APPROVED

F.W. Parker Charter Essential School

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday May 8, 2025 at 6:45 PM

Location
Parker School

http://parker.school/boardoftrusteesmeeting

Trustees Present
C. Beasley, E. Moura (remote), E. Sturgis, F. Fernau, J. Fredericksen, L. Hayner, M. Beam, M. Edgar, M. Lindsey, M. Turnbull, P. Gordon, S. Razzetti, S. Reinhorn, T. Testa

Trustees Absent
C. Soderman, N. Odekirk Hatlevig

Trustees who left before the meeting adjourned
E. Moura

Guests Present
D. Merriam, D. Van Patten, K. Tedstone, M. Beganski, M. McKenna

I. Meeting Notes

A. Meeting objectives

1. To discuss implementing the Development Plan and help draft the Case for Support
2. To review and discuss MCAS results and an Academic Dashboard

B. To prepare for this meeting, please do the following...

1. RVSP through Board on Track
2. Read the Head of School Report

II. Opening Items

A. Record attendance and guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

P. Gordon called a meeting of the board of trustees of F.W. Parker Charter Essential School to order on Thursday May 8, 2025 at 6:45 PM.

C. Approve minutes

E. Sturgis made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 04-10-25.
T. Testa seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

J. Fredericksen	Aye
T. Testa	Aye
M. Beam	Aye
N. Odekirk Hatlevig	Absent
M. Lindsey	Aye
C. Soderman	Absent
L. Hayner	Aye
E. Sturgis	Aye
C. Beasley	Aye
M. Edgar	Abstain
F. Fernau	Aye
M. Turnbull	Aye
S. Reinhorn	Abstain
E. Moura	Aye
P. Gordon	Aye
S. Razzetti	Abstain

III. Updates from Head of School, Enrollment, and DEI

A. Head of School Report

Brian Harrigan said it has been an exciting two days of senior exhibitions and community support is better than ever.

Julie Fredericksen asked if community involvement with senior exhibitions is the result of action or outreach. Monique Beganski said there was some outreach but Parker visibility is up due to the 30th Gala and the higher interest in enrollment.

Brian said he is looking forward to welcoming Parker's new Principal, Bex Willusz. He said she will be visiting the school soon and her start date is July 1st.

Brian said fifteen Parker students recently visited Bristol Myers Squibb. He said the visit logistics were hard but worth it. He said BMS is interested in building partnerships with local schools and would like to host a visit again next year.

B. Enrollment

Brian said he feels good about enrollment - Parker is at or near full enrollment. He said Paker will enter the next school year with 85 7th graders on the waitlist.

Marie Beam asked if this changes how Parker thinks about teaching or staffing? Deb Merriam said this the increased enrollment reflects the Parker "normal". Brian said an additional special education teacher has been added.

Brian said the enrollment committee has been gathering interesting data from families who have declined offers. He said community building events will continue; the PPCC is creating a culture where families can come together and they hosted a family coffee during Cafe Wednesday.

Julie asked if there was a sense of whether or not some families are planning to "try out" Parker next year. Brian said Parker is advising new families to give their students a year to adjust and experience Parker.

C. Community Conversation

Brian said the Multicultural Connections Community Block will host a community conversation on Wednesday, May 28th - the focus will be on antisemitism and hate speech . Brian said Rabbi Josh Breindel from Congregation Beth El in Sudbury will be the guest speaker and the conversation will focus on the history and impact of the Nazi swastika.

D. End of year activites

Brian said Graduation is Wednesday, June 4th at 6pm. He encouraged Board members to attend and said for new members especially, it is a good way to get a feel for the school.

IV. Academic Update

A. MCAS review and Academic Dashboard

Deb Merriam presented an overview of MCAS performance from last year. Deb said students take the MCAS ELA and Math tests in 7th and 8th grade and again in 10th grade and the goal is to meet standards.

Deb said in ELA for 7th and 8th combined scores - 60% were in meeting or exceeding range - this is higher than the state average. She said the 40% who did not meet or exceed were largely in the partially meeting category.

Deb said in Math for 7th and 8th combined scores - 54% were in meeting or exceeding range - this is higher than the state average. She said those who did not meet are were largely in the partially meeting category.

Ellen Sturgis asked what the trends are like overall. Deb said they are relatively consistent. Deb said Parker is not a school that teaches to the test and is compared to many schools that do.

Julie Fredericksen asked if data can be separated for 7th and 8th grade. Stefanie Reinhorn said all info is publicly available on the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) website.

Tiffany Testa asked Deb to explain what process is for students who are underperforming Deb said there were minimum scores needed to be diploma eligible that threshold is no longer active. Deb said very small number who did not meet threshold scores. Deb said the kids who struggle on the test struggle in school and there can be targeted and personalized support and test skill support for those who need it.

Deb presented MCAS data for 10th grade ELA and Math and said that in general, results are similar to the lower grades.

Deb presented MCAS data for the 8th grade general science test and the 10th grade biology test.

Deb said there is now a civics test in 8th grade. She said last year the test piloted with only State level data, this year the test was operational, and next year it will be live.

Deb presented disaggregated data for MCAS results - broken down by four subgroups, all students, students with disabilities, w/o disabilities, high needs (ELL and low income - not statistically significant for Parker).

Deb said there is an achievement gap between students with and without disabilities. Mara asked what the disability category represents. Deb said this category represents students on IEPs.

Deb said the general trend at Parker which is replicated across state is students in historically marginalized groups don't do as well. Deb said the gap between Parker students with disabilities and those without is smaller than the state gap between those two categories.

Deb said there is still work to do to close the gap. Deb said Parker is doing most of things that data points to as helpful to struggling students in these subcategories - strong student/teacher relationships is one of the recommendations.

Mara asked what percentage of students are on IEPs. Deb said 25-30%.
Tiff asked if data could be disaggregated for race next year. Deb said yes but it's a matter of having time available to do the work.

Pam asked if the same gap is seen in the assessments that Parker does. Deb said it's a good question and could be explored.

Stef asked what systems are used to keep track of data. Stef said that it may be worth looking at the correlation between Parker assessment success and MCAS performance to see what the narrative is there.

Board Members discussed the value of the MCAS
Deb said the recent ballot question did not remove the MCAS requirement. The question removed the minimum score threshold - the test is no longer the competency determination requirement (CDR). She said every school now needs to come up with their own CDR. Deb said the Div II Gateway requirements are in line with the State CDR requirements.
She said individual students no longer accountable to MCAS scores but schools are accountable to the scores.

Deb asked the Board to think about what data/evidence/information they would benefit from seeing/discussing periodically to be prepared to engage in meaningful conversation about the academic program. She presented some ideas and a draft academics dashboard.

Deb invited Board Members to pair up and discuss the types of data that could be collected. The group came back together and shared their ideas.

- Mara -PLP engagement and enrollment
- Caroline - multi-tiered systems of support and mechanisms to assure equity
- Julie - college enrollment - what to expect
- Stef - where students are on assessments - compare and disaggregate on certain assessments
- Tiff - non traditional approach to meeting needs of students with disabilities - how do we diversify and meet needs of those students.
- Fletcher - wholistic picture of how Parker compares with philosophically comparable schools
- Martin - how do you quantify strategic thinking abilities?
- Pam - criteria for excellence - use these to see how they translate to transferrable skills

V. Development

A.

Implementing the Development Plan and Case for Support

Katrina Tedstone said the Development Committee is looking to boost current family and alum donor participation rates. She said there are two initiatives happening a 30 gifts in 30 days drive aimed at current and alum families and and an alumni push. Katrina said she feels confident the goals for each initiative will be met.

Katrina and Brian introduced work on the Case for Support Statement.
Brian said often fundraising discussions are approached from a needs-based mindset. He said it is more aspirational and positive to approach these conversations from a strengths-based position - answering how you are uniquely qualified to address the needs.

Katrina distributed the Parker Case Statement Draft and Members were given time to read through the and share what resonated. Members shared warm feedback and cool feedback. Katrina collected comments for further revision of the document.

VI. Finance

A. Q3 Dashboard and First Read of Fiscal Policies

Michelle McKenna presented Q3 Quarterly Financial Dashboard Report and highlighted items from the report.

- Numbers are similar to Q2 - the headcount went down a little
- Slight decrease of DESE estimate - per pupil
- Grants slightly above budget
- Total revenue is above budget given budgeted vs actual enrollment
- Salaries 300K bonus hit Q3 will end up 200K above budget there
- Teachers Center - activity is slower - reduced budget there for year
- Surplus is running above budget - the payout of bonuses took care of most surplus

Michelle said everything looks good this year and there are no numbers yet for next year.

Michelle said FinComm had made a few recommendations during their annual review of Fiscal Policies and Procedures (included in the meeting packet).

- Under Purchasing Goods and Services - purchasing for the school lunch program was added as an exemption
- Under Investment Policy - language was added to clarify how liquidity reserve numbers are determined.

Michelle said Comm recommends the creation of a revenue stabilization fund to allow FinComm and Board to be a little less conservative in budgeting. Michelle said the fund would start with $300K funded from Facilities. This fund would be used if there is a deficit and added to if there is excess.

Michelle said the Board will be asked to vote on the policy changes and stabilization fund in June.

Marie asked why revenue stabilization fund would be funded out of Facilities. Michelle said Facilities feels they have ample funds and the most liquid amount of cash is there. Sonia asked if the Board could tap reserves and rebudget to stabilize. Michelle said yes but the stabilization fund allows for more flexibility.

VII. Other Business

A. Comments from the public

There were no comments from the public.

B. Schedule for BOT meetings 2025-2026

Pam Gordon distributed a proposed calendar for 2025-2026 Board meetings (included in the meeting packet). She said she had received feedback about meeting less as a whole Board. Pam said the Bylaws say nine meetings need to be held annually and she is proposing nine meetings and one retreat each year instead of two.

Pam said a survey would be sent to collect preferences for the calendar and retreat dates.
She said discussion about how Board is operating will be included in the June meeting. Pam said MPCSA and survey results will be shared during a GovComm meeting and all Board members are welcome to attend.

C. Feedback on the Board

Stef Reinhorn said she would like more student voices to be included in the development of goals.
E. Moura left.

D. Vote - Executive Director

S. Razzetti made a motion to authorize the CEO Evaluation Committee to finalize contract negotiations for Brian Harrigan as the Executive Director of Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School.
J. Fredericksen seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
P. Gordon	Aye
E. Sturgis	Aye
M. Lindsey	Abstain
F. Fernau	Aye

Roll Call

C. Beasley	Aye
N. Odekirk Hatlevig	Absent
S. Razzetti	Aye
E. Moura	Absent
C. Soderman	Absent
J. Fredericksen	Aye
M. Beam	Aye
M. Turnbull	Aye
T. Testa	Aye
S. Reinhorn	Aye
L. Hayner	Aye

VIII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:09 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. Lindsey

Documents used during the meeting

- 2025 May Head of School Report.pdf
- Q3FY25 Dashboard.pdf
- FY25 fiscal policy and procedures.pdf
- Proposed agenda 25-26.pdf