

## THE CHALLENGE:

In the 2008–2009 school year, Bell Multicultural High School (BMHS) and Lincoln Multicultural Middle School (LMMS) combined to create the Columbia Heights Educational Campus (CHEC), enrolling approximately 1,350 students. More than 95% of students at CHEC qualify for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program. In 2004, only 25% of LMMS students and 13% of BMHS students achieved proficiency on the district English language arts test, as measured by the Stanford Achievement Test, ninth edition (SAT9).

## LITERACY IN ACTION:

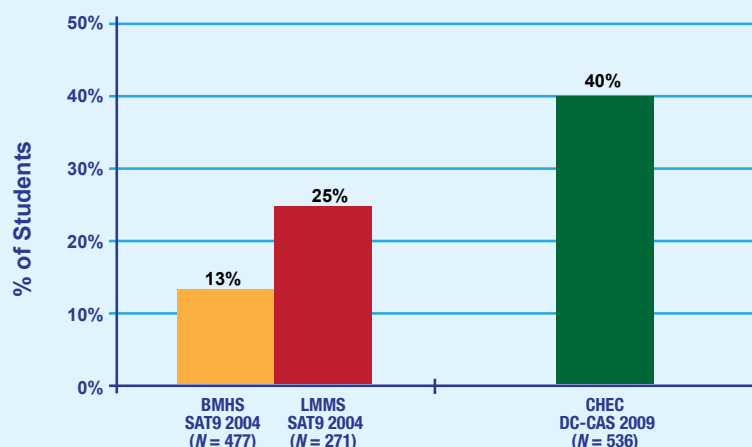
CHEC's literacy improvement plan began in the 2004–05 school year at BMHS and in the 2008–2009 school year at LMMS. It included the following elements:

- ✓ **Assessment** to identify students reading at the fourth-grade reading level or below;
- ✓ **Research-based literacy intervention** to accelerate students' reading achievement;
- ✓ **Data** to benchmark and monitor student literacy performance;
- ✓ **Partnerships** with the National Council of La Raza and Jobs for the Future to provide professional development that helps educators improve reading instruction;
- ✓ **Parent engagement initiatives** to teach parents how to support student literacy;
- ✓ **Small learning communities** to help teachers respond to students' diverse literacy needs;
- ✓ **Tutoring** programs to perfect students' reading performance;
- ✓ **25 Book Campaign** to encourage students to read one million words over the course of the school year; and
- ✓ **Framework** that organizes literacy curriculum around reciprocal teaching, Socratic Seminars, writing, vocabulary, note-taking and note-making.

## THE RESULTS:

The 2004 SAT9 and the 2009 DC Comprehensive Assessment System (DC-CAS) results reveal consistent gains. In April 2006, all public schools in the District of Columbia transitioned to the DC-CAS to measure student achievement.

**Percent of Middle and High School Students Achieving Proficiency on the District English Language Arts Assessments in 2004 and 2009**



In 2004, 13% and 25% of students in two schools achieved proficiency for an average of 19%. In 2009, after the unification of these schools into one campus, the percentage of students reaching proficiency more than doubled, with 40% of students performing at the Proficient level.



# Columbia Heights Educational Campus: *Washington, DC*

## **LITERACY: A KEY SCHOOL TURNAROUND STRATEGY**

CHEC, in partnership with Scholastic, accomplished the following:

- Implemented Scholastic's READ 180® intervention for struggling students in middle and high school; and
- Provided coaching and training focused on continuous improvement of literacy instruction.

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