



# **Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**

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75 Pleasant Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148-4906

Telephone: (781) 338-3000  
TTY: N.E.T. Relay 1-800-439-2370

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Dear Students, parents, educators, staff, community members, and friends of the John Avery Parker Elementary School:

We are proud and excited to write this letter reviewing the tremendous progress the John Avery Parker Elementary School (Parker) has made since the launch of the school's turnaround plan three years ago. Your steadfast commitment and collective effort over these last three years of receivership have driven impressive improvements in student learning and achievement. Instruction has improved in all subjects, and students, particularly those who are English language learners, are showing gains in reading, writing, and mathematics. Educators throughout the building are working collaboratively to continually improve their practice and provide each student with the supports and experiences they need to meet their individual goals. Families feel welcomed, supported and engaged as partners with the work at the school.

These significant accomplishments are certainly worth celebrating. But we must maintain this same tenacity and level of hard work as we strive to continue improving -- there is still work to be done. Despite the improvements, many students continue to perform below state proficiency averages in English language arts, mathematics, and science, and additional support needs to be provided to some students to address attendance and classroom behavior issues.

Accompanying this letter is the renewed turnaround plan for turning around the Parker school with continued focus on the priority areas set forth in the original plan:

- 1) A strong focus on great teaching, so all students will achieve to their highest potential;
- 2) A program of study that provides students with a well-rounded curriculum;
- 3) Supports for students, so they have what they need to learn; and
- 4) Effective use of resources, including time, funds, staff, operational support, and other resources.

We have included updates that describe the areas in which the Parker school has made progress to date and provide details about the turnaround plan's implementation going forward. The updates are provided in bold text throughout the plan. Our mission -- to provide a world-class education for all of Parker's students -- remains just as urgent now as it was when we commenced the turnaround plan three years ago. Once again this plan will serve as our roadmap for the coming years, and we will continue to need your support to implement it effectively. As you read through this plan, we ask you to again consider the role you might play in achieving the goals it sets.

You have already demonstrated that— by working together—extraordinary improvement is possible. Let us continue to make such impressive strides for years to come.

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Jeff Wulfson  
Acting Commissioner  
Department of Elementary & Secondary Education



Dr. Pia Durkin  
Superintendent  
New Bedford Public Schools

## Section 1. Executive Summary

### Introduction from Acting Commissioner Wulfson

On October 30, 2013, Commissioner Mitchell Chester determined that the John Avery Parker Elementary School was chronically underperforming – a Level 5 school in the Commonwealth’s accountability system. This designation provided a significant opportunity to transform the school from one of the lowest performing in the state to an extraordinary school with sustained high performance. Using the tools provided by the Achievement Gap Act, we will continue to transform the Parker so that all students receive a high quality education.

On January 29, 2014, Commissioner Chester named New Bedford School District Superintendent Pia Durkin as the point person to implement the turnaround plan at the Parker school. On March 7, 2014, the preliminary turnaround plan was released and, as provided in the statute, Superintendent Durkin, the New Bedford School Committee, and the Parker Local Stakeholder Group were invited to propose modifications. On March 28, 2014, the proposed modifications from the Local Stakeholder Group were received, and on April 9, 2014, in tandem with the release of this plan, Commissioner Chester provided a response to those requests (available at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/sss/turnaround/level5/schools>).

Now, in the summer of 2017, I recognize that the Parker school has achieved great progress, with much work still to be accomplished. I know this work is challenging, and I do not assume that the Parker’s continued status as a Level 5 school is due to a lack of effort or concern by the adults working there. I also know that students at the Parker school can achieve at even higher levels, and deserve an even stronger education than they have been receiving. To provide sufficient time for the strategies put in place to reach full and consistent implementation and to further improve student achievement school-wide, I am renewing the turnaround plan for an additional three-year term. Superintendent Durkin participated in the development of the renewed turnaround plan that follows. I look forward to working with Superintendent Durkin and with the Parker community to implement the renewed turnaround plan and realize the full potential of the students attending the school.

### **Turnaround Plan summary**

For years, the John Avery Parker Elementary School has struggled to make consistent academic progress, although changes implemented in its first three years in receivership are beginning to yield positive results. Despite designation as a Level 4 school in 2010 (and the resulting autonomies, authorities, and investments provided to the district and school), student achievement at the John Avery Parker Elementary School continued to lag, leading to the school’s designation as a Level 5 school in fall 2013. Superintendent Durkin, as the Commissioner’s point person to implement the turnaround plan for the Parker, restarted the school in summer 2014.

Some of the key findings that led to the school entering receivership included:

- **Low rigor of classroom instruction:** In the 2012-2013 school year, fewer than 50% of students passed the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) in any

subject. Particularly in reading and English/Language Arts (ELA), data suggests that students were not provided with rigorous instruction every day in every classroom.

- **Limited structures for tracking progress and making mid-course corrections:** After it was designated Level 4 in 2010, the school had difficulty making the comprehensive, rapid changes needed to create substantial progress, delaying much-needed improvements in the school's systems for providing rigorous instruction and supports.
- **School schedule does not maximize instructional time:** Due to structural issues in the school schedule, students were often pulled for related arts courses during core instructional time, preventing teachers from providing high-quality instruction during a continuous core instructional period. Students with disabilities were also often pulled from core classes to receive specialized services.
- **Lack of use of data to drive instruction:** Monitoring Site Visits from previous school years indicated that teachers did not formally use a data cycle to identify "root causes" for why students struggle. Student performance did not grow between past years' middle-of-year (MOY) and end-of-year (EOY) assessments, suggesting that teachers did not know how to analyze data thoroughly, or did not know how to change their practice in response to the data.
- **Few supports to address behaviors that prevent students from fully engaging in their learning:** Teachers lacked the expertise to address behavioral issues in the classroom. This led to disruptions of classroom instruction and a school environment that did not focus primarily on teaching and learning.
- **Limited number of focused approaches to engage families as partners in their children's learning:** While many families attended social activities at the school, Parker offered few events focused on academics. Parent-teacher conferences were optional, and teachers were not expected to maintain two-way communication with their students' families. Many families do not speak English, and the school did not establish effective ways to engage them. The school also struggled to build relationships with community agencies to assist families.

As a district, the New Bedford Public Schools started to address these issues in the 2013-2014 school year under the leadership of Superintendent Pia Durkin. As a Level 5 school, Parker Elementary has used the authorities afforded to it to deepen the focus on instruction and on the use of data to ensure that all students receive challenging instruction in every classroom every day. This will continue to be accomplished by exercising certain authorities available to Level 5 schools, including:

- Extending the school day and school year for students and staff
- Providing extensive PD to teachers
- Retaining and hiring highly-effective staff to ensure the school's teachers are dedicated to a continuous cycle of improvement to raise student performance
- Implementing a new career ladder that rewards teachers for improving student achievement
- Revising the collective bargaining agreement with the New Bedford Educators' Association and other applicable unions for members working at Parker

Parker staff and students remain committed to the essential strategies set forth in the 2014 Turnaround Plan, which harnessed the strengths of the school's many talented educators and students. In this plan renewal, the content of the turnaround plan was adjusted to reflect the progress to date at Parker and areas where the school may fine-tune or deepen its focus under a renewed plan. In the renewed turnaround plan, the school will continue its focus on the priority areas set forth in the original plan:

- **Increase the rigor of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III instruction (Priority Area 1):** The school will continue to focus heavily on PD and coaching for teachers to ensure that they use evidence-based best practices to consistently provide instruction to students that promotes higher-order thinking and pushes students to meet grade level standards. This will be accomplished through:
  - Refining curricula in reading and math that are aligned with the most recent Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, and establishing curricula in science.
  - Providing PD on implementing effective and rigorous instructional practices and strategies in Tiers I, II, and III; and holding teachers accountable for using the evidence-based practices they learn through PD in their classroom, including strategies for differentiating instruction for all students based on their individual needs
  - Further developing the school's pre-kindergarten program to address literacy development at an early age
  - Refining services for English language learners
- **Create school structures and systems that support instruction and maximize time on task (Priority Area 2):** The school will continue to refine systems and structures to ensure that students receive instruction from teachers who can support and challenge them to improve toward grade level standards, such as:
  - Retaining, hiring, and developing teachers who are committed to rapidly improving student performance through a cycle of continuous improvement and who have a track record of success in improving student achievement
  - Continually revising the school schedule to maximize time in core instruction by leveraging the extended school day and year and as well as time for arts, interventions, and support services
  - Recognizing and rewarding teachers for improving student achievement through a new career ladder
- **Increase the use of data to drive instruction (Priority Area 3):** The school leadership team and teacher collaboration teams (TCTs) will continue to use data to inform instruction. To ensure that data analysis have an impact on classroom instruction, the school will focus on:
  - Refining a system for collecting, organizing, and summarizing student data
  - Ensuring that common formative assessments are administered and analyzed regularly

- Sharing data with students and helping them set goals for their learning
- Further building the capacity of TCTs to analyze student-level data and use it to inform their instruction during core and intervention instructional periods
- Monitoring TCTs' decisions for impact in the classroom
- **Establish a school culture focused on achievement and engage families as partners in their children's learning (Priority Area 4):** School leaders and teachers will continue to be responsible for promoting a school culture that focuses on learning, and for engaging families in the school's efforts to improve student performance through:
  - Continuing to provide a safe and respectful school climate that prioritizes student learning
  - Providing tiered supports to ensure students come to school ready to learn by addressing behavioral issues, including on-task behavior during class, and the reinforcement of content at home
  - Further developing a coherent strategy for teacher and family communication
  - Building families' capacity to support students' academic progress using parent-centered programs like a Family Resource Center, workshops, and events.

Three years into the turnaround effort, Parker has developed systems and structures in these four priority areas. To increase the rigor of instruction, Parker staff meet regularly in grade-level and vertical teams to closely study curriculum frameworks, plan lessons, reflect on student work, and plan next steps for teaching and learning. Parker began implementing the PRIDE intervention model to reteach and reinforce core curriculum standards; helping students at all levels meet academic goals. In order to build a positive school culture that maximizes time on learning, Parker implemented a schoolwide Positive Behavior Intervention System as well as a Building Based Support Team that ensures processes are in place to support students with intensive academic and/or social-emotional needs. Parker staff consistently use data to drive instruction through a combination of daily and weekly reviews of student data used to inform core instruction, identify areas of re-teaching, place students in groups, and recognize students for areas of growth and achievement. Parker staff have focused work on engaging families and the community in school-based activities and events and emphasizing the importance of getting students into the school on time and ready to learn.

As Parker implemented this turnaround plan over the last three years, it has monitored the results and learned from the experiences. While adjustments have been made along the way, these changes remain consistent with the priorities, strategies, and goals outlined in the 2014 Turnaround Plan. As a result, over the last three years, Parker has made significant progress on many of the goals set forth in the 2014 plan. Specifically, the school has:

- Created a culture of all adults sharing responsibility for all student learning and doing what is needed to help all students succeed
- Improved rigor of core instruction in ELA and math

- Improved supports for English language learners by appropriately identifying students in need of language development supports, hiring ESL teachers, and training all Parker educators to incorporate Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) strategies into every lesson
- Developed small-group intervention blocks for math and ELA, grouping students by standard and skill, and rotating through different teachers including grade-level classroom teachers, lead teachers, and special education teachers
- Developed a culture which focuses on student outcomes, grounded in a range of data. Parker staff have thoroughly integrated data into their practice, including daily and weekly data review sessions during team collaboration time. Systems and processes have been established to regularly monitor student progress toward goals, such as student data walls, student data binders, and an on-line tracking database, as well as having students begin to set and monitor their own goals
- Implemented a Positive Behavior Intervention System
- Developed a Building Based Support Team to provide academic and non-academic supports for students with Tier III needs
- Implemented summer learning opportunities to reduce “summer slide”
- Initiated family and community engagement through the Family Resource Center Manager and teacher-developed family engagement plans
- Reduced chronic absence and tardiness through a range of initiatives
- Leveraged autonomies to make “mid course” corrections and adjustments, as needed, in order to better serve students

The effective use of resources to maximize student achievement is the principle on which all of the school’s strategies will be based. All resources allocated to Parker – including time, funds, human capital, operational supports, and other resources – will continue to be fully aligned in support of student learning. Staff at Parker will continue to review student work samples, as well other student data, to create action plans with strategies to develop student critical thinking skills.

### **Theory of Action**

IF the John Avery Parker Elementary School focuses on and persists in expecting, developing, supervising, and evaluating educators' capacity to deliver rigorous and engaging instruction that is:

- aligned to state standards,
- monitored so students' progress in attaining those standards reaches a level of proficiency,
- adjusted and differentiated so that all students will be supported and stretched to make progress, and
- demonstrated every day in every classroom

THEN student achievement will significantly increase in each classroom and in the school overall.

### **Parker Elementary School Core Values**

- Our core business is teaching and learning
- Our students always come first
- Everyone shares in accountability for student results
- Teamwork, trust, and mutual respect are expected
- Parents and community members are our partners in ensuring that all students improve their academic performance

## Section 2: Priority Areas for Improvement

### Priority Area for Improvement 1: Maximize and accelerate student achievement by increasing the rigor of classroom instruction in every classroom for every student every day

#### Rationale

*Achievement will only increase if students are consistently provided with rigorous instruction. To ensure that student achievement improves rapidly, Parker Elementary must establish a curriculum aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in ELA and mathematics, which incorporate the Common Core State Standards; must develop and support teachers through PD to provide Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III instruction, supports, and interventions; and must empower school leaders to provide growth-producing feedback to teachers with a focus on rigor.*

#### Related Emerging and Sustaining Practices for School Turnaround

- Improving instruction and interventions through teacher- and student-specific data

For challenges addressed by Priority Area #1, please see the April 9, 2014 Turnaround Plan at pp. 6-7: <http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/turnaround/level-5-schools/parker-final-plan-modified-bese.pdf>.

## Strategies to Achieve Priority Area 1

Key Strategy	Owner
<p><b>1.1 Align the reading, writing, and math curriculum with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks to ensure students receive rigorous core instruction.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Reading:</u> Continue to implement the new Reading Street curriculum that was piloted in school year 2013-2014 in grades 3-5, and roll out the program in all classes in grades K-2. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Expand the Lively Letters curriculum from pre-K to kindergarten to help students master phonemic awareness to ensure early reading fluency</li> <li>○ Continue the work of the current reading specialist to assist with implementation of Reading Street</li> <li>○ Implement model curriculum units for reading; based on pilot, roll out districtwide as appropriate</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update: A new reading curriculum has been implemented in all grades, with particular focus on rigorous tasks aligned to new standards. While the school has made significant progress in this area, reading will continue to be a priority for refinement.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Writing:</u> Continue to use the Empowering Writers program, currently used in grades K-5.</li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update: The school has placed a deep focus on implementing key writing processes and practices, which are embedded within lesson planning, staff development, classroom observations, teacher feedback, and student work analysis, across all grades and subjects. The school no longer uses the Empowering Writers program and instead developed its own writing resources and reference guides. These resources build on the Reading Street reading program, and address the three genres of writing: Opinion/Argument, Informational/explanatory, and narratives. While the school has made significant progress in this area, writing will continue to be a priority.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Math:</u> Solicit teacher input and finalize and implement the K-5 math curriculum based on district evaluation of potential math programs.</li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update: A new math curriculum has been implemented in all grades, with particular focus on conceptual learning and rigorous tasks aligned to new standards. While the school has made significant progress in this area, mathematics will continue to be a priority.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Science:</u> Review existing science program, including solicitation of teacher input, and revise if necessary. The science curriculum will</li> </ul>	<p>Deputy Superintendent</p>

include an emphasis on literacy development. Ensure sufficient materials and curriculum supports, and include related PD (PD) for teachers (see 1.2 below).

**2017 Update: The district is rolling out a new science curriculum for grades 3-5 in school year 2017-2018 and will add grades K-2 in school year 2018-2019.**

- Regularly assess the fidelity of implementation of each program through classroom observations, conversations with teachers, and focused learning walks to identify areas where teachers need additional support in using the curricula.

**2017 Update: Parker has developed a strong system for assessing implementation of instruction which includes a school instructional leadership team, grade-level and vertical teacher teams, schoolwide ELA and math teams, regular observations of classroom practice, and review of student work. While the school has made significant progress in this area, it will continue to refine these systems and processes.**

Regularly assess programs and services for Parker's students with disabilities. Ensure students' needs are met through the most appropriate program/service delivery model (e.g., co-teaching, substantially separate classrooms, and/or other models), in order for all students to receive rigorous core instruction.

**2017 Update: In the past three years the Parker has shifted to an inclusion model, with pull-out services, serving students with disabilities through the school's RTI model which identifies and provides supports for all students as needed. While the school has made significant progress in this area, this will continue to be a priority for refinement.**

- Based on identified areas for support, provide additional PD to help teachers understand and deliver the content of their core curricula.
  - Share best practices and PD material with other elementary schools in the district such as how to utilize Bloom's Taxonomy to integrate higher-order thinking questions within lessons which was shared with all principals.

**2017 Update: The school has developed an approach to PD that includes school-wide and targeted sessions, with topics identified by analysis of a range of student and teacher data. Sessions may be led by Parker teachers, school leaders, or district personnel. While the school has made significant progress in this area, it will continue to refine the approach.**

- Teachers shall receive 90 minutes of dedicated common planning and collaboration time per week.

**2017 Update: Teacher Collaboration Time (TCT) has become a major driver of improvement in the school, with teachers working in a**

<p><b>systematic way in grade-level and vertical-grade teams to plan lessons and reflect on student progress. While the school has made significant progress in this area it will continue to refine the approach.</b></p> <p><i>This strategy is informed by Local Stakeholder Group recommendation B-6, B-7, and B-10.</i></p>	
<p><b>1.2 Use Level 5 authorities to increase the amount of focused and accountable PD for teachers on delivering effective, engaging, and rigorous reading and math instruction in Tiers I, II, and III during and beyond the core block.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Level 5 authorities include, for example, expanding the school year and school day, establishing a plan for PD, and providing increased opportunities for teacher planning time and collaboration focused on improving student instruction.</li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update: Parker school staff have leveraged the school’s autonomies in a number of ways, including refining class schedules throughout the year to improve student supports, adjusting staff responsibilities, modifying the annual calendar to increase time for core instruction, and refining PD plans to better address teacher needs. In the coming years the school will continue to strategically leverage autonomies to respond to student needs and improve outcomes.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The three tiers of instruction are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tier I instruction: occurs during the core block and includes instruction and interventions that target all students</li> <li>○ Tier II instruction: provides interventions and time on instruction for struggling students, in addition to Tier I</li> <li>○ Tier III instruction: the most intense level of intervention, provided to students who receive Tier I and II instruction but who continue to struggle</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Tier I:</b> 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 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 14 full days of training for all core teachers in grades pre-K-5. Provide summer programming as a seamless extension of the school year for those students most in need of additional time on learning.</li> <li>○ Work with an external consultant to identify an instructional focus area and identify evidence-based best practices to share during PD, with a goal of ensuring that teachers develop skills</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, principal</p>

for teaching higher-order thinking skills and know how to build a culture of high expectations for learning in their classrooms. Solicit teacher input when identifying PD needs

- Dedicate monthly faculty meetings to PD on Tier I instruction with a focus on ELA and math; and provide PD for related service providers
- Redefine the role of the Teaching and Learning Specialist to be an instructional coach who provides job-embedded PD and works with teachers individually and in small groups on delivery of differentiated, high-powered instruction rich in literacy through side-by-side coaching of teachers and observations of students needing intensive literacy instruction
  - 70% of literacy coach's time will focus on working with teachers, and 30% of his/her time will be spent directly with students

**2017 Update: The multi-faceted approach to supporting Tier I instruction has led to stronger individual teacher practice, as well as strong common practices that are used in all classrooms and all grades across the school. The Parker school has shifted the role of the instructional coach so it is 100% focused on adult learning. The coach spends time in classrooms coaching and modeling effective teaching practices and also supports Teacher Collaboration Time and PD. In addition, the Parker school revised its staff calendar to provide more PD for teachers throughout the school year rather than front-loading most of it during the summer. (See 2.2 for more details on this shift). In the coming years the school will continue to refine supports for core instruction.**

- Tier II: Coach teachers on further differentiating instruction based on specific needs of subgroups of students as identified by the collection and review of student data (see Priority Area 3).
  - During PD on monthly early-release days and during common planning time, train teachers to implement center-based instruction in which students are flexibly grouped and re-grouped based on their strengths and skills
    - “Centers” provide the opportunity to review, reinforce, and accelerate student learning based on students’ strengths and weaknesses in priority curriculum standards
  - Train teachers to differentiate Reading Street and math curriculum based on student need

**2017 Update: Parker staff have implemented these strategies to differentiate learning experiences for students across all subjects and target specific skills and standards where students needs extra support.**

**In the coming years the school will continue to implement, evaluate, and refine these strategies.**

- **Tier III:** Coach teachers and related service providers to support students who demonstrate significant learning gaps and work with struggling students directly.
  - As part of the new role, the instructional coach trains teachers on providing targeted instruction to students who are significantly behind grade-level and provides additional support to struggling students directly
  - Provide additional time on task for students who are struggling during the school’s remediation/intervention period (see Priority Areas 2 and 3)

**2017 Update: Parker staff have implemented these strategies to provide intensive Tier III supports for students who are struggling in specific academic areas, and have refined and improved these strategies over time. As mentioned in the Tier I update above, the coach no longer provides direct support for struggling students. Instead students receive that support from teachers and service providers. In the coming years the school will continue to implement, evaluate, and refine these strategies to address gaps in student learning and ensure they meet grade-level standards.**

- Present targeted PD to teachers with a focus on providing appropriate accommodations and modifications for students with disabilities in both general education and substantially separate classrooms to ensure access to quality instruction in the least restrictive environment possible in all three tiers of instruction.
  - Solicit teacher feedback on PD quality and practical application in the classroom.

**2017 Update: Parker teachers have received significant support in providing differentiated instruction that addresses individual student needs, and helps students meet the academic and non-academic goals outlined in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). The effectiveness of this work is monitored through grade-level and school-level teams. While the school has made significant progress in this area, this will continue to be a priority for refinement.**

- Identify two teacher-leaders to model implementation of reading, writing, math, and science curricula in “best-practice” classrooms during core instruction and to coach peers.
  - Principal and Superintendent select teacher-leaders through an application process
  - Establish a schedule that allows teacher-leaders to teach their own classes and coach peers through role-modeling and during

TCT conversations

- Financial incentives for the position may be awarded, consistent with the provisions of the performance-based compensation plan (see Appendix A)

**2017 Update: In school year 2016-2017, three teacher-leaders were identified in accordance with the Parker school's career ladder. Responsibilities include supporting their peers with instructional practices and also teaching students in need of intense support. In the coming years Parker will continue to leverage teacher leaders to support instructional improvement and student outcomes.**

- Establish the expectation that teachers will immediately use the practices gained in PD in their daily instruction; monitor teachers for follow-through.
  - After each PD session, teachers implement what they learned in their classrooms
  - Literacy coach and teacher-leaders provide embedded support and activities, coach teachers, and develop follow-up activities to ensure teachers are able to put their new knowledge and skills into practice
  - Teachers continue to use weekly common planning time to share successful practices and learn from each other
  - Principal conducts classroom observations and learning walks to ensure new instructional practices are being used and implemented with fidelity, and to provide feedback to teachers on their instruction
  - Teachers, literacy coach, and principal assess the impact of the PD on student learning by analyzing data

**2017 Update: The Parker school has developed a culture of continuous growth and improvement where teachers are invested in their PD and strive to quickly embed new strategies into their practice. Systems are in place to monitor and support follow-through. In the coming years Parker staff will continue to refine implementation in this area.**

- Use the educator evaluation tool for the principal to provide growth-producing feedback to teachers that considers both teacher skill and evidence of student outcomes.
  - Principal conducts at least 10 mini-observations a week and spends at least 600 minutes a week on instructional leadership

**2017 Update: Parker school leadership has a well-established system for regularly observing classroom practice and providing teachers with feedback that helps improve their practice. This**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>practice will continue to be a priority.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share PD material and best practices with other elementary schools in the district.</li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update: Promising practices identified at the Parker school have been shared with other New Bedford schools through regular principal collaborative meetings and PD. The school has also hosted principals and teachers from other New Bedford schools to focus on specific strategies for supporting instructional and social-emotional success. The school will continue to make it a priority to share promising practices with other schools in the district.</b></p> <p><i>This strategy is informed by Local Stakeholder Group recommendation B-3, B-9, and E-3.</i></p>	
<p><b>1.4 Study, develop, and expand the current pre-K program to better serve all students in a more cohesive program with a focus on literacy.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine and propose new program parameters to increase the current population of students served in the pre-K program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Currently, program serves mostly students with disabilities from throughout the district and a limited number of general education students from the Parker neighborhood</li> <li>○ By December 31, 2014, analyze data to examine why more families of Parker students do not take advantage of the pre-K program and how the program can be enhanced to attract additional students and meet their needs</li> <li>○ Based on data analysis, develop and execute a strategy for attracting more students to the program by spring 2015</li> <li>○ Change current district policy to prioritize enrollment in the pre-K program for students who would attend Parker in grades K-5</li> <li>○ Study the feasibility of expanding the program to add classrooms and instructional time (e.g., possibly full days, full week)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Establish a curriculum for the program with a focus on early literacy and oral language development to address the literacy development gaps in many incoming kindergartners, and narrow students' learning gaps by grade 3. Align the pre-K program with Parker's K-5 program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Continue using the Lively Letters curriculum to teach phonemic awareness to students</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update for Strategy 1.4: Parker has implemented a thriving full-day, full-week Pre-K program for 3- and 4-year old students that has become a major highlight of the school's progress. The focus on early literacy and oral language development has helped students become significantly more prepared for work in the higher grades. Parker Pre-K teachers are fully incorporated into the teacher teaming and PD</b></p>	Principal

<p><b>structures for the school. The model has been replicated in other New Bedford schools. In the coming years, this will continue to be a priority for the school.</b></p> <p><i>This strategy is informed by Local Stakeholder Group recommendation B-4.</i></p>	
<p><b>1.5 In conjunction with the district’s current efforts study and evaluate the need for supports for English language learners (ELLs) and develop services as necessary.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In alignment with wider district efforts, re-evaluate current processes for screening students for fluency in English. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In winter and spring 2014, send home-language surveys to all Parker students in their native language to identify and evaluate students who may qualify as ELLs or former ELLs (FELLs) and who need language support</li> <li>○ Depending on survey results, develop and implement relevant ELL and/or SEI curriculum, classrooms, and services as needed</li> <li>○ Depending on survey results, develop a Parker ELL Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) as needed</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update: Parker school has made huge strides in accurately identifying and supporting students who are English language learners. In the coming years the school will continue to prioritize focus in this area.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If necessary, present targeted PD to teachers with a focus on providing appropriate accommodations and differentiating instruction to meet the needs of ELLs and former ELLs (FELLs) in all three tiers of instruction. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ PD for teachers will focus on strategies to help ELLs access the curriculum, differentiate instruction to meet student needs, and provide appropriate assessments</li> <li>○ Interventions for ELL and FELL students will target language development</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update: As part of its larger system for supporting teachers practice and student outcomes, the Parker school has provided focused support to meet the needs of English language learners. In the coming years the school will continue to prioritize focus in this area.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All teachers and administrators will obtain SEI endorsement. The Parker leadership team, the district’s Implementation Manager for Quality Services for English language learners, and ESE will work collaboratively to develop a plan for offering SEI endorsement related training for Parker staff.</li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update: All Parker teachers have earned the SEI endorsement, and in the coming years this will continue to be a requirement for</b></p>	<p>Superintendent</p>

<b>employment at the school.</b>	
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*This priority area is aligned with the New Bedford Accelerated Improvement Plan.*

### **Implementation Milestones**

➤ Beginning in September, 100% of teachers will receive at least monthly coaching and actionable feedback on their use of priority tools and strategies beginning with concept understanding and concept development. Some teachers will receive more focused instructional coaching.
➤ By the end of September, all teachers will be clear on the priority tools and strategies that are the focus for the year, as evidenced by the educator evaluation goals, PD feedback, lesson plans, and TCT action steps.
➤ At least monthly, teachers will discuss with their evaluators how they are using priority tools and strategies, and how previous recommendations have been implemented, sustained and are making a difference for students.
➤ By MOY, all teachers are sustaining the practices that were the focus of their initial feedback, while working on new practices as evidenced through learning walks and observations.
➤ By EOY, all teachers are sustaining the practices that were the focus of previous feedback, while working on additional new practices.
➤ Teachers will work across grade levels to understand student' strengths and challenges, with a particular focus on designing challenging lessons that recognize students are coming to them with increasingly higher levels of proficiency than in previous years.
➤ Teachers will document and share promising practices across grade levels using the lesson study process, PD, and teacher collaboration time.
➤ At the MOY STAR benchmark assessment, 25% of students will increase one level.
➤ At the EOY STAR benchmark assessment, 40% of students will increase one level.

## **Priority Area for Improvement 2: Establish school structures and systems to ensure that all students have teachers who are proficient in delivering rigorous instruction and maximize instructional time**

### **Rationale**

*Without the proper resources and support, teachers cannot successfully provide rigorous instruction to all students. Parker Elementary must be staffed with teachers who are committed to delivering rigorous instruction and continually improving their own practice to ensure that all students succeed. Systems and structures must be established to provide adequate time in core instruction with these highly-qualified staff. All resources allocated to Parker—including time, funds, human capital, operational supports, and other resources—will be used to maximum effectiveness and will be fully aligned to support student learning.*

### **Related Emerging and Sustaining Practices for School Turnaround**

- Building a community of effective practice through leadership, shared responsibility, and professional collaboration

For challenges addressed by Priority Area #2, please see the April 9, 2014 Turnaround Plan at p. 14: <http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/turnaround/level-5-schools/parker-final-plan-modified-bese.pdf>.

**Strategies to Achieve Priority Area 2**

<b>Key Strategy</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<p><b>2.1 Exercise Level 5 autonomies to recruit, hire, and develop all teachers who are committed to a cycle of continuous improvement and who take responsibility for improving student results.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 5 autonomies include limiting, suspending, or changing provisions of contracts or collective bargaining agreements as they relate to the school (see Appendix A).</li> <li>• Articulate expectations for staff at a Level 5 school that requires bold and robust change, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Teachers and other professional staff will devote whatever time is required to achieve and maintain high-quality education.</li> <li>○ In addition to their traditional responsibilities, all staff members will be expected to be involved in a variety of educational and administrative activities necessary to fulfill the school’s mission.</li> <li>○ The Superintendent, working with the principal, will have the sole authority to set professional expectations and put policies and procedures in place for the school that will lead to the rapid academic achievement of Parker’s students.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Superintendent and the principal have the discretion to select the staff for any and all positions at the school. In order to exercise this autonomy, following consultation with the union, all existing Parker employees who are interested in continuing to work at Parker will be asked to reapply to secure positions.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Specifically, the Superintendent and principal may select staff for Parker’s positions represented by the New Bedford Educators Association (NBEA) without regard to seniority within the NBEA or past practices between the New Bedford School Committee and the NBEA.</li> <li>○ The principal, in collaboration with the Superintendent, may formulate job descriptions, duties, and responsibilities for any and all positions in the school.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Beginning in the school year 2014-15, the Superintendent and the principal will identify teachers to retain through a thorough assessment based on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Teachers’ expressed interest in remaining at the school for at least three years;</li> <li>○ Student growth data;</li> <li>○ Classroom observations;</li> <li>○ Educator evaluation ratings, including educators’ portfolios of</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Superintendent, principal</p>

<p>evidence, using the educator evaluation system used in New Bedford Public Schools;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Principal’s assessment of teachers’ skills to provide rigorous instruction, continually improve their practice, and commit to working in an environment where staff express an urgency for raising student performance;</li> <li>○ Teacher’ willingness to participate in extensive PD, an extended school day and school year, occasional weekends and evenings, and other requirements of a Level 5 school;</li> <li>○ Evidence of commitment to working as part of a high-performing team; and</li> <li>○ Based on number of teachers retained for the 2014-2015 school year, identify staffing needs.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recruit and hire teachers annually to fill needed positions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Publicize positions and recruit high-quality proficient and exemplary teachers within New Bedford Public Schools</li> <li>○ Partner with outside organizations to recruit effective teachers with track records of success</li> </ul> </li> <li>● The principal may make adjustments to staff positions annually and may unilaterally move staff to other positions within the school if they are appropriately licensed for those positions.</li> <li>● For school year 2015-2016 and beyond, use ratings in the educator evaluation system of New Bedford Public Schools to identify teachers who will be retained and who will be separated from the school, with a focus on retaining teachers who are proficient and exemplary.</li> <li>● Use a dispute resolution process that allows for rapid and effective resolution of employee concerns (see Appendix A).</li> <li>● Support all teachers through PD as described in Priority Area 1.</li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update for Key Strategy 2.1: Contract provisions, as identified by Appendix A, were implemented and have been sustained since June 2014. All of the above authorities and activities have enabled the Parker school to assemble a strong staff that works diligently and collaboratively to help all students succeed. The Superintendent’s and principal’s flexibility with staffing decisions has been a critical component of the school’s progress. High expectations have become the norm at the Parker school, with all staff doing what is needed to promote student achievement and success. In the coming years, this focus on developing and retaining a strong staff team will continue to be a priority.</b></p>	
<p><b>2.2 Focus time, resources, and efforts on improving the quality of core instruction and maximizing the effectiveness of instructional time.</b></p>	<p>Principal</p>

- Extend the school year for teachers and students:
  - 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 PD, planning time, and family engagement activities throughout the school year, including summer, after school, evenings, and Saturdays.

**2017 Update: The extended school day and school year has added critical time for core instruction and student supports as well as time for teachers to collaborate and further develop their practice. Parker staff have continually reflected on the use of this time to ensure it is maximized to best serve students. The instructional and PD calendar outlined above reflects a modification of the original plan, which was approved by the Commissioner in January 2017. As noted in that amendment, the new calendar increases learning time for all students while maintaining a high level of quality PD time for all teachers. The changes were suggested by faculty at the Parker School as a result of their analyses of student attendance and outcomes during the summer and Saturday programs, as well as the outcome of student performance during the school year. The new calendar adds seven 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. The original summer program has been replaced with one run by the district in conjunction with a community partner.**

**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 PD throughout the year instead of scheduling most of it in July enables the district and school leadership to be more responsive to the needs of the teachers and students throughout the year. This will enable teachers to learn new strategies, implement them within their classroom, and receive feedback between sessions.**

**In the coming years the Parker school staff will continue to reflect on the school’s calendar and revise it as needed in order to best support strong student outcomes.**

- Create a school schedule with student “movement” near the end of the day, including interventions, enrichment, and related arts.
  - Dedicate the morning portion of every day to core instruction in an uninterrupted block.
  - Stagger work times for student support staff (e.g., guidance

counselors, behaviorists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, social workers, nurses, school adjustments counselors, et al. and for related arts specialists (e.g., art, music, and PE teachers) so that students are not pulled from core instruction to receive services or attend related arts courses.

- Schedule related arts near the end of the day so that students receive well-rounded educational experiences without interrupting core education.
- Solicit staff input in schedule development.

**2017 Update: The Parker school has succeeded in developing a schedule that maximizes time on core instruction and the assignment of related student support staff while maintaining a well-rounded educational experience. Staff have leveraged the school’s autonomies to revise the schedule as needed throughout the school year in order to better maximize time and staff in service of student learning. In the coming years the school will continue to reflect on the schedule and make further refinements as needed.**

- Establish an intervention or acceleration period during the school day so that all students receive intervention and/or enrichment based on need, as identified by data (see Priority Area 3).

**2017 Update: Parker school has established a schedule that includes regular opportunity for intervention or acceleration in specific content areas identified through ongoing analysis of student performance on standards. In the coming years the school will continue to focus on leveraging this time to help all students meet targeted learning goals for growth and achievement.**

- By December 2014, complete review of Parker’s technology needs to ensure it has the resources (financial and otherwise) necessary to maximize rapid academic achievement of its students. By June 2015, Parker will have a written plan in place to upgrade all technology (software, hardware, and infrastructure). The plan shall ensure that all classrooms have high-speed internet access and a sufficient number of age-appropriate devices (e.g., tablets or laptop computers) to allow regular use in preparation for 21<sup>st</sup> century instructional and assessment activities. The plan shall be implemented school year 2015-2016.
  - PD shall be provided for teachers and the principal about effective incorporation of technology in their instructional practice.
  - TCTs and other collaborative efforts shall consider the teaching of technology literacy as part of curriculum development.
  - 2017 Update: The technology plan at the Parker is being driven by a district-wide plan to infuse technology into instruction and increase student access to technology both in and out of school. PD and

<p>collaborative planning have helped teachers incorporate technology into their core instruction as well as targeted supports for students. In the coming years this will continue to be a priority.</p> <p><i>This strategy is informed by Local Stakeholder Group recommendation B-1.</i></p>	
<p><b>2.3 Create incentives based on student results to reward teachers for rapid improvements in student performance.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective starting in the 2014-2015 school year, a new performance-based compensation system will be developed and used to compensate teachers based on individual effectiveness, professional growth, and student academic growth. (See Appendix A “Working Conditions and Compensation for Level 5 Schools” and Appendix C “Financial Plan for the School.”)</li> <li>• Communicate the new compensation system to all stakeholders to ensure they understand the objectives and benefits of the system.</li> <li>• Roll out the system in spring 2014 to allow for a smooth transition between the current and new compensation systems.</li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update for Key Strategy 2.3: The new performance based compensation system was effectively rolled out in Spring 2014. The system has helped Parker attract high-quality candidates for open positions while also retaining and further developing current staff. The teacher leader position has been leveraged to recognize and reward strong educators while also providing additional supports for teachers and students.</b></p>	<p>Superintendent</p>

## **Implementation Milestones**

➤ In the coming years, teachers will work to further differentiate core instruction and increase the level of rigor for all students, including a greater emphasis on writing across all content areas. Also, teachers will continue to use PRIDE time to group students by targeted skills based on ongoing analysis of data and student work.
➤ Teacher collaboration time will be used to review student data and drive differentiation within core instruction as well as determine groupings for PRIDE time interventions.
➤ Teachers will deepen their practice of looking at student work to better understand students' strengths and challenges.
➤ Teachers will reflect on the degree to which the lesson aligns to the standard and whether the assigned tasks reflect a higher level of rigor.
➤ Teachers will create a rubric to calibrate expected outcomes.
➤ Teachers will use protocols to review student work.
➤ 2.2 Data defense meetings will be held every six weeks to ensure students are progressing towards proficiency and teachers are properly adjusting instruction.
➤ 2.3 SILT will review and triangulate all school data (academic and non-academic) at least monthly in order to refine systems and reallocate supports for students and teachers as needed.
➤ Every six weeks, students in grades 3-5 will set and monitor academic and non-academic goals with their teachers.
➤ At each cycle at least 80% of students will meet the goals they set for themselves.
➤ 2.4 At the MOY benchmark, the number of students not meeting proficiency will be reduced by 25%.
➤ 2.5 At the EOY benchmark, the number of students not meeting proficiency will be reduced by 40% and 100% of students will demonstrate academic growth.

**Priority Area for Improvement 3: Provide students with appropriate supports and acceleration opportunities to maximize their learning by using data to differentiate instruction and identifying opportunities for intervention and enrichment**

**Rationale**

*Using data to inform teachers' practice is an essential tool for providing rigorous instruction, yet it is not consistently used across all classrooms at Parker Elementary. Teachers need a robust understanding of how to differentiate their instruction based on analysis of their students' data. Teachers are beginning to embrace and implement the data cycle, but only a continued focus on data will ensure that teachers build upon this practice.*

**Related Emerging and Sustaining Practices for School Turnaround**

- Providing data-driven tiered instruction for all students

For challenges addressed by Priority Area #3, please see the April 9, 2014 Turnaround Plan at p. 19: <http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/turnaround/level-5-schools/parker-final-plan-modified-bese.pdf>.

**Strategies to Achieve Priority Area 3**

<b>Key Strategy</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<p><b>3.1 Create a coherent system for organizing student data, communicating data to students and teachers, and acting on data.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Collect the data</u>: Create a coherent system for collecting and organizing common formative assessment (CFA) data.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Identify an external partner to assist in this work</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <u>Communicate the data</u>: Create a student data “dashboard” system to provide the principal and teachers with timely views of all students’ academic profiles and non-academic profiles for students who are at-risk (see Priority Area 4).</li> <li>• <u>Share data with students</u>: Help students understand their own performance data, set goals, and identify strategies for improvement.</li> <li>• <u>Create tools to use the data</u>: Improve existing tools and create new tools to help teachers and the principal analyze data (e.g., spreadsheets for reviewing CFA data schoolwide, TCT toolkit, etc.) Provide appropriate PD in the use of these data tools.</li> <li>• Using existing data, conduct a “root cause” analysis to identify why students struggle to meet grade-level goals and expectations.</li> <li>• This analysis will inform the schedule and topics for PD needs addressed in Priority Area 1.</li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update for Key Strategy 3.1: Parker staff have developed a number of systems and processes for using a wide range of data to inform their work at the student, class, grade, and whole-school levels, in both academic and non-academic areas. Data is reviewed in teams daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly and the information is used to refine and focus work across the school in order to improve student outcomes. Increasingly this data is shared with students and their families to empower them to set goals and monitor their own progress. In the coming years Parker will continue to focus on refining and sustaining these practices.</b></p> <p><i>This strategy is informed by Local Stakeholder Group recommendation A-2.</i></p>	<p>Superintendent and the Manager of Curriculum, Data and Assessment</p>
<p><b>3.2 Ensure the regular administration of formative assessments in ELA and math.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a calendar for administering CFAs regularly in ELA and math throughout the year using Reading Street, Galileo assessments, etc.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Create a TCT calendar to clearly define the schedule for completing data cycles during the school year, including specific guidelines on when teachers should re-teach and re-assess their</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Principal, school instructional leadership team</p>

<p>students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Conduct additional diagnostic testing, including screening for English language proficiency, for students who are identified as struggling and who are consistently below grade-level.</li> <li>● With the support of the principal, create banks of rigorous assessment questions aligned with the current curriculum standards for teachers to use in their CFAs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Share questions with other elementary schools districtwide.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Embed formative assessments in daily instruction.</li> <li>● School instructional leadership team (SILT), which includes teachers and school administrators, monitors implementation of CFAs at the classroom level by collecting formative assessments from a sample of classrooms and through conversations and analysis with teachers.</li> <li>● SILT analyzes results of CFAs to identify schoolwide trends in students' learning and design strategies to address gaps.</li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update for Key Strategy 3.2: The use of common assessments at Parker has been critical to the school's progress as it has enabled SILT and other collaborative teams to focus on the same standards, tasks, and outcomes in their conversations about students' progress and teachers' practice. In the coming years the school will continue to refine the systems for conducting these assessments and using the results to inform school strategies.</b></p> <p><i>This strategy is informed by Local Stakeholder Group recommendation A-4.</i></p>	
<p><b>3.3 Build the capacity of leadership staff and teachers to effectively use the data inquiry cycle to make data-driven decisions about instruction.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● As part of the extended day and staggered schedules, use TCT meetings and planning time to provide teachers with dedicated time to review student data. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ As part of the TCT calendar, create agendas to ensure that TCTs their time effectively working on focused instructional goals and practices.</li> <li>○ Develop a TCT meeting schedule that optimizes teacher participation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Based on the results of formative assessments, TCTs identify priority areas for each subject and grade-level.</li> <li>● Establish a voluntary professional learning community for teachers to deepen their understanding of data-driven instruction by reading about data-driven instruction, discussing problems of practice, etc... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Frequency of meetings to be determined</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Principal

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sessions will be facilitated by principal, TLS, or teacher-leader</li> <li>● Develop and implement a PD plan to ensure that teachers know how to consistently check for students’ understanding, to use embedded formative assessments to monitor students’ progress, and to interpret data that affects their classroom instruction.</li> <li>● Ensure that teachers provide supplemental supports/interventions to struggling students based on data, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Additional time on task during the intervention/remediation period that address students’ specific learning targets.</li> <li>○ Instruction during the intervention/remediation period that uses evidence-based programs with track records of success (e.g., SuccessMaker) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discontinue intervention/remediation programs that have been deemed ineffective based on students’ results.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Summer programming led by the district and a community partner for students identified as struggling in reading and math, based on MOY and EOY student achievement data, including benchmark assessments, MCAS performance, and performance on CFAs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● 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 the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth will receive training from the lead teachers in four to five agreed upon school-wide instructional practices, and will provide after-school 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. Identify and implement opportunities for acceleration and enrichment to challenge students in areas where they are proficient, including project-based learning and an application of learning strategies within increasingly complex contexts (e.g., science, social studies, and throughout community-based venues, including the New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford Historical Society, etc.).</li> <li>● Identify instructional best practices to address the areas in which students struggle. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Literacy coach provides job-embedded coaching and PD to teachers on data analysis, coordinated by the principal.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Coordinate the provision of specialized instructional supports that take place outside of the pre-K-5 classroom in alignment with students’ Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) to limit student absence during</li> </ul>	
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<p>core instruction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that principal provides growth-producing feedback to teachers on their use of data to inform instruction.</li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update for Key Strategy 3.3: Parker staff have developed a number of ongoing systems and processes for using a range of data to understand what students have learned, where they need support, and where they can be challenged to learn even more. Academic and non-academic data are analyzed and acted on daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly. The daily intervention time that was discussed earlier provides regular opportunity for teachers to provide interventions and extensions for small groups of students. In addition, Parker school targets some students for extra support before and after school, on weekends, and during the summer, to ensure that students get the support they need without missing core instructional learning time. Teachers and other staff share successful strategies with each other during collaborative work time, with additional ongoing feedback and support from the principal. In the coming years the school will continue to refine and sustain these practices.</b></p> <p><i>This strategy is informed by Local Stakeholder Group recommendation B-1.</i></p>	
<p><b>3.4 Monitor that TCT decisions result in differentiated instruction and additional learning time for all students, leading to improvement in student outcomes.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SILT meets weekly to review student data, track progress toward meeting the school’s goals, and make instructional adjustments as necessary.</li> <li>• TCTs make instructional adjustments after each formative assessment based on the results of the data.</li> <li>• TCTs reassess and regroup students based on most recent formative assessment data every six to eight weeks.</li> <li>• Principal, SILT, and literacy coach monitor data-driven decisions for impact by reviewing TCTs’ action plans and reflection protocols, through conversations and analysis with teachers, and by classroom observations.</li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update for Strategy 3.4: Parker staff have developed strong systems and habits for collaboratively reflecting on data in order to monitor the impact of the instructional decisions they make. At the school, grade, and teacher levels, Parker staff continually adjust their practice in response to their analysis of student outcomes. In the coming years the staff will continue to further refine and embed this practice.</b></p>	Principal, literacy coach

*This priority area is aligned with the New Bedford Accelerated Improvement Plan.*

### **Implementation Milestones**

➤ Parker educators will continue to refine the use of data to inform instruction and student supports, including looking at authentic student work and monitoring progress.
➤ 3.1 Teachers will continue the use of the data portfolios for progress monitoring, updating every six weeks.
➤ 3.2 Teacher teams will triangulate academic, attendance and behavioral data every six weeks in order to identify appropriate change to Tier I, II and III (will be referred to the building based support team (BBST) process) supports.
➤ 3.4 100% of students supported by BBST will meet the individual goals set for them by the team.

**Priority Area for Improvement 4: Ensure that all students succeed academically by establishing a climate that focuses on learning and engaging families as partners in student learning**

**Rationale**

*The Parker school is responsible for ensuring that all students are productive learners during the school day; therefore the school must establish a positive culture that focuses on student learning. Families are valued members of the school community whose collaboration is needed to support and accelerate student learning beyond the school day and at home. The school must increase family engagement in children's learning experiences by offering family-friendly activities and relationship-building focused on academics. These targeted activities and supports will lead to increased on-task student behavior in the classroom, cooperative problem-solving work with families on attendance and behavior issues, and reinforcement of academic content at home.*

**Related Emerging and Sustaining Practices for School Turnaround**

- A safe, orderly, and respectful environment for students and teachers

For challenges addressed by Priority Area #4, please see the April 9, 2014 Turnaround Plan at p. 24: <http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/eae/accountability/turnaround/level-5-schools/parker-final-plan-modified-bese.pdf>.

## Strategies to Achieve Priority Area 4

Key Strategy	Owner
<p><b>4.1 Establish a safe and respectful school climate so that all students can learn (Tier I Social/Emotional and Behavioral Supports).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate key priorities in the turnaround plan and schoolwide focus areas to students in a clear, student- and family-friendly way that ensures understanding of high expectations, academic goals, and how regular attendance and positive behavior can help everyone in the school reach those goals.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Build on the district’s “Where Are You Headed?” campaign to help students begin to think about college, career, and other future aspirations.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update: The Parker has developed a number of ways to communicate schoolwide priorities in a way that has enabled staff, students, and families to work together with a common purpose and toward common goals. While the district is no longer formally continuing the “Where Are You Headed” campaign, Parker continues to create opportunities for students to think about college, career, and future aspirations. In the coming years Parker will continue to communicate high expectations and work together to help all students set and achieve ambitious goals.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a consistent, evidence-based behavior management system and related protocols for handling student behavior issues to ensure a safe learning environment.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This will be a Tier I schoolwide approach developed with staff input, that will result in all Parker staff using common and consistent language and systems to help all students demonstrate on-task behavior during all academic classes.</li> <li>○ During August PD and ongoing throughout the year, establish the common understanding that teachers’ primary business in the classroom is ensuring that all students are fully engaged in their learning.</li> <li>○ Coach teachers to build a repertoire of strategies for ensuring that students remain engaged and on task in the classroom (e.g., classroom management, positive reinforcement, and providing opportunities to respond).</li> <li>○ Engage staff, families, and students in determining whether to implement a student dress code.</li> <li>○ Message monthly “core values” for students to motivate them to engage in their education and to set high expectations for all members of the school community.</li> <li>○ Hold Student of the Month assemblies to recognize students for exemplary academic growth, performance, and effective effort, and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Behavior intervention specialist</p>

<p>provide rewards centered on learning and enrichment.</p> <p><b>2017 Update: Parker staff have developed a number of systems, processes, and habits that have promoted a positive school-wide climate where students can focus on learning. All Parker staff use consistent language and practices to promote positive behavior and reinforce core value, which students and families have begun using. In the coming years the Parker staff will continue to refine and further strengthen the school’s positive climate in service of promoting strong student outcomes.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor programs and behavioral expectations for impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Establish a system for collecting, organizing, and acting on data on student behavior.</li> <li>○ Celebrate successes, and make mid-course corrections as necessary (see Priority Area 3 for academic alignment).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update: Parker has developed a number of systems and practices to review data related to student behavior in order to identify students who need additional support, and to ensure those supports address the core challenges that students may face. A number of rituals have been established to celebrate student growth, achievement, and success, contributing to a positive school climate where students strive to do their best and help others to the same. In the coming years this will continue to be an area of focus.</b></p> <p><i>This strategy is informed by Local Stakeholder Group recommendation B-5.</i></p>	
<p><b>4.2 Provide tiered supports to students demonstrating behaviors that prevent them and others from fully engaging in the classroom (Tier II and Tier III supports).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire a behavior intervention specialist to plan, coordinate and implement this work. <p>2017 Update: A behavior specialist has been hired and will continue to ensure quality coordination and implementation of this work.</p> </li> <li>• <b>Tier II:</b> Teachers, family members, and students work with the behavior intervention specialist to develop behavior plans or identify supplemental supports/interventions for identified students who have difficulty staying on task and/or are disruptive in the classroom. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Students identified as needing Tier II supports based on behavioral issues inside and outside the academic setting.</li> <li>○ Teachers, family members, and the behavior intervention specialist review both academic and behavioral data to determine the root cause of misbehavior (see Strategy 4.3).</li> <li>○ Teachers, family members, and behavior intervention specialist work with students to develop plans to raise students’ academic</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Principal, behavior intervention specialist</p>

<p>achievement and address behavioral issues at school and at home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Teachers, family members, and behavior intervention specialist monitor plans for impact and adjust as necessary.</li> <li>○ Teachers collaborate with behavior intervention specialist regularly to discuss roadblocks and receive supports in enacting plans.</li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update: Parker staff have developed the systems and structures identified above, and have developed capacity to identify and support students who need support focusing on academics. The school has learned how to identify specific ways to address the needs of students based on where they are, and adjust those supports based on constant, ongoing evaluation of students’ needs. School-based support teams have emerged as an especially powerful lever for doing this work. In future years Parker staff will continue to refine these processes and further embed them in schoolwide practice.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>Tier III:</u> Teachers, students, and families collaborate with Family Resource Center staff and behavioral intervention specialist to identify community resources to assist families in need of services and support. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Students identified as needing more intensive and targeted supports/interventions based on the results of previous Tier II interventions and supports.</li> <li>○ Teachers, family members, Family Resource Center staff, and behavior intervention specialist review both academic and behavioral data to determine the root cause of off-task behavior with a plan to increase focused learning time and student outcomes.</li> <li>○ Teachers, family members, Family Resource Center staff, and behavior intervention specialist monitor behavior plans for impact on learning and adjust as necessary.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update: Parker has developed the systems and structures described above to identify families in need of support and to connect them with appropriate community partners. In future years Parker staff will continue to monitor and refine these processes and further embed them in schoolwide practices.</b></p> <p><i>This strategy is informed by Local Stakeholder Group recommendation B-5.</i></p>	
<p><b>4.3 Establish meaningful communication and relationship-building between teachers and families to reinforce and support academic goals and student success.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide PD to teachers on cultural competencies before the beginning of the school year to engage with all family members, including those who are not native English speakers.</li> </ul> <p>2017 Update: Parker staff have engaged in ongoing conversations and PD to learn about the students and families they are serving at the</p>	<p>Principal, Family Resource Center manager</p>

<p>school, in order to build meaningful relationships and provide academic and non-academic supports that are relevant to their lives. In the coming years this will continue to be a priority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clarify and monitor expectations for teachers’ communication with families. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Parker staff reach out to families one to three times over the summer to maintain relationships and progress on goals between school years.</li> <li>○ Core pre-K-5 teachers reach out to the families of all their students at least once a month during the school year to discuss students’ academic progress.</li> <li>○ Core pre-K-5 teachers hold at least one parent-teacher conference with all their students’ families during the school year.</li> <li>○ Supported by Family Engagement Center Coordinator, encourage teachers to conduct visits with families who are receptive to engaging with teachers outside the school setting.</li> <li>○ All educators record written and oral communication with families in a log.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update: Parker staff have developed a number of systems and practices to engage families as partners in their child’s education, including frequent communication about student goals and celebrations of their progress. In the coming years this will continue to be a priority for the school.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reinvigorate the school-site council by leveraging it as an opportunity for families to provide input, feedback, and support to turnaround efforts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ensure supports are available so that families who do not speak English can fully participate.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>2017 Update: Parker school has developed a number of ways to engage families as volunteers in and out of the school, providing meaningful opportunities to contribute to the school’s success. The strategic leadership of the Family Engagement Center Coordinator has been critical to this work, particularly in engaging families who speak languages other than English. In the coming years, Parker will continue to refine and expand the role of families as partners in the school’s turnaround.</b></p> <p><i>This strategy is informed by Local Stakeholder Group recommendation C-1, D-1, D-3, and D-4.</i></p>	
<p><b>4.4 Build parent capacity to support academic goals and school success.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Communicate key priorities in the turnaround plan and schoolwide focus areas to families in a clear, family-friendly way. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Educate families on grade-level expectations for rigor for their</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Family Resource Center manager</p>

students in reading and math, and what they can do at home to support those goals.

- Educate families on school behavioral expectations and protocols and what they can do at home to support those expectations.
- Provide translation into all languages spoken at home in all family communications.

**2017 Update: Parker staff have developed a number of strategies for communicating with families about academic and non-academic goals for students at the school, and for engaging families as partners in reaching those goals, regardless of the language spoken at home. In the coming years this will continue to be a priority.**

- Establish a Family Resource Center to coordinate family and community engagement activities that are linked directly to student learning.
  - Hire a coordinator for the Resource Center to help families access resources through community agencies to provide extensive services and supports, including language and workforce supports.
  - Investigate successful Parent Academy models to offer parent support and programming.

**2017 Update: The Family Resource Center and its Coordinator have been critical to the progress of the Parker school by developing strategic partnerships with community agencies and systems by which to identify families who need these services the most. In the coming years the school will continue to refine and expand work in this area.**

- Through the Family Resource Center:
  - Analyze school-level data from past events to identify successful strategies for engaging families.
  - Offer schoolwide evening events that combine literacy and math development with engaging activities for children and families to learn together.
  - Hold schoolwide evening events and workshops to help all families, with a focus on non-native English speakers, navigate the school system, understand how to interpret grades, MCAS results and other data shared with students, and make the link between their child's elementary school experience and their goal to be prepared for college and careers.

**2017 Update: The family events coordinated by the Family Resource Center have helped families and school personnel to work together to support student success and to develop trusting relationships with each other that enhance the work of the school. In the coming years this will continue to be a priority.**

- Partner with community-based agencies or organizations to provide

wraparound services and other supports (e.g., home visits, adult workforce development, wraparound referrals, family literacy development, mentoring, law enforcement services if needed, etc.) that enhance students' learning and ensure that families are partners in their children's progress toward higher achievement.

- The Family Resource Center coordinator will lead the development of a schoolwide plan for providing or referring students to resources that provide necessary wraparound services; this plan will be developed in conjunction with ongoing districtwide efforts.
- The secretaries of health and human services, of labor and workforce development, and of public safety will coordinate with the secretary of education and the Commissioner about the implementation of the turnaround plan as appropriate and will, subject to appropriation, reasonably support the implementation consistent with the requirements of state and federal law.

**2017 Update: As mentioned above, the Family Resource Center Coordinator has been critical to the progress of the Parker school by developing strategic partnerships with community agencies that provide needed supports for targeted students and families that contribute to improved outcomes at school. The school continues to refine systems and processes for identifying, supporting, and monitoring students in need of wraparound supports, and will continue to focus on this as a priority.**

- 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, Pre-K 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.

**2017 Update: The school has implemented these strategies above and has remained focused and dedicated to providing learning opportunities that engage families as partners. The school has developed different levels and types of opportunities that address a range of assets and needs identified by families, and has developed systems and processes to ensure that appropriate opportunities are provided to families.**

*This strategy is informed by Local Stakeholder Group recommendation C-1, D-1, D-3, and D-4.*

*This priority area is aligned with the New Bedford Accelerated Improvement Plan.*

**Implementation Milestones**

➤ 4.1 All teachers will have individual family engagement action plans by September to be monitored monthly by the Family Resource Center Manager.
➤ Each month, every teacher will conduct at least one family engagement activity for his or her class (could be in-school, out-of-school, or via assignments that promote family engagement).
➤ At least once a trimester, all teachers will confer with each child’s family about the child’s progress toward attaining his or her goals (in grades 3-5 this will include each student’s six week goals).
➤ 4.2 As part of the district’s Nellie Mae Foundation Community Engagement grant, the Family Resource Center Manager will work with the technical assistance team from Great Schools Partnership to develop an action plan for engagement of families.
➤ 4.3 By June 2017, the number of students who are tardy will decrease by 50%.

<b>Statutory requirements</b>	<b>Related Priority Area(s)</b>
Achievement gaps for limited English-proficient, students with disabilities and low-income students	All Priority Areas
Alternative English language learning programs for limited English proficient students	Priority Area 1
Social service and health needs of students at the school and their families, to help students arrive and remain at school ready to learn; may include mental health and substance abuse screening	Priority Area 4
Improved or expanded child welfare services and, as appropriate, law enforcement services in the school community, in order to promote a safe and secure learning environment	Priority Area 4
Improved workforce development services provided to students at the school and their families, to provide students and families with meaningful employment skills and opportunities	Priority Area 4
Coordination among secretaries of health and human services, of labor and workforce development, of public safety and the secretary of education to support the implementation of the plan.	Priority Area 4
A financial plan for the school, including any additional funds to be provided by the district, commonwealth, federal government or other sources	Appendix C
Formation of a Parent Advisory Committee focused on English language learners (if applicable)	Priority Area 1
Strong leadership in schools, including a new or current principal with a track record of success	Priority Areas 1, 2, & 3
Redesigned school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration	Priority Area 2

### **Turnaround Plan Authorization**

The renewed turnaround plan is authorized for a period of three years. The Superintendent may develop and/or revise additional components of the plan, which must be approved by the Commissioner.

## **Guidance on Changes in Policy and Strategies to Consider under State Law**

The Superintendent will use the proposed changes in policies and strategies available to Level 5 schools to implement the school's Turnaround Plan as marked below.

### **Curriculum and Instruction**

- ✓ **Expand, alter, or replace curriculum:** The Commissioner may expand, alter, or replace the curriculum and program offerings of the school, including the implementation of research based early literacy programs, early interventions for struggling readers and the teaching of advanced placement courses or other rigorous nationally or internationally recognized courses, if the school does not already have such programs or courses.
- ✓ **Expand use of time:** The Commissioner may expand the school day or school year or both of the school.
- ✓ **Add kindergarten or pre-kindergarten:** The Commissioner may add pre-kindergarten and full day kindergarten classes in an elementary school, if the school does not have such classes.

### **Financial and Asset Management**

- ✓ **Reallocate school budget:** The Commissioner may reallocate the uses of the existing budget of the school.
- ✓ **Reallocate district budget:** The Commissioner may provide additional funds to the school from the district's budget, if the school does not receive funding from the district at least equal to the average per-pupil funding received for students of the same classification and grade level in the district.

### **Human Resources**

- ✓ **Attract and retain leaders and teachers:** The Commissioner may provide funds, subject to appropriation, to increase the salary of an administrator or teacher in the school, to attract or retain highly qualified administrators or teachers or to reward administrators or teachers who work in chronically underperforming schools that achieve the annual goals set forth in the turnaround plan.
- ✓ **Make staffing changes:** The Commissioner may, following consultation with applicable local unions, require the principal and all administrators, teachers, and staff to reapply for their positions in the school.
- ✓ **Implement a new system of evaluation and/or performance compensation:** The Commissioner may establish steps to assure a continuum of high expertise teachers by aligning the following processes with a common core of professional knowledge and skill: hiring, induction, teacher evaluation, PD, teacher advancement, school culture, and organizational structure.
- ✓ **Leadership development:** The Commissioner may establish a plan for PD for administrators at the school, with an emphasis on strategies that develop leadership skills and use the principles of distributive leadership.

### **PD and Collaboration**

- ✓ **Embedded PD:** The Commissioner may include a provision of job embedded PD for teachers at the school, with an emphasis on strategies that involve teacher input and feedback.
- ✓ **Expanded teacher planning time:** The Commissioner may provide increased opportunities for teacher planning time and collaboration focused on improving student instruction.

## **Leadership and Governance**

- ✓ **Change contract or collective bargaining agreements:** The Commissioner may limit, suspend or change one or more provisions of any contract or collective bargaining agreement, as the contract or agreement applies to the school; provided that the Commissioner shall not reduce the compensation of an administrator, teacher, or staff member unless the hours of the person are proportionately reduced; and provided that the Commissioner may require the school committee and any applicable unions to bargain in good faith for 30 days before exercising authority pursuant to this clause.
- ✓ **Change district policies:** The Commissioner may limit, suspend, or change one or more school district policies or practices, as such policies or practices relate to the school.

## **Additional Strategies**

- ✓ **Study best practices:** The Commissioner may develop a strategy to search for and study best practices in areas of demonstrated underperformance in the school.
- ✓ **Address mobility and transiency:** The Commissioner may establish strategies to address mobility and transience among the student population of the school.
- ✓ **Additional strategies:** The Commissioner may include additional components based on the reasons why the school was designated as chronically underperforming and the recommendations of the local stakeholder group.

## **Appendix A: Working Conditions and Compensation for Level 5 Schools**

*Following are the terms for working conditions and compensation specific to the John Avery Parker Elementary School, a Level 5 school in the district. The Commissioner and Superintendent Durkin reserve the right to make additional changes to the collective bargaining agreement as needed. Nothing contained in the turnaround plan or the collective bargaining agreement shall be construed to limit the rights of the Commissioner as they are provided for under G.L. c.69, §J.*

### **TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR EMPLOYEES AT THE JOHN AVERY PARKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Pursuant to G.L. c. 69, §1J, the Commissioner must create a turnaround plan intended to maximize the rapid improvement of the academic achievement of students in the John Avery Parker Elementary School, hereinafter referred to as “the school.” The Commissioner will take all appropriate steps necessary to support the goals of the turnaround plan. Among other things, the Commissioner may:

- (1) expand, alter or replace the curriculum and program offerings of the school, including the implementation of research-based early literacy programs, early interventions for struggling readers and the teaching of advanced placement courses or other rigorous nationally or internationally recognized courses, if the school does not already have such programs or courses;
- (2) reallocate the uses of the existing budget of the school;
- (3) provide additional funds to the school from the budget of the district, if the school does not already receive funding from the district at least equal to the average per-pupil funding received for students of the same classification and grade level in the district;
- (4) provide funds, subject to appropriation, to increase the salary of an administrator, or teachers in the school, in order to attract or retain highly-qualified administrators or teachers or to reward administrators or teachers who work in chronically underperforming schools that achieve the annual goals set forth in the turnaround plan;
- (5) expand the school day or school year or both of the school;
- (6) for an elementary school, add pre-kindergarten and full-day kindergarten classes, if the school does not already have such classes;
- (7) limit, suspend, or change 1 or more provisions of any contract or collective bargaining agreement, as the contract or agreement applies to the school; provided, however, that the commissioner shall not reduce the compensation of an administrator, teacher or staff member unless the hours of the person are proportionately reduced; and provided further, that the commissioner may require the school committee and any applicable unions to bargain in good faith for 30 days before exercising authority pursuant to this clause;
- (8) following consultation with applicable local unions, require the principal and all administrators, teachers and staff to reapply for their positions in the school, with full discretion vested in the Superintendent regarding her consideration of and decisions on rehiring based on the reapplications;
- (9) limit, suspend or change 1 or more school district policies or practices, as such policies or practices relate to the school;

- (10) include a provision of job-embedded PD for teachers at the school, with an emphasis on strategies that involve teacher input and feedback;
- (11) provide for increased opportunities for teacher planning time and collaboration focused on improving student instruction;
- (12) establish a plan for PD for administrators at the school, with an emphasis on strategies that develop leadership skills and use the principles of distributive leadership; and
- (13) establish steps to assure a continuum of high expertise teachers by aligning the following processes with the common core of professional knowledge and skill: hiring, induction, teacher evaluation, PD, teacher advancement, school culture and organizational structure.

The terms outlined below are necessary for the successful implementation of the turnaround plan and reflect mandatory changes to the school's policies, agreements, work rules, and any practices or policies. These terms will take effect July 1, 2014. The Commissioner reserves the right to make additional changes to collective bargaining agreements as needed. Nothing contained in the turnaround plan or the collective bargaining agreements shall be construed to limit the rights of the Commissioner as they are provided for under G.L. c.69, §1J.

Central to the School Turnaround Plan is the requirement that the John Avery Parker Elementary School make effective use of its resources to maximize student achievement. In particular, the John Avery Parker Elementary School Turnaround Plan requires Superintendent Durkin to develop and use a new performance-based compensation system, which will contain a career path and which compensates employees based on individual effectiveness, professional growth, and student academic growth. The compensation plan must be affordable and sustainable and may serve as a model for the district to consider in setting future compensation policies.

Part I, below, sets out working conditions for all staff at the school.

Part II, below, sets out the performance-based compensation system.

These terms shall supersede any contrary provision of the district's collective bargaining agreements or any pre-existing practice or policy. The terms reflect mandatory changes to the district's policies, agreements, work rules and any practices or policies, and are implemented pursuant to G.L. c. 69, § 1J.

## **I. WORKING CONDITIONS**

To implement the John Avery Parker Elementary School Turnaround Plan, Commissioner Chester selected Superintendent Pia Durkin as the Commissioner's designee (hereinafter referred to as Superintendent Durkin) to implement the turnaround plan for the school. Superintendent Durkin shall have full managerial and operational authority for the school. Superintendent Durkin shall develop, and the Commissioner shall approve, an annual operational plan which outlines working conditions for staff working at the school.

Superintendent Durkin retains final authority over school-based decision-making and her determination shall be final.

## **Conditions Necessary for Superintendent Durkin to Succeed**

Superintendent Durkin will exercise key autonomies derived from those articulated in the Commissioner's school turnaround plan. Below are the conditions and autonomies that are necessary for the successful transformation of the John Avery Parker School, a low-performing school:

### **Student Discipline**

Superintendent Durkin shall have the discretion to establish the code of conduct for students and establish procedures and standards for the discipline of students in the school.

### **Staffing**

#### ***Collective Bargaining Agreements:***

- All staff members at the school will continue to be represented by their respective collective bargaining units. However, certain terms of the collective bargaining agreements in effect across the district will not apply at the school managed by Superintendent Durkin. Also, prior Level 4 agreements and/or decisions of the John Avery Parker Elementary School Joint Resolution Committee (JRC) will not apply beyond June 30, 2014. John Avery Parker Elementary School employees will also accrue seniority while employed at the school. Superintendent Durkin will adopt the new compensation strategy to be effective July 1, 2014 for teachers. (See Part II).
- Grievance Procedure: Notwithstanding any provision in a collective bargaining agreement, the Grievance Process for employees at the John Avery Parker Elementary School shall be as follows:

A grievance is defined as an allegation of a violation of an applicable provision of the parties' collective bargaining agreement. The following are excluded from the definition of grievance and from this grievance procedure:

- Suspension of professional employees
  - Discharge of professional employees
  - Non-renewal of professional employees
- A. The grievant may be represented by his/her union representative at any level of the dispute resolution process.
- B. Grievance Process:
1. Level 1 Grievance: The employee may submit a grievance to the Principal in writing within ten (10) work days of the occurrence of the event giving rise to the grievance. The grievance must include a description of the alleged violation, identify the specific violation of the parties' agreement alleged to have been violated, and state the desired resolution.
  2. Level 1 Response: Within ten (10) work days of the receipt of the grievance, the Principal/designee will schedule a meeting with the grievant to discuss the

grievance. Within five (5) work days of the meeting, the Principal/designee will issue a decision to the NBEA.

3. Level 2 Grievance: If the grievant is not satisfied with the Principal's/designee's response at Level 1, the grievant may submit the grievance to the Commissioner's designee, Superintendent Pia Durkin, in writing within five (5) work days of receiving the Level 1 response. The grievant's submission to the Commissioner's designee shall include the Level 1 Grievance and the Level 1 Grievance Response and an explanation with the reasons why the grievant does not find the Level 1 Response satisfactory.
4. Level 2 Response: Within fifteen (15) work days of the receipt of the grievance, the Commissioner's designee will schedule a meeting with the grievant to discuss the grievance. Within five (5) work days after the meeting, the Commissioner's designee will issue a decision to the NBEA for professional employees or to the applicable union, if the employee is not represented by the NBEA.
5. Level 3 Grievance: If the grievant is not satisfied with decision of the Commissioner's designee, she/he may submit the grievance in writing to the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts within five (5) work days of receipt of the Level 2 Response. The employee's submission to the Commissioner must include the following information:
  - Name of grievant;
  - For employees represented by the NBEA, New Bedford Educators Association, 160 William St. New Bedford Ma, 02740. For employees represented by another union, the name and address of the applicable union.
  - School District where grievant is employed;
  - Level 1 grievance;
  - Level 1 decision;
  - Level 2 grievance;
  - Level 2 decision; and
  - An explanation with the reasons why the Level 2 decision was not satisfactory to the Grievant.
6. Level 3 Decision: The Commissioner's designee's Level 2 response will be entitled to substantial deference during the Commissioner's review of the Level 3 grievance. The Commissioner's decision shall be final. The Level 3 decision shall be sent to the NBEA if the grievant is represented by the NBEA. If the

employee is represented by another union, the Commissioner's decision will be sent to the applicable union.

7. General Provisions:

- A. The time periods are considered maximum periods. Failure of the grievant to advance his/her grievance to the next level within the time period shall be deemed to be acceptance of the grievance answer/decision at the prior Level.
- B. The Commissioner's designee has the authority to suspend or amend the time periods for any one or more grievances in writing by agreement with the union.

***Personnel:***

- Superintendent Durkin has the sole discretion to select the staff for any and all positions at the school, including administrators, teachers, maintenance staff, nurses, security guards, et al. There is to be no requirement for Superintendent Durkin to employ any specific individuals in the school.
- Superintendent Durkin may select staff for union-represented positions without regard to posting requirements, transfer provisions, recall provisions, and seniority provisions in an applicable collective bargaining agreement and without regard to any applicable and past practices between the school committee and union.
- Superintendent Durkin may formulate job descriptions, duties, and responsibilities for any and all positions in the school.
- Staff in the existing school (and the district) shall not have attachment rights to any position and Superintendent Durkin may unilaterally move any employee at the school to another position provided that for positions requiring a license or certification that the employee is properly licensed and certified.
- Superintendent Durkin may choose to terminate or non-renew any union or non-union employee pursuant to federal and state laws and municipal ordinances.
- In dismissing an employee as a result of misconduct, Superintendent Durkin shall not be bound by any provision in an applicable collective bargaining agreement, practices or procedures between the school district and any collective bargaining unit. Superintendent Durkin shall issue discipline, up to and including termination, to employees in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and municipal ordinances.
- The school and its employees are exempt from the layoff and recall provisions of any applicable collective bargaining agreement and any associated practices.
- Notwithstanding any provision in an applicable collective bargaining agreement or practice to the contrary, administrators may without limitation have discussions with educators about professional practice, student needs, data analysis, curriculum, and other topics about or related to improving instruction and educational outcomes for students.

## **Professional Obligations**

Teachers and other professional staff shall devote whatever time is required to achieve and maintain high quality education at the John Avery Parker Elementary School. For example, unless formally excused, teachers and other professional staff shall participate in all regular school functions during or outside of the normal school day, including faculty meetings, parent conferences, department meetings, curriculum meetings, promotional exercises, and other similar activities.

Notwithstanding any provision of an applicable collective bargaining agreement or practice to the contrary, and subject only to the requirements of any applicable state or federal law, all employees assigned to work at the John Avery Parker Elementary School shall request and receive advance approval from the Principal/designee whenever possible for each personal day requested. Employees will inform the Principal/designee as soon as practicable of the employee's need to use a sick day(s) prior to taking the day.

## **Expectations for Staff Members**

- The term of employment for teachers will be July 1 through June 30, and will include the following:
  - Up to and including 18 days of PD, 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.
  - Superintendent Durkin and Chief Academic Officer will develop the schedule for students and for employees and shall determine the content for PD and planning days.
  - Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving: On the Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving, professional employees shall remain in their assignments fifteen (15) minutes beyond the actual dismissal time of students.
  - Final Day of Classes in the Work Year: The final day of classes will be a full work day for professional employees but a half-day for students with dismissal time for students being the same as the day before Thanksgiving.
- The John Avery Parker Elementary School will use the state's Educator Evaluation Framework, as determined by Superintendent Durkin.
- Except as noted below, the standard workday for professional employees represented by the NBEA at the school will be 8 hours. Professional employees shall arrive at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to the start of the student day and may be required to supervise students as students arrive. Professional employees may be assigned duties, including duties before and/or after school, to support the smooth operation of the John Avery

Parker Elementary School. The Commissioner's designee shall establish the hours for the work day.

Additional working conditions for specific staff are as follows:

- *Grade-level Teachers* at the Parker School shall receive up to 175 minutes of preparation time per five-day week and 90 minutes of common planning time per five-day week. Specialists will not be entitled to common planning time but may be assigned to participate in some common planning time from time to time at the discretion of the Principal. Common planning time activities may include but are not limited to planning lessons, analyzing student data, strategizing effective instructional practices, working with colleagues, and coaching. Common planning time will not be used for delivery of student services, supervising students, or performing non-instructional related administrative tasks.
- The schedule will be created in such a way that teachers will have a duty-free lunch lasting approximately 30 minutes each full work day.
- *Teacher leaders:* At least two teacher-leaders will be identified: one in grades K-2 and one in grades 3-5. Applicants for the position may apply and applications will be reviewed by Superintendent Durkin, the Chief Academic Officer, and/or the Principal. Superintendent Durkin shall determine the job duties, responsibilities, and qualifications for such teacher leader positions which are expected to include: (1) coaching of peers on providing rigorous instruction and (2) opening up the teacher leader's classroom to peers so teachers can view model lessons and use that observational learning to adjust their own practice accordingly in their own classrooms. Superintendent Durkin shall establish the salary or stipend for such teacher leader positions and shall appoint qualified individuals to such positions whom she may remove in her sole discretion.
- Student support services personnel such as guidance counselors, social workers, nurses, behaviorists, SAC, therapist, OT, and PT may be assigned staggered start and end times to their work days provided the employee's starting time is within one hour of the regular start time and the time is continuous.
- *After School Meetings and Activities:*
  - In addition to meetings pursuant to Section E.1 of Article 12 of the NBEA Unit A collective bargaining agreement, professional employees in the school will be required to attend up to and including three (3) meetings per month. Meetings will begin within a reasonable amount of time following the end of the student day (generally and approximately ten (10) minutes after the end of the student dismissal) and will last no longer than seventy-five (75) minutes. Content of the meetings will be determined by Superintendent Durkin, the Chief Academic Officer, the Principal, and/or Teacher Leader with approval of Principal and may include but are not limited to PD activities, common planning, grade-level meetings or activities, and cross grade-level meetings. New personnel in their first full year of employment in the John Avery Parker Elementary school may be required to attend additional meetings.
  - Employees at the John Avery Parker Elementary School may be required to attend four (4) evening parent-teacher conferences and one (1) open house

each school year, and up to and including four (4) evenings each year for the school. Events may include but are not limited to plays, shows, and recreation events for students. Evening meetings and events shall not last more than two (2) hours and shall end no later than 9:00 p.m. During all evening meetings and events there will be an administrator, administrator's designee, or central office staff member present for the duration of the evening meetings.

During a typical Monday-Friday week, all staff members are expected to perform additional duties that support the smooth operation of the school before the school day, during the school day, and after the school day. Additional responsibilities may include but are not limited to: coverage of homeroom periods; substitute coverage of classes and duties of others who are absent from school; coverage of school and afterschool activities (e.g., lunch periods, recess, etc.).

Superintendent Durkin, Chief Academic Officer, and/or Principal may assign NBEA members to be available to support, assist, and communicate with students and parents in the Family Resource Center.

- NBEA members are expected to be involved in a variety of educational and administrative activities that are necessary to fulfill the mission of the school. These activities may include, but are not limited to the following:
  - Conducting home visits: Professional employees will be offered training before commencing home visits. When necessary, home visits may be conducted at another mutually agreed upon location. Home visits by professional employees shall take place outside the school day and with notice to the principal. Professional employees may schedule their home visits with another educator if they choose. If an educator is assigned to participate in a home visit(s) the educator shall be paired with another educator if the educator so requests;
  - Conducting regular contact with families of students with chronic behavior issues, poor attendance and/or other factors that are affecting student' learning will be made to discuss academic and social progress of these students weekly;
  - Participating in four family conference evenings during the school year;
  - Preparing of individual progress reports and report cards;
  - Leading student extracurricular activities;
  - Maintaining a subject-area bulletin board;
  - Working regularly with school administrators to improve one's instructional practices;
  - Checking homework daily;
  - Attending student-related meetings; and

- Serving as an advisor to a small cohort of students
- Notice of Retirement: A teacher shall provide notice pursuant to Article 7 of the NBEA contract that includes an irrevocable resignation and must be made to the Superintendent of Schools on or before February 1<sup>st</sup> with payment being made on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> of September of the same calendar year.

## **II. PROFESSIONAL COMPENSATION SYSTEM**

As part of the Turnaround Plan, Superintendent Durkin and the Parker school leaders will continue to utilize the revised compensation system with the following components.

For information about the compensation system in prior school years, please see the Parker Revisions to the Compensation Section of Appendix A (April 2017):

<http://www.mass.gov/edu/government/departments-and-boards/ese/programs/accountability/support-for-level-3-4-and-5-districts-and-schools/school-and-district-turnaround/level-5-schools/current-level-5-schools/john-avery-parker-elementary-school-new-bedford.html>

Basic principles of the plan:

Provides competitive compensation for teachers

Rewards teachers for excellent performance and effectiveness

Provides a career path for teachers to grow professionally without leaving the classroom

Provides opportunities to reward teachers for their contributions to student growth

The new professional compensation system will be implemented for professional employees in the John Avery Parker Elementary School and will include a teacher career ladder containing five tiers—Novice, Developing, Career, Advanced, and Master—that will compensate teachers commensurate with their development and impact on students. It is envisioned that student outcomes will improve by creating a professional compensation system that will attract new high-potential teachers and retain our best performers and leaders.

The Commissioner’s designee for the John Avery Parker Elementary School may include student performance measures in the evaluation of teacher s’ performance and determination of teachers’ compensation.

### **CAREER LADDER**

#### **Definitions:**

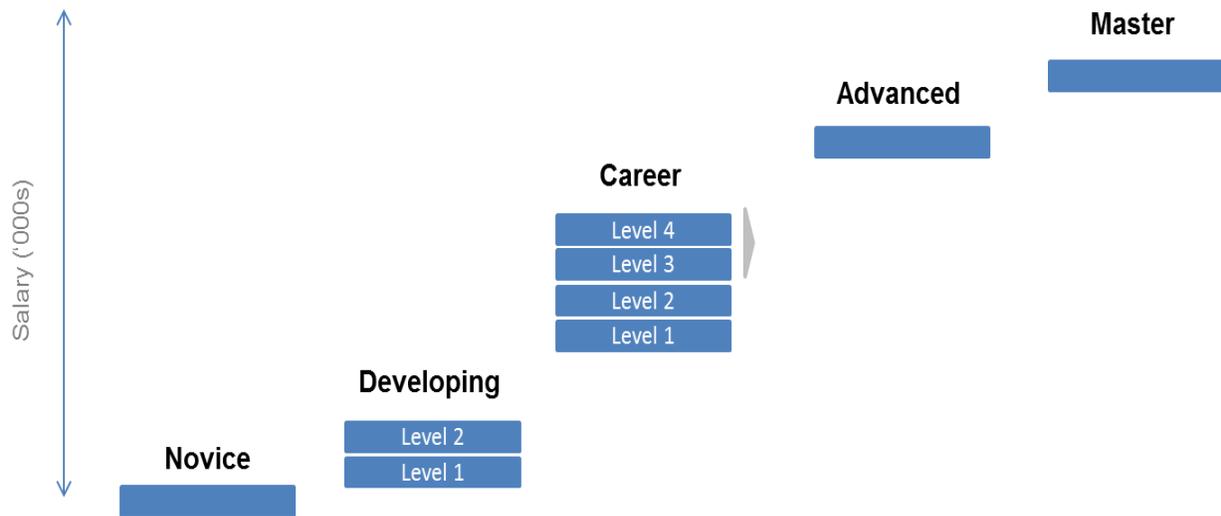
**Novice** teachers are typically first-year teachers entering teaching directly from college.

**Developing** teachers are early career educators, typically with one to two years of experience. There are two levels within the Developing tier.

**Career** teachers have been recognized as excellent educators. Career teachers serve as role models to less-experienced educators, and proactively drive their own professional growth.

**Advanced** teachers are outstanding educators who serve as schoolwide models of excellence. Advanced teachers have at least five years of experience and possess deep expertise in their craft.

**Master** teachers are exceptional educators who serve as schoolwide and districtwide models of excellence. Master teachers have at least five years of experience, possess deep expertise in their craft, and are capable of elevating the practice of already-gifted educators. Master teachers will assume additional roles and responsibilities to support the school’s and district’s improvement.



**Transition to the Career Ladder**

Effective July 1, 2014, each New Bedford Public Schools teacher assigned to the John Avery Parker Elementary School were placed on one of the Levels based on such teacher’s performance as determined by the Commissioner’s designee. Teachers newly hired and assigned to the John Avery Parker Elementary School will be placed on one of the Levels as determined by the Commissioner’s designee:

**Career Ladder 2017-2018 Salaries**

Novice	\$52,000
Developing Level I	\$55,000
Developing Level II	\$59,000
Career Level I	\$63,000
Career Level II	\$66,500

Career Level III	\$70,000
Career Level IV	\$75,000
Career Level IV	* \$75,000+

The annual base salary for an “Advanced” teacher will be \$81,500. A teacher designated as an Advanced teacher, whose total compensation exceeds \$81,500, will receive an additional \$1,500.

The annual base salary for a “Master” teacher will be \$89,000. Teachers selected for this position will receive a stipend differential based on their annual base salary in order to reach \$89,000. These stipend compensation amounts shall be included in base pay, or otherwise considered as part of the teacher’s annualized salary, for retirement purposes.

The salary schedule will continue to be reviewed and may be adjusted periodically by the Commissioner’s designee to reflect market conditions.

**Advancement on the Career Ladder**

A Novice teacher shall advance to Developing I and a Developing I teacher shall advance to Developing II annually provided that the teacher does not receive an end-of year overall evaluation rating of “unsatisfactory” and provided that such teacher’s employment is renewed.

A Developing II teacher shall advance to Career I and all Career level teachers shall advance a level annually provided that an end-of-year overall evaluation rating of “proficient” or “exemplary” is received, with “proficient” or better ratings on all four standards. It is expected that educator evaluation ratings and student performance data will be major components of the teacher’s evaluation. A teacher with an end-of-year overall rating of “proficient” who has achieved less than “proficient” ratings in the third and fourth standards may still advance to the next level with the recommendation of the school principal and the approval of the Commissioner’s designee.

A teacher may advance on the salary scale more rapidly than described at the discretion of the Commissioner’s designee.

Novice, Developing, Career, and Advanced teachers who continue in employment at the John Avery Parker Elementary School shall not have their salary reduced based on their performance evaluation.

Consistent with the School Turnaround Plan, based on past experience and performance, a newly-hired teacher may be placed above the Novice level at the discretion of the Commissioner’s designee.

The categories of Advanced and Master teachers will be established effective July 1, 2014. The roles, expectations, and selection criteria for Advanced and Master teachers will be determined by the Commissioner’s designee.

A teacher who has attained the status of Career III or a higher level and received “proficient” or “exemplary” overall end-of-year ratings the previous two years can apply to become an

Advanced teacher through a cumulative career portfolio, including demonstrated success in attaining specific student growth benchmarks as determined by the Commissioner's designee.

A teacher who has attained the status of Career III or a higher level and received "exemplary" overall end-of-year ratings the previous two years can apply to become a Master teacher through a cumulative career portfolio with demonstrated success in attaining specific student growth benchmarks as determined by the Commissioner's designee. The portfolio may include 1) student growth data over time; 2) endorsements from peers, parents, students, and administrators; 3) and evidence of effective instruction.

In addition to teacher advancement as outlined above, the Commissioner's designee may provide additional compensation to a bargaining unit member if she determines that such payment is necessary to better serve the needs of the students. Such compensation may include payment to teachers who possess additional certifications not required by their current positions, and/or for performing additional duties, etc.

### **III. Summary Regarding Bargaining Activity**

On January 29, 2014, Commissioner Chester sent letters to the New Bedford School Committee and several unions representing employees who work at the Parker School notifying them that the turnaround plan for the Parker School would require changes to the collective bargaining agreements, and requiring them to bargain with respect to these changes.

An ESE representative met in Executive Session with the Superintendent and the School Committee to review the contents of the working conditions changes and the parameters for the compensation plan.

ESE provided the required changes to working conditions at the Parker School to the Superintendent. The district scheduled sessions with the teachers union. The New Bedford Superintendent and key staff members assisted the school department's labor attorney during the negotiations. There were several preparatory meetings and discussions with the Superintendent, the labor attorney, an ESE representative, and school department personnel.

#### New Bedford Teachers Association

Meetings were held with representatives of the NBEA and the Massachusetts Teachers Association on February 24, 27, and 28, 2014, pursuant to the Commissioner's directive. The NBEA represents both the teachers and the administrators in the district. The bargaining sessions were attended by the Superintendent as well as an ESE representative. The Superintendent provided the NBEA with a Working Conditions Summary Document for the Parker School that outlined various changes to terms and conditions of employment and set forth a model compensation plan which would serve as a basis for compensation changes in the school. The Superintendent and the labor attorney explained the intended changes at the school and answered questions posed by the NBEA and the MTA. The NBEA made counterproposals to the changes. Some agreements were reached on language changes which have been incorporated into the plan. Ultimately, no agreement was reached on the totality of the required changes, including teacher compensation.

### Other Unions

The district's Human Resources Director expects to conclude meetings with the two other employee unions by April 11, 2014. The American Federation of Teachers union represents the six paraprofessionals and The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) represents two custodians and one secretary. The Human Resources Director does not anticipate any issues since the majority of the working conditions changes apply mostly to teachers in the Parker School.

## **Appendix B. Measurable Annual Goals**

This section will be updated in the fall of 2017 when statewide assessment and metrics are reported.

## **Appendix C. Financial Plan for the School**

### **John Avery Parker Elementary School Financial Plan**

The Commissioner and the Superintendent are fully committed to the most effective use of the Parker school's resources in order to achieve the rapid, dramatic improvement of the school. The effective use of resources to maximize student achievement is the principle on which all of the school's strategies will be based. All resources allocated to the Parker school – including time, funds, human capital, operational supports and other resources – will be aligned in support of student learning.

Given that salaries and employee benefits are the largest and most significant portion of a school's budget, the Commissioner and the Superintendent will ensure that those investments are allocated in a manner most likely to promote increased student learning. In addition, the Commissioner and the Superintendent will ensure the provision of sufficient time for student instruction and staff development, and that the use of that time maximizes student achievement. At the same time, they will curtail expenditures that do not demonstrate a positive relationship to student learning.

#### Projected Funding Available for Parker Elementary School in Fiscal Year 2017-2018

Pursuant to the Achievement Gap Act, a district is required to provide funding to a Level 5 school that is at least equal to the average per-pupil funds received by other schools in the district for students of the same classification and grade level.<sup>1</sup> The Act also authorizes the Commissioner to reallocate the use of those funds within a Level 5 school. If the Commissioner determines that a district has not provided the required level of funding to a Level 5 school, the Commissioner is authorized by the statute to provide additional funds to the school from the budget of the district. The Commissioner reserves the right to exercise this authority, following further review of the total funding provided by the district to the Parker school. If the Commissioner decides to provide additional funds to the Parker school from the district budget, the Commissioner will notify the school committee and the Superintendent in writing of the amount and the rationale for the additional funds.

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<sup>1</sup> G.L. c. 69, § 1J(o).

The information provided below includes projected funds to be available for operating the Parker school in school year 2017-2018, including district, state, and federal funding sources.

Funding Source	FY18 Estimated Amount	Inclusions and Exclusions
School-based local appropriation	\$1,937,037	This includes staff and general school-based expenses for grades Pre-K to 5. It does not include transportation, food services, payroll services, benefits and/or similar district services which will be provided to the Level 5 school on the same basis as other schools. Includes approximately \$100,000 for gas, oil, and electricity for the school.
District supports to school from local appropriation	\$393,152	This will include support for district-based positions and services such as special education, school nurse, and attendance specialist, assigned to schools including the Level 5 school based on student and program needs. This amount will be determined when the budget is final and student enrollment is known.
Federal grants	\$167,117	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Title I: Funds to improve education for children with low academic achievement - School allocation, including additional allocation for low-performing schools</li> </ul> <p>To be determined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Title I – Additional allocation for other centrally-budgeted supports to schools</li> <li>• Title IIA: Funds to improve educator quality</li> <li>• Title III: Funds to improve education for English language learners</li> <li>• Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): Funds to improve education for children with disabilities</li> <li>• Other federal grants</li> </ul>

Within the broad budgetary framework identified above, and consistent with the statutory requirement of equity in per-pupil funding, the Commissioner will use his discretion to determine whether and to what extent the per-pupil funding formula will include provision of “in-kind” services. For example, it is anticipated that the district will provide certain services to the Parker school (including but not limited to: transportation, employee benefits, facilities, payroll, safety, food service, and other central office services) as “in-kind” support. It is also anticipated that the Superintendent will provide certain services to the Parker school that the district provides to other non-Level 5 schools. The funding formula may recognize the provision of services from the district. Where the Superintendent is providing services that the district provides to other non Level 5 schools, the district will provide commensurate funding to the Parker school. The district, Superintendent, and ESE will enter into a Memorandum of

Agreement regarding the provision of these services and will work together to ensure that the appropriate resources are available for the school's daily operations.

### Compensation and Student Achievement

Good teaching matters and is a key to addressing proficiency gaps. Some teachers routinely secure a year-and-a-half of gain in achievement while others with similar students consistently produce only one-half a year gain. As a result, two students who begin the year with the same general level of achievement may know vastly different amounts one year later – simply because one had a weak teacher and the other a strong teacher. Further, no other attribute of schools comes close to having the magnitude of influence on student achievement that teacher effectiveness provides.<sup>2</sup> Research on school leadership underscores the importance of effective leaders in attracting, retaining, and supporting effective teachers and creating organizational structures and environments where powerful teaching and learning is the norm.

The impact of teachers is cumulative. Having effective teachers for successive years accelerates student growth while having ineffective teachers for successive years dampens the rate of student learning. Research in the Dallas school district and the State of Tennessee suggests that having a strong teacher for three years in a row can effectively eliminate the racial/ethnic and income achievement gap.<sup>3</sup>

No other expenditure comes close to that which is devoted to personnel: often as much as 85 percent of the budget is dedicated to educator salaries and benefits.<sup>4</sup> In a typical school district, compensation has little nexus to performance. Drawing from the example above, given identical length of service and continuing education credits, the teacher who consistently is highly effective would be paid the same as the teacher who routinely underperforms. Further, it is likely that both teachers have identical responsibilities and opportunities for leadership, despite the vast difference in accomplishment.

The development of a performance-based compensation system is an essential strategy for maximizing the rapid academic achievement of students at the Parker school.

Effective in school year 2014-15, a new performance-based compensation system was employed to compensate employees based on responsibilities and leadership roles, individual effectiveness, professional growth, and student academic growth. The Superintendent restructured compensation to ensure that the district's investment in the school promotes, supports, and values effective performance. The new compensation system will help to improve student learning by attracting new high potential teachers and allowing the school to retain its most effective leaders and teachers.

The evidence demonstrating that the primary compensation factors – longevity and credit accumulation – have little relationship to educator performance continues to accumulate. For example:

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<sup>2</sup> Hanushek, E. (2010), "The Economic Value of Higher Teacher Quality." National Bureau of Economic Research.

<sup>3</sup> Carey, K. "The Real Value of Teachers: Using Information about Teacher Effectiveness to Close the Achievement Gap," Thinking K-16, Vol. 8, Issue 1, Winter 2004.

<sup>4</sup> <http://cepa.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/stateRole.pdf>

- Generally, teachers with master’s degrees have little or no additional positive effect on student achievement compared to teachers who do not have an advanced degree.<sup>5</sup> The exception to this statement is in a few specific content areas--math and science--where researchers found student achievement to be slightly higher for high school students whose math and science teachers held advanced degrees.<sup>6</sup>
- Approximately 90 percent of the master’s degrees held by teachers are degrees attained from education programs that tend to be unrelated to or unconcerned with instructional impact.<sup>7</sup>
- “Although teachers with master’s degrees generally earn additional salary or stipends--the so-called ‘master’s bump’ – they are no more effective, on average, than their counterparts without master’s degrees.”<sup>8</sup>
- The traditional structure is built on the assumption that teachers get better with experience. While it is true that novice teachers, particularly in their first year, experience a steep learning curve, teacher performance tends to plateau after 6 to 10 years.<sup>9</sup>

In order to direct school fiscal resources to most directly promote rapid improvement of student achievement, the performance-based compensation plan at the Parker school will include the following basic principles: 1) provide competitive compensation for teachers; 2) reward teachers for excellent performance and effectiveness; 3) provide a career path for teachers to grow professionally without leaving the classroom; and 4) reward teachers for their contribution to student growth. Restructuring compensation in this way ensures that the Parker school’s investment in educators promotes and values effective performance.

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<sup>5</sup> Raegen Miller and Marguerite Roza, 2012. “The sheepskin effect and student achievement: De-emphasizing the role of master’s degrees in teacher compensation.” Washington, DC: Center for American Progress. Available: [http://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2012/07/pdf/miller\\_masters.pdf](http://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2012/07/pdf/miller_masters.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Dan Goldhaber and Dominic Brewer, 1998. “When should we reward degrees for teachers?” *The Phi Delta Kappan* 80(2): 134-138.

<sup>7</sup> National Center for Education Statistics, “2003-2004 Schools and Staffing Survey” as cited by Miller and Roza, 2012.

<sup>8</sup> Miller and Roza, 2012, p.1.

<sup>9</sup> Eric A Hanushek, John F. Kain and Stephen G. Rivkin, “Teachers, Schools and Academic Achievement.” Working Paper 6691 (National Bureau of Economic Research, 1998).