

Level 5 Schools 2016–17 Quarter 1 Report: John Avery Parker Elementary School

School Information		Student Enrollment and Demographics ^a	
Location	New Bedford, Massachusetts	Total SY 2016–17 Enrollment	297
Current Status	Level 5	Percentage Economically Disadvantaged	67%
Receiver Name	Dr. Pia Durkin	Percentage High Needs	83%
		Percentage SWDs	18%
Year Designated Level 5	2013	Percentage ELLs	31%
		Percentage Black	14%
Year Designated Level 4	2010	Percentage Latino/Hispanic	39%
Grade Span	PK–5	Percentage Asian	0%
Number of Full-Time Staff in SY 2016–17	39	Percentage White	39%
		Percentage Multirace	7%
Priority Areas			
<p>Priority Area 1: Increase the rigor of Tier I (universal for all students), Tier II (targeted for struggling students), and Tier III (intensive for highest need students) instruction.</p> <p>Priority Area 2: Create school structures and systems that support instruction and maximize time on task.</p> <p>Priority Area 3: Increase the use of data to drive instruction.</p> <p>Priority Area 4: Establish a school culture focused on achievement and engage families as partners in their children’s learning.</p>			

^a Student demographic data, including percentages of students with disabilities (SWDs) and English language learners (ELLs) is from the 2015–16 school year (SY 2015–16) due to the movement of students at the start of the school year. These data will be updated to reflect the 2016–17 school year (SY 2016–17) in Quarter 2 reports.

Content provided by Superintendent Pia Durkin

Executive Summary

Using lessons learned from the previous year, Parker’s Summer Academy and summer professional development were very different this summer. Guided by instructional coaches and using school year data, all teachers worked to develop a summer curriculum that targeted specific standards and used project-based learning to better engage students. With the help of lead teachers, all teachers created profile folders for every student that included student data and student work. Not only did the teachers use these to monitor progress, but they were then given to the students’ next-grade teacher at the end of the summer. One hundred students enrolled in this year’s Summer Academy (approximately 38% of the student body), and 75% of enrolled students completed the program. This is up from last year, when less than 50% of enrolled students completed the program.

Teacher professional development was spearheaded by the teachers with Principal Lynn Dessert facilitating. The teachers handled one topic a week: English language arts (ELA) strategies and

student work, mathematics strategies and student work, family engagement strategies and identifying parent barriers, and data analysis. Over the course of the month, teachers also conducted a book study and were responsible for researching and presenting their assigned strategy to the rest of the teachers.

The effectiveness of the summer program will be assessed in two ways. Staff will review the student end-of-year (EOY) and beginning-of-year scores (Reading Street Baseline and enVisionMATH for all students and Galileo for Grades 3–5), comparing students who did and did not attend Summer Academy. Because there was a focus on writing in the Summer Academy, staff will review the June Common Formative Assessment (CFA) with the end of September CFA to see if students who attended in the summer showed greater gains. All of this data will be available in October.

Overall, as a result of the summer work, staff felt much more organized and better prepared for the start of the school year compared to last year.

Updates on Priority Areas

Priority Area 1: Increase the rigor of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III instruction.

- **Highlight:** Teachers targeted specific standards for summer learning based on student EOY benchmark data and developed them, embedding a theme approach around “Grow your mind and body.”
- **Highlight:** Within grade-level clusters, teachers worked as teams to differentiate instruction by level for students in the Summer Academy. For example, fourth- and fifth-grade teachers and the special education teacher worked together and grouped students based on ability within lessons to provide scaffolding to meet student needs.
- **Highlight:** With the help of the lead teachers, teachers created student profile folders for each student that highlighted their strengths, areas of growth, all available data and their Summer Academy benchmarks. These folders were used for progress monitoring during the Summer Academy and, at the end of the summer, were provided to the students’ upcoming teachers.
- **Challenge:** Because Summer Academy is optional for students, attendance issues can have an effect on learning. Overall enrollment in Summer Academy was comparable to summer 2015 and attendance was sporadic despite significant recruitment, outreach, and home visits by the Family Resource Center Manager (FRCM). Students who missed time needed to have lessons retaught.

Priority Area 2: Create school structures and systems that support instruction and maximize time on task.

- **Highlight:** Parker offered a Summer Academy that provided 105 hours of instructional time to students. Unlike last year, all of the teachers were involved in the planning of the Summer Academy by developing, revising, and delivering the curriculum. Based on the previous years’ observations, teachers felt that students needed to do more hands-on learning and therefore incorporated project-based learning. For example, fourth- and

fifth-grade students read about various ways vegetables can be grown and were able to go on virtual field trips. They spoke to a food scientist in Minneapolis and an organic farmer and beekeeper in Wisconsin. They learned about the various environments in which crops can be grown, hydroponics, and store-bought and locally grown crops. After sampling tomatoes grown in different environments and exploring their findings, students were asked to write a persuasive essay about which tomato they believed to be the best.

- **Highlight:** The teachers' schedule included 2.5 hours of professional development a day or 10 hours a week for four weeks. Each week had a different focus that included ELA, mathematics, family engagement strategies, and data analysis.
- **Highlight:** Teachers reviewed all available data (ACCESS, benchmark EOY, DIBELS, etc.) and created student profiles for each student. They used these to develop classroom data binders and collected weekly work samples during Summer Academy.
- **Highlight:** Teachers completed a book study of Doug Lemov's *Teach Like a Champion*. Each teacher focused on one technique that they then presented to the rest of the staff. One of the key strategies is "tracking, not watching." This ensures that teachers are monitoring students during the lesson and tracking whether or not they understand the material.
- **Challenge:** Not all students participated in the Summer Academy, and those students who did attend did not necessarily attend every day. Of 260 students eligible to attend, about 100 enrolled and 70–80 attended.

Priority Area 3: Increase the use of data to drive instruction.

- **Highlight:** Teachers developed student data profiles that included the most recent ACCESS scores, EOY benchmark data, DIBELS, and other measures to develop strategic student groupings for the Summer Academy.
- **Highlight:** Teachers worked in grade-level teams to differentiate instruction for the Summer Academy by student skill level using the data collected.
- **Highlight:** Every class has a data wall with student data. Teachers will update this wall monthly with the most recent common formative assessment data. By the end of the school year, classrooms will have a routine that incorporates the data wall and students in Grades 3–5 will be setting and monitoring their own goals.
- **Challenge:** With so much student data, developing student profiles and using the information to develop tiered interventions and lessons takes time. The summer allowed teachers the time to do this, but clear action steps to ensure that this practice is continued during the year when there is less time available to update student profiles will be necessary.

Priority Area 4: Establish a school culture focused on achievement and engage families as partners in their children's learning.

- **Highlight:** Teachers used one week of summer professional development to focus on family engagement strategies. They identified obstacles that families may have that

prevent them from participating in school activities. One such identified challenge is improving interactions with parents. To address this challenge, teachers received training from two different community partner agencies around how to handle these better.

- **Highlight:** Parker has a dedicated Family Resource Center Manager who developed a community partnership event for students and families that focused on how to grow an urban garden. Nine families signed up to help out with the community garden for the upcoming school year. Of the nine families, eight were new to volunteering in the school.
- **Highlight:** As the Family Resource Center Manager creates a family engagement action plan for the whole school, each teacher developed a family engagement action plan to increase family engagement in their individual classrooms.
- **Challenge:** Family survey data from spring 2016 reported that only 25% of families felt engaged with the school. This year, every teacher is expected to communicate with at least one family member of each student at least once every month.