

**Community Day Charter Public School – Riverside**  
**Community Day Charter Public School - South**  
**Executive Summary**

*This was prepared by the founding group of the  
Community Day Charter Public School-Riverside (CDCPS-Riverside) and the  
Community Day Charter Public School-South (CDCPS-South).*

The mission of the Community Day Charter Public School-Riverside (CDCPS-Riverside) and the Community Day Charter Public School-South (CDCPS-South) is to provide a rigorous academic experience for early Kindergarten (K-1) - Grade 8 students in Lawrence, a Massachusetts “Gateway” city where most parents of school-age children identify Spanish as the first language of the family. Each school will replicate programs and best practices developed by Community Day Charter Public School in Lawrence, drawing upon the expertise of experienced founders and board members who have an established track record of providing an effective curriculum and establishing a school culture with high expectations for student achievement. The school has an impressive history of developing innovative approaches to teaching students and in replicating those practices through training. At its inception in 1995, the school envisioned the need for standards based curriculum, English immersion for English language learners, and the use of data to support student learning. Students graduating from grade 8 at CDCPS demonstrate proficiency on standardized tests of achievement; they are well-prepared and successful in high school, including high schools that base admission on achievement, and college.

In 1995 CDCPS founders adopted one of seven national instructional models that were developed by research groups with funding from the U.S. Department of Education. When at a later date, Massachusetts Standards were promulgated, CDCPS teachers realigned curriculum to meet state requirements and were among the first to be funded by the MA DESE to provide standards based training to new teachers from across the Commonwealth. Teachers at the school continue to design pedagogy and develop core content in response to data analysis related to standard based goals. The school was also among the first in the state to hire a full time director of data reporting and analysis. The school’s rigorous use of data to assess both student learning and teacher competency and to provide insights into improving classroom teaching has become a model that is funded by foundations for replication in other schools. CDCPS proposed a program of English immersion for second language learners in its 1995 Commonwealth Charter application. Founders drew upon their experience with Lawrence children in early childhood programs to propose a language immersion curriculum that is supported by Spanish speaking classroom teachers. The school has been recognized by several national groups for its outstanding record in closing the achievement gap for low income, second language learners; these are cited in the narrative describing plans to build a network of schools.

Student achievement data as well as parent demand support the need for another high performing charter school like CDCPS in Lawrence. In Lawrence there is a very large achievement gap for proficiency on the MCAS between all white students in the state and

Lawrence Hispanic students (-39.4 points in 2009). On the other hand, CDCPS has completely closed the achievement gap between Hispanic students and all white students in the state (+3.8 points in 2008 and +0.8 points in 2009). Moreover there are over 1,000 families on the school's wait list.

In addition to success in the area of academic achievement, and critical to that achievement, is the school's attention to every aspect of student development and its belief in supporting the individual differences of each child. Music and art programs as well as Spanish language instruction, a strong athletic and physical education program, community service and values based character development are all aspects of CDCPS culture that we will replicate in our new school. We also have a strong commitment to the role of parents in developing our school. CDCPS was founded with input from parents and we propose to draw upon parent counsel in developing our new school by implementing a comprehensive marketing program of outreach to potential parents. We will ask them to serve on our founding parent advisory board to help us develop policies related to issues like uniforms, school calendar, field trips and school discipline and on our governing board to develop policies related to school governance. The many parents who enroll their children in the school lottery each year are testimony to the level of satisfaction families have with not only the academic life of the school but all aspects of its culture and achievement.

Past experience in sharing the innovations cited above will support the replication of these successful practices for our new school. CDCPS teachers have impressive records in delivering training and disseminating good practices for other teachers and schools. The school launched its consulting and training initiative, *Community Partners Initiative* (CPI) in 2002 to disseminate school practices relative to the use of data, curriculum mapping, aligning curriculum with standards, and meeting the needs of ELL students. Teachers and administrators from the school developed instructional content and workshops to train a range of both charter and district school teachers and administrators throughout the state and beyond. The school's director of data and analysis developed a series of reports relative to MCAS data used by teachers to improve classroom teaching; to date CPI has trained over 1,000 teachers to use these data reports.

Finally, CDCPS will extend its successful approach to school management by collaborating with the non-profit agency, Community Day Care Center of Lawrence, Inc. (d/b/a Community Day Charter Management Organization) to provide its new school with central services: fundraising and development, technology, human resources, financial services, data reporting and analysis. This practice is both efficient and effective; it is a cost effective way of distributing central functions across several programs to enable an efficient delivery of services at a reduced cost. Moreover the assigning of central management functions to the agency permits the school administrators to concentrate their energies on being quality instructional leaders, able to focus on strategic areas of school culture and student life.