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*“We are committed to developing a community of learners who*

*are academically proficient, demonstrate strong character and*

*exhibit self-confidence.”*

**Proposal for Amendments to Level 5 School Turnaround Plans**

**Parker Elementary School**

January 4, 2017

**Proposals to change the Parker Elementary School turnaround plan:**

We propose to modify the school calendar beginning in the 2017-2018 school year in order to increase learning time for all students while maintaining a high level of quality professional development time for all teachers. This entails the following changes to the turnaround plan:

1. Replace the current summer program model with one run by the district and provide enrollment preference for Parker students.
2. Start the school year for all students seven (7) days earlier, which will increase the student academic year from 185 to 192 days, for a total of 1401 hours. In 2017-18, Parker students will start on August 17.
3. Provide professional development for teachers throughout the school year rather than having the majority in the summer. The 2017-18 schedule includes five (5) days in August, seven (7) days during the school year and two (2) days after the close of the school year (see calendar), as well as the equivalent of four (4) days for family engagement activities.
4. Replace the current Saturday Academy with other approaches to support students and engage families. All students will receive additional core instruction and targeted support within the school day. In addition, as part of a partnership with the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth, college students will be available to provide tutoring to Parker scholars four days a week for one hour. For families, monthly events will be conducted during the week, in addition to the four parent conferences already outlined in the turnaround plan. Teachers will attend all of these events.

The length of the school day will remain the same (8:00-3:30 for students, with teachers arriving 15 minutes before and staying 15 minutes after), and the teachers will continue to have one half-day of professional development each month, from 12:15-3:45.

These changes will result in seven (7) additional days of instruction for all students while still maintaining a range of targeted supports for struggling students as well as responsive approaches to family engagement.

This change is intended to address the **Measurable Annual Goals (MAG)** of Narrowing Proficiency Gaps in English Language Arts, Math and Science for all students as well as for subgroups. While the school has made some gains, Parker has not yet met its MAGs in any of these subjects, meaning many students are still not yet proficient in these areas. These changes in the school schedule will provide all students with additional instructional time, while maintaining high levels of professional development to build staff capacity to plan and deliver rigorous instruction that is informed by a range of data.

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**Rationale**: These proposed changes were suggested by faculty at Parker as a result of their analyses of student attendance and outcomes during the summer and Saturday programs, as well as the outcomes of students during the school year. Data show that the school day model of core instruction and PRIDE time (interventions) have been effective in helping students make gains. In contrast, while some students made gains during the summer program and Saturday Academy, overall participation and attendance were not as high as desired, meaning the programs were not operating at capacity, students did not receive as much targeted instruction as they needed, and teacher time was not being used as efficiently as possible. This additional instruction will narrow learning gaps for students and minimize summer learning loss.

In addition, since teacher retention has dramatically increased at the Parker, teachers no longer need as much time during the summer to get to know each other and develop basic common practices. Scheduling the professional development throughout the year instead of scheduling most of it in July allows the district and school leadership to be more responsive to the needs of the teachers throughout the year. This will allow teachers to learn new strategies, implement them within their classroom and receive feedback between sessions.

The shift to an earlier start in August also leverages the Level 5 autonomy to promote a change that the superintendent would like to see eventually in all schools across the district. By demonstrating that these additional instructional days correlate to increased student success, the district can help build the case to extend this schedule at additional schools.

**The proposed calendar includes:**

1. **192 instructional days** for a total of **1401** **hours**. The student school day will continue to be 8:00-3:30, with one early release each month at 12:15 for teacher professional development. Students will start school seven (7) days before the rest of the district. In 2017-18, Parker students will start on August 17. Parker will continue to operate during the February vacation as it has been since the start of its turnaround plan.
2. **Up to 18 days for teachers to engage in professional development and family engagement activities**. In 2017-18, fourteen of these will be full professional development days, and the remainder may be partial days for family engagement activities that will add up to four days. The district and school are confident this approach will be sufficient to address teachers’ needs. In addition to these professional development days, teachers will continue to be provided 175 minutes of preparation time and 90 minutes of common planning time per five-day week, as well as monthly half-day professional development meetings.
3. Summer learning opportunities provided by the district for targeted students.

**Changes to existing language/content in the turnaround plan relevant to these efforts**

Initiative 1.2 in the Parker turnaround plan currently says *“Provide training for core teachers in grades pre-K-5 over the summer and during the school year on evidence-based best practices for providing Tier I instruction in ELA and math. Provide four weeks of training for all core teachers in grades pre-K-5 over the summer through a pilot summer institute in which teachers receive professional development on Tier I instruction for half the day and teach struggling students in summer school for the other half. Identify struggling students for the program based on middle-of-year (MOY) and end-of-year (EOY) student achievement data, including Galileo and MCAS data, and performance”* (page 8-9)

**The proposed change to the turnaround plan would amend this section to state:**

* Provide training for core teachers in grades pre-K-5 during the school year on evidence based-best practices for providing Tier 1 instruction in ELA and math. Provide at least fourteen (14) full days of training for all core teachers in grades pre-K-5. Provide summer programming in a manner that will position it as a seamless extension of the school year for those students most in need of additional time on learning.

Initiative 2.2 also says the school will ***“****Extend the school year for teachers up to 185 instructional days with students in attendance for 7.5 hours; per full day of school (4 hours and 15 minutes on monthly early release days); add 40 minutes to the current school day for teachers to increase the standard school day from 7 hours and 20 minutes to 8 hours; and add up to 25 days for professional development, planning time, Saturday Academies (not to exceed two per teacher per work year), and Summer Academies.”* (page 16)

**The proposed change to the turnaround plan would amend this section to *state:***

* *“Extend the school year for teachers up to 192 instructional days with students in attendance for 7.5 hours per full day of school (4 hours and 15 minutes on monthly early release days); add 40 minutes to the current school day for teachers to increase the standard school day from 7 hours and 20 minutes to 8 hours; and provide up to 18 days for professional* development, planning time, and family engagement activities throughout the school year, including summer, after school, evenings, Saturdays, and after the close of the school year.”

Initiative 3.3 says the district will ***“****Offer a Saturday Academy for struggling students in targeted grades to provide additional instruction while simultaneously building the knowledge, skills, and capacity of families to develop students at home (see Priority Area 4).*

* *Hire an external consultant to assist in developing the curricula and program for the Academy.*
* *Identify students to attend the program based on performance data.*
* *Ensure that the program contains learning opportunities that address the specific learning targets of students who attend.”*

In addition, Initiative 4.4 in the turnaround plan states the district will ***“****Offer high-quality learning opportunities for parents and families, facilitated by community partners and teachers, for three hours twice a month in October, November, January, February, March, April, and May.”* (pages 27-28)

**The proposed change to the turnaround plan would amend these sections to state:**

* *“3.3 Support struggling students in targeted grades to help them address specific learning targets by continuing to differentiate and provide Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports during PRIDE time and for all students throughout the 192 day school year. In addition, students from University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth will receive training from the lead teachers in 4-5 agreed upon school-wide instructional practices, and will provide afterschool tutoring four days a week for one hour for any student who needs additional support. The tutors will be required to follow a school designed tutorial structure that will be driven by skill specific lessons and monitored closely by student assessment. The Parker Scholar Tutorial Center will be available to help close immediate instructional gaps for students.*
* *“4.4 Offer high-quality learning opportunities for parents and families. The Family Resource Center Manager (FRCM) has developed a series of parent engagement events once a month including family literacy nights, math nights and potluck dinners. In addition, PreK families have their own series of monthly events that foster family and school partnership in an effort to build family engagement early. The FRCM is working with the district Wraparound Manager to strengthen student success by using the principles of “Conditions for Learning”, characterized by school climate, academic engagement, student support, social emotional learning and family engagement.*

These changes would have modest effect on the professional working conditions outlined in the turnaround plan. Teachers will still work up to 210 days during the course of each year. However, more of those days will be full teaching days rather than professional development days, as described below and shown in the chart at the bottom.

Appendix A of the Parker’s turnaround plan currently states a number of terms of employment and expectations for staff, including the following that are affected by these changes:

* *“Up to and including 25 days for professional development, planning time, Saturday Academies (not to exceed two per teacher per work year), and Summer Academies;”* (page 35)
* *“Up to and including 185 instructional days with students in attendance for seven and one half (7.5) hours per full day of school;”* (page 35)
* *“Superintendent Durkin, Chief Academic Officer, and/or Principal will select teachers to take part in a summer academy program for students. Teachers will participate in a half-day of professional development or other activity as determined by the administration and spend a half-day working with students. The summer program is anticipated to be up to and including 16 days over a 4–week period with each day being 6.5 hours.”* (page 36)
* *“Superintendent Durkin, Chief Academic Officer, and/or Principal may select any NBEA members to participate in the Saturday Academy. NBEA members will be expected to participate in no more than two Saturday Academy sessions during the school year.”* (page 37)

**The proposed changes to the turnaround plan would amend these sections of Appendix A as follows:**

* *“Up to and including 18 days of professional development, planning time, and family engagement activities throughout the school year, including summer, after school, evenings, Saturdays, and after the close of the school year (see calendar).”*
* *“Up to and including 192 instructional days with students in attendance for seven and one half (7.5) hours per full day of school.”*
* “The receiver may modify this schedule in the best interest of the students.”

**These two provisions will be removed from the working conditions:**

* Superintendent Durkin, Chief Academic Officer, and/or Principal will select teachers to take part in a summer academy program for students. Teachers will participate in a half-day of professional development or other activity as determined by the administration and spend a half-day working with students. The summer program is anticipated to be up to and including 16 days over a 4–week period with each day being 6.5 hours. (page 35-36)
* Superintendent Durkin, Chief Academic Officer, and/or Principal may select any NBEA members to participate in the Saturday Academy. NBEA members will be expected to participate in no more than two Saturday Academy sessions during the school year. (page 37)

**The following two Measurable Annual Goals would be removed:**

* Percentage of students who participate in Parker's summer institute (page 54)
* Percentage of core K-5 teachers who participate in at least one Saturday Academy Program (page 55)

The chart below outlines these changes for 2017-18.

**\_\_Signed by Dr. Pia Durkin\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** January 4, 2017

Dr. Pia Durkin, Superintendent Date

New Bedford Public Schools

**Changes to Parker Elementary School Calendar**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2016-2017** | **2017-2018** |
| **Summer programming** | **16 half-days**   * Led by Parker staff | **Schedule TBD**   * Led by the district |
| **Student school year**  (and Teacher teaching time) | **185 days**  (8 hours each)   * Includes classes during February vacation * Includes monthly half-days for teacher professional development | **192 days**  (8 hours each)   * Includes classes during February vacation * Includes monthly half-days for teacher professional development |
| **Professional Development and Family Engagement** | **Up to 25 days**   * 3 days prior to the start of the school year * 16 days x 6.5 hours in summer (half teaching, half PD) * One full day in October * 2 Saturday Academy half-days * Four evening parent conferences and open houses   Additional PD provided one half-day monthly from 12:15-3:45, but that is already addressed by the full school days above | **Up to 18 days**   * 5 days in August * 7 additional days throughout the school year * 2 days at the end of the year   The equivalent of 4 days (to be scheduled) for:   * Monthly Family Engagement Events(outside the school day) * Evening parent conferences and open houses   Additional PD provided one half-day monthly from 12:15-3:45, but that is already addressed by the full school days above |
| **Total teacher days** | **Up to 210** | **Up to 210** |
| **Total student hours** | **1352** | **1401** |