

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**OF THE**

**Francis W. Parker**

**Charter Essential School**

**2016-2017**

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## SCHOOL PROFILE

<b><i>Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School</i></b>			
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)	49
Year Opened	1995	Year(s) Renewed (if applicable)	2000, 2005, 2010, 2015
Maximum Enrollment	400	Current Enrollment As of June 22, 2017	391
Chartered Grade Span	7-12	Current Grade Span	7-12
# of Instructional Days per school year	180	Students on Waitlist as of June 22, 2017	217
School Hours	Begins 8:30am Ends 3:30pm Ends 1:30pm on Weds	Age of School	22

### 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.

### **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 in the 2016-2017 school year. 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 2016-2017, the question was “What unites 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

<b>Date</b>	<b>Amendment Requested</b>	<b>Approved?</b>
Fall, 2016	Revised expulsion policy	Pending
November, 2016	Single adjustment to School Region (add West Boylston)	Yes

## DISSEMINATION EFFORTS

See Appendix A, Objective #6 in Accountability Report for additional information. Listed below are only dissemination efforts with schools in the greater Boston area and/or in Parker's general region. Additional workshops not included in this list are reflected in the dissemination numbers provided in the Accountability Report in Appendix A.

<b>Best Practice Shared</b>	<b>Vehicle for Dissemination</b> (describe the method, format, or venue used to share best practices)	<b>Who at the school was involved with the dissemination efforts? (Title)</b>	<b>Criteria</b> that best aligns to the shared best practice (choose from the drop down menu)	<b>With whom</b> did the school disseminate its best practices? (Partners and Locations)	<b>Result of dissemination</b> (List any resulting artifacts, materials, agendas, or results from partners. Also indicate if the school received grant funding to disseminate and if a grant report was written.)
Performance-based promotion	Custom Workshop	Teachers, students	Curriculum	Boston Public Schools; Center for Collaborative Education	Artifacts vary, but may include focus questions, participant notes, participant revised work products (e.g., curriculum unit), participant discussions and team learning. <u>No grant funding nor grant reports.</u>
Assessment	Custom Workshop	Teachers, students	Mission and Key Design Elements	North Brookfield Public Schools	See above.
Essential Schools	Open Visit	Teachers, students	Mission and Key Design Elements	UMASS Lowell graduate students; Amesbury teachers	See above.
Inquiry-based mathematics	Custom Workshop	Teachers, students	Instruction	Bridge Boston Charter School	See above.
Portfolios	Custom Workshop	Teachers, students	Mission and Key Design Elements	Worcester Academy	See above.
Essential Schools	Custom Workshop	Teachers, students	Mission and Key Design Elements	GSE Harvard University	See above.
Exhibitions	Open Visit	Teachers, students, parents	Assessment and Program Evaluation	Christa McAuliffe Charter School	See above.
Essential Schools	Custom Workshop	Teachers, students	Mission and Key Design Elements	UMASS Lowell fellows	See above.
Student Government	Custom Workshop	Teachers, students	School Leadership	Newton Public Schools	See above.
Inquiry-based STEM	Custom Workshop	Teachers, students	Instruction	Revere Public Schools	See above.
Performance-based promotion	Custom Workshop	Teachers, students	Curriculum	Melrose Public Schools	See above
Portfolios	Custom Workshop	Teachers, students	Mission and Key Design Elements	Bridge Boston Charter School	See above
Exhibitions	Open Visit	Teachers, students, parent	Assessment and Program Evaluation	Malden Public Schools	See above.

## ACADEMIC PROGRAM SUCCESS

### **Student Performance**

Parker School Report Card link:

<http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/reportcard/rc.aspx?linkid=37&orgcode=04780505&fycode=2016&orgtypecode=6&>

Please see Accountability Report Measures for additional student performance information.

### **Program Delivery**

There have been no significant changes to the program delivery in the 2016-2017 school year. The school is aware of the DESE-approved revised standards in mathematics, ELA, and STE adopted this year. All relevant teams have been monitoring these developments and refining curriculum, where necessary. Since Parker's core curriculum is based on a skills-based approach, many of the adjustments to the standards are already reflected in Parker's program, and teams have been making adjustments for some time. Since continuous improvement and program revision are key components of the Parker program, 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 coming school year, the revised standards will continue to be incorporated into this review.

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

No significant changes were made to Parker's approach to school culture, student health or student discipline in the 2016-2017 school year.



## ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY

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

The organization structure of the school was not altered in 2016-2017.

### **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 2016-2017.

### **Budget and Finance**

See following pages

**Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School**  
**Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Net Position (Unaudited)**  
**Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2017**

**REVENUES:**

State allocation - tuition	\$4,759,010
State allocation - facilities aid	\$351,542
Federal and State Grants	\$75,242
Private Grants and Contributions	\$150,809
Program Fees:	\$245,252
Miscellaneous income	\$89,178

**TOTAL REVENUES** **5,671,033**

**EXPENSES:**

Salaries and wages	3,777,768.83
Payroll taxes and fringe benefits	592,620.47
Recruiting and staff development	41,462.46
Accreditation	3,120.00
Assessment	2,234.88
Books and curriculum material	21,190.73
Computer hardware and software	27,103.40
Computer internet access	4,874.72
Consultant-instructional	35,484.70
Contract services	34,405.45
Depreciation	43,140.57
Dues and subscriptions	50,735.89
Food-school lunch program	104,670.36
Furniture and equipment	39,248.87
Inspections	14,147.60
Insurance	39,004.00
Leases-school building	414,051.52
Leases-fields and sports arena	17,403.50
Legal & accounting services	75,712.44
Maintenance-equipment	10,999.92
Maintenance-facility	23,254.39
Other	31,572.14
Printing, copy, and postage	33,240.63
Sports equipment	7,583.26
Student activities and field trips	41,152.89
Student transportation	52,803.85
Supplies	40,927.29
Uniforms-athletics	6,628.59
Utilities	77,034.46
Vending	1,053.95

**TOTAL EXPENSES** **5,664,632**

**OPERATING INCOME** **6,401**

**NON OPERATING REVENUES**

Interest Income	4,347
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**CHANGE IN NET ASSETS** **10,748**

**NET POSITION, JUNE 30, 2016** **2,795,028**

**NET POSITION, JUNE 30, 2017** **\$2,805,776**

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

6/30/17

**Assets**

**Current Assets:**

Cash and cash equivalents	\$2,450,158
Accounts receivable, net of allowances	
-Intergovernmental	31,047
-Due from related Party	98,022
-Other	740
Prepaid expenses	18,917
Total current assets	2,598,885

**Cash Held for Student Activities** 54,394

**Noncurrent Assets:**

Other Non Current Assets	145,104
Deposits	2,175
Capital Assets	671,929
Less - accumulated depreciation	459,814
Net capital assets	212,115

**Total assets** \$3,012,674

**Liabilities and Net Assets**

**Current Liabilities:**

Accounts payable and withholdings	\$18,145
Accrued payroll and expenses	98,685
Unearned Revenue	35,674
Total current liabilities	152,503

**Due to Student Activities** 54,394

**Net Assets:**

Invested in capital assets	212,115
Building Rental Asset	145,104
Restricted for capital purchases	38,100
Restricted for Special Purposes	91,907
Reserve Fund	754,909
Capital Plan Reserve	395,000
Facilities Reserve Fund	1,121,741
Liquidity Reserve	46,899
Total net assets	2,805,776
Total liabilities and net assets	\$3,012,674

**Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School  
Operating Budget  
Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2018  
As approved by the Board of Trustees on March 20, 2017**

	<b>FY18 Budget</b>
<b>REVENUES:</b>	
State allocation - Tuition	4,867,895
State allocation - Facilities Aid	353,628
Federal and State Grants	74,100
Private Grants and Contributions	125,000
Program Fees:	241,500
Miscellaneous income	50,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$5,712,123</b>
<b>EXPENSES:</b>	
Salaries and wages	3,889,174
Payroll taxes and fringe benefits	683,037
Recruiting and staff development	65,400
Accreditation	3,250
Assessment	4,500
Books and curriculum material	28,350
Computer hardware and software	47,404
Computer internet access	6,240
Consultant-instructional	40,900
Contract services	48,210
Depreciation	47,500
Dues and subscriptions	57,790
Food-school lunch program	92,500
Furniture and equipment	31,100
Inspections	11,050
Interest	41,000
Insurance	0
Leases-school building	339,856
Leases-fields and sports arena	37,400
Legal & accounting services	30,350
Maintenance-equipment	16,150
Maintenance-facility	31,860
Other	27,900
Printing, copy, and postage	40,300
Sports equipment	11,730
Student transportation	46,950
Supplies	55,350
Uniforms-athletics	6,300
Utilities	121,348
Vending	700
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>5,863,599</b>
<b>OPERATING INCOME</b>	<b>(151,476)</b>
<b>NON OPERATING REVENUES</b>	
Interest Income	4,000
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>(147,476)</b>
<b>NET POSITION, JUNE 30, 2017</b>	<b>2,807,776</b>
<b>NET POSITION, JUNE 30, 2018</b>	<b>\$2,660,300</b>

### **CAPITAL PLAN FOR FY17**

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 has developed a plan around next steps toward realization of our capital strategic goals. Capital and Long-Range Planning Committee will oversee completion of a roof repair and resurfacing project in the summer/fall of 2017. The funds utilized for this project will be a combination of private fundraising, new bond borrowings, and use of reserve funds. The reserve funds were not formally earmarked with the State in terms of an official capital plan, but the funds were being accumulated by the Board of Trustees with the upcoming capital needs projects, as identified by the Capital and Long-Range Planning Committee, in mind.

## APPENDIX A: Accountability Plan Evidence 2016-2017

### Faithfulness to Charter

	2016 - 2017 Performance (Met/Partially Met/Not Met)	Evidence
<b>Objective: Parker is guided by the Ten Common Principles of Essential Schools.</b>		
<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>Overall teacher response rate: <b><u>88%</u></b></p> <p><b><u>97%</u></b> of responding teachers agreed or strongly agreed</p> <p>Average response: <b><u>4.7</u></b> <i>(on a 1-5 scale where 5 is 'strongly agree')</i></p>

### Academic Program Success

	2016 – 2017 Performance (Met/Partially Met/Not Met)	Evidence
<b>Objective: All students will make a public exhibition of their work before moving on to the next level of study.</b>		
<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><u>100%</u></b> of students moving between divisions completed public exhibitions of mastery (i.e., gateways) <i>(214 individual students completed 328 domain-based gateways between 9/1/16 and 6/22/16)</i></p> <p><b><u>100%</u></b> of students who earned a diploma completed a public exhibition (i.e., senior project exhibition) <i>(61 graduates in 2017)</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>Overall student response rate: <b><u>91%</u></b></p> <p><b><u>95%</u></b> of responding students agreed or strongly agreed</p> <p>Average response: <b><u>4.5</u></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><u>100%</u></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>Overall student response rate: <b><u>91%</u></b></p> <p><b><u>74%</u></b> of responding students agreed or strongly agreed</p> <p>Average response: <b><u>4.1</u></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><u>100%</u></b> of enrolled students created a Personal Learning Plan in October, 2016 for the 2016-2017 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><u>100%</u></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>Overall teacher response rate: <b><u>88%</u></b></p> <p>a) CFG <b><u>95%</u></b> of responding teachers agreed or strongly agreed</p> <p>Average response: <b><u>4.5</u></b> (on a 1-5 scale where 5 is 'strongly agree')</p> <p>b) Collaboration <b><u>100%</u></b> of responding teachers agreed or strongly agreed</p> <p>Average response: <b><u>4.8</u></b> (on a 1-5 scale where 5 is 'strongly agree')</p>
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**Organizational Viability (Dissemination)**

	<p>2016 - 2017 Performance (Met/Partially Met/Not Met)</p>	<p>Evidence</p>
<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 224 visitors (representing more than 27 different schools and institutions) through more than 29 different events in the 2016-2017 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 2016-17 school year, 7 participants successfully completed the program. Since its inception, the NTC has licensed and placed 114 teachers in various fields. For the upcoming school year, more than 60 applications were received, and the program anticipates 10 candidates placed in 4 different schools. NTC has also extended to support teachers</p>



		<p>in completing their Master's degree from Fitchburg State University and extend teacher learning toward into the professional pathway. One teacher participated in NTC2 (a second year of NTC) in the 2016-17 school year, and two more will participate during the 2017-18 school year.</p>
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**Appendix B  
RECRUITMENT PLAN  
2017-2018**

School Name: Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School

**2016-2017 Implementation Summary:**

1. In a brief narrative, what were report the successes and challenges of implementing the school's recruitment strategies from the 2016-2017 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, Littleton, Leominster, North Middlesex, and Groton-Dunstable, which comprise approximately 60% of the student body. Parker implemented its recruitment plan as written, with specific attention to community-based information sessions to reach specific demographic groups (held in public venues like local libraries, rather than at Parker) and partnering with a local food pantry to reach other targeted demographic groups.

- A) Successes and challenges of the community-based information sessions. Each of the community-based information sessions was successful from a design perspective: we were able to reserve "high visibility" space near the entrance of each library, had print media "announcements" or calendar listings in advance, had Spanish-speaking staff present where called for in the recruitment plan, and had appropriate collateral materials on hand. Challenges included the low volume of interactions with parents/students actually interested in exploring enrollment in a charter public school and/or Parker in particular; we were more likely to interact with a curious "passer-by" than with a family actively seeking out information about Parker.
- B) Successes and challenges of partnering with local food pantry. Parker has an ongoing relationship with a regional food pantry located on Devens, within walking distance of the school. Historically, the relationship has been based on Parker students and staff engaging in service at the pantry, mostly in support of weekly distribution activities (e.g., stocking shelves); through these shared activities, pantry staff and other volunteers have come to know about Parker and its programs. Because of client confidentiality concerns and other pantry norms, we did not hold a "live" information session but instead created a static display that included a poster with graphics and explanatory text plus a pocket for "take-away" informational brochures; this display was mounted for several weeks.

2. Is there additional information that gives context for subgroup enrollment figures (e.g., high number of siblings enrolled in entry class, re-classification of student subgroup status, etc.)?

Each year, approximately one-third to one-half of admitted students are siblings of current students (following state enrollment regulations on sibling preference).

3. Please provide a brief explanation if you think that your incoming class of students (as captured in the October 1, 2017 SIMS report) will meet the comparison index or the school's gap narrowing targets. Please explicitly state if you would like further discussion with the Department regarding the school's Recruitment Plan once your school has submitted October 1<sup>st</sup> SIMS demographic information.

We believe that our October SIMS will show a population consistent with our current data, as detailed below.

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

**General Recruitment Activities for 2017-2018:**

**Activity 1: Morning Information Sessions**

Ninety minutes total running time on a day school is in session. Prospective students and parents/guardians arrive in time for students to be paired with peer hosts; students attend advisory and one hour of class. Meanwhile, parents/guardians attend a general information session in the library.

**Activity 2: Evening Information Sessions**

Prospective students and parents/guardians begin the evening session together with a general overview presentation. Students then have the option to participate in "break-out" sessions with teachers featuring sample activities from Arts & Humanities (AH) and Math, Science, Technology (MST) classes. Meanwhile, parents & guardians continue an informational presentation covering all major aspects of the program and the enrollment process. Total running time ninety minutes.

**Activity 3: Community Information Sessions**

Walk-up, conversational, informal sessions supported by graphic displays, examples of student work, and take-one brochures; Spanish-speaking staff present as indicated. Scheduled in specified communities with targeted populations, usually in the public library. Total running time ninety minutes per session.

**Activity 4: Mailings**

Info Session flyers and applications mailed to a wide variety of community organizations for posting, etc.

**Activity 5: Current Family Outreach**

During enrollment season, we ask current families to post flyers in public spaces in their towns, display yard signs, etc.

**Recruitment Plan –Strategies**

**List strategies for recruitment activities for each demographic group.**

**Special education students/students with disabilities**

**(a) CHART data**

**School percentage:**  
15.9%  
**GNT percentage:** n/a  
**CI percentage:** 12.1%

The school is above  
GNT percentages and  
above CI percentages

**(b) 2016-2017 Strategies**

- Met GNT/CI: no enhanced/additional strategies needed
- We directly address the school design of personalized education and supports for special education (including those built directly into the general education program) at all information sessions.

**(c) 2017-2018 Additional Strategy(ies), if needed**

**Limited English-proficient students/English learners**

<p><b>(a) CHART data</b></p> <p>School percentage: 0% GNT percentage: 2.0% CI percentage: 4.0%</p> <p>The school is below GNT percentages and below CI percentages</p>	<p align="center"><b>(b) 2016-2017 Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Met GNT/CI: no enhanced/additional strategies needed</li> <li>• All enrollment materials are available in Spanish on the school website.</li> <li>• Enrollment materials are distributed in Spanish to relevant local agencies.</li> <li>• We offer community-based information sessions (some with a Spanish-speaking staff member present) and will increase the number of community information sessions available with a Spanish-speaker as well as adding new sessions in communities with high percentages of Spanish-speaking students (based on CHART data).</li> </ul>
	<p align="center"><b>(c) 2017-2018 Additional Strategy(ies), if needed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Did not meet GNT/CI: additional and/or enhanced strategies below:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use social media to target Leominster/Fitchburg during enrollment season</li> <li>• Work with Boys/Girls Clubs in Leominster/Fitchburg to raise awareness of program</li> <li>• Establish a new Board of Trustees sub-committee on diversity to investigate additional strategies</li> <li>• Expect to see increase in lottery participation from Leominster and Fitchburg within three years</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Students eligible for free or reduced lunch (Low Income/Economically Disadvantaged)**

<p><b>(a) CHART data</b></p> <p>School percentage: 5.3% GNT percentage: n/a CI percentage: 18.3%</p> <p>The school is below GNT percentages and below CI percentages</p>	<p align="center"><b>(b) 2016-2017 Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Met GNT/CI: no enhanced/additional strategies needed</li> <li>• 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 or otherwise reach the community that utilizes their services.</li> <li>• Parker will add a community information session in a relevant community to target this population.</li> </ul>
	<p align="center"><b>(c) 2017-2018 Additional Strategy(ies), if needed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Did not meet GNT/CI: additional and/or enhanced strategies below:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In partnership with Devens Enterprise Commission (DEC), MassDevelopment, and Devens businesses, actively promote new regional shuttle bus service, run by Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART) as a public transportation option for economically disadvantaged students to get to Parker. Specific tactics being considered include using MART buses in Fitchburg to advertise the new shuttle service.</li> <li>• We would expect to see increased lottery participation from Fitchburg and Leominster—the largest communities served by the shuttle service—within three years.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p><u>Students who are sub-proficient</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>(d) 2016-2017 Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In order meet the needs of students who struggle to be successful within the wider academic program, Parker incorporates additional support within the school day (but without pull-out from core academic classes) for needs like foundational math skills, executive function support, and time management. Weaknesses in these skills often lead students to be sub-proficient. This program and school schedule will be specifically discussed at information sessions in order to help families understand how Parker can serve children in this demographic.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Students at risk of dropping out of school</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>(e) 2016-2017 Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In order to continue to work to recruit students who may be at risk of dropping out of school, Parker will hold a community information session in a sending district with a relatively higher drop-out rate.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Students who have dropped out of school</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>(f) 2016-2017 Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPTIONAL</b> <u>Other subgroups of students who should be targeted to eliminate the achievement gap</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>(g) 2016-2017 Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>

**RETENTION PLAN  
2017-2018**

**Please provide a brief narrative report on the successes and challenges of implementing last year's retention strategies from the 2016-2017 Retention Plan.**

**2016-2017 Implementation Summary:**

Parker continued to have a high retention rate among its student body (93.2%) which exceeded the stated retention goal for 2016-2017 (90%). 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>	Retention rate goal: 85%

Retention Plan –Strategies	
List strategies for retention activities for <u>each</u> demographic group.	
Special education students/students with disabilities	
<p><u>(a) CHART data</u></p> <p><b>School percentage:</b> 4%</p> <p><b>Third Quartile:</b> 9.5%</p> <p>The school is below third quartile percentages.</p>	<p><b>(b) 2016-2017 Strategies</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Below third quartile: no enhanced/additional strategies needed</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>• Implementation of school mission of student-centered learning (including personalization and knowing students well).</li> </ul>
<b>(c) 2017-2018 Additional Strategy(ies), if needed</b>	

<b>Limited English-proficient students/English learners</b>	
<p><b>(a) CHART data</b></p> <p><b>School percentage:</b> na <b>Third Quartile:</b> 13.3%</p> <p>The school is below third quartile percentages.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>(b) 2016-2017 Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Below third quartile: no enhanced/additional strategies needed</li> <li>• At this time, Parker does not have an ELL/LEP population to retain.</li> </ul> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>(c) 2017-2018 Additional Strategy(ies), if needed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No ELs were enrolled during the 2016-2017 school year. No retention strategies needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Students eligible for free or reduced lunch (low income/economically disadvantaged)</b>	
<p><b>(a) CHART data</b></p> <p><b>School percentage:</b> 6.3% <b>Third Quartile:</b> 11.5%</p> <p>The school is below third quartile percentages.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>(b) 2016-2017 Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Below median and third quartile: no enhanced/additional strategies needed</li> <li>• Implementation of school mission of student-centered learning (including personalization and knowing students well).</li> </ul> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>(c) 2017-2018 Additional Strategy(ies), if needed</b></p>
<p><u>Students who are sub-proficient</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Students at risk of dropping out of school</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Students who have dropped out of school</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPTIONAL</b> <u>Other subgroups of students who should be targeted to eliminate the achievement gap</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the variety of strategies articulated above, all students who struggle are offered careful support and attention, across all demographic groups.</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX C: School and Student Data Tables

Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School's student demographic and enrollment profile may be found at: <http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/profiles/student.aspx?orgcode=04780505&orgtypecode=6&>

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity 2016-2017		
Race/Ethnicity	% of Students	% of School
African American	0.5	0.5
Asian	1.5	1.5
Hispanic	2.8	2.8
Native American	0.0	0.0
White	91.6	91.6
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0.0	0.0
Multi Race Non-Hispanic	3.5	3.5
Special Education	15.9	15.9
Limited English proficient	0.0	0.0
Economically Disadvantaged	5.3	5.3

Administrative Roster for the 2016-2017 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

Teacher and Staff Attrition for the 2016-2017 School Year				
	Number as of the last day of the 2016-17 school year	Departures during the 2016-2017 school year	Departures at the end of the school year	Reasons
Teachers	50	0	11	6 teachers were part of our licensure program and had completed all requirements, one teacher left for an administration position at another school, two teachers left for relocation, one teacher left for personal reasons, and one teacher was covering a leave
Other Staff	30	0	1	Relocation out of state



**Members of the Board of Trustees 2016-2017**

<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	Treasurer	Finance	Serving second term	Began 07/11 Ends 06/17
Christine Regan-Davy		Governance	Serving first term	Term began 07/16 Term ends 6/19
Julie Bartsch		Principal Evaluation	Serving second term	Began 07/11 Ends 06/17
Theresa Espinola		Finance	Serving first term	Began 07/16 Ends 06/19
Cindy Stack-Haan		Development	Serving first term	Begins 07/13 Ends 07/16
Cheryl Lower	Chair	Principal Evaluation,	Serving third term	Begins 7/12 Ends 7/18
Kayla Reeves		Principal Evaluation	Serving second term	Begins 07/16 Ends 07/19
Steven Roach		Facilities	Serving first term	Begins 07/14 Ends 06/17
Joe Howard		Finance	Serving second term	Began 07/15 Ends 07/18
Peter Macdonald	Vice Chair	Governance	Serving second term	Began 07/14 Ends 06/17
Caroline Beasley			Faculty Serving first term	Term began 06/16 Term ends 06/19
Jeanine Wood		Facilities	Serving first term	Begins 07/14 Ends 06/17
Todd Sumner		Principal Evaluation, Governance (non-voting) Board Development	Principal	
Laura Warner	Clerk	Enrollment	Serving second term	Term began 07/16 Term Ends 07/19
Mary-Wren VanderWilden		Development	Serving second term	Term Began 07/15 Term Ends 07/18

**APPENDIX D:  
Additional Required Information**

Position	Name
Board of Trustees Chairperson	Cheryl Lower
Charter School Leader	Todd Sumner
Special Education Director	Terry Weisinger
MCAS Test Coordinator	Deb Merriam
SIMS Coordinator	Deb Merriam
English Language Learner Director	Deb Merriam
School Business Official	Michelle McKenna
Sims Contact	Deb Merriam

Action	Date(s)
Student Application Deadline	February 1, 2018
Lottery	February 6, 2018

# APPENDIX E: Organizational Chart

