

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Francis W. Parker

Charter Essential School

2014-2015

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School Profile

<i>Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School</i>			
Type of Charter (Commonwealth or Horace Mann)	Commonwealth	Location	49 Antietam Street Devens, MA 01434
Regional or Non-Regional?	Regional	Districts in Region (if applicable)	45 (70 towns)
Year Opened	1995	Year(s) Renewed (if applicable)	2000, 2005, 2010, 2015
Maximum Enrollment	400	Current Enrollment	396
Chartered Grade Span	7-12	Current Grade Span	7-12
# of Instructional Days per school year	180	Students on Waitlist	201
School Hours	Begins 8:30am Ends 3:30pm Ends 1:30pm on Weds	Age of School	20

THE MISSION

The Parker School's mission is “to move the child to the center of the education process and to interrelate the several subjects of the curriculum in such a way as to enhance their meaning for the child” (Charter, October 1994). As a member of the Coalition of Essential Schools, the Parker School will realize this mission through educational practice guided by the Ten Common Principles of Essential Schools:

1. The school should focus on helping adolescents learn to use their minds well. Schools should not attempt to be “comprehensive” if such a claim is made at the expense of the school’s central intellectual purpose.
2. The school’s goals should be simple: that each student master a limited number of essential skills and areas of knowledge. While these skills and areas will, to varying degrees, reflect the traditional academic disciplines, the program’s design should be shaped by the intellectual and imaginative powers and competencies that students need, rather than necessarily by “subjects” as conventionally defined. The aphorism “Less Is More” should dominate: curricular decisions should be guided by the aim of thorough student mastery and achievement rather than by an effort merely to cover content.
3. The school’s goals should apply to all students, while the means to these goals will vary as those students themselves vary. School practice should be tailor-made to meet the needs of every group or class of adolescents.

4. Teaching and learning should be personalized to the maximum feasible extent. Efforts should be directed toward a goal that no teacher have direct responsibility for more than 80 students. To capitalize on this personalization, decisions about the details of the course of study, the use of students' and teachers' time and the choice of teaching materials and specific pedagogies must be unreservedly placed in the hands of the principal and staff.
5. The governing practical metaphor of the school should be student-as-worker rather than the more familiar metaphor of teacher-as-deliverer-of-instructional-services. Accordingly, a prominent pedagogy will be coaching, to provoke students to learn how to learn and thus to teach themselves.
6. Students entering secondary school studies are those who can show competence in language and elementary mathematics. Students of traditional high school age but not yet at appropriate levels of competence to enter secondary school studies will be provided intensive remedial work to assist them quickly to meet these standards. The diploma should be awarded upon a successful final demonstration of mastery for graduation: an "exhibition." This exhibition by the student of his or her grasp of the central skills and knowledge of the school's program may be jointly administered by the faculty and by higher authorities. As the diploma is awarded when earned, the school's program proceeds with no strict age grading and with no system of "credits earned" by "time spent" in class. The emphasis is on the students' demonstration that they can do important things.
7. The tone of the school should explicitly and self-consciously stress values of unanxious expectation ("I won't threaten you but I expect much of you"), of trust (until abused) and of decency (the values of fairness, generosity and tolerance). Incentives appropriate to the school's particular students and teachers should be emphasized, and parents should be treated as essential collaborators.
8. The principal and teachers should perceive themselves as generalists first (teachers and scholars in general education) and specialists second (experts in but one particular discipline). Staff should expect multiple obligations (teacher-counselor-manager) and a sense of commitment to the entire school.
9. Ultimate administrative and budget targets should include, in addition to total student loads per teacher of eighty or fewer pupils, substantial time for collective planning by teachers, competitive salaries for staff and an ultimate per pupil cost not to exceed that at traditional schools by more than 10 percent. To accomplish this, administrative plans may have to show the phased reduction or elimination of some services now provided students in many traditional comprehensive secondary schools.
10. The school should demonstrate non-discriminatory and inclusive policies, practices, and pedagogies. It should model democratic practices that involve all who are directly affected by the school. The school should honor diversity and build on the strengths of its communities, deliberately and explicitly challenging all forms of inequity and discrimination.

14 July 2015

The 2014-2015 academic year had several notable events, both for Parker as a whole and for the Board of Trustees.

- Parker celebrated its twentieth anniversary with a special weekend in May that included a diverse number of activities and culminated in a formal dinner.
- Our charter was renewed and the Principal and Chair attended the renewal ceremony in May.
- We charged a Development Committee, which started organizing itself, and also ran a match campaign that raised \$40,000 in honor of the twentieth anniversary.
- We clearly saw the results of our shift from transactional work to strategic work. The Board continued to have its annual meeting in January.
- In support of the Board's position that children of faculty be allowed preference in the school admission lottery, the Board's Enrollment Committee continued advocating through the Massachusetts Charter Public School Association.
- The Facilities/Capital Planning Committee conducted a feasibility study to help inform our choices about the physical plant.
- The Governance Committee began expanding its role beyond being a nominating committee.
- The Board started the academic year with seventeen members (including the *ex officio* principal).
- Board committees include Development, Enrollment, Facilities/Capital Planning, Finance, Governance, and Principal Evaluation. Except for the Principal Evaluation Committee, we actively seek parents and staff as committee members.

It is a privilege to serve as Chair of the Parker Board of Trustees; all of the Trustees look forward to the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cheryl Coonahan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Cheryl Coonahan Chair of the Board of Trustees

Mission and Key Design Elements

There have been no changes to the mission or key design elements of the school. The 10 Common Principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools (as listed in the mission) are the skeleton of Parker, upon which all else is built, and Parker is an incredibly mission-driven school. The 10 Common Principles are living ideas and concepts within the school, and all elements of the school are rooted in the ideas contained there, as they have been since Parker's inception. Decisions on a wide-range of issues are made in consultation with the principles. For example, curriculum, assessment, and instructional discussions and decisions are centered on the ideas of "less is more," "student as worker," and "demonstration of mastery."

Parker's school design draws directly from its mission. Curriculum (the academic program), instruction (teaching), and assessment of student learning are closely interwoven. The core organizational principles of the academic program are domains (areas of study) and divisions (cohorts of students at a level of study). Students study in four domains, each of which teaches several integrated disciplines or areas of study: Arts & Humanities (AH); Math, Science and Technology (MST); Spanish; and Wellness (physical education, health and personal/social responsibility). Students are organized into three Divisions, which most students progress through in two-year cycles. Division 1 is roughly equivalent to grades seven and eight, Division 2 is roughly equivalent to grades nine and ten, and Division 3 is roughly equivalent to junior and senior year of high school. Performance-based promotion is the fundamental premise of the school; using portfolios and public exhibitions, students must demonstrate their readiness to move to the next level of study. The School's Criteria for Excellence establish the academic expectations for all students and are used to evaluate student learning. The curriculum emphasizes practice and progress in the same key skills across all divisions: reading, writing, oral presentation, listening, research, artistic expression, Spanish, mathematical problem-solving, technical communication, scientific investigation, systems thinking, and technology. The academic program expresses its mission in the following ways:

- The curriculum is academically challenging, interdisciplinary, and emphasizes student inquiry.
- Teachers work in cross-disciplinary teams with small groups of students in two year curricular cycles in Divisions 1 and 2. Teachers in Division 3 develop seminar and laboratory courses with a discipline-based focus.
- Teachers design instruction to meet the needs of their students and to allow students to demonstrate their understanding and skills through many forms of exhibition.
- Teachers design curriculum, instruction and assessment with each other in collaborative teams, by domain/division. A common curriculum, with shared major texts, projects and expectations is experienced by all students through Divisions 1 and 2. In Division 3, students have the opportunity to make choices among more specialized courses that are solo-taught and developed. Division 3

teachers collaborate closely on the key standards and expectations for Division 3 learning.

- Students are encouraged and then required to take an active role in their learning.
- Student learning is evaluated using school-wide standards and rubrics drawn from the School's Criteria for Excellence.
- Students are required to reflect on and revise their work incorporating direct teacher feedback to strengthen and deepen their understanding.
- Students must complete the requirements of each division and exhibit their learning before progressing to the next division (level of study).
- The School has a flexible long-block schedule that allows students more time to focus on depth in student learning activities and allows teachers substantial planning time during the school day.
- The Advisory system allows teachers to know students well and to serve as their academic and personal guides.
- The teaching staff is differentiated and senior practitioners mentor and coach junior staff; critical reflection and peer observation are built into teachers' schedules.
- The School has a service component in which students learn by contributing to the school and the larger community as volunteers.
- Students and teachers collaborate in school governance and discipline through the Community Congress and Justice Committee.
- The teacher-leader model substantially reduces overhead and places student advising and management decisions in the hands of the teaching staff.
- The school's curriculum is modified each year in response to the Essential Question. In 2014-2015, the question was "What's stopping us?" Teachers support students in extending their learning beyond the classroom and in integrating learning across classrooms through the Essential Question.

Amendments to the Charter

There were no amendments to the Charter in the 2014-2015 year.

Dissemination Efforts

See Appendix A, Objective #3 under Organizational Viability.

Academic Program Success

Student Performance

Parker School Report Card link:

<http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/reportcard/SchoolReportCardOverview.aspx?linkid=37&orgcode=04780505&fycode=2014&orgtypecode=6&>

Program Delivery

Continuous improvement and program revision are key components of the Parker program, and as such, small adjustments are made throughout the year to various elements of the program, including, but not limited to, curriculum, instruction, and assessment. These adjustments are made in response to a number of types of data, including, but not limited to, student reflection, student performance, and teacher reflection.

An example of a revision made to the program during the 2014-2015 school year is the structure of the Division Two Math, Science and Technology (MST) program. Though the core curriculum, standards, and learning expectations remain consistent, the new organizational structure of the program allows students to select from amongst several core classes that present this information in differing modalities or with different areas of focus. (Previously, students experienced a common curriculum for the year.) Students now take two required semester-long classes and then can choose two of four electives to pursue learning of the remaining key content within the two-year program expectations.

<u>Required Courses (All Students Take Both)</u>	
These courses include a full year of laboratory-based biology with a heavy emphasis on algebra/algebra 2 topics. All students take these courses during Division 2.	
<u>Infection, Disease, and Immunity</u>	<u>Genetics, Inheritance, and Evolution</u>
Biology topics: Cellular structure and function (includes DNA and protein synthesis), photosynthesis and cellular respiration, anatomy and physiology Math topics: Number sense, linear functions, exponential functions, exponent rules, solid geometry (area, volume, and surface area)	Biology topics: Inheritance and variation of traits, adaptation and natural selection, changes in population over time, energy and dynamics in ecosystems. Math topics: probability and statistics, quadratic functions, and polynomials (including factoring).
<u>Elective Courses (Students Choose ONE from each Group)</u>	
Elective courses allow students the opportunity to pursue areas of interest while continuing to build core skills. All courses are laboratory science courses integrated with mathematics. Electives are designed in pairs (Group A and Group B) so that the same core mathematics is covered regardless of student choice. Students who need additional time in Division 2 are able to take multiple elective courses to build skills without repeating previous units of study.	
Group A (Choose ONE)	
<u>Engineering, Programming, and Making</u>	<u>Environment: The Land, the Water, the Relationship</u>
Science topics: Electricity and engineering Math topics: Functions, linear equations, inequalities, systems of equations and inequalities Additional Topics: Computer programming	Science topics: Plant science, photosynthesis, heat and energy transfer, engineering Math topics: Functions, linear equations, inequalities, systems of equations and inequalities; statistics, applications of 3D geometry

Group B (Choose ONE)	
<u>Beyond a Doubt</u>	<u>On Target</u>
<p>Science topics: Forensic science with an emphasis on chemical analysis of samples and DNA analysis.</p> <p>Math topics: Similar triangles and right triangle trigonometry; line and angle properties; triangle congruence; geometric proof; applications of quadratics; regression</p> <p>Additional topics: symbolic logic</p>	<p>Science topics: Projectile motion, optics (physics), engineering</p> <p>Math topics: Similar triangles and right triangle trigonometry; line and angle properties; triangle congruence; geometric proof; applications of quadratics; regression</p> <p>Additional topics: conic sections, robotics and programming</p>

Additionally, the faculty engaged in a year-long examination of the daily/weekly school schedule and the overall allocation of time in learning across the week. Through intensive committee work and using a democratic process to solicit ideas and feedback, a final revised schedule was created. This schedule will be implemented for the 2015-2016 school year. Overall “time in learning” is slightly increased, without changing the existing start and end times of the school day. The most notable change is the revision to class meeting schedule on Wednesdays, which creates time for a 35 minute “Academic Block” at the end of the day three times a week. The purpose of this time is to provide students with time, during the school day, for academic skill development and practice in order to support their progress through and success in the academic program.

Organizational Viability

Organizational Structure of the School

The organization structure of the school was not altered in 2014-2015.

Teacher Evaluation

Parker uses the rubric, timeline, performance categories, and other general elements of the Massachusetts Model System of Educator Evaluation.

Budget and Finance

See following pages

Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Net Assets (Unaudited)
Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2015

REVENUES:

State allocation	\$4,907,184
Federal and State Grants	\$75,829
Private Grants and Contributions	\$177,567
Program Fees:	\$266,002
Miscellaneous income	\$224,502
TOTAL REVENUES	5,651,084

EXPENSES:

Salaries and wages	3,657,369
Payroll taxes and fringe benefits	542,098
Recruiting and staff development	56,058.09
Accreditation	3,045.00
Assessment	4,519.96
Books and curriculum material	27,684.40
Computer hardware and software	106,053.74
Computer internet access	3,785.28
Consultant-instructional	47,105.05
Contract services	191,227.47
Depreciation	37,963.43
Dues and subscriptions	47,194.19
Food-school lunch program	83,291.71
Furniture and equipment	48,917.59
Inspections	9,205.68
Insurance	36,507.00
Leases-school building	356,976.25
Leases-fields and sports arena	23,884.75
Legal & accounting services	20,651.83
Maintenance-equipment	9,478.96
Maintenance-facility	43,728.22
Other	53,788.50
Printing, copy, and postage	30408.43
Sports equipment	7,802.95
Student activities and field trips	71,664.83
Student transportation	40,331.00
Supplies	48,215.18
Uniforms-athletics	5,031.05
Utilities	93,509.98
Vending	816.15
TOTAL EXPENSES	5,708,313

OPERATING INCOME (57,229)

NON OPERATING REVENUES

Interest Income 4,058

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS (53,171)

NET ASSETS, JUNE 30, 2014 2,811,552

NET ASSETS, JUNE 30, 2015 **2,758,381**

**Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School
Statement of Net Assets (Unaudited/ Draft)**

<u>Assets</u>	<u>6/30/15</u>
Current Assets:	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$2,298,268
Accounts receivable	9,443
Prepaid expenses	11,821
Total current assets	2,319,532
Cash Held for Student Activity Funds	49,675
Noncurrent Assets:	
Capital Assets	178,569
Less - accumulated depreciation	-39,506
Net capital assets	218,075
Other Non Current Assets	476,979
Total assets	\$3,064,261
 <u>Liabilities and Net Assets</u> 	
Current Liabilities:	
Accounts payable	\$135,527
Accrued expenses	94,174
Deferred revenues	26,504
Total current liabilities	256,205
Due to Student Activity Funds	49,675
Net Assets:	
Invested in capital assets	218,075
Restricted for capital purchases	23,241
Restricted for Special Purposes	149,357
Building Rental Asset	474,804
Liquidity Reserve	46,899
Reserve Fund	644,388
Capital Plan Reserve	395,000
Facilities Reserve Fund	806,616
Total net assets	2,758,381
Total liabilities and net assets	\$3,064,261

**Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School
Operating Budget
Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2016**

	FY16
REVENUES:	<u>Budget</u>
State allocation - Tuition & Facilities Aid	\$5,060,345
Federal and State Grants	73,200
Private Grants and Contributions	125,000
Program Fees:	224,400
Miscellaneous income	42,000
TOTAL REVENUES	\$5,524,945
 EXPENSES:	
Salaries and wages	3,813,728
Payroll taxes and fringe benefits	589,296
Recruiting and staff development	49,875
Accreditation	3,300
Assessment	5,200
Books and curriculum material	31,650
Computer hardware and software	40,500
Computer internet access	5,000
Consultant-instructional	45,900
Contract services	66,350
Depreciation	45,000
Dues and subscriptions	51,865
Food-school lunch program	85,000
Furniture and equipment	31,200
Inspections	7,800
Interest	38,500
Insurance	200
Leases-school building	359,850
Leases-fields and sports arena	36,800
Legal & accounting services	28,200
Maintenance-equipment	12,800
Maintenance-facility	34,000
Other	25,850
Printing, copy, and postage	32,700
Sports equipment	11,630
Student transportation	43,130
Supplies	56,650
Uniforms-athletics	5,300
Utilities	126,600
Vending	3,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	5,686,874
 OPERATING INCOME	 (161,929)
NON OPERATING REVENUES	
Interest Income	3,800
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(158,129)
NET ASSETS, JUNE 30, 2015	2,758,381
NET ASSETS, JUNE 30, 2016	\$2,600,252

Capital Plan for FY16

The Francis W. Parker Charter School holds reserve funds meant to improve and add to our current school facility. The Board of Trustees tasked a Capital and Long Range planning committee to conduct a Capital Needs Assessment. The needs assessment was completed in the Spring of 2013. The committee is developing a plan around next steps toward realization of our capital strategic goals. As the steps in our process are completed, the Parker Charter School will be updating its Capital Plan.

Appendix A
Accountability Plan Evidence

Faithfulness to Charter

	2014 - 2015 Performance (Met/Partially Met/Not Met)	Evidence
Objective: The school is faithful to the mission, vision and educational philosophy defined in the charter application and any subsequent approved amendment(s).		
<p style="text-align: center;">Measure:</p> <p>In the annual parent and student surveys, parents and students will report that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are held to high standards • The school puts students at the center of their own educations • The school fosters a sense of respect and trust among teachers and students, and parents are welcomed into the school. <p>(At least 175 parents, and at least 90% of students will complete the survey. Average responses in all cases will be 4 or higher on a scale of 1 to 5)</p>	MET	<p>Results of annual parent and student surveys: P=(Parent survey, n=206) S=(Student survey, n=349; 90% of student body)</p> <p><u>Students are held to high standards</u> P= average response of 4.5 (92% agree or strongly agree) S=average response of 4.2 (82% agree or strongly agree)</p> <p><u>Students at center of education</u> P= average response of 4.7 (99% agree or strongly agree) S=average response of 4.3 (85% agree or strongly agree)</p> <p><u>Sense of respect and trust</u> P= average response of 4.7 (96% agree or strongly agree) S=average response of 4.3 (90% agree or strongly agree)</p> <p><u>Parents welcomed into school</u> P= average response of 4.6 (94% agree or strongly agree)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Measure:</p> <p>In the annual faculty survey, teachers report that the 10 Common Principles inform their daily practice and decision making.</p>	MET	<p>Results of annual teacher survey (n=44 direct classroom teachers)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">average response of 4.6 (98% agree or strongly agree)</p>

Academic Program Success

	2014 - 2015 Performance (Met/Partially Met/Not Met)	Evidence
<p>Objective: Students at the school demonstrate proficiency, or progress toward meeting proficiency targets on state standards, as measured by the Massachusetts Comprehensive Accountability System (MCAS) exams in all subject areas and at all grade levels tested for accountability purposes.</p> <p>The school will decrease the number of students at the warning/ failing level in grades 7 and 8, and will have no students failing at the 10th grade level.</p>		
<p>Measure: Each year, the CPI for 10th grade Math and ELA exams will be 95 or higher.</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>	<p>MCAS from Spring 2014 show a CPI of 98.8 in ELA and a CPI of 89.8 in Math for 10th graders. The ELA threshold was met; the Math threshold was not. Parker has carefully analyzed this data, as well as the longitudinal patterns of testing data for this class. The aggregate scores for this class have been statistically anomalous (within the larger data set of Parker test scores) over time, including data from the 6th grade year before entering Parker. Students who did not perform at threshold levels continued to receive targeted academic support, especially in math.</p>
<p>Measure: Each year, the overall percentage of students in the warning range for grades 7-8 will be 10% or fewer, and 0% of students will fail the 10th grade ELA or Math exams.</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>	<p>In ELA, 100% of students in all grades scored above the warning/failing range; in other words, 0% of students tested in the warning/failing range for ELA, so the measure was met. In Math, 4% of 7th graders were in the warning range and 12% of 8th grade students were in the warning range. This represents significant improvement from prior years, with both percentages being lower than any other year in this charter term. So, although the target threshold of this measure was not met, notable progress over time was demonstrated in the</p>

		math scores. At the tenth grade level, all students passed the ELA test. Ten percent of students failed the Math test; all but one student passed the math test on the first retake. This represents a significantly higher percentage than is typical (see note above). Over the course of the charter term, 0% of students failed the 10 th grade math test in most years.
<p>Objective: The school achieves and maintains a median student growth percentile (SGP) of 40 or higher in the aggregate and for all statistically significant sub-groups in all subject areas tested for accountability purposes.</p>		
<p>Measure: Each year, the median student growth percentile is 40 or higher in both ELA and Math for grade 10.</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>	<p>Tenth grade students achieved an SGP of 72 in ELA and an SGP of 38 in Math. This is the highest ELA SGP in the charter term. (See notes above relevant to the Math scores/SGP for this class.)</p>
<p>Objective: The school uses a balanced system of formative and benchmark assessments.</p> <p>Teachers and school leaders use qualitative and quantitative evidence to inform, guide and improve instructional planning and practice.</p>		
<p>Measure: All teachers collaboratively examine student work at least once per month to maintain common standards and to determine areas of instructional need.</p>	<p>MET</p>	<p>Results of annual teacher survey (n=44 direct classroom teachers; 100% of classroom teachers)</p> <p>average response of 4.8 (100% agree or strongly agree)</p>
<p>Measure: Curriculum plans clearly show that every unit of study is designed with a balance of formative and summative assessment.</p> <p><i>(Both of these will be measured through the faculty survey, with at least 90% of teachers responding to the survey. At least 90% of teacher responses will agree or strongly agree that both of these measures are true for their work. The meetings and curriculum plans will also be observed and documented by the domain leaders for each academic domain.)</i></p>	<p>MET</p>	<p>Results of annual teacher survey (n=44 direct classroom teachers; 100% of classroom teachers)</p> <p>average response of 4.6 (95% agree or strongly agree)</p> <p><i>(For both measures, 100% of domain leaders said that these measures were usually or always true, when relevant.)</i></p>
<p>Objective: The school regularly and systematically reviews the quality and effectiveness of the academic program, and modifies the program accordingly.</p>		

<p>Measure: Each year, the leaders for each domain will report to the board of trustees key recommendations for curriculum revision and program improvement based on a variety of data (student feedback, assessment results, teacher reflections, survey data, and teacher and supervisor observations). These reports will be documented annually in the board minutes, and will cite the data sources impacting decisions. Instructional planning each year will begin with a review of these recommendations.</p>	<p>MET</p>	<p>All domain leaders made reports to the Board of Trustees during the 2014-2015 school year, as documented in Board minutes. Annual instructional planning also included review of this information and targeted revisions to curriculum as warranted.</p>
<p>Measure: At least 75% of graduates will make a successful transition after graduation from the Parker School as demonstrated by either completion of a post-secondary program or gainful employment. Data will be gathered from at least 70% of alumni.</p>	<p>MET</p>	<p>Data drawn from the National Student Clearinghouse database, in combination with follow-ups on data gaps from that source, show a high degree of college completion amongst the first eleven years of Parker graduates (high school classes of 2000-2010). Credible data is available for 91% of graduates; amongst those students with known data, 82% of them have a four-year degree. For students with a Bachelor's degree, the five-year completion rate is 96%. An additional 4% of students have a trade certification, associate's degree, or entered the military.</p>

Organizational Viability

	2014 - 2015 Performance (Met/Partially Met/Not Met)	Evidence
<p>Objective: The school develops an annual budget that can be sustained by enrollment and is in support of student academic achievement.</p> <p>The school demonstrates a history of positive net assets, adequate cash flow to sustain operations and support the academic program, and consistently operates within budget.</p> <p>The school's annual independent audits are free of material or repeated findings.</p>		
<p>Measure: The school's annual budget is sustained by its enrollment.</p>	<p>MET</p>	<p>Management of the school begins the budget process by determining the desired enrollment level and budgets to the level of per student</p>

		<p>income. The school has a significant waiting list each year and is able to determine the number of students we would like to have in the school on any given year, allowing the school to determine its income level. The Finance Committee and the Board of Trustees then determine, with advisement from the Principal and Business Manager, the per pupil revenue figure to be used as an income basis for the upcoming school year. With the guidance of the principal and business manager, the board approves the school's maintenance of reserves to offset any instability in the per pupil revenue figure. The revenue figure for the current year's budget is extremely stable. From that point, the school is able to budget expenses to the known level of income. The school has a history of success at falling within its budget on an annual basis.</p>
<p>Measure: Each year, the school demonstrates a history of positive net assets, adequate cash flow to sustain operations and support the academic program, and consistently operates within budget.</p>	<p>MET</p>	<p>The financial position of the school is strong, with no need for short-term borrowings to fund operations. The school maintains enough in reserves to cover the cash needs of the school. The cash balances are \$2,347,943 at June 30, 2015 (unaudited). The school does have an open line of credit with the bank of \$250,000 if necessary. Since inception, through conservative budget practices and fiscal responsibility, the school has accumulated net assets of \$2,758,381 as of June 30, 2015 (unaudited). This provides the school with protection from possible negative impacts of the local and state economic</p>

		<p>conditions on the major revenue source, tuition, ensuring that a quality program can continue to be delivered in times of economic uncertainty. These reserves also serve to maintain the school's facilities. The school has an active facilities committee created a capital plan with reserves dedicated to maintaining and updating our facilities in the future. The school has a history of having revenues in excess of expenditures and of always ending the fiscal year favorable to budget.</p>
<p>Measure: There is an absence of material or repeated audit findings in annual audits by qualified independent auditor</p>	<p>MET</p>	<p>The annual report has never resulted in major findings, and the school has always received an unqualified opinion from the independent auditors. The Finance Committee selected Powers and Sullivan as auditors for the years ended June 30, 2014 and June 30, 2015. It is expected that the results will continue to be an unqualified opinion as there have been no major changes in the financial policy or management of the school.</p>
<p>Objective: The school defines and delineates clear roles and responsibilities among board and staff.</p>		
<p>Measure: On the annual board self-evaluation, at least 75% of trustees will report that the board consistently focuses on governance, not management.</p>	<p>MET</p>	<p>In its most recent self-evaluation, 100% of Board members (n=15) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. The Board changed its self-evaluation timeline since the last annual report (to an annual calendar year, rather than a school calendar year), and thus new data will not be available until later in the fall.</p>
<p>Measure: On an annual leadership survey, at least 75% of school leaders report sufficient autonomy to make</p>	<p>MET</p>	<p>100% of school instructional</p>

pedagogical and management decisions.		leaders (n=5) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.
Objective: The school has collaborated with its sending district(s) on the sharing of innovative practices and has provided models for replication and best practices.		
Measure: The Teachers Center offers a variety of professional development workshops, partnerships, and related programs, and continues to attract teachers from the region to these programs. At least 5 different events will be hosted each year.	MET	The Teachers Center hosted more than 180 visitors (representing more than 30 different schools and institutions) through more than 35 different events in the 2014-2015 year.
Measure: The school receives continued approval by the DESE for the New Teachers Collaborative teacher preparation program, designed to train teachers to work in small progressive schools.	MET	The New Teachers Collaborative Program continues to be approved as a teacher preparation program. In the 2014-15 school year, eight participants successfully completed the program. Since its inception, the NTC has licensed and placed 99 teachers in various fields. For the upcoming school year, more than 188 applications were received, and the program anticipates 9 candidates placed in 2 different schools.

Appendix B: Recruitment Plan 2015 – 2016

School Name: Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School

Date: August 1, 2015

Please provide a brief narrative report on implementation of recruitment strategies from last year's plan.

Implementation Summary:

Parker implemented its recruitment plan as written, with specific attention to continuing to widen the locations in which the enrollment-focused Information Sessions were advertised and posted, with focus on groups indicated in the plan. Flyers advertising Parker and the Information Sessions were sent to more locations than in prior years. The plan to post at the Leominster RMV did not come to fruition, as it was more cost prohibitive than anticipated. In particular, an increased number of food pantries that serve communities in Parker's region were contacted with information, enrollment flyers, and applications. No significant increase in targeted populations was noted through the use of these strategies, based on the CHART data.

Describe the school's general recruitment activities, i.e. those intended to reach all students.

General Recruitment Activities:

Historically, the primary vehicle for recruitment at the Parker School has been two three-hour Information Sessions held each January, hosted by teachers, students and parents. These sessions have been advertised by posting flyers in area communities. Additionally, information about the program has been available on the school website for prospective families. Internally collected data indicates that most families who come to the Information Sessions have heard about Parker via "word of mouth," that is, conversation with a friend, neighbor, acquaintance, colleague, etc. In an attempt to widen the demographic that considers applying to Parker, we will be substantially revising the programs available to learn about the school. These revisions include monthly student shadow days, shorter but more frequent information sessions, and Q&A sessions hosted at targeted local libraries (see details in the recruitment plan). As a regional charter school, Parker draws from up to 75 school districts, with more than 40 towns regularly represented at the school. The top four sending school districts are Ayer-Shirley, Groton-Dunstable, Littleton, and North Middlesex, which comprise approximately 50% of the study body.

Recruitment Plan – Goals and Strategies	
List strategies for recruitment activities for each demographic group.	
Demographic Group	Strategies
Special education students	At 18.1%, Parker’s special education percentage continues to remain above the state average (17.1%), above the median of comparison schools (15.8%), and well above the comparison index (12.0%). Given its long history of attracting special education students at rates above average, Parker will continue its current practices to recruit this population, including addressing supports for special education at information sessions (including those built directly into the general education program).
Limited English-proficient students	Parker’s Limited English-proficient demographic is 0%. The median comparison 1.6%. This continues to be an area in which Parker has not yet been successful in attracting students, despite materials being available in Spanish on the website and actively distributed in Spanish to relevant local agencies. In order to continue to work to recruit students in the Limited English-proficient demographic, Parker will hold an information sessions in Leominster (rather than at Parker), and this session will be led by both the school principal and a Spanish-speaking teacher. The session will be advertised in English and Spanish through flyers and community newspapers. (This school district was selected by using DOE data to determine a school within our region with a higher percentage of the targeted population. Leominster has an ELL population of approximately 6%.)
Students eligible for free or reduced lunch	The median percentage of “economically disadvantaged” students at Parker is 3.3%. This is below the median comparison of 14.3%. In order to continue to work to recruit students in the economically disadvantaged demographic, Parker will hold information sessions at libraries in Ayer/Shirley (rather than at Parker). The sessions will be advertised through flyers and community newspapers. (This school district was selected by using DOE data to determine a school within our region with a higher percentage of the targeted population. Ayer/Shirley has an economically disadvantaged population above 20%.)
Students who are sub-proficient	Specific data is not reported on this demographic in the CHART tool. However, in order to meet student needs in areas of academic struggle that prevent success within the wider academic program, Parker has revised its daily and weekly school schedule for the 2015-2016 school year. These changes incorporate additional support within the school day (but without pull-out from core academic classes) for student needs like foundational math skills, executive function support, and time management. Weaknesses in these skills often lead students to be sub-proficient. These program revisions will be specifically discussed at information sessions in order to help families understand how Parker can serve children in this demographic.
Students at risk of dropping out of school	In order to continue to work to recruit students who may be at risk of dropping out of school, Parker will hold an information session in Littleton (dropout rate of 5.7%) and Clinton (dropout rate of 4.7%). The sessions will be advertised through flyers and community newspapers. (These school districts were selected by using DOE data to determine districts with higher rates of the targeted population.)

<p>Students who have dropped out of school</p>	<p>Since Parker has a strong retention rate, maintains a lengthy waitlist for each grade, and rarely has openings after 9th grade, it does not make sense to recruit students above age 16 who have already dropped-out, as there would be little to no opportunity for them to matriculate at the school given enrollment regulations.</p>
<p>Other subgroups of students who should be targeted to eliminate the achievement gap</p>	<p>Using strategies identified above (most notably, widening the base of locations where Information Sessions are advertised), Parker hopes to increase the number and kinds of other underserved demographic groups in the recruiting process.</p>

Retention Plan 2015 – 2016

Please provide a brief narrative report on implementation of retention strategies from last year's plan.

Implementation Summary:

As is typical, Parker continued to have a high retention rate among its student body. In particular, Parker's attention to personalized learning and individual student needs allows it to understand and meet the needs of a wide variety of students. As has been true for several years, students at risk of dropping out of school were intensively counseled and supported through decision-making about their futures. Parker implemented its retention plan as written and will continue to engage in these educational practices throughout the next year, as retention rates are high and do not indicate a significant need for change.

Overall Student Retention Goal	
Annual goal for student retention (percentage):	Parker's retention rate is high, at 94.6% overall. Parker's goal for student retention is 90%, a goal which has been met for many years.

Retention Plan –Strategies	
List strategies for retention activities for <u>each</u> demographic group.	
Demographic Group	Strategies
Special education students	<p>In addition to the strategies used for all students, Parker will utilize the following strategies in order to retain students who face particular academic/special education challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued targeted professional development and support for teachers in understanding and meeting the needs of students with different learning needs, including anxiety and executive function disorders. • Revised school schedule allows for more small group instructional support for student needs without pull-out from core academic classes.
Limited English-proficient students	At this time, Parker does not have an LEP population to retain.

<p>Students eligible for free or reduced lunch</p>	<p>In addition to its currently existing supports for students and families experiencing socio-economic challenges, this year, Parker will pilot a “laptop loaner” program for students in this demographic. Identified students will be offered an annual loan of a school laptop, for use at school and at home, as well as information about accessing internet at home, if relevant.</p>
<p>Students who are sub-proficient</p>	<p>In the coming year, Parker will launch a new program called “Academic Block” in which students will receive small-group instruction, tutoring, and/or support in identified areas of academic need. These sessions will meet three times a week for 35 minutes per sessions. Student advisors will oversee student placement in these sessions to best support their needs with the goal of bringing them up to academic proficiency.</p>
<p>Students at risk of dropping out of school</p>	<p>Any and all Parker students who intend to "drop out" of high school or who have significant attendance or performance issues are met with frequently into order to identify best next steps to completion of a high school program, including the GED. Students do not drop out unbeknownst to the school or without a clear plan for next steps that allow them to be successful.</p>
<p>Students who have dropped out of school</p>	<p>Parker does not have any students who have "dropped out" of school without other planning in mind. Any students at risk of doing so are counseled towards an appropriate alternate program, including completion of a GED. Students who withdraw from the school under these conditions are followed-up with until another program or the GED has been established/completed.</p>
<p>Other subgroups of students who should be targeted to eliminate the achievement gap</p>	<p>Using the variety of strategies articulated above, all students who struggle are offered careful support and attention, across all demographic groups.</p>

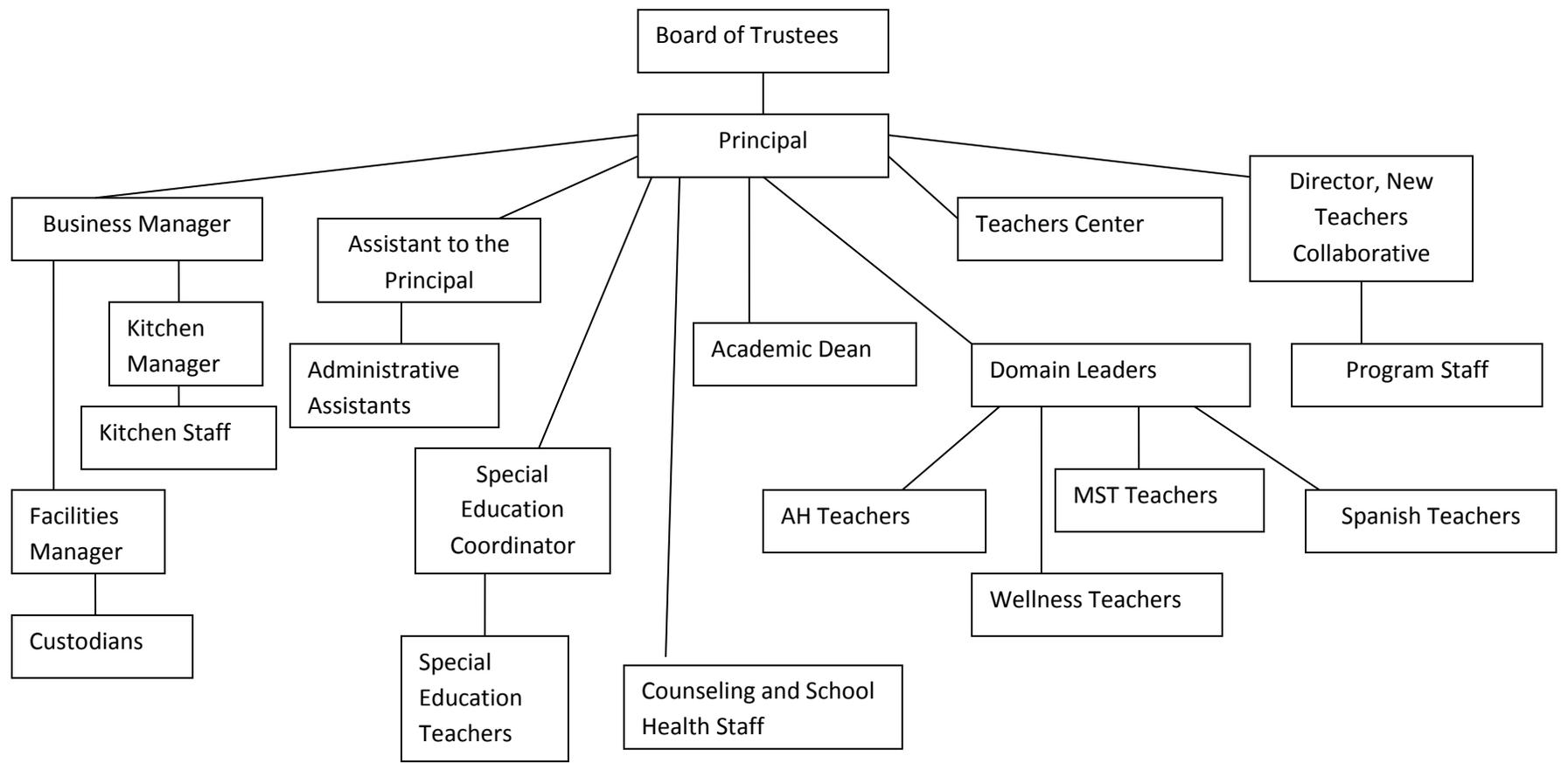
**Appendix C
School and Student Data**

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity 2014-2015		
Race/Ethnicity	% of Students	% of School
African American	0.3	0.3
Asian	1.8	1.8
Hispanic	3.6	3.6
Native American	0.0	0.0
White	92.6	92.6
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0.3	0.3
Multi Race Non-Hispanic	1.5	1.5
Special Education	18.1	18.1
Limited English proficient	0.0	0.0
Low Income	3.3	3.3

ADMINISTRATIVE ROSTER FOR THE 2014-15 SCHOOL YEAR		
Title	Brief Job Description	Start date
Todd Sumner	Principal	7/1/11
Michelle McKenna	Business Manager	3/8/06
Deb Merriam	Academic Dean	7/1/95
Sue Massucco	Arts and Humanities Domain Leader	2/23/08
Diane Kruse	MST Domain Leader	8/1/99
Ruth Whalen	Spanish Domain Leader	7/1/98
Terry Weisinger	Special Education Coordinator	8/14/02

TEACHERS AND STAFF ATTRITION FOR THE 2014-15 SCHOOL YEAR			
	Number as of the last day of the 2014-15 school year	Departures during the 2014-2015 school year	Departures at the end of the school year
Teachers	49	1	13
Other Staff	26	1	3

At the end of academic year 2014-2015, Parker had 13 teacher positions and 3 non teacher positions turn over. No administration positions transitioned. Four collaborating teacher interns employed at Parker left at the end of their training year. Six teachers left due to family reasons/ personal schedule changes/ relocation. Three teachers left for other K-12 employment. Two non-teaching staff left due to family reasons/ personal schedule changes/ relocation. One non-teaching staff left at the end of the year due to retirement. One teacher and one non-teacher resigned mid-year due to personal reasons



BOARD MEMBERS FOR THE 2014-15 SCHOOL YEAR				
Name	Position on the Board	Committee affiliation	Number of terms served	Length of each term
Jane Adams		Governance	Serving second term	Began 07/11 Ends 06/17
Bill Allen	Treasurer	Finance	Serving third term	Began 9/06 Term ends 6/15
Bob Amici		Governance	Serving second term	Term began 07/13 Term ends 6/16
Julie Bartsch		Principal Evaluation	Serving second term	Began 07/11 Ends 06/17
Miriam Smith		Development	Serving first term	Began 07/13 Ends 06/16
Cindy Stack-Haan		Governance	Serving first term	Begins 07/13 Ends 07/16
Cheryl Coonahan	Chair	Principal Evaluation, Summer Retreat Planning	Serving third term	Begins 7/12 Ends 7/18
Kayla Reeves		Enrollment	Serving first term	Begins 07/13 Ends 07/16
Steven Roach		Facilities	Serving first term	Begins 07/14 Ends 06/17
Joe Howard		Finance	Serving first term	Began 07/12 Ends 07/18
Peter Macdonald	Vice Chair	Governance	Serving second term	Began 07/11 Ends 06/17
Matt Smith	Clerk	Board Development Finance	Faculty Serving second term	Term began 06/13 Term ends 06/16
Jeanine Wood		Facilities	Serving first term	Begins 07/14 Ends 06/17
Todd Sumner		Principal Evaluation, Governance (non-voting) Board Development	Principal	
Laura Warner		Enrollment	Serving first term	Term began 07/13 Term Ends 07/16
Mary-Wren VanderWilden		Development	Serving second term	Term Began 07/12 Term Ends 07/18
Aaron Stockwell		Governance Principal Evaluation	Serving first term	Begins 07/13 Ends 07/16

Appendix D

Position	Name
Board of Trustees Chairperson	Cheryl Coonahan
Charter School Leader	Todd Sumner
Assistant Charter School Leader	NA
Special Education Director	Terry Weisinger
MCAS Test Coordinator	Deb Merriam
SIMS Coordinator	Deb Merriam
English Language Learner Director	Deb Merriam

Action	Date(s)
Student Application Deadline	February 1, 2016
Lottery	February 4, 2016