

FRAMINGHAM COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL



ANNUAL REPORT 2002 – 2003

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“I become more courageous by doing the very things I needed to be courageous for – first, a little, and badly. Then, bit by bit, more and better. Being avidly – sometimes annoyingly – curious and persistent about discovering how others were doing what I wanted to do.”

--Audre Lorde

The third of ten Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound Design Principles, The Responsibility for Learning, is best embodied by this quote, and describes so well the learning we have experienced in our first full year of operation. Parents, staff and students have taken responsibility for making this school a learning organization that works tirelessly to meet the needs of our students. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I offer you the first annual report of the Framingham Community Charter School for the 2002-2003 school year.

I want to thank the Executive Director, Principal, staff, students and parents for working so hard to promote our mission. I also want to thank the Boy’s and Girl’s Club and the Framingham Historical Society for their partnership, and the St. Stephen’s Parish in Framingham, our landlord, for their support. These and so many other successes would not have been possible without Andrea Johnson, our retiring first Board Chair. I want to thank her for her courage (yes, it does take courage to be the first), guidance, and dedication. It was the courage and persistence of our staff, students, parents and others too numerous to name, that made the successes of our first year possible.

As I consider the challenge of serving our students and sustaining our growth, I am heartened by a recent experience with our students that assured me of the assimilation of the Design Principles into our school culture and our readiness to meet our challenges. The last board meeting of the year included a presentation by a team of students on their conclusion of a year-long investigation of the question “How is Water Essential?” The teacher and children had chosen this question because the school had no working water fountains and the kids relied instead on portable, filtered coolers placed throughout the buildings. The students presented an argument that the cost to install water fountains would, in the long run, save the school money, promote better health, and be preferable to water coolers. The presentation was stunning in its complexity and thoroughness and required exhaustive research, writing, and public speaking. After each of the students spoke, I thought of our Responsibility for Learning, and how everyone, especially the students, was taking responsibility for the success of this school. Afterwards, the Board voted to fund the installation of new water fountains through, in part, personal contributions!

We experienced extraordinary success this first year. Our Executive Director and Principal both received awards for leadership and community service. We opened a wonderful building with a gymnasium, cafeteria, art and classroom space. 98% of our student body (of those who have not moved out of state) is returning and more than 200 students are enrolled for next year. And, most importantly, we created a wonderful place

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for middle school kids. As we double our student body in the next couple of months, we are confident that this next year will be a continuation of our success. We expect to continue to develop partnerships with community organizations, expand our board membership, and complete further renovations of our facility so that we can faithfully perform our charter.

Mark Shobin, Ed.D.
Chairperson, Board of Trustees

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The mission of the Framingham Community Charter School is to cultivate within each member of a diverse student body, through the Expeditionary Learning design, an intense commitment to self and community, the courage and insight to set high standards for academic and personal success, and the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to achieve those standards.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Framingham Community Charter School was founded on the belief that all children could be powerful, self-directed learners who value their contribution to peers and community. Children in public schools need teachers and mentors who believe in them and set high standards for their personal and academic growth. However, expectations, particularly in middle schools, are often so low that children become uninspired or feel emotionally unsafe.

Guided by research on the most effective middle schools, supported by Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound, inspired and led by faculty and students, we began this year creating a school where children have the courage and insight to set high standards for themselves, and the knowledge, skills and attitudes to achieve those standards. In just 10 months since opening, Framingham Community Charter School created an environment where students look forward to going to school, genuinely like the work they do and eagerly share it with peers and guests. During the year students regularly demonstrated an intense commitment to themselves and to others through innovative practices, such as public apologies and thank you's in whole-school assemblies, sharing of personal histories in advisory groups, and supporting one another in adventure and core classes.

The first five weeks of school were taught in small group discussions on the floor of the gymnasium, which inevitably helped us to build community and forced us to focus and listen closely to one another. It taught us to be grateful and make use of the time and space available. Like a sprinter, we finished the year with a breathtaking leg kick. Staff and students worked tirelessly up to the last day of the school year to complete their year-long expeditions and create final products for audiences beyond the classroom. One team made a detailed and seamless presentation to the Board of Trustees on how the school would save nearly \$30,000 by renovating the school water fountains, while meeting the needs and preference of students. Another team published a book, complete with its own ISBN and stored at the Library of Congress, detailing the process required to make a zoo exhibit, the animals and habitats in that exhibit, and even beautifully drawn pictures of each animal. A final team produced a field guide to the produce section of the local Stop and Shop grocery store, which was ultimately donated to the store. Each piece of produce in the guide has its life cycle drawn, recipes that the students have made (and eaten), a write-up describing important information, and a stunning drawing.

We realize this past year was just the beginning and that we have much more to accomplish and prove. It will take another 12 months before we have any data from external academic assessments that show our academic gains. We understand that the challenges to sustain and build on our early success are immense. In order to fulfill our promise to parents and students, to the town of Framingham and to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to implement an innovative and effective middle school choice for Framingham residents, we must continue to hire expert and dedicated staff; develop our

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code of conduct for faculty, parents and students; promote a culture of quality, where student and faculty work is consistently revised until we achieve the standard we set for ourselves; secure the resources for a modern facility; convince the state legislature that charter schools must be nurtured and supported; build a mutually beneficial relationship with the local district; and, continue to hold ourselves and our students to the highest standards. It is with hope, high expectations and humility that we believe that our systems and rituals - including small classes, a daily advisor-advisee program, two weekly community circles, project-based, hands-on learning, extensive field work, the absence of grades and the presence of external audiences - have created a foundation for the personal and academic success of each of our students.

At Framingham Community Charter School, we believe that our challenges can only be met and our promises as a charter school can only be fulfilled, with the help of others. As a community-based school, we believe that our success and the success of others are interdependent. Over the last ten months we have sent invitations to over 680 individuals to visit our school, we have advertised an open invitation to attend our weekly community circle every Friday, and we have conducted numerous information meetings with parents, community members, and professional colleagues. We invite you to visit our school and we look forward to sharing with you and learning from you, so that we can make our contribution to peers and to community, and so that we can fulfill our promise to provide an effective middle school choice for those in need.

Robert Kaufman
Executive Director

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE IN RELATION TO ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN¹

The first year of operation for Framingham Community Charter School witnessed considerable progress toward our goal of cultivating life-long learners who value quality work and develop character as they make a positive difference in the community. Some examples include the following:

- Framingham Community Charter School received a written report from an implementation check by Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound staff. In the report, the Expeditionary Learning Field Director and School Designer noted that our “dedication to the principles of excellent teaching and faithfulness to the core practices of Expeditionary Learning are apparent throughout the school... The ratings you see on the implementation check are considerably higher than what we would expect from a first year school.” Some recommendations for improvement include better documentation of expeditions, development of school-wide practices in literacy and greater diversity in student and staff populations.
- The students in one of three teams were investigating how to design and create an authentic biome². While they were excited to select a biome and move into the action-oriented phase of designing plans and finding a location for their pseudo-biome, some reflective exercises prompted the students as a team to decide that they needed to do research reports. Each student then composed a multi-page report complete with outlines, notes, and multiple drafts in order to convince the class why their biome was the best to create.
- Students designed individual experiments with all of the components of a lab report and revised each lab report numerous times.
- Students reflected on their work: they learned how to set appropriate goals, to determine what resources were needed to succeed, and to evaluate their success. On a geography test, they were given a minimum number of countries and capitals to locate but allowed to choose, in advance, their level of challenge. They had to justify their choice, explain how they would achieve that goal, and, after receiving the results, explain what they did well and where they could have improved.

¹ Framingham Community Charter School has completed its first year of operation. “Schools completing their first year of operation will provide a summary of student and school (organizational) performance in a manner that is consistent with the goals of your charter, and meets, as closely as possible the expectations of your accountability plan.” MA DOE, Charter School Annual Report, General Guidelines for the 2002-2003 School Year, May 19, 2003.

² A biome is an entire community of living organisms in a single major ecological region.

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- Math teachers attempted to make up for the tremendous deficits with which our students entered³ with concept-based teaching. For example, some of the *strongest* students entered thinking that more place values filled to the right of the decimal places meant that the number was larger. Students now appreciate how place value works to the left and right of the decimal.
- Every student participated in a year-long Learning Expedition and contributed to the team's final product: a proposal for how to improve the drinking water at the school (accepted by the Board of Trustees and paid for out of their own personal funds after the presentation), a guidebook to produce around the world (now available in Stop and Shops located in Framingham), and a book on how to make an expedition that will design and create a biome.
- Framingham Community Charter School established and maintained strong governance and financial management over the last year which illustrates the short- and long-term viability of the school. Monthly financial statements and a positive end-of-year fund balance show that the school retained a positive cash flow throughout the fiscal and will carry a positive fund balance. The board approved a budget revision in January 2003 and monthly budget versus actual reports show that expenses were within 1% of budget. Consultants helped Framingham Community Charter School develop a strong culture within the board for well attended meetings, setting agendas, and producing meeting minutes.

The evidence of success is powerful, though anecdotal. Framingham Community Charter School has adopted an Accountability Plan that will require us to do the following:

- Base our claims in measurable results;
- Implement standardized testing beginning in the fall of 2003;
- Collect and analyze comprehensive data on academic performance and faithfulness to the charter;
- Create clear portfolio requirements for each grade level that must be met in order to graduate to the next grade. In 2003, these requirements will be for math, language arts and science. In 2004, social studies and world language will be added.

³ The percentile scores in the Terra Nova results will demonstrate these deficits and Objectives Performance Index will help us to remediate them.

ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN

Academic Success

Performance Objective #1: Students at Framingham Community Charter School will become proficient in the basic skills of reading, writing, and mathematics.

Goal 1: Students at Framingham Community Charter School will become clear and effective writers of the English language and proficient in reading.

Measurement 1 – Value Added

Each cohort of students will increase their scores on the Terra Nova 2nd edition/CAT Basic Multiple Assessments for English / language arts by two percentile points per year in both the reading *and* writing sections.

Method of Assessment: Terra Nova 2nd edition/CAT Basic Multiple Assessments for English / language arts administered in the fall of students' incoming year and each subsequent spring⁴

Measurement 2 - Absolute

93% or more of Framingham Community Charter School students will pass the grade 7 English / language arts MCAS test.⁵

Method of Assessment: Grade 7 MCAS English / language arts test

Measurement 3 - Comparative

The Framingham Community Charter School scaled score on the grade 7 English / language arts MCAS will be at least as high as the average of the Framingham district's middle school scores.

Method of Assessment: Grade 7 MCAS English / language arts test

Measurement 4

During their three years, 100% of students will receive at least one personal written response to their writing from a reader outside of the school.⁶

Method of Assessment: Photocopy kept in student portfolio.

⁴ Our first cohort of students, which entered in 2002, did not take the test. Therefore, they will be taking the Terra Nova for the first time this fall as seventh graders. This footnote applies to Goal 2, Measurement 1, as well.

⁵ In the Framingham district for 2001 and 2002, an average of 8% of grade 7 students scored in the Warning category while 92% of grade 7 students passed the English / language arts MCAS test.

⁶ The respondent cannot be a family member who the student knows already e.g. a long-lost cousin could count.

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Measurement 5

At least 10% of students will have their work published outside of a school venue in a selective forum.

Method of Assessment: Photocopy kept in student portfolio.

Measurement 6

Each student will read at least 20 books and/or other department-approved alternatives in their three years at Framingham Community Charter School.⁷

Method of Assessment: Student log of books signed by teacher kept in student portfolio.

Goal 2: Framingham Community Charter School students will demonstrate proficiency in mathematical computation, problem-solving, and application of key concepts.

Measurement 1 – Value Added

Each cohort of students will increase their scores on the Terra Nova 2nd edition/CAT Basic Multiple Assessments for Mathematics by two percentile points per year.

Method of Assessment: Terra Nova 2nd edition/CAT Basic Multiple Assessments for Mathematics

Measurement 2 - Absolute

70% or more of Framingham Community Charter School students will pass the grade 6 MCAS, and 75% or more of Framingham Community Charter School students will pass the grade 8 MCAS.⁸

Method of Assessment: Grades 6 and 8 MCAS Mathematics test

Measurement 3 - Comparative

The Framingham Community Charter School scaled score on the grade 6 and grade 8 MCAS tests will be at least as high as the average of the Framingham district's middle school scores.

Method of Assessment: Grades 6 and 8 MCAS Mathematics test

⁷ An article from a scientific journal, for example, would be a legitimate alternative.

⁸ In the Framingham district for 2001 and 2002, an average of 68% of grade 6 students and 67% of grade 8 students passed the mathematics MCAS.

Organizational Viability

Performance Objective # 1 - Financial Transparency and Sound Financial Management

Goal 1: Framingham Community Charter School will demonstrate financial transparency and sound financial management.

Measurement 1 - Board review of external audit of financial reports and internal controls

Method of Assessment: Audit presentation and board response documented in board meeting minutes

Measurement 2 - Financial statements disseminated to the public

Method of Assessment: Annual financial statements published in the Framingham Community Charter School annual report and audited financial statements on public record with state auditor

Measurement 3 - Monthly financial reports presented to the board will show positive monthly cash flow

Method of Assessment: Presentation of budget versus actual reports showing positive monthly cash flow documented in board meeting minutes

Measurement 4 - Financial statements will show a positive end of fiscal year fund balance

Method of Assessment: Annual financial statements published in the Framingham Community Charter School annual report and audited financial statements on public record with state auditor

Measurement 5 - Board review of financial performance compared with budget at least semi-annually

Method of Assessment: Board review of budget versus actual reports or a revised board approved budget will be documented in board meeting minutes

Performance Objective # 2 - Strong Governance and Management

Goal 1: The board will establish systems of good governance and learning.

Measurement 1 - The board will comply with internal board approved by-laws

Method of Assessment: Written annual self-evaluation using a recognized and reliable tool

Measurement 2 - The board will set and evaluate goals for itself each year

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Method of Assessment: Documented in board meeting minutes

Measurement 3 - Sub-committees on finance and fundraising will meet at least twice per year

Method of Assessment: Documented in board meeting minutes

Measurement 4 - Written minutes for 100% of board meetings

Method of Assessment: Board chair to report on all board meeting minutes available on file

Measurement 5 - Each board member will attend at least 75% of board meetings

Method of Assessment: Documented in board meeting minutes and board chair end of year report

Performance Objective #3 - Demand for School Services

Goal: Student demand will meet the expectations of the business plan.

Measurement 1 - 98% student enrollment in year 2, 100% thereafter

Method of Assessment: Annual Department of Education report on average daily attendance

Measurement 2 - At least 95% of incoming sixth graders who do not move from their residence at the time of enrolling at Framingham Community Charter School, will remain enrolled at Framingham Community Charter School for three years

Method of Assessment: Exit data recorded and reported in Framingham Community Charter School annual report

Faithfulness to Terms of Charter

Goal 1: Framingham Community Charter School students will demonstrate a clear commitment to themselves ... have the courage and insight necessary to set high standards for academic and personal success, and have the ... attitudes necessary to achieve the standards they have set for themselves.

Measurement 1 - Despite an increased homework load as they progress in grade level, students will turn in a greater percentage of their homework

Method of Assessment: As measured by report card ratings and documented kept in student portfolio.

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Measurement 2 - Across gender and ethnicity, students will increase their self-confidence from grade 6 to grade 8 according to a recognized and reliable psychological assessment.⁹

Method of Assessment: Aggregate data from psychological assessment.

Measurement 3 - Each student who has been at the school for three years will complete at least one of the school's multi-day Adventure Trips.

Method of Assessment: Record kept in student portfolio.

Measurement 4 - Each year as part of their Individual Achievement Plans, students will establish and revise clear goals for themselves and SMART¹⁰ benchmarks for achievement of those goals.

Method of Assessment: Record kept in student portfolio.

Measurement 5 - 95% of students will either achieve at least 80% competency in the Presidential Fitness Test or sustain aerobic activity for 20 minutes.

Method of Assessment: Record kept in student portfolio.

Goal 2: Framingham Community Charter School students will demonstrate a clear commitment to their community.

Measurement 1 - 90% of students who have been at the school for three years will perform 60 hours of community service or participation.¹¹ At least 40 of those hours will be for work done outside of school and for the benefit of a community beyond the school.¹² *Method of Assessment: Service log kept in student portfolio.*

Goal 3: Framingham Community Charter School students will implement the Expeditionary Learning model of education at an increasingly high level.

Measurement 1 - Scores from the Expeditionary Learning external review team will improve each year.

Method of Assessment: Expeditionary Learning Annual Review

⁹ Subject to availability of reliable, valid test and funding.

¹⁰ The SMART acronym stands for "specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound."

¹¹ Attending Town Meeting, School Committee Meetings, and participating in Framingham's Flag Day are examples of participation that might not be construed as service.

¹² Students will not be punished for failure to do so but will receive "Graduation with Distinction" notation on their report cards for successfully completing this community service provision.

SUMMARY OF EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The educational program at Framingham Community Charter School (FCCS) is predicated on the belief that middle school students need opportunities to produce high-quality work that will matter beyond the classroom and scaffolding to get there.

Through a series of interconnected strategies and teaching methods – described below - FCCS creates the required conditions to realize its educational philosophy.

Strategies/Features:

- Small school, approximately 310 students at full size
- Small classes, 17 students per class
- Hands-on, project-based learning
- Individual Achievement Plans for each student
- Student evaluations based on competency standards, not grades
- Daily meetings with faculty advisors
- Community service required and integrated with learning
- Daily common planning time for teachers
- Special courses in Peace Studies, Study Skills and Adventure
- 7th graders have the same teacher in the 8th grade
- Classrooms with all populations, including special needs and limited English proficiency students

Teaching Methods: Framingham Community Charter School has partnered with Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (ELOB) to support its educational philosophy. ELOB is a whole school design that challenges students to meet rigorous academic and character standards. ELOB is built around 10 design principles and five core practices that guide the teaching and learning in schools.

Briefly, the ten Design Principles are the Primacy of Self-Discovery, The Having of Wonderful Ideas, The Responsibility for Learning, Empathy and Caring, Success and Failure, Collaboration and Competition, Diversity and Inclusivity, The Natural World, Solitude and Reflection, and Service and Compassion.

The five core practices build on one another to support high expectations and high achievement in every domain. The five core practices of ELOB are:

1. Learning Expeditions: High quality learning expeditions are the core of teaching and learning at Expeditionary Learning schools. Learning expeditions are long-term, in-depth investigations of a topic that engage students through authentic projects, fieldwork, and service. They include in-depth projects and final performances before audiences of parents and community members. These public

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performances set high expectations by integrating learning goals that are informed or dictated by district and state standards. Teachers plan and teach the expeditions in teams using topics, questions, and learning goals informed by district and state standards. Throughout a learning expedition, teachers regularly assess, revise, and improve their work.

2. **Reflection and Critique:** At Expeditionary Learning schools, teachers model a culture of reflection, critique, revision, and collaboration. Examining and assessing student work allows teachers to discover what students know and how they learn, and provides teachers with information on how to improve instruction and curriculum.
3. **School Culture:** The culture of a school—its shared beliefs and practices—has a tremendous impact on the learning, teaching, and assessment of all students. Expeditionary Learning schools promote a strong culture of best effort, high expectations, community and collaboration, service, and diversity.
4. **School Structures:** Expeditionary Learning requires the reorganization of time, student grouping, and resources to support high quality learning expeditions. Schedules at Expeditionary Learning schools provide longer and more flexible blocks of time for project-based learning and fieldwork, for team planning, and for community-building activities. Multiyear teaching strengthens relationships in the classroom and improves the likelihood of academic success by allowing students to stay with the same team of teachers for more than one year. Site-based management, shared decision making, and school-based budgeting allow schools to structure practices and resources to support comprehensive school improvement.
5. **School Review:** Expeditionary Learning schools engage in an annual cycle of reflection, planning, and action to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Schools look at evidence of student work and instructional practices to assess progress toward full implementation of the design, set priorities for improvement, and create an action plan for achieving those priorities. School and Expeditionary Learning staff use the Expeditionary Learning benchmarks to conduct an initial assessment to gain baseline data and make an initial implementation plan, do periodic implementation checks, and conduct an annual review of school progress to reflect on their practice and plan for the future. A periodic peer review to get outside critique is done every three years.

During this past school year, students and teachers selected the following learning expeditions for the 2002/03 school year.

How do We Control the Quality and Diversity of Produce? Students chose a piece of produce to study – origin, history, societal impact. Twice a month

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students visited and worked on local farms – planting, harvesting, and cooking. Students created experiments with plants that involve cross-pollination and looked at models of hydronium, concepts that are high school level. The final product was a field guide to the local Stop & Shop.

Why is Water Essential? The teacher and children chose this question because the school had no working water fountains and the kids relied instead on portable, filtered coolers placed throughout the buildings. Students studied topical maps of Framingham and created their own water map of the town – the map indicates water sources, areas of pollution, and future issues with the water supply. Students designed a continuous river map on separate sheets of paper. The teacher would then insert an obstacle – dam, tree clearing, housing development – and the students would have to redirect the river while still maintaining its integrity. The students studied the importance of water in arid countries. They created a model United Nations with representatives from Turkey, Sierra and Iraq. The dialogue was based on water sources and future sustainability of the region. Students applied lessons learned throughout the year to their own building. They studied the cost to install water fountains in the school, health risks of water coolers and student preference. The final product was a presentation to the Board of Trustees on the need to renovate the water fountains. The Board voted to approve the student’s proposal and funded the renovation, in part, through personal contributions.

Can a Biome be developed? Students produced world maps by drawing them free hand. The students were given one piece of paper (for the entire year) and the use of a grid system in which to produce their map. The students studied the layout of countries, mountains, and waterways and then transposed this information to their own maps. Students met with a visiting cartographer to understand how maps are actually created. The students studied aspects of a quality exhibit by evaluating Framingham storefronts and area zoos. The final product was a book about how to design a rainforest exhibit.

Curriculum Design: Framingham Community Charter School follows the Massachusetts Frameworks for the appropriate grade levels.

SCHOOL PROFILE

Summary of External Standardized Test Results: Not yet available.

Summary of Internal Assessment Results: See Summary of Performance in Relation to Accountability Plan (page 7).

Number of Instruction Days for the 2002-2003 School Year: Framingham Community Charter School students completed 180 school days beginning on August 27, 2002 and ending June 19, 2003. The school was opened from 8:30 am – 2:30 pm Monday and Wednesday and from 8:30 am – 4:30 pm Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.

Grades and Age Levels Served: In its first year of operation, Framingham Community Charter School served grade 6, and students ranged in age from 10-11 years old. Grades seven and eight will be added in 2003 and 2004, respectively. The students will range in age from 10-14.

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GOVERNANCE PROFILE

List of Board of Trustees:

Name	Affiliations (Professional)	Position on Board	Term of Appointment	Committees
Foster Grant, Janice	-	Member	11/01 - 11/04	Finance
Foster, Walter	WAF Associates	Member	08/00 - 08/03	Governance
Freeman, Doug	-	Secretary	09/02 - 09/05	Finance
Johnson, Andrea	REI, Inc.	Member	04/01 - 04/05	Governance
Perry, Betsy	Classic Elite Yarns	Treasurer	12/02 - 12/05	Finance
Rosenthal, Mark	Sakon, LLC Huntington	Member	08/00 - 08/03	-
Shobin, Mark	Learning Center	Chairperson Vice	09/02 - 09/05	Governance
Vale, Larry	Keane, Inc.	Chairperson	03/03 - 03/05	Development

Summary of Major Policy Decisions Made by Board of Trustees in Past Year: Framingham Community Charter School's Board of Trustees met on a monthly basis to make policy, establish committees, and oversee the school. Below is a list of major policy decisions made by the Board.

- Approval of lease on 25 Clinton Street, Framingham, MA.
- Approval of Architect
- Approval of scope of renovation
- Approval of Financing
- Approval of marketing plans to fill 6th grade
- Approval of lottery plans to ensure fair process
- Approval of contingency plan for School opening when construction was delayed
- DOE approved plan and allowed School to open on time
- Approval of 3-year budget
- Approval of Fiscal Year 2003 budget
- Approval of Parents as potential trustees
- Approval of amended by-laws that included 4 officers, and the acceptance of meeting by conference call is necessary
- Election of four Officers for 03-04
- Establishment of 3 committees: Finance, Governance and Development

Summary of Official Complaints Received by the Board of Trustees: The Board received two complaints from the same person in regards to the same issue. Both were replied to within thirty days. The complaint stated that the 6th grade class did not represent the population of the Town of Framingham and suggested that the school marketed itself to only one segment of the population. The Board responded to the first

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complaint in writing, acknowledging receipt of the complaint and stating that effort was made to attract a diverse population. The DOE, who had been asked to look into the issue, responded to the second complaint. The DOE found that effort was made attract students of all ethnic backgrounds.

The DOE, Program Quality Assurance Office (PQA) received a complaint from the Framingham Public District Schools regarding the timeframe that Framingham Community Charter School (FCCS) used to re-write Individual Education Plans. Framingham Community Charter School informed affected parents and responded to PQA. The case has been closed.

STUDENT PROFILE

Student Demographics: Framingham Community Charter School's student body consisted of 102, 10-11 year-old students. Below are details of the student body:

Male	64 (62.7%)
Female	38 (37.2%)
African American	4 (3.9%)
Anglo American	90 (88.2%)
Asian American	1 (.98%)
Hispanic American	7 (6.8%)
Bilingual	9 (8.8%)
Special Education Needs and/or Individual Education Plans	21 (20.5%)
Title 1 (Free/Reduced Lunch Program)	12 (11.7%)

Students are selected by random lottery. Grades seven and eight will be added in 2003 and 2004, respectively. At full capacity, enrollment will be 306 students.

Total Number of Student Applications Received: Framingham Community Charter School received 107 applications for the 2002-2003 school year. All applicants reside in Framingham, MA and applied for acceptance to the sixth grade. Five students were placed on the waiting list, however, once the school year began enrollment ranged between 99 and 102 students.

Student Turnover Data: Framingham Community Charter School experienced the following student turnover during the 2002-2003 school year:

Total Number of Students That Left During the School Year	4 students
Total Number of Students Not Returning	5 students
<i>Reason for Leaving</i>	
• Family Move	2 students
• Preferred More Structured Learning Environment	2 students
• Transfer to Private School – Tuition Free	1 student

Number of Students Placed on In-School Suspension, Out-of-School Suspension, or Expelled: Framingham Community Charter School did not have to expel or out-of-school suspend any students. In-school suspensions were as follows:

Extreme Disrespect Towards a Teacher	1 student
Fighting	4 students ¹³
TOTAL	5 students
	7 suspensions

¹³ Two students received two suspensions each.

STAFF PROFILE

Name of Executive Director and Principal: Robert Kaufman serves as Framingham Community Charter School's Executive Director. Michael Delman serves as Framingham Community Charter School's Principal.

Summary of Teacher Qualifications: Sixty five percent of the teaching staff of Framingham Community Charter School is highly qualified; the average years of experience is 7.9 years; and the average time with our school is 1 year. (The school just completed its first academic year.)

Teacher Turnover: During the 2002-2003 Framingham Community Charter School had 21 teachers and staff. Seven teachers will not be returning for the 2003-2004 school year.

Left During School Year..... 1 staff member

Reason for Leaving

- Unprofessional Behavior..... 1

Left After School Year Ended..... 6 staff members

Reason for Leaving

- Returned to university teaching..... 1
- Position revised and lacked qualifications..... 1
- Relocated out of state..... 1
- Preferred private school teaching..... 1
- Eliminated position..... 1
- Retired..... 1

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FINANCIAL PROFILE

**Framingham Community Charter School
Un-audited Financial Statements
for the Twelve Months Ended June 30,2003**

Statement of Revenues and Expenses
Twelve Months Ended June 30, 2003
(Unaudited)

Revenue:	\$
State Tuition	937,443
Federal Start-up Grants	243,964
Federal Construction Grant	152,272
Private Grants	53,788
State Grants	30,489
Other Revenue	17,089
	<hr/>
Total Revenue	1,435,045
Expenses:	
Personnel -Teaching	510,185
Personnel - Support	243,514
Facility Costs	219,656
Indirect Costs	119,705
Direct Materials and Supplies	86,987
Business Services	35,946
	<hr/>
Total Expenses	1,215,993
Excess Revenue of Expenses	<hr/> <hr/>
	\$219,052

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**Framingham Community Charter School
Balance Sheet
June 30, 2003
(Unaudited)**

Assets:	\$
Cash	186,190
Accounts Receivable	15,244
Other Current Assets	<u>10,119</u>
Total Current Assets	211,553
Furniture & Equipment	31,051
Leasehold Improvements	52,130
Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(21,376)</u>
Net Fixed Assets	61,805
Construction in Progress	<u>132,628</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>\$405,986</u></u>
Liabilities and Fund Balance:	
Accounts Payable	12,867
Line of Credit	165,000
Unearned Revenue	17,600
Other Current Liabilities	<u>16,502</u>
Total Liabilities	211,969
Fund Balance	
Beginning Fund Balance	(25,053)
Current Year Surplus	<u>219,052</u>
Ending Fund Balance	<u>193,999</u>
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	<u><u>\$405,968</u></u>

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**Framingham Community Charter School
Operating Budget
Fiscal Year 04**

I. Revenue	
	FY 04
Tuition	\$ 1,873,944
State Grants	\$ 24,745
Federal Grants	\$ 135,600
Private Funds	\$ 10,000
Food Revenue	\$ 26,250
Transport. Reimbursement	\$ -
Realization of Unearned Revenue	\$ -
Total Revenues	\$ 2,070,539
II. Expenditures	
- Administration Payroll	\$ 252,716
- Facilities Payroll	\$ 35,000
- Teaching Payroll	\$ 992,579
- Employee Benefits & P/R Taxes	\$ 194,037
Total Payroll	\$ 1,474,332
Total Facility	\$ 77,361
Total Direct Services and Materials	\$ 123,500
Total Indirect Services and Costs	\$ 126,646
Total Other Operating Costs	\$ 62,500
Total Revenues	\$ 2,070,539
Total Committed Costs	\$ 1,864,339
Income	\$ 206,200

DISSEMINATION

The role and responsibility of a Massachusetts charter school is to disseminate best practices and education or education-administration models for replication. Framingham Community Charter School has taken this commitment seriously, and reached out to community and professional groups locally and in New England to share its lessons learned. The steps taken by Framingham Community Charter School over the last 12 months to educate professional colleagues and the broader community on its program represent the first phase in a plan to disseminate best practices and models for replication the public.

Open Houses: In its first year of operation, Framingham Community Charter School mailed formal invitations to 685 individuals to attend open houses in October, 2002 and June, 2003. Guests included every elected or appointed official in Framingham, key community leaders such as the Town Manager, CFO and leaders of civil service departments like fire and police. The district superintendent in Framingham was invited, along with representatives of local non-profits, community groups, donor agencies, local businesses, and professionals who had been supportive of Framingham Community Charter School.

During the open houses guests heard presentations from students, saw displays of student work and had a question-and-answer period with school leaders. The October Open House, which focused on elected and appointed officials in Framingham, emphasized explanations of the administrative structures, including scheduling, hiring, and supervision, financing and educational philosophy, including Expeditionary Learning. Guests at both open houses were given an opportunity to tour the Framingham Community Charter School facility.

Public Invitation to Weekly Friday Assembly: Framingham Community Charter School adopted a policy in the fall of 2002 that made our weekly Friday assembly open to the public. At various times, and particularly from December through March, Framingham Community Charter School advertised this public invitation to our Friday assembly on our web site and through inserts in community newspapers in Framingham and surrounding towns, flyers in local businesses and community organizations, and newspaper ads in the *MetroWest Daily News*.

Between 3:20 pm and 3:55 pm every Friday, the entire Framingham Community Charter School student and staff community gathered in the gymnasium to recognize students that exemplified our core values, and to hear students present their work or perform. Staff and students made public thank you's and apologies to one another, and if there was time, groups of staff, students and parents were organized into teams for a quiz show contest on the latest content being taught in the classroom.

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Parent Information Meetings: Beginning in December, 2002 and continuing through the end of the year, Framingham Community Charter School held more than a dozen public parent information meetings. These meetings were advertised on our web site and through direct mailings when possible, inserts in community newspapers in Framingham and surrounding towns, flyers in local businesses and community organizations, and newspaper ads in the *MetroWest Daily News*.

During parent information meetings guests saw student work and heard explanations of our educational philosophy, including Expeditionary Learning, expectations of students, grading, discipline, homework, etc. We also explained charter school financing and politics, as well as the administrative structures that support the educational program, such as scheduling, hiring, and supervision. Guests had a chance to tour the Framingham Community Charter School facility and ask questions of school leaders.

Identification and Dissemination of Best Practices: Numerous lessons learned regarding best practices and education or education-administration models were shared through each medium that Framingham Community Charter School used to disseminate information to the public. However, a more formal process was begun to identify, highlight, verify and disseminate best practices most suited as models for replication. Oversight of this process and ultimately a decision on whether or not a best practice should be disseminated as a model for replication was made the responsibility of the Framingham Community Charter School Leadership Team. (The role and function of the Leadership Team (LT) is modeled on the board of trustees. The LT identified and farmed out issues to sub-committees. It will hear the proposals of subcommittees and vote on decisions. Membership includes a diverse range of staff, and may be expanded to include one board member.) The LT created a sub-committee to report on best practices for possible dissemination as a model for replication. The LT will hear the sub-committee's report in the spring of 2004.

Participation in Professional Networks: Framingham Community Charter School is a member of the Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound network of more than 115 schools around the United States. Framingham Community Charter School hosted a regional meeting of outward bound schools where administrators and teachers had the opportunity to compare notes, share lessons learned, and receive training from one another. Framingham Community Charter School also disseminated information on its general practice and lessons learned through an Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound Network website and national conference of Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound schools. The 2003 national conference was attended by the entire Framingham Community Charter School teaching staff. Framingham Community Charter School is also a member of the Massachusetts Charter School Association, where school leaders share lessons learned.

Media, Events and Television: Framingham Community Charter School received considerable media attention in its first year of operation, affording it many opportunities

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to share with the public its lessons learned. Articles on Framingham Community Charter School's educational program or administration appeared in the *Boston Globe*, *MetroWest Daily News*, *Commonwealth Magazine* and *Framingham Tab*. School leaders participated in two locally televised debates on charter schools and middle school education. The Executive Director participated with Representative Debbie Blumer at Boston College on a panel discussion of charter schools, and spoke to the Framingham Democratic Town Committee, as well as numerous community groups and elected officials. Framingham Community Charter School maintained a web site that published important information about charter schools and a weekly update from the Principal that often addressed Framingham Community Charter School's response to the most salient issues in middle school education today.