

ENTRY PLAN

**Brian Harrigan, Head of School
Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School**

July 5, 2022



Parker Class of 2022

“We believe that the school’s central focus must be on the intellect, on helping each young citizen learn to use his or her mind resourcefully and well.” - Ted Sizer

It is with great excitement, pride and a few butterflies that I write to you today as Parker’s new Head of School. Thank you for entrusting me with this great opportunity and responsibility. I am honored to lead the school that Ted Sizer and the founders envisioned, the model of what a student-centered, rigorous and progressive education should be. I am honored to follow in the legacy of loving leadership that Todd embodied. As we all know, Parker is a very special place!

I am thrilled to put students at the center of everything that we do, to build off the tremendous foundation of success and to join this terrific staff and school community. We are at an important moment for Parker - as committed as ever to the vision established 28 years ago and determined to ensure that Parker thrives into the next 28 years and beyond. Thank you for contributing to the past, present and future of Parker!

Thank you, Todd, for your time and support over the past five months. Todd has quickly become a trusted mentor and friend. Todd and I met eleven years ago when I led a team at Hopkinton High School interested in Senior Project. We were beyond impressed by the excitement and engagement of Parker students and the extraordinary depth and quality of their projects. We were struck by the warmth and generosity shown by Todd, Jon Churchill and everyone at Parker who hosted us. Jon explained that at Parker, we don’t teach subjects - we teach students, a simple but important reminder of the focus of our work.

Thank you to everyone who has welcomed me across the past many months, particularly Deb Merriam who oversaw my transition and facilitated countless sessions with students and staff. Thank you, Deb, for your friendship and making me always feel at home at Parker! I look forward to working together for many years to come. I want to thank Christine Regan Davi, Glenn Penna and the Parker Board of

Trustees for your outstanding leadership, service and support. We are extraordinarily lucky to have a team of leaders willing to give back to the school that they love. Thank you from all of us at Parker!

Reflections

Over the past five months of transition, I have had the pleasure of meeting many students, families, staff and community members. Parker is filled with extraordinary people doing exceptional things...

- A school full of joy, pride and a commitment to excellence
- Students using their minds well - deeply engaged and inquisitive
- Teachers and staff who set high expectations, provide rigorous coaching and help students excel
- The Habits of Learning are everywhere - inquiry, collaboration, critical thinking, reflection and perseverance define the Parker experience
- Students who are known, loved and supported by adults and students alike
- A tone of decency and trust schoolwide
- A culture of kindness and respect for all students to be their authentic selves
- A commitment to democracy, equity and inclusive practice

Entry Plan

I approach my entry into Parker as an inquisitive learner, intent on listening, asking lots of questions and resisting the temptation to make quick decisions with incomplete information. The Entry Plan is a chance for me to hear from all of you, while also affording the school community an opportunity to pause, reflect and plan. Done well, the Entry Plan will uncover several strengths and opportunities for improvement. It will also serve as a vehicle for discussion about where we want to go as a community.

Communication will be key to the success of this effort. I will share my findings along the way, celebrating our great successes by email, in-person and online. If you are so inclined, please follow us on social media. I will be most active on Twitter, starting today.

Twitter [@theparkerschool](https://twitter.com/theparkerschool)

Instagram [@parkercharter](https://www.instagram.com/parkercharter)

Facebook [@parker.charter.1](https://www.facebook.com/parker.charter.1)

Opportunities for Conversation

The heart of the Entry Plan is a series of opportunities for conversation for students, parents, staff and members of the community to talk with me about your Parker experience. For each of these conversations, I will introduce myself and explore the following questions...

- What are Parker's greatest strengths?
- What are Parker's greatest opportunities for improvement?
- What obstacles stand in our way of making improvements?
- What can the new Head of School do to help you?



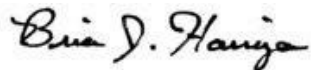
Please join us for one of these community conversations. All are welcome - though note that current students will have a chance to talk with me once school starts if they don't want to come in during summer vacation. Each of the sessions will be held in person at Parker. RSVP is appreciated but certainly not required by emailing Monique at mbeganski@theparkerschool.org. If you are interested in attending but unable to make any of these dates, please let us know so we may schedule additional sessions. If you are unable to attend in person, we would be happy to schedule virtual sessions. We will schedule more sessions in the fall as well.

- Thursday, July 14 from 4:00 - 5:00 pm
- Wednesday, August 10 from 5:00 - 6:00 pm
- Tuesday, August 23 from 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Conclusion

Thank you for your partnership and support. Parker is an extraordinary place - because of all of you. I look forward to meeting you!

With respect,



Brian Harrigan, Head of School

He, him, his

Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School

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Twitter [@theparkerschool](https://twitter.com/theparkerschool)

“Our school must model the thoughtful life that should infuse a civil and rich democracy, that it must be safe, engaging, inviting and joyful place for students and for adults.” - Ted Sizer

“Everyone at the school should be accorded the respect of being known well.” - Ted Sizer

“Serious learning in school is hard work, requiring involvement, intensity and loyalty to the task...” - Ted Sizer

Brian's Bio

Brian Harrigan is thrilled and honored to join Parker as the new Head of School. Brian promotes a positive school culture that is rigorous, loving, respectful, equitable, inclusive and welcoming to all students. Early in his career, Brian taught Social Studies at Gonzaga College High School in Washington, DC. Most recently, Brian served as the Principal of Natick High School for the past seven years. During this time, he developed a close partnership with Starfish International, a school for girls in The Gambia, West Africa. Brian is an avid runner, completing 15 marathons at an ever-slower pace. He lives in Hopkinton with his wife and two teenage daughters. He is a better parent and educator as life and work come together every day.