

Amendment Request–March 2014
Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School (BFCCPS)

Type of Charter	Commonwealth	Location	Franklin
Regional or Non-Regional?	Non-Regional	Districts in Region (if applicable)	NA
Year Opened	1995	Year(s) Renewed	2000, 2005, 2010
Maximum Enrollment	450	Current Enrollment	450
Students on Waitlist	327	Current Grade Span	K-8
81 students waitlisted for kindergarten; 42 are Franklin residents		Current Age of School	18 years
Amendment Request	Add Bellingham, Blackstone/Millville, Holliston, Hopedale, Medway, Mendon/Upton, Milford, Millis, Norfolk, Plainville, Walpole, and Wrentham;		
Implementation: 2015-2016	Increase maximum enrollment from 450 to 900 (450).		

Mission Statement

The mission of BFCCPS is to assist parents in their role as primary educators of their children by providing the children with a classical academic education coupled with sound character development and community service.

Key Considerations Regarding Request

BFCCS seeks to become a regional charter school by adding 12 neighboring districts to its charter region, and increase its current maximum enrollment from 450 to 900 students. The school plans to increase enrollment by 200 students in grades K-4 during the 2015-2016 school year and continue to grow enrollment over a nine year period. The school presently fills vacancies throughout the K-8 grade span and will continue to do so. The school reports that submission of this request was prompted in part by long-standing facility needs, and the ability to continue to offer and improve enrichment opportunities for its students. The school presently leases space in Franklin from the Roman Catholic Archdiocese with specific constraints on use.

BFCCS has consistently high student performance, achieving Level 1 status in both 2012 and 2013; a school percentile of 90 and 89 respectively; and a PPI of 100 and 93 in the aggregate. The school was commended in 2012 for high achievement, and selected as a Massachusetts and National School of Character in 2011 by the non-profit Character Education Partnership organization. In 2012, the school achieved a PPI of 75 in the high needs subgroup (10% of the school population). The school did not serve a sufficient number of students in the relevant subgroups to be assigned a high needs subgroup in 2013.

While the school serves comparatively higher percentages of students identified as First Language Not English (FLNE), the school has served a lower percentage of students with disabilities and students identified as low income in comparison to its primary sending district, Franklin Public Schools. The school indicates in its request that regionalization will support the recruitment of a more diverse student population. The school has made adjustments to its recruitment and retention plan in response to Department feedback.

In response to Department concerns regarding the anomalous attrition rate in 2011, the school has reported that the increase was related to a small number of families with multiple children enrolled in the school who decided to not return due to personal circumstances.

Overall, the submitted amendment request, the school's 2010 renewal, and the Department's accountability records indicate that the school's academic program is a success, that the school is a viable organization, and that it has been faithful to the terms of its charter. The school has stated a commitment to regional transportation in its request and during conversations with the Department. The school has submitted at the Department's request additional information as evidence of demand for a 900 student K-8 school from the proposed charter region, facility planning and preparations, as well as a 10 year financial income and cash flow projections to address concerns regarding financial shortfalls during first four years of proposed implementation.

The Department solicited comment from all 13 superintendents of the proposed charter region. Superintendent Perry Davis of Blackstone-Millville Regional School District provided public comment opposing the expansion of the school due to the district's own concerns around its shrinking enrollment in the lower grades and limited fiscal resources. Franklin Superintendent Maureen Sabolinski declined to submit comment. No other comments were received.