

**Princeton Charter School**

# **Strategic Plan**

**Parent Meeting**

**January 23, 2014**

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**VISION STATEMENT**

The Princeton Charter School’s vision is to provide a diverse student body with the best possible education by focusing on fundamental academic disciplines in an atmosphere that affirms academic achievement. Princeton Charter School believes that academic success is best achieved through a rigorous curriculum that requires mastery of core knowledge and the development of critical thinking skills. By providing an intellectually stimulating and supportive learning environment, PCS will enable each child to become a reflective learner, develop personal, social, and academic strengths, cultivate a responsible work ethic, and grow into a service-minded member of our community.

# Princeton Charter School - Strategic Plan

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## LETTER FROM THE BOARD

Throughout the Princeton Charter School's fifteenth anniversary year, the Princeton Charter School Board of Trustees and Administration engaged in a strategic planning process. This process was informed by various school constituencies through a range of input and engagement including face-to-face meetings, focus groups, surveys, a day-long retreat, and representation on the Strategic Planning Committee.

The result is a dynamic plan that preserves and builds on the strong foundation of PCS' first 15 years while identifying vital opportunities to enhance our school. While some strategic planning processes are born of crisis and necessity, Princeton Charter School's arises from strength and opportunity. Because we are successfully meeting our Charter's commitment to providing a diverse student body with the best possible education by focusing on fundamental academic disciplines in an atmosphere that affirms academic achievement, we can now invest in further enhancing and expanding our efforts in five core areas: Academic Excellence, Student Life, School Resources, Community Outreach, and Governance. The initiatives we will pursue in each of these core areas are outlined in the pages that follow.

The Strategic Plan will be implemented over the coming three years. Some initiatives are already under way, some will soon commence, while others will be carefully developed for full implementation in the years to come. The Head of School bears responsibility for overseeing implementation of the Strategic Plan with the support of a Board of Trustees task force. The Head of School will provide regular updates to the Board of Trustees and the Princeton Charter School community. We look forward to drawing on the rich resources, expertise, and commitment of the Princeton Charter School community for the implementation of this multi-faceted plan.

Just as we seek to cultivate life-long learning in our students, our aim is for the Princeton Charter School to be an organization in which strategic planning is an on-going responsibility and opportunity for enhancing our school, rather than a periodic exercise. Therefore, we anticipate that the Strategic Plan will be a living document that, while charting the opportunities ahead, will be flexible and responsive to new information, developments, and perspectives.

What will remain constant, of course, is our commitment to fulfilling the Charter that called our school into being. As stewards of the mission and the institution, we look forward to the next fifteen years and more of the Princeton Charter School as we all strive to provide a diverse student body with the best possible education focusing on fundamental academic disciplines in an atmosphere that affirms academic achievement. Together we will inspire, support, and challenge *all* of our students to achieve. We look forward to your partnership in these years to come.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Josephson, President

Khalid Anwar, Treasurer

Kinga Kaminska, Trustee

Amanda Rose, Vice President

Nandini Chowdhury, Trustee

Trusha Shah, Trustee

Shannon Daley-Harris, Secretary

Randy Hubert, Trustee

Alan Zetterberg, Trustee

Lawrence Patton, Head of School

Princeton NJ, November 2013

## **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

Princeton Charter School is committed to a rigorous, sequential and cumulative curriculum that emphasizes mastery of fundamental skills. Superb teachers, who use best practices and focus on high student achievement, constitute the core of the educational program. The school provides support and challenge for all students to achieve this high standard.

### ***1. Ensure that the curriculum utilizes best pedagogical approaches.***

- Develop an effective and continuous system of curriculum evaluation, revision, implementation and measurement of the academic program.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of all curricula and goals.
- Develop a framework for the teaching of critical thinking skills.
- Develop a clearly defined and articulated approach to student assessment that reflects different modes and skills appropriate to each age level.
- Address the world language needs of students who enter at different ages and levels of language background.
- Create a task force to assess options and costs for a more diverse arts program and a more flexible schedule to allow opportunities for broader arts experiences.

### ***2. Recruit and develop PCS's excellent faculty.***

- Evaluate additional avenues and approaches for continuing to attract dedicated and talented faculty and staff to the Charter School.
- Develop innovative tenure policies that adhere to the high standards set forth by the Charter, the Board of Trustees and the Administration.
- Develop and implement a Faculty Evaluation Plan that ensures teaching excellence and professionalism by promoting reflection on practice, expertise in content and pedagogy, flexibility and responsiveness to student needs, collegiality among teachers, and by evaluating teaching proficiency in relation to student outcomes.

***3. Integrate technology into teaching and learning at all grade levels in a manner that both adds value to the learning process and develops mastery of the technological skills needed for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.***

- Develop a map of skills and knowledge for technology in accordance with the Charter , Common Core Standards, Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) standards, and best practice.
- Develop a well-defined plan for technology-supported instruction at each grade level in alignment with the Charter, Common Core Standards, PARCC standards, and best practices.
- Develop a system to support faculty use of technology in the curriculum to achieve best practices.

***4. Determine the optimal staff structure and resources needed to address all support and special education needs.***

- Assess and articulate the goals, scope and processes of the special education program for staff and families.
- Develop materials for faculty training; update the website and handouts that communicate this program.
- Determine cost/benefit of shared services, cooperative and online solutions in support of special education services, compliance, administration and communication.

## **STUDENT LIFE**

To prepare students for future success in an increasingly global community, the Princeton Charter School is committed to the development of student character through student leadership, respect for others, and meaningful community service.

***5. Establish a leadership program that inculcates a sense of personal responsibility and confidence.***

- Identify critical attributes of leadership that we expect to develop in our students.

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- Create a task force comprised of students and faculty to design a program of leadership opportunities and a method to evaluate the effectiveness of such a program.

## ***6. Create a community service program that fosters a sense of responsibility for others.***

- Identify critical attributes of service that we expect to develop in our students.
- Create a task force of students and faculty to design a program of community service opportunities and a method to evaluate the effectiveness of such a program.

## **SCHOOL RESOURCES**

The School is committed to providing the students and faculty with outstanding facilities in support of the instructional and afterschool programs.

## ***7. Develop a campus plan that provides students, faculty and staff with a safe, secure, aesthetically pleasing and functional learning environment.***

- The campus plan should place a high priority on safety and security, the functionality of the playground, the provision for optimal classroom learning facilities, and the development of the sports field and outdoor areas of the campus.

## ***8. Research, choose, and implement a “computing environment” that provides students, families and faculty with seamless access to technology in support of teaching, learning and school communications.***

- This review should consider file management, posting course documents, online communications, instructional applications, and 21<sup>st</sup> century skill development, as well as the selection of hardware and software appropriate to support the instructional needs of the school.
- Establish a staffing plan to support efficiently the desired computing environment considering three discreet areas: (1) IT administration and hardware support,(2) administration of core school programs and (3) classroom integration of technology in support of learning goals.

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

As a public charter school, PCS faces unique communications challenges. An effective communications strategy will broadly and accurately convey the PCS mission and identity as an established, cost-effective, academically rigorous, diverse public school option that welcomes a wide range of students and provides both challenge and support. Located in a community that is rich with resources and opportunities for service, PCS seeks to contribute to, engage in, and enhance the Princeton community.

***9. Develop a purposeful communications strategy with sufficient staff and other resources to promote a positive understanding of Princeton Charter School as an asset to the community.***

***10. Develop an ongoing community engagement strategy to contribute to, benefit from, and partner with various segments of the Princeton community.***

- Seek mutually beneficial opportunities to collaborate and partner with Princeton Public Schools in areas such as curriculum, facility use, faculty development, administrative and Board relationships, and student enrichment.
- Seek mutually beneficial opportunities to actively engage with Princeton University, local businesses, and other community stakeholders.

***11. Refine the PCS admissions recruitment process to strive for applicant pools that reflect the diversity of the Princeton community and draw students and families who value what is unique about PCS.***

## **GOVERNANCE**

Princeton Charter School, founded by parents, continues to rely on the leadership and dedication of the Board of Trustees and the support of parents to preserve and translate the vision of the Charter into reality. As the School develops and transitions into the next phase, it must develop its professional infrastructure to provide vision and leadership that will ensure its ongoing success.

### ***12. Review and re-envision the governance structure to address the changing needs of the school in support of this Strategic Plan.***

- Consider the staffing and administrative resources needed to adequately meet strategic needs.
- Recruit and organize parents to participate on all levels of the school.
- Coordinate efforts of the administration, Board, Friends and Endowment to fundraise, and to seek other sources of outside funding such as grants.

### ***13. Review Board structure and committee system to maximize Board oversight and effective communication.***

- Streamline Board committee structure and define structured schedules to ensure faculty and parent participation.
- Develop and implement procedures for recording committee meeting minutes and the sharing of these among the full Board.
- Assess cost/benefit of technology applications that facilitate Board operations and communication.

### ***14. Establish a more systematic practice of recruiting, orienting, and mentoring new administrators, Board members, Friends and Endowment officers.***

- Provide professional development opportunities for faculty and staff to support their role in the administration of PCS and as leaders of PCS.
- Develop a training protocol and calendar that assigns mentors, orients new Trustees, and reviews by-laws and policies appropriate to each group.
- Develop a succession plan for Board leadership.