

## Annual Report 2014-2015

### **Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School**

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**Introduction to PVPA**

<b>Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School (PVPA)</b>			
<b>Type of Charter</b>	Commonwealth	<b>Location</b>	South Hadley, MA
<b>Regional or Non-Regional</b>	Regional	<b>Districts in Region</b>	Agawam, Amherst-Pelham Regional, Athol-Royalston Regional, Belchertown, Central Berkshire Regional, Chicopee, Easthampton, East Longmeadow, Erving, Frontier Regional, Gateway Regional, Gill-Montague Regional, Granby, Greenfield, Hadley, Hampden-Wilbraham Regional, Hampshire Regional, Hatfield, Holyoke, Longmeadow, Ludlow, Mohawk Trail Regional, Monson, Northampton, Palmer, Pioneer Valley Regional, Quaboag Regional, Ralph C. Mahar Regional, South Hadley, Southwick-Tolland Regional, Springfield, Stockbridge, Ware, West Springfield, Westfield
<b>Year Opened</b>	1996	<b>Years Renewed</b>	2001, 2006, 2011
<b>Maximum Enrollment</b>	400	<b>Current Enrollment</b>	410
<b>Chartered Grade Span</b>	9-12	<b>Current Grade Span</b>	7-12
<b># of Instructional Days per school year</b>	180	<b>Students on Waitlist</b>	362
<b>School Hours</b>	8:30-3:55 8:30-2:50 (F)	<b>Age of School</b>	20 years
<b>Mission Statement</b>			
PVPA offers its students <b>intensive exposure to the performing arts</b> within the context of an <b>excellent college preparatory curriculum</b> .			

## **Letter from the Chair of the Board of Trustees**

Dear Commissioner Chester and MA Board of Education Trustees:

By insisting upon the interdependence of creative and critical thinking, PVPA has provided a compelling alternative to traditional public education for nineteen years. Although the charter school universe has changed dramatically since we began in 1996, our school has remained faithful to its charter and is both an academic success and a viable organization. During the past year, we have devoted substantial time and resources to looking at data, implementing new curricula, bolstering our special education and math departments, and increasing our focus on equity and diversity to ensure that PVPA's success is clearly evident to broad representation of the Commonwealth's K-12 public education community. We are pleased to note that we have achieved improvements large and small in these targeted areas while staying true to our vision of an arts-rich public school education.

As we approach our fourth re-charting process, I am confident that our original Board members would be very proud of how we have grown. From our humble beginnings in Hadley, to our move to a newly renovated facility in South Hadley eleven years ago, to the addition of a middle school, PVPA's energy and enthusiasm has not changed. However, our community has changed, and for the better. We are more geographically, socioeconomically, and racially diverse now than ever before. Students from our eight highest sending cities and towns comprise seventy percent of our total enrollment. Of those students, almost one-third come from Springfield (50), Chicopee (24) and Holyoke (20). Our changing demographics require us to be even more vigilant that every student reaches his or her potential. This increased focus has led us into wonderful new partnerships and offered learning opportunities for the entire community.

In January 2016, not long after the charter renewal site visit team has finished its work, our students and teachers will gather together in our newly created 7,000 square-foot multipurpose performance and assembly space. This gathering will be the first time that all members of the school community will be able to come together on our South Hadley campus—a dream long deferred, but now realized, thanks to Florence Bank, MassDevelopment, the Friends of the PVPA, and two decades' worth of contributions big and small from our incredible community. This gathering will be a perfect way to celebrate twenty years of PVPA history and to look forward to the history we've yet to make!

Sincerely yours,



Kim Hicks, PhD

President, PVPA Board of Trustees

## **School Performance and Program Implementation**

### **Faithfulness to the Charter: Mission and Key Design Elements**

#### **Intensive Exposure to the Performing Arts**

In the 2014-2015 school year, PVPA offered 126 performing arts classes to its 400 students. No other public secondary school in the Commonwealth comes close to providing that level of depth and breadth in the arts. This fact has been true throughout our most recent charter term, and since the school's inception. In addition to our core curricular offerings, every other week, students may elect to perform and/or show their work at the PVPA Open Microphone. Over the past two years, the World Language Department's Open Microphone performance has become so popular among that it will now have its own evening in our Mainstage production schedule this year. ELA, history and science classes also make their way onto the Open Microphone schedule through collaborations with teachers from our dance, theater and music departments. There is no escaping the arts when one attends PVPA.

Another example of how we are faithful to the mission and key design elements is our Paideia Winter Session. Paideia is a three-week term that offers all students the opportunity to become immersed in either one full-day or two-half day learning experiences in a variety of disciplines, especially in the arts. This past year, classes offered during Paideia included the following arts offerings:

*A Cappella Ensemble, African Dance Mask-Making, Arts Alive: Collaboration w/Springfield Public Schools, Broadway Through the Ages, Catalyst Dance Company, Children's Theater Touring Company, Composers Laboratory, Dance Education Lab, Dance: Senior Thesis Project, Eye of the Beholder: Merging Poetry and Photography, Films of Woody Allen, Found Art and Literature: Discovering Art Objects and Storytelling, Hip Hop History and Culture, LED Theatrical Lighting, Life and Times of Frank Zappa, Mixed Media: Wearable Art, Mock Trial, Music of the Romantic Era, Pit Orchestra: Pirates of Penzance, Sound Engineering, Stagecraft Intensive, The Pitch: Writing and Selling Your Screenplay, WOFA West African Dance Company.*

#### **An Excellent College Preparatory Curriculum**

During the current charter term, PVPA has increased the breadth of academic course offerings to ensure that we met our strategic plan goal of providing challenging and rigorous curriculum for all students. To that end, PVPA became a full member of the Virtual High School consortium, thereby allowing easy access to multiple Advanced Placement classes. Our high graduation requirements exceed the admission requirements of the Massachusetts State University system, and our college acceptance rates and placements clearly demonstrate that our curriculum provides excellent preparation for the rigor of college. The following courses are a sample of electives offered at PVPA for students in grades 11-12 (as well as grade 9-10 students who are accelerated).

*French 4, French 5, Spanish 4, Spanish 5, Physics, Anatomy & Physiology, Forensics, LGBTIQ Studies, Honors Shakespeare, African American Lit, Calculus AB, Calculus BC, Honors Shakespeare, Honors Globalization, Honors Renaissance, Latin American Studies, 1960s Art and Culture, Civil Liberties, Western Music Theory: Bach, Advanced Music Theory Improvisation, Advanced Music Theory: Film Scoring, Advanced Technique: Ballet, Advanced Technique: Contemporary Dance, Theater Critique, Advanced Costuming.*

PVPA students in grades 7-10 are enrolled in required core academic courses designed to provide a strong foundation for their learning in the grades 11-12 academic program of studies. In addition to students' grade reports and narratives, a critical measure of our students' readiness to tackle advanced work is reflected in our 10<sup>th</sup> grade MCAS scores during our current charter term. Although this data is available to you in many forms, it is important to note that when compared to other high schools in the Pioneer Valley, in 2014 PVPA was ranked first in science, third in math, and fourth in ELA based on the

percentage of students scoring advanced and proficient. Furthermore, PVPA had the highest percentage of students scoring advanced in ELA and science.

### **Program Delivery: Curriculum**

PVPA's standards-based grading practices necessitates that the following elements be included in any curriculum map:

- State or National Standards → Course Objectives → Primary Summative Assessments (including notation of common department assessments) for all Course Objectives
- Clear distinction between year long and semester-long skills
- Measurable course objectives and unit-specific course objectives
- Unit-specific course objectives arranged in chronological fashion
- Unit-specific notes about core resources, activities, and texts

Curriculum Maps are living documents that will change over time. At the start of any school year, the curriculum map should represent the teacher's plans for the course. At the end of a given year, the teachers of a course can prepare changes to the following year's map.

A curriculum map reflects common Course Objectives and Primary Summative Assessments even if there is more than one teacher for a given course. Teachers of a common course may develop individualized approaches to formative assessments, additional summative assessments, or any instructional moves to support students' work on the common Course Objectives and Summative Assessments. If the course instructors disagree on suggested revisions to the Course Objectives or Primary Summative Assessments, then the decision-making moves to the Department Leader and is reviewed by the Director of Academic Programs or Director of Arts Programs for final approval.

### **Program Delivery: Assessment**

PVPA utilizes a standards-based grading system model. Students' final grades are determined by evidence of student learning on specific course objectives that are derived from state standards. The evidence comes from assessments selected by teachers that align tightly to their specific course objectives. Individual classroom teachers are supported in identifying valid professional sources and collaborating with colleagues for the development of their assessments, and are responsible for individually monitoring students' progress in learning through an analysis of these in-class assessments.

All teachers engage in deliberate planning within departments to find common assessment tools and methods that would allow each department to gather more data on students' progress across courses. In 2014-2015, all teachers in all departments completed this work. Several departments (Math, Science, World Language, ELA, Dance) implemented these newly developed assessments to better assess evidence of student learning. In 2015-16, all departments are expected to continue their collaborative work with these common assessment tools.

To ensure fidelity to our assessment practices, department leaders and program directors will review and give feedback on course curriculum maps, the alignment between unit Course Objectives and listed summative assessments, monitor teachers' use of Parent Portal to document student work and need for revisions on summative assessments, request that teachers include student work artifacts in all mid-cycle and end-of-cycle evaluation meetings, and approve each department's common assessment tool and analyze that the source of the selected assessment includes external professional resources to support its validity.

### **Amendments to the Charter**

PVPA did not request any amendments to its charter during the 2014-2015 school year.

## Dissemination Efforts

### Academic

- Math Improvement Director and Special Education Teacher collaborated to teach *Math for Struggling Learners*, for the Collaborative for Educational Services (CES) in Northampton, MA. The CES is the area's largest professional development provider and serves many districts from which PVPA receives its students.
- English Teacher and Science Department Leader presented at the NCTE conference that focused on how PVPA's LGBTIQ class addresses the issue of Intersex in science and literature.
- History Department leader presented at UMASS to other educators on PVPA's model for studying the Constitutional Convention.
- American Sign Language Teacher took two students to Michigan for the DPAN ASL Music Video Workshop for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Teens. The final product (music video) was directed by a seventh grade PVPA student: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FGtmx2O3sSA>
- Math Improvement Director and two math department teachers worked with teachers from several of our sending districts, as well as with the Western Massachusetts Math Partnership, sharing information and providing training on our newly implemented College Prep Math-Core Connections math curriculum.
- Science Department Leader was appointed to the MA DESE Science Ambassador group working to finalize and share the new science standards.
- History Department Leader/Mock Trial Coach has collaborated with the Hampden County Bar Association, as well as other local public schools, to promote the growth of the Mock Trial program in Western, MA.

### Arts

The Dance Education Lab (DEL) at PVPA. The DEL program emphasizes a creative approach to teaching dance and choreography to students by making connections to literature, social studies and science. This unique combination of community service, mentoring, collaborative teaching and learning has proven to be highly successful for the PVPA students, their younger mentees, and teachers in neighboring schools.

- DEL School Collaborations: Belcher Elementary School, Chicopee; Gorse Early Childhood Center, South Hadley; Leeds Elementary School, Northampton; NEARI School, Holyoke; Wildwood Elementary School, Amherst; Hilltown Cooperative School, Easthampton.
- DEL Community Presentations and Programs: PVPA Dance for Kids, Northampton, MA
- WOFA – West African Dance Company conducted programs in the following public school districts: South Hadley, Springfield, Westhampton, Ashfield, and Children's Theatre Elementary School Performance Tour: Students create a theater piece that is performed at elementary schools throughout the Pioneer Valley during our three-week Paideia Winter Session.
- Children's Theater In Residence: The company performs numerous shows at the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art in Amherst, MA throughout the February vacation week.
- Music Department Faculty and their students visited numerous elementary and middle schools during its annual "We Came To Play" tour, including South Hadley, Holyoke, and Springfield.
- Music Ensemble performed at the following events and schools: Groovy Truth Ensemble, UMASS High School Jazz Festival, Amherst; Jazz Band Collaboration with South Hadley HS, South Hadley; Student Jazz Performances, Northampton Jazz Festival; Pop R&B, Jazz Festival at Holyoke Community College;
- The Spectrum A Cappella Ensemble performed at the Berklee College of Music, Boston, WGBY's Together in Song Program, Springfield, and a national competition in Pittsburgh, PA
- Music and Synchronized Poetry Partnership (MAPS): PVPA and the Urban Assembly Green Careers School in Harlem, NY

- Arts Alive: A partnership with the Kensington School in Springfield, MA via Springfield's Arts Alive initiative. During our Paideia Winter Session, PVPA students assist classroom teachers at Kensington and help prepare for the Springfield Public Schools' Ballroom Dancing Competition, "Over the Top." Children from the Kensington School visit PVPA in January and attend a special PVPA Children's Theatre Company performance and meet our student actors.
- Catalyst dance company performed at the 2015 Grinspoon Foundation Pioneer Valley Teachers of Excellence Awards Dinner
- Catalyst dance company attended the National High School Dance Festival in Miami, FL and many PVPA dancers received prestigious awards and scholarships.

### **Academic Program Success**

#### **Student Performance: A**

<http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/accountability/report/school.aspx?linkid=31&orgcode=04790505&orgtypecode=6&>

#### **Student Performance: B**

Please see the Accountability Plan.

### **Program Delivery Changes in 2014-2015**

#### **Special Education Programmatic Changes**

- Created a new full time School Psychologist Position
- Implemented a new formal mentor program for SPED Apprentice
- Provided ongoing trainings to all faculty on analyzing and accommodating diverse learners

#### **Middle School Reading Workshop**

- Provided professional development training in reading instruction using the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment
- Provided targeted small group instruction and time to read text that matched the student's reading levels to develop vocabulary through focused word study, extend access to age appropriate leveled reading texts, support greater reading comprehension skills and independent reading skills

### **Organizational Viability**

#### **Organizational Structure of the School**

There were no changes to the organization structure of the school in the 2014-2015 school year. The changes listed below reflect the 2015-2016 organizational structure, which is attached:

- The full-time Director of Math Improvement will become a part-time consultant, as envisioned when the position was created two years ago.
- The Director of Student Affairs will take over the supervision and evaluation of the guidance staff thereby allowing the Director of Arts Programs to expand their responsibilities in the PVPA production processes leading up to performances both at PVPA and in other venues.

### **Teacher Evaluation**

PVPA follows the [Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation](#) for evaluating the professionalism and effectiveness of all administrators, teachers and specialized instructional support personnel. All administrators, teachers, and specialized instructional support personnel are evaluated on set PVPA Educator Standards according to the following Educator Plans:

The **Developing Educator Plan** is for all educators in their first three years with the district and, at the discretion of the evaluator, educators in new assignments. This one-year plan is developed collaboratively



with input from both the educator and the evaluator. The **Self-Directed Growth Plan** is for all educators who have worked in the district for at least three years, and who had an overall rating of *Exemplary or Proficient* from the prior year. **The Directed Growth Plan** is for all educators who have worked in the district for at least three years, and who had an overall rating of *Needs Improvement* from the prior year. **The Improvement Plan** is for all educators who have worked in the district for at least three years, and who had an overall rating of *Unsatisfactory* from the prior year.

**Five-Step Evaluation Cycle**

**Step 1 - Self-Assessment:** Educators self-assess their performance using student data (as applicable) and the PVPA Educator Evaluation Standards. See the PVPA Self-Assessment Form and the MA DESE Rubric for more detail on each standard.

**Step 2 - Analysis, Goal Setting and Plan Development:** Educators work collaboratively with supervisors to develop S.M.A.R.T. goals. Educators propose goals that include at least one student learning goal and at least one professional practice goal (aligned to the PVPA Educator Evaluation Standards, and may be a team goal held in common with colleagues), and submit proposed goals to supervisors.

**Step 3 - Implementation of the Plan:** Each educator completes the planned action steps of his/her Educator Plan and the educator and evaluator each collect evidence of practice and goal progress that includes: Artifacts of educator practice, student survey data, feedback, communications, and additional evidence gathered by the supervisor.

**Step 4 - Mid-Cycle Formative Assessment:** Formative assessment may be ongoing throughout the evaluation cycle, but typically takes places mid-cycle when a Mid-Cycle Formative Assessment Report is completed. The Formative Assessment Report provides written feedback and ratings to the educator about his/her progress towards attaining the goals set forth in the Educator Plan, and performance on PVPA Educator Evaluation Standards.

**Step 5 - End-of-Cycle Summative Assessment:** The summative evaluation is based upon teacher performance throughout the year, including information from unannounced and announced observations, and must utilize the End-of-Cycle Summative Assessment Report form to comply with state regulations. Supervisors meet with the educators to discuss and sign the Summative Evaluation Report prior to submitting it to the Head of School. As with all documentation, employees may attach a written response. Summative evaluations (including all prior evaluation write-ups) are kept in each staff member’s personnel file.

**Budget and Finance**

**A. Unaudited FY 15 Statement of Net Assets**

**Assets**

Current Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$1,990,187
Accounts Receivable (net)	24,186
Other Current Assets	415,982
Total Current Assets	2,430,355
Fixed Assets (net)	429,493
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$2,859,848</b>

**Liabilities**

Accounts Payable	\$63,512
Accrued Expense	32,575
Accrued Payroll and Withholdings	367,935
Lease Payable	22,711
Other Liabilities	4,350
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<hr/> 491,083
Net Assets	2,368,765
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<hr/> <hr/> \$2,859,848

**B. Unaudited FY 15 Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Assets****Revenue**

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Sources	\$5,185,186
Production	59,148
Student Activities	63,092
Auxiliary	90,262
Interest	2,727
Fundraising	78,666
Miscellaneous	2,251
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<hr/> \$5,481,332

**Expense****Education Expense**

Salaries and Benefits	\$2,815,906
General Educational Expense	44,904
Departmental	48,967
Grants	115,670
Education-Other	154,880
<b>Total Education Expense</b>	<hr/> 3,180,327

Production	128,130
Technology	37,399
Administrative	1,033,983

Development	56,538
Facilities	732,994
Depreciation	63,852
Auxiliary Expense	154,624
Other Expense	8,999
<b>Total Expense</b>	<u>\$5,396,846</u>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<u><u>\$84,486</u></u>

**C. FY 16 Approved Budget**

	<b>Approved Budget FY 15</b>	<b>Approved Budget FY 16</b>
<b>Revenue</b>		
Commonwealth of Massachusetts Revenue	\$5,116,052	\$5,206,191
Production Revenue	44,000	42,200
Student Activities Revenues and Fees	51,500	50,200
Auxiliary Revenue	91,500	77,500
Interest	2,400	2,800
Fundraising Revenue	98,811	77,567
Summer Program	16,000	0
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<u>\$5,420,263</u>	<u>\$5,456,458</u>
<b>Expense</b>		
Education Expense		
Education Salaries, Taxes and Benefits	\$2,860,774	2,948,809
General Educational Expenses	50,300	56,200
Departmental Expense	52,500	52,500
Grants	105,000	110,000
Education-Other	98,000	138,000
<b>Total Education Expenses</b>	<u>\$3,166,574</u>	<u>\$3,305,509</u>
Production	132,235	89,148
Summer Program	21,308	0
Technology	50,000	50,000
Administrative	1,073,197	980,838
Development	63,871	35,074

Facilities Expense	710,495	772,671
Depreciation	51,100	64,100
Auxiliary	140,697	144,750
Other Expenses	4,000	6,500
<b>Total Operating Expense</b>	<u>\$5,413,477</u>	<u>\$5,448,590</u>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<u>\$6,786</u>	<u>\$7,868</u>

#### D. Capital Plan for FY16

During the summer of 2010, PVPA Charter Public School embarked on the creation of replacement schedules for significant technology and theatrical equipment. In addition, PVPA worked with the Nonprofit Finance Fund to develop a 20-year Systems Replacement Plan that forecasts the necessary replacement of specific systems and equipment, presuming routine maintenance will be ongoing. Building equipment and components are grouped into major categories, i.e. heating, air conditioning, ventilation, plumbing, and roof systems. The costs and useful-life expectancy of systems are based on data provided by building contractors, vendors, and published cost estimates. Items with relatively short useful lives may need to be replaced more than once during the 20-year period. Projected replacement costs are adjusted for inflation at a 4% annual rate.

\*Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School (PVPA) and its related 501(c)(3) organization, The Friends of Pioneer Valley Performing Arts High School (The Friends), have a lease agreement by which PVPA rents the building at 15 Mulligan Drive in South Hadley, MA. During the spring of 2015, construction began on a 7,100 square foot multi-use theater addition that is expected to be completed in January 2016. The cost of the project, \$2.1 million, will be financed by The Friends with proceeds from refinancing its existing mortgage (completed in June 2014) and accumulated reserves.

Project: Chairs for new multi-use theater space

Current Status: In progress

Current Estimated Schedule: December 2015

Current Estimated Cost: \$9,000

Financing: Accumulated surplus (approved by Board of Trustees in FY 16 Capital Budget)

PVPA has not established a capital project reserve account for this project. Funds expected to be reimbursed from Capital Campaign receipts.

Project: Mechanical rigging system for lighting in new multi-use theater space

Current Status: In progress

Current Estimated Schedule: December 2015

Current Estimated Cost: \$30,000

Financing: Accumulated surplus (approved by Board of Trustees in FY 16 Capital Budget)

PVPA has not established a capital project reserve account for this project. Funds expected to be reimbursed from Capital Campaign receipts.

Project: Lift for installing tech equipment in new multi-use theater space

Current Status: In progress

Current Estimated Schedule: December 2015

Current Estimated Cost: \$5,000

Financing: Accumulated surplus (approved by Board of Trustees in FY 16 Capital Budget)

PVPA has not established a capital project reserve account for this project. Funds expected to be reimbursed from Capital Campaign receipts.

Project: Phone, data and public address connectivity for new multi-use theater space

Current Status: In progress

Current Estimated Schedule: December 2015

Current Estimated Cost: \$16,500

Financing: Accumulated surplus (approved by Board of Trustees in FY 16 Capital Budget)

PVPA has not established a capital project reserve account for this project.

Project: Chromebooks to equip classrooms and cart

Current Status: In progress

Current Estimated Schedule: July 2015

Current Estimated Cost: \$8,000

Financing: Accumulated surplus (approved by Board of Trustees in FY 16 Capital Budget)

PVPA has not established a capital project reserve account for this project.

Project: Security cameras for new multi-use theater space

Current Status: In progress

Current Estimated Schedule: December 2015

Current Estimated Cost: \$19,100

Financing: Accumulated surplus (approved by Board of Trustees in FY 16 Capital Budget)

PVPA has not established a capital project reserve account for this project.

Project: Repainting of exterior

Current Status: Not started

Current Estimated Schedule: 2016

Current Estimated Cost: \$80,000 - \$90,000

Financing: Accumulated surplus

PVPA has not established a capital project reserve account for this project.

Project: Complete resurfacing of parking lot

Current Status: Not started

Current Estimated Schedule: 2018

Current Estimated Cost: \$275,000 - \$300,000

Financing: Accumulated surplus

PVPA has not established a capital project reserve account for this project.

Project: Replacement of flooring

Current Status: Not started

Current Estimated Schedule: 2019

Current Estimated Cost: \$25,000 - \$30,000

Financing: Accumulated surplus

PVPA has not established a capital project reserve account for this project.

Project: Repair of masonry and sealing of windows

Current Status: Not started

Current Estimated Schedule: 2019

Current Estimated Cost: \$65,000 - \$70,000

Financing: Accumulated surplus

PVPA has not established a capital project reserve account for this project.

Project: Replacement of chairs, desks and tables  
Current Status: Not started  
Current Estimated Schedule: 2020  
Current Estimated Cost: \$67,000 - \$70,000  
Financing: Accumulated surplus  
PVPA has not established a capital project reserve account for this project.

## Additional Information

### Conditions

**Condition 1:** No later than March 31, 2013, Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter School shall submit to the Charter School Office a comprehensive evaluation of the school's mathematics program conducted by an external consultant.

**Status: Met.** On March 29, 2013, the school submitted a mathematics program evaluation conducted by two external mathematics consultants.

**Condition 2:** No later than May 15, 2013, Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter School shall submit to, and receive approval from, the Charter School Office for an action plan that specifies strategies to improve mathematics performance. The action plan must address implementation of a proven curriculum and instruction program for mathematics. The action plan must include a timetable for the implementation of actions, must set deadlines for the completion of key tasks, and must set clear and specific implementation benchmarks to allow the board of trustees of Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter School and the Charter School Office to monitor implementation.

**Status: Met.** On June 4, 2013, the school submitted an action plan to the Department. The Department gave feedback on the plan, and school staff made edits and revisions. The final plan was approved in August of 2013.

**Condition 3:** Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter School must demonstrate that it is an academic success by December of 2014 by providing evidence that the school has met or is making substantial progress toward meeting benchmarks in its approved Accountability Plan and, in particular, has demonstrated significant and sustained academic improvement in mathematics.

**Status: Ongoing** In 2014, PVPA's performance improved to place in it Level 1. In 2014, the school is in the 60<sup>th</sup> percentile when compared to other middle-high schools statewide. Ninety percent of student scored in the Proficient or Advanced categories on the English language arts (ELA) portion of the MCAS, above the state average. Sixty-six percent of students scored in the Proficient or Advanced categories on the science portion of the MCAS, above the state average. Fifty-nine percent of students scored in the Proficient or Advanced categories on the mathematics portion of the MCAS, equal to the state average.

### 2014-2015 Math Improvement Plan Activities

- Reworked pacing guides and course objectives based for all CPM materials
- Began a multi-year process of integrating arts into the math curriculum
- Revised curriculum maps
- Assessed all new students before the start of school to ensure proper math placement Revised unit assessments and finals
- Created department-wide rubric and write-up template to support and track students' skill development through the curriculum
- Continued math support for targeted students in Math 7 through Geometry

- Designed and implemented a pre-middle school math program for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students whose skill and content gaps prevented them from meeting grade-level learning expectations
- Designed and implemented a pre-algebra math program for 9th grade students whose skill and content gaps prevented them from meeting grade-level learning expectations.
- Designed and implemented an Intermediate Algebra class for students who needed more time in Algebra I before advancing to Algebra 2.
- Designed and implemented an Accelerated 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Math program for students who will be ready for Algebra 1 as 8<sup>th</sup> graders.
- Used the work of Shifter, Bastable, and Russell to guide our work in understanding numbers and operations.
- Used Jo Boaler's "How to Learn Math for Students" course to support students' growth in understanding on how to be successful in math.
- Purchased new resource for HS Foundations students not yet ready for Algebra 1
- Continued CPM training for new teachers prior to the start of the year
- Provided resources for five teachers to take a course at Mt. Holyoke College on teaching the Base Ten System
- Paid for six teachers to participate in the fall PLC offered by Western Mass Mathematics Partnership
- Sent the entire math department to the NCTM conference in April (Boston)

### **Complaints**

The PVPA Board of Trustees received two complaints during the 2014-2015 school year.

1. A teacher alleged that they were required to work more hours per work than colleagues in the same department. After an investigation, the Board found that the allegation was without merit.
2. A teacher alleged that they were unfairly evaluated and as such, the non-renewal of their expiring contract was unjustified. The Board of Trustees president affirmed that the school administration properly followed the teacher supervision and evaluation guidelines.

**APPENDIX A**

Accountability Plan Evidence 2014-15

**Faithfulness to Charter**

<b>Objective:</b> PVPA’s annual high school graduation and college acceptance rates will exceed the average of the ten districts from which we receive our highest percentage of students.										
Measures	2014-2015 Performance	Evidence								
<b>Measure:</b> One hundred percent of high school students who meet PVPA graduation requirements will be admitted to college.	<b>Met</b>	<b>Class of 2015</b> – 100% of applicants were accepted; 93% plan to attend college this fall. (Note: Every PVPA graduate who applied to college was accepted.)								
<b>Measure:</b> Each year, PVPA’s average SAT I English scores will exceed those of our sending districts by ten percent. (The ten districts from which we receive our highest percentage of students, in alphabetical order, are: Amherst, Belchertown, Chicopee, Easthampton, Hadley, Holyoke, Monson, Northampton, Springfield, and South Hadley.)	<b>Met</b>  (For the most recent year we have data.)	<b>2013-2014 SAT Critical Reading</b> 10 Sending District Avg. Score: 507 PVPA Score: 590  <b>2013-2014 SAT Writing</b> 10 Sending District Avg. Score: 494 PVPA Score: 550								
<b>Measure:</b> The average SAT I math scores of the Class of 2016 will increase by five percent over the combined average SAT I math scores in 2011, 2012, and 2013.	<b>NA</b>	While this measure cannot be assessed yet, the average SAT I math scores in 2011 through 2013 were: <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td align="center">2011</td> <td align="center">2012</td> <td align="center">2013</td> <td align="center">2016</td> </tr> <tr> <td align="center">514</td> <td align="center">506</td> <td align="center">509</td> <td align="center">TBD</td> </tr> </table>	2011	2012	2013	2016	514	506	509	TBD
2011	2012	2013	2016							
514	506	509	TBD							
<b>Objective:</b> PVPA students will demonstrate and promote the value of an arts-based education.										
<b>Measure:</b> All students will take a minimum of two arts classes every semester and declare a major by the start of their junior year.	<b>Met*</b>	*With the exception of those students who required both a math intervention class and an academic support block(s) per their IEP, all students were scheduled for a minimum of two arts classes per semester, and many students take three arts classes per semester.								
<b>Measure:</b> Each year, all audition-based music classes will perform for local schools and organizations to promote the importance of an arts-focused education.	<b>Met</b>	Music students performed in multiple schools in the Pioneer Valley as well as with PVPA’s partner school in NYC, NY. For the past decade, PVPA students have performed in the Berklee High School Jazz Festival at the Berklee College of Music in Boston.								
<b>Measure:</b> Each year, our dance	<b>Met</b>	The Dance Education Lab students were in								



<p>students will be in residence at a local elementary school teaching dance to children without access to a dance program.</p>		<p>residence during the January intersession, as well as throughout the school year. In addition, last year the WOFA dance company travelled to Guinea, Africa and performed in schools all over the country. In 2014-2015, PVPA began its third dance company, Funkadelic, a hip-hop troupe that performed in multiple venues in the Valley.</p>
<p><b>Measure:</b> Each year, our theater students will create an original performance and tour the piece in local elementary schools and arts organizations.</p>	<p><b>Met</b></p>	<p>In 2014-2015 the Children's Theater Company performed Strange Love in Outer Space in many elementary schools during the January intersession. In addition, the company was in residence at the Eric Carle Museum during the February school break. This practice has been part of our core theater program for many years. Also in 2014-2015, PVPA travelled to the MA Theater Guild High School Play Festival.</p>
<p><b>Measure:</b> By September 2014, PVPA will establish a summer professional development institute for the teaching of the performing arts in public schools.</p>	<p><b>Not Met</b></p>	<p>The timeline for implementing this measure has moved to the summer of 2016 due in large part to the construction of our new multi-purpose performance space, scheduled for completion in January 2016.</p>

## APPENDIX B

### Charter School Recruitment and Retention Plan Template

#### Recruitment Plan

2015-2016

**School Name:** Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School

**Date:** July 21, 2015

**Provide a brief narrative report on implementation of recruitment strategies from last year's plan.**

#### **Implementation Summary**

Parents of students with IEPs recommend PVPA to parents who, for a variety of reasons, are dissatisfied with the special education services their children receive in their home school district. As a result, PVPA accepted more students with intensive needs from out of district, self-contained placements.

The number of new students in grades 7-10 who requires placement in either a Math Intervention, Math Support, or Foundations Math class demonstrates that PVPA is attracting sub-proficient students, particularly in math. Due to our school culture of acceptance and safety, PVPA also enrolls many students whose parents report had been bullied in their home districts and who were at high risk for dropping out of school.

For the past three years, PVPA students who "dropped out" have received a PVPA diploma due to our commitment to seeing our students through to the end of their high school education. For example, students who were short credit and needed one or two classes to meet graduation requirements have officially dropped out, taken one or two courses at local community colleges, and then were awarded a PVPA diploma after PVPA receives confirmation of successful completion from the college registrar.

Whether it is the local economy or our recruitment efforts, PVPA has had to devote more resources in its annual budget to underwrite the costs of transportation, athletic, club and activity fees for its students. Even students' families who do not fall under the new guidelines have requested relief from fees that they had been previously able to pay.

Clearly, in spite of our fidelity to our outreach efforts for enrolling ELLs, we were not successful last year.

**Describe the school’s general recruitment activities, i.e. those intended to reach all students.**

**General Recruitment Activities**

1. Sent Admission Packets (information about school and the application process) to all guidance departments in elementary and secondary schools in Hampshire, Hampden, and Franklin County.
2. Sent press releases to all newspapers, radio and television outlets in all representing sending districts detailing availability of applications, process for applying, deadline for application, as well as an overview of the school, and an information meeting schedule to see the school and ask questions of school administrators.
3. Advertised on radio and print media (including Spanish language programs) to broaden the application pool.
4. Posted flyers in economically depressed communities promoting school and in timely manner for application to school.
5. Held informational meetings at the school and off site at community centers that are easily accessible to public transportation.

**Recruitment Plan –Strategies**

**List strategies for recruitment activities for each demographic group.**

<b>Demographic Group</b>	<b>Strategies</b>
Special education students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Include the Director of Academic Support and SPED-PAC parents in information session meetings</li> <li>2. Increase information about our SPED programs on the PVPA website</li> </ol>
Limited English-proficient students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Translate additional admissions materials into Spanish</li> <li>2. Increase recruitment outreach in Holyoke and Chicopee</li> <li>3. Increase advertising in Spanish-language media outlets (local newspapers and radio stations)</li> <li>4. Provide access to the entire PVPA website in Spanish</li> </ol>
Students eligible for free or reduced lunch <sup>1</sup>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Publicize the fact that PVPA underwrites the cost of our transportation program for our eligible families thereby eliminating the obstacles to getting to and from school.</li> <li>2. Increase our publicity for the PVPA our computer give-away program for eligible families.</li> <li>3. Include information about our free and reduced lunch and student activity fee programs on admissions material.</li> </ol>
Students who are sub-proficient	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Share our graduation and college acceptance rate information with families on the admissions materials</li> <li>2. Describe our reading and math academic support intervention programs and our homework support structures</li> </ol>

Students at risk of dropping out of school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss partial day programs for students to alleviate academic or financial stress</li> <li>2. Share information about our counseling and academic support services</li> <li>3. Schedule a meeting with students and families to discuss concerns and expectations for earning a PVPA diploma</li> <li>4. Provide information and support for students who decide, after exhausting steps 1-3, to pursue a GED and work</li> </ol>
Students who have dropped out of school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Send PVPA mailings and emails to students who have dropped out of school</li> <li>2. Call students and parents to encourage their continued academic pursuits</li> <li>3. Provide guidance and support for scheduling students into alternative educational programs that allow students to obtain a PVPA diploma</li> </ol>
Other subgroups of students who should be targeted to eliminate the achievement gap	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide a list of PVPA student organizations that support students feeling safe, accepted, and included at PVPA (mentoring, LGBTIQ, etc.).</li> <li>2. Share the student culture and diversity goals outlined in the strategic plan.</li> </ol>

**Retention Plan**  
2015-2016

<b>Please provide a brief narrative report on implementation of retention strategies from last year's plan.</b>
<b>Implementation Summary</b>
<p><b>Special Education Students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See <b>Conditions</b>: 2014-2015 Math Improvement Plan Activities</li> <li>• See <b>Program Delivery Changes 2014-2015</b></li> <li>• Hired full-time School Psychologist</li> <li>• Implemented a mentor program for Apprentice Teachers (Instructional Paraprofessionals)</li> <li>• Continued training for all faculty on accommodating diverse learners</li> <li>• Increased access and use of technology to increase timely communication between regular education and special education teachers</li> </ul> <p><b>Limited English Proficient</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hired native Spanish speaker in the Main Office to improve ease of communication when receiving calls from native Spanish speakers</li> <li>• Revamped website to incorporate a language translation program (Spanish, Chinese, French)</li> <li>• Hired Diversity Coordinator to work with staff to advance our goals for cultural competence</li> </ul> <p><b>Students Eligible For Free/Reduced Lunch</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sent information to all families advertising our Computer Give-Away program and low-cost internet service for eligible families</li> <li>• Provided preferential parent-teacher conference slots for families without access to web-based</li> </ul>

scheduling program

- Waived or significantly reduced the bus fee, athletic fee, and activity/field trip fee for all eligible students
- Schedule meetings to accommodate parents who work full-time

**Students Who Are Sub-Proficient**

- See **Conditions**: 2014-2015 Math Improvement Plan Activities
- See **Program Delivery Changes 2014-2015**
- See **Retention Plan Summary**: Special Education Students
- Began a Peer Tutoring Program
- Redesigned Homework Support to provide more targeted support

**Students At Risk For Dropping Out**

- Provided ongoing academic and non-academic supports (tutoring, counseling, work study, reduced course load)
- Maintained weekly students of concern meetings (guidance, teachers, administrators) to monitor at-risk students
- Implemented with fidelity all recommendations that support a safe and supportive environment for LGBTIG students

**Students Who Have Dropped Out Of School**

- Maintained regular contact with students and parents/guardians to support a pursuit of a GED or returning to their home district schools

**Other Subgroups Of Students Who Should Be Targeted To Eliminate The Achievement Gap**

- Created and hired a Diversity Coordinators
- Provided anti-bias staff and student trainings on and off campus
- Partnered with the NCCJ and Camp Anytown program
- Review sub-group achievement data to identify gaps and address specific areas of concern
- Designed, implemented and analyzed a student school culture survey
- Provided instructional materials free of bias and affirming of all PVPA students

Overall Student Retention Goal	
Annual goal for student retention (percentage):	93.5%

Retention Plan –Strategies	
List strategies for retention activities for <u>each</u> demographic group.	
Demographic Group	Strategies

Special education students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain weekly academic support/guidance team meetings</li> <li>2. Expand the use of electronic data tracking tools and communication tools</li> <li>3. Provide additional professional development training for special education teachers in the new math curriculum</li> <li>4. Expand the math and reading intervention programs</li> <li>5. Support teacher training for implementing modifications in a standards-based classroom and grading system</li> <li>6. Analyze data to determine retention and graduation rates trends of students with IEPs</li> </ol>
Limited English-proficient students	<p>Although PVPA has no LEP students at this time, we will continue to implement strategies on the assumption our recruitment efforts will yield more LEP students in the future.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recruit staff members who are fluent with Spanish</li> <li>2. Ensure that website materials are translated into Spanish</li> <li>3. Maintain our Latino Heritage Month outreach education activities</li> </ol>
Students eligible for free or reduced lunch <sup>2</sup>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Distribute eligibility forms to all families prior to the start of school</li> <li>2. Ensure that all families understand that no students will be denied participation to any activity due to ones ability to pay an activity or transportation fee</li> <li>3. Increase publicity for the computer give-away program for families who cannot afford a home computer</li> <li>4. Provide preferential parent-teacher conference sign-up slots for <u>families who do not have access to the internet at home</u></li> </ol>
Students who are sub-proficient	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop additional math and reading assessment tools to identify sub-proficient students within the first two-weeks of school</li> <li>2. Ensure that all new teachers understand their responsibilities with respect to providing appropriate accommodations and modifications</li> <li>3. Assign upperclassmen to Homework Support in lieu of a less supported study period</li> <li>4. Place students with Peer Tutors</li> </ol>
Students at risk of dropping out of school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish a regular check-in with parents/guardians and the student</li> <li>2. Provide academic and non-academic supports as needed (tutoring, counseling, work study, reduced course load)</li> <li>3. Maintain regular contact between guidance counselors and classroom teachers</li> <li>4. Create a peer mentoring program</li> </ol>
Students who have dropped out of school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain email and phone contact to encourage students to return to school or pursue their GED</li> <li>2. Offer opportunities to return to school on a part-time basis via work study or early college courses</li> </ol>

<p>Other subgroups of students who should be targeted to eliminate the achievement gap</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Provide anti-racist teacher training designed to strengthen teachers' cultural competency</li><li>2. Regularly review sub-group achievement data to identify gaps and address specific areas of concern</li><li>3. Ensure that all instructional materials are free of bias and are supportive and affirming of all PVPA students.</li></ol>
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**APPENDIX C**

School and Student Data Tables

<b>STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC AND SUBGROUP INFORMATION</b>		
Race/Ethnicity	# of students	% of entire student body
African-American	24	5.9
Asian	9	2.2
Hispanic	46	11.4
Native American	2	.5
White	294	72.6
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	1	.2
Multi-race, non-Hispanic	29	7.2
Special education	64	15.8
Limited English proficient	0	0
Economically Disadvantaged	56	13.8

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE ROSTER FOR THE 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR</b>			
Name, Title	Brief Job Description	Start date	End date
Scott Goldman Head of School	Reports to Board of Trustees, evaluates all administrative personnel and programs	July 2011	NA
Llama Maynard Director of Academic Programs	Oversees all aspects of the academic program (curriculum, instruction, assessment, MCAS) and supervises and evaluates academic teachers.	August 2009	NA
Robert Brainin Chief Financial Officer	Responsible for all budgetary matters (transportation, food service, grants, and production revenue/expenses). Prepares and monitors the budget and oversees HR in collaboration with Head of School.	July 2008	NA
Brent Nielsen Special Education Director	Responsible for all aspects of the school's special education program, including staff supervision and evaluation, program development, 504 monitoring and outside consultants providing ancillary services.	July 2013	NA



Chris Fournier Director of Student Affairs	Responsible for student culture, school-wide event planning, student discipline, and all student-led organizations and activities.	April 1999	NA
Thom Vreeland Technology Coordinator	Maintains the school's technology requirements including hardware, software, PowerSchool and compatibility with all DESE reporting requirements.	August 1999	NA
Laura Davis Director of Arts Programs	Oversees all aspects of the arts program (curriculum, instruction, assessment, auditions, productions) and supervises and evaluates arts teachers.	August 2004	June 2015

#### TEACHERS AND STAFF ATTRITION FOR THE 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR

The teacher and staff attrition numbers this year reflect what we hope will be the trend as we move into our twentieth year. Several factors may have played a role, including but not limited to our continued desire to move part-time teachers to full-time or near full-time positions, 3% salary increases for teachers in each of the last two years, the excitement surrounding our new building construction project, and good teacher satisfaction survey scores.

	Number as of the last day of the 2014-2015 school year	Departures during the 2014-2015 school year	Departures at the end of the school year	Reason(s) for Departure
Teachers, Guidance Counselors, Special Education Teachers, Nurse, Library	52	NA	4	1=Retired; 2=Career Change; 1=Non-Renewal
Administrators, Administrative Support/ Clerical Staff, and Apprentice Teachers	23	NA	4	4=New Jobs

#### BOARD MEMBERS FOR THE 2014-15 SCHOOL YEAR

Name	Position on the Board	Committee affiliation(s)	Number of terms served	Length of each term
Donovan Arthen	Alumni Rep. Community Member	Governance	2	Elected on 6/9/15; ends on 6/30/17

**BOARD MEMBERS FOR THE 2014-15 SCHOOL YEAR**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position on the Board</b>	<b>Committee affiliation(s)</b>	<b>Number of terms served</b>	<b>Length of each term</b>
James Barnhill				
Donovan Arthen	Alumni Rep Community Member	Governance	1	Joined 9/13; ends 6/17
James Barnhill	Community Member	Governance		Joined 9/14; ends 9/16
Will Decherd	Teacher	Governance	2	Joined 6/13; ends 6/17
Rachel Dionne	Parent	Finance	2	Joined 6/13; ends 6/17
Emma Frazier	Student		1	Completed one-year term, ended 6/15
Kim Hicks	President, Parent	President	3	Joined 6/10; ends 6/16
Deborah Jacobson	Treasurer, Community Member	Finance	2	Joined 9/11; ends 6/17
Berri H. Jacque	Community Member	Governance	2	Joined 10/12; ends 6/16
William Maldonado	Student		2	Completed one year term; ended on 6/15
Sean Moore	Alumni Rep Community Member		1	Joined 11/12; ends 6/16
Michaela Moreau	Student		1	Completed one-year term; ended on 6/30/15
Sheila Mulholland	Community Member	Finance	3	Joined 9/09; ended 6/15
Kate Nelson	Student		1	Completed one-year term; ended on 6/30/15
Jeanne Powers	Teacher		2	Joined 6/13; ended 6/15
Janet Rivera	Parent		1	Joined 2/15; ends 6/17
Asha Strazzero-Wild	Community Member	Clerk	1	Joined 10/12; ended 6/15
Gary Smith	Parent	Governance	2	Joined 9/12; ends 6/16
Geoff Sumi	Parent	Governance	2	Joined 9/13; ends 6/17

**Appendix D**  
Additional Required Information

**Key Leadership Changes**

Position	Name
Board of Trustees Chairperson	NA
Charter School Leader	NA
Assistant Charter School Leader	NA
Special Education Director	NA
MCAS Test Coordinator	NA
SIMS Coordinator	NA
English Language Learner Director	NA

**Facilities**

PVPA has neither relocated nor acquired a new facility within our charter school's current municipality.

**Enrollment**

Action	Date(s)
Student Application Deadline	January 29, 2016
Lottery	February 12, 2016