

# Fenway High School

A Pilot School of Boston Public Schools

Community of learners \* Sustain and enhance culture \*

Fenway \* Advance educational excellence and academ-

ic achievement \* Improve post-graduate success in

## **A Plan for the Future**

higher education \* Ensure smooth transition to Mission

**Strategic Plan 2013-2018**

Hill \* 30th anniversary \* Increase awareness of Fenway

\* Expand fundraising capabilities & financial stability \*

Review and plan governance and

succession planning \* Community of learners \*



September 2013

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# Executive Summary

Fenway High School is preparing for important and exciting transformations. First, its new building will give the school its own unique identity and a true sense of ownership. Second, a new neighborhood and new neighbors open up an array of potential partnerships and relationships that can bring mutual benefit. Perhaps most importantly, Fenway is ready and eager to deepen its impact on an enlarged student population, as the school expands to include more—and more diverse—students. **Goal 3** supports the transition to Mission Hill and beyond.

Fenway's 30 year track record demonstrates a willingness to innovate and collaborate to benefit the academic achievement of its students. Now, as a result of its strategic planning process, Fenway has embraced an even more expansive vision, realizing that staying the course will not bring Fenway to the next level; it must move beyond the successes of the moment to create a new bold future. The future imagines an urban public high school where all students achieve their academic potential at not only secondary but also post-secondary levels, and are prepared and supported to contribute to their community's civic and economic life. Fenway will be that high school.

The school's commitment to high academic standards for graduation is the underpinning of this bold future. For Fenway students, a high school diploma is a milestone. As this Strategic Plan envisions, specifically in **Goal 1**, there will be expanded programs in the curriculum: enhancement of tutoring, preparation for the SAT/ACT tests, and support for faculty to expand their capacity to teach students who are English Language Learners and/or students with learning disabilities. **Goal 2** envisions providing the counseling and guidance students need to find the right college, and also envisions providing the support that students need to thrive there and receive their degree.

This is an ambitious agenda. It will require resources as set forth in **Goal 4**, as well as leadership and persistence, as set forth in **Goal 5**. Fenway has demonstrated an abundance of these in the past, and the school is confident that it will do so in the future.

Fenway's 30 year track record demonstrates a willingness to innovate and collaborate to benefit the academic achievement of its students.

# Introduction

Fenway High School is a nationally recognized leader in high school education. The school is preparing for a future of important and exciting transformations. To guide us, a strategic plan was developed from thoughtful insight provided by our stakeholders, resulting in detailed goals and action steps. The heart and spirit of Fenway is the education of the students so that each young person reaches his or her full potential. This overarching purpose touches each and every goal of the Strategic Plan. Through hard work and dedication, we will implement our objectives as we strive to bring the school into a bold new future.

Fenway High School (Fenway) was founded in 1983 as an academic program for students who needed an alternative to the large public high school setting. Today it remains a pioneer in the small school movement. In 1995, Fenway became a pilot high school within the Boston Public School system, allowing Fenway's Board of Trustees control over the school's programs, staffing, and expenses. In 2002, Fenway earned accreditation from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, and was reaccredited in 2011.

The school has won numerous awards at the local and national level, including the COSEBOC School Award (Coalition of Schools Education Boys of Color) in 2012 and a Bronze Medal from US News & World Report in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013. In 2012, Fenway was recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education, about which we are incredibly proud.

Fenway implemented the strategic planning process to develop a plan to guide the school through the next three to five years. The school's mission statement in turn helped guide us through the process.

Instead of the traditional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats approach, we focused on three key words: sustain, change, and create.

We asked ourselves, what do we want to **sustain**? What do we want to **change**? What do we want to **create**? By meeting with faculty, administration, students, parents, alumni, community partners, and supporters, we gained valuable insight that helped us to develop five goals.

## Mission Statement

*Fenway High School's mission is to create a socially committed and morally responsible community of learners that values its students as individuals. Fenway's goal is to encourage academic excellence and to develop intellectual habits of mind, self-esteem and leadership skills among all students.*

Our five strategic goals are to:

1. **Advance** educational excellence and academic achievement
2. **Improve** post-graduate success in higher education
3. **Ensure** smooth transition to Mission Hill and beyond
4. **Increase** awareness of Fenway and expand fundraising capabilities & financial stability
5. **Review and plan** governance and succession planning

## **GOAL:**

### **Advance educational excellence and academic achievement**

The school's 30-year track record demonstrates a willingness to innovate and collaborate to order to benefit the academic achievement of its students. Building upon this rich history, Fenway has embraced an even more expansive vision, realizing that staying the course will not bring Fenway to the next level and that it must move beyond the successes of the moment to create a bold new future. The future ima-

gines an urban public high school in which all students achieve their academic potential, not only at secondary but post-secondary levels, and are well prepared and supported to contribute to their community's civic and economic life. Fenway will be that high school.

#### **Objectives:**

##### **Conduct curriculum alignment**

- Timeframe: 3 years
- Person(s) responsible: Content teams
- Outcome Measures: Implementation of proposals, improved student academic performance, alignment with common core, college and career ready

##### **Increase special education capacity**

- Timeframe: 1-2 years
- Person(s) responsible: Administration, Special education coordinator
- Outcome Measures: Increase in dual certified staff, effective implementation of differentiated instruction across content areas

##### **Expand programming for English Language Learners**

- Timeframe: 2 years
- Person(s) responsible: Literacy coordinator, SPED coordinator, Administration
- Outcome Measures: Academic progress, full mainstreaming by graduation, development of an SEI strand for Spanish speaking students

##### **Review house structure and schedule, propose modifications**

- Timeframe: 5 months
- Person(s) responsible: Administration, Schedule committee
- Outcome Measures: Reach consensus of house configuration for next 4 years, begin implementation of new structure, determine schedule adjustments needed to expand curriculum offerings

##### **Sustain local control of curriculum and assessment**

- Timeframe: 4 months
- Person(s) responsible: Administration
- Outcome Measures: Board and faculty agree that autonomy over curriculum and assessment aligns with core values

##### **Create extended learning opportunities**

- Timeframe: 2 years
- Person(s) responsible: Administration, Development office
- Outcome Measures: Developed definition of 'extended learning', staff position established that provides oversight of extended learning, developed organization system for tracking extended learning, expansion of: dual enrollment, one-on-one tutoring, SAT preparation, and extracurricular offerings

## **GOAL:**

### **Improve post-graduate success in higher education**

FHS research documented that the success and feelings of empowerment demonstrated by FHS students during their high school years stand in stark contrast with the data and reports flowing from students' post-graduate experiences. While FHS graduation rates (over 90%) are the envy of any urban high school, its students who matriculate to two and four-year higher education programs face a daunting set of circum-

stances. The data show that just over one-third of FHS graduates complete the programs they chose after graduation from FHS. Although these rates are well above the average rates of graduates of urban schools, they are not at the level Fenway aspires to achieve. In tackling the goal of improving post-graduate success in higher education, multi-pronged objectives were advanced to focus on the following objectives.

#### **Objectives:**

##### **Assemble and maintain data on post-graduate higher education success**

- Timeframe: 3 months
- Person(s) responsible: Elizabeth Beal
- Outcome Measures: Create a database analyzing system

##### **Enhance college counseling program**

- Timeframe: 5 months
- Person(s) responsible: Elizabeth Beal, Emily LeFevre, Senior Advisors
- Outcome Measures: More acceptances to 4 year colleges, improved statistics on graduation rates from college

##### **Assess impact of current curriculum and curriculum changes on student success**

- Timeframe: 8 months
- Person(s) responsible: Head of School, Faculty
- Outcome Measures: Proposals implemented, improved student academic performance, students are college and career ready

##### **Improve SAT/ACT test preparation courses**

- Timeframe: 1 year
- Person(s) responsible: Peggy Kemp, Adriana Costache
- Outcome Measures: Schedule developed that enables all students to participate, test scores rise, students accepted to more selective colleges

##### **Support graduates in their higher education programs**

- Timeframe: ongoing
- Person(s) responsible: Elizabeth Beal, Carol Lazarus
- Outcome Measures: System established for communicating with more graduates, system established for communicating with college administration offices, system created for Fenway alumni to tutor one another on campus, higher graduation rates, positive feedback

## **Objectives:**

### **Enhance Senior Advisory's impact on preparation for life after FHS**

- Timeframe: ongoing
- Person(s) responsible: Fran Farrell and Senior Institute
- Outcome Measures: Consistent agendas for Advisory sessions, acceptance by faculty and students, established partnership with Passport to College

### **Enhance parental advocacy for their students and their students' post-FHS success**

- Timeframe: ongoing
- Person(s) responsible: Peggy Kemp, Kevin Brill, Elizabeth Beal, Keith Hammitte, Senior Advisors
- Outcome Measures: Coordinated outreach for parents, timeline established for communicating key info to parents, higher attendance at college-related FHS events

### **Expand tutoring opportunities**

- Timeframe: 9 months
- Person(s) responsible: Peggy Kemp, Carol Lazarus
- Outcome Measures: After-school Tutoring Coordinator identified, established systematic after-school tutoring, sufficient tutors recruited, regular attendance by students who need tutoring, student grades trend upwards from year to year, acceptances to higher tier colleges

### **Streamline relationships with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) that focus on college retention**

- Timeframe: 8 months
- Person(s) responsible: Elizabeth Beal
- Outcome Measures: Higher graduation rates from 4-year colleges

## **GOAL:**

### **Ensure smooth transition to Mission Hill and beyond**

The move to a new facility in Mission Hill in 2015 provides the school with many opportunities as well as challenges. This goal seeks to capitalize on these opportunities to the maximum extent and to make adjustments to further our school's mission and core values in a new environment and context.

#### **Objectives:**

**Coordinate with Architects, Project Manager and Boston Public School to ensure final architectural designs reflect needs of instructional programming and construction is completed to specification and in a timely fashion**

- Timeframe: 3 years
- Person(s) responsible: Administration and Facilities Committee
- Outcome Measures: Building ready for move in summer for 2015 aligned with school programmatic needs

**Establish regular communications regarding facility and transition with all constituents**

- Timeframe: ongoing-2015
- Person(s) responsible: Administration/Development/Board of Trustees
- Outcome Measures: Inclusion of updates in parent news letter and development news-letter throughout process, established relationship with Mission Hill Gazette, active list of neighborhood contacts

**Sustain and enhance the culture of Fenway High School before, during, and after the move to Mission Hill**

- Timeframe: 4 years
- Person(s) responsible: Administration, Faculty, Education Committee
- Outcome Measures: Limited faculty and student attrition, efficient and effective school structure and operation implemented or maintained

**Maintain current partnerships as well as develop new ones presented by the move to Mission Hill**

- Timeframe: 3 years
- Person(s) responsible: Development Committee, Education Committee, Finance Committee, Administration
- Outcome Measures: Partnerships with new organizations identified and developed, new partnerships aligned with curriculum needs

## **Objectives:**

### **Maintain strong relationships within the faculty and staff of Fenway High School throughout the move**

- Timeframe: 2 years
- Person(s) responsible: LEAD Team, SST, Administration
- Outcome Measures: Even faculty attrition rates prior to, during, and after the move, faculty engagement during school growth and leadership through Teaching and Learning Committee, LEAD Team, Board of Trustees and more

### **Maintain a safe environment for all faculty, staff, and students in our new location**

- Timeframe: 2 years
- Person(s) responsible: Administration, Student Support Team, LEAD Team, Education Committee
- Outcome Measures: Job descriptions established for all positions in school which provide clarity for operational accountability and efficiency.

## **GOAL:**

### **Increase awareness of Fenway and expand fundraising capabilities & financial stability**

Throughout its history, Fenway High School has attracted and appreciated the external financial support drawn from a variety of sources. Individuals, corporations, and foundations have made grants and gifts to the school, which have, in turn, enhanced its ability to strengthen programs and supports for students. These programs and supports have

distinguished Fenway High School and contributed to its strong track record of success. As Fenway moves forward and into a new facility with expanded student population, the Development Office, the Development Committee and the Board as a whole will be challenged to find the resources not only to maintain current initiatives, but also to expand programming to meet new, prioritized objectives and action items including:

#### **Objectives:**

##### **Increase overall external support**

- Timeframe: ongoing
- Person(s) responsible: Development Office/ Committee
- Outcome Measures: Increase donor base, exceed prior year donations

##### **Fully utilize opportunities presented by 30th anniversary event**

- Timeframe: 1 year
- Person(s) responsible: Development Office
- Outcome Measures: Additional newcomers as annual fund donors

##### **Engage entire Board of Trustees in fundraising**

- Timeframe: 8 months
- Person(s) responsible: Development Committee, Board of Trustees
- Outcome Measures: Fundraising training session, increased Board participation in soliciting funds, 100% Board participation in Annual Fund

##### **Develop a marketing program**

- Timeframe: 8 months
- Person(s) responsible: Development Office
- Outcome Measures: Comprehensive marketing program and materials

##### **Strengthen alumni participation**

- Timeframe: 1 year
- Person(s) responsible: Development Office
- Outcome Measures: Comprehensive database of alumni, participation in events

##### **Develop and maintain new partnerships**

- Timeframe: ongoing
- Person(s) responsible: Development Office, Faculty, Administration
- Outcome Measures: Increase in partnerships with community organizations

## GOAL:

### Review and plan governance and succession planning

**Governance:** There are many governance strategies and goals that have been initiated and will be implemented by Fenway during the next three to five years that will materially affect the future health of the school. The anticipated changes in the operation of Fenway High School over the next few years are going to be significant. Aligning the Board's organization, structure, bylaws and procedures to keep pace with these changes is essential. This work will fall to the Governance committee and the full board. The existing structure and membership of the board and its five standing committees along with the Board's and the schools leadership's relationship with the Boston Public Schools as well as with the Mayor and the City Council have proven to be flexible and invaluable to the sustenance of the school. Continued attention to the evolving structural, organizational and political environment is essential to future success of the school and its students, as is a willingness to evolve and be alert and responsive to those changes. A variety of structural, leadership, and committee changes may be necessary to fully implement the strategic vision over the next period of transition.

**Succession Planning:** Fenway High School's leaders have successfully developed a community responsible for its overall success. This is an outgrowth of stable leadership and the fortunate continuity and commitment to core values and beliefs in both the learning of students and the nature of a learning community. Despite its good fortune in seeing smooth transitions it is important to anticipate and prepare for future shifts in leadership of both the school and its board. The governance committee and board will develop a procedural template and the organizational capacity to respond to succession needs and challenges as well as to the leadership demands of an ever more complex and successful institution.