



Annual Report

August 1, 2010

Four Rivers Charter Public School
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I. Introductory Description of the School

Four Rivers Charter Public School is located at 248 Colrain Road in Greenfield, MA. The school is sited on a former dairy farm, and is next door to Greenfield Community College.

The school was awarded a charter by the Department of Education in 2002 to serve 192 students in grades 7-12. It opened in September, 2003 with 64 students in 7th and 8th, and added 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th in successive years, attaining full enrollment of 192 in September, 2007. The school's charter was renewed in 2008 for another five years. Also in 2008 the school applied for and received an amendment to the charter, increasing the enrollment cap to 212. The school ended the 2009-10 academic year with 187 enrolled students, and graduated its third senior class on June 5, 2010.

As a regional Commonwealth charter school, Four Rivers draws primarily from the six secondary school districts of Franklin County: Frontier Regional, Gill-Montague Regional, Greenfield, Mohawk Trail Regional, Pioneer Valley Regional, and Ralph C. Mahar Regional. With Greenfield as its county seat, Franklin County is the most rural area of the Commonwealth, with an estimated population in 2007 of 71,602 within 724 square miles. This results in less than 100 people per square mile, compared to 796 per square mile for the state. The 26 municipalities of Franklin County range in size from the Town of Greenfield, population 17,706 in 2007, to the town of Monroe with a population of 96 for the same year. The county is 77% forested.

The population of Franklin County is 95.5% white (86.5% for Massachusetts); 1.1% black (6.9% in MA.); 0.3% American Indian or Alaska Native (same as MA.); 1.5% Asian (4.9% for MA); multi-racial 1.5% (same as MA); and Hispanic or Latino 2.5% (7.9% in MA). Only 6.2% speak a language other than English at home (18.7% in MA); 29.1% earned a Bachelor's degree or higher (33.2% in MA). Households below the poverty level were 9.2% in 2004 (9.9% for MA).

The following are key personnel and may be contacted for further information. Peter Garbus is Principal and Head of School; Susan Durkee is Assistant Principal and Co-Founder. Harlan Smith is Director of Operations. They may be reached at 413-775-4577. Four Rivers is affiliated with Expeditionary Learning Schools, a national, non-profit school reform model that links academic learning, service, and character development.

Four Rivers Charter Public School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement.

Letter from Board of Trustee's Chair

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148-4906

Dear Commissioner Chester:

I am pleased to report that the conclusion of our seventh year of operation has seen continued growth and development of Four Rivers Charter Public School. A strong, vibrant curriculum remains in place with clear standards that are guided by the Massachusetts Frameworks, the Expeditionary Learning model and the school's themes of nature, technology and community.

This past school year marked a shift from our operation as a new school to an established school. We have been able to concentrate on deepening our curriculum, our faculty support systems and our community culture. Our Principal from last year has become our Head of School/Principal. The concurrent redistribution of administrative duties has enabled each of our administrators to focus on their respective goals in a way that has fully supported our faculty, our students and our school as a whole.

The Board of Trustees continues to play an active role in the school's growth and development. We meet monthly to work together on school governance. As part of that process we receive from our Head of School reports on the three dimensions of our charter: academic success, organizational viability and faithfulness to our charter. The Vice Chair, Treasurer and I as Board Chair have all continued in our roles this year. Two Board members left the Board, and we have gained two new members, so we have a healthy balance of sustained membership and new trustees. This mix of continuity and growth provides the school with dynamic, diverse and strong governance.

Our faculty remains deeply committed to the students, to our school community and to the quality of the education they provide. They have a mutually respectful relationship with our Head of School. Because of the quality of our staff, Four Rivers Charter Public School has gained a reputation for high standards, excellent education and an exceptional student body.

The school continues to develop and deepen partnerships in the community, most notably with Greenfield Community College. Many 11th and 12th graders appreciate being able to take courses there. Four Rivers continues to seek out and develop more opportunities for our students to provide meaningful contributions to our broader community of Franklin County. We are grateful for our place in this community and look forward to educating more of our area's young people.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Betts Bartlett, Chair

III. Mission Statement

Four Rivers Charter Public School is dedicated to educating young people for lives of learning and service. The school offers a rigorous academic program aligned with the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks and an emphasis on character development for moral and social responsibility. Three central themes -- nature, technology and community -- guide teaching and learning at the school, engaging students and teachers in a fundamental question of our times: how do we find the healthy, sustainable interrelationship of the natural world, technology in its many forms, and the human community? The school works closely with parents and seeks both to serve and to learn from the many resources of Franklin County.

IV. Performance and Plans

Four Rivers Charter Public School - Accountability Plan **2008-2013**

Draft submitted: August 1, 2007

Revised draft approved by Board of Trustees 9/8/08, further revised 9/17/08

Approved by DESE Charter Office 9/19/08

FAITHFULNESS TO CHARTER

Accountability Plan Objectives and Measures

OBJECTIVE 1: Themes: Nature, Technology, Community

Four Rivers Charter Public School will use the themes of nature, technology, and community to engage and advance student learning.

Measures

- 1a** All students will complete, at least once each year, individual or group projects that address the essential question in the school's mission: *How do we find the healthy, sustainable interrelationship of the natural world, technology in its many forms, and the human community?* 90% of these projects will be of *Meeting* quality, as judged by the evaluations of experts, visitors to the school, and/or faculty members who do not teach the students whose projects are being evaluated.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met. All students completed a project in at least one class. Nearly 96% of the projects were of meeting quality.*

Examples of projects from this year include:

- *In Division III – Personal environmental philosophy paper in English; Green River water sampling and analysis in Chemistry; Walkability study in History of Community class; CO₂ Model Congress.*
- *In Division II – 9th grade expedition on nutrition, farms and local agriculture; 9th grade Stream Study projects; 10th grade HIV expedition.*
- *In Division I – Pieces of the Past Expedition combined service at the Green River with Social Studies and Science questions about how humans influence their environment, and how our environment influences us; 7th grade Aswan Dam debate in which students role-played a community debating pros and cons of putting a dam on the Nile river. Eighth grade Bio-flyer addresses technology and community.*

- 1b** All students, as part of their annual portfolio, will reflect on their engagement with the school themes and the essential question in the mission. 90% of the students will meet this criterion in the assessment of their portfolio.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met in all grades except grade 8. In Division III 90% reflected on the themes; in Division II 100%; in grade 7, 95%.. Grade 8 did not fully incorporate the themes of nature, technology and community into portfolios.

Examples of ways the measure was met especially well:

- *Division III portfolio reflections on Wilderness Literature and Environmental History*
- *Division II Transcendentalist essays*
- *Grade 7 Green River service reflection*

OBJECTIVE 2: Character & Community

Four Rivers Charter Public School will engage students in character growth and service to the school and the community.

Measures

- 2a** 90% of students will engage in effective goal-setting for personal and academic growth, as documented in advisory records, student-led conferences and portfolio reflections.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met with 92% of students engaged in effective goal setting.

- 2b** An annual survey of parents and students will document that at least 75% of respondents believe the school helps students to grow personally and develop strength of character.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met for parents but not for students, with 91% of parents and 67% of students agreeing or strongly agreeing that the school helps students grow as people and develop strength of character.

- 2c** 90% of students will meet their requirements for service to the school and the community, as documented in advisory records and portfolio reflections.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met with 99% of students meeting the service requirement.

Some examples of successful group service projects include:

- *One crew participated in Relay for Life (raising money to fight cancer)*
- *Green River Clean-up; Energy Park clean-up*
- *9th grade opening week trip to Red Gate Farm*
- *Harvesting the school's winter squash to donate to the local Food Bank*

Some examples of successful individual service in 11th and 12th grades include:

- *Volunteer firefighter*
- *Emergency room volunteer*
- *Academic tutoring*

OBJECTIVE 3: College and Post-Secondary Planning

Four Rivers Charter Public School will support students in applying to and entering college or preparing for other post-secondary opportunities for learning or service.

Measures

3a All 12th grade students will develop a post-secondary plan that includes career and education goals.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met with 100% of 12th grade students developing a post-secondary plan.

3b The school will guide all 12th grade students in applying to at least one college.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was not met. Of 16 graduating seniors, 14 applied at more than one college. Two did not apply at any college.

3c At least 80% of graduating seniors will matriculate to a college or other post-secondary educational setting of their choice within 15 months after graduation from Four Rivers.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met. For the class of 2010, 88% have plans to enroll in college within 15 months. From the class of 2009, 80% are in college or plan to be enrolled within 15 months of graduation. From the class of 2008, 89% were attending college within 15 months of graduation.

3d In a survey of graduates enrolled in college, at least 80% of those responding will report that they felt well prepared by their education at Four Rivers.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met. In a December 2009 survey, 95% of alumni responding said they felt well prepared for college.

OBJECTIVE 4: Expeditionary Learning

Four Rivers Charter Public School will implement Expeditionary Learning Core Practices to further its mission.

Measures

4a The school will continue to deepen its implementation of Expeditionary Learning Core Practices, as evidenced on the annual implementation review scoring by Expeditionary Learning consultants.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was partially met. With the exception of the Learning Expeditions category, the school's scores were steady in two areas and improved in two areas, all around the level of Implementing.

Overview from the EL Implementation Review

In its eighth year, Four Rivers is an established school with much to celebrate. Strong structures and practices in a variety of areas, particularly around Junior Internships and Senior Expeditions, have served as models for many other secondary schools in the Expeditionary Learning network. This year

several new, enthusiastic staff joined the school and the focus of our collaborative work centered on differentiated instruction. While some scores appear lower than in previous years, they are consistent with large numbers of new teachers and perhaps a deepening understanding of the specific indicators within each benchmark. Scores rose in a few areas as well; detailed descriptions are included below.

- 0 – Not Yet Begun
- 1 – Beginning
- 2 – Developing
- 3 – Implementing
- 4 – Highly Implementing

<u>Learning Expeditions</u>		<u>Active Pedagogy</u>		<u>School Culture and Character</u>		<u>Leadership and School Improvement</u>	
1. Compelling topics and guiding questions	2	1. Lesson design	3	1. Culture and character in the classroom	3	1. Leadership and school improvement	3
2. Products and linked projects	2	2. Effective instructional practices	3	2. Culture and character schoolwide	3		
3. Fieldwork, experts, service	1	3. Teaching reading across disciplines	2	3. Building and sustaining a professional learning community	3	<u>Structures</u>	
4. High quality student work	3	4. Teaching writing across disciplines	2			1. School Structures	3
		5. Teaching inquiry-based math	3			2. Effective Grading and Reporting Structures	2
		6. Effective assessment practices	2				

Progress over time

	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
Learning Expeditions	2.33	2.0	2.17	2.0	2.75	2.0
Active Pedagogy	2.4	2.6	2.4	2.6	2.33	2.75
Culture and Character	2.67	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Leadership/School Improvement	2.0	2.5	2.5	3.0	2.0	3.0
Structures					2.5	2.5

4b For Core Practices identified by the school as high priority in its annual professional development work plan, the school will meet 90% of its designated measures of success.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met, as captured by the learning target that was set at the beginning of the year.

From the EL Implementation Review:

“Our target in this area centered on differentiated instruction: **I can build confidence and competence implementing differentiated instruction through expeditionary learning practices.** Teachers worked in Peer Coaching Groups, primarily designed by the faculty. These groups were supported by some school designer consultation, as well as leadership involvement. Adjustments were made to Peer Coaching configurations and protocols in response to feedback from teachers, and by the second half of the year, these groups gained notable momentum in their collaborative work. Despite the fact that scores in Lesson Design dipped one point from last year’s proficient, not consistent to developing, it is notable that 50% of teachers selected proficient, not yet consistent or higher. This suggests significant teacher

confidence in this area, perhaps due to our instructional focus. Yet 25% self-assessed at a developing or beginning level and this wide range of individual scores across the school may once again be attributable to the large numbers of staff new to Expeditionary Learning practices. The established Peer Coaching structure provides numerous opportunities for those more experienced with EL practices to share with newer or struggling teachers.”

OBJECTIVE 5: Dissemination

Four Rivers Charter Public School will identify and disseminate best practices of its faculty and staff, including those representative of exemplary Expeditionary Learning Core Practices.

Measures

- 5a** The school will identify and disseminate practices and products expressive of high quality Expeditionary Learning Core Practices and other exemplary Four Rivers practices to other schools and communities annually.

***Progress toward the goal:** The goal was met. Four staff presented at this year’s Expeditionary Learning National Conference in Kansas City in February 2010. Seventh grade Math/Science teacher, Mandy Locke, and current Dean of Students, Matt Leaf, presented their model learning expedition on a Vernal Pool project, Division 3 teacher Andy Stenson presented on Senior Projects, and Principal Peter Garbus presented on building faculty culture. The school also hosted visits throughout the year from university classes and from area educators.*

- 5b** The school will, within its second term, offer models for replication and best practices to other public schools in Franklin County.

***Progress toward the goal:** The goal was partially met. We continue to host individuals and groups from area schools and university programs who want to see an Expeditionary Learning school in action. However, a plan to participate in a day of county-wide professional development in October just did not work out as hoped. We have a new idea ready to try for next year.*

Common School Performance Criteria – Faithfulness to Charter

Implementation of mission, vision, and educational philosophy:

The best description and evidence for our implementation of the school’s mission, vision, and philosophy comes in excerpts from our year 7 Site Visit Report which was completed this past spring.

Finding: Stakeholders reported that the school’s mission is to educate students for lives of learning and service with an emphasis on technology, nature, and the community.

When asked to describe the school’s mission, school administrators and board members identified the goal of preparing students for success in college. Administrators reported that they see lifelong learning and preparation for college as being one and the same. Teachers stated that they strive to teach students content and skills that will be useful to them after they graduate. The school has established several supports for students to plan their future after they graduate. Students in eleventh and twelfth grade meet with their advisor and the school’s college counselor to develop a post-secondary plan. Students complete a questionnaire that assesses their interests and preferences, which is used to help students as they prepare to leave the school. The school reports that in 2009 all seniors developed a post-secondary plan with the support of their advisor and college counselor. Eighty-six percent of graduating students applied to at least one college and 93 percent of students planned to attend college within 15 months of graduating.

Students reported that the school places great emphasis on developing a supportive school community. The school has developed six character virtues that include integrity, respect, perseverance, responsibility, courage, and compassion. All stakeholders reported that the school has established an environment in which each student is well known. All students are assigned to an advisor who is responsible for supporting the student and helping them set goals. Each division (division one is grades seven and eight; division two is grades nine and ten, and division three is grades eleven and twelve) has a weekly meeting in which they meet together to discuss school issues and celebrate students that have embodied the school's virtues.

Finding: Expeditionary learning is the school's guiding pedagogical model.

Since its founding the school's academic program has been based on the Expeditionary Learning program (EL). The school has designed an EL academic program aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (MCF). The EL design is based on five core practices and related benchmarks. Administrators reported that the school's focus on community, technology, and nature blend well with the EL model. All stakeholders reported the school's approach to instruction emphasizes the idea that students must experience what they are learning. Administrators reported that students should learn in an active way in the context of a larger purpose. Students reported that they engage in hands on learning that encourages exploring things deeply in the context of big ideas. Stakeholders provided several examples of learning expeditions that included creating a geology guide to a nearby rock climbing park and going on a bicycle ride to learn about geography. Although site visitors were told about various learning expeditions and reviewed several examples they did not observe learning expeditions during observations.

Finding: The school has met most of the faithfulness to charter measures contained in its accountability plan.

FRCPS has reported against an accountability plan that was approved in May 2009. The plan contains five measures related to faithfulness to charter, each with several measures. The first objective relates to the school's themes of nature, technology, and community and contains two measures, neither of which was met in 2008-09. The second objective addresses students' character growth and service to the school community. The objective contains three measures, all of which were met in 2008-09. The third objective relates to college and post-secondary planning and contains four measures. In 2008-09 two of these measures were met and two were not met. The fourth objective is associated with the school's EL practices and contains two measures, one of which was met and the other for which performance cannot be determined. The last objective relates to the school's dissemination practices and contains two measures, one of which was met and the other which was partially met.

Recruitment, enrollment and retention:

Our recruitment and enrollment strategies have been straightforward and consistent from the beginning of the school.

1. **Information Sessions:** The school holds four information sessions in January and February. With refreshments provided by the Family Council and teachers, staff, students, and parents on hand, we introduce prospective families to the key components of the school.
2. **Wednesday Tours:** During recruitment season, we offer tours of the school where students and families can visit classrooms to see what the place looks and feels like with real live students and teachers in action.
3. **Student Shadowing:** Students who get a spot for the following year are invited to spend a day or half day shadowing a student.
4. **Advertising:** All information sessions were advertised in a variety of local papers.

Our retention strategies center on providing academic support and challenge for every student. Our teachers are trained at Differentiated Instruction which allows us to work with heterogeneous groups of students in ways that

help each student get what they need in order to learn well. Additional supports are available through after school help and Title I tutoring.

We also ask for frequent feedback to help individuals get what they need and to solicit ideas that might make the school better. This open and responsive approach helps us serve our students and families in ways that make them want to stay.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM SUCCESS

Accountability Plan Objectives and Measures

OBJECTIVE 6: English Language Arts

Students at Four Rivers Charter Public School will be able to read with strong comprehension, analysis and interpretation, and write with clarity and skill for different purposes and audiences.

Measures

- 6a** MCAS: 75% of students who have attended Four Rivers Charter Public School (FRCPS) for at least two years will attain Proficiency on the English Language Arts MCAS in the 10th grade, and at least 90% will pass in 10th grade.

Progress toward the goal: *Based on Spring 2009 results, the goal was met; 97% of all 10th graders, who had been at the school for at least 2 years, performed at proficient level or above. All 10th graders passed.*

- 6b** MCAS: 65% of students will attain Proficiency on the ELA MCAS in the 8th grade, and at least 90% will pass.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met with 85% of 8th graders performing at the proficient level or above and 96% passing the Spring 2009 ELA MCAS.*

- 6c** MCAS: Students in grade 8 and 10 will achieve results on the 8th and 10th grade ELA MCAS at or above the average of the Franklin County schools from which these students were drawn. (Note: average scores of the sending schools will be calculated as weighted mean.)

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met. Four Rivers 10th grade students attained proficiency in ELA MCAS at a rate 21% above the average scored by their sending districts. Students in 8th taking the ELA MCAS attained proficiency 9% above the average scored by their sending districts.*

- 6d** Adequate Yearly Progress: The school will meet its annual targets in English Language Arts in aggregate and in sub groups.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met.*

- 6e** Progress Reports: 90% of all students will pass all standards in English at the end of the year.

Progress toward the goal: *Teachers report that 87% of their students passed all standards in English by the end of the year. After summer tutoring and make-up work is completed it is anticipated that 98% of students will have met the goal.*

OBJECTIVE 7: Math

Students at Four Rivers Charter Public School will be able to apply mathematical knowledge and skills to solve problems.

Measures

- 7a** MCAS: 65% of students who have attended FRCPS for at least two years will attain Proficiency on the Math MCAS in the 10th grade, and at least 90% will pass in 10th grade.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met. Of 10th graders who had attended the school for at least two years, 88% performed at proficient or above on the Spring 2009 Math MCAS and 94% passed.*

- 7b** MCAS: 60% of students will attain Proficiency on the Math MCAS in the 8th grade, and at least 90% will pass.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was not met; 47% of 8th graders performed at proficient or above in the 2009 Math MCAS, and 75% passed..*

- 7c** MCAS: Students in grades 8 and 10 will achieve results on the 8th and 10th grade Math MCAS at or above the average scores of the Franklin County schools from which these students were drawn.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met. Four Rivers 8th grade students attained proficiency in the Spring 2009 Math MCAS at a rate 6% above the average scored by their sending districts. Students in 10th taking the Spring 2009 Math MCAS attained proficiency at a rate 17% above the average scored by their sending districts.*

- 7d** Adequate Yearly Progress: The school will meet its annual targets in Math in aggregate and in sub groups.

Progress toward the goal: *This goal was not met in the aggregate or in sub groups.*

- 7e** Progress Reports: 90% of all students will pass all standards in Math at the end of the year.

Progress toward the goal: *Teachers report that 85% of students passed all Math standards at the end of the school year. It is anticipated that 95% will pass all Math standards once summer make-up work is completed.*

OBJECTIVE 8: Science

Students at Four Rivers Charter Public School will be able to apply scientific knowledge and methods to solve problems and conduct experiments and research.

Measures

- 8a** MCAS: Students in grades 8 and 10 will achieve results on the 8th and 10th grade Science MCAS at or above the average scores of the Franklin County schools from which these students were drawn.

Progress toward the goal: *This goal was met. Four Rivers 8th grade students attained proficiency in the Spring 2009 Science MCAS at a rate 10% above the average scored by their sending districts. Students in 10th taking the Spring 2009 Biology MCAS attained proficiency 23% above the average scored by their sending districts.*

8b Research: 95% of students will successfully complete a Science research project related to the school themes annually.

Progress toward the goal: *This goal was not met. Only 93% of students completed a science research project related to the school themes. Examples of especially strong research projects include: “What is Waste - Where is Away”, grade 7; Farm projects in grade 9; and Mutagen research projects in grade 10.*

8c Progress Reports: 90% of all students will pass all standards in Science at the end of the year.

Progress toward the goal: *This goal was met. Science teachers report that 90% of students met all Science standards at the end of the year. It is anticipated that 95% of students will meet all the standards once summer make-up work is complete.*

OBJECTIVE 9: Social Studies/History

Students at Four Rivers Charter Public School will be able to apply historical insights and research skills to better understand United States and world history.

Measures

9a MCAS: Students who have attended FRCPS for at least two years will achieve results on the 10th or 11th grade Social Studies/History MCAS at or above the average scores of the Franklin County schools from which these students were drawn.

Progress toward the goal: *The Social Studies/MCAS was discontinued by the Commonwealth due to budget constraints.*

9b Research: 95% of students will successfully complete a Social Studies/History research project related to the school’s themes annually.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met. Social Studies teachers report 95% of students successfully completed a Social Studies/History research project related to the school’s themes.*

9c Progress Reports: 90% of all students will pass all standards in Social Studies/History at the end of the year.

Progress toward the goal: *This goal was not met. Social Studies teachers report that 82% of students passed all standards in Social Studies/History at the end of the year. It is anticipated that 96% will pass all standards once summer make-up work is completed.*

Common School Performance Criteria – Academic Program Success

Curriculum

For the most part, the school did not make any significant changes to the curriculum this past year. The description of curriculum elements therefore remains unchanged:

The school’s curriculum is organized by subject area, with course standards established in every subject every year. Teachers work through their grade level or division teams to coordinate curriculum for each group of students, while subject area teams have continued building coherent scope and sequence. Subject area teams began drafting program statements to describe and define broad learning targets students will aim towards in each program, work which will continue over this next school year. In addition, we identified school wide learning

targets to guide our overall program. These outcomes are the categories for our end of year portfolio reflections. Taken together, course standards, subject area targets, and school wide targets define the knowledge and skill we expect students to develop through their learning at Four Rivers. Course overviews and developing program statements give a more specific picture of the curriculum.

One change was the addition of Guided Reading and Mathletics in the 7th and 8th grade to help us focus on and develop students' fundamental skills. Students had one class or the other for 3 short sessions each week. Teachers felt positive about the first year of these classes.

One other significant effort this past year was a close study of 7th and 8th grade math and science MCAS scores. In light of the school not meeting AYP for Mathematics, we wanted to try to understand what changes might be needed. We discovered through this study a number of areas that students did not do as well on as they might have. Teachers are using that information to adjust their curriculum for next year. In addition, we purchased the second editions of Connect Math texts which do a better job of helping students develop skills while taking a problem-solving approach.

Instruction

When someone visits Four Rivers, we hope that they will see ENGAGED LEARNING in every classroom. They might observe the following evidence of that engagement:

- Eyes and ears focused on the teacher's instructions.
- Groups of students solving problems, asking each other questions, suggesting possible solutions, making decisions, discussing a text etc.
- Looking at documents to build background knowledge.
- Individuals or partners involved in a lab, following careful laboratory procedures, and thinking like scientists.
- Taking notes on a mini-lesson.
- Whole class discussion, responding to the teacher's questions.
- Constructing knowledge through inquiry as they piece together information or respond to a text or record observations, moving towards statements of understanding.
- Wrestling with new questions or new information or new skills.
- Generating a list of criteria for good quality work.

To achieve this engagement, there are several INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES that we have learned together or that are common throughout the school:

LEARNING TARGETS

These define the broad academic standards and the day to day objectives students are working towards. Often they will be written on the board and reviewed by the teacher at the beginning of class. Students should know what skills or knowledge they are learning.

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

The goal of differentiating instruction is to enable each student in our classrooms to continually progress and to stretch. To simplify, the basic steps of differentiating instruction include the following:

- Teachers are clear about the essential facts, concepts, principles, and skills that frame their subject -- "What do you want each student to come away with as a result of this activity?"
- Teachers seek information to help them understand each student's point of entry and progress in learning.
- Teachers attempt to match curriculum and instruction to the learner's readiness, interest, or learning profile.

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

These practices emphasize continual formative assessment to help students know their strengths and focus on what they still need to learn. It involves helping students develop a clear vision of the content standards they are responsible for learning, offering effective feedback related to the learning targets, teaching students to self-assess, peer-assess, and set goals for further learning, designing focused practice and revision opportunities, and engaging students in tracking, reflecting on, and sharing their progress.

ACTIVE PEDAGOGY

Teachers structure lessons so that teachers talk less and students talk more; the students do the thinking and the work. Teachers sometimes start a lesson or an investigation with a complex or provocative problem and build skills, vocabulary, and concepts on a “need to know” basis. Teachers sometimes start a lesson or an investigation with an experience to generate curiosity. Lessons incorporate strategies to build curiosity and have a sense of urgency and purpose. During independent work times, teachers actively engage and guide students (e.g., confer with students, pull small invitational groups, etc.).

Some of our teachers have been at the school for years working on these practices. Others have joined us more recently and at earlier stages of learning them. While there is a range of implementation, we expect that everyone is moving in the same direction.

Much of our work on instruction continued the work of previous years. The school continued to work on two key areas of instructional practice – learning expeditions and active pedagogy. Through our contract with Expeditionary Learning, teachers engaged in monthly workshops, offsite trainings, and ongoing conversation and feedback around these practices. Part of that work involves learning better what these practices look like. The other part is the planning and implementation. The learning expedition work involves designing long term projects that engage students’ literacy, numeracy, and thinking skills, that call on them to develop content understanding, and that ask them to produce real products for real audiences whenever possible. To do that takes an enormous amount of planning from teachers. The active pedagogy work is about learning day to day practices that engage students and put them in the role of actively constructing their understanding and developing skills. Expectations for instruction are conveyed to teachers by the staff Field Guide and school documents, by the Principal, and by the school’s Expeditionary Learning consultants. For students, they come to understand the aims of our instruction through their day to day experience. We continually tell them how we are approaching their learning and they come to do a great deal of thinking about how our school does things.

We also did considerable work this year on Differentiated Instruction. After building common understanding of these practices, all teachers committed to take initial or further steps to implement them. Teachers worked on their own and through Peer Coaching Teams.

Program Evaluation

The school does several things to gather information – both qualitative and quantitative – on the success of our academic program.

1. The Leadership Team meets every two weeks to discuss and process any questions and concerns that come up in the day to day life of the school. This group makes continuous assessments of and adjustments to teaching and learning in the school.
2. At the midyear and the end of the year, surveys were distributed to all families, students, and staff. The results of these surveys get summarized and categorized by how able we might be to turn results into actions.
3. In the fall, subject area teams reviewed MCAS results from the previous spring. Item analysis told us which standards we covered well and which might need more attention.
4. For students entering 7th grade, diagnostic assessments were administered in reading and math to identify students that might need extra support through Title I services.
5. At the end of each term, students and families receive clear information about where they succeeded or struggled in their learning. Grading and report cards are standards-based, along with narrative comments that describe the big picture of how a student is doing. By knowing our students well and by clearly

defining the learning targets we're aiming for, we have a great deal of information about student learning in the school.

6. Students complete portfolios each year, reflecting on what they've learned and how they've learned. In passage years (8th, 10th, and 12th), students have to prove their readiness to move on to the next level. This process shows us a great deal about what students are learning well.
7. In general, our assessment practices through Expeditionary Learning are formative. We use these "assessment for learning" practices on a day to day basis to set clear learning targets, assess what students are learning, and then give feedback and adjust instruction to help them learn what they need to learn.
8. This past year, more teachers are trying to use pre-assessments and differentiated instruction to get specific data on what students understand in order to better target the instruction different students need to move forward.
9. This past year we used the new Data Warehouse to better track longitudinal progress of the students who stay in our school.
10. This past year, an administrative intern did a thorough item analysis of our 7th and 8th grade math and science results, looking for patterns that might help us adjust our curriculum and instruction.
11. For next year, we have purchased additional diagnostic tools in order to assess all students in grades 7-10 as they enter our school.

School Culture

The following are policies and structures in place to create a school culture that supports student learning and to further the implementation of the school's mission:

1. The Dean of Students was in his second year with primary responsibility for discipline as well as the positive side of school culture in our school, which we work on through our Crew Program, student leadership, community meetings, and community wide events.
2. We continued to work on more consistent interpretation, enforcement, and follow through on school rules and policies.
3. We significantly revised our Student and Family Handbook to establish clear principles and expectations for behavior that our students learn and understand.
4. In terms of disciplinary actions this past year, we continued our use of in-school-suspensions, which became more possible with the new Dean of Students role. We saw a decrease in the number of students receiving blue slips (our disciplinary referrals) and students who did receive them did not receive as many.
5. While there was a decrease in minor incidences, we had a significant number of more serious suspensions. There was a physical fight between two ninth graders in September. There were four minor incidents of substance possession and use over the winter. And then there were a total of 13 suspensions for drug possession in April and May resulting from an investigation into drug transactions in the high school. On the one hand, this gives us significant concern about our school culture and we are working hard this summer to clarify and strengthen our practices around substance use prevention. On the other hand, we took significant action to address an issue that is present in most schools, which might very well strengthen our school culture.

Diverse Learners

Four Rivers has strong Academic Support Services for the diverse learners that come to our school. The following items describe how the school implemented accommodations that address the needs of diverse learners at Four Rivers last year:

1. We worked with 21 students on Individualized Education Plans and 12 students on Section 504 Plans.
2. In addition, approximately 12-15 students had Student Success Plans overseen by their advisor and teachers.

3. Additional students took advantage of Title I after school and summer tutoring.
4. With each of these students, we follow state and federal regulations regarding evaluations, meetings to develop plans, implementation of accommodations, and the monitoring and adjustment of those accommodations.
5. A part-time special education director and our School Psychologist led the team of 3 Learning Specialists and 3 Teacher Assistants in providing these services.
6. Regular education teachers and the special education teachers met weekly to review all students on plans to discuss each student's progress and to clarify or adjust classroom accommodations.
7. The Learning Specialists provide in class support, direct specialized instruction, and Learning Center support depending on each student's IEP. Overall, there is the sense that our academic support services have been delivered with professionalism and great care.
8. We also began the 2009-10 school year with a 3-day workshop on Differentiated Instruction, which taught us strategies and tools from Expeditionary Learning to help us make accommodations with all of our students. This was a significant focus for our professional development work during the 2009-10 school year.
9. For 2009-2010, the school has made a significant investment to strengthen academic support services further with the creation of a new half-time position, the Academic Support Director. This role draws together responsibility for all major programs related to academic support.
10. The school currently does not serve any English language learners.

Supervision and Evaluation of Teachers

This year the school implemented revised and clarified processes for teacher supervision, as described below:

The policies that follow define the practices and procedures by which all staff in the school are evaluated. Their purpose is to ensure the quality of teaching and fulfillment of job responsibilities in our school.

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

1. **Goal Setting:** By October 1, teachers submit 2-4 professional goals for the year ahead. These are the same individual goals for Peer Coaching Groups. Goals should be related to the Teacher Job Description or "Key Qualities for Effective Four Rivers Teacher" when possible. The Principal may also require specific goals. The Principal meets with each teacher to review goals and expected outcomes for the coming year.
2. **Performance Data:** The Principal observes teachers and gathers data on performance through the following means and may require additional documents, supporting information, or observations to complete an evaluation:
 - a. Teachers submit documents to the Principal, including but not limited to: course overviews, expedition overviews, project assignments and product descriptors.
 - b. The Principal conducts periodic walkthroughs and informal observations.
 - c. The Principal observes teachers new to the school at least 2 times by November 1.
 - d. For teachers with more than 3 years in the school, the Principal conducts at least one formal observation every 2 years.
 - e. For teachers with less than 3 years in the school, the Principal conducts at least one formal observation each year.
 - f. By November 1 and March 1 of each semester, the school conducts a simple anonymous student survey for each of their teachers (see attached template). The data is gathered in a report and reviewed by the teacher and the Principal.
 - g. Teachers may submit other artifacts or documentation if they wish by March 15.
3. **Notice of Concern:** When concerns arise regarding a teacher's performance, the Principal discusses the concern with the teacher, discusses relevant expectations, and documents the communication.
4. **Improvement Plans:** With teachers for whom there are known areas of concern that could lead to non-renewal, the Principal discusses the concern with the teacher, discusses relevant expectations, and documents the communication. The teacher submits an Improvement Plan – approved by the Principal -- by January 1 at the latest.

EVALUATION PROCESS

1. Performance Reviews: By April 1, the Principal completes a performance review for all teachers with less than 3 years in the school. For teachers with more than 3 years in the school, the Principal completes a performance review at least every 2 years. Note that target performance on meeting criteria may be measured against years of experience. Newer teachers might not be expected to meet all criteria right away and more veteran teachers might be expected to be closer to meeting all criteria.
2. Renewal: The Principal informs all teachers of their renewal status for the following year by the April break. There may be circumstances under which a teacher with no Improvement Plan is not renewed for the following year.
3. Letters of Agreement: Teachers receive letters of agreement for the next year by June 1.

KEY QUALITIES FOR AN EFFECTIVE FOUR RIVERS TEACHER:

At Four Rivers, we ask that every teacher demonstrates that he or she...

- Respects and cares for the students
- Works well with colleagues
- Sees parents as partners in helping the student succeed
- Is deeply engaged with his or her subject area (is a student, too)
- Wants to grow, personally and professionally, in a balanced way
- Is committed to our mission and themes
- Works with EL methods to achieve our mission
- Wants to help build Four Rivers into an exemplary charter school

<i>These qualities are to be reviewed annually for full-time faculty by self, peer, and the Principal, with ratings of Beginning, Approaching, Meeting, Exceeding (or Not Applicable) for each key quality.</i>	BG	AP	MT	EX
1) Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment				
a) Develops coherent curriculum, aligned to state curriculum frameworks and Four Rivers curriculum goals, and implements curriculum in clear and well-designed units of instruction				
b) Sets explicit course standards for each trimester, and provides learning targets, rubrics and models to support students in meeting standards				
c) Demonstrates a growing understanding and application of the Expeditionary Learning core pedagogical practices of "Learning Expeditions" and "Active Pedagogy"				
d) Provides multiple and varied opportunities for success for all students				
e) Uses assessment to understand and improve student learning				
f) Uses school themes to advance student engagement and learning				
2) Classroom Management and Climate				
a) Shows enthusiasm for and knowledge of the subject(s) being taught				
b) Knows and understands students' needs and abilities				
c) Manages instructional groups, time, and material in productive ways				
d) Sets clear expectations for positive student behavior in class and on fieldwork				
e) Monitors and responds effectively to inappropriate behavior or attitudes				
f) Maintains safe, orderly, and attractive physical space				
3) Character and Community				
a) Models Four Rivers character virtues, employs them in teaching, and recognizes students who demonstrate them				
b) Helps to create and maintain a culture where learning is valued and there is pride in hard work and achievement				
c) Serves as effective advisor for individual students and for his or her crew (or, if not an advisor, in other ways supports student growth in academic and personal goal-setting)				
d) Upholds and enforces school-wide expectations and norms (conduct out of classroom and in common areas, handbook guidelines, discipline procedures and safety, etc.)				

e)	Supports service and community-building activities				
f)	Communicates with parents or guardians in positive and proactive ways				
4) Professional Responsibilities and School Goals					
a)	Participates fully in faculty meetings and assigned committees, and adheres to established norms for working together in groups				
b)	Engages in on-going professional development, driven by annual goal setting, and stays current with best practices in area of responsibility				
c)	Uses reflection and awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses to improve teaching (and participation in school community)				
d)	Supports colleagues in their professional growth and effective teaching				
e)	Keeps accurate records and submits progress reports in a correct and timely manner, and in other ways meets administrative responsibilities well				
f)	Shares responsibility for attainment of identified school goals, such as yearly Four Rivers school improvement goals, EL implementation goals, the accountability plan goals, and dissemination goals				

Professional Development

The following items describe the major professional development activities undertaken this past school year:

1. Almost all of our professional development activities happen under our contract with Expeditionary Learning.
2. That contract provided 10 on site consultant days which included classroom observations, one on one coaching, and whole school workshops.
3. The contract also provided over 30 days of off site training on specific EL principles and practices.
4. At the end of the year, the EL consultants who worked with us conducted surveys and a full Implementation Review to describe our progress and possible next steps for our further development.
5. As mentioned in other parts of this report, we focused specifically on Differentiated Instruction. We also continued to focus on developing learning expeditions and strengthening active pedagogy in our classrooms. The entire staff except three teachers participated in a workshop on Differentiated Instruction that led directly to this past year's whole school focus.
6. Our overall approach to professional development is to focus on a few practices that we want to learn together, to get trained in those practices, and then to work together throughout the year to implement them.
7. According to our latest review, the school is at strong levels of implementation with many EL core practices. Our school improvement plan for 2010-2011 identifies Assessment and Grading as our professional development focus for next year.

ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY

Accountability Plan Objectives and Measures

OBJECTIVE 10: Enrollment

Four Rivers Charter Public School will maintain full or nearly full enrollment.

Measures

10a The school will maintain enrollment at or above 97% of its enrollment cap each year.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was not met. The school reported 193 students enrolled as of October 1, 2009, which is 91% of the 212 enrollment cap. The school ended the year in June 2010 with 187 students, or 88% of the enrollment cap.

10b 90% of the students eligible and able to return to Four Rivers Charter Public School will reenroll for the following year.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was not met. Out of 162 students enrolled at the end of the 2008-09 school year and eligible to return, 134 re-enrolled in 2009-10, or 83%.

10c Applications each year will exceed the number of places available by at least 25%.

Progress toward the goal: This goal was met. For the 2009-10 school year, Four Rivers received 164 applications for 61 openings, a demand ratio of 2.7 (270%).

OBJECTIVE 11: Faculty

Four Rivers Charter Public School will retain highly qualified, committed and effective full-time teachers.

Measures

11a The school will retain annually 75% of the full-time teachers who have received good or outstanding evaluations and whose circumstances allow them to continue teaching at Four Rivers Charter Public School.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met. All teachers except one will be returning to teach next year, or 94%.

11b In an annual survey, at least 75% of the parents responding will report satisfaction with the effectiveness of the faculty in areas of academic challenge, support, and communication.

Progress toward the goal: The goal was met. 84% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that they are satisfied with the amount of academic challenge in their child's program. 89% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that they are satisfied with the amount of support in their child's program. 82% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that communication from and with teachers is easy and adequate.

OBJECTIVE 12: Board

The Board of Trustees, as the governing body of Four Rivers Charter Public School, will fulfill its responsibilities to set policies, monitor progress, and plan effectively for the needs of the school.

Measures

- 12a** The Board will hold at least 11 monthly meetings each year and maintain membership consistent with the by-laws.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met.*

- 12b** In an annual evaluation of the school leader conducted by the designated committee of the Board, at least 80% of the approved annual goals for the school leader will be met.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met.*

- 12c** The Board will monitor progress in meeting the objectives and measures in the school's Accountability Plan through semi-annual reports from the school leader and will, as needed, call for and track an action plan to improve performance in deficient areas.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was partially met. Data relevant to the Accountability Plan was presented throughout the year and the Board was kept up to date through a Principal's Report at each meeting. The Board is currently working to develop a data dashboard that would more clearly track the school's important goals.*

- 12d** The Board will develop, implement, and assess a Board Action Plan annually.

Progress toward the goal: *The goal was met.*

OBJECTIVE 13: Finance

Four Rivers Charter Public School will be a fiscally sound and solvent organization.

Measures

- 13a** Annual expenditures, excluding depreciation, will not exceed annual revenues.

Progress toward the goal: *This goal was met. It has been met every year of the school's existence, and in fact has also had a net operating gain every year including depreciation.*

- 13b** The school will attain a cash reserve equivalent to three months' operating expenses by the end of its second charter term.

Progress toward the goal: *This goal was met. The school attained this goal in the last operating quarter of its first charter term and is maintaining it.*

- 13c** The school will meet the annual fundraising goals established by the Board of Trustees in the annual approved operating budget.

Progress toward the goal: *This goal was met. The school budgeted \$15,000 to be raised from the annual Sustainability Fund in FY 2010. Actual results were \$16,280, but the school has not drawn that into income for FY2010, but is leaving it in reserve with exception of designated gifts.*

13dThe annual independent audit for Four Rivers Charter Public School will report no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses.

Progress toward the goal: *This goal was met, as it has been met in every past year.*

Common School Performance Criteria – Organizational Viability

Policy Decisions

The following are the major policy decisions made by the school’s board of trustees this past year:

1. The Board approved new evaluation policies for faculty and staff.
2. The Board approved a Work Life Committee, which is a group within the school to discuss, recommend, and make improvements to work life in the school. Any agreements made by the new committee also come to the Board for approval.
3. The Board approved major administrative and faculty salary scale changes based upon more refined and competitive benchmarking studies.
4. The Board approved criteria for major budget initiatives.
5. The Board approved a capital plan for next year.
6. Systems for decision-making and communication within the school employ a four-quadrant grid distinguishing among administrative, administrative with input, consensus, and delegated decisions. We have also discussed and clarified what decisions happen at the board level and which are for management.

Amendments to the Charter

The only amendment to our charter this year was revised bylaws in order to conform to state regulations.

Complaints

The board received two complaints this year, both related to disciplinary investigations that took place this spring. The two complaints referred to issues involving investigation practices and how disciplinary situations were handled by the administration.

The board chair convened a group to gather information and make recommendations to the full board, all with the guidance of school counsel.

With the Board’s approval, the chair sent a letter of response for each complaint. No disciplinary actions were taken, but the school has reflected on the issues raised and will be proposing revised policies and practices related to school discipline and discipline investigations.

Oversight

The following are steps taken by the board of trustees to assess the performance of the school and school leader this past year:

1. The board of trustees monitors the school's achievement and progress through enrollment figures, finances, the school's test results, and anecdotal evidence of stories and observations from the day to day life of the school.
2. Much of the board's official assessment has been tied to the formal evaluation process of the head of school. That evaluation was completed at the midyear in order to determine whether the head of school would be offered a contract for next year. The normal schedule for evaluating the head of school will take place during the summer so that it can be determined by December whether the head of school will be asked to return the following year. That schedule is now in place, with a formal end of year evaluation being completed now.
3. The full faculty and staff are invited to offer feedback on both positions.
4. Students and parents are surveyed regularly for feedback on the overall school performance. This year, formal surveys were completed at the midyear and at the end of the year. Parents and students also gave feedback on the head of school.
5. The board established an Accountability Committee with the job of monitoring the school's performance results and making any recommendations about program changes needed to strengthen those results.
6. The focus of the board's retreat in April was data. What data does it want to see on a regular basis in order to monitor the school's progress? We are reviewing our Accountability Plan for possible revisions and to see whether a more compact data dashboard might be useful.

Board Planning

The Board did not establish or pursue any planning outside of its normal functioning this past year. Given a transition in school leadership, a new board chair, and several new trustees, our emphasis this year was on solidifying normal practice.

Family Satisfaction

The school conducted a midyear survey of all families and staff, and an end of year survey with all families, staff, and students. These results gave us great deal of information about where people are satisfied and where they'd like to see improvements. Specific results from these surveys are presented throughout this annual report, as well as below:

Annual Parent Survey Please rate the following aspects of our EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM.					
Answer Options	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure
A. I generally understand the educational approach at Four Rivers.	24	49	0	0	1
B. Academic expectations are clear.	25	45	1	0	3
C. I am satisfied with the amount of academic challenge in my child's program.	14	48	9	1	2
D. The progress reports help me understand my child's achievement.	17	46	7	1	2
E. I am satisfied with the amount of homework assigned to my child.	13	46	9	4	1
F. I am satisfied with the amount of academic support and extra help available to my child.	20	46	5	0	1
G. My child is held to higher academic expectations than at his or her previous school.	29	24	12	2	5
H. The school succeeds in creating a positive social and emotional environment.	28	33	5	3	4
I. Behavioral expectations are clear.	30	35	4	1	3
J. The school is helping my child grow as a person and develop his or her strengths of character.	34	33	5	0	2
K. I believe that at least one of my child's teachers knows and understands him or her well.	38	28	2	1	5

Annual Parent Survey Overall, how do you rate the quality of Communication, Activities and Administration?					
Answer Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure
A. The newsletter and mailings provide good communication with the school.	29	42	3	0	0
B. Communication from and with teachers is easy and adequate.	18	43	9	3	1
C. Communication from and with the school administration is easy and adequate.	21	38	11	1	3
D. The school has built a strong sense of community among students, staff and families.	22	33	10	5	4
E. Four Rivers has had a positive impact on my involvement with my child's education.	20	42	6	2	2
F. I support the school through Family Council participation or other volunteer activities.	14	34	16	0	7
G. I am satisfied with the current after-school offerings.	5	37	22	3	5
H. My child would join in more after school activities if a greater variety were offered.	15	33	12	2	11

Annual Student Survey Please rate the following aspects of our EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM.					
Answer Options	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure
I generally understand the educational approach at Four Rivers.	23	82	5	3	10
Academic expectations are clear.	20	88	7	2	6
I am satisfied with the amount of academic challenge in my program.	10	83	15	7	8
The progress reports help me understand my achievement.	20	73	12	4	14
I am satisfied with the amount of homework assigned.	5	66	23	21	7
I am satisfied with the amount of academic support available.	24	76	12	3	6
I am held to higher expectations than at my previous school or schools my friends go to.	36	69	8	6	4
The school succeeds in creating a positive social and emotional environment.	16	79	11	9	8
Behavioral expectations are clear.	16	88	7	3	8
The school is helping me grow as a person and develop my strengths of character.	15	68	15	6	18
I believe that at least one of my teachers knows and understands me well.	30	55	20	4	12

Annual Student Survey Overall, how do you rate the quality of Communication, Activities and Administration?					
Answer Options	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
The newsletter and mailings create a good communication system within the school.	8	61	21	6	23
Communication from and with most teachers is easy and adequate.	12	73	16	5	14
Communication from and with the school administration is generally easy and adequate.	5	58	24	7	26
The school has built a strong sense of community among students, staff and families.	11	66	11	11	21
I would join in more after school activities if a greater variety were offered.	32	44	12	9	24
I am satisfied with the current after-school offerings.	5	45	34	16	20

Financial Oversight

The following are items that describe how the school developed a budget this past year:

1. Guided by the school's Director of Operations, the administrative team began budget planning last winter.
2. Following past practices, year-to-date expenditures and program priorities and projected changes were modeled.
3. The Finance Committee of the Board received updates monthly and provided feedback as the process took place.
4. The DESE recommendations regarding potential revenue shortfalls were included in three scenarios ranging from a 5% lower tuition rate to a 10% lower tuition rate for FT2010.
5. Historical benchmarking of Four Rivers' salary structures against those of the sending districts were updated and applied to salary schedules for faculty and staff.
6. Salary schedules were created for administration.
7. Expected attrition in 11th and 12th grade enrollment necessitated a lower than desired enrollment of 190, with program and recruitment plans developed to fill a portion of the student spaces and improve future retention.

V. Recruitment and Retention Plan

I. Recruitment Plan

List the strategies the school will use during the upcoming school year to attract and enroll a student population that reflects the demographics of the school's sending district(s), using comparison data provided by the Department. Include plans for a minimum of three specific subgroups.

Four Rivers has been interested in increasing the diversity of our student population for several years. While Franklin County does not have great racial diversity, there is considerable socio-economic and cultural diversity. Some data shows that our low income students outperform low income students from our sending districts and the state, so we might be very well suited to serve more of this population.

Student Recruitment Plan
<p>Demographic Group # 1: Limited English-proficient students</p> <p>Recruitment Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hold outreach sessions to build initial interest: With populations not currently attending the school's standard information sessions, we would like to go to them and meet with families on their own turf, so to speak. These outreach sessions will take place during November and December in order to draw these new families to our standard sessions in January and February. We intend to reach out through the following area institutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Center for New Americans (Greenfield) ii. Western MA Legal Services (Northampton) 413-584-4034 iii. Nuestras Raices (Holyoke) iv. Greenfield Community Youth Center (Greenfield) b. Distribute Spanish language brochures and meeting announcements through the same organizations. c. Advertise in area Spanish language publications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. El Sol Latino in Amherst ii. El Pueblo Latino, part of the Springfield Republican d. Provide transportation to scheduled information sessions at the school: Using our school buses, we can pick up at various locations on the days of our information sessions to bring people to the school.
<p>Demographic Group # 2: Students eligible for free lunch</p> <p>Recruitment Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hold outreach sessions to build initial interest: With populations not currently attending the school's standard information sessions, we would like to go to them and meet with families on their own turf, so to speak. These outreach sessions will take place during November and December in order to draw these new families to our standard sessions in January and February. We intend to reach out through the following groups and institutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Leyden Woods (Greenfield) ii. Greenfield Gardens, 58 Pray Drive, 413-774-4904 iii. Center for Self Reliance, 31/2 Osgood Street, 413-773-5029 iv. Salvation Army, 72 Chapman Street, 413-773-3154 v. DIAL/SELF Teen Services, 21 Abbott Street, Greenfield, MA. vi. Greenfield Youth Center, 20 Sanderson Street, Greenfield, MA, 775-0144

vii. Community Action! Youth Programs, 154 Federal Street, 774-7028

- b. Distribute brochures and meeting announcements through the same organizations.
- c. Provide transportation to scheduled information sessions at the school: Using our school buses, we can pick up at various locations on the days of our information sessions to bring people to the school.

Demographic Group # 3: Students eligible for reduced price lunch:

Recruitment Activities:

- a. Hold outreach sessions to build initial interest: With populations not currently attending the school's standard information sessions, we would like to go to them and meet with families on their own turf, so to speak. These outreach sessions will take place during November and December in order to draw these new families to our standard sessions in January and February. We intend to reach out through the following groups and institutions:
 - i. Leyden Woods (Greenfield)
 - ii. Greenfield Gardens, 58 Pray Drive, 413-774-4904
 - iii. Center for Self Reliance, 31/2 Osgood Street, 413-773-5029
 - iv. Salvation Army, 72 Chapman Street, 413-773-3154
 - v. DIAL/SELF Teen Services, 21 Abbott Street, Greenfield, MA.
 - vi. Greenfield Youth Center, 20 Sanderson Street, Greenfield, MA, 775-0144
 - vii. Community Action! Youth Programs, 154 Federal Street, 774-7028
- b. Distribute brochures and meeting announcements through the same organizations.
- c. Provide transportation to scheduled information sessions at the school: Using our school buses, we can pick up at various locations on the days of our information sessions to bring people to the school.

VI. Dissemination and Sharing of Innovative Practices

This description should provide evidence that the school has provided models for replication and best practices to other public schools in the district where the charter school is located and has collaborated with its sending district on the sharing of innovative practices

Four Rivers hosted a number of visitors from public and private institutions interested in learning more about our school's practices.

1. A reporter from the Greenfield Recorder interviewed students for an article that appeared locally about project-based learning.
2. A Division 3 social studies class on educational policy hosted Ken Danford, the leader of North Star which is a home schooling organization.
3. Two teachers and three students from Covenant School in Lexington, MA came to observe community meeting and to speak with our Dean of Students about structures that contribute to strong school culture.
4. A group writing a charter application for a new Expeditionary Learning school in the Berkshires visited to learn more about our school wide structures that support learning and school culture.
5. Les Edinson, lead developer of a new public school district assistance center, visited to discuss areas which Four Rivers might be able to show as best practices.
6. John Bickart & Pablo Samuels visited Dean of Students Matt Leaf to look at Four Rivers as an example of school using the EL model.
7. Mark Kenen, Executive Director of the MA Charter School Association visited Division 3 classes on education policy.
8. A reporter from The Springfield Republican interviewed teacher Mandy Locke for a story on the 7th grade cookbook that benefited the local food bank.
9. Students from the Clark School visited our 8th grade. We have a program with this school for the deaf through which their students practice interacting with students in a mainstreamed school.
10. Member of the Greenfield Planning Board, Roxann Wedegartner, and developer Jordi Herold joined division 3 students for their presentations on Envisioning Greenfield.
11. Sue Gentile, professor from Antioch New England, brought a visiting professor from Washington State, Victor Nolet, to see Expeditionary Learning and learning for sustainability in action.
12. Ashley Mostaghini, with a group from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, visited to gather enrollment data for a study comparing performance results of students who attend a charter school with those from its waiting list.

In addition to hosting these visitors, Four Rivers staff again presented master classes at the Expeditionary Learning National Conference held in Kansas City in February:

1. Seventh grade Math/Science teacher, Mandy Locke, and current Dean of Students, Matt Leaf, presented their model learning expedition on a Vernal Pool project.
2. Division 3 teacher Andy Stenson presented on Senior Projects.
3. Principal Peter Garbus presented on building faculty culture.

VII. Financial Reports

SCHOOL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND INFORMATION (Un-audited) Year Ended June 30, 2010

The following financial statements and information have been prepared by the management of the school and are un-audited.

Financial Highlights

Four Rivers Charter Public School had revenues of \$2,59,246 for the year ended June 30, 2010. The school had net income (change in net assets) of \$49,125 for the year, which was comprised of operating income of \$36,744 and non-operating revenues of \$12,381.

Results of Operations

Positive variances from the adopted budget were related to greater per-pupil tuition rates than anticipated and greater federal grant funding than anticipated. The loss on athletic services was much lower than budget. No funds were spent from the Contingency account.

Negative variances were greater salary costs than budgeted and greater occupancy costs.

Other variances were due to grant timing between fiscal years.

During the fiscal year ended June 30, 2010, Four Rivers Charter Public School had 192 students and received \$2,448,760 in per pupil tuition, which represents 95% of the school's revenue. In addition, Four Rivers Charter School received various federal and state grants, which totaled \$123,754.

Budget for Fiscal Year 2011

The budget presented for the 2009-2010 school year reflects an enrollment of 196 students. The budget also reflects an assumption of an approximately 1% decrease in per-pupil tuition rates due to the economic uncertainty of state and local budgets. There are no capital expenditures planned for FY 2011.

Four Rivers Charter Public School Schedule of State and Federal Grants Received Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2010 (un-audited)

Grants - State	200
Grants - Federal	
SPED 274	1,325
ARRA IDEA	17,763
ARRA Title I	3,543
Rural Education Assistance Program	31,034
SPED 240	40,141
Title 1	27,509
Title II	2,239
	123,554

Four Rivers Charter Public School
STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENSES,
AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
Fiscal Year 2010
Preliminary and Un-audited

Current Assets	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 637,030
Accounts receivable	3,639
Grants receivable	25,080
Prepaid expense	<u>18,041</u>
Total current assets	<u>683,790</u>
Noncurrent Assets	
Capital Assets	
Land	-
Buildings	-
Leasehold improvements	51,508
Furniture and equipment	44,621
Motor vehicle	<u>73,760</u>
	169,889
Less Accumulated Depreciation	<u>95,418</u>
Total capital assets	74,471
	<u>-</u>
Total noncurrent assets	<u>74,471</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>\$ 758,261</u></u>
Current Liabilities	
Accounts payable	\$ 40,461
Accrued wages payable	141,474
Accrued payroll liabilities	6,241
Accrued expenses	697
Deferred revenue	23,396
Capital lease payable - short term	<u>8,147</u>
Total current liabilities	<u>220,416</u>
Noncurrent Liabilities	
Capital lease payable - long term	<u>10,109</u>
Total long-term liabilities	10,109
Total Liabilities	<u>230,525</u>
Net Assets	
Investment in capital assets	56,215
Unrestricted	<u>474,283</u>
Total net assets	<u>530,498</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u><u>\$ 761,023</u></u>

Four Rivers Charter Public School
INCOME STATEMENT
Fiscal Year 2010
Preliminary and Un-audited

Operating revenues	
Per-pupil revenue and fees	\$ 2,448,760
Grants	123,754
Mass health	6,397
Program, athletic and student fees	20,255
Food service fees	20,315
Expense reimbursement	<u>39,765</u>
Total operating revenues	<u>2,659,246</u>
Operating expenses	
Salaries	1,530,705
Payroll taxes	53,060
Fringe benefits	127,590
Office supplies and materials	26,334
Professional development	35,145
Dues and subscriptions	5,649
Recruitment/advertising	4,448
Travel staff/board	723
Contracted services	27,125
Instructional technology	29,553
Testing and assessment	3,531
Health services	910
Depreciation and amortization	21,867
Food services	19,767
Athletic services	5,924
Utilities and telephone	40,124
Maintenance of building and grounds	72,266
Maintenance of equipment	7,938
Rent/lease of building and grounds	496,808
Insurance	25,472
Miscellaneous	<u>87,563</u>
Total operating expenses	<u>2,622,502</u>
Operating income (loss)	<u>36,744</u>
Nonoperating revenues	
Contributions	20
Rents	4,298
Investment income	4,104
Interest expense	(2,901)
Fundraising	17,696
Fundraising expense	(10,836)
Loss on disposition of assets	<u>-</u>
Total nonoperating revenues	<u>12,381</u>
Change in net assets	49,125
Net assets - beginning of year	<u>481,373</u>
Net assets - end of year	<u><u>\$ 530,498</u></u>

**FOUR RIVERS CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL
Adopted Operating Budget
FY 2011**

Revenues

revenue from state sources

Tuition	2,480,576
Mass Health SPED and minor state grants	5,200

revenue from Federal Sources

Title I grant (FY 2010 remainder)	7,650
Title I grant	<i>award of</i> \$22,235
ARRA Title I funds	<i>award of</i> \$12,102
ARRA SPED Funds	<i>award of</i> \$31,728
REAP grant	29,073
Mass. SPED 240 Grant	40,000
Title II Part A Teacher Quality	2,359

revenue from local sources

Lease of Tech Coordinator	37,247
Sustainability Fund	15,000
Bank Interest	3,200
Rental Income net of expense	4,000
TOTAL REVENUE	2,624,305

Expenditures

Salaries

Salaries & Stipends - Faculty and Professional Staff	1,193,223
Salaries - Administrative	383,766
Salaries - Secretarial	81,967
Salaries - Custodial	17,864
<u>Subtotal-Salaries</u>	1,676,820

Fringe Benefits and Taxes

Health Insurance	129,987
Section 125 Flexible Spending Acct Fees	3,000
FICA Tax	29,278
Life Ins. & LTD	10,000
Medicare Tax	21,872
MA SUI, Workforce Training, Health taxes	4,500
<u>Subtotal- Fringe Benefits and Taxes</u>	198,637

Instructional

Professional Development & ELOB	38,000
SPED Outside Contractual Services	25,000
College advising	5,900
Internet courses	10,000
Contract Labor- Non-Instructional	2,200
Testing & Assessment	2,100
Consultants: Professional and Academic	600

SPED Instruct. Equip., & transitional course costs	700
Intensives	2,650
Orientation	1,500
Expeditions	12,000
Supplies/Materials- General Instructional	16,000
Art Supplies	2,000
Technology, Voice, Data and Software	15,070
Library Expense and Reference Books	2,000
Textbooks	10,000
<u>Subtotal- Instructional</u>	145,720

Business Services

Advertising- Enrollment and Staff Recruitment	5,000
Insurance- Student; Property, Casualty & Prof. Liab.	27,357
Workers Compensation Insurance	5,779
Legal, Technical, Consulting Services	6,000
Office Expenses	2,500
Copying Equipment & Expense	10,000
Fees, Licensing, Dues and Memberships	6,000
Meetings, Catering, Rentals, Graduation, Alumni	4,750
Payroll Service	4,200
Postage and Shipping	4,200
Printing - Outside	2,000
Travel- Admin and Board	1,000
<u>Subtotal- Business Services</u>	78,786

Operations and Maintenance

Custodial Mgmt Contract	7,000
Floor refinishing & carpeting (twice/yr.)	6,200
Grounds-snow, grass, cleanups, fertilization	26,400
Trash Removal	2,304
Pest Control	887
Elevator, HVAC Maintenance & Contracts	8,750
Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs	4,000
Property Repair & Improvements	10,000
Maintenance and Supplies	3,750
<u>Subtotal- Operations and Maintenance</u>	69,291

Student Services

Health/Nurse Supplies	900
Food (includes school lunch, net of income)	500
Fuel and Supplies for School Vehicles	3,600
<i>Sports and PE Expenses</i>	
PE / Wellness Gym Rental	1,040
Sports subsidy (Expenses net of fee income)	6,380
<u>Subtotal- Student Services</u>	12,420

Board of Trustees

Audit and Consultants	9,000
Workshops and Conferences	1,000
Interest Expense on Copier leases	3,200

<u>Subtotal- Board of Trustees</u>	13,200
TOTAL REVENUE (from above)	2,624,305
TOTAL ROUTINE OPERATING EXPENDITURES	2,591,520
INCREASE IN NET ASSETS (before depreciation)	32,785
DEPRECIATION	19,000
INCREASE IN NET ASSETS (after depreciation)	13,785
OPERATING MARGIN	0.5%

Four Rivers Charter Public School

FY 2011 Capital Plan

Planning for Facilities and Campus Expansion

When the school reached its full capacity of six grades (192 students) in FY 2008, it became clear that the facilities were in many ways inadequate for optimum learning spaces, student and faculty support spaces, and administrative spaces. Further subdivision of office spaces was nearly exhausted; more than one full time teacher was functioning in an “itinerant” status and using classrooms not adequately equipped or designed for their primary teaching subject, and full school assembly and conference space didn’t exist. Physical Education and sports activities required frequent renting of off-site fields and gymnasiums and using school owned and contracted transportation to move students back and forth during and after the academic day.

A formal survey of faculty, staff and management was undertaken in November of 2008 to catalogue and prioritize space and campus needs and presented to the FRCPS Board of Trustees’ Finance and Facilities Committee. In December, 2008 the Committee began a discussion of its role in strategic planning and presented the results of the campus and facilities survey and priorities to the Board. It began a process to define “Financial and Facilities Budgeting and Multi-Year Modeling Focus Areas and Methodological Assumptions” and to define “Minimum Economic Indicators for Major Strategic Budget Initiatives” which culminated in two guiding documents adopted and refined over FY 2009 and 2010. The purpose of these documents was to create sets of measures and indicators to guide the Board of Trustees in multi-year capital planning and other strategic budget initiatives.

With the results of the facilities and campus survey in hand, the school developed a set of minimum prioritized building requirements for an addition to an existing building or a free standing building sited nearby. The school was assisted by Kuhn-Riddle Architects and Baybutt Construction Corporation, both familiar with school construction and Four Rivers in particular. High level designs and construction costs were developed.

The acquisition of additional field space and room to add a building has also been considered and survey and appraisal work has been completed during FY 2010 by Four Rivers Educational Foundation, Inc. to enable it to gauge acquisition costs and value of nearby land.

Capital Plan for FY2011

1. In FY 2011, the Foundation will continue to explore a small acquisition of surplus property in the vicinity of the school.

2. Using the construction and project cost estimates developed in 2008 by Kuhn-Riddle Architects and Baybutt Construction, inflated by estimates projected to FY 2015, the Foundation has a goal of setting aside funds to pay for a 20% down payment of the planned \$1.5M facility project.
3. The school will develop projections of estimated costs for equipment, furnishings and technology of the facility project. A capital reserve fund plan for these costs will be established during fiscal year 2011.

VIII. Data Section

Instructional Time

Instructional Time:	
Total number of instructional days for the 2009-2010 school year:	180
First and last day of the 2009-2010 school year:	09/02/2009 06/21/2010
Length of school day (please note if schedule varies throughout the week or the year):	M,T,Th,F = 425 minutes/day W = 300 minutes; 2000 minutes/wk

Average class size: 15.42 for 2009-10; student / teacher ratio 10 to 1.

Student Enrollment Information

STUDENT Enrollment Information:	
Number of students who completed the 2008-09 school year but did not reenroll for the 2009-10 school year (excluding graduates):	28
Total number of students enrolled as of October 1, 2009:	193
Total number of students who enrolled during the 2009-10 school year, after October 1, 2009:	7
Total number of students who left during the 2009-10 school year, after October 1, 2009:	11
Total number of students enrolled as of the June 30, 2010 SIMS submission:	187
Number of students who graduated at the end of the 2009-10 school year:	16
Number of students on the waitlist as of June 30, 2010	73

Student Reason for Departure 2009-10	No. of Students
Moved out of area	1
Moved to therapeutic programs	2
Transportation Problems – no school bus or public transportation	2
Earned GED	2
Drop out	1
Return to home district for more traditional H S program	2
Personal	1

Total Enrollment~187 As of June 21, 2010 (last day of school)

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC AND SUBGROUP INFORMATION (for students enrolled as of the June 2010 SIMS submission)		
Race/Ethnicity	# of students	% of entire student body
African-American	2	1%
Asian	1	.5%
Hispanic	5	2.5%
Native American	0	-
White	176	94%
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0	0
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	3	2%
Special Education	22	12%
Limited English Proficient	0	0
Low Income	48	26%

Administrative Roster and Organizational Chart

Summary Data on Faculty and Staff

ADMINISTRATIVE ROSTER FOR THE 2009-10 SCHOOL YEAR		
Title	Brief Job Description	Start date
Principal	Academic Prog., Curriculum Development, Instructional Practices, Faculty Supervision	August 2007
Assistant Principal	Scheduling, Community Resources Instructional Support, Senior & Junior Seminar	2002
Director of Operations	Financial Management, Human Resources, Technology, Facilities Management	2003
Dean of Students	School-wide Discipline, School Culture, Crew Program, Com-munity Events, Extracurriculars	2003

TEACHERS AND STAFF ATTRITION FOR THE 2009-10 SCHOOL YEAR			
	Number as of the last day of the 2008-09 school year	Departures during the 2008-09 school year	Departures at the end of the school year
Teachers	Full time = 17	0	1
	Full time Asst = 3	0	0
	Part time = 5	0	0
Other Staff	Full time = 2	0	0
	Part time = 7	2	0

Teachers' reasons for leaving: 1 Full Time Teacher Travel

Highly Qualified Status: All full-time classroom teachers and assistant teachers were "Highly Qualified" in the subjects they teach.

Administrative attrition: None in 2009-10

BOARD MEMBERS FOR THE 2009-10 SCHOOL YEAR				
Name	Position on the Board	Committee affiliation(s)	Area of expertise and/or additional role at school (parent, staff member, etc.)	Number of terms served; Length of each term, including date of election and expiration
Marie Bartlett	Chair	Committee on Trustees & Personnel Policy	Community Educator	Appointed 2002; current 3-yr term ends 9/2010
Linda Cavanaugh	Vice-Chair	Facilities & Finance Committee; Committee on Accountability and Program Planning	Math Professor at Greenfield Community College; Parent	Appointed 2002; current 3-yr term ends 9/2010
Trevor Davis	Secretary	Committee on Accountability and Program Planning	Attorney-at-Law	Appointed 2008 for term ending 9/2011
Edwin Murray	Treasurer	Facilities & Finance Committee	Prof. Emeritus of Strategy & Planning, Boston University	Appointed 2008 for term ending 9/2011
Edward Blatchford	Trustee	Committee on Trustees & Personnel Policy; Development Committee	Co-founder & Retired Executive Director of the School	Appointed 2009 term ending 2012
Regina Campbell	Trustee	Committee on Trustees & Personnel Policy	Director of Quality & Risk Management, Baystate Franklin Medical Center; Parent	Appointed 2009; term ending 2012
Alan Fraker	Trustee	Committee on Accountability and Program Planning	College Counselor, Montclair-Kimberly Academy; former Dir of Accountability for KIPP Foundation	Appointed 2003; Resigned July 2010
Ian Fraser	Trustee	Facilities & Finance Committee	Chairman of the Board, Aztec Land & Cattle Co Ltd.,	Appointed 2009; term expires 10/2012
Disa Pratt	Trustee	Development Committee	Director of Sales, NewChapter Nutritional Supplements; parent of FRCPS graduate	Appointed 2009; term expires 9/2011
Dr. Sara Rourke	Trustee	Development Committee	Medical Director, Franklin Adult Medicine	Appointed 2010; term expires 9/2013
Deborah Voland	Trustee	Committee on Trustees & Personnel Policy; Facilities & Finance Committee	Community Volunteer with technology background; Parent	Appointed 2004; term expires 9/2011
Peter Garbus	Ex-officio		Principal and Head of School; Parent	Appointed 7/2009; expires on termination