# **Introduction**

The lists of strategies were collected from both Commonwealth and Horace Mann charter schools from across the state. These are samples of activities designed to increase applications and enrollment for students in particular demographic groups.

While these strategies were submitted by actual charter schools, school names have been removed to keep this list more generic; community organization names were left in order to illustrate the types of organizations relevant for each subgroup and the kinds of specificity expected in strategies.

This collection was gathered to encourage new ideas for strategies and activities based on the experiences of other charter schools; however, we do not suggest that charter schools copy these examples verbatim, as they may or may not be relevant within your local community. Each school needs to identify the particular organizations, neighborhoods, and resources in its own communities which are most relevant to the subgroup they are targeting for recruitment.

The strategies listed are suggestions and are not meant to provide an exhaustive inventory of possibilities.

The full directions for preparation of recruitment and retention plans are found on pages 9-13 of the Annual Report Guidelines (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/acct.html?section=annual>).

Links to the statute requiring these plans and to the regulations regarding these plans are found here: <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter71/Section89> and <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr1.html?section=05>

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| Appendix BCharter School Recruitment and Retention Plan Template |

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As defined in MGL c. 71 § 89 and 603 CMR 1.00, Massachusetts charter schools must receive approval from the Department for a recruitment and retention plan which is updated annually. In developing the recruitment and retention plan, please review the charter school regulations governing student recruitment, enrollment, and retention, found at [603 CMR 1.05](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr1.html?section=05).

“A charter school must develop a plan that includes deliberate, specific strategies the school will use to attract, to enroll, and to retain a student population that is demographically comparable to similar grades in schools from which the charter school enrolls students. Charter schools shall submit recruitment and retention plans for approval by the Department that meet the requirements of MGL c. 71, § 89; 603 CMR 1.05; and any guidelines issued by the Department” (603 CMR 1.05(1)).” The charter school statute outlines certain demographic groups that must be included in all recruitment and retention plans, including: limited English proficient, special education, free lunch, and reduced-price lunch students[[1]](#footnote-1), as well as those who are sub-proficient on the MCAS, at risk of dropping out of school, have dropped out of school, or other at-risk students who should be targeted to eliminate achievement gaps. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will consider the extent to which the school has followed and updated its recruitment and retention plan as one of the factors in making a renewal decision (c. 71, § 89(i)).

Furthermore, as specified in MGL c. 71, § 89 (i)(3), if the school is located in a district with 10 percent or more of limited English-proficient students, the school’s recruitment strategies must include a variety of outreach efforts in the most prevalent languages of the district.

The Department encourages schools to use the Charter Analysis and Review Tool (CHART) (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/finance/chart/>) to access school specific demographic data for a sub-set of the categories.

The Department has created a Compendium of Recruitment Strategies to assist schools when creating Recruitment and Retention Plans. Please see: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/sped/default.html> Please contact your school’s liaison if you require assistance with the CHART tool or the creation of you Recruitment and Retention Plan.

**Provide an updated plan for the 2016-2017 school year using the template below. Please follow the directions for each element of the plan.**

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| **Recruitment Plan**2016-2017 |

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| School Name: |
| Date: |

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| * **Please provide a brief narrative report on implementation of recruitment strategies from last year’s plan.**
* **Please provide any additional information that gives context for subgroup enrollment figures, e.g., high number of siblings enrolled in entry class, re-classification of student subgroup status, etc.**
* **Please provide a brief explanation if you think that your incoming class of students (as captured in October 1, 2016 SIMS report) will meet the comparison index or the school’s gap narrowing targets. Please indicate if you would like further discussion with the Department regarding the school’s Recruitment Plan once you have submitted your October 1st SIMS demographic information.**
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| **2015-2016 Implementation Summary:**NARRATIVE FOR IMPLEMENTATION |

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| **Describe the school’s general recruitment activities, i.e. those intended to reach all students.** |
| **General Recruitment Activities for 2016-2017:****RECRUITMENT IMPLEMENTATION FOR ALL STUDENTS** |

Directions for creating deliberate, specific strategies for the recruitment plan:

Look at CHART: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/finance/chart/>.

Review your school’s subgroup enrollment in CHART. Please pay particular attention to the enrollment of students who are limited English proficient, students with disabilities, and low income (economically disadvantaged) students. Additionally, please pay particular attention to trends over time.

Determine for which of the above subgroups the charter school enrolls a comparable population (meaning the charter school rates of enrollment of the subgroup is at or above the comparison index OR meeting the gap narrowing target) **and** for what subgroups the school *falls below* the comparison index.

**For subgroups with a comparable population**: list the recruitment strategies that the school has used in the past.

**For subgroups that fall below the comparison index**: create enhanced recruitment strategies (i.e. more specific and targeted for this particular subgroup) in the revised plan.

**Do not repeat strategies.** Each group should have its own set of specific and deliberate strategies.

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| **Recruitment Plan –Strategies** **List strategies for recruitment activities for each demographic group.** |
| **Demographic Group** | **Strategies** |
| Special education | * At the January Information Sessions, the school’s Special Education Coordinator and staff are available to families for individual consultations and to describe school resources to serve student needs.
* At the January Information Sessions, representatives from the school’s SPEDPAC (**sp**ecial **ed**ucation **p**arent **a**dvisory **c**ouncil) are available to prospective families to discuss Special Education.
* Parents from the SPEDPAC also coordinate several outreach events each year for current and prospective students.
* Special education staff and parent members of the charter school's SPEDPAC reach out to make contact with members of SPEDPAC groups at area schools, attend their meetings, and provide the parents in attendance with information and flyers.
* Both the SPEDPAC and the school Special Education staff belong to several special education-related organizations and on-line forums at which they discuss opportunities for students at the charter school.
* Continue to work with MSPCC (Mass Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children), DCF (Department of Children and Families) and Tufts Floating Hospital to continue seeking referrals of Special Ed students. Target one specific Early Intervention site and build relationship there.
* Collaborate with the Multicultural Wellness Center (MWC) to provide enrollment information for families that have children with special needs. The Wellness Center provides therapeutic services, mentoring, in homes support services and access to community support for students and families. The mission of MWC is to provide mental health services to diverse communities who have historically been underserved and underrepresented in the mental health field.
* All recruitment materials state explicitly in the languages spoken by the families that “children with special needs are welcome at our school.”
* A student with Special needs was one of the speakers at each of the Information Sessions held.
* The Special Education Director will collaborate with the Elementary School principal to provide information to kindergarten applicants with information regarding the school’s special education program.
* The Special Education Director with collaborate with French River Education Center to share admissions information and related services.
* The Special Education Director will consult with Assumption College’s Counseling program regarding supporting the city’s high needs population.
* The Special Education Director will meet at least monthly with the external affairs contacts from the United Way of Central Massachusetts and the Worcester Department of Public Health, Girls Inc, and Assumption College School of Counseling to provide families with programmatic information.
* The Special Education Department will participate in the Kindergarten Screening Process to provide parents with programmatic information.
* Promotional materials direct prospective families to the school website and SEPAC page for contact information and details about programs, events, and special needs services.
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| Limited English-proficient students | * Distribute literature and applications in Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Cape Verdean Creole, Chinese, Somali and Vietnamese. Families that speak any of these languages will receive our application in English as well as their native language.
* Provide translation services at recruitment events.
* The school established an advertising contract with St. Stephens Parish in Framingham (high Latino population). The school plans to advertise in other local churches including: St. Tarcisius and Igreja Batista de Framingham, the First Baptist Brazilian Church in Marlborough
* Work with the Brazilian Business Club (BBC) in Framingham to brainstorm effective ways for connecting with the local Brazilian community.
* Disseminate translated materials at cultural celebrations and content extravaganzas/ quarterly student project presentations.
* Send Principal and Spanish-speaking teacher to speak at 4 Vietnamese community events.
* Employ Nigerian and Haitian parents to do recruiting at churches, social gatherings, or workplaces
* Bilingual or Multilingual staff available during the open houses and information sessions.
* Copies of our application (in seven languages) at the East Zone Family Resource Center of the Boston Public Schools, and in neighborhoods that are densely populated by families that speak languages other than English such as Mattapan and Fields Corner.
* Reach out to community organizations that serve non-English speaking populations: Viet-AID, the Haitian Multi-Service Center, the Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers, and the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center.
* Provide at least 500 families of preschool students eligible for enrollment in preK at our school with information about the school and eligibility by continuing to work with Associated Early Care and education, the Family Nurturing Center, HeadStart preschools operated by Action for Boston Community Development, Inc., and other early childhood organizations such as VietAID that serve communities predominately composed of immigrant families, refugee families and non- and limited-English speaking families
* Distribute at least 500 applications in each of the five target languages to families via organizations with already established sustained and consistent contact with FLNE families. Organizations with which our school has already built relationships and that represent the foundation of our recruitment network include: Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative; Dorchester House; Haitian-American Public Health Initiatives; Hyde Square Task Force; East Boston Ecumenical Community Counsel; Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers; Massachusetts Advocates for Children.
* Make school information available in newspapers published in target languages, and on radio stations broadcasted in target languages. Newspapers and radio stations include: La Semana, El Planeta, El Mundo, Asian Times, Boston Chinese News, Brazilian Times, World Journal (Chinese), Haitian Reporter (Haitian Creole), Sampan (Chinese), and Thang Long (Vietnamese), WRCA-AM 1330, WUNR-AM 1600, POWER 800(WNNW), WNTN-AM 1500.
* We will reach out to the following community organizations that serve non-English speaking populations: Viet-AID, the Haitian Multi-Service Center, the Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers, and the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center.
* Collaborate with the African Community Development Corporation and the Centro Las Americas to provide enrollment information to families.
* Leave translated copies of our flyers and applications at adult ESL programs in the community
* The ELL Coordinator will participate in the kindergarten screening process to support families who have been identified as limited English proficient through the enrollment process.
* For the 2016-17 school year, we have hired a second full-time ELL teacher. Our 3 ELL teachers will recruit the parents of current LEP students to help recruit in their own communities.
* The school will invite prospective families and community members to our Heritage Night that will highlight the cultures of our current students.
* Translators are provided for families touring the school and students who are shadowing other students.
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| Economically disadvantaged students | * Post flyers at the Boys and Girls Club, the MetroWest YMCA, and Suburban Athletics, community programs that tend to service lower income families and their children
* Make contact with community resources used by low income families, including SNAP (**S**upplemental **N**utrition **A**ssistance **P**rogram) and WIC (**W**omen, **I**nfants and **C**hildren) food stamp programs, food pantries, thrift shops, social service agencies. Provide contact persons with flyers and information regarding enrollment, information sessions, etc. Provide rides to information sessions from these locations.
* Provide refreshments and child care at one or more information sessions.
* Continue outreach strategies to all partner agencies. Schedule speaker at DCF to talk to all Dorchester/Roxbury caseworkers.
* Recruit K1 students through collaboration with Associated Child Care and Education, HeadStart, VietAID and other organizations serving low-income immigrant families, refugee families, and non- and limited-English speaking families, since program eligibility is determined by family income below the poverty level.
* Identify community programs similar to the Boys and Girls Club and Suburban Athletics in Ashland, Marlborough, and Natick, the three districts in addition to Framingham with more substantial populations of student eligible for free lunch compared with the other four districts; Establish relationships with these organizations, make information available to organization leaders and post flyers.
* Students are recruited through the Community Action, Inc. Head-Start Program. Each year the Charter Leader addresses parents/caregivers at a Kindergarten registration Informational Meeting. A brief overview of the K-5 program and the Free All-Day Kindergarten program is presented. Lottery applications are made available for these parents. Students are also recruited through brochures and information made available to the wrap-around services including Haverhill YMCA and YWCA, Haverhill Girls’ and Boys’ Club, Haverhill Public Library.
* Promotional materials and Open House announcements made at regional Head Start sites.
* We will make our application available to families residing in low-income housing developments throughout the city such as Franklin Field and Old Colony.
* We will provide application materials to neighborhood ABCD sites such as the Asian American Civic Association, the Citywide Boston Hispanic Center, the Dorchester Neighborhood Service Center, Boys and Girls Clubs, and the Mattapan Family Service Center.
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| Students who are sub-proficient | * Identify the elementary schools in sending districts with higher percentages of students in Needs improvement (NI) and Warning (W) proficiency levels, compared to other elementary schools; reach out to the Parent-Teacher-Councils at these schools and offer presentation our school program in the fall or winter.
* Identify tutoring services in the community, make contact with them to inform them about your school and provide them with flyers and notices to share with their clients.
* We will include information about our tutoring and extra support services in our advertisements.
* Recruitment mailings to grade 5 students in BPS, the majority of whom are sub-proficient in Math and ELA.
* Ensure that our promotional materials state that we do backfill seats and clearly outline offered services that support students who are sub-proficient (e.g., rich and diverse academic program, after school program, social/emotional support services, homework and course coaching support programs, consistent parent/school communication policies and procedures)
* The school will establish relationships with local middle schools (including the Brown Middle School, Excel, The Frederick Pilot Middle School, Roxbury Prep, etc.) that will refer students who are academically behind or who have scored in the warning categories on the ELA or math MCAS.
* Make our application available to tutoring and academic enrichment programs such as 826 Boston (a non-profit tutoring and writing center), the Boston Learning Center, and Kumon.
* The school will continue to post flyers that highlight remedial strategies.
* A link on the school web site will post the unique characteristics of the charter school and benefits for students who may be in jeopardy of failing.
* The school will advertise its additional time initiatives including Saturday Scholars Program and the February and April vacation week Acceleration programs in recruitment efforts.
* We will maintain a positive rapport with middle and high school staff members and the Boston Re-Engagement Center (REC) to identify the students who need the supports and programming provided by BDEA. We visit the REC twice a year and hold a meeting with REC staff at BDEA once a year. By emphasizing our nontraditional competency- based education system and the support it can provide to students who are subproficient at a traditional school, we recruit students who need academic and social/emotional supports.
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| Students at risk of dropping out of school | * To demonstrate the potential for at risk students to find success here, we will profile selected students in our advertising; we will include such students as speakers in our information sessions, and we will invite at risk students to shadow formerly at risk students for a class day here.
* We will make our application available to programs that service at-risk youth throughout the city such as Friends of the Children, StandUp for Kids-Boston, and Boston Youth Sanctuary.
* Build and maintain an active relationship with probation officers and the court system, actively recruit there, and post flyers and applications in the probation offices in Chelsea, Lynn, Cambridge, and Boston courts.
* Great effort will be put into relationships with probation officers and lawyers in students’ lives. Our Dean will meet regularly with the Assistant District Attorney to discuss students who are involved in the court system.
* School will host tables and/or hold information sessions at PAACA (Positive Action Against Chemical Addiction) at the Wise Women Program, and at the local vocational technical high school.
* Identify the elementary schools in sending districts with higher percentages of students in NI and W compared to other elementary schools; reach out to the Parent-Teacher-Councils at these schools and offer to give a presentation about the school’s program in the fall or winter.
* Hold an appreciation luncheon for community agencies (e.g. Boys and Girls Club, Amica, PAL (Police Athletic League)) that work to support students in our area, including those at risk of dropping out of school. Our guests are sent home with information that they can pass on to their clientele.
* Hold information session at House of Peace and Education (serves students at risk of dropping out of school).
* Speak at a dinner at the Cleghorn Neighborhood Center that serves students at risk of dropping out of school.
* Develop and maintain relationships with and leave brochures at places that work with students at the age of dropout, such as YouthBuild, JobCorps, GED programs, and drop-in youth centers.
* Check EWIS data on DESE website to find students at risk, due to homelessness, low attendance, etc.
* An enrollment counselor sends enrollment information to local GED programs.
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| Students who have dropped out of school | * We make contact with juvenile justice representatives, (e.g. local police, probation officers), homeless shelters, and others who might be aware of students who have dropped out, to inform them about our school and encourage them to connect us with students who have dropped out and support them to apply
* We meet regularly with representatives from local police department, Juvenile Court, DSS, DYS, Youth Groups, Lowell Community Health Center, Job Corps, and UTEC.
* Students who dropped out are identified by the local High School. The school collaborates with the guidance department as a liaison between the school and the district. This collaboration will continue to be a primary method of identifying students who have dropped out, are not in a GED program, have not aged out of high school and who may be appropriate candidates for the charter school.
* The school’s Student Support Services team, many of whom are based in our community, are equipped with recruitment information and trained to reach out to and engage children who have dropped out of school.
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| **OPTIONAL** Other subgroups of students who should be targeted to eliminate the achievement gap | * Recruit young men of color by recruiting through inner-city sports organizations (e.g. YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, AAU teams). We will contact coaches in neighborhoods densely populated by families of color.
* We will make our application available to The Paul Robeson Institute for Positive Self-Development, an organization that is dedicated to supporting young black males in our community.
* The school is hosting Portuguese language and Brazilian culture classes for Brazilian families to maintain their facility with the Portuguese language and their understanding of Brazilian culture. During these classes, distribute recruiting brochures and bilingual flyers to interested students and parents.
* The school will actively recruit parenting or pregnant teens and will advertize all how the school provides the necessary supports to obtain educational success.
	+ Daycare center on site
	+ The Childcare Center staff will coordinate with DCF, Childcare Circuit (voucher program), and our school staff to support pregnant/parenting youth.
	+ Student Support Staff will oversee our maternity/paternity leave program, in which new parents will have one liaison/point-person at the school who calls regularly, gathers all work from teachers, coordinates getting that work to the student, and handles any concerns of the student who is on maternity leave.
* Help students obtain daycare vouchers through the social work department. We will establish systems for students who receive vouchers so that they can be processed and paperwork submitted in a timely fashion.
* We will also work closely with DCF workers who refer students who are pregnant or parenting to our school.
* We will work with local agencies including the Immigrants’ Assistance Center to reach recent immigrants in order for families learn about the school.
* We will reach out to support groups for grandparents, foster parents, and others who are caring for children who are not in the custody of their parents. We will ensure these families understand that the children may remain enrolled as long as they remain somewhere in MA.
* In collaboration with the homeless shelters, we will distribute information to homeless families and ensure that these families understand the supports that the school will provide to their children under McKinney Vento. We will also highlight for these families the school features that may be particularly important for homeless children including onsite counseling, transportation home at 5:00 PM, free uniforms, and a “Backpack Club” that provides food for children during the weekends.
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1. Please note: The Department has a new metric, called Economically Disadvantaged. Please see here for information: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/ed.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)