

**THE MARIN SCHOOL OF ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY OUTPACES OTHER  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN MARIN ON GROWTH OF KEY  
ACADEMIC INDICATOR**

**NOVATO, CA (August 31, 2005)**— The Marin School of Arts and Technology (MSAT), a charter high school in Novato, has topped all other regular public schools in Marin for its growth in a key academic success indicator according to the California Department of Education official web site ([http://ayp.cde.ca.gov/reports/APR/2005APR\\_colist.asp?cYear=&cSelect=21,MARIN&cChoice=APR2005&d3=2](http://ayp.cde.ca.gov/reports/APR/2005APR_colist.asp?cYear=&cSelect=21,MARIN&cChoice=APR2005&d3=2)).

MSAT's Academic Performance Index (API) grew by 133 points, or 20%, since its base testing in the spring of 2004, giving it an API score of 802. Last year, MSAT scored 669 on the API.

MSAT's growth on the API was the highest of any regular (non-alternative) high school in Marin, and the highest for all regular schools in Marin. It was the fifth highest API growth of the over 450 charter schools in California. The average API growth in Marin was 15 points.

California's Public Schools Accountability Act of 1999 established the API to reflect a school's academic performance based on annual results of statewide testing. A score of 800 is the statewide performance target. "For a school in its second year of operation to score 802 is simply phenomenal. And we are committed to do even better next year," said Bob Lenz, Chief Education Officer of Envision Schools.

MSAT, established in the fall of 2003 by Envision Schools, is known for combining a rigorous academic curriculum and personalized instruction with a project-based curriculum that encourages critical thinking and creativity.

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“MSAT’s scores grew dramatically because MSAT continued to deliver a relevant, standards-based curriculum focused on college preparation,” said Principal Stewart Fox. “MSAT has a terrific faculty—this kind of growth doesn’t happen without a dedicated, talented teaching staff,” said Fox. MSAT also met all Adequate Yearly Progress targets. AYP targets are federal growth goals stipulated by the No Child Left Behind Act. “MSAT’s API score is evidence that students can develop critical thinking and creative skills while at the same time mastering state standards. It does not have to be an ‘either/or.’ At MSAT it is both.” said Tony Harris, a Lead Teacher at MSAT.

### **About the Marin School of Arts and Technology**

The Marin School of Arts and Technology, a public charter high school in Novato, was established by Envision Schools in the fall of 2003. Based on a nationally recognized model for excellence in secondary education, MSAT combines rigorous academic instruction with a small and personalized learning environment. The school’s relevant curriculum and project-based learning motivates students by giving them the opportunity to combine classroom course work with real world experiences.

### **About Envision Schools**

Envision Schools ([www.envisionschools.org](http://www.envisionschools.org)) is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit whose mission is to develop a cluster of small, high-performing public high schools in the Bay Area that engage diverse student bodies in rigorous academic work resulting in college graduates. Envision Schools is partially supported by a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

### **About The Academic Performance Index**

Established by the California Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA) of 1999, the API is a number index that reflects the growth of a school’s academic performance based on annual results of statewide testing. It is used to rank schools annually based on their performance level. API scores are also used to meet state and federal requirements. Schools’ API scores are ranked separately within school type: elementary, middle and high schools.

Every public school (kindergarten through grade twelve) receives two API reports during the year. The first report, the API Base, shows the school’s current level of academic performance and sets goals for growth. The second report, the API Growth, shows how well those targets were met. The 2004 API Base report, released in March 2005, is calculated with results of the 2004 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program and the 2004 California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE). The API ranges from a low of 200 to a high of 1000, with an API score of 800 as the statewide performance target.

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