

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**OF THE**

**Francis W. Parker**

**Charter Essential School**

**2015-2016**

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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	21

### 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.

## FAITHFULNESS TO THE CHARTER

### **Mission and Key Design Elements**

Please see Appendix A, Accountability Report, for additional details.

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, as well as developing key habits of learning that transcend any one academic area of study.
- 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. Collaborative teaching models and embedded professional development are key design elements that support adult and student learning.
- 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 2015-2016, the question was “What pushes us forward?” Teachers support students in extending their learning beyond the classroom and in integrating learning across classrooms through the Essential Question.

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CHARTER**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Amendment Requested</b>	<b>Approved?</b>
1/25/16	Enrollment Policy update (to align with regulation changes)	Yes
Submitted May, 2016	Expulsion Policy update (to align with regulation changes)	Pending
Submitted May, 2016	Single adjustment to School Region	Pending

**Dissemination Efforts**

See Appendix A, Objective #6 in Accountability Report.

## ACADEMIC PROGRAM SUCCESS

### **Student Performance**

Parker School Report Card link:

<http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/accountability/report/school.aspx?linkid=31&orgcode=04780505&orgtypecode=6&>

Please see Accountability Report Measures for additional student performance information.

### **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.

In the 2015-2016 school year, the most notable program revision was an adjustment to the daily school schedule and use of time in learning. While the core use of time was not changed, and students still spend most of their school day in the academic division/domain classes described earlier, all students now additionally have time for targeted skills work (both support and enrichment) outside of their academic classes. This schedule change was made after a year-long, faculty-wide examination (in 2014-2015) of the daily/weekly school schedule and the overall allocation of time in learning across the week. 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 the class meeting schedule on Wednesdays, which creates time for a 35 minute “Academic Block” at the end of the day four 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.

### **Social, Emotional, and Health Needs**

No significant changes were made to Parker’s approach to school culture, student health or student discipline in the 2015-2016 school year.

## ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY

### **Organizational Structure of the School**

The organization structure of the school was not altered in 2015-2016.

### **Teacher Evaluation**

Parker uses the rubric, timeline, performance categories, and other general elements of the Massachusetts Model System of Educator Evaluation. There were no changes to this system in 2015-2016.

### **Budget and Finance**

See following pages

<b>Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School</b>	
<b>Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Net Position (Unaudited)</b>	
<b>Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2016</b>	
<b>REVENUES:</b>	
State allocation - tuition	\$4,711,570
State allocation - facilities aid	\$355,314
Federal and State Grants	\$74,578
Private Grants and Contributions	\$134,348
Program Fees:	\$298,127
Miscellaneous income	\$49,326
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>5,623,262</b>
<b>EXPENSES:</b>	
Salaries and wages	3,691,866.46
Payroll taxes and fringe benefits	560,998.17
Recruiting and staff development	55,357.80
Accreditation	3,120.00
Assessment	3,741.04
Books and curriculum material	24,591.14
Computer hardware and software	94,793.05
Computer internet access	3,853.40
Consultant-instructional	30,857.35
Contract services	70,188.30
Depreciation	40,383.38
Dues and subscriptions	54,114.31
Food-school lunch program	85,737.29
Furniture and equipment	38,430.94
Inspections	10,374.15
Insurance	38,738.63
Leases-school building	353,805.99
Leases-fields and sports arena	24,108.50
Legal & accounting services	17,143.37
Maintenance-equipment	11,716.25
Maintenance-facility	18,063.70
Other	32,752.43
Printing, copy, and postage	31,602.97
Sports equipment	5,351.07
Student activities and field trips	108,588.55
Student transportation	44,901.24
Supplies	41,696.52
Uniforms-athletics	4,445.42
Utilities	88,651.00
Vending	672.06
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>5,590,644</b>
<b>OPERATING INCOME</b>	<b>32,618</b>
<b>NON OPERATING REVENUES</b>	
Interest Income	4,029
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>36,647</b>
<b>NET POSITION, JUNE 30, 2015</b>	<b>2,758,381</b>
<b>NET POSITION, JUNE 30, 2016</b>	<b>\$2,795,028</b>

<b>Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School</b>	
<b>Statement of Net Position (Unaudited/ Draft)</b>	
	<b><u>6/30/16</u></b>
<b><u>Assets</u></b>	
<b>Current Assets:</b>	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$2,226,869
Accounts receivable, net of allowances	
-Intergovernmental	2,502
-Due from related Party	107,629
-Other	10,618
Prepaid expenses	12,475
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>2,360,093</b>
<b>Cash Held for Student Activities</b>	<b>54,570</b>
<b>Noncurrent Assets:</b>	
Other Non Current Assets	309,954
Deposits	2,175
Capital Assets	628,723
Less - accumulated depreciation	416,672
<b>Net capital assets</b>	<b>212,051.00</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$2,938,844</b>
<b><u>Liabilities and Net Assets</u></b>	
<b>Current Liabilities:</b>	
Accounts payable and withholdings	\$7,779
Accrued payroll and expenses	74,967
Unearned Revenue	6,500
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>89,245</b>
<b>Due to Student Activities</b>	<b>54,570</b>
<b>Net Assets:</b>	
Invested in capital assets	212,051
Building Rental Asset	309,954
Restricted for capital purchases	30,000
Restricted for Special Purposes	74,598
Reserve Fund	754,909
Capital Plan Reserve	395,000
Facilities Reserve Fund	971,616
Liquidity Reserve	46,899
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>2,795,028</b>
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>\$2,938,844</b>

**Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School**  
**Operating Budget**  
**Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2017**  
**Passed by the Board of Trustees on March 8 2016**

	<b>FY17</b>
<b>REVENUES:</b>	<b><u>Budget</u></b>
State allocation - Tuition	4,765,675
State allocation - Facilities Aid	352,735
Federal and State Grants	74,300
Private Grants and Contributions	125,000
Program Fees:	217,700
Miscellaneous income	43,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$5,578,410</b>
<b>EXPENSES:</b>	
Salaries and wages	3,802,967
Payroll taxes and fringe benefits	615,513
Recruiting and staff development	63,600
Accreditation	3,300
Assessment	5,200
Books and curriculum material	28,400
Computer hardware and software	40,500
Computer internet access	5,000
Consultant-instructional	44,400
Contract services	68,950
Depreciation	45,000
Dues and subscriptions	56,190
Food-school lunch program	87,000
Furniture and equipment	31,950
Inspections	8,000
Interest	41,000
Insurance	200
Leases-school building	359,851
Leases-fields and sports arena	36,600
Legal & accounting services	28,750
Maintenance-equipment	12,700
Maintenance-facility	34,000
Other	26,600
Printing, copy, and postage	32,200
Sports equipment	11,630
Student transportation	43,910
Supplies	54,775
Uniforms-athletics	6,300
Utilities	137,384
Vending	700
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>5,732,569</b>
<b>OPERATING INCOME</b>	<b>(154,159)</b>
<b>NON OPERATING REVENUES</b>	
Interest Income	4,000
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>(150,159)</b>
<b>NET POSITION, JUNE 30, 2016</b>	<b>2,795,028</b>
<b>NET POSITION, JUNE 30, 2017</b>	<b>\$2,644,869</b>

#### 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. It is in the current thinking of the Capital and Long Range Planning Committee that the school building will complete a roof repair and resurfacing project. Current estimated timing is summer of 2017.

# APPENDIX A

## ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN EVIDENCE 2015-2016

### Faithfulness to Charter

	2015 - 2016 Performance (Met/Partially Met/Not Met)	Evidence
<b>Objective:</b> Parker is guided by the Ten Common Principles of Essential Schools.		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Measure:</b></p> <p>In a teacher survey with 85% response rate or above, 85% or more of teachers will agree or strongly agree with the statement: The Ten Common Principles of Essential Schools influence my daily practice.</p>	<b>MET</b>	<p>Teacher response rate: <b>96%</b></p> <p><b>95%</b> of responding teachers agreed or strongly agreed <i>(42 out of 44 teachers)</i></p> <p>Average response: <b>4.7</b> <i>(on a 1-5 scale where 5 is 'strongly agree')</i></p>

### Academic Program Success

	2015 - 2016 Performance (Met/Partially Met/Not Met)	Evidence
<b>Objective:</b> All students will make a public exhibition of their work before moving on to the next level of study.		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Measure:</b></p> <p>Parker will hold public exhibitions of mastery for 100% of students moving between divisions and for graduation.</p> <p>85% of students will successfully complete a public exhibition of their work when they show readiness to move between divisions or to graduate.</p>	<b>MET</b>	<p><b>100%</b> of students moving between divisions completed public exhibitions of mastery (i.e., gateways) <i>(242 individual students completed 351 domain-based gateways between 9/1/15 and 6/10/16)</i></p> <p><b>100%</b> of students who earned a diploma completed a public exhibition (i.e., senior project exhibition) <i>(57 graduates in 2016, as of 7/15/16)</i></p>

<p><b>Objective:</b> All students will create portfolios of work that meet standards aligned with Parker's Criteria for Excellence in twelve different skill areas.</p>		
<p><b>Measure:</b> In a student survey with 85% response rate or above, 90% of students will agree with the statement: I am working towards a portfolio of work that meets standards in Parker's skill areas in my academic classes.</p>	<p><b>MET</b></p>	<p>Student response rate: <b>85%</b></p> <p><b>90%</b> of responding students agreed or strongly agreed <i>(301 out of 334 students)</i></p> <p>Average response: <b>4.4</b> <i>(on a 1-5 scale where 5 is 'strongly agree')</i></p>
<p><b>Measure:</b> 100% of students are creating a portfolio in eligible classes (Arts &amp; Humanities (AH); Math, Science and Technology (MST); and relevant Spanish levels).</p>	<p><b>MET</b></p>	<p><b>100%</b> of students collected portfolio-based evidence of their academic performance over the year in each relevant class</p>
<p><b>Objective:</b> All students create Personal Learning Plans (PLP's) that include at least one goal unique to the student and at least one goal related to the Habits of Learning.</p>		
<p><b>Measure:</b> In a student survey with 85% response rate or above, 90% of students will agree with the statement: I have a Personal Learning Plan that includes at least one goal unique to me and at least one goal related to the Habits of Learning.</p>	<p><b>PARTIALLY MET</b></p>	<p>Student response rate: <b>85%</b></p> <p><b>89%</b> of responding students agreed or strongly agreed <i>(296 out of 334 students)</i></p> <p>Average response: <b>4.2</b> <i>(on a 1-5 scale where 5 is 'strongly agree')</i></p>
<p><b>Measure:</b> 100% of students will create a Personal Learning Plan each year.</p>	<p><b>MET</b></p>	<p><b>100%</b> of enrolled students created a Personal Learning Plan in October, 2015 for the 2015-2016 school year</p>
<p><b>Objective:</b> Teachers will engage in collective planning and support each other in refining individual teaching practice.</p>		
<p><b>Measure:</b> Domain-based teacher planning teams will meet regularly; all eligible teachers will participate in a Critical Friends Group (CFG).</p>	<p><b>MET</b></p>	<p>Domain-based teacher planning teams met at least weekly; most met more frequently.</p> <p><b>100%</b> of eligible teachers participated in a CFG.</p>

<p><b>Measure:</b> In a teacher survey with 85% response rate or above, 85% or more of teachers will agree or strongly agree with the statements: a) participation in CFG helps deepen my teaching practice; b) I collaborate with colleagues in my planning team and/or CFG in examining student work and developing standards-based units.</p>	<p><b>MET</b></p>	<p>Teacher response rate: <b>96%</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">a) <u>CFG</u></p> <p><b>92%</b> of responding teachers agreed or strongly agreed <i>(42 out of 44 teachers)</i></p> <p>Average response: <b>4.3</b> <i>(on a 1-5 scale where 5 is 'strongly agree')</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">b) <u>Collaboration</u></p> <p><b>95%</b> of responding teachers agreed or strongly agreed <i>(42 out of 44 teachers)</i></p> <p>Average response: <b>4.8</b> <i>(on a 1-5 scale where 5 is 'strongly agree')</i></p>
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### Organizational Viability (Dissemination)

	2015 - 2016 Performance (Met/Partially Met/Not Met)	Evidence
<p><b>Objective:</b> The school will disseminate best practices through the Sizer Teachers Center and train teachers to work in student-centered classrooms.</p>		
<p><b>Measure:</b> 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.</p>	<p><b>MET</b></p>	<p>The Teachers Center formally hosted more than 195 visitors (representing more than 29 different schools and institutions) through more than 31 different events in the 2015-2016 year.</p>
<p><b>Measure:</b> The school receives continued approval by DESE for the New Teachers Collaborative teacher preparation program; thirty (30) newly inducted teachers are eligible for licensure through NTC during the charter term, at a pace of approximately six per year.</p>	<p><b>MET</b></p>	<p>The New Teachers Collaborative Program continues to be approved as a teacher preparation program. In the 2015-16 school year, 8 participants successfully completed the program. Since its inception, the NTC has licensed and placed 107 teachers in various fields. For the upcoming school year, more than 75 applications were received, and the program anticipates 11 candidates placed in 4 different schools.</p>

## APPENDIX B

### RECRUITMENT PLAN 2016-2017

School Name: Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School

Date: August 1, 2016

**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 offering new community-based information sessions (held in public venues like local libraries, rather than at Parker) to widen opportunities for families to learn about Parker. In conjunction with this effort to bring information about Parker into communities, Parker substantially restructured the information sessions held at the school. Information sessions and school visits are now available more often, for shorter periods of time, and at various times of day, in hopes of reaching a wide audience with a range of ways to learn about Parker's program.

**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 was two three-hour Information Sessions held on Sundays in January. In an attempt to widen the demographic that learns about and considers applying to Parker, information sessions were restructured and revised. 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 more than 70 school districts, with more than 40 towns regularly represented at the school. The top five sending school districts are Ayer-Shirley, Groton-Dunstable, Leominster, Littleton, and North Middlesex, which comprise approximately 58% of the study body. Each year, approximately one-third of admitted students are siblings of current students (following state enrollment regulations on sibling preference). Approximately one-third of the incoming class of seventh graders will be siblings of current students.

**RECRUITMENT PLAN – GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

List strategies for recruitment activities for each demographic group.

<b>Demographic Group</b>	<b>Strategies</b>
Special education students	At 16%, Parker’s special education percentage dropped slightly this year. For the last four years, the special education percentage has been above state averages, but this year, it is slightly below the state average (17.2%). It remains above the comparison index (12.1%), as it has for years. (Not indicated in this number are the 12% of Parker students on 504 plans.) Given its long history of attracting special education students at rates above average, Parker will monitor this percentage to see if this year is an anomaly or a trend. Parker will continue its current practices for recruiting this population, including directly 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 is 1.9% and the comparison index is 4.0%. The gap narrowing target is 1.7%. 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 the past year, Parker began to offer community-based information sessions in conjunction with another area charter school, with a Spanish-speaking staff member present. In order to continue to work to recruit students in the Limited English-proficient demographic, Parker will expand the number of community information sessions available with a Spanish-speaker, adding a new community. These sessions will be held in Leominster (ELL: 7.5%) and Fitchburg (ELL: 10.4%). Community sessions held in Ayer-Shirley will be specifically advertised for Spanish-speakers, as this is Parker’s largest sending district, with an ELL population of 3.5%. (School districts selected using DESE data to determine a school district within Parker’s region with a higher percentage of the targeted population.)
Students eligible for free or reduced lunch (aka, economically disadvantaged)	The median percentage of “economically disadvantaged” students at Parker is 3.0%. This is below the comparison index of 16.1%. In order to continue to work to recruit students in the economically disadvantaged demographic, Parker will attempt to partner with the local food pantry (which serves a majority of Parker’s highest sending districts) to hold an information session at their location. Furthermore, Parker will add a community information session in Lunenburg (14.7% economically disadvantaged). (School district selected using DESE data to determine a school district within Parker’s region with a higher percentage of the targeted population.)
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 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 add an information session in the Quabbin District (dropout rate of 3.8%). (School district selected by using DESE data to determine districts with higher rates of the targeted population.)
Students who have dropped out of school	Since Parker has a strong retention rate, maintains a lengthy waitlist for each grade, and does not enroll student after 9 <sup>th</sup> 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.
Other subgroups of students who should be targeted to eliminate the achievement gap	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.

# RETENTION PLAN

## 2016 – 2017

**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. Attrition rates for subgroups, such as low income and high need students, are also below state averages and comparison indexes. As has been true for many 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 need for significant change.

### Overall Student Retention Goal

<b>Annual goal for student retention (percentage):</b>	Parker’s retention rate is high, at 97.3% overall. Parker’s goal for student retention is 90%, a goal which has been met for many years.
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### Retention Plan –Strategies

**List strategies for retention activities for each 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"> <li>• Targeted skill development through workshops within the school day that provide support for struggling students in core classes.</li> <li>• Note that Parker’s attrition rate for special education students was 5%, below the state average of 10.2% and below Parker’s top two sending districts: Ayer-Shirley (14.5%) and Littleton (7.3%).</li> </ul>
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, Parker piloted a “laptop loaner” program for students in this demographic. Identified students were loaned a school laptop, for use at school and at home. Parker will expand and formalize this program in the coming year. Parker is also adding free home-based access to critical software (Microsoft Office) for students. Since Parker’s current retention rate for economically disadvantaged students is 100%, this is not an area of current concern.</p>
<p>Students who are sub-proficient</p>	<p>Parker will refine a new program called “Academic Block” in which students receive small-group instruction, tutoring, and/or support in identified areas of academic need. These sessions meet three times a week for 35 minutes per session. Student teachers oversee student placement in these sessions to best support their needs with the goal of bringing them up to academic proficiency. Again, Parker’s high need retention rate is well above averages and sending districts, and the personalized nature of Parker’s general education programs seems to serve this demographic well without further targeted programs.</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 and consideration of alternative high school programs. 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 TABLES

<b>Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity 2015-2016</b>		
Race/Ethnicity	% of Students	% of School
African American	0.5	0.5
Asian	1.5	1.5
Hispanic	3.5	3.5
Native American	0.0	0.0
White	91.7	91.7
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0.3	0.3
Multi Race Non-Hispanic	2.5	2.5
Special Education	16.0	16.0
Limited English proficient	0.0	0.0
Economically Disadvantaged	3.0	3.0

<b>Administrative Roster for the 2015-2016 School Year</b>		
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

<b>Teacher and Staff Attrition for the 2015-2016 School Year</b>				
	Number as of the last day of the 2015-16 school year	Departures during the 2015-2016 school year	Departures at the end of the school year	Reasons
Teachers	47	1	8	2 personal reasons, 2 relocating, 1 was a long term substitute, 4 were one-year licensure candidates
Other Staff	31	3	3	1 retired, 4 personal reasons, 1 termination

**Members of the Board of Trustees 2015-2016**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position on the Board</b>	<b>Committee affiliation</b>	<b>Number of terms served</b>	<b>Length of each term</b>
Jane Adams		Governance	Serving second term	Began 07/11 Ends 06/17
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 second 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

**APPENDIX D**  
**ADDITIONAL REQUIRED INFORMATION**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>
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

<b>Action</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
Student Application Deadline	February 1, 2017
Lottery	February 9, 2017