



NOVATO CHARTER SCHOOL

940 "C" Street, Novato, California 94949 • (415) 883-4254

Rachael Bishop, Director

School Accountability Report Card

Contact Information

Parents or community members who wish to participate in school committees, school activities, or become a volunteer may contact the Novato Charter (Elem) at 415-883-4254.

School Profile

Novato Charter is a K-8 school in the Novato Unified. Curriculum is focused on educating the whole child. The school supports cultural awareness on a daily basis through its diverse literature selections and seasonal festivals.

During the 2007/08, 236 K-8th grade students were enrolled at the school, with classes arranged on a traditional/year round schedule calendar.

UNIQUE ASPECTS OF THE NOVATO CHARTER SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM:

- The academic curriculum integrates the arts, drama, painting, music, drawing and knitting. This model of education through the arts awakens imagination and creativity, bringing vitality and wholeness to learning.
- The Class Teacher is given the opportunity to take the same children through the grades for multiple years of elementary school (grades 1-8), teaching all the main lesson subjects. This provides the child with a feeling of camaraderie and commitment, and affords the teacher the opportunity to work more deeply with the children and their families. This model offers stability and continuing guidance to each child.
- Textbooks are not typically used in the elementary grades. The teacher creates a presentation and the children make their individual books (main lesson books) for each subject, recording and illustrating the substance of lessons. These beautiful main lesson books are an important record of learning and a way in which art is integrated into every subject.
- A Foreign Language is taught beginning in first grade, giving the children an experience of another culture. At the discretion of the teacher, a foreign language may be introduced into the kindergarten.
- Science is taught in the lower grades through observation and experience of our natural environment. Through nature studies, gardening and environmentally conscious practices the children develop reverence and a sense of guardianship for the Earth and all of its inhabitants. In the upper grades science is standards based. The teacher sets up experiments, calls upon the children to observe carefully, ponder, discuss and write it up as scientific observation. The students are then drawn to their own conclusions, either a law or formula. Through this process, rigorous, independent thinking and sound judgment are developed..
- Multicultural content is integrated throughout the curriculum by means of biography, story telling, history, art, crafts, music, foreign language, and the practice of seasonal celebrations.
- The humanities curriculum acknowledges that the cultures of the past have influenced humanity throughout time and continue to influence the values and morals of today's world. Children will learn about several religions and cultures from an historical perspective following State framework guidelines. Beginning in grade two (2) fables are taught, history and legends in grade three, Norse mythology in grade four, and the ancient cultures of India, Egypt, Persia, Mesopotamia and Greece in grade five. By exposure to these cultures through their legends and literature, the children gain flexibility and an appreciation for the diversity of humankind. The performing arts curriculum is an integral part of these studies culminating in an annual class play performance in 2nd- 8th grades. By the close of eighth grade, the students have journeyed from Greece and Rome to medieval history, the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Age of Exploration, up to the present day.
- Reading and writing are taught in the same way as they originated in the course of human history. First graders hear stories, draw pictures and discover letters in the gesture of pictures. Exposure to phonics is accompanied by the use of songs, poetry, and games that help to establish a joyful experience of language. Through the grades, reading texts are taken from the classical humanities curriculum.
- In Grades 1 thru 8, each school day begins with the "Main Lesson," a two-hour period in which the core curriculum (standards aligned) is presented. The main lesson subjects such as algebra, Greek history, botany or acoustics are taught in three to four week blocks. Many blocks are continued later in the term. This approach allows for freshness and enthusiasm, concentrated in-depth experience, and gives the children time to integrate learning.
- For the remainder of the day, the children are engaged in special subject classes, practice periods and games classes. Both boys and girls learn handwork, knitting, crocheting, sewing, and woodworking. In the first grade, children are taught to play the recorder. Other instruments are gradually introduced, leading to choir and strings orchestra in the higher grades. The children learn songs, games, poems and a foreign language beginning in the first grade. Through the grades, the foreign language program expands to include reading, writing and grammar. Other arts, such as beeswax, clay modeling, performing arts, puppetry and painting are included in the curriculum, as well.
- Practical work such as crafts and handwork, are integral parts of the required curriculum from kindergarten through the eighth grade. Research confirms that brain function is founded on body function. Learning to knit and crochet in the early grades develops the motor skills that enhance intellectual development. Coordination, patience, perseverance and imagination are also schooled through practical work. Activities like woodworking, house building, and gardening are included in the elementary curriculum to give the children an understanding of and respect for how things work in the world.

Student Enrollment by Ethnic Group

2007-08

	Percentage
African American	2.6%
American Indian	0.4%
Asian	5.1%
Caucasian	85.1%
Filipino	0.9%
Hispanic or Latino	3.8%
Pacific Islander	0.0%
Multiple or No Response	2.1%

• Students' transition from Kindergarten and from grade to grade, is uniquely facilitated at the Charter school by having teachers follow their class for an average of four years. This eliminates the anxiety that usually arises when children must face a new teacher every year, allowing instead for their immediate and focused attention on the new curriculum.

To develop lifelong learners who have competence, self-motivation, confidence, and responsibility.

Standards-aligned assessment tools vary depending on grade level. In grades K-1, students are evaluated using observational methods and benchmarks. These measures reflect a child's progress toward meeting each standard and identify students "at risk". In grades 2-8, in addition to standardized tests, teachers use a variety of assessment tools, including standard-based rubrics, portfolios of written work, tests, oral presentations, projects, artwork, and lab assignments. These tools not only measure whether students are developing necessary skills, but also demonstrate their ability to apply gained knowledge to solve real-world problems. An example of a "hands on" activity that measures students' ability to utilize mathematical concepts, are projects such as cooking, building a chicken coop or constructing a kindergarten playhouse.

PUPIL OUTCOMES:

As the Waldorf-inspired curriculum both accelerates and decelerates the timing of some of the content standards in kindergarten through 2nd grade, it is the goal of NCS that by completion of the third grade and forward 90% of its students will have mastered or exceeded the State Content Standards on grade level.

Methods of Assessment: CST, CAT6, grade level skill area rubric, alternative assessment measures

At least 75% of NCS students will show one grade or measurable progress toward proficiency in each academic year

Methods of Assessment: CST, CAT6, grade level skill area rubric, alternative assessment measures

NCS shall meet its API growth target schoolwide and in any identified subgroups.

Methods of Assessment: API Growth target

NCS shall make adequate yearly progress.

Methods of Assessment: AYP Report

The School shall meet or exceed 95% average daily attendance.

Methods of Assessment: Attendance reports

The school shall score in the top 20% of schools statewide.

Methods of Assessment: API Reports

Student progress and development are carefully monitored and formally reported annually to the parents at parent-teacher conferences. Additionally, a parent or teacher may request a conference at any time. Mid-term and year-end reports on each child are prepared and given to parents. While mid-year reporting highlights the child's progress to date, the year-end report includes an overview of the year stating what was taught during each learning block. The second part of the report will be a written narrative of the child describing academic performance, social and emotional development, and artistic expression. The Child's strengths and achievements will be highlighted, and areas for further progress identified. The third part of the report will include a skill area rubric, aligned with the NCS academic standards as developed by the Academic Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Committee (includes the Novato Charter School faculty and Director).

Mission/Vision Statement

Educating our children so that they may grow to be capable and contributing human beings.

VISION

The Novato Charter School is a Waldorf-inspired educational community which is committed to the healthy growth and development of the whole child. Through a Waldorf-inspired curriculum, our teachers nurture the imagination in the early years, building a foundation for abstract thinking, gradually and appropriately challenging the intellect through out the grades.

This philosophy places equal emphasis on a solid academic program, artistic expression, social development and attention to the inner life and natural rhythms of the child.

Our School is committed to creating a healthy community which reflects and supports our common values. We believe that children develop social responsibility and feel a greater sense of significance in a small, supportive environment which promotes close long-term relationships with classmates and teachers. In an atmosphere of respectful clear communication, cooperation and parent participation we believe children flourish and grow to be healthy, capable, contributing human beings.

We believe that teaching children to care for and respect the earth encourages global responsibility and promotes environmentally conscious living. The celebration of seasonal festivals is an integral part of this as children joyously experience the earth's natural cycles. By reducing or eliminating exposure to electronic media and encouraging a cooperative rather than a competitive milieu, a child's inherent creative and intellectual abilities will naturally unfold. At the heart of this approach is the recognition that teaching must be presented to children in a way which fills them with wonder, reverence and enthusiasm.

Parent Involvement

The Novato Charter School will encourage parents to facilitate communication, community building, and participation in Director appointed school committees in order to provide opportunities for parent involvement and to facilitate activities which support the school.

The Director may appoint committees as necessary. The Committees are a means by which parents contribute time and skills toward the betterment of the children and the School. The Director shall maintain a list of active Committees.

The Committee Chairs shall report Committee activities to the Director for approval. The Chairs shall also report Committee activities to the Parents. By their nature, the Committees will work with various bodies within the School, providing support activities as appropriate.

Parent Committee meetings shall be scheduled as needed and meeting minutes shall be prepared and submitted to the Director following the meeting.

The preferred decision making process for the Parent Committees is one that strives to build consensus among participants. Committees shall strive, when possible, to reach consensus on all issues before them.

The Director, a Board liaison, or Faculty liaison may be appointed to the parent committees and shall attend the meetings when necessary. Appointed Committees may include, but are not limited to, Festivals, Parent Education, Publication/Communication, Hiring, and Facilities Development. The School's governing and foundation boards are also vehicles for parent involvement. Each class shall have a room parent and liaison to the Novato Charter School Foundation Board. The Parent Committees shall designate a Chair, who shall conduct meetings and coordinate activities with the Director or designee(s). The committees shall also operate according to the NCS communication Model.

To encourage additional parent involvement, the charter School shall at a minimum also do the following:

- o Develop an ongoing list of extensive participation opportunities for parents;
- o Offer free educational seminars for parents geared toward educating parents on educational methods and how to support and prepare their students for school success.
- o Offer free extra-curricular activities for both student and parent participation.

Novato Charter greatly benefits from its supportive parents who donate time, money, and resources. The school has a strong base of parent volunteers who contribute to the school in variety of ways. Parents are also welcome to join the school board, foundation, and committees. The school also benefits from several community partnerships, including the Novato rotary, Marin Community Foundation and North Bay Children's Center.

Because NCS is sponsored by parents, family involvement in the school is both active and extensive. Each classroom has a parent liaison and every operational committee (facilities, parent education, fundraising, gardening, festivals, and outreach) is primarily composed of parents.

Thanks to this unprecedented level of parent involvement and support for the school, the NCS Foundation (parent fundraising arm of the school) raises over \$190,000 per year to help sustain our varied and rich program.

Fostering continued connections of students and their families to the school is the cornerstone of our community. Parents are brought together, not only through their active involvement and participation in the daily operations of the school, but also by the celebration of three major seasonal festivals: Fall, winter, and spring. These all-school events offer opportunities for families to build relationships, work together and enjoy the fruits of their efforts, and for the children to be a part of a greater community. The school gives back to the greater community by establishing working partnerships with several canned food drives, the Tolay Creek Restoration projects, and the Science Environmental Education Docent Program (SEED). The students also perform community services in local preschools and volunteer at Glide Memorial Church.

NCS believes it is very important to keep parents abreast of academic standards, current educational research, and stages of learning and child development. Towards this end, parent education evenings are scheduled quarterly. Last spring, the committee put together a series which included the following lectures: Endangered Minds: The Effects of the Media on Brain Development, Waldorf-methods in Public Charter Schools, Adolescence: Understanding the Age of Exploration, and Schooling the Imagination – A Developmental Approach.

Our school's high attendance levels (95.9% as of Dec 2nd.), parent satisfaction indices, and API scores are a direct result of a holistic approach to education, a motivated and effective staff, active and involved parent community, strong leadership and a nurturing environment.

Enrollment By Grade

This chart illustrates the enrollment trend by grade level for the past 3 school years.

Enrollment Trend by Grade Level			
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
K	45	44	43
1st	24	24	25
2nd	24	23	24
3rd	25	24	24
4th	24	24	24
5th	25	26	24
6th	23	24	25
7th	24	23	22
8th	19	25	24

Enrollment By Program

During the 2007/08 school year 236 students were enrolled at Novato Charter (Elem), of which 0.04% were English Learners, and 0% were socioeconomically disadvantaged.

Class Size Reduction

In 1996, state legislature approved implementation of the Class Size Reduction (CSR) program that provides funding to hire additional teachers to assist schools in reducing K-3 class sizes. Novato Charter (Elem) began implementing CSR for grades kindergarten through three in 1996-1997. The table displays the percentage of K-3 classrooms that participated in CSR for the past three school years.

CSR Participation			
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
K	0%	67%	0%
1	0%	0%	0%
2	0%	0%	0%
3	0%	0%	0%

Class Size

Average class sizes are 24 in grades 1-8, and 22 in kindergarten. In addition to credentialed classroom teachers, students receive assistance in the classroom from: Specialty Teachers including Spanish, Music, Environmental Education/Gardening, Handwork, and Physical Education, Classroom aides in the kindergarten and Resource room.

	Class Size Distribution											
	Average Class Size			Classrooms Containing:								
	06	07	08	1-20 Students			21-32 Students			33+ Students		
K	23	15	22	-	2	-	2	1	2	-	-	-
1	24	24	25	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-
2	24	23	24	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-
3	25	24	24	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-
4	24	24	24	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-
5	25	26	24	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-
6	23	24	25	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-

Discipline & Climate for Learning

Students at Novato Charter are guided by specific rules and classroom expectations that promote respect, cooperation, courtesy and acceptance of others. The goal of Novato Charter discipline program is to (enter goal) promote a positive and safe learning environment. Parents and students are informed of school rules and discipline policies through the (Parent/ Student handbook/newsletters/Friday folders) which are sent home at the beginning of the school year. The Suspensions and Expulsions table illustrates total cases for the last three years, as well as a percentage of enrollment. Suspensions are expressed in terms of total infractions, not number of students suspended, as some students may have been suspended on multiple occasions. Expulsions occur only when required by law or when all other alternatives are exhausted.

	Suspensions & Expulsions					
	School			District		
	05-06	06-07	07-08	05-06	06-07	07-08
Suspensions	0	0	0	959	1446	650
Suspension Rate	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	12.1%	17.9%	8.2%
Expulsions	0	0	0	33	32	27
Expulsion Rate	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%

Students are encouraged to participate in the school's additional academic and extracurricular activities, which are an integral part of the educational program. These schoolwide and classroom incentives promote positive attitudes, encourage achievement, and aid in the prevention of behavioral problems. Extracurricular activities, clubs, and programs include: (Choir, Aikido, Gardening, community service, school wide festivals and events). The school's interscholastic athletic programs promote individual and team-oriented achievement and self-esteem through school-sponsored teams that compete with other schools in the area. Athletic programs include: (soccer, basketball, pentathlon games, Greek games). School recognizes and celebrates the achievements and successes of students and staff on a regular basis. Students are recognized for their achievements during (awards assemblies/by their classroom teacher).

The entire educational community at NCS works collaboratively on addressing the problem of social exclusion and bullying among students. Conflict resolution and esteem building are integral parts in the school's curriculum. All Novato School teachers have participated in bullying conferences, trainings, and workshops. Through the Marin County Abused Women's Society and Social Advocates for Youth (SAY) we provide training for teachers, students, and parents. The Director has written grants to bring presenters from these organizations for 6-week workshops in the 2nd through 8th grade classrooms. In addition, most faculty members have been trained in the use of the TRIBES program which utilizes strategies for conflict resolution, communication, and building classroom community.

Using a positive discipline model, our goal is to discourage misbehavior and encourage students to learn from their mistakes in order to make appropriate choices in the future.

The NCS has a unique media policy that is explained to parents on school tours, is outlined in the Parent Handbook, and included in the Parent Expectation Agreement. Numerous studies indicate that overexposure to the electronic media has detrimental effects on a child's healthy growth and development, which impacts concentration, attention span, reading skills, interpersonal relationships, social behavior, values, and psychological health. Therefore we encourage families to incorporate a media free philosophy into their daily lives. Towards this end, we request that our parents make a conscious effort to significantly reduce or eliminate the use of media (television, videos, DVD's, video games, computer games, and feature movies) in their children's lives. While limiting or eliminating media from a child's life might be challenging in today's world, families at NCS find that more free time means more creative and outdoor play, more quality time together, and more time spent reading. Our dress code policy also disallows overt display of media images.

Safe School Plan

Safety of students and staff is a primary concern of Novato Charter. The school is always in compliance with all laws, rules, and regulations pertaining to hazardous materials and state earthquake standards. The School Site Safety plan was last reviewed and updated on (enter date) April 2007 by the School Safety Committee. All revisions were communicated to the both the classified and certificated staff. The school's disaster preparedness plan includes steps for ensuring student and staff safety during a disaster. Fire and disaster drills are conducted on a (monthly/regular) basis throughout the school year. Lockdown drills are held once a year. Students are supervised before and after school by certificated staff, classified staff, and/or the principal. Parent volunteers, certificated staff, and classified staff help with supervision during lunch and break periods. There is a designated area for student drop off and pick up. Visitors must sign in and out of the school office. All visitors wear visitor badges.

Formal Safety and Emergency Preparedness and Physical Well-being programs and policies back the Novato Charter School's commitment to its students' health and safety.

In close coordination with the Novato Unified School District, NCS has developed, and continuously updates, its Emergency Preparedness Plan which covers:

- Emergency procedures for earthquakes, fires, "lock-downs", floods, etc.
- Student release policies
- Configuration and responsibilities of emergency teams
- Evacuation routes and utility shut-off locations
- Communication protocols

Each classroom is equipped with an emergency backpack with survival and first aid supplies and student medical and contact information. Durable containers are stored in the classrooms filled with "comfort packs", food and water. The backpacks and containers are replenished and updated every year by parent volunteers. Earthquake, fire, and lock down drills are practiced on a regular basis. The Novato Fire Department plays an active role by visiting the school at least twice a year to run the drills. Last year, representatives from the Fire Department observed a mock student release exercise. Their feedback and support was used to fine-tune our emergency plan.

School Facilities

NCS negotiated one of the first successful Proposition 39 Facilities Agreements with our sponsoring district. Facility development and site improvements were the focus for the past 5 years including: classroom enhancements; installation of an irrigation system, fencing, shade structures, green house, kindergarten play yard, 1-5 playground, ¾ acre playing field, planting over 40 trees, landscaping, and other site beautification.

Our school insures the safety of all students before and after school by providing staff supervision at drop of and pick up and a school crossing guard. Our school focus is continued facilities development and improvement. The school's philosophy emphasis' classroom hygiene and esthetics. The students, staff, parent community, and janitors work collaboratively to maintain a healthy and beautiful place for students to learn.

Novato Charter was originally constructed in 1996 and is comprised of 10 classrooms, 1 community room, 1 resource room, 1 staff lounge, 1 computer lab, and 2 playgrounds. Recent remodeling included garden arbor and middle school athletic field. Cleaning Process: The principal works daily with the custodial staff of 2 part-time employees to ensure that the cleaning of the school is maintained to provide for a clean and safe school. The district governing board has adopted cleaning standards for all schools in the district. A summary of these standards are available at the district office for review.

Maintenance and Repair District maintenance staff ensures that the repairs necessary to keep the school in good repair and work orders are completed in a timely manner. A work order process is used to ensure efficient service and highest priority are given to emergency repairs. While reviewing this report, please note that even minor discrepancies are reported in the inspection process. The items noted in the table have been corrected or are in the process of remediation.

School Facility Conditions				
Date of Last Inspection: 01/23/2008				
Overall Summary of School Facility Conditions: Exemplary				
Items Inspected	Facility Component System Status			Deficiency & Remedial Actions Taken or Planned
	Good	Fair	Poor	
Gas Leaks	X			
Mechanical Systems	X			
Windows/Doors/Gates/Fences (Interior and Exterior)	X			
Interior Surfaces (Floors, Ceilings, Walls, and Window Casings)	X			
Hazardous Materials (Interior and Exterior)	X			
Structural Damage	X			
Fire Safety	X			
Electrical (Interior and Exterior)	X			
Pest/Vermin Infestation	X			
Drinking Fountains (Inside and Outside)	X			
Restrooms	X			
Sewer	X			
Roofs (observed from the ground, inside/outside the building)	X			
Playground/School Grounds	X			
Overall Cleanliness	X			

Deferred Maintenance Budget The district participates in the State School Deferred Maintenance Program, which provides matching funds on a dollar-for-dollar basis, to assist school districts with expenditures for major repair or replacement of existing school building components. Typically this includes roofing, plumbing, heating, electrical systems, interior or exterior painting, and floor systems.

Physical Fitness

In the spring of each year, Novato Charter (Elem) is required by the state to administer a physical fitness test to all students in grades five and seven. The physical fitness test is a standardized evaluation that tracks the development of high-quality fitness programs and assists students in establishing physical activity as part of their daily lives. Results of student performance are compared to other students statewide who took the test.

Percentage of Students in Healthy Fitness Zone

2007-08 Test Results		
	5th Grade	7th Grade
School		
School Overall	N/A	N/A
School (Boys)	N/A	*
School (Girls)	N/A	N/A
District		
District Overall	33.8%	24.0%
District (Boys)	28.6%	24.9%
District (Girls)	38.8%	23.1%
State		
State Overall	28.5%	32.9%
State (Boys)	25.5%	30.2%
State (Girls)	31.6%	35.7%

Federal Intervention Program

Schools and districts receiving federal Title I funding enter Program Improvement (PI) if they do not make AYP for two consecutive years in the same content area (English/Language Arts or Mathematics) or on the same indicator (API or graduation rate). After entering PI, schools and districts advance to the next level of intervention with each additional year that they do not make AYP.

Federal Intervention Programs		
	School	District
Program Improvement (PI) Status	Not in PI	Not in PI
First Year in PI	-	-
Year in PI (2008-09)	-	-
# of Schools Currently in PI	-	1
% of Schools Identified for PI	-	5.26%

*Scores are not disclosed when fewer than 10 students are tested in a grade level and/or subgroup.

California Standards Test

The California Standards Test (CST), a component of the STAR Program, is administered to all students in the spring to assess student performance in relation to the State Content Standards. Student scores are reported as performance levels: Advanced (exceeds state standards), Proficient (meets standards), Basic (approaching standards), Below Basic (below standards), and Far Below Basic (well below standards). The combined percentage of students scoring at the Proficient and Advanced levels in English/Language Arts, Math, Science, for the most recent three-year period, is shown. For results on course specific tests, please see <http://star.cde.ca.gov>.

California Standards Test (CST)																											
Combined % of Students Scoring at Proficient and Advanced Levels																											
	Language Arts						Math						Science														
	2		3		4		5		2		3		4		5												
	06	07	08	06	07	08	06	07	08	06	07	08	06	07	08	06	07	08									
All Students																											
School	54	68	63	72	67	63	76	88	76	60	81	92	59	82	83	76	71	76	75	76	67	84	65	79	72	73	84
District	61	64	64	56	54	51	66	67	69	66	63	64	69	67	69	70	70	71	71	71	72	66	61	61	56	57	62
State	47	48	48	36	37	38	49	51	55	43	44	48	59	59	59	58	58	61	54	56	61	48	49	51	32	37	46
Males																											
School	64	*	*	80	64	45	*	77	64	*	*	83	73	*	*	80	73	60	*	85	64	*	*	75	*	*	83
District	55	58	62	53	50	48	60	69	66	63	59	61	70	67	71	72	70	71	69	74	72	66	57	64	58	57	66
State	43	44	44	33	33	35	46	48	52	40	41	46	59	59	61	58	58	62	54	56	61	48	48	51	34	38	48
Females																											
School	46	92	50	*	69	82	94	85	63	89	46	86	*	69	91	82	64	69	81	74	82	63	79	82	63	79	82
District	67	70	65	57	59	55	72	65	72	69	67	66	68	66	67	69	69	69	74	69	73	67	65	58	53	57	58
State	50	53	51	39	41	40	54	55	59	47	48	52	57	58	58	56	57	60	55	58	62	48	49	52	30	35	45
Caucasian																											
School	57	71	61	70	75	63	84	84	80	75	86	89	67	82	83	75	70	80	84	84	75	81	71	78	88	76	83
District	73	75	78	65	68	63	79	80	82	78	76	76	78	76	82	78	79	76	81	83	81	77	73	72	68	73	76
State	65	66	64	55	56	57	69	71	74	63	64	67	74	74	74	73	72	74	68	70	74	64	63	65	52	58	68

*Scores are not disclosed when fewer than 10 students are tested in a grade level and/or subgroup.

California Standards Test (CST)												
Combined % of Students Scoring at Proficient and Advanced Levels												
	Language Arts			Math			Science	Social Science				
	6	7		8		6	7		8	8		
	06	07	08	06	07	08	06	07	08	06	07	08
All Students												
School	78	71	80	67	88	82	73	72	75	70	58	56
District	60	63	63	67	68	68	65	60	61	62	60	56
State	41	42	47	43	46	49	41	41	45	41	42	44
Males												
School	67	*	*	50	75	*	*	60	55	75	*	*
District	57	62	57	61	64	65	58	52	56	61	63	53
State	38	40	44	38	42	44	37	37	41	42	42	44
Females												
School	91	65	95	*	75	*	*	92	64	41	58	*
District	63	64	68	75	72	71	72	70	66	61	58	57
State	44	45	50	48	51	54	45	46	50	41	41	43
Caucasian												
School	86	87	90	68	95	93	73	74	82	76	67	60
District	70	73	79	80	76	78	74	75	70	70	70	67
State	61	61	66	63	66	68	62	62	63	58	58	60

*Scores are not disclosed when fewer than 10 students are tested in a grade level and/or subgroup.

CAT-6

The California Achievement Test (CAT/6) is a standardized norm-referenced test (NRT), which indicates how the student or group of students compares with that of a norm group and other students from around the country. In August of 2004 the governor signed legislation reauthorizing the STAR Program. Prior to the reauthorization the California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey) were administered to all students in grades two through eleven. The reauthorization program requires administering the CAT/6 Survey only to students in grades three and seven. Students in grades three and seven were tested in reading, language, spelling, and mathematics. The purpose of administering the CAT/6 Survey is to determine how well California students are achieving academically compared to a national sample of students tested in the same grade at the same time of the school year. The CAT/6 chart reflects the percentages of students scoring at or above the 50th percentile, or those students performing at average/above average level, in Reading and Math.

CAT/6 Norm Referenced Test												
% At or Above 50th Percentile												
Reading						Math						
3			7			3			7			
06	07	08	06	07	08	06	07	08	06	07	08	
All Students												
School	92	67	86	75	83	91	84	75	73	92	83	74
District	57	56	56	69	67	69	70	69	68	69	68	71
State	37	38	38	46	47	49	55	56	56	50	51	52
Males												
School	93	64	82	57	67	*	87	73	55	86	75	*
Females												
School	*	69	91	*	100	88	*	77	91	*	92	63
Caucasian												
School	90	75	81	73	91	100	80	80	75	91	91	86

*Scores are not disclosed when fewer than 10 students are tested in a grade level and/or subgroup.

Academic Performance Index

The Academic Performance Index (API) is a score on a scale of 200 to 1,000 that annually measures the academic performance and progress of individual schools in California. On an interim basis, the state has set 800 as the API score that schools should strive to meet. Statewide Rank: Schools receiving an API Base score are ranked in ten categories of equal size (deciles) from 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest), according to type of school (elementary, middle, or high school). Similar Schools Rank: Schools also receive a ranking that compares that school to 100 other schools with similar demographic characteristics. Each set of 100 schools is ranked by API score from 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest) to indicate how well the school performed compared to similar schools.

API School Results				
	05-06	06-07	07-08	2008 API Growth Score
Statewide Rank	9	9	9	
Similar Schools Rank	2	1	2	
All Students				
Actual Growth	1	4	-	-
Caucasian				
Actual Growth	2	5	-	-

Adequate Yearly Progress

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is a federal law enacted in January 2002 that reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). It mandates that all students (including students who are economically disadvantaged, are from racial or ethnic minority groups, have disabilities, or have limited English proficiency) in all grades meet the state academic achievement standards for Mathematics and English/Language Arts by 2014. Schools must demonstrate "Adequate Yearly Progress" (AYP) toward achieving that goal. The federal NCLB Act requires that all schools and districts meet the following Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements:

- Participation rate on the state's standards-based assessments in English/Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics.
- Percent proficient on the state's standards-based assessments in ELA and Mathematics.
- API as an additional indicator.
- Graduation rate (for secondary schools).

There are several consequences for schools that do not meet the AYP standards, including additional tutoring and replacing of staff. Students would also be allowed to transfer to schools (within their district) that have met their AYP's, and the former school would be required to provide the transportation to the new site. Results of school and district performance are displayed in the chart.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)				
	School		District	
Made AYP Overall	No		No	
Met AYP Criteria	English - Language Arts	Mathematics	English - Language Arts	Mathematics
Participation Rate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Percent Proficient	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
API School Results	No		Yes	
Graduation Rate	N/A		Yes	

Teacher Evaluation

A constructive evaluation process promotes quality instruction and is a fundamental element in a sound educational program. Evaluations and formal observations are designed to encourage common goals and to comply with the state's evaluation criteria and district policies. Temporary and probationary teachers are evaluated annually and tenured teachers are evaluated every other year. Qualifying tenured teachers are on five year evaluation cycles.

Evaluations are conducted by the principal who has been trained and certified for competency to perform teacher evaluations. Teacher are evaluated on the following criteria: Engaging and Supporting All Students in Learning, Understanding and Organizing Subject Matter for Student Learning, Assessing Student Learning, Creating and Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning, Planning Instruction and Designing Learning Experiences for All Students and Developing as a Professional Educator.

Novato Unified offers programs to assist teachers, such as Beginning Teacher Support and Training (BTSA) and Peer Assistance and Review (PAR). BTSA is for new, credentialed teachers.

Peer Assistance and Review is designed to assist permanent teachers in need of support in subject matter knowledge or teaching methods for the purpose of improving instruction. This may occur voluntarily or as a result of a less than satisfactory evaluation. The program allows for exemplary teachers to provide support for permanent teachers in need of professional development.

At Risk Interventions

Novato Charter provides after-school tutoring in English/Language Arts and Mathematics for those students performing below grade-level standards or who are at risk of retention. Intersession courses are offered during vacation periods when necessary. Other intervention programs offered at Novato Charter include: After school program, tutoring, small group instruction.

Counseling & Support Staff

It is the goal of Novato Charter to assist students in their social and personal development as well as academics. The school gives special attention to students who experience achievement problems, difficulty coping with personal and family problems, trouble with decision making, or handling peer pressure. The counselor to pupil ratio is 1: 12. The table lists the support service personnel available at Novato Charter.

The table lists the support service personnel available at Novato Charter (Elem).

Counseling & Support Services Staff		
	Number of Staff	Full Time Equivalent
Counselor	1	.2
Resource Specialist	1	1.0
Speech/Language/ Hearing Specialist	1	0.2

Teacher Assignment

Novato Unified recruits and employs the most qualified credentialed teachers. For the 2007/08 school year, Novato Charter (Elem) had 10 fully credentialed teachers who met all credential requirements in accordance with State of California guidelines.

	Teacher Credential Status			
	School			District
	05-06	06-07	07-08	07-08
Fully Credentialed	10	11	10	428
Without Full Credentials	1	1	1	8
Working Outside Subject	0	0	0	22

Teacher misassignments reflect the number of placements within a school for which the certificated employee in the teaching or services position (including positions that involve teaching English Learners) does not hold a legally recognized certificate or credential. Teacher vacancies reflect the number of positions to which a single designated certificated employee has not been assigned at the beginning of the year for an entire year. For the 2006/07 school year, the most current data are reported.

	Misassignments/Vacancies		
	05-06	06-07	07-08
Misassignments of Teachers of English Learners	0	0	1
Misassignments of Teachers (other)	0	0	0
Total Misassignments of Teachers	0	0	1
Vacant Teacher Positions	0	0	0

Substitute Teachers

The Novato Unified district has an adequate pool of fully credentialed and qualified substitutes in order to maintain continuity of instruction at Novato Charter. Generally, the district does not experience any problems finding qualified substitute teachers. When a substitute teacher is not available for an absent teacher, the principal assumes the role of substitute.

Curriculum Development

All curriculum development in the Novato Unified School District is aligned to the California State Frameworks and Content Standards using state and district adopted instructional programs. Annually, a comprehensive data analysis of student achievement is conducted to establish SMART Goals (Strategic/specific, Measureable, Attainable, Results-oriented, Timebound) aimed at raising academic performance for all students. Course outlines and benchmarks are updated regularly to align with the state standards, district goals, and the district-wide assessment program.

Highly Qualified Teachers

The Federal No Child Left Behind Act requires that all teachers in core subject areas meet certain requirements in order to be considered as "Highly Qualified" no later than the end of the 2006-07 school year. Minimum qualifications include: possession of a Bachelor's Degree, possession of an appropriate California teaching credential, and demonstrated competence in core academic subjects.

	NCLB Compliant Teachers	
	% of Core Academic Courses Taught By NCLB Compliant Teachers	% of Core Academic Courses Taught By Non-NCLB Compliant Teachers
School	80.0%	20.0%
District	88.7%	11.3%
High-Poverty Schools in District	0.0%	0.0%
Low-Poverty Schools in District	87.9%	12.1%

Instructional Materials

Novato Charter does not use the District adopted instructional materials.

District-Adopted Textbooks					
Grade Levels	Subject	Publisher	Adoption Year	Sufficient	% Lacking
8th	Mathematics	Harcourt	2001	Yes	0.0%

District Expenditures

Novato Unified spent an average of \$8,654 to educate each student, based on 2006-07 FY audited financial statements. The table provides a comparison of a school's per pupil funding from unrestricted sources with other schools in the district and throughout the state.

Expenditures per Pupil	
School	
Total Expenditures Per Pupil	\$0
From Restricted Sources	\$0
From Unrestricted Sources	\$0
District	
From Unrestricted Sources	\$6,380
Percentage of Variation between School & District	
State	
From Unrestricted Sources	\$5,300
Percentage of Variation between School & State	N/A

Teacher & Administrative Salaries as a Percentage of Total Budget

This table displays district salaries for teachers, principals, and superintendents, and compares these figures to the state averages for districts of the same type and size. The table also displays teacher and administrative salaries as a percent of the districts budget, and compares these figures to the state averages for districts of the same type and size. Detailed information regarding salaries may be found at the CDE Web site.

Average Salary Information		
Teachers - Principal - Superintendent		
2006-07		
	District	State
Beginning Teachers	\$39,289	\$39,692
Mid-Range Teachers	\$58,084	\$62,830
Highest Teachers	\$73,046	\$80,472
Elementary School Principals	\$93,603	\$98,460
Middle School Principals	\$98,899	\$104,522
High School Principals	\$107,121	\$114,549
Superintendent	\$165,644	\$166,547
Salaries as a Percentage of Total Budget		
Teacher Salaries	39.3%	40.2%
Administrative Salaries	6.8%	5.8%

School Site Teacher Salaries

The chart illustrates the average teacher salary at the school and compares it to the average teacher salary at the district and state based on FY 2006-07 financial statements.

Average Teacher Salaries	
School & District	
School	\$53,435
District	\$57,364
Percentage of Variation	6.85%
School & State	
All Unified School Districts	\$62,157
Percentage of Variation	14.04%

School Leadership

Leadership at Novato Charter is a responsibility shared between district administration, the principal, instructional staff, students, and parents. The district's emphasis is on a well-balanced and rigorous core curriculum at all grade levels. Instructional programs are aligned with state and district standards. For the past 10 years, leadership duties were assumed by Director Rachael Bishop. Director Bishop has 30 years of experience in education with positions as teacher, principal, director. Staff members and parents participate on various committees that make decisions regarding the priorities and direction of the educational plan to ensure instructional programs are consistent with students' needs and comply with district goals. Leadership teams include: festivals, parent education, fundraising, emergency preparedness, facilities, instruction, communication.

The basic tenets of our educational philosophy support our belief that learning is expanded when teaching strategies and structures include:

The basic tenets of our educational philosophy support our belief that learning is expanded when teaching strategies and structures include:

- A multi-sensory approach using art, drama, painting, music, drawing, and sculpting, to deliver the California State Standards (CST's)

- A model that asserts that children have identifiable stages of development
- An environment that nourishes both the academic and the unfolding of the emotional and social aspects of the child
- Academic components framed within a creative and imaginative context
- An approach that develops capacities for learning, as opposed to one that focuses solely on imparting information
- A partnership between home and school
- Limited media exposure
- A model that asserts a cooperative, non-competitive approach

In the early grades, our teachers nurture children's imaginations, building a foundation for future learning and abstract thinking. School wide, our curriculum and teaching methods strive to engage the whole child cognitively through strong academics, emotionally by means of balancing the day with stories and artistic work, and physically through integrating daily movement exercises and healthy nutrition. Our pedagogical approach is based on Rudolf Steiner's Waldorf methods, Howard Gardener's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, and Piaget's Constructivist Theory.

Faculty synergy is essential in implementing curriculum and instructional practices at NCS. At the beginning of every year, teachers review the SBE-adopted standards and are then given creative flexibility in selecting the instructional materials best suited to impart those standards to their students. Discussions of best practices in education as they relate to standards, are continued throughout the year in faculty meetings. Early dismissal every Thursday allows time for this important collaboration. Each school day begins with a two hour main lesson block in which the core (state-aligned) curriculum is presented. Main lessons are taught in three to four week blocks, which allow for concentrated learning. The teacher delivers presentations and students make their individual main lesson books for each subject, recording and illustrating the substance of each lesson (see photo). These unique books are important records of concept development and standards and are one way that art is integrated into academic subjects. Special subject classes support the core curriculum including handwork, recorder, string instruments, choir, foreign language, gardening, and performing arts.

Backed by solid research on childhood development and real-world experiences, this model awakens the imagination and creativity of every student and brings vitality and wholeness to learning. This encourages students to acquire lifelong "ownership" of the information contained in SBE instructional materials and other curriculum components. Our approach to the State-adopted California history standards for the fourth grade is an example of how this is achieved. Before traveling to the historical gold mining town of Columbia for a five-day Living History experience, students will engage in several, multi-sensory activities, which include:

- Learning period songs and playing them on strings and wind instruments
- Studying the geography of the region and the history of the Native American populations, including learning traditional Miwok songs and games
- Presenting a report on an animal native to California
- Recounting stories of men and women of the period from diverse perspectives, (i.e. Vietnamese, Chinese, Mexican, African Americans, etc.)
- Traveling to the Sonoma Mission students reenact a "day in the missionary life", make candles, spin wool, cook in an outdoor oven, weave baskets, and take a guided tour of the mission

Acknowledging the importance and growing influence of the Hispanic culture in California, the Castagnola Family Foundation has awarded grants for the past three years to fund the NCS' Spanish language program. Spanish is taught throughout grades 1-8.

Science is taught in the lower grades utilizing observation and direct experience of the natural environment. Through nature studies, gardening, and environmental education, children develop reverence and a sense of guardianship for the Earth. In upper grades, the students conduct experiments in zoology, botany, physics, physiology, astronomy, inorganic chemistry, nutrition, and ecology. These courses are designed to encourage and support critical thinking and assist students in drawing their own conclusions.

Instructional Time (includes Minimum days)

For 2007/08, Novato Charter offered 180 days of instruction, comprised of 128 regular days. The additional 52 minimum days were utilized for: staff collaboration, school improvement, festivals. All instructional time either met or exceeded the daily instructional minute requirements specified in the California Education Code.

Instructional Minutes By Grade Level		
	Minutes Required	Actual Minutes
K	36,000	42,675
1st	50,400	56,440
2nd	50,400	56,440
3rd	50,400	56,440
4th	54,000	56,440
5th	54,000	56,440
6th	54,000	56,440
7th	54,000	56,440
8th	54,000	56,440

Computer Resources

Novato Charter has 1 computer labs with 25 computers . The computer lab is staffed by a teacher. Computer skills and concepts are integrated throughout standard curriculum which helps to prepare students for technological growth and other opportunities. Students have been trained in the following programs: MS Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Mac I Photo/ Movies.

Classrooms are not connected to the Internet.

Computer Resources			
	05-06	06-07	07-08
Computers	15	15	15
Students per computer	15.5	15.8	15.7
Classrooms connected to Internet	1	1	1

Library Information

Classes at NCS visit local public libraries on a weekly basis.

Governing Board Members

During the 2007/08 the Novato Unified was governed by the following Board of Education Members:

- Debbie Butler
- Cindi Clinton
- Thomas Cooper
- Derek Knell
- Ross Millerick
- Leslie Schwarze
- Jennifer Treppa

Additional Internet Access/Public Libraries

For additional research materials and Internet availability, students are encouraged to visit the public libraries located in the city of Novato, which contain numerous computer workstations.

Data Sources

Data within the SARC was provided by Novato Unified School District, retrieved from the 2007-08 SARC template, and/or located on Dataquest (<http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest>).

Dataquest is a search engine, maintained by the California Department of Education (CDE), which allows the public to search for facts and figures pertaining to schools and districts throughout the state. Among the data available, parents and community may find information about school performance, test scores, student demographics, staffing, and student misconduct/intervention.

Staff Development

Staff members build teaching skills and concepts by participating in many conferences and workshops throughout the year, then sharing their experiences and knowledge with district colleagues. The district dedicated 3 days to staff development annually for the past three years.

At the end of each evaluation, teachers, working in conjunction with the Director, develop job target plans and establish professional goals. Expected outcomes and target dates, action plans, resources needed, and objective benchmarks to assess attainment of goals are incorporated in an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP). The school provides direct support to these IPDP's in the form of:

- Mentoring by skilled teachers who conduct weekly meetings to discuss curriculum, pedagogy, and SBE-standards integration
- Classroom visitations and observations by the Mentor
- Four paid professional development days to attend workshops, conferences, and/or trainings aligned with the IPDP
- Funding for 1-3 week summer training seminars on SBE-standards based integration and innovative teaching strategies
- Discussions on pedagogy during weekly faculty meetings
- Colleague support
- Site-workshops by skilled professionals

These kinds of professional development opportunities strengthen our curriculum and help teachers provide meaningful and relevant learning experiences to our students.

Classified staff and administrators are also provided with opportunities for professional development. During 2007-08 for example, the school's administrative staff participated in the following training:

- Green California School's Summit
- Ongoing emergency preparedness training sponsored by the Marin County Office of Education
- Monthly meetings at the District Office to develop emergency preparedness procedures
- A three-day seminar offered by the Charter Schools Development Center covering a wide range of topics such as: School Finance, Understanding Student Performance Data, Teacher Credentialing Compliance, Successful Models of ELL and Best Practices