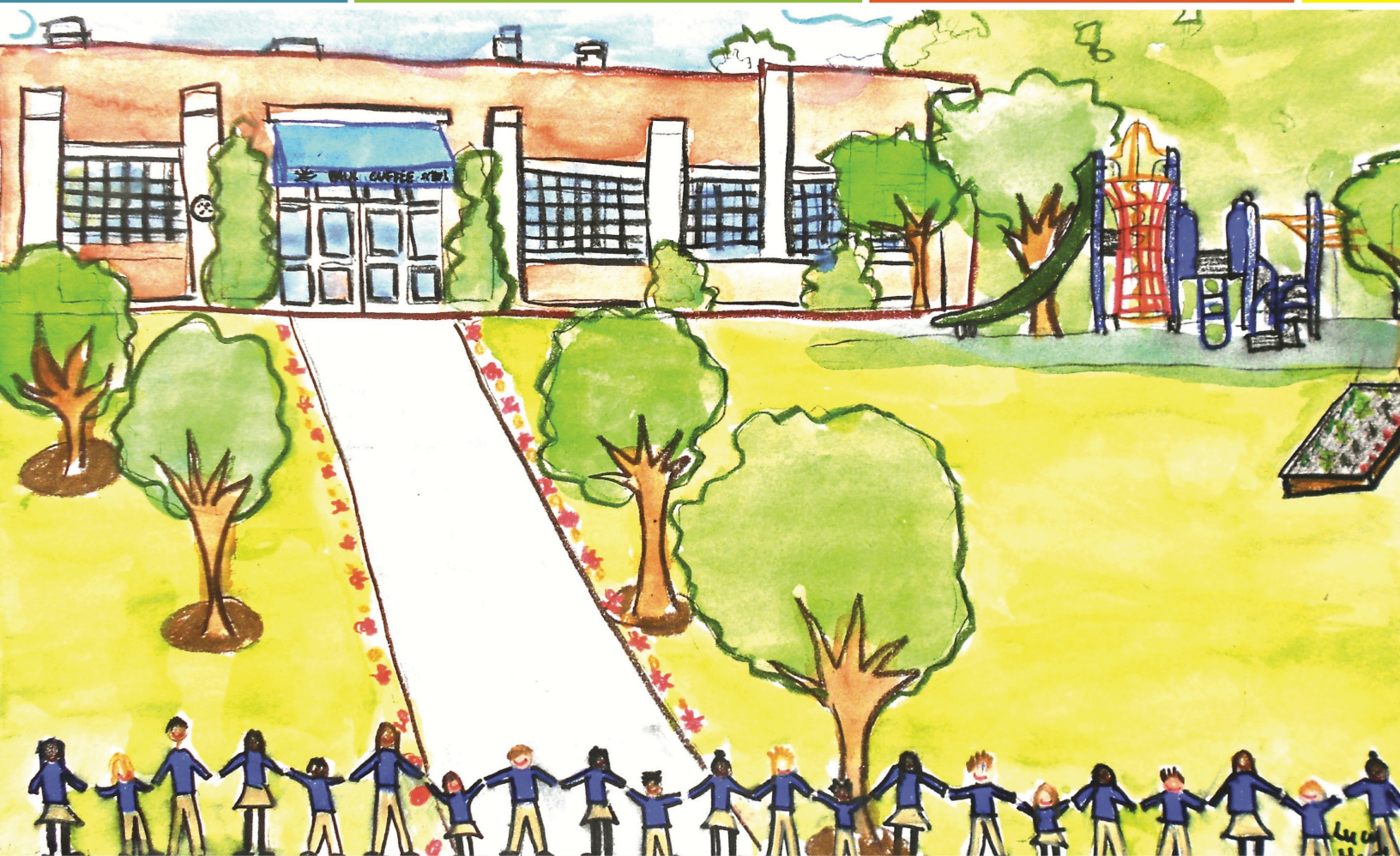




PAUL CUFFEE SCHOOL
A Maritime Charter School for Providence Youth



2015 - 2020
Strategic
Plan

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS	4
HISTORY OF PAUL CUFFEE SCHOOL	5
TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS	6
WHO WAS PAUL CUFFEE?	7
MISSION STATEMENT & STATEMENT OF VALUES AND BELIEFS	9
STRATEGIC DIRECTION	10
FIRST 13 YEARS	10
2015–2020	10
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	11
STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1: CONTINUE TO IMPROVE AND FOSTER THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL GROWTH OF PAUL CUFFEE SCHOOL STUDENTS	11
STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2: IMPROVE SYSTEMS OF STAFF AND FACULTY SUPPORT, WITH A FOCUS ON INCREASING DIVERSITY AND MAXIMIZING EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS	14
STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3: ENSURE THE LONG-TERM FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF THE SCHOOL'S EDUCATIONAL MODEL AND PROGRAM	15
STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4: CONVENE AND FACILITATE COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS TO PROMOTE PEER LEARNING	15
DESIRED STUDENT OUTCOMES	16
APPENDIX I: OBJECTIVES AT A GLANCE	17

Executive Summary

Over the past 13 years, Paul Cuffee School (PCS) has realized its vision of expanding from a small early-learning facility into a full college-preparatory K–12 school with a reputation for excellence. With 1,500 applicants a year, consistently impressive results on standardized tests, and an 88% college acceptance rate among the school's first graduating class in 2014, PCS has much to celebrate. At the same time, we are mindful of the need to continue to assess and improve all aspects of our program to ensure that our students receive the best possible education.

The *Paul Cuffee School Strategic Plan 2015–2020* presents four overarching strategic priorities for the next five years, each with supporting goals, objectives, milestones, and timelines for implementation.

Strategic Priority 1: Continue to improve and foster the academic achievement and social-emotional growth of Paul Cuffee School students. PCS will provide and refine rigorous curricula, instruction, and assessment that challenge students to increase the skills needed for academic success. Evidence-based decision-making and ongoing training and evaluation will ensure continuing use of best practices and reinforce our ability to serve all students, including those who may struggle because of language and other learning differences. Our reach as a school will extend beyond K–12 through attention to expanded options in college and career and through the strengthening of our academic enrichment programs. In addition, we will foster our relationships with families in ways that support student achievement.

Strategic Priority 2: Improve systems of faculty and staff support, with a focus on increasing diversity and maximizing educator effectiveness. Recognizing that quality teaching is essential for student success, PCS will bolster current support systems by putting in place a professional development model focused on meeting identified needs among students and staff. This model includes peer learning and assessment, shared leadership, and tools for collaborating across campuses. In addition, PCS will enhance pathways for internal advancement and actively recruit candidates who reflect the diversity of our school community to reinforce that we are an institution that values racial and ethnic diversity among its workforce.

Strategic Priority 3: Ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the school's educational model and program. As a public charter school, PCS pays for its own facilities costs while serving a diverse, urban population chosen through a need-blind lottery. Financial management is therefore an important aspect of ensuring the ongoing success of the school's program and the students it serves. PCS will work to ensure long-term financial sustainability through a combination of effective fiscal stewardship, efficient use of resources, and development efforts that tap into unrestricted funding sources and build a culture of giving.

Strategic Priority 4: Convene and facilitate collaborative partnerships to promote peer learning. PCS will extend its large network of academic and enrichment collaborators to include partnerships with other schools designed to share knowledge and improve specific aspects of the educational program. Partnerships will center on peer-to-peer learning and collaboration among faculty and staff. Both PCS and its partners will benefit from peer training, which will focus on the areas of greatest strength at each partnering school. Formalizing this arrangement will allow PCS staff to share their expertise while gaining new insight into areas where other schools excel.

The goals and action items outlined in the strategic plan support each of these priorities. They also serve the greater purpose of helping our students thrive at PCS—and go on to succeed in college and beyond.

Strategic Planning Committee Members

Russell Carey - Chair	Brown University, Paul Cuffee School (PCS) Board Member & former PCS parent
Katie Alvarez	PCS 8 th Grade Teacher
Tom Beall	PCS 9 th Grade Teacher
David Burnham	PCS Board Member
Eric Charlesworth	PCS Middle School Principal
Jon Conklin	PCS Business Manager
Allyn Copp	Fall River Public Schools, PCS Board Member
Becky Coustan	PCS Upper School Principal & PCS parent
Crystal Gantz	PCS Board Member & PCS parent
Ann Hampson	PCS Special Services Coordinator
Christopher Haskins	PCS Head of School
Alex Molina	Providence After School Alliance, PCS Board Member
Maria Monteiro	PCS Institutional Advancement Director
Joop Nagtegaal	PCS Board Member
Kim Noble	City Year Rhode Island, PCS Board Member
Maria Palmgren	PCS Executive Assistant to Head of School
Carolyn Pemberton	PCS Board Member
Wendy Randle	PCS Lower School Principal
Earl Smith III	University of Rhode Island, PCS Board Member
Babak Taleghani	CRE Solution, LLC, PCS Board Member
Ariana Wohl	The Learning Community
Kristin Lehoullier	Facilitator

History of Paul Cuffee School

Paul Cuffee School (PCS) grew from a dream of Dr. Cyril O. Burke, a local physician, who believed that the abundant learning opportunities associated with Narragansett Bay could be combined with a rigorous, college-preparatory academic curriculum for Providence students in kindergarten through grade 12. The goal was to introduce marine and environmental sciences to urban youth in order to expand their knowledge, abilities, and career options. In 1999 the International Sailing Institute, PCS's sponsoring organization, was formed and in that same year submitted a charter application to the Rhode Island Department of Education. The Board of Regents approved the school's charter in 2000.

The school opened in 2001 with 136 students in grades K–3 split between two locations—kindergarten and grade 1 at the French-American School and grades 2 and 3 at the Holy Name School. The school expanded through the fall of 2013, adding grades and facilities. The first PCS class of seniors graduated in June 2014, with 88% of the class accepted into at least one two- or four-year college or university. PCS currently serves its 774 students in three separate locations in Providence. The Lower School, serving grades K–5, is in a school-owned building at 459 Promenade Street. The Middle School (grades 6–8) and Upper School (grades 9–12) are in rented spaces, the former at 30 Barton Street on the city's west side and the latter at 544 Elmwood Avenue on the south side.

PCS receives more than 1,500 applications for approximately 50 available slots each year. Students are admitted by lottery, without regard for socioeconomic status, ethnicity, or academic standing. The school's demographics mirror those of its Providence sending district; the student body comprises 85% Latino-American and African-American students. Approximately 75% of students qualify for free or reduced-rate lunch.

With committed, dedicated teachers, innovative instruction differentiated for each student's needs, review and implementation of best practices, and strong parent engagement, PCS students consistently outperform their Providence peers on statewide standardized tests. In some years, PCS students have outperformed the state in several subject areas. The school aims to outperform the state in every category, every year. With its namesake Paul Cuffee as an example, the school sets its sights on preparing its students not only for college, but also—and more importantly—for life. PCS aims to educate intelligent, reflective, engaged global citizens eager to make a difference in the world that they will inhabit and inherit.

Timeline of Key Events

Date	Key Event/Activity
1998	Local physician Dr. Cyril Burke shares his ideas for a school for urban students that will offer preparation for college and beyond using sailing, marine, and environmental sciences as a foundation
1999	International Sailing Institute is formed
1999	PCS charter application is submitted to the RI Department of Education (RIDE)
2000	Board of Regents approves school charter application David Bourns (former Head of School at George School in PA) is hired as founding PCS Head of School
2001	School opens in three separate locations: administrative offices at the Community Church of Providence, grades K-1 at the French American School, and grades 2-3 at Holy Name School
2002	Building for Lower School site purchased in February Lower School opens in September for grades K-4 at 459 Promenade Street, Providence
2005	Lower School reaches capacity with grades K-7 Grades 6-7 move to 30 Barton Street (rented site from St. Mary's church) in November NECAP test is piloted in RI; with the exception of grade 8, PCS students in all grades outperform Providence in writing, math, and reading, surpassing even the state in some areas
2006	PCS has full Middle School with grades 6-8
2006-2007	PCS mission revisited and revised; language about college preparation agreed upon—"prepares students for success in higher education and throughout their lives"
2007	PCS is recognized as one of the top 52 charter schools in the country
2008	PCS is commended by Board of Regents for closing achievement gaps
2009	RIDE & Board of Regents approve the educational program for PCS's college-preparatory Upper School
2010	Upper School opens at the former Feinstein High School and welcomes the class of 2014
2014	PCS graduates its first senior class on June 10

Who Was Paul Cuffee?

Paul Cuffee was born on the tiny island of Cuttyhunk, eleven miles offshore of New Bedford, MA. He was the seventh of ten children of Kofi Slocum, a freed African slave, and Ruth Moses, a Wampanoag Indian. His father took the name Slocum out of respect for the man who had freed him, John Slocum, a Quaker whose family owned Cuttyhunk. His mother was descended from a long line of Wampanoags who had been friendly to the early white settlers. They were a hardworking, devout couple. Quakers themselves, they raised their children to be contributing citizens. They were free and ambitious, and they prospered.

When Paul was eight, his parents bought a 116-acre farm in Westport, MA. This was an unusual move for a freed slave; it was 1766, still nearly a century before President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. All ten siblings grew to adulthood and lived successful lives, but Paul was the star of the family. He dropped Slocum as his last name and adapted his father's first name instead, changing Kofi, an Ashanti word meaning "born on a Friday," to Cuffee (though often spelled with just one "e").

Paul Cuffee showed an early affinity for boatbuilding, navigation, and trade. As a young teenager he built small boats and traded among the Massachusetts islands, as his father had done for many years. Later, he served aboard a whaler owned by the prominent Rotch family, Quaker merchants and whalers of New Bedford. During the Revolutionary War, his ship was captured by the British and Cuffee was imprisoned in New York. Freed after three months, he made his way home, built his own vessel, and became a blockade runner, sailing on the darkest and stormiest nights to elude British patrols. He made a good living taking food and household supplies to Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard. By the time he was in his early twenties, few people had greater knowledge of the currents, shoals, and weather variations of the Massachusetts islands.

In 1783, a few weeks before the end of the Revolutionary War, Cuffee married a local Native American woman named Alice Pequit. They raised seven children. Encouraged by the Rotch family and other successful merchants, Cuffee set about building his own mercantile empire. Manned by African American and Native American crews, his ships could be found on both sides of the Atlantic. Eventually he opened a store in New Bedford to sell the goods he imported.

Paul Cuffee's influence grew steadily greater as he rose in the world. After a long struggle with politicians, he and his brother John won the right to vote in Massachusetts for landowning people of color. As a substantial landowner he had sharply questioned why he should be taxed without representation. Having had to teach himself to read and write, he was eager for his own children to learn these skills. He offered to help pay for the first public school in Westport, but some in the village did not want their children to sit next to Negroes. Cuffee's generous reaction was to build a school and support a teacher on his own property, welcoming the children of his white neighbors as well as his own. Thus, what was possibly the first integrated school in America was opened by a man of color.

Of commanding presence and legendary integrity, Cuffee was admired by people of all colors. Upon his return in 1812 from a voyage to Sierra Leone, unaware that his country was at war with Great Britain, he found his ship impounded by the U.S. Revenue Service in Newport. Within six days, at record-breaking speed, Cuffee was in Washington knocking at the door of President Madison, who immediately arranged for the ship to be returned. Cuffee is said to have been the first person of color to enter the White House through the front door.

Paul Cuffee was one of the wealthiest men of color in early 19th century America. He could have rocked on his porch in Westport watching his ships come home with precious cargoes, but as a devout Quaker he believed God would be better pleased if he kept working to help people who were less fortunate. He chose to devote his remaining energy to taking free Blacks to Africa, often at his own expense. Sierra Leone, an African colony supported by British Quakers, provided a fine opportunity for developing a farming economy. Unfortunately, Cuffee could not persuade the native chiefs that tilling the soil would lead to greater community prosperity than selling their captives as slaves.

Today at PCS we tell our students that if Paul Cuffee could achieve all that he did in his day, surely they can overcome the obstacles they face today.

Mission Statement & Statement of Values and Beliefs

Our Mission:

Paul Cuffee School, a K–12 public charter school of choice, educates a diverse community of students from Providence, Rhode Island. We respect each individual and the world we share. This quality of our community is central to our mission.

In the spirit of Paul Cuffee's life, we teach students to value and practice personal initiative, perseverance, and social responsibility. Our school accomplishes these goals through a rigorous academic program, which, enriched with maritime experiences, fosters discovery and critical thinking. We prepare students for higher education, lifelong learning, and active citizenship.

Our Statement of Values and Beliefs:

A man of great compassion and resolve, Paul Cuffee provides a model and inspiration for our work. Our community strives to uphold the following core values:

- **Student Achievement and Social-Emotional Growth:** We focus both on students' social-emotional development and their academic achievement. We set high academic, social, and personal expectations for students of all abilities and backgrounds. We believe in a rigorous, differentiated approach to scholarship that fosters discovery and critical thinking across multiple intelligences. We provide a responsive, hands-on educational program that promotes the intellectual, social-emotional, and physical development of each student. We teach and learn with a dynamic growth mindset.
- **Facing and Embracing Differences:** We believe that our strength comes from our diversity. We strive to be an inclusive community that values and respects individuals and appreciates diversity in race, ethnicity, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, family structure, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, learning readiness, and other characteristics that contribute to our full identities. We work to stand against oppression and for equity at the local and global level through dynamic curricula, just hiring practices, and shared decision-making.
- **Collaboration and Communication:** We support the efforts of each community member with care, resources, and time because collectively we are greater than the sum of our parts. We take the time to know the backgrounds, interests, and preferred communication styles of students, families, and team members in order to build trusting relationships that promote growth and achievement. We encourage each other to share opinions and questions openly and directly with a tone of decency and respect. We listen to understand each other and to resolve conflict thoughtfully.
- **Personal Initiative, Perseverance, and Leadership:** We encourage each other to take responsibility and persist in the face of obstacles inside and outside the classroom. We work to build the capacity of all members of our community to take on leadership roles and engage in shared decision-making and pro-active problem solving. Following the example of the mariner Paul Cuffee, our maritime-themed program provides authentic experiences through which our students learn and apply the qualities of leadership.

First 13 Years

Paul Cuffee School was created to provide an innovative educational program that offers a rigorous, college-preparatory, maritime-themed academic curriculum for Providence students in kindergarten through grade 12. While we are one of the oldest charter schools in Rhode Island, we are still a fairly young organization, built with a high degree of entrepreneurial spirit. We just finished expanding and graduated our first senior class in June 2014.

During our start-up and expansion years, our school put in place a strong foundation upon which to build. It created a unique and special public school culture founded on the understanding that academic outcomes are strongly connected to learning in an environment where students feel safe, supported, academically challenged, and socially capable. Our attention to the value of relationships has developed a culture of high expectations in our staff, students, and families. The quality of our school community is an important measure of our success and something of which we are extremely proud.

Given that the greatest predictor of post-secondary success is a student's level of academic achievement, we are also very focused on, and proud of, our students' academic performance. One of several measures of our students' achievement is their performance on standardized assessments. Meeting the intent of the charter legislation, Paul Cuffee School has a history of demonstrating success in this area when compared with results from our sending district and the state. While we expect our students to demonstrate proficiency on standardized assessments, our definition of achievement is broader than what a standardized test can measure, and our expectations are much higher. Our goal is for students at every grade level to demonstrate the highest level of achievement and success across the state and the region.

Our goal is for Paul Cuffee students to demonstrate the highest levels of achievement and success across the state and the region.

2015–2020

We have in place a strong and effective culture to help us achieve this goal. Our next phase of development will put in place the systems needed to support our organization's size at full enrollment capacity, while we work to standardize best practices across the organization. Specifically, we will:

- Support evidence-based decision-making to improve academic achievement and social-emotional growth.
- Sustain and nurture the positive culture and supportive climate that we believe is fundamental to our students' success.
- Provide quality professional development and feedback to maximize the effectiveness of our educators. Broaden the diversity of our faculty and staff to reflect the demographic representation of our students and families.
- Develop a long-term financial plan that will sustain our educational program at full student capacity.
- Foster adult peer learning and collaboration through expanded strategic community partnerships.

Strategic Priority #1: Continue to Improve and Foster the Academic Achievement and Social-Emotional Growth of Paul Cuffee School Students

Academic achievement for our students always has been, and will continue to be, our number one priority. Success in academics depends both on the quality of our educational program and on the learning environment we create. Over the next five years we will put in place more consistent school-wide systems and evidence-based decision-making protocols to ensure that our school is fully responsive to students' needs. Specifically, we will:

1.1: Provide rigorous curricula, instruction, and assessment that challenge students to increase their perseverance and critical thinking skills. We will continue to align and refine our curriculum to meet the demands of the Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards in order to help students achieve the most essential K–12 learning outcomes. We will intentionally connect the standards and our curriculum with our mission to help students develop personal initiative and social responsibility, as well as the perseverance and critical thinking skills needed for academic success. Ongoing assessment will focus on ensuring that students are acquiring necessary academic skills as well as on refining instruction to meet students' learning needs. Experiential learning through our maritime theme, the development and strengthening of outside partnerships, and implementation of technology and tools that support blended learning (a combination of in-person and online instruction) will help our students gain authentic learning experiences that support academic knowledge. Our goals in this area include:

- 1.1a: Continue to align the curriculum and instruction to the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards.
- 1.1b: Continue to align our curriculum and instruction across all grade levels to incorporate the school's core values regarding social-emotional learning, justice, perseverance, and critical thinking.
- 1.1c: Provide ongoing individual and classroom assessment to ensure that students are acquiring the required academic concepts and skills and to guide instruction that meets the needs of every student.
- 1.1d: Ensure that teachers have the technology, tools, and training needed to support ongoing alignment among instruction, curriculum, and assessment.
- 1.1e: Develop a "scope and sequence" document (outlining concepts and learning objectives to be covered) for maritime experiences that defines how these experiences enrich the curriculum across K–12.
- 1.1f: Strengthen outside partnerships and collaborations that enhance student learning by supporting our maritime theme, reinforcing critical thinking skills, fostering discovery, and enhancing academic and social-emotional learning.

1.2: Sustain and nurture social-emotional learning and growth. We have always believed in the importance of promoting the social-emotional development of each student. We approach relationships with students and one another with a dynamic growth mindset. Making mistakes and taking risks are a part of developmental growth and are embraced as opportunities for learning and a chance for reflection and goal setting. Our goals in this area include:

- 1.2a: Designate classroom and school time for the explicit purpose of building classroom and community connections.
- 1.2b: Provide a consistent environment (structure, schedule, and relationships with adults) so that students know what is expected of them at all times and in all settings.
- 1.2c: Explicitly teach students expectations for peer and adult interactions.
- 1.2d: Consistently provide adult-directed self-reflection for students when they demonstrate problem behaviors.
- 1.2e: Provide high-quality training to all new faculty and staff related to social-emotional learning.
- 1.2f: Incorporate into daily lessons opportunities for student voice, autonomy, and joyful learning.
- 1.2g: Incorporate movement and mindfulness practices into the daily structure of the school day.
- 1.2h: Promote and enhance school-wide community celebrations.

1.3: Implement evidence-based decision-making that improves academic and behavioral

outcomes. Response to Intervention (RTI)—a comprehensive early-warning approach for identifying and supporting students with learning and behavior needs—is the decision-making framework by which we will allocate resources and supports. This process involves screening and benchmarking, problem solving, goal setting, and delivering a system of interventions in an expanding circle of support, while frequently monitoring progress and celebrating improvements. Our goals in this area include:

- 1.3a: Expand and provide greater coherence to our evidence-based instructional programming and provide more time and attention for students requiring re-teaching, including specially designed instruction for students whose learning differences require substantial supports.
- 1.3b: Further develop and refine a consistent, positive, school-wide system for how we prevent and respond to problem behaviors.

1.4: Continue to support the needs of instructional staff to ensure the implementation of best

practices. We will implement a data-driven planning process resulting in professional development that directly aligns with student and staff needs. Since the most effective form of professional development is job-embedded and focuses on students and their learning, we will identify and adopt a repertoire of research-based best practices that coordinate and integrate with the job-embedded professional development and coaching model described under staff sustainability (see Objective 2.1). Specifically, we will:

- 1.4a: Ensure that annual professional development reflects student and staff needs and is based on demonstrated student and staff performance.
- 1.4b: Create professional learning communities that include collaborative analysis of student work, peer coaching, and mentoring.
- 1.4c: Implement a system of regular review of student outcomes that informs decisions (data cycle of inquiry) to improve teaching and learning.

1.5: Strengthen our capacity to serve special education students, English language learners (ELLs), and their families.

Improving our ability to serve students in special education and ELLs through a highly organized and flexible support system will be an important focus over the next five years. Students with the greatest learning challenges are often those demonstrating the smallest gains in achievement year to year. A stronger capacity in this area will allow these students to close learning gaps. Our goals in this area include:

- 1.5a: Implement the RTI early-warning system to frequently review and proactively respond to student needs.
- 1.5b: Annually evaluate and respond to students' needs by reallocating human resources and creating efficiencies in service delivery.

1.5c: Increase the capacity of faculty to meet the needs of ELLs and students with special needs.

1.6: Expand students' exposure to a wide variety of college and career options at all grade levels through enrichment programs during and beyond the school day. Too often we hear college and career discussed as some abstract notion of contributing to the world, when what students really need to know is where their strengths lie, what the related academic fields are, and in which careers they might best exercise their strengths and talents. To expand our students' exposure to college and career options, we will:

- 1.6a: Create a scope and sequence document for post-secondary readiness that outlines age-appropriate actions for each grade level.
- 1.6b: Continue to pursue and develop formal community partnerships embedded into each school's curriculum.
- 1.6c: Align individual learning plans across divisions to better support students' college and career aspirations and readiness.
- 1.6d: Annually evaluate and strengthen college credit opportunities to meet the needs of high school students.

1.7: Increase retention of students at the transitions between divisions, particularly between the Middle and Upper Schools. Currently, some students leave PCS after grade 8 for other, highly selective high schools. We are proud that so many of our students have competitive choices of where to go for high school. We will strive to increase our retention of these students by increasing the competitiveness of our Upper School through academic achievement and extracurricular opportunities. To address this, we will:

- 1.7a: Achieve higher levels of academic performance by implementing the educational priorities outlined in this plan.
- 1.7b: Invest in, expand, and promote extracurricular activities and athletics.
- 1.7c: Enhance and expand student opportunities in visual and performing arts.
- 1.7d: Annually gather and assess data to increase retention and more effectively brand and market the school to parents and youth.
- 1.7e: Develop a comprehensive marketing and branding plan that will help all school stakeholders understand what is offered at every school division.
- 1.7f: Develop and implement an "on-boarding" process for new 9th graders.
- 1.7g: Modify transition policies to reduce the number of families holding onto open slots.

1.8: Build and nurture strong partnerships among families, teachers, staff, and students in ways that increase student achievement and community connections. Parents, caregivers, older siblings, and alumni are positioned to help encourage, support, and motivate students to improve their academic achievement. We have found success in developing strong family partnerships, and we will use these relationships to help further social-emotional growth as well as academic achievement. To achieve this goal, we will develop and articulate a clear vision for family engagement and support that vision with well-defined priorities and a financial strategy. Specifically, we will:

- 1.8a: Improve academic outcomes by providing school resources to support home learning.
- 1.8b: Increase families' capacity to support their student's social-emotional growth and academic achievement.
- 1.8c: Enlist families to help staff increase the school's family engagement skills.
- 1.8d: Increase parent participation in school governance and decision-making processes.
- 1.8e: Provide high-quality adult learning opportunities for the caregivers of our students.

Research clearly shows that quality teachers are the most important school-based factor influencing student performance. In addition, we believe it is our responsibility to actively recruit and hire faculty and staff who represent the racial and ethnic makeup of our students and families. Therefore, we will hire and retain the most diverse and highest-quality professional teaching and support staff possible, and ensure that they are supported to meet the needs of our students. To achieve these goals, we will:

Strategic Priority #2: Improve Systems of Staff and Faculty Support, with a Focus on Increasing Diversity and Maximizing Educator Effectiveness

2.1: Develop and implement a professional development and coaching model that will support job-embedded growth, provide for inter- and cross-departmental collaborative learning, and lead to multiple pathways for professional advancement for all faculty and staff at PCS. We believe that high-impact professional development tied to student and staff needs is one of the most important investments we can make to increase our students' academic achievement. To strengthen our professional development, we will put in place job-embedded training and peer-learning opportunities. Specifically, we will:

- 2.1a: Create a comprehensive, differentiated professional development plan for faculty to develop expertise in prioritized areas, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Providing differentiated instruction and ensuring inclusive classrooms.
 - Promoting social-emotional learning.
 - Developing cultural competence and using culturally responsive teaching practices.
 - Fostering personal responsibility and active citizenship among students.
 - Using assessment to plan instruction.
- 2.1b: Create opportunities for teachers and staff to increase capacity for shared leadership by:
 - Training teacher-leaders and teaching partners to facilitate professional learning communities, where teachers regularly gather to provide each other with feedback on their professional practice and their students' work.
 - Supporting peer coaching and mentorship.
 - Establishing site-based leadership teams that represent the various job functions within the school.
 - Providing relevant professional learning opportunities for non-teaching staff to improve their leadership skills.
- 2.1c: Effectively leverage technology to increase collegiality and collaboration across PCS campuses.

2.2: Actively recruit, hire, and develop candidates, both internal and external, who reflect the diversity of the community we serve and have the skills and dispositions necessary for our mission's success. Having a diverse faculty and staff facilitates stronger and deeper connections to our diverse learning community and promotes valuable perspectives among staff, faculty, and students. To achieve this goal, we will:

- 2.2a: Provide professional opportunities for teaching partners who wish to become certified as classroom teachers.
- 2.2b: Establish relationships with local and national partners who can help identify diverse candidates.

- 2.2c: Deepen partnerships with educator preparation programs to support the development of a pipeline of diverse candidates with the skills to support our mission.
- 2.2d: Create a strategy for supporting and inspiring our students to pursue teaching as a career.

Strategic Priority #3: Ensure the Long-Term Financial Sustainability of the School's Educational Model and Program

As Paul Cuffee School has matured and grown over the past 13 years to include a Middle School and an Upper School, our core expenses are forecast to increase above our allocated public funding, creating a structural deficit that must be addressed to ensure the school's long-term sustainability. To address this issue, we will:

3.1: Achieve long-term financial sustainability through fiscal conservatism and effective stewardship of the school's resources. To ensure our long-term financial sustainability, we will need to find ways both to increase revenue and to reduce costs. The school will need to prioritize staff functions and consider reducing and combining positions without compromising the quality of our educational programs. While the school has benefited from private donations and community partnerships, it needs to pursue public and private grant opportunities more aggressively. To these ends, we will:

- 3.1a: Manage school resources to optimize efficiency, including people, facilities, equipment, and funding:
 - Maintain a disciplined approach toward staff costs.
 - Develop a strategy to maximize all available federal, state, and municipal funding.
- 3.1b: Prioritize development:
 - Maximize Annual Fund giving so that all community members become stakeholders in the pursuit of development goals.
 - Create a shared sense of responsibility for philanthropy development among all stakeholders.
 - Increase fundraising via grants and other unrestricted sources.
 - Increase the use of technology as a marketing and communication tool.
- 3.1c: Continually monitor our progress against the budget projection in our five-year strategic plan to ensure accountability and to focus decision-making on these core principles.

Strategic Priority #4: Convene and Facilitate Collaborative Partnerships to Promote Peer Learning

We know that our educational program will improve through partnerships with other schools. Collaboration will bring mutual benefit and learning to all parties. To achieve this goal, we will:

4.1: Convene and provide facilitative leadership for peer-to-peer learning communities with other schools. We will collaborate with traditional public schools, charter public schools, and independent private schools to develop and share evidence-based practices that support student achievement and social-emotional development. To do so, we will:

- 4.1a: Identify PCS focus areas for peer learning and collaboration.
- 4.1b: Develop and implement a plan to initiate collaboration with other schools.

Desired Student Outcomes

We believe that each child can succeed at high levels and that success can be measured in many ways, including, but not limited to, standardized test scores. By using a personalized approach, responsive teaching, a dynamic and rigorous curriculum, refined practices, and compassionate and patient teachers, we will position our students for success in making the most of their college, career, and civic opportunities and responsibilities. To measure the impact and success of this plan, we have carefully chosen the following student outcomes as overarching measures of our progress:

- ☐ The number of students meeting grade-level benchmarks in grades K–12—as measured by the K–5 Rigby PM Benchmark, AIMSWeb, and the 6–12 STAR Reading and Math assessments—will increase, on average, by 5–10% annually.
- ☐ The number of students who score at the Proficient or Proficient with Distinction level on the NECAP science exam in grades 4, 8, and 11 will increase, on average, by 5–10% annually.
- ☐ The number of students who score between Moderate and Distinguished on the PARCC exam in grades 3 through 11 for English language arts will increase, on average, by 5–10% annually.
- ☐ The number of students who score at the Moderate and Distinguished level on the PARCC math exam in grades 3 through 11 will increase, on average, by 5–10% annually.
- ☐ Average PSAT scores among 9th to 11th graders will increase, on average, by 5–10% annually.
- ☐ The number of students accepted into four-year colleges will increase, on average, by 5–10% annually.
- ☐ The number of students in grades 4–12 who respond “Agree” or “Strongly agree” to the annual student survey question, *“Students in my school treat one another with respect”* will increase by 5% annually.
- ☐ The number of students in grades 4–12 who respond “Agree” or “Strongly agree” to the annual student survey question, *“Students in my school treat teachers with respect”* will increase by 5% annually.
- ☐ 100% of students in grades 4–12 will respond “Agree” or “Strongly agree” to the annual student survey question, *“I feel safe in my school.”*
- ☐ The number of students participating in extracurricular activities, including clubs and athletics, will increase by 5% annually.
- ☐ The number of students demonstrating leadership through school- and community-based opportunities, including civic organizations, public speaking, mentorship, community service/volunteerism, and mentorship, will increase by 5% annually.
- ☐ The number of students who demonstrate chronic absenteeism (absent from school 10% of school year or more) will decrease by 10% annually.
- ☐ The number of students who are suspended from school for major rule violations will decrease, on average, by 5% annually.

Appendix I: Objectives at a Glance

Strategic Priority #1: Continue to Improve and Foster the Academic Achievement and Social-Emotional Growth of Paul Cuffee School Students

- 1.1: Provide rigorous curricula, instruction, and assessment that challenge students to increase their perseverance and critical thinking skills.
- 1.2: Sustain and nurture social-emotional learning and growth.
- 1.3: Implement evidence-based decision-making that improves academic and behavioral outcomes.
- 1.4: Continue to support the needs of instructional staff to ensure the implementation of best practices.
- 1.5: Strengthen our capacity to serve special education students, English language learners, and their families.
- 1.6: Expand students' exposure to a wide variety of college and career options at all grade levels through enrichment programs during and beyond the school day.
- 1.7: Increase retention of students at the transitions between divisions, particularly between the Middle and Upper Schools.
- 1.8: Build and nurture strong partnerships among families, teachers, staff, and students in ways that increase student achievement and community connections.

Strategic Priority #2: Improve Systems of Staff and Faculty Support, with a Focus on Increasing Diversity and Maximizing Educator Effectiveness

- 2.1: Develop and implement a professional development and coaching model that will support job-embedded growth, provide for inter- and cross-departmental collaborative learning, and lead to multiple pathways for professional advancement for all faculty and staff at PCS.
- 2.2: Actively recruit, hire, and develop candidates, both internal and external, who reflect the diversity of the community we serve and have the skills and dispositions necessary for our mission's success.

Strategic Priority #3: Ensure the Long-Term Financial Sustainability of the School's Educational Model and Program

- 3.1: Achieve long-term financial sustainability through fiscal conservatism and effective stewardship of the school's resources.

Strategic Priority #4 Convene and Facilitate Collaborative Community Partnerships to Promote Peer Learning

- 4.1: Convene and provide facilitative leadership for peer-to-peer learning communities with other schools.