossom

AS THE SECOND SCHOOL YEAR OF EXCEL ACADEMY comes to a close, we look back at our accomplishments in 2009-2010. Excel scholars have grown tremendously in the past year. We have seen baby teeth fall out and new teeth come in. We have seen the smallest scholar in the class finish the year as the tallest. We have watched scholars struggling to sound out words in a book and then reading independently with ease. We have watched and guided our scholars as they learned how to play new games with new friends. We know that we are lucky to be able to teach our girls at such important stages in their lives. We are grateful that we are able to participate in and enjoy the growth of each student.



## Excel Academy's Growth

Excel experienced its own growth during the 2009-2010 school year. In our inaugural year we provided high quality education to 134 students. We had top notch teachers and a very dedicated administrative staff. Going into the 2009-

2010 school year, Excel increased our enrollment by 56% in order to meet growing demands from the community. Excel's administration knew that 210 students could not fit in the educational annex at our original location, so we looked for a new location that could hold us for the years to come. With the help of Building Hope, a non-profit that helps charter schools find and lease school space, we moved into the old Birney Elementary School building. We had a new location, space for returning and new students, and returning and new teachers. Our second year was even better than the first. To



**Excel's New School Building!**

ensure that all of our scholars received the attention that they needed, additional support staff were hired. Our teachers and students received tremendous support from our new Dean of Students (Mrs. Johnson), School Psychologist (Ms. Ball), Special Education Teacher (Ms. Snead), and Data Analyst (Mr. Steinhaus). Excel's staff is proud of our own growth and the growth of our students.

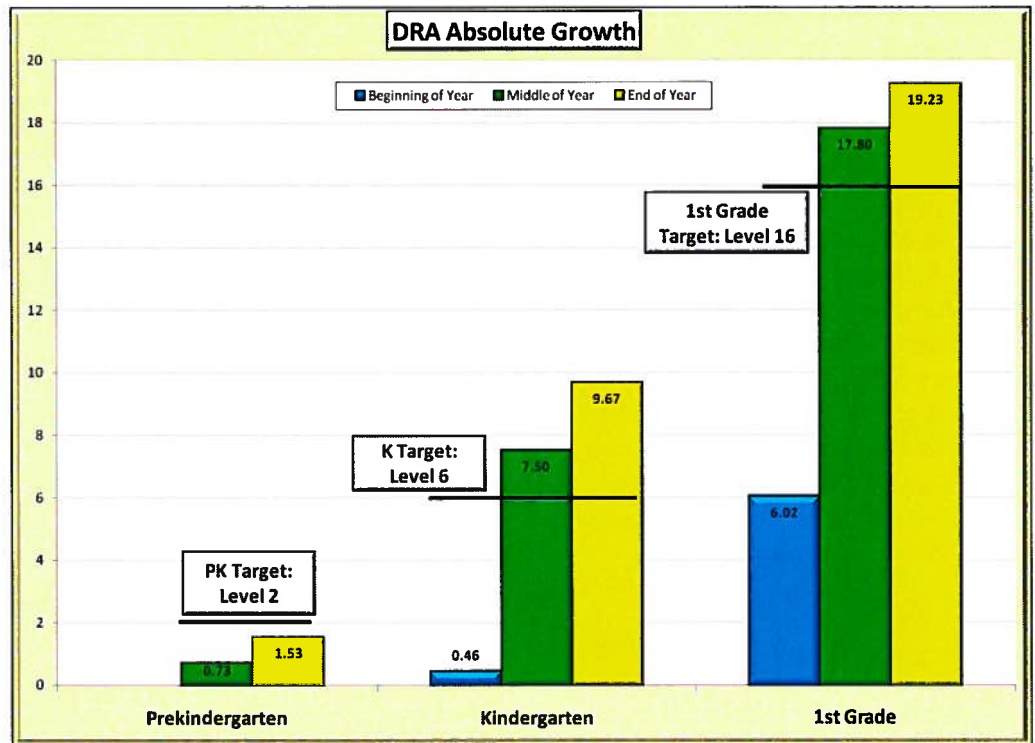
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- Testing Terrific
- Fantastic Field Trips
- Envious End-of-the-Year
- Ambassador Visit

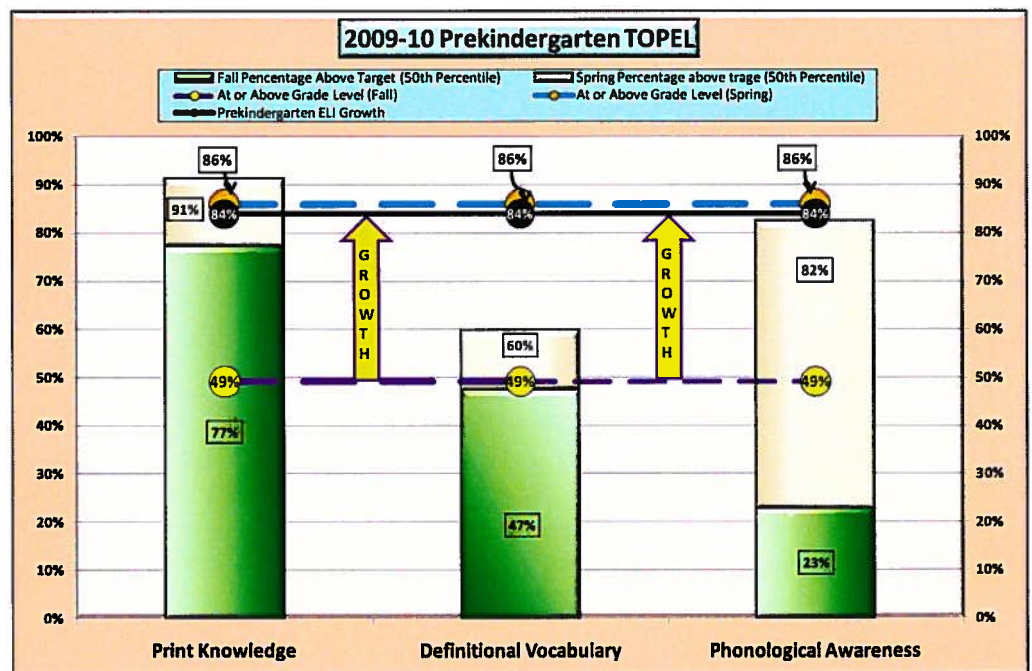
# Congratulations! K – 1st classes are reading ABOVE average on the DRA tests

The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) measures a student's ability to preview and predict a story and read it out-loud. The assessment tests students' fluency, expression when reading, comprehension, and any oral reading strategies the student uses. Excel is pleased to announce that we set above average targets for our prekindergarten through 1st grade students and that our kindergarten and 1st grade students surpassed those targets. Our prekindergarten students came very close to meeting their target.



# Congrats! PS/PK made gains in leaps and bounds in TOPEL testing

The Test of Preschool Early Literacy (TOPEL) measures alphabet knowledge and early knowledge about written language conventions and form (print knowledge), single-word oral vocabulary definitional vocabulary, and word blending abilities (phonological awareness). Prekindergarten scholars started the year with more than half of all scholars below grade levels. By the end of the year 86% of scholars were at or above grade level as measured by TOPEL.



## 2009-2010 Field Trips!

Excel's 2009-2010 school year was full of learning and enrichment. Excel scholars went on numerous field trips to deepen their academic knowledge and expand their experiences in the city and the world around it.

Our students took field trips to Ronald Reagan National Airport, Rock Creek Park, and Imagination Stage Theater to see Ferdinand and the Bull.

Scholars visited the

National Museum of History, Capitol Hill, White House Easter Egg Roll, National Zoo, Botanical Gardens, Colleges Park Aviation Museum, Clark Eliaoak's Farm, Butler's Orchard Pumpkin Patch, and Stone Ridge Academy of the Sacred Heart. Each experience exposed our scholars to new subjects or new environments that taught them about art, culture, history, science, and themselves.



Excel students went on amazing field trips to special places. Clockwise from the left: Ms. Jackson with students at the White House Easter Egg Roll, Butler's Orchard pumpkin picking, Flight ready at the College Park Aviation Museum.

## Bienvenida Embajadora Barco

Excel was honored to have the Colombian Ambassador to the US, Mrs. Carolina Barco, visit us in May. Mrs. Barco came to Excel to learn about our innovative educational methods so that she could support progressive education reform in her home country of Colombia.



Oxford graduating class of 2010 (Kindergarten)

## End-of-the-Year-Carnival

Following the Bridge Ceremony on June 18th, families joined Excel in an ongoing tradition, a family carnival. Face painting, two moon bounces, live kids music, and delicious BBQ kept scholars and parents entertained and happy. It was a beautiful sunny day filled with joy and anticipation for the new school year to come.



Students ready for fun, food, music, and family at the Carnival

## Bridge Ceremony 2010!

On June 17th and 18th, Excel Academy held its second annual Bridge Ceremony to celebrate scholars' successful completion of their academic year. As family members, teachers and other staff looked on, every scholar walked "over" the bridge to symbolize her path to a new grade, and also to the path to college. The bridge symbolizes the rewards and obstacles on the path to college. At Excel we ensure that our scholars are academically, socially and emotionally prepared to

cross any bridge on their way to reaching their goals.

In addition to the bridge ceremony, scholars shared their Fun Friday customs and routines with the audience. Each class performed special songs to demonstrate the five governing principles of the Excel community: Respect, Enthusiasm, Achievement, Citizenship, and Hard Work. The Bridge Ceremony was an exciting and emotional event for all of our families and students and a delightful ending to an amazing year.



## Your Gift Will Enable Excel Academy Scholars to Focus on Their Studies While Looking their Best

Please consider making a financial gift to help Excel Academy supply free uniforms to every Scholar. The cost of a complete uniform, which includes a jumper, a polo shirt, and a sweater, is sixty dollars (\$60.00). Excel Academy uniforms help to foster a culture of unity, reduce “self-consciousness”, increase academic focus, and enable every student to look their best every day.

### Upcoming Events

August 2010	Welcome New Staff
August 2- 27	Professional Development
August 18- 20	Parent Orientation
August 23	Pre-School, Pre-K Days
August 26	First Day of School for All Scholars

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**To Donate or Volunteer:**  
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## 2010-2011 EXCEL ACADEMY Public Charter

