



**Application for Renewal of a
Public School Charter**

Four Rivers Charter Public School

**248 Colrain Road
Greenfield, MA 01301**

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Application submitted July 27, 2012

JULY 31, 2012

Dear Barry Barnett and Commissioner Chester,

As Principal of the Four Rivers Charter Public School, I'm proud to offer this application for the renewal of our charter. After an initial term that set this school on strong foundations, the second term has seen Four Rivers consolidate gains, systematize practices and policies, and reach significant levels of academic achievement.

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Performance and Plans

This section of the Application provides information concerning the school’s performance over the current charter period and plans for the next charter period.

Note on the data: Some data are missing from the first year of the second charter, before we reorganized our Accountability Plan and began keeping systematic data on each objective.

1. Faithfulness to Charter

1.1 Accountability Plan Objectives and Measures Relating to Faithfulness to Charter

List each objective and measure contained in the school’s current, ESE-approved Accountability Plan relating to the school’s faithfulness to the terms of its charter.

- For each listed measure, state whether the school has met, is making progress toward meeting, or has not met the measure and provide data or other evidence supporting the statement; student level data must not be submitted. Provide evidence from each year of the charter term.
- If necessary, the data or other evidence may be provided in Appendix B as a clearly labeled attachment.

OBJECTIVE 1: Themes: Nature, Technology, Community

Four Rivers Charter Public School will use the themes of nature, technology, and community to engage and advance student learning.

Measures

1a All students will complete, at least once each year, individual or group projects that address the essential question in the school’s mission: *How do we find the healthy, sustainable interrelationship of the natural world, technology in its many forms, and the human community?* 90% of these projects will be of *Meeting* quality, as judged by the evaluations of experts, visitors to the school, and/or faculty members who do not teach the students whose projects are being evaluated.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was not met; the school has made progress.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
% completing a project related to the school themes	NA	97	96	97	88

1b All students, as part of their annual portfolio, will reflect on their engagement with the school

themes and the essential question in the mission. 90% of the students will meet this criterion in the assessment of their portfolio.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was not met; the school has made progress.

As the school's portfolios evolved, the requirements have moved away from particular sections and questions to having students reflect more holistically on the story of their year. Nonetheless, faculty agree that we want to do more with the school themes and essential question.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
% completing a reflection on engagement with school themes.	NA	83	88	70	74

OBJECTIVE 2: Character & Community

Four Rivers Charter Public School will engage students in character growth and service to the school and the community.

Measures

2a 90% of students will engage in effective goal-setting for personal and academic growth, as documented in advisory records, student-led conferences and portfolio reflections.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
% students completing goal setting	NA	91	92	99	99

2b An annual survey of parents and students will document that at least 75% of respondents believe the school helps students to grow personally and develop strength of character.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met for parents, but not for students.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
% parents who believe the school helps students to grow personally and develop strength of character	NA	91	91	99	91
% students who believe the	NA	NA	67	71	72

school helps students to grow personally and develop strength of character					
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2c 90% of students will meet their requirements for service to the school and the community, as documented in advisory records and portfolio reflections.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met all but 1 year.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
% students who meet their requirements for service	NA	91	99	83	96

OBJECTIVE 3: College and Post-Secondary Planning

Four Rivers Charter Public School will support students in applying to and entering college or preparing for other post-secondary opportunities for learning or service.

Measures

3a All 12th grade students will develop a post-secondary plan that includes career and education goals.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
% seniors who complete a post-secondary plan	NA	100	100	100	100

3b The school will guide all 12th grade students in applying to at least one college.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was not met; the school has made progress.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
% seniors who apply to at least one college	NA	86	88	88	89

3c At least 80% of graduating seniors will matriculate to a college or other post-secondary educational setting of their choice within 15 months after graduation from Four Rivers.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
% seniors who matriculate within 15 months of graduation	NA	93	88	88	NA

3d In a survey of graduates enrolled in college, at least 80% of those responding will report that they felt well prepared by their education at Four Rivers.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met with the exception of math.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
% responding graduates who feel well prepared for college by their education at Four Rivers	NA	100 for most areas, only 50 for math	95	90	85

OBJECTIVE 4: Expeditionary Learning

Four Rivers Charter Public School will implement EL Core Practices to further its mission.

Measures

4a The school will continue to deepen its implementation of Expeditionary Learning Core Practices, as evidenced on the annual implementation review scoring by Expeditionary Learning consultants.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met.*

These aggregate scores over the years reflect improvement even with an ever-changing faculty. Individual faculty members each have their own trajectory of improvement.

From 04-11, Expeditionary Learning used a 4-point scale.

0 – Not Yet Begun 1 – Beginning 2 – Developing 3 – Implementing 4 – Highly Implementing

This past year, the organization adopted a new system of evaluating implementation, new categories of practice, a 5-point scale, so this past year’s results are in their own chart below..

	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11
Learning Expeditions	2.33	2.0	2.17	2.0	2.75	2.0	2.5
Active Pedagogy	2.4	2.6	2.4	2.6	2.33	2.75	2.7
Culture and Character	2.67	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.3
Leadership/School Improvement	2.0	2.5	2.5	3.0	2.0	3.0	3.0
Structures					2.5	2.5	3.0

	11-12
Curriculum	3.8
Instruction	4.1
Assessment	4.2
Culture and Character	3.8
Leadership	3.8

4b For Core Practices identified by the school as high priority in its annual professional development work plan, the school will meet 90% of its designated measures of success.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met.
These indicators involved inputs and those were met.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
School-wide focus	NA	Learning Expeditions	Differentiated Instruction	Assessment for Learning	One integrated learning expedition per grade
Indicators met?	NA	Partly	Yes	Yes	Yes

OBJECTIVE 5: Dissemination

Four Rivers Charter Public School will identify and disseminate best practices of its faculty and staff, including those representative of exemplary Expeditionary Learning Core Practices.

Measures

5a The school will identify and disseminate practices and products expressive of high quality Expeditionary Learning Core Practices and other exemplary Four Rivers practices to other schools and communities annually.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
Dissemination of high quality practices and products	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

5b The school will, within its second term, offer models for replication and best practices to other public schools in Franklin County.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was partially met.

The school offered partnerships, but no offers were accepted or successfully implemented.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
Offered partnerships with public educators in Franklin County	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

1.2 Common School Performance Criteria Relating to Faithfulness to Charter

Provide evidence of the school's performance with respect to each of the following areas related to the school's faithfulness to charter, as derived from the Common School Performance Criteria. *Do not duplicate information already provided in reporting on the school's Accountability Plan.*

a. School description

Provide a brief description of the school, including the year the school received its charter; the year the school opened; the school's location, grade span, maximum enrollment, current enrollment, and current wait list; and the district(s) served.

Four Rivers Charter Public School is located at 248 Colrain Road in Greenfield, MA. The school is sited on a former dairy farm, and is next door to Greenfield Community College.

The school was awarded a charter by the Department of Education in 2002 to serve 192 students in grades 7-12. It opened in September, 2003 with 64 students in 7th and 8th, and added 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th in successive years, attaining full enrollment of 192 in September, 2007. The school's charter was renewed in 2008 for another five years. Also in 2008 the school applied for and received an amendment to the charter, increasing the enrollment cap to 212. The school ended the 2010-11 academic year with 201

enrolled students, and graduated its fourth senior class on June 4, 2011.

As a regional Commonwealth charter school, Four Rivers draws primarily from the six secondary school districts of Franklin County: Frontier Regional, Gill-Montague Regional, Greenfield, Mohawk Trail Regional, Pioneer Valley Regional, and Ralph C. Mahar Regional. With Greenfield as its county seat, Franklin County is the most rural area of the Commonwealth, with an estimated population in 2007 of 71,602 within 724 square miles. This results in less than 100 people per square mile, compared to 796 per square mile for the state. The 26 municipalities of Franklin County range in size from the Town of Greenfield, population 17,706 in 2007, to the town of Monroe with a population of 96 for the same year. The county is 77% forested.

The population of Franklin County is 95.5% white (86.5% for Massachusetts); 1.1% black (6.9% in MA.); 0.3% American Indian or Alaska Native (same as MA.); 1.5% Asian (4.9% for MA); multi-racial 1.5% (same as MA); and Hispanic or Latino 2.5% (7.9% in MA). Only 6.2% speak a language other than English at home (18.7% in MA); 29.1% earned a Bachelor's degree or higher (33.2% in MA). Households below the poverty level were 9.2% in 2004 (9.9% for MA).

b. Mission, vision, and educational philosophy

State the mission statement of the school. Describe and provide evidence of how the school is faithful to the mission, vision, and educational philosophy defined in the charter application and subsequent approved amendment(s), if applicable.

Implementation of mission, vision, and educational philosophy:

Nearly every data point in this report provides relevant evidence of how the school is faithful to the mission, vision, and educational philosophy defined in the charter application and any subsequent approved amendments. Our effort here is to describe as best as possible what might not have been described explicitly in other sections.

The school mission set our course to educate young people for lives of learning and service. In its charter application, the school identified the following purposes:

1. *Academic:* To provide a solid preparation in the core academic disciplines so that students are prepared for college, work or other post-secondary opportunities and that they perform successfully on MCAS and other assessments; to foster clear, enlivened thinking, in which questions are embraced with openness and wonder, answers are sought with rigor and respect for truth, and collaboration with others is encouraged; and to develop the skills and attitudes for lifelong learning.
2. *Character:* To help students recognize their own "genius," the particular strengths they bring; to develop abilities to work and play cooperatively with others; to awaken students to their moral compass by emphasizing the virtues of courage, respect, responsibility and compassion; and to train students in the process of making healthy choices.
3. *Themes:* To engage deeply and creatively in study and fieldwork involving the school's three themes of nature, technology and community, as they appear within our immediate community and more widely in our culture; and to develop projects or proposals demonstrating balanced and sustainable interworking of these themes.
4. *Service to the Franklin County community:* To provide an educational alternative to students of Franklin County and their families; as part of the school's program to seek opportunities for service to and participation in the community life, businesses and natural resources of the county; and with time to provide educational programs and models that may be

of help to other schools and individuals in the area.

To fulfill our mission, the school is guided by four basic commitments we have articulated to students, parents and the community, and by our affiliation with Expeditionary Learning Schools.

1. *Expect the best:* Four Rivers expects high levels of achievement in academic learning, effort, and teamwork. We challenge students to dig deeper and work harder than most have done before. With talented and enthusiastic teachers, our program seeks to prepare every student for college. The curriculum grows from the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, with an emphasis on excellence in reading, writing and math, ensuring readiness for the MCAS. Its real energy comes from teachers working with small classes to develop challenging projects, through which students learn essential knowledge, skills, and values. They teach with clear standards for top quality work, respect for individual differences, and the conviction that every student can and wants to strive for the best.
1. *Learn by doing:* At Four Rivers, learning is active, not passive. Meaningful, engaging projects are central to our curriculum. Several times a year classes go on “learning expeditions”: in-depth investigations of a theme or topic, guided by questions, which may extend from four to six or more weeks. Students do original research and fieldwork, often involving experts in the community. Expeditions promote responsibility and collaboration; they speak to diverse learning styles, reveal new strengths, and deepen understanding. Typically, learning expeditions end with the students producing work—a report, a publication, a presentation—that has a real purpose and a real audience.
1. *Explore big questions:* The school’s themes of nature, technology and community engage teachers and students in basic questions that promote active learning and bring them in touch with our area and our times. What does the natural world have to teach us? What does technology, and the creative power of invention behind it, offer us? How do they work together for the good of all? There is endless learning to be explored -- and a cause to be served -- in our themes. Our answers can shape the future, here in Franklin County and in the world beyond.
1. *Build character and community:* At Four Rivers, the development of character and community are as important as academic achievement. Our school is small, with a place for everyone. Every student is known; each is valued as bringing a unique gift to the school. All of us are called on to think and act for the common good. Through our advisory program and our curriculum, we guide each student’s quest for the strength of character and insight to make healthy choices and set positive goals. We encourage student leadership and initiative in helping one another, strengthening our school, and serving the community beyond. We emphasize six character virtues, and we also have a clear code of conduct, with no tolerance for behavior that is unsafe or hurtful to an individual or the community.

Since its founding, Four Rivers has drawn strength from its affiliation with Expeditionary Learning Schools (EL), a national non-profit model for comprehensive school reform. Expeditionary Learning is rooted in a rich tradition of innovative approaches to active learning, academic rigor, and character growth, and it is a vital resource to help Four Rivers realize our unique mission and our charter. The Core Practices describe Expeditionary Learning in action:

1. *Learning Expeditions*: Learning expeditions are long-term, in-depth investigations of a topic that engage students through authentic projects, advancing skills and content understanding aligned with state standards. The benchmarks give detailed indicators on implementing learning expeditions across the school; designing compelling topics and guiding questions; designing products and linked projects; incorporating fieldwork, local expertise, and service learning; and producing and presenting high quality student work.
1. *Active Pedagogy*: The model is not just about learning expeditions; more basically, it calls for using active and engaging instructional practices school-wide, as much as possible. Benchmarks include teaching reading and writing across the disciplines; teaching math, science and social studies through inquiry; valuing the arts as a vehicle for learning; and using effective assessment practices.
1. *Culture and Character*: Benchmarks in this crucial area promote building a positive school culture and fostering character; ensuring equity and high expectations; fostering a safe, respectful and orderly community; promoting adventure and fitness; developing a professional community; and engaging families in the life of the school.
1. *Leadership and School Improvement*: Leaders in Expeditionary Learning schools provide leadership in curriculum, instruction and school culture. Benchmarks also call for sharing leadership and building community partnerships, using multiple sources of data to improve student achievement; and assessing school progress and planning for improvement continually.
1. *Structures*: Expeditionary Learning benchmarks in this area focus on ensuring that schedules accommodate project work and flexible grouping, as well as time for planning and professional development for faculty. Still more importantly, they call for ways for all students to be known well and supported by caring adults.

In sum, the school's mission is to educate students for lives of learning and service with an emphasis on technology, nature, and the community, Expeditionary Learning is the school's guiding pedagogical model, and the school has met most of the faithfulness to charter measures contained in its accountability plan.

c. Organizational structure

(i) Governance/leadership

Describe and provide evidence of how the board of trustees implements the governance and leadership structure as defined in the charter application or subsequent approved amendment(s), if applicable.

(ii) Contractual relationships (if applicable)

Describe and provide evidence of how the board of trustees and school leadership establish effective working relationships with the school's management company. Describe changes in the school's relationship with the management company and how the school has ensured that these changes comply with required charter amendment procedures.

Provide evidence that the board of trustees of a Horace Mann charter school has established and operates under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the host

district by including the MOU in Appendix B of the Application and describing the process for updating and revising this document.

Implementation of the Governance/Leadership structure

The Board's current governance structure and the school's leadership structure are both in line with the intentions of the original charter and subsequent approved amendments. The Board's committees have been functioning as designed, though the Development Committee is not as active as hoped and the Accountability Committee has slowly established its rhythm. As for the Leadership Structure, the combined Principal/Head of School role started two years ago has been working well. Additional administrative positions created for College Counselor/Academic Support Director this past year and Special Education Director with other assigned responsibilities created for next year give the school a full complement of leadership.

d. Academic program

Describe and provide evidence of how the school establishes an academic program, including pedagogical approach, curriculum, assessment, and other unique elements defined in the charter application or subsequent approved amendments.

2. Academic Program Success

2.1 Accountability Plan Objectives and Measures Relating to Academic Program Success

- List each objective and measure contained in the school's current, ESE-approved Accountability Plan relating to the school's academic program success.
- For each listed measure, state whether the school has met, is making progress toward meeting, or has not met the measure and provide the data or other evidence supporting the statement; student level data must not be submitted. Provide evidence from each year of the charter term.
- If necessary, the data or other evidence may be provided in Appendix B as a clearly labeled attachment.

OBJECTIVE 6: English Language Arts

Students at Four Rivers Charter Public School will be able to read with strong comprehension, analysis and interpretation, and write with clarity and skill for different purposes and audiences.

Measures

6a MCAS: 75% of students who have attended Four Rivers for at least two years will attain Proficiency on the English Language Arts MCAS in the 10th grade, and at least 90% will pass in 10th grade.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
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<i>% proficient 10th grade ELA MCAS</i>	81	100	97	97	100
<i>% passing 10th grade ELA MCAS</i>	100	100	100	100	100

6b MCAS: 65% of students will attain Proficiency on the 8th grade ELA MCAS, and at least 90% will pass.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
<i>% proficient 8th grade ELA MCAS</i>	NA	95	85	80	80
<i>% passing 8th grade ELA MCAS</i>	NA	100	96	100	100

6c MCAS: Students in grade 8 and 10 will achieve results on the 8th and 10th grade ELA MCAS at or above the average of the Franklin County schools from which these students were drawn. (Note: average scores of the sending schools will be calculated as weighted mean.)

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
<i>10th grade ELA MCAS scores at or above the weighted average of Franklin County schools</i>	15	26	21	31	8
<i>8th grade ELA MCAS scores at or above the weighted average of Franklin County schools</i>	NA	32	9	17	6

6d Adequate Yearly Progress: The school will meet its annual targets in English Language Arts in aggregate and in subgroups.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
Met AYP for ELA	NA	YES	YES	YES	NO

6e Progress Reports: 90% of all students will pass all standards in English at the end of the year.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met, with one exception.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
% passing all standards in ELA	92	91	87	91	90

OBJECTIVE 7: Math

Students at Four Rivers Charter Public School will be able to apply mathematical knowledge and skills to solve problems.

Measures

7a MCAS: 65% of students who have attended FRCPS for at least two years will attain Proficiency on the Math MCAS in the 10th grade, and at least 90% will pass in 10th grade.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
% proficient 10th grade Math MCAS	81	82	88	86	97
% passing 10th grade Math MCAS	96	93	94	100	100

7b MCAS: 60% of students will attain Proficiency on the Math MCAS in the 8th grade, and at least 90% will pass.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was not met.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
% proficient 8th grade Math	NA	51	47	43	54

MCAS					
% passing 8th grade Math MCAS	NA	76	75	80	91

7c MCAS: Students in grades 8 and 10 will achieve results on the 8th and 10th grade Math MCAS at or above the average scores of the Franklin County schools from which these students were drawn.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
10th grade Math MCAS scores at or above the weighted average of Franklin County schools	15	12	17	20	14
8th grade Math MCAS scores at or above the weighted average of Franklin County schools	14	8	6	8	13

7d Adequate Yearly Progress: The school will meet its annual targets in Math in aggregate and in subgroups.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was not met in the aggregate or in sub groups.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
Met AYP for ELA	NA	YES	NO	NO	YES

7e Progress Reports: 90% of all students will pass all standards in Math at the end of the year.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was not met every year.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
% passing all standards in Math	83	93	85	75	92

OBJECTIVE 8: Science

Students at Four Rivers Charter Public School will be able to apply scientific knowledge and methods to solve problems and conduct experiments and research.

Measures

8a MCAS: Students in grades 8 and 10 will achieve results on the 8th and 10th grade Science MCAS at or above the average scores of the Franklin County schools from which these students were drawn.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
<i>10th grade Science MCAS scores at or above the weighted average of Franklin County schools</i>	14	23	23	38	33
<i>8th grade Science MCAS scores at or above the weighted average of Franklin County schools</i>	16	31	10	19	3

8b Research: 95% of students will successfully complete a Science research project related to the school themes annually.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met or nearly met each year.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
<i>% students in Science complete a project related to the school themes.</i>	92	98	93	99	100

8c Progress Reports: 90% of all students will pass all standards in Science at the end of the year.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met all except one year.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12

<i>% passing all standards in Science</i>	88	93	90	92	91
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OBJECTIVE 9: Social Studies/History

Students at Four Rivers Charter Public School will be able to apply historical insights and research skills to better understand United States and world history.

Measures

9a MCAS: Students who have attended FRCPS for at least two years will achieve results on the 10th or 11th grade Social Studies/History MCAS at or above the average scores of the Franklin County schools from which these students were drawn.

Progress toward the goal: *The Social Studies/MCAS was discontinued by the Commonwealth due to budget constraints.*

9b Research: 95% of students will successfully complete a Social Studies/History research project related to the school’s themes annually.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met all except one year.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
<i>% students in Social Studies complete a project related to the school themes.</i>	88	97	95	98	100

9c Progress Reports: 90% of all students will pass all standards in Social Studies/History at the end of the year.

Progress toward the goal: *This goal was met all except one year.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
<i>% passing all standards in Social Studies.</i>	90	92	82	93	91

2.2 Common School Performance Criteria Relating to Academic Program Success

Provide evidence of the school’s performance with respect to each of the following areas related to the success of the school’s academic program, as derived from the Common School Performance Criteria. *Do not duplicate information already provided in reporting on the school’s Accountability Plan.*

a. Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

(i) Provide evidence that students at the school demonstrate proficiency or progress toward meeting proficiency targets on state standards as measured by the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) exams in all subject areas and at all grade levels tested for accountability purposes.

SCIENCE

8TH GRADE

	2008		2009		2010		2011				08	09	10	11	12
Subgroup	% P/A	CPI			N	N	N	N							
All Students	57%	83.1	36%	68.8	49%	80.7	34%	74.3			37	36	35	35	
Low Income					45%	77.3					9	9	11	7	
Non-Low Income	57%	83.9	33%	65.7	50%	82.3	39%	76.8			28	27	24	28	
Non-Disabled	55%	83.3	43%	75	53%	85	35%	76.6			33	30	30	31	
White	56%	82.6	33%	68.2	50%	81.3	32%	73.5			36	33	32	34	
Male	56%	83	42%	67.1	50%	79.2	58%	82.9			25	19	18	19	
Female	58%	83.3	29%	70.6	47%	82.4	6%	64.1			12	17	17	16	
Title 1	41%	76.5			20%	65					17	8	15	7	
Non-Title 1	70%	88.8	43%	74.1	70%	92.5	39%	77.7			20	28	20	28	
High Needs	62%	80.8	29%	64.3	43%	75	20%	65			13	14	14	10	
Non-High Needs	54%	84.4	41%	71.6	52%	84.5	40%	78			24	22	21	25	

BIOLOGY

	2008		2009		2010		2011			2008	2009	2010	2011
Subgroup	% P/A	CPI		N	N	N	N						

All Students	79%	91.1	85%	95.5	97%	97.7	100%	100		28	33	32	32
Non-Low Income	81%	92.9	87%	96	96%	97	100%	100		21	31	25	26
Non-Disabled	83%	92.4	89%	97.3	97%	97.4	100%	100		23	28	29	26
Non-ELL	79%	91.1	85%	95.5	97%	97.7	100%	100		28	33	32	32
White	78%	90.7	87%	95.8	97%	97.6	100%	100		27	30	31	31
Male	88%	95.3	94%	96.9	100%	100	100%	100		16	16	13	17
Female	67%	85.4	76%	94.1	95%	96.1	100%	100		12	17	19	15
Title 1			55%	86.4						8	11	7	8
Non-Title 1	85%	93.8	100%	100	100%	100	100%	100		20	22	25	24
High Needs	70%	87.5			100%	100	100%	100		10	7	10	11
Non-High Needs	83%	93.1	92%	98.1	95%	96.6	100%	100		18	26	22	21

(ii) Provide evidence of the school's median student growth percentile (SGP) in the aggregate and for all statistically significant subgroups in all subject areas tested for accountability purposes during the charter term.

(iii) Provide evidence of the school's progress in making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the aggregate and for all statistically significant subgroups. Provide information on whether the school is identified for accountability purposes (designated as in Needs Improvement, Corrective Action, or Restructuring status).

b. Other achievement, improvement, and assessment measures

Provide clear and concise information in the aggregate on student progress over the term of the charter on internal or external assessments (other than the MCAS) that has not already been provided in reporting on the school's Accountability Plan.

c. Curriculum

Describe the school's curriculum, as documented and implemented, including a description of all curricular elements. Provide evidence that the curriculum consistently addresses the skills and concepts that all students must know and be able to do to meet state standards, is aligned vertically and horizontally, and describe how it supports opportunities for all students to master these skills and concepts.

List the major texts and other resources, including those developed by the school, used in core academic and mission-driven subjects.

Identify and briefly describe any major curriculum changes made by the school during the charter period.

d. Teaching and learning

(i) Instruction

Describe schoolwide instructional practice and how it is aligned with the school design, instructional expectations, and curriculum. Describe how instruction is effectively delivered and how clear expectations are conveyed to teachers and students.

Provide evidence that teachers are purposeful in their lessons and students are engaged in meaningful learning.

(ii) Classroom and school environment

Describe the school's implementation of policies and structures that ensure the classroom and school environment is orderly, supports the goal of student understanding and mastery of skills, and is consistent with the school's mission.

(iii) Diverse learners – general education accommodations, special education, and English language learner education

Explain how the school ensures that all students, including students who require physical or classroom accommodations, those with limited-English proficiency and/or special education needs, are able to fully participate in, and benefit from, the educational goals and mission of the school. Provide a description of the school's programs for special education and English language learner education.

Federal programs self-evaluation: Describe the self-evaluation procedure implemented by the school to determine the effectiveness of programs for students enrolled in special education and/or identified as English language learners. Include a data-based analysis showing that students in those groups have made expected academic gains.

In cases where students enrolled in special education or English language learner education did not make expected academic gains, describe program modifications made as a result of the self-evaluation.

(iii) Professional climate

- Describe the process(es) by which school leaders provide teachers with formal and informal feedback and guidance that leads to improved instructional practice and student achievement, including the process for formal evaluation of teachers, the standards that are used for evaluation purposes, and how the school uses evaluation results.
- Describe the major professional development activities undertaken by the school over the last two years, why those activities were chosen, any outcomes from the professional development activities, and how the effectiveness of these activities is evaluated.
- Describe how teachers are provided with structures for collaboration.
- Describe how the school has established an appropriate professional climate resulting in a purposeful learning environment and reasonable rates of retention for school administrators, teachers and staff.

(iv) Assessment and instructional decision-making

Describe the school’s use of formative and benchmark assessments. Describe and provide evidence of how qualitative and quantitative evidence is used by teachers and school leaders to inform, guide, and improve instructional planning and practice.

(v) Program evaluation

Describe and provide evidence of the systems and structures that are in place to regularly and systematically review the quality and effectiveness of the academic program. Describe how the school modifies programs to ensure improvement.

Curriculum

The Four Rivers curriculum has been built from the ground up using state frameworks and the recommendations of national subject area organizations to guide us. For the most part, the school did not make significant changes to the curriculum this past year. The description of curriculum elements therefore remains unchanged:

The school’s curriculum is organized by subject area, with course standards established in every subject every year. Teachers work through their grade level or division teams to coordinate curriculum for each group of students, while subject area teams have continued building coherent scope and sequence. Subject area teams began drafting program statements to describe and define broad learning targets students will aim towards in each program, work which will continue over this next school year. In addition, we identified school wide learning targets to guide our overall program. These outcomes are the categories for our end of year portfolio reflections. Taken together, course standards, subject area targets, and school wide targets define the knowledge and skill we expect students to develop through their learning at Four Rivers. Course overviews and developing program statements give a more specific picture of the curriculum.

Academic Program Overview

7th Grade	8th Grade	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
Writing and Literature 1	Writing and Literature 2	Intro HS Writing and Literature	American Literature	Expository Writing and Literature	Critical Thinking and Communication

Ancient Civilizations	Middle Ages to Renaissance	US History 1	US History 2	Modern World History	American Civics
Math Skills	Pre-Algebra	Algebra 1	Geometry	Algebra 2	Calculus or Data
Intro to Earth Science and Bio	Intro to Physical Science	Environmental Science	Biology	Chemistry	Physics
Spanish 1a	Spanish 1b	Spanish 1	Spanish 2	Spanish 3	Advanced Spanish

School Wide Learning Targets

At Four Rivers, we have determined our focus targets from the state curriculum frameworks, various reports about what some call twenty first century skills and reports about the skills and qualities most important for success in college. Every course is designed with these in mind and course standards embody them.

FOUR RIVERS GRADUATES CAN:

Inquiry and Investigation

- They can use questions to help shape research.
- They can actively seek out, synthesize and apply new information.
- They can investigate a topic through a variety of sources, ideas and viewpoints.

Critical Thinking and Analysis

- They can extract ideas from a variety of learning experiences (reading, group work, lecture, discussion, hands-on activities) and synthesize them into a new understanding of a topic.
- They can independently understand, assess, synthesize and use information from different sources.
- They can develop a comprehensive understanding of a text, an experiment, a concept or idea by looking at its parts or components

Creative Thinking and Expression

- They can demonstrate respect and appreciation for new perspectives with an open mind and a willingness to adapt their thinking.
- They can learn and apply a variety of means of creative expression to share ideas and information.
- They can use expressive, creative and focused language in their communication that engages a specific audience.

Problem-Solving

- They can design and test solutions to problems.
- They can collaborate effectively with peers as necessary to solve problems and complete tasks.
- They can find multiple ways to solve a problem and can share the strengths and weaknesses of different solutions.

Communication

- They can organize and share knowledge and ideas on a topic through speaking or writing or another means of communication.

- They can explain or demonstrate understanding of something that they learn, using appropriate tools, materials or language.
- They can craft well-organized, articulate, compelling, and focused writing appropriate for a defined purpose and audience.
- They create products with CRAFTSMANSHIP and QUALITY
- They can craft, refine and polish a piece of work until it is of meeting quality.

- They can use feedback on their work to identify areas of strength and weakness and to take action toward improving themselves (as a student, community member or individual).
- They can complete work with consistent care for organization, detail, and accuracy.

They develop ideas about SUSTAINABILITY

How do we find the healthy, sustainable interrelationship of the natural world, technology in its many forms, and the human community?

- They can explain the concept of sustainability.
- They can generate ideas, original designs and possibly products that address the Four Rivers Essential Question.

They develop strong CHARACTER

- They can take responsibility for completing work on time and with good faith effort.
- They can recognize their role in a community of learners and actively try to help to move the whole group forward.
- They can know how to persevere through something that they struggle with.
- They can have the courage to try new things or to tackle work that has been difficult for me; they are willing to stretch beyond their comfort zone.
- They can have academic integrity: they do their equal share in group work.
- They can respect the opinions of others, even when they disagree.

Instruction

When someone visits Four Rivers, we expect they will see ENGAGED LEARNING in every classroom. They might observe the following evidence of that engagement:

- Eyes and ears focused on the teacher's instructions.
- Groups of students solving problems, asking each other questions, suggesting possible solutions, making decisions, discussing a text etc.
- Looking at documents to build background knowledge.
- Individuals or partners involved in a lab, following careful lab procedures, and thinking like scientists.
- Taking notes on a mini-lesson.
- Whole class discussion, responding to the teacher's questions.
- Constructing knowledge through inquiry as they piece together information or respond to a text or record observations, moving towards statements of understanding.
- Wrestling with new questions or new information or new skills.
- Generating a list of criteria for good quality work.

To achieve this engagement, there are several INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES that we have learned together or that are common throughout the school:

LEARNING TARGETS

These define the broad academic standards and the day to day objectives students are working towards. Often they will be written on the board and reviewed by the teacher at the beginning of class. Students should know what skills or knowledge they are learning.

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

The goal of differentiating instruction is to enable each student in our classrooms to continually progress and to stretch. To simplify, the basic steps of differentiating instruction include the following:

- Teachers are clear about the essential facts, concepts, principles, and skills that frame their subject -- “What do you want each student to come away with as a result of this activity?”
- Teachers seek information to help them understand each student’s point of entry and progress in learning.
- Teachers attempt to match curriculum and instruction to the learner’s readiness, interest, or learning profile.

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

These practices emphasize continual formative assessment to help students know their strengths and focus on what they still need to learn. It involves helping students develop a clear vision of the content standards they are responsible for learning, offering effective feedback related to the learning targets, teaching students to self-assess, peer-assess, and set goals for further learning, designing focused practice and revision opportunities, and engaging students in tracking, reflecting on, and sharing their progress.

ACTIVE PEDAGOGY

Teachers structure lessons so that teachers talk less and students talk more; the students do the thinking and the work. Teachers sometimes start a lesson or an investigation with a complex or provocative problem and build skills, vocabulary, and concepts on a “need to know” basis. Teachers sometimes start a lesson or an investigation with an experience to generate curiosity. Lessons incorporate strategies to build curiosity and have a sense of urgency and purpose. During independent work times, teachers actively engage and guide students (e.g., confer with students, pull small invitational groups, etc.).

Some of our teachers have been at the school for years working on these practices. Others have joined us more recently and are at earlier stages of learning them. While there is a range of implementation, we expect that everyone is moving in the same direction.

Classroom and School Environment

The following are policies and structures in place to create a school culture that supports student learning and to further the implementation of the school’s mission:

1. The Dean of Students has primary responsibility for discipline as well as the positive side of school culture in our school, which we work on through our Crew Program, student leadership, community meetings, and community wide events.
2. We continued to work on more consistent interpretation, enforcement, and follow through on school rules and policies.
3. We continued to use our Student and Family Handbook to establish clear principles and expectations for behavior that our students learn and understand.
4. We had a significant decrease in major violations this year. The previous year saw a

physical fight, four minor incidents of substance possession and use, and 13 suspensions for drug possession, and we took significant action to address these issues. This year we did not have a single similar incident.

Diverse Learners

Four Rivers has strong Academic Support Services for the diverse learners that come to our school. The following items describe how the school implemented accommodations that address the needs of diverse learners at Four Rivers last year:

1. We worked with 26 students on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and 19 students on Section 504 Plans.
2. In addition, approximately 22 students had Student Success Plans overseen by the Academic Support Director and the student's advisor and teachers.
3. Approximately 24 students used Title I services during the school day, after school and in the summer.
4. With each of these students, we follow state and federal regulations regarding evaluations, meetings to develop plans, implementation of accommodations, and the monitoring and adjustment of those accommodations.
5. A part-time special education director and a .85 School Psychologist led the team of 3 Learning Specialists and 3 Teacher Assistants in providing these services. We also added a half-time Academic Support Director.
6. Regular education teachers and the special education teachers met weekly to review all students on plans to discuss each student's progress and to clarify or adjust classroom accommodations.
7. The Learning Specialists provide in-class support, direct specialized instruction, and Learning Center support depending on each student's IEP. Overall, there is the sense that our academic support services have been delivered with professionalism and great care.
8. This past year, the school served its first English Language Learner (ELL) student. His 10th grade teachers received 24 hours of Category 2 Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) training, and the student received 2 hours of ESL instruction each day.

Professional climate

(i) Evaluation and Supervision

The policies that follow define the practices and procedures by which all staff in the school are evaluated. Their purpose is to ensure the quality of teaching and fulfillment of job responsibilities in our school.

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

1. **Goal Setting:** By October 1, teachers submit 2-4 professional goals for the year ahead. The Principal meets with each teacher to review goals and expected outcomes for the coming year.
2. **Performance Data:** The Principal observes teachers and gathers data on performance through the following means and may require additional documents, supporting information, or observations to complete an evaluation:
 - a. Teachers submit documents to the Principal, including but not limited to: course overviews, expedition overviews, project assignments and product descriptors.
 - b. The Principal conducts periodic walkthroughs and informal observations.
 - c. The Principal observes teachers new to the school at least 2 times by November

1.
 - d. For teachers with more than 3 years in the school, the Principal conducts at least one formal observation every 2 years.
 - e. For teachers with less than 3 years in the school, the Principal conducts at least one formal observation each year.
 - f. Teachers gather anonymous survey data from students at least once each year. The data is reviewed by the teacher and the Principal.
 - g. Teachers may submit other artifacts or documentation if they wish by March 15.
3. **Notice of Concern:** When concerns arise regarding a teacher's performance, the Principal discusses the concern with the teacher, discusses relevant expectations, and documents the communication.
4. **Improvement Plans:** With teachers for whom there are known areas of concern that could lead to non-renewal, the Principal discusses the concern with the teacher, discusses relevant expectations, and documents the communication. The teacher submits an Improvement Plan – approved by the Principal -- by January 1 at the latest.

EVALUATION PROCESS

1. **Performance Reviews:** By April 1, the Principal completes a performance review for all teachers with less than 3 years in the school. For teachers with more than 3 years in the school, the Principal completes a performance review at least every 2 years.
2. **Renewal:** The Principal informs all teachers of their renewal status for the following year by the April break. There may be circumstances under which a teacher with no Improvement Plan is not renewed for the following year.
3. **Letters of Agreement:** Teachers receive letters of agreement for the next year by June 1.

This year, the Principal and teachers agreed to use the Kim Marshall rubrics for teaching as criteria for performance. The Principal also follows Kim Marshall's method of mini-observations to visit all classrooms on a regular basis, followed by brief, informal conversations with teachers about what's going on in their teaching.

(ii) Professional Development

Our overall approach to professional development is to focus on a few practices that we want to learn together, to get trained in those practices, and then to work together throughout the year to implement them. Almost all of our professional development activities happen under our contract with Expeditionary Learning. That contract provided 8 on site consultant days which included classroom observations, one on one coaching, and whole school workshops. The contract also provided over 30 days of off site training on specific EL principles and practices. At the end of the year, the EL consultants who worked with us conducted surveys and a full Implementation Review to describe our progress and possible next steps for our further development.

The following items describe the major professional development activities undertaken this past school year:

1. The school continued to work on two key areas of instructional practice – learning expeditions and active pedagogy. Through our contract with Expeditionary Learning, teachers engaged in monthly workshops, offsite trainings, and ongoing conversation and feedback around these practices. Part of that work involved learning better what these practices look like. The other part was the planning and implementation.
2. The learning expedition work involved designing long term projects that engage students' literacy, numeracy, and thinking skills, that call on them to develop content understanding, and

that ask them to produce real products for real audiences whenever possible. To do that takes an enormous amount of planning from teachers.

3. The active pedagogy work was about learning day to day practices that engage students and put them in the role of actively constructing their understanding and developing skills.

4. We also did considerable work this year on Assessment for Learning. After building common understanding of these practices, all teachers committed to take initial or further steps to implement them. Teachers worked on their own and through Peer Coaching Teams.

5. Expectations for instruction are conveyed to teachers by the staff Field Guide and school documents, by the Principal, and by the school's Expeditionary Learning consultants.

6. For students, they come to understand the aims of our instruction through their day to day experience. We continually tell them how we are approaching their learning and they come to do a great deal of thinking about how our school does things.

7. While we expect to see the results of this work show in student achievement and family satisfaction with the program, Expeditionary Learning completes an Implementation Review every year that tracks our progress. According to our latest review, the school is at strong levels of implementation with many EL core practices.

(iii) Collaboration

Four Rivers is a highly collaborative environment. We work together in numerous ways on a daily basis. Some of those structures include the following:

1. Grade level and division level teaching teams coordinate and sometimes integrate curriculum; they also discuss students.

2. Subject Area teams meet periodically to review/refine scope and sequence and overall program goals.

3. Peer Coaching Groups meet in cycles on Wednesdays to advance instructional practices.

4. Leadership Team brings faculty representatives and administration together to work on academic and school culture issues and initiatives.

5. Work Life Committee brings faculty representatives and administration together to work on issues and initiatives related to work life in the school.

6. Whole Faculty works together on building community and consensus towards school wide goals.

(iv) Professional Climate and Staff Retention

Staff at Four Rivers have many avenues for input and agency; through these we maintain a professional climate consistently supported by most of our staff:

1. One hundred percent of respondents (19) agreed or strongly agreed with these three statements:

a. "I support the mission of Four Rivers."

b. "Teachers have strong voice at Four Rivers."

c. "I am satisfied with my job at Four Rivers."

2. Norms for communication and working together are explicit and discussed.

3. Teams and groups continually bring up kudos and concerns.

4. Decision-making pathways define when decisions are full faculty consensus or administrative with input.

5. The Work Life Committee allows collaborative decision-making around what can be contentious issues.

While we needed to hire 5 new teachers for next year, no teachers are leaving because they

don't like the school.

Assessment and instructional decision-making

Our teachers used formative assessments in a number of ways this past year. Day to day pre-assessments allow teachers to differentiate lesson plans for the day or week based on which students are ready for which next steps. Students frequently use feedback from teachers and peers to revise work to meet established learning targets. In 7th and 8th grade, ongoing diagnostic work during Mathematics tells teachers what skills students most need to work on. Using several core practices of Expeditionary Learning, teachers continually get qualitative data to guide their day to day work with students.

English, math, and science teachers used quantitative data from the previous year's MCAS to affirm where we have been on track with our instruction and where we might need to make adjustments. In response to those scores, we made minor adjustments to curriculum for science and English and more significant moves for math. We do not currently use any formal system of ongoing benchmark assessments for math or reading, though we did initiate last year an annual assessment of writing. Our intent is to establish a writers profile for each student based on 6+1 Writing and to monitor each student's progress over their years in the school.

Program evaluation

The school does several things to gather information – both qualitative and quantitative – on the success of our academic program.

1. Every year, the Principal establishes a School Improvement Plan to focus and guide the work of the coming year. Results of one year's program evaluation feed into that planning to ensure that the school addresses its issues and takes initiatives towards continuous improvement.
2. The Leadership Team meets every two weeks to discuss and process any questions and concerns that come up in the day to day life of the school. This group makes continuous assessments of and adjustments to teaching and learning in the school.
3. At the end of the year, surveys were distributed to all families, students, and staff. The results of these surveys get summarized and organized to turn results into actions.
4. In the fall, subject area teams reviewed MCAS results from the previous spring. Item analysis told us which standards we covered well and which might need more attention.
5. For students entering 7th grade, diagnostic assessments were administered in reading and math to identify students that might need extra support through Title I services.
6. At the end of each term, students and families receive clear information through Progress Reports about where students succeeded or struggled in their learning. Grading and report cards are standards-based, along with narrative comments that describe the big picture of how a student is doing. By knowing our students well and by clearly defining the learning targets we're aiming for, we have a great deal of information about student learning in the school.
7. Students complete portfolios each year, reflecting on what they've learned and how they've learned. In passage years (8th, 10th, and 12th), students have to prove their readiness to move on to the next level.
8. Our general assessment practices through Expeditionary Learning are formative. We use these "assessment for learning" practices on a day to day basis to set clear learning targets, assess what students are learning, and then give feedback and adjust instruction to help them learn what they need to learn.

- 9. Teachers regularly use pre-assessments to get specific data on what students understand in order to better target the instruction different students need to move forward.
- 10. We continue to make efforts to use the Data Warehouse to better track longitudinal progress of the students who stay in our school.

The most significant program modifications that occurred this past year involved middle school math. In response to lagging MCAS scores, we made changes to the curriculum and we provided extra support to students.

3. Organizational Viability

3.1 Accountability Plan Objectives and Measures Relating to Organizational Viability

- List each objective and measure contained in the school’s current, ESE-approved Accountability Plan relating to the school’s organizational viability.
- For each listed measure, state whether the school has met, is making progress toward meeting, or has not met the measure and provide data or other evidence supporting the statement; student level data must not be submitted. Provide evidence from each year of the charter term.
- If necessary, the data or other evidence may be provided in Appendix B as a clearly labeled attachment.

OBJECTIVE 10: Enrollment

Four Rivers Charter Public School will maintain full or nearly full enrollment.

Measures

10a The school will maintain enrollment at or above 97% of its enrollment cap each year.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met the past 2 years.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
<i>Average FTE</i>	192	195	190	205	208
<i>Enrollment as a percentage of the school's cap</i>	100	92	90	97	98

10b 90% of the students eligible and able to return to Four Rivers Charter Public School will re-enroll for the following year.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met all except one year.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12

% students who re-enrolled	92	92.5	83	92	92
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10c Applications each year will exceed the number of places available by at least 25%.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
% by which applications exceed available spots	155	150	270	250	268

OBJECTIVE 11: Faculty

Four Rivers Charter Public School will retain highly qualified, committed and effective full-time teachers.

Measures

11a The school will retain annually 75% of the full-time teachers who have received good or outstanding evaluations and whose circumstances allow them to continue teaching at Four Rivers.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
% eligible teachers who return the next year	95	83	94	90	86

11b In an annual survey, at least 75% of the parents responding will report satisfaction with the effectiveness of the faculty in areas of academic challenge, support, and communication.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
% parent satisfaction with level of faculty challenge to students	92	95	84	86	87
% parent satisfaction with level of faculty support to students	93	90	89	94	91

<i>% parent satisfaction with level of faculty communication</i>	87	75	82	75	92
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OBJECTIVE 12: Board

The Board of Trustees, as the governing body of Four Rivers Charter Public School, will fulfill its responsibilities to set policies, monitor progress, and plan effectively for the needs of the school.

Measures

12a The Board will hold at least 11 monthly meetings each year and maintain membership consistent with the by-laws.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
<i>Board held expected meetings and maintained adequate membership</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

12b In an annual evaluation of the school leader conducted by the designated committee of the Board, at least 80% of the approved annual goals for the school leader will be met.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
<i>Head of School annual goals set/met</i>	YES, SET	NA	YES	YES	YES

12c The Board will monitor progress in meeting the objectives and measures in the school's Accountability Plan through semi-annual reports from the school leader and will, as needed, call for and track an action plan to improve performance in deficient areas.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
<i>Board monitored school's accountability</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

<i>goals</i>					
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12d The Board will develop, implement, and assess a Board Action Plan annually.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
<i>Board Action Plan implemented</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

OBJECTIVE 13: Finance

Four Rivers Charter Public School will be a fiscally sound and solvent organization.

Measures

13a Annual expenditures, excluding depreciation, will not exceed annual revenues.

Progress toward the goal: *This goal was met.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
<i>Positive end of year balance</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

13b The school will attain a cash reserve equivalent to three months' operating expenses by the end of its second charter term.

Progress toward the goal: *This goal was met.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
<i>Three months cash reserves maintained/no borrowing</i>	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES

13c The school will meet the annual fundraising goals established by the Board of Trustees in the annual approved operating budget.

Progress toward the goal: *This goal was met.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
<i>Annual fundraising goal met</i>	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES

13d The annual independent audit for Four Rivers Charter Public School will report no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses.

Progress toward the goal: *This goal was met.*

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
<i>No significant deficiencies or material weaknesses found in annual audit.</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES	TBD -- none expected

3.2 Common School Performance Criteria Relating to Organizational Viability

Provide evidence of the school's performance with respect to each of the following items related to the school's organizational viability, as derived from the Common School Performance Criteria. *Do not duplicate information already provided in reporting on the school's Accountability Plan.*

a. Financial management

(i) Solvency and stability

- Describe the school's financial history, including the history of net assets, adequate cash flow to sustain operations, support for the academic program, and consistent operation within budget.
- Describe how the school develops budgets that are realistic and support student academic achievement. Include information on the budget planning process and the process for making decisions and setting priorities.
- Describe how the school develops a budget that can be sustained by its enrollment. If the school also relies on additional resources, describe how those resources are generated.
- Provide evidence that the school has received annual independent audits that are free of material or repeated findings throughout the charter term. Describe how the school implements an effective system of internal controls over revenues, expenses, and fixed assets. Describe how the school exercises good business practices.

(ii) Fiscal oversight

- Describe and provide evidence of how the board of trustees and school leadership implement effective structures and systems to enable responsible fiscal oversight of the school.
- Describe and provide evidence of how the board of trustees demonstrates long-term fiscal oversight through appropriate planning processes.

b. Leadership and governance

(i) Board accountability

Describe the systems and structures established by the board of trustees to demonstrate that the board is responsible to the school community(ies) it serves.

(ii) Decision making and communication

Provide evidence that demonstrates how the school has created clear and well-understood systems for decision-making and communication. Describe how these systems result in a common sense of purpose for all school constituencies.

(iii) Roles and responsibilities

Briefly describe the organizational structure of the school, including the roles and responsibilities of the board of trustees, administrators, and teachers.

(iv) Board oversight

- Describe and provide evidence of how the board of trustees regularly and systematically assesses the performance of the school leader(s) against clearly defined goals and makes effective and timely use of the evaluations.

- Describe any goals established by the board of trustees for the school outside of the school's Accountability Plan, the tools for understanding progress toward meeting those goals, and the frequency of reporting to the board of trustees. Describe any strategic planning efforts undertaken by the board of trustees, the results of those efforts, and the current status of any initiatives launched as a result of strategic planning.

(v) School leadership

- Describe the steps taken by the board of trustees to ensure that the school employs a leader who demonstrates effective leadership of the school's programs.

- Describe the process and criteria by which the school recruits and hires teachers and other staff.

c. Program planning and evaluation

(i) Family engagement

Describe and provide evidence of how the school demonstrates that families and students are satisfied with the school's program. If not already provided through an Accountability Plan objective or measure, summarize the results of any student and/or family surveys conducted during the current charter term. Include the number of students and/or families who participated. Describe how the school involves families as partners in the education of their children.

d. Compliance

(i) Coordinated Program Review

Describe the school's response to areas for special education and/or English language learner program improvement cited in charter school office site visit reports, Coordinated Program Reviews, and the federal programs renewal inspection. Include specific steps taken by the school to address any issues identified in those reports.

(ii) Safety

Describe how the school provides a safe environment for students and staff, including:

- How the school establishes and maintains a physically safe environment for students and

staff.

- Preventing harassment and discrimination within the school community through proactive trainings and education, and having policies, procedures, and trained staff to address incidents that may arise.
- How the school addresses the social, emotional, behavioral and health needs of its students.
- Ensures that all persons have undergone a criminal background check before coming into direct, unsupervised contact with children.

(iii) Facilities

Describe the school's facility and how the facility meets applicable state and federal requirements, is suited to the school's programs, and is sufficient to serve diverse student needs. Provide evidence that the school facility(ies) is/are fully programmatically accessible to persons with disabilities. Provide evidence that educational spaces used for the delivery of special education, related services and English language learner education are comparable to those provided for general education students.

(iv) Employee qualifications

Describe and provide evidence that all teachers and administrators meet all applicable state and federal requirements and standards.

e. Dissemination

Describe and provide evidence of how the school has collaborated with its sending district(s) on the sharing of innovative practices and has provided models for replication and best practices.

Policy Decisions

The following are the major policy decisions made by the school's board of trustees this past year:

1. The Finance Committee approved a new Capital Plan that lays out steps ahead to consider adding and paying for additional school facilities.
2. The Board approved the school's Bullying Prevention Plan, along with other revised policies in the Student and Family Handbook.
3. The Board voted to support a primary budgeting goal for FY 2012 of achieving 100% of the average of the salary scales of the six sending districts. The previous goal had been 95%.
4. The Board conducted a retreat focused on Math education.
5. The Board approved a capital plan for next year.
6. The Board approved the school's' Corrective Action Plan in response to the DESE Coordinated Program Review and expressed its commitment to see that the actions described get fully implemented.
7. The Board approved the addition of a Faculty Trustee through a proposed amendment to the bylaws.

Amendments to the Charter

No amendments were submitted this year, though the Charter School Office did approve by-law amendments submitted the previous year.

Complaints

The board received one complaint this year; it dealt primarily with the school’s Spanish immersion program and communication regarding academic progress. The school’s complaint procedure had been amended to allow the chair to respond directly to such a complaint. The board chair investigated and responded to the complaint. No disciplinary actions were taken.

Oversight

The following were steps taken by the board of trustees to assess the performance of the school and school leader this past year:

1. The Board continued to monitor the school’s achievement and progress through enrollment figures, finances, the school’s test results, and anecdotal evidence of stories and observations from the day to day life of the school.
2. The board established an Accountability Committee with the job of monitoring the school’s performance results and making any recommendations about program changes needed to strengthen those results. The Accountability Committee worked this year to further define its function as well as the data points it will monitor. A calendar of reporting was also established.
3. Much of the board’s official assessment was tied to the formal evaluation process of the head of school. That evaluation will be completed over the summer based on survey data as well as results from the School Improvement Plan and Principal’s goals.
4. The full faculty and staff are invited to offer feedback, as well as Trustees, parents, and students.
5. Students and parents also give regular feedback on the overall school performance.
6. The focus of the board’s retreat in April was Math education. This year several steps have been taken to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the school’s math program with the intention of devoting new resources for further improvements.

Board Planning

The Board continued to work on solidifying its normal practices. That includes the monthly work and reporting of committees. As mentioned above, one initiative was to set a calendar of data reporting. Another initiative was to prepare for the current chair finishing her term in September.

Family Satisfaction

The school conducted its annual end of year School Climate Survey of all families, students and staff. These results gave us a great deal of information about where people are satisfied and where they’d like to see improvements. Specific results from these surveys are presented throughout this annual report, as well as below:

	Parents (89 responses)				Students (129 responses)			
Answer Options	% Strongly Agree	% Agree	% Disagree	% Strongly Disagree	% Strongly Agree	% Agree	% Disagree	% Strongly Disagree

				gr ee				gr ee
A. I generally understand the educational approach at Four Rivers.	37	60	1	0	19	68	7	2
B. Academic expectations are clear.	31	57	9	0	19	67	8	4
C. There is sufficient academic challenge in the program.	26	60	8	2	26	61	5	3
D. Progress reports clearly present a student's achievement.	25	55	16	1	15	62	11	4
E. Teachers assign the right amount and kinds of homework.	15	55	18	1	10	48	22	9
F. Teachers offer sufficient academic support and extra help.	35	52	4	1	22	60	4	3
G. Students are held to high academic expectations.	34	56	3	2	36	53	6	2
H. The school creates a positive social and emotional environment.	51	46	2	0	22	47	14	9
I. Behavioral expectations are clear.	49	45	4	0	35	59	5	5
J. The school helps students grow as people and develop their character.	47	49	1	0	23	43	17	9
K. Students are expected	42	53	3	1	32	63	2	2

to do high quality work.								
L. Every student is known well by at least one teacher in the school.	58	38	0	0	30	44	11	6
Answer Options	Strongly agree	A g r e e	Di s a g r e e	Str o n g l y d i s a g r e e	Strongly Agree	A g r e e	Di s a g r e e	Str o n g l y D i s a g r e e
A. The Flash, Currents, and other mailings provide good communication from the school.	45	54	0	0	9	40	24	8
B. Communication with teachers is easy and adequate.	29	38	12	0	16	61	7	5
C. Communication with administration is easy and adequate.	28	63	6	1	14	49	16	6
D. The school has built a strong sense of community among students, staff, and families.	35	51	9	0	26	52	15	5
G. I am satisfied with my child's education at Four Rivers.	35	54	4	0				

Safety

There are several principles that lie at the heart of our school culture. They define the foundations behind our Code of Conduct and our Guidelines for Behavior and Community. We describe these principles as our character virtues:

1. **RESPONSIBILITY**: Students take responsibility for their own behavior; they demonstrate responsibility for learning and they act responsibly as a member of school community.
2. **RESPECT**: Students show respect for self, they act respectfully toward other students and adults, and they treat personal and school property with respect.
3. **COURAGE**: Students act with confidence and good judgment, they are willing to try new or challenging experiences, and they hold to their own best values despite pressure from others.
4. **COMPASSION**: Students demonstrate kindness; they show interest in others' views and experiences and they encourage and help others.
5. **PERSEVERANCE**: Students show effort in pursuit of excellence; they persist in the face of difficulties and they complete their tasks.
6. **INTEGRITY**: Students act in an honest and trustworthy manner; they show commitment to developing strong character values and they set positive examples for the school community.

We have also established clear policies and procedures to prevent, investigate, and intervene around situations involving bullying, harassment, and illegal substances. This year, there were 25 safety related incidents reported and investigated, leading to 10 instances where consequences were warranted. In general, our aim is to make expectations clear, teach our students what they mean, then hold them accountable for living by them. When they don't, there are consequences and there is learning. Our School Psychologist, our Wellness Advocate, and our Advisors all support the growth that happens when students make mistakes and learn from them.

Employee Qualifications

All candidates for employment complete a standard application, giving us the information we need to determine whether they meet applicable state and federal standards. In reviewing that information this year, we determined that the 2 part-time teachers for music did not meet criteria for being Highly Qualified. One of those teachers will be back in his regular assignment – which does not require HQ status – and the other will be pursuing HQ status in the years ahead.

Financial Oversight

The following are items that describe how the school developed a budget this past year:

1. Guided by the school's Director of Operations, the administrative team began budget planning last winter.
2. Following past practices, year-to-date expenditures, program priorities and projected changes were modeled.
3. The Finance Committee of the Board received updates monthly and provided feedback as the process took place.
4. The DESE recommendations regarding expected revenue shortfalls were included in the adopted budget.
5. Historical benchmarking of Four Rivers' faculty salary structures against those of the sending districts were updated and applied to salary schedules for faculty. Administrative and other staff salaries followed the established scales, rechecked against relevant benchmarks, and updated by the Board-approved amounts.

6. Expected improvement in student retention in 11th and 12th grade enrollment suggested a larger but conservative enrollment of 196, an increase of 6, with program and recruitment plans maintained to improve future retention.

4. Plans For the Next Five Years

4.1 Program

Describe the school's plans for the next charter term, including ways in which the school intends to modify or augment the program set out in the original charter application. This section should discuss how the school has thought strategically about the next five years. It should be noted, however, that the school must apply for approval to amend its charter pursuant to 603 CMR 1.11.

The school and its board continually reflect on progress and next steps. To look ahead to the next five years mostly involves continuing to move forward in the directions established by the school's original charter. The mission of the school -- to prepare students for lives of learning and service -- remains the same. The vision of the school -- a small community of diverse individuals engaged and inspired -- remains the same. And the school's approach -- employing the practices of Expeditionary Learning -- remains the same. The next steps for this school involve working to get closer and closer to the ideals set out after in the first place.

Here are the specific goals identified and approved by the school's Board of Trustees:

1. Improve student progress and performance and address the school's Level 2 accountability status.
2. Work to get even better with the teaching and learning practices we've already set out to implement.
3. Find ways to partner directly with area district schools.
4. Enhance the school's facilities.

4.2 Maximum Enrollment and Grade Level Span

If the school has not yet reached the maximum enrollment or grade span authorized in its current charter, state whether or not the school plans to do so in the next charter period. Briefly discuss the rationale for the school's plans.

The school has reached its maximum enrollment -- and the maximum capacity of its facilities. The only plan regarding expansion is to ask for the school's cap to be raised to 216, allowing for the possibility of 36 students in each grade.

Appendices

Appendix A: Certifications & Statement of Assurances

The Application must include the following:

- A completed Charter Public School Renewal Application Certification Statement signed by either the chairperson of the board of trustees or the board's designated signatory authority and attached in Appendix A of the Application.
- If the school is a Horace Mann charter school, the Application must also include a completed Horace Mann Charter Public School Renewal Application Certification Statement. The statement must be signed by the chair of the school committee and the president of the local teachers' union of the district in which the school is located (603 CMR 1.12), and must be attached in Appendix A of the Application.
- A signed Statement of Assurances signed by a duly authorized representative of the charter school.

Appendix B: Additional Information

Appendix B must contain the following additional information, *clearly labeled and numbered as follows*:

1. *The current, ESE-approved Accountability Plan*

2. *Accountability Plan evidence*

This data should be clearly labeled, explicitly referenced in the text, and directly relevant to that part of the text. *Do not duplicate information or data already provided in the text of the Application in reporting on the school's Accountability Plan.*

This data is already provided in the text of the Application.

3. *External Assessments (Table 1)*

Using the External Assessments table (found in Section VII of these *Guidelines*) list all external assessments (other than MCAS) that the school has used during the current charter period, including the name of the external assessment, grades assessed, date implemented, and date discontinued, if applicable. Include the completed table in Appendix B of the Application.

No external assessments other than MCAS were implemented during the current charter period.

4. *External assessment data*

For each assessment listed in the External Assessments table that is currently in use, is not included in the school's Accountability Plan, and provides data from multiple administrations, provide summaries of performance data for all relevant years and grades in a clearly labeled manner. Student-level information must not be submitted.

There is no additional external assessment data to report.

5. *Board of Trustees Membership (Table 2)*

Using the Board of Trustees Membership table (found in Section VII of these *Guidelines*), list the current total board membership.

Current Board Members				
Name	Position on the Board	Committee affiliation(s)	Area of expertise, and/or additional role at school (parent, staff member etc.)	Number of terms served and length of each, including date of election and expiration

6. *Board of Trustees Turnover (Table 3)*

Using the Board of Trustees Turnover table (found in Section VII of these *Guidelines*) list the number of board members joining and leaving the board in each school year of the current charter period.

List the total board membership and the number of board members joining and leaving the board in each school year of the current charter period.

School Year	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Total Membership					
Members Joining					
Members Departing					

7. *Long-term planning documents used by the board of trustees*

Provide copies of any long-term planning documents developed by the board, such as strategic plans.

8. *Evaluation form(s) for the head(s) of school*

Include any standard forms used for evaluation of the performance of the head of school in Appendix B of the Application.

9. *Staffing and Staff Turnover (Table 4)*

Using the Staffing and Staff Turnover table (found in Section VII of these *Guidelines*), list the following information for each year of the current charter period: the number of administrators, teachers, and other staff (actual number and FTE) and the number of departures of administrators, teachers, and other staff during and at the end of each school year.

List the following information for each year of the current charter period: number of administrators, teachers, and other staff (actual number and FTEs) and number of departures of administrators, teachers, and other staff, during and at the end of each school year. Provide a brief explanation of administrator and teacher departures.

School Year	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Administrators					
Number and FTEs	4 3.7	5 4.7	5 4.15	6 5.45	6 6
Departures during school year	0	0	0	0	0
Departures at end of school Year	0	1	0	1	0
Teachers					
Number and FTEs	29 24.8	29 24	27 24	27 23.1	27 23.2
Departures during school year	0	1	0	2	0
Departures at end of school Year	2	2	0	2	0
Other Staff					
Number and FTEs	7	10	10	9	8

	3.9	5.4	5.9	5.3	5.2
Departures during school year	0	1	2	0	0
Departures at end of school Year	0	1	0	0	0

2009-2010: A part time Technology Assistant left during the year for a full time position at the Community

2007-2008: A Chemistry teacher voluntarily left because she didn't feel she could handle the demands of the role; a Teacher Assistant was not renewed because the special needs student she was hired to teach had transferred to another school.

2008-2009: A Chemistry teacher was not renewed because his performance was inadequate. A History teacher left unexpectedly near beginning of year for a different opportunity. He bid on an opening at Four Rivers the next year and returned. A long time Teacher Assistant left at the end of the year, moving to California with her family. The cofounder/Head of School retired at the end of the year. The part time College Counselor voluntarily left for another position at the end of the year. College. A part time SPED Secretary left during the year to care for a critically ill nephew.

2010-2011: A part time Music Teacher left during the year to care for a seriously ill teenage daughter with a rare condition. A Chemistry Teacher left during a year due to health problems and an interest in finding a less demanding position. An English/History teacher left at the end of the year to be the primary caregiver for his new first born child while his spouse went back to work. An English/Social Studies teacher was not renewed at the end of the year due to performance. A part time SPED Director was not renewed at the end of the year so that the role could be combined with other duties for a veteran full time SPED teacher already at Four Rivers.

2011-2012: No changes to report.

10. School organizational chart

Please provide an organizational chart including administrators' names and titles.

<p>PETER GARBUS Principal/Head of School</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Program Accountability Admissions and Enrollment Board Relations Core Practices Implementation 	<p>SUSAN DURKEE Assistant Principal</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Building Care/Use Community Connections Dissemination Expedition Planning Evening Events 	<p>MATT LEAF Dean of Students</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance/Tardies Clubs Crew Program Discipline Extracurriculars Instructional Support 	<p>ANDY STENSON College Counselor/Acad Support Dir</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Recovery Alumni Relations Athletic Eligibility
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6. External Relations 7. Faculty Supervision 8. Grants/Development 9. Instructional Leadership 10. School Mission 11. Staff Hiring	6. Instructional Support 7. Junior Internships 8. New Teacher Orientation 9. Public Art/Displays 10. Scheduling 10. Senior X 11. Tribs registration	7. Intensives 8. School Culture 9. School Wellness Team 10. Service 11. Student Events 12. Student Leadership 13. Student Orientation	3. College Counseling 4. Div 3 Course Selection 5. ELL 6. GCC/VHS courses 7. Individual Learning Opportunities 8. SSPs 9. Title I
HARLAN SMITH Director of Operations 1. Budget/Accounting 2. Entitlement Grants 3. Facilities 4. Financial Management 5. FREF support 6. FR Board support 7. Human Resources 8. Lunch Program 9. Purchasing 10. Special Projects	LESLIE TAYLOR Admin Coordinator 1. Admissions 2. Currents 3. Enrollment 4. State Reporting 6. Student Records 7. Transcripts 8. St. Work Permits and Parking Permits 10. Substitute Teachers 11. School Closings	CAROLYN WOOD School Secretary 1. Attendance 2. Communications 3. Lunch program 4. Special Education 5. The Flash 6. Transportation scheduling	KATE CONANT Special Ed Director 1. Assessments 2. 504 Plans 3. Homeless Student Liaison 4. Individual Education Plans 5. MCAS Testing 6. Special Ed Team

11. Memorandum of Understanding (if applicable) -- Not Applicable

12. Management contract (if applicable) -- Not Applicable

13. A copy of the school's current bylaws

14. A copy of the school's current enrollment policy

Appendix C: Compliance Documents

Appendix C must contain documentation of compliance with all building, health, safety, and insurance requirements, including:

- Up-to-date Certificate of Occupancy
- Up-to-date Fire Inspection Certificate
- Up-to-date Building Safety Inspection
- Up-to-date Flammable Compounds and Liquids Certificate (if applicable)
- Up-to-date Health Inspection
- Up-to-date Insurance Certificate(s)
- Asbestos Inspection and Management Plan (if applicable)
- Lead Paint Inspection (if applicable)