

RISING TIDE

CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

2016 ANNUAL REPORT



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Rising Tide Charter Public School

Type of Charter	Commonwealth	Location	Plymouth, MA
Regional or Non-Regional?	Regional	Districts in Region	Barnstable, Bourne, Carver, Duxbury, Falmouth, Lakeville, Marshfield, Mashpee, Middleborough, Old Rochester, Pembroke, Plymouth, Sandwich, Silver Lake, Wareham
Year Opened	1998	Years Renewed	2003, 2008, 2013
Maximum Enrollment	700	Current Enrollment	616
Chartered Grade Span	Grades 5-12	Current Grade Span	Grades 5-12
# of Instructional Days during the 2014-2015 school year	180	Students on Waitlist	224
School Hours	7:40 am - 3:10 pm	Age of School	18 Years

Mission Statement

“To become intimate with your home region, to know the territory as well as you can, to understand your life as woven into the local life does not prevent you from recognizing and honoring the diversity of other places, cultures and ways. On the contrary, how can you value other places if you do not have your own? If you are not placed, then you wander the world like a sightseer, a collector of sensations, with no gauge for measuring what you see. Local knowledge is the grounding for global knowledge.” (Scott Russell Sanders)

The Rising Tide Charter Public School will provide a strong academic program rooted in the history of Plymouth, Massachusetts. Our students will harvest opportunity from the practice of language, the reasoning of mathematics, the analysis of science and the reflection of history. We want children to hone skills through rigorous studies, but skills alone do not make a whole education. The Rising Tide Charter Public School will also cultivate within its students a sense of belonging to our community, a tie with those who have come before them and a seed of continuity between the Plymouth of today and the Plymouth of tomorrow. The Rising Tide Charter Public School will graduate capable and prepared young adults who have already sown within themselves a sense of place and belonging that will be the bounty of the future, whether they remain among us or venture from our harbor.

Letter from the Chairman of the Board of Trustees

I have served on the Rising Tide Charter Public School (Rising Tide) Board of Trustees for nine years. For the past three years, I have held the role of Chairman of the Board of Trustees. I am also a member of the Executive Committee and the Finance Committee. The 2015-2016 school year has been one of growth but also one of facilities' challenges for Rising Tide.

During the 2015 to 2016 school year, Rising Tide continued to add more students and graduated its second grade 12 class. As they did last year, the whole community gathered in June for graduation ceremonies, with a sense of pride in the graduates and in the development of the Rising Tide community. Also this year, school leaders and teachers worked together to add courses to the upper school curriculum and to expand the senior Internship course. The middle school made some changes to the school schedule and courses in order to slow down the school day and also expanded its advisory curriculum.

School leaders and the board of trustees continued to work on securing an adequate facility for Rising Tide's grades 5-12 program. The strength and resiliency of Rising Tide's community was demonstrated when leaders and board members decided to abandon the project to build a new upper school and, instead, to acquire a single building for grades 5-12. Mutual agreement on strategic goals as well as a sense of determination allowed the board and school leaders to successfully sign a purchase and sale agreement for an already-existing facility that will adequately house the entire school community. Plans are well underway to arrange for designing and financing this facility.

Other areas of emphasis this year have been on solidifying leadership, as well as on modifying teaching and program needs for an expanding school. In addition, the board has worked with school leaders on challenges related to financing school expansion at the same time that the school program continues to grow.

Rising Tide continues to thrive and look optimistically to the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Harry Salerno
Chairman
Rising Tide Charter Public School Board of Trustees

School Performance and Program Implementation

Part I. Charter School Performance Criteria Relating to Faithfulness to the Charter

Over the past five years, the Rising Tide Charter Public School (Rising Tide) has expanded to include the high school grades; the program now spans from grade five to grade twelve. As the leadership group has become more inclusive and stable, and the school's culture and programs have become more definitive, the school has been challenged to maintain consistency in implementation of its mission and key design elements across all grade levels. This section includes a mixture of mission and key design elements that are new and those on which school staff are still working to maintain consistency across all grade levels.

Mission and Key Design Elements in Rising Tide's Governance and Leadership:

Role of the Rising Tide Board of Trustees

Rising Tide's Board of Trustees takes responsibility for overseeing school operations and for annually evaluating the Head of School. In 2015-2016, Rising Tide's Board of Trustees accomplished the following tasks, in accordance with the school mission and key design elements:

1. The Rising Tide Board of Trustees' Facilities Committee as well as the entire Board of Trustees was very active once again this year as they worked with school leaders to solve the school's facilities' challenges. Rising Tide was entering into the 90% construction document phase of constructing a new upper school when an abutter began objecting to the new building. Even though Rising Tide had clear legal rights to construct the new building, the board of trustees and school leaders decided to abandon the project. The school subsequently located an existing 100,000 square foot building on eighteen acres of land that can house the entire school, grades 5-12. Throughout this protracted process, the Rising Tide Board of Trustees and school leaders have successfully guided the school. Everyone, including trustees, school staff, parents, and students, agrees that this new project is better for the future of the school. Board members have been involved and supportive of the school throughout the process. One board member and facilities' committee member, Roy Bruninghaus, has attended all architecture and town meetings and has proven to be an invaluable resource and support to the school, as well as an effective liaison with the board.
2. Rising Tide's Board Finance Committee has been active in 2015-2016, overseeing the process of acquiring bond and bank financing for the new upper school project. School leaders and finance committee members are working collaboratively on this project.

Building School Leadership

2015-2016 marked the second year that Rising Tide enrolled all eight grade levels, 5-12. More students were added as the school gradually moves toward its 700 student maximum enrollment. As growth has taken place, Rising Tide's school leaders have tried to carefully expand the school leadership team with the mission in mind. Key elements of the mission that school leaders have maintained as they build a leadership team are the strong academic program with an emphasis on skill development for individual students, a sense of community, and the importance of student understanding of and involvement in the region. During the 2015-2016 academic year, no new leadership positions were added; however, new people moved into leadership positions and the role of curriculum coordinators expanded to better meet the needs of the school.

1. Rising Tide's leadership team consists of the Head of School/Middle School Principal, Assistant Head of School/Upper School Principal, Upper and Middle School Deans, Academic

- Dean, Curriculum Leader, and Special Education Coordinator. In keeping with the school's mission, school leaders constantly strive to build a collaborative leadership team so that school leaders develop a strong sense of community among themselves and are able to convey this sense of community to faculty and students. The leadership group fully discusses most decisions to ensure consistency of practice and also to encourage participation in decision-making. This process takes time; however, as new leaders are added to the group, these discussions assist new leaders with understanding the various elements that contribute to decision-making and ensure consistency in school culture and future decision-making. During this past year, new staff members took on the roles of Upper School Dean and Middle School Dean. The entire leadership team worked together, meeting regularly, to ensure consistency with the mission and key design elements and reflection in decision-making.
2. A great deal of work was done in 2015-2016 with curriculum coordinators in order to expand their role in overseeing faculty in their disciplines. For the second year, Rising Tide hired substitutes once a quarter for each curriculum coordinator so that he or she could observe classes of teachers in their disciplines, followed up by meetings with school leaders to provide input on teacher planning and assessments. Training was also provided to curriculum coordinators so they could lead their curriculum area groups in looking at student work together in order to determine developing student skill levels.
 3. The Head of School and Assistant Head of School spent a great deal of time discussing a logical governance and compensation model for Rising Tide staff members as the school begins to move from its years as a growing organization to a more stable future as a sustainable organization. School leaders have been considering hiring a consulting firm, who has worked with charter schools before, in order to help Rising Tide look at leadership and compensation options for the future.

Mission and Key Design Elements in Rising Tide's Beliefs and Values:

Maintaining Consistency of Beliefs and Values as New Staff and Courses are Added to the Program

Over the past several years, as Rising Tide has added grade levels and staff members, school leaders have tried to maintain consistency with the mission in school culture, beliefs and values, while making sure that expectations are grade and age-level appropriate. Some areas where culture, beliefs and values are consistently evident in grades 5-12 are:

1. *Maintaining a Focus on the Individual Student*
Rising Tide's original charter application clearly states that the school's founders wanted the school to focus on the individual student, and they wanted the school to implement the concept that all students are capable of learning and of critical thinking but that each student learns differently and at a different rate. Throughout its history, Rising Tide staff members have maintained a focus on the individual student, through its advisor program, small class size, and availability of academic support for all students. During the 2015-2016 academic year, Rising Tide's middle school extended advisory time for all students and both the middle and upper schools enhanced an existing wellness program. The advisory and wellness programs will be discussed in the *Program Delivery* section of this report.
2. *Maintaining Rising Tide's Core Principles in Academic and Social Settings*
Four core principles guide Rising Tide's culture and philosophy. These core principles are those of *Honesty, Trust, Respect for all community members, and Taking Increasing Responsibility for Oneself*. These principles grew out of the school's mission statement and offer important guides for decision-making and student behavior and standards in all aspects of school life. Teachers cite these core principles in situations involving academic rigor and standards as well as in behavioral situations. As Rising Tide has grown and added grade levels, these core principles have been more clearly defined; school leaders and

teachers have also stratified these principles so that, each year, as students mature, more is expected of them in relation to these principles.

3. *Electives Programs for All Students*

Rising Tide has maintained its commitment to the school's mission as the school has grown by creating and further developing electives programs in both the middle and upper schools. Rising Tide's school leaders and teachers believe that an electives program, grades 5-12, is an important component of maintaining a strong and varied academic program, developing a sense of community, and helping students to better plan for the future.

In the middle school, electives programs include:

- *Exposition Courses*, described in the Accountability Plan section
- *Discover Courses*: These electives' courses take place in the second and third quarters of the school year. Discover courses provide students with a wonderful opportunity to discover activities and learn new skills in a way that may be different from the rest of the school day.

In the upper school, electives programs include:

- *Two electives courses each year*: Some electives courses connect directly to the Plymouth region; all electives courses allow Rising Tide to expand its academic offerings to students.
- *Senior Internship Program*: This program for seniors began last year. Students enrolled in the internship program combine academic skills-based learning with an internship in the field. This program is described in the *Program Delivery* section of this report.

4. *Creating Graduation Ceremonies and Traditions Consistent with the School Mission and Vision*

The school's mission was strongly considered as the Rising Tide staff planned the school's second graduation. Planners wanted graduates to feel a strong sense of academic accomplishment as well as a strong sense of belonging to a supportive and caring community. With the mission in mind, the whole community, students in grades 5-12 and all staff members, as well as families and friends of graduates, attended the graduation ceremony under a large tent, so that graduates would both see and feel the size and strength of the community that supports them. Academic accomplishments were recognized during the awards night ceremony that took place the night before graduation.

Evidence of Mission and Key Design Elements in Rising Tide's Vision

Evidence of Mission and Vision in School Program

As Rising Tide has expanded during the past four years to include grades 5-12, school leaders have tried to maintain the founders' vision, stated in the school's mission, in the expanding program. Evidence of the original vision may be found in the following elements of school program, grades 5-12:

1. *Strong Academic Program*

Rising Tide teachers in grades 5-12 maintain high academic standards for all students, as stated in the school's mission statement. As the school has expanded, the staff has worked diligently to maintain these high standards in all courses, both core courses and electives. All of the courses listed in Rising Tide's *Program of Studies* are rigorous courses. Through utilizing an inquiry and skills-based approach, teachers make the challenging curriculum accessible to all students.

2. *Commitment to Developing Student Skills*

As Rising Tide has added grade levels to its program, teachers, who create and design curriculum, have maintained a commitment to encouraging students to develop strong academic skills. All Rising Tide courses are designed around the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the Rising Tide Schoolwide Objectives. Progress on skill development is evidenced in second and fourth term Benchmark Rubrics on student report cards.

During the 2015-2016 school year, teachers worked together in mixed Teaching and Learning groups in order to look together at student work. This year, the purpose of looking at student work together was so that teachers could talk together about the various skills students should develop at the various grade levels. This work will help teachers to design the Benchmark Assessments mentioned in Rising Tide's 2013 Accountability Plan. In addition to helping with the assessment design, these conversations among teachers will also assist teachers in becoming better at teaching skills to students, along with content.

3. *Including Ties to Plymouth and the Region*

Rising Tide teachers continue to create ties to Plymouth and the region at all grade levels and in every course. The Senior Internship Program, added in the 2014-2015 school year, created a new opportunity to create ties to the region. In the upcoming school year, a semester course on *Local History* is planned to be added to the upper school program.

4. *Commitment to graduating capable and self-confident young adults who have developed a sense of place*

The Internship Program, along with the regular academic program and arts courses, has greatly enhanced Rising Tide's ability to graduate capable and grounded young adults.

Evidence of Mission and Key Design Elements in Curricular Model and Instructional Practices

Since 2008, Rising Tide teachers, under the leadership of the Head and Assistant Head of School, Curriculum Leader, and Curriculum Coordinators have been working to develop and document a curriculum based upon the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and staff-created Schoolwide Objectives, Benchmark Skills, Guiding Principles, and Essential Questions. The Rising Tide staff regards curriculum as dynamic, never static, and as constantly evolving; by design, the curriculum at Rising Tide will never be set. At the same time that they have been developing curriculum, teachers have been introduced to the backward design method of curriculum design and instructional planning and encouraged to create units in the backward design method, as defined by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe in *Understanding by Design* (ASCD 2005). This method of approaching curriculum design and instruction is combined with Rising Tide's inquiry and skills-based approach to teaching and learning. The inquiry and skills-based approach is utilized in classrooms as well as in social settings and disciplinary situations. Evidence of teacher unit plans prepared in a backward design method and demonstrating an inquiry and skill-based approach may be found in Appendix E.

Instruction at Rising Tide is described in the school's *Philosophy and Practice Manual* as a hybrid of an inquiry approach along with some direct skills' instruction. Teaching and learning at Rising Tide are designed to include strong content and skills in a safe environment that encourages the questioning necessary to lead to critical thinking skills and abstract concepts. Consistent use of this approach and leading students to big ideas is a goal for the Rising Tide professional community. The inquiry and skills-based approach to teaching and learning is described in the *Philosophy and Practice Manual* in the following manner:

The inquiry and skills-based approach is used to support academic growth by encouraging students to think critically and ask questions. Teaching and learning at Rising Tide is approached as a process of exploration rather than a reporting of information and memorization of facts. In an inquiry and skills-based classroom, teachers and students engage in meaningful questions and discussions, collect and analyze information, draw conclusions, and communicate an understanding of the material. The inquiry and skills-based approach is not limited to project-based learning; the approach may be used in posing challenges where direct skill instruction is taking place, such as working with a piece of literature, a mathematical pattern, or a scientific problem. In this academic environment, a teacher acts as a facilitator for student learning, encouraging and leading questioning, listening and directing student discovery, and constructively critiquing for better

understanding or development of skills. Students are expected to be active learners, and teachers are expected to help students build skills as well as navigate and make sense of the world.

Evidence of Mission and Vision in Instructional Practices

Teachers are working on incorporating the following guidelines, taken from the *Rising Tide Philosophy and Practice Manual*, into their teaching practice:

- Modeling and communicating the *Guiding Principles*
- Clearly communicating expectations
- Establishing accountability
- Exhibiting enthusiasm about the subject matter and skills being taught
- Asking students questions
- Encouraging students to think critically and ask questions
- Listening to student responses
- Remaining flexible and responsive to the students in the classroom
- Presenting information using a variety of methods (verbal, written, visual, kinesthetic)
- Providing opportunities for students to practice and explore
- Providing opportunities for feedback and assessment

Amendments to the Charter

Rising Tide did not apply for any charter amendments during the 2015-2016 school year.

Rising Tide's Dissemination Efforts

1. During the 2015-2016 school year, two Rising Tide middle school science teachers continued to work with the local non-profit *Whale and Dolphin Conservancy* to create a curriculum unit about whales and conservation of natural resources. The two teachers created the unit plan in the backward design method used at Rising Tide. The *Whale and Dolphin Conservancy* staff will be presenting this Rising Tide-created curriculum unit at conferences throughout New England.
2. Rising Tide's Grade 12 Internship Program provides opportunities for the school to partner with local organizations and for school staff to disseminate to these organizations information about curriculum as well as school culture. Rising Tide's Internship Coordinator reaches out to local organizations in order to find opportunities for students to work with and in local organizations as well as for these organizations to partner with the school. An integral part of this program is for business people to learn about Rising Tide's philosophies and teaching and learning methods; in addition, this program encourages the business community to align with Rising Tide in assisting interns to learn about transitioning from the academic to the business world.
3. In the summer of 2015, one of Rising Tide's science teachers visited Tokyo Gakugei University in Japan. At the university, the teacher presented two well-attended lectures to students and faculty from the university and other area universities. The topics were *More Women in Science*, *Strategies for K-12 Educators*, and *Public Education and Charter Schools in the United States*. The presentation included two parts:
 - Looking at public schools from a historical perspective leading up to education reform and the beginnings on charter schools;
 - Rising Tide Charter Public School, its mission, philosophy, and practice.

4. Each year, in the spring, Rising Tide hosts *STEM Night* which highlights Rising Tide's philosophies and practices. This event is publicized in the local newspaper and offers community members an opportunity to learn more about Rising Tide and its program.
 - *STEM Night* is held in March, on "pi day" and is planned and implemented by Rising Tide's mathematics and science teachers. Teachers plan challenging and interesting science and math activities that can be enjoyed by entire families. The purpose of the evening is to celebrate science and math in an enjoyable but interesting manner. Many Rising Tide families participate in this annual evening event.

Part II: Academic Program Success

Student Performance

Rising Tide's School Report Link:

<http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/profiles/general.aspx?topNavId=1&orgcode=04830000&orgtypecode=5&>

Student Achievement Trends

Student Performance on Internal and External Assessments

Internal Assessments

As stated in Rising Tide's 2013 Accountability Plan, the school's academic staff is working to develop internal assessments based upon Rising Tide's staff-created Schoolwide Objectives and Benchmark Skills. Information about staff progress on these internal assessments may be found in Appendix A, under *Accountability Plan*.

External Assessments

College and Work Readiness Assessment (CWRA)

A few years ago, Rising Tide's Curriculum Leader and other school leaders investigated and then the school adopted the College and Work Readiness Assessment (CWRA) for use with high school students. This assessment utilizes real-world situations in which a challenge is presented. Students are asked to assume a role with which to address the problem or suggest a course of action based upon information provided in the assessment. The CWRA uses innovative tasks and questions to evaluate student performance in higher-order skills, such as analysis and problem-solving, writing effectiveness and mechanics, scientific and quantitative reasoning, and critical reading and evaluation. Students complete a Performance Task and then some selected response questions. The CWRA is designed to assist schools with making programmatic changes to strengthen higher-order skills. The CWRA also seems more aligned with upcoming PARCC assessments.

In the fall of 2015, Rising Tide administered the CWRA+ to students in grades 9 and 12 only. This decision was made because grade 9 is an entry-level grade so the school would be able to collect entry information on new students. Administering the assessment to grade 12 will provide Rising Tide with longitudinal data, demonstrating the progress students make over time on various skills. School staff decided to not test students in grades 10 and 11 in order to avoid over-testing students. In grade 10, students need to focus on MCAS testing; in grade 11, students are concentrating on testing for post high school options.

As can be viewed in the data below, the mean mastery level of Rising Tide freshmen and seniors is in the *Proficient* category. Mean scores in *Scientific & Quantitative Reasoning*, *Critical Reading & Evaluation* and *Critiquing an Argument*, on a scale ranging from 200 to 800, are above average in all three areas. The data demonstrate that, over time, from grades 9 to 12, student scores on the CWRA improve overall. Rising Tide staff members believe this trend of improving on the skills presented in this assessment over time is evidence that Rising Tide students gain more critical thinking skills during their high school years at the school.

CWRA Summary Results by Class

	Mean Score	25 th Percentile Score	75 th Percentile Score
Total CWRA+ Score	Freshmen 989 Seniors 1074	Freshmen 876 Seniors 947	Freshmen 1086 Seniors 1176

Performance Task	Freshmen 999 Seniors 1097	Freshmen 873 Seniors 951	Freshmen 1117 Seniors 1221
Selected Response Questions	Freshmen 967 Seniors 1036	Freshmen 822 Seniors 887	Freshmen 1055 Seniors 1217

CWRA Mastery Levels by Class

Mean Total Score	Mean Mastery Level	Percent Basic	Percent Proficient and Advanced
Freshmen 989 Seniors 1074	Proficient Proficient	45 24	52 47

CWRA Selected Response Questions: Mean Subscores by Class

	Mean Score	25 th Percentile Score	75 th Percentile Score
Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning	Freshmen 467 Seniors 482	Freshmen 388 Seniors 402	Freshmen 530 Seniors 588
Critical Reading & Evaluation	Freshmen 471 Seniors 506	Freshmen 410 Seniors 425	Freshmen 525 Seniors 580
Critique an Argument	Freshmen 467 Seniors 516	Freshmen 395 Seniors 418	Freshmen 528 Seniors 585

National Latin Examination

Studying Latin has been a requirement for Rising Tide middle school students since the school opened in 1998. By the time Rising Tide students complete Grade 8, the majority has completed the equivalent of Latin I and are prepared to move onto Latin II in Grade 9. The Latin program has become stronger over the years and, each year, more students are prepared to move into Latin II in high school. One manner in which the Rising Tide staff has elected to gauge the success of its Latin program is to administer the National Latin Exam to all Grade 8 students, starting in 2008. Now that Rising Tide has added the high school grades to its program, all Rising Tide Latin students, beginning with Grade 8, take the National Latin Exam in March. Since 2011, Rising Tide students, in the aggregate, have scored above the national average on the National Latin Exam. This year, 63.01 of Rising Tide’s Latin students earned awards on the National Latin Exam, an increase of approximately nine percentage points from last year’s total scores.

Comparison Between 2016 National Latin Examination Average Scores and Rising Tide Charter Public School Averages

Exam Level	International Percentage of Students who Earned Awards	Rising Tide Percentage of Students who Earned Awards
Latin I	45.81	70.37
Latin II	46.46	54.17
Latin III	46.35	62.96
Prose IV	45.06	61.11
Poetry IV	45.00	80.00
Latin 5, 6	40.00	25.00

2016 Spanish Language Assessment

The world languages teachers assessed all students taking courses in Spanish this year using the ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL). In previous years, the department has assessed students using the National Spanish Examination. Students were assessed using AAPPL in order to use real-world tasks to provide evidence of students' Spanish language skills in the three modes of communication: Interpretive, Interpersonal, and Presentation, using real-world tasks (as explained at <http://aappl.actfl.org/>).

In the 2015-2016 school year, Rising Tide students provided the world languages teachers with a baseline for improving the students' communication skills and performance on the AAPPL in future years. Students were assessed in four categories of communication: Interpersonal Listening and Speaking; Presentational Writing; Interpretive Listening; Interpretive Reading. The Rising Tide Spanish I students performed at or above the expectations the Rising Tide Spanish department set for this assessment 79% of the time on average across the four categories of communication. The Rising Tide Spanish II students performed at or above the expectations 36% of the time on average across the four categories of communication. The Rising Tide Spanish III students performed at or above the expectations 21% of the time on average across the four categories of communication. The Rising Tide Spanish IV/V students performed at or above expectations 75% of the time on average across the four categories of communication.

Program Delivery

Curriculum

During the 2015-2016 academic year, Rising Tide made a few changes to its middle school curriculum, completed changes to its upper school science curriculum progression and introduced an expanded wellness curriculum in its middle and upper schools. Some changes were made to the middle school schedule, and more advisory time was added to the middle school program.

1. Middle School Curriculum Changes and Additions

Rising Tide's middle school schedule was changed this past year in order to slow down the school day, lengthen class time, and abolish classes that met two times a week, thus reducing a middle school student's course load. This new schedule is discussed below. In order to expand the arts program and also reduce course load, two changes were made:

- A dance/theater course was added to the middle school curriculum this past year in order to coincide with arts offerings at the upper school. Middle School students will have the opportunity to participate in two semesters of dance/theater during their middle school years, grades 5-8.
- Classical World, a two-day-a-week, grade 6 introduction to Latin culture, was removed from the middle school curriculum. Teachers decided it would be better to expand grades 7 and 8 Latin to full courses, meeting five out of six days in a six-day rotation, and not offer Classical World to grade 6 students. The curriculum for Classical World was added to the grade 7 Latin curriculum.
- In order to do away with middle school courses that met two times a week, Rising Tide staff members decided to change the configuration of the arts and physical education courses in the middle school; these courses, Music, Visual Art, Dance/Theater, and Physical Education, are now semester courses. Students in grades 5 and 7 take a semester of Visual art and a semester of Physical Education; students in grades 6 and 8 take a semester of Music and a semester of Dance/Theater. Each of these arts/PE courses meets as many times during the semester as any other course.

2. Completion of Upper School Science Curriculum Progression

When Rising Tide first added grade 9 to its program, the science course for that grade level was Ecology. The decision to offer Ecology in grade 9 was based upon a desire to fulfill the school's mission of requiring all students to learn about the local region of Plymouth and surrounding

towns. As grade levels were added to the program, school leaders and science teachers decided that, instead of starting the upper school science program with Ecology, the school would adopt the *Physics First* model of science instruction, where grade 9 students study conceptual Physics. After Physics, students then move to Chemistry in grade 10, Biology in grade 11, and are then able to choose Honors Physics, Honors Biology, or Environmental Science in grade 12. The *Physics first* model appealed to the Rising Tide staff because of its proven success in building conceptual understanding of science concepts to better prepare students for the study of other sciences. In addition, the *Physics first* model seems to draw more young women into science study and fields. The transition from *Ecology first* to *Physics first* took several years to complete. The 2015-2016 school year marks the first time that this progression of science courses was completed.

3. *Expansion of Wellness and Middle School Advisory Curricula*

One of the two Staff Goals for the 2015-2016 academic year, devised by school leaders, was to develop an advisory curriculum that incorporates service learning and wellness topics in grades 5-12. The *Essential Question* developed around this goal was:

How can we help students navigate their personal growth?

During the summer of 2015, Rising Tide's Upper School Adjustment Counselor spent time considering age-appropriate wellness topics for students in grades 5-12. She put together a spreadsheet of topics that she then distributed to grade level team leaders in grades 5-12. With support from the wellness leader and the Middle and Upper School Deans of Students, team leaders and advisors began implementing this curriculum during the school year. Advisory teams made some progress in implementing the wellness curriculum during the school year. During the summer months this year, school leaders will discuss how to provide more support for advisors teaching the wellness curriculum.

- *Teambuilding and Leadership Trips*

Important components of the wellness curriculum were the addition, in grades 9 and 12, of whole class teambuilding and leadership trips at the beginning of the school year. Grade 9 students and their advisors traveled to Camp Takodah in New Hampshire for three days of teambuilding. Grade 12 students and their advisors traveled to Mount Washington State Park for two days of teambuilding and leadership training. Both of these trips served to unify these classes and enabled advisors to get to better know their advisees. The trips helped to further the school's mission by building community and allowing advisors to become better acquainted with students and thus be able to better serve the individual student during the school year.

- *Expansion of Middle School Advisory Curriculum*

Under the guidance of the Middle School Dean of Students, middle school advisors expanded the advisory curriculum for all students during the 2015-2016 school year. In an effort to better orient students to the grade level and for students to get to know one another and Advisors to get to know individual students, middle school advisors decided to devote first term electives time to advisory time. Advisories met for extended periods of time two or three times each week during the first term. Groups were able to work on navigating the demands of a new grade level, and were also able to find time to focus on wellness topics, teambuilding, and service learning.

4. *Changes to the Middle School Schedule*

Rising Tide's staff decided to make some alterations to its middle school schedule in 2015 in order to slow the day down for students and staff, lengthen period classes, and cut down on the number of classes middle school students would take in a year. Classes were changed from a five day to a six day rotation, and lengthened from fifty to sixty minutes, with one ninety-minute class each day. The schedule is a cascading one so that each of the six classes students carry during a semester meets in a ninety minute class once in the six-day rotation. Staff

members and students reacted positively to the changes and seemed to agree that the goals for changing the schedule were met.

Instructional Model, Assessment Methods, and Supports for Diverse Learners

In the areas of instructional models, assessment methods, and supports for diverse learners, no major changes took place at Rising Tide during the 2015-2016 school year; however, each of these areas was discussed and addressed in Rising Tide's ongoing work to become better at helping each student to succeed in school.

Work on Rising Tide's Instructional Model and Assessments

Because Rising Tide has been adding the high school grades over the course of the past five years, the school has hired many teachers, all of whom are new to Rising Tide and many who are new to teaching. Although Rising Tide began utilizing an inquiry and skills-based model of instruction several years ago and introduced the backward design method of planning units and lessons many years ago, use of these models and methods has been uneven across the grade levels because of the recent addition of program and teachers. As a result of these additions and changes, the Rising Tide staff continues to work on developing consistency among teachers and grade levels in creating units and lessons.

Rising Tide's curriculum leader and curriculum coordinators continue to work with individual teachers on creating year-long plans, units and lessons in the backward design method. This work is ongoing as Rising Tide adds new staff members and courses each year.

One of the big questions that teachers were asked to consider during the 2015-2016 school year was, *How can we know that students are developing the skills we are trying to teach?* In order to answer this question, professional development this past school year was focused two areas:

- Collaboratively looking at student work to analyze the demonstration of skills
- Scheduling and following through with peer observations, at least once per term, throughout the school year

All Rising Tide teachers begin their curriculum development with the skills in the MA Curriculum Frameworks and include these standards in their curriculum design. In addition to the skills included in the Frameworks, Rising Tide teachers, over the years, have developed their own *Schoolwide Objectives* and *Benchmark Skills*. An important part of Rising Tide's 2013 Accountability Plan is designing benchmark assessments, once in the Middle School and once in the Upper School. In addition to creating these benchmark assessments to complete work for its Accountability Plan, however, Rising Tide school leaders and teachers are working to develop a hierarchy of skills development for students in grades 5-12. During the 2015-2016 school year, teachers met in mixed teaching and learning groups, curriculum area groups, and grade level groups to look at student work and begin to catalog a progression of skills that students need to develop, grades 5-12, and in each subject area. During the summer of 2016, some school leaders and curriculum coordinators will be coming together to begin to develop the grade level skills' assessments for students in grades 5-12.

Work on Improving Support for Diverse Learners

This past school year, Rising Tide teachers and advisors continued their work on improving learning for all students through their goal of developing an advisory curriculum that incorporates service learning and wellness topics, grades 5-12. This work is described in detail in the Program section and was created in an effort to help all students to navigate their personal growth.

Response to Intervention (RTI)

One specific initiative this past school year that was designed to try to improve support for diverse learners was led by Rising Tide's Assistant Head of School/Upper School Principal and a group of school personnel, including the Middle and Upper School Deans of Students, Special Education Coordinator, School Psychologist, Curriculum Leader, and Academic Dean. This initiative involved looking carefully at Rising Tide's Child Study program and considering whether or not to make changes to this program,

making it closer to an RTI program. Rising Tide's Child Study program, originally designed to promote teacher discussion of struggling students and targeted support for these students, did not seem to be consistently providing adequate support for diverse learners. School leaders and personnel have been wondering if the school should make a shift from primarily anecdotal teacher input to more data-driven information. Under the guidance of Rising Tide's School Psychologist, more data driven information was gathered this past year on a limited and trial basis, yielding some positive results. At the same time, a study group was formed in order to discuss a possible shift from Child Study program to RTI. The group will continue into the next school year before any conclusions are drawn; however, some positive changes were made to the Child Study program and the group will continue to work next year.

Social, Emotional, and Health Needs

Rising Tide has not made any changes to its approach to student discipline this year. Two years ago, the school revised its discipline policies to comply with new regulations. These changes involved inviting parents to the school to discuss any recommended out-of-school suspension time. Rising Tide also revised its discipline procedures to comply with recent laws that recommend a reduction in the time students spend serving out-of-school suspensions. Rising Tide continued its already-existing policy of encouraging students who need to be suspended from school to continue to make academic progress in their school work. Rising Tide's revised policies may be found in the Student Handbook, included in the school website at www.risingtide.org.

Part III: Organizational Viability

Organizational Structure of the School

As Rising Tide has transitioned from a middle school to a middle/upper school, the basic organizational structure of the school has remained the same. As the school expands, however, a few new positions will be added in order to accommodate more students and staff members. School leaders are continuously discussing how to transition Rising Tide from a growth organization to a sustainable one. The school currently has a signed purchase and sale agreement to purchase a facility large enough to accommodate both the middle and upper schools in one building. Housing the entire school program in one building should save Rising Tide from doubling up on some staff positions. No changes were made in the Organizational Chart for 2015-2016.

For the upcoming school year, Rising Tide is planning to expand two positions in the leadership staff and add one new position.

1. The College and Future Planning position will expand from a part-time position to a full-time position. This expansion is due to student enrollment increases in the upper grade levels. Rising Tide's first two graduating classes with thirty-four students and forty-one students respectively. In the 2016-2017 school year, the grade 12 class will be close to seventy students. Because of this increase in student numbers for the upcoming senior class, the decision was made to expand the College and Future Planning position from part-time to full-time.
2. The Middle School Adjustment Counselor position will also be expanding from part-time to full time in the upcoming school year. As Rising Tide expands its grades 5-12 wellness program, the school will require an adjustment counselor at each level to assist advisors with the implementation for the program.
3. Rising Tide is planning to hire a full-time Development and Communications Director before the start of the 2016-2017 school year. Plans to upfit and then occupy a new and larger facility, demand for athletic teams and spaces, and the desire to hire and maintain a strong and viable staff have all contributed to a decision to hire a Development Director who can assist the school with community outreach, external communication, and fundraising efforts.

Two Organizational Charts for 2015-2016, one for *Education and Services* and the other for *Operations and Support*, may be found in *Appendix F*.

Teacher Evaluation

Rising Tide utilizes its own, staff-devised, method for teacher evaluation. This method of teacher observation and evaluation has been designed to provide teachers with the support they need to become effective educators and to continue to challenge themselves and grow throughout their teaching careers. The method for teacher observation and evaluation is described below:

Working together, Rising Tide's program leaders and faculty leaders, with input from all teachers, create four or five Staff Goals prior to the beginning of the school year. These goals are shared with all staff members in the late spring or during the summer before the school year begins. Before returning to school in August, each staff member is asked to set four or five goals for him or herself for the year ahead; the school asks that at least two of these goals should be directly related to the School Goals for the year. When staff members arrive at the school for August meetings, they share their goals with one another, in curriculum and team meetings. Soon after the school year begins, individual teachers meet with school leaders to review their goals.

During the school year, each teacher is observed by a number of different staff members, including the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, Curriculum Leader, Curriculum Coordinator, Advisory Team Leader and peers. After each observation, the observer makes contact with the observed teacher and provides feedback and suggestions.

For teachers new to Rising Tide, in their first year of teaching, the Head of School or Assistant Head of School conduct a more formal observation and evaluation of the new teacher's classes after ninety days, or half-way through the school year. The Head of School or Assistant Head of School gather feedback from other observers, observe the new teachers' classes themselves, and then have a one-on-one meeting with the new teacher in order to provide feedback and suggestions. Following this meeting, the Head of School or Assistant Head of School write a 90-Day Review that is then reviewed by the new teacher, signed, and placed in the teacher's personnel file.

During the last quarter of the school year, the Head of School and Assistant Head of School conduct formal observations, over the course of several days, of each newer teacher. After these observations, the teacher meets with one of the school leaders to review progress on the year's goals and to discuss teaching practices and areas for suggested improvement. Following this meeting, the Head of School or Assistant Head of School write a formal evaluation, which is then reviewed and signed by the teacher. This evaluation is placed in the staff member's personnel file. Teachers who have been at Rising Tide for more than five years are reviewed every two or three years, rather than every year.

Budget and Finance

The following reports are included in Rising Tide's Budget and Finance Reports:

1. Unaudited FY16 statement of revenues, expenses, and changes in net assets (Income Statement)
2. Statement of Net Assets for FY16 (Balance Sheet)
3. Approved School Budget for FY17
4. Capital Plan for FY17

A. Unaudited FY 16 Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Assets

July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016

Operating Revenues:	
State Grants	\$ 7,769,286
Federal Grants	\$ 144,132
Food Service revenue	\$ 49,010
On - Behalf Payments	\$ 250,000
In-Kind Revenue	\$ 293,000
	<hr/>
Total operating revenue	\$ 8,505,428
Operating Expenses	
Salaries	\$ 4,500,578
Payroll Taxes	\$ 156,644
Fringe Benefits	\$ 706,713
Occupancy	\$ 545,372
Telephone & Utilities	\$ 97,947
Contracted Services	\$ 43,435
Professional Services	\$ 57,412
Insurance	\$ 29,576
Student Supplies & Materials	\$ 158,385
Student Activities	\$ 269,070
Office Expenses	\$ 75,410
Food Service Program	\$ 57,609
Training & Development	\$ 6,479
Postage	\$ 7,624
Repairs and Maintenance	\$ 39,663
Travel	\$ 23,920
Advertising & Marketing	\$ 30,666
Dues	\$ 42,520
In-Kind Expenses	\$ 293,000
On behalf payments	\$ 250,000
Interest Expenses	\$ 153,272
Depreciation	\$ 273,068
Abandoned Project Costs	\$ 1,347,020
	<hr/>
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 9,165,381
	<hr/>
Operating income (loss)	\$ (659,953)
Nonoperating revenues and (expenses)	
Interest Income	\$ 4,265
Private Contributions	\$ 8,379
Other Income	\$ 211,390
	<hr/>
Total net nonoperating income(loss)	\$ 224,033
Change in Net Position	\$ (435,920)
Net Position, beginning of the year	\$ 2,941,298
	<hr/>
Net Position, end of the year	\$ 2,505,378
	<hr/> <hr/>

B. Statement of Net Assets for FY16 (Balance Sheet)

Current Assets

Cash	\$	2,317,768
Class & Student Funds Held	\$	46,689
Grants and Accounts Receivable	\$	10,790
Prepaid Expenses	\$	<u>21,284</u>
Total Current Assets	\$	2,396,531

Non Current Assets

Security deposits	\$	10,500
Restricted Cash	\$	800,000
Prepaid Rent	\$	27,500
Due from Related Party	\$	12,999
Capital Assets, Net	\$	<u>5,584,222</u>
Total noncurrent Assets	\$	6,435,221
Total Assets	\$	8,831,752

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$	136,060
Accrued Expenses	\$	500,232
Capital Lease Obligations - current	\$	44,875
Note Payable - current portion	\$	318,307
Class and Student Funds held	\$	<u>73,250</u>

Total Current Liabilities \$ 1,072,725

Noncurrent Liabilities:

Note Payable	\$	5,163,898
Capital Lease Obligation	\$	<u>89,753</u>

Total noncurrent Liabilities \$ 5,253,651

Total Liabilities \$ 6,326,376

Net Position:

Net investment in capital assets	\$	1,273,415
Unrestricted	\$	<u>1,231,962</u>
Total net position	\$	2,505,377
Total liabilities and net position	\$	8,831,752

C.**Approved School Budget for FY 17****Income**

State Tuition	\$ 8,229,000
State and Federal Grants	\$ 144,117
Supplemental Fee Revenue	\$ 65,000
Funds Income	\$ 3,000
Other revenue	\$ 158,875
Interest Income	<u>\$ 3,500</u>
Total Income	\$ 8,603,492

**Expense
s**

Staff Expenses	\$ 6,058,440
Food Services	\$ 70,000
Student Fee Expenses	\$ 39,000
Direct Educational Expenses	\$ 529,991
General and Administrative	\$ 190,000
Marketing and Enrollment	\$ 29,000
Facilities Operations	\$ 1,169,050
Depreciation and Amortization	<u>\$ 370,000</u>
Total Expense	\$ 8,455,481

Net Ordinary Income \$ 148,011

10 Year Capital Plan FY 2017 - FY 2026

The school has received approval from the DOE to expand to a high school with a total of 700 students.

The following capital projects expected to occur over the next ten years:

1) Computer Fleet Lease:

In accordance with the school's technology plan, the computer fleet maintenance cost reflects the annual investment required to upgrade and replace computers and related equipment in our media labs and classrooms. We have entered into computer lease agreements for our computer fleet. This annual cost is paid from operating cash flows each year and therefore has no requirement for a capital reserve.

2) Classroom Technology Upgrades:

These costs are related to replacement of technology and continued expansion of new technology into the classrooms and will be paid from operating cash flows each year and therefore have no requirement for a capital reserve.

3) Furniture Replacements:

Periodically classroom and administration furniture is replaced. This cost reflects the annual cost to replace existing furniture throughout the school including classroom desks, storage lockers, art room tables, lunch tables, filing cabinets and various other items. This annual cost is paid from operating cash flows each year and therefore has no requirement for a capital reserve.

4) School Expansion - Building & Infrastructure:

During FY 2017 we plan to purchase a building and begin construction work for internal renovations. We will complete most of the construction work during FY 2017 but will finish the work and move into the new building during the first two months of FY 2018. We currently occupy one building for our Middle School and one building for our Upper School. Once the new building project is complete, we will house both our Middle and Upper Schools in the new building. We will move our existing furnishings and equipment into the new facility. The total new building projected budget is \$18,800,000. We are financing the building project with Tax-Exempt Bonds in partnership with Massachusetts Development Finance Agency, a loan from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Bank Lenders.

	FYE 2017	FYE 2018	FYE 2019	FYE 2020	FYE 2021	FYE 2022	FYE 2023	FYE 2024	FYE 2025	FYE 2026	Total
Capital Projects:											
1) Computer Fleet Leasing	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	400,000
2) Classroom Technology Upgrades	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	150,000
3) Furniture Replacements	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	300,000
4) School Expansion - Building & Infrastructure	15,666,666	3,133,334	-	-							18,800,000
Total Capital Projects	15,751,666	3,218,334	85,000	19,650,000							

Appendix A
 Accountability Plan Objectives and Measures
 2013-2018 Accountability Plan

	2015-2016 Performance (Met/Partially Met/Not Met)	Evidence
Objective I: Rising Tide’s professional staff will create and maintain a strong academic program based upon the Rising Tide Schoolwide Objectives and Benchmark Skills.		
<p>Measure 1: By June 2016, Rising Tide’s Schoolwide Objectives and Benchmark Skills will be included in teacher unit and assessment planning, as evidenced in subject area curriculum binders.</p>	Partially Met	<p>Under the leadership of Rising Tide’s Curriculum Leader and subject area curriculum coordinators, teachers save curriculum units electronically. Many of the teacher unit plans now include Rising Tide’s Schoolwide Objectives and Benchmark Skills; teachers have recently started to add the Schoolwide Objectives and Benchmark Skills to their unit planning. An example of a unit plan that includes these elements may be found in Appendix E, Exhibit I.</p>
<p>Measure 2: By June 2018, in order to develop a program with high academic standards, students will be able to successfully demonstrate proficiency, at least once in the middle school and once in the upper school, on integrated skills assessments of Rising Tide’s Schoolwide Objectives and Benchmark Skills, as reflected in assessment rubrics.</p>	Partially Met	<p>During the 2015-2016 school year, Rising Tide teachers met in curriculum area groups, grade level team groups, and mixed groups to look together at student work. The purpose of looking at student work together was to focus on skill acquisition for students, trying to answer the question, “<i>How will we know what students know and are able to do?</i>” Work on student skill acquisition is going to inform the work that small teams of teachers are going to address during the summer of 2016 as they begin to design integrated skills assessments. An example of a teacher-generated rubric that utilizes the Rising Tide Schoolwide Objective and Benchmark Skills may be found in Appendix E, Exhibit II.</p>
Objective II: Rising Tide’s professional staff will offer students a program that includes strong connections to the regional community.		
<p>Measure 1: By 2018, all Rising Tide students, grades 5-12, will have the opportunity to participate in at least four Service Learning</p>	Partially Met	<p>During the 2015-2016 school year, all grade 7 students participated in a year-long</p>

<p>projects, two in the middle school and two in the upper school, as documented in the academic or advisory curriculum and demonstrated in student reflections.</p>		<p>service learning project about local ecology and responsible citizenship. Grade 8 students worked with the Plymouth Council on Aging and Emeritus, a senior citizen home, on an oral history project. Many student in the Upper school participated in service learning projects through various groups. Students in grade 9 wrote and mailed letters to US troops, and grade 10 students collected food for Thanksgiving baskets. Two staff members, along with some students, formed a Community Action Club that completed many service projects for local people and organizations. Other service learning projects were completed by small groups of students, in the National Honor Society and Junior Classical League.</p>
<p>Measure 2: Each year, at least 90% of Rising Tide Middle School students will successfully complete the Exposition Program that reflects the school’s mission. Successful completion is reflected in an average score of <i>needs improvement</i> or above, over four years, on a report card rubric.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<p>In the Spring of 2016, 98.5% of Rising Tide Middle School students completed at least satisfactory work in the Rising Tide Exposition Course. Five students out of 344 students received a report of “unsatisfactory” on an Exposition report card rubric.</p>
<p>Measure 3: By 2018, all Rising Tide full year courses, grades 5-12, will include at least one connection to the Plymouth region, as evidenced in subject area curriculum binders and reflected in samples of student work.</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>	<p>This measure was created in 2013. Some Rising Tide teachers already do regularly include connections to the Plymouth region in their unit and lesson planning but more will be adding to these connections in the next few years. An example of a teacher-created unit plan where a regional connection was included in the Grade 5 Communications and Investigations course may be found in Appendix E, Exhibit III.</p>
<p>Objective III: Rising Tide’s teachers will utilize an inquiry and skills-based approach to teaching and learning that includes real-world experiences and critical thinking skills.</p>		
<p>Measure 1: Each year, all teaching units will reflect use of an inquiry and skills-based approach to teaching and learning, reflected in unit planning design and in year-end teacher</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>	<p>For the 2015-2016 school year, most teaching units reflect an inquiry and skills-based approach and many teacher</p>

<p>evaluations. Teacher units are collected at the end of each school year, electronically, in curriculum area folders.</p>		<p>observations reflected this method of approaching student learning. An example of a unit and one teacher evaluation that reflect an inquiry and skills-based approach are included in Appendix E, Exhibit IV.</p>
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Appendix B

Access and Equity: Recruitment and Retention Plan

Recruitment Plan 2015 - 2016

School Name: Rising Tide Charter Public School

Date: June 2016

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

Implementation Summary:

Rising Tide's 2015-2016 Recruitment Plan was successful, as the school maintained a healthy waitlist of 345 students. Rising Tide has been continuing to work on finding ways to attract students to the school by employing new marketing tactics in the district, which have been largely successful. Rising Tide's enrollment numbers continue to increase in the Upper School, surpassing last year's student count by over 30 students. The sibling enrollment numbers remain high, as Rising Tide is seeing older siblings enroll in the Upper School, in addition to the already high number of siblings in the Middle School. In total, we had 63 siblings apply and be accepted for the 2015-2016 school year.

Increasing Rising Tide's exposure in the community and district, particularly for special needs and ELL students, has been an active goal over the last year. Rising Tide held three open houses and mentioned, when advertising these events, that a member of the special education department would be in attendance and available for any questions. Rising Tide increased its special needs population by 34% from 2014-2015, which is 15.3% of the overall student population, up from 12% the previous year. Rising Tide continues to work on attracting more students whose first language is not English; however, the ELL population in the region is low compared to other Massachusetts districts. Rising Tide can and does provide non-English speaking applicants with documents translated into Portuguese and Spanish, the two foreign languages most common in the area.

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

General Recruitment Activities:

1. Information Open Houses in the evenings and on Saturdays, in order to accommodate family schedules.
2. Regular school tours so families can visit Rising Tide while school is in session.
3. Shadow tours offered to prospective students so they can visit the school with a student host and attend classes.
4. Conversations with other school and community leaders, inviting students to attend open houses.
5. Posters/Fliers about upcoming tours/open houses placed in a variety of locations in regional towns, targeting for various types of students, including fliers on the local cable station.
6. Regular mailings about Rising Tide to residents of regional towns. Mailing lists acquired from regional school districts.
7. Emails regarding open houses and lottery information are sent to our entire contact list of just under 3,000.

Recruitment Plan Strategies

Demographic Group: Special Education Students

Rising Tide's 2016 special needs population is 15.3%, up from 12% in 2015. The comparison index is 12.8%. Rising Tide's goal is to increase its percentage of students with special needs.

Strategies:

1. At Information Open Houses and in recruitment mailings, make clear to families that charter schools are for all students and that special education services are available for students.
2. Continue to have a member of Rising Tide's Special Education team attend all Information Open Houses in order to meet separately with parents of applicants with Special Needs. The meetings include information about Rising Tide's program and provide an opportunity for prospective parents to ask individual questions about the school program.
3. Continue to work with regional school districts in order to obtain accurate listings of all students and their addresses for mailings.
4. Rising Tide's SPED Coordinator and parents involved with the school's SEPAC will reach out to SEPAC parents at other schools.
5. In brochures and marketing materials, include language that clearly states that students with special needs are welcome at Rising Tide.
6. Parents of Rising Tide's special education students will be invited to attend the December and January Information Sessions so that they can meet with prospective students and their families.

Demographic Group: Limited English-Proficient Students

Rising Tide's Limited English-Proficient Students population continues to be 0.0% for 2016. The Comparison Index is 0.3%. Rising Tide's goal is to continue to try to increase its percentage of students whose first language is not English.

Strategies:

1. Continue to work with regional school districts in order to obtain accurate mailing lists of current students in the districts. Mail information about Rising Tide to all regional families about Rising Tide's program.
2. School staff will continue to conduct demographic studies of the region in order to identify target areas in the region for non-English speaking populations.
3. Place fliers/posters with information about open houses in targeted neighborhoods.
4. Continue to make information about Rising Tide available in Spanish and Portuguese to families.
5. Provide translation services on Rising Tide's website so that all information about the school can be viewed in other languages.

Demographic Group: Students who are economically disadvantaged

The percentage of Rising Tide students who receive free or reduced lunch in 2016 remains at 12.5%, similar to its number in 2015 of 12.9%. The median average is 22%. Rising Tide's goal is to increase its number of students who are considered economically disadvantaged.

Strategies:

1. Mail school information to all regional families using mailing lists provided by regional school districts.

2. Post fliers about upcoming Information Open Houses at the Plymouth Boys' and Girls' Club and other clubs in the Rising Tide region that tend to service economically disadvantaged families and their children.
3. Continue to utilize *Virtual Gateway* to help Rising Tide to identify families who receive food stamps and who automatically qualify for free lunch.
4. Continue to make the application for free/reduced lunch easily accessible to all Rising Tide families by having it available on the school's website, mailed along with the summer mailing, and reminding families, through the weekly parent newsletter, that the application is available. Rising Tide also encourages families to apply for free/ reduced lunches if their family income is reduced at any time by \$500 or more.
5. Make contact with community resources used by low-income families, including food stamp programs, food pantries, and social service agencies. Provide contact people with flyers and information regarding enrollment and information open houses.

Demographic Group: Students Who are Sub-Proficient

Rising Tide's 2016 percentage of High Needs students was 26.9%, up from 24.9% the previous year. The Comparison Index is 42.2%. Rising Tide's goal is to increase its number of High Needs students.

Strategies:

1. Continue to send mailings to all eligible students and their families in the region.
2. Continue to stress at Information Open Houses that Rising Tide is open to all students in the region who are eligible for a public education. Through the lottery system, there is no discrimination against any student or group of students.

Demographic Group: Students at Risk of Dropping Out of School

Rising Tide's 2016 percentage of students who dropped out of school was 0%. The Statewide Average was 1.9%.

Strategies:

1. Rising Tide created a new Skills Course for the 2013-2014 school year, and has had success in implementing similar courses in 2014-2015 and again in 2015-2016. Rising Tide identified at-risk students by their teacher's feedback and MCAS testing. In place of an Elective Course, these identified students attended regular 90-minute skills' classes every other day for one or two semesters. The goal of this course was to provide struggling students with regular access to trained professional teachers for assistance with areas that are challenging to students. The course is staffed by two or three teachers who are able to offer individual assistance and instruction to struggling students.
2. Rising Tide offers academic counseling for struggling students, meetings with families and students regarding options and alternate school programs.

Demographic Group: Students Who Have Dropped Out of School

Rising Tide's 2016 percentage of students who dropped out of school was 0%.

Strategies:

1. Rising Tide will offer academic counseling for those students and their families to explore other options and alternate school programs.

Retention Plan

2015 – 2016

Please provide a brief narrative report on implementation of retention strategies from last year's plan.

Implementation Summary:

Rising Tide's retention rate continues to grow. For 2016, Rising Tide surpassed its goal for retention by retaining 91.3% of students. This is an impressive increase from 2015's retention rate of 85.2%; which has been steadily increasing since 2013.

Part of the higher retention rate is due to increasing popularity of the Upper School. More and more Grade 8 students are electing to stay, rather than move onto other schools. Interest in the Upper School continues to grow each year, as the academic program continues to expand and develop. As our first two graduating classes (in 2015 and 2016) received acceptances into many impressive college and universities, Rising Tide feels strongly that the retention rate will continue to grow.

Overall Student Retention Goal	
Annual goal for student retention (percentage):	87%

Retention Plan Goals and Strategies for All Students

Rising Tide currently has in place many strategies designed to encourage students and families to remain enrolled in the school. Some of these strategies are:

1. Student/family orientation in the spring before students begin the school year.
2. Informal Open House the day before school begins so that students and parents can meet their faculty advisor and teachers and ask questions before the school year begins.
3. Fall grade 9 overnight field trip to help create team building and bonding.
4. Regular Information Open Houses for Grade 8 students and their families to learn about Rising Tide's Upper School program.
5. Opportunities for Upper School students to interact with middle school students in order to demonstrate skills developed in the Upper School program.
6. Regular SEPAC meetings for parents of students with disabilities as well as regular education student families.
7. Personal attention from faculty advisor.
8. Weekly parent newsletters from school to home.
9. Twice a year parent/student/advisor conferences.
10. Small class size with plenty of individual student attention.
11. Academic support time for all students built into the regular school day.
12. Child Study Program, where teachers and parents of struggling students work together to develop good learning strategies to help the child succeed in school.
13. Two school counselors to support all students.
14. Assistance from advisors, school counselor and administrators with behavioral and social/emotional challenges.

15. Family events at the school, such as Family STEM Night, Verses and Visuals, Muffins for Moms, Donuts for Dads, Music Concerts, Art Shows.

Retention Plan for Special Demographic Groups

Demographic Group: Special Education Students

Strategies:

1. Regular contact with family through advisor and/or learning specialists.
2. Work consistently at school with learning specialist.
3. Academic Support time available for all students on a regular basis.
4. Family invited to regular SEPAC meetings with learning specialists.
5. Learning specialist present at student/advisor/parent conference twice a year.
6. Ready accessibility to student Advisor, Learning specialists, and Special Needs' Coordinator

Demographic Group: Limited English-Proficient Students

Strategies:

Currently, Rising Tide has no students who are limited English proficient

Demographic Group: Students Who are Economically Disadvantaged

Strategies:

1. Personal attention for all students through the Advisor Program.
2. Title I Reading Specialist available to assist students with reading challenges.
3. Math Skills Course available for two terms in the Middle School.
4. Skills Course during Elective block available for Upper School students who are struggling academically.
5. Academic Support time for all students built into the academic day.
6. School Counselor available for consultation.

Demographic Group: Students Who are Sub-Proficient

Strategies:

1. Personal attention for all students through the Advisor Program.
2. Title I Reading Specialist available to assist students with reading challenges.
3. Math Skills Course available for two terms in the Middle School.
4. Skills Course during Elective block available for Upper School students who are struggling academically.
5. Extended Learning Time built into the academic day.
6. School Counselor available for consultation.

Demographic Group: Students at Risk for Dropping Out of School

Strategies:

1. Personal attention for all students through the Advisor Program.
2. Title I Reading Specialist available to assist students with reading challenges.
3. Math Skills Course available for two terms in the Middle School.
4. Skills Course during Elective block available for Upper School students who are struggling academically.
5. Academic Support time for all students built into the academic day.
6. School Counselor available for consultation.

Demographic Group: Students Who Have Dropped Out of School
Strategies:

1. Follow up phone calls and requests for meetings to the family of the student informing them of options that are available to them.
2. Offer of academic counseling for student who may be interested in returning.

Appendix C

School and Student Data

Rising Tide's School Report Card Link:

<http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/profiles/general.aspx?topNavId=1&orgcode=04830305&orgtypecode=6&>

Student Demographic and Subgroup Information (For students enrolled as of the June 2016 SIMS submission)		
Race/Ethnicity	# of Students	% of entire student body
African-American	7	1.1%
Asian	16	2.6%
Hispanic	13	2.1%
Native American	2	0.1%
White	560	90.9%
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	18	3.2%
Special Education	94	15.3%
Limited English Proficient	0	0.0%
Economically Disadvantaged	79	12.5%

Administrative Roster for the 2015-16 School Year			
Name, Title	Brief Job Description	Start Date	End date (if no longer employed at the school)
Jill Crafts, Head of School	Primary director for all aspects of academic and organizational oversight, and state and federal compliance.	1999	
Michael O'Keefe, Assistant Head of School	Deputy director for all aspects of academic and organizational oversight, and state and federal compliance.	2004	
Tyler Post, Dean of Students Middle School	Provides student accountability and services that are shared with teachers.	2009	
James Simons, Dean of Students Upper School	Provides student accountability and services that are shared with	2011	

	teachers.		
Maureen Chapman, Upper School Academic Dean	Directs individuals and manages functional supporting services under the direction of a senior staff member.	2005	
Rachel Ezell, Curriculum Leader	Develops curriculum and instructional development activities	2004	
Melissa Singletary, Data Specialist	Information Services	2014	
Shawna Weekly, School Counselor	Provides counseling services to students and shares strategies with teachers.	2014	
Cheryl Larson, School Psychologist	Provides counseling services and administers psychological testing to students; and shares strategies with teachers.	2010	
Kacie Gaudet, School Nurse	Provides nursing services to students and staff members. Keeps track of student immunizations, screens students for vision and hearing.	2012	
Lisa Biagini, School Nurse	Provides nursing services to students and staff members. Keeps track of student immunizations, screens students for vision and hearing.	2015	
Lauren Macpherson, Special Education Coordinator	Works with special needs and regular education teachers to provide services for special needs' students. Oversees the inclusion program.	2006	
Eric Mello, Business Manager	Plans, organizes and directs the school's financial management program, including accounting and revenue administration.	2010	
Aaron Valente, IT Director	Provides leadership in the areas of school infrastructure, data management, technology curriculum and classroom integration strategies.	2012	

Kimberly Harnais, Assistant Business Manager	Responsible to the Business Manager and Head of School for finance, human resources and facilities management.	2007	
Lisa Lewicki, High School Office Manager	Works the front desk, answers telephones, greets visitors, sorts mail, and coordinates lunch, assists with student records and coordinating activities for the students.	2006	
Nicole Lowen, Receptionist and Administrative Assistant	Works the front desk, answers telephones, greets visitors, sorts mail, and coordinates lunch.	2014	
Beth Lanoue, Special Education Office Manager	Keeps track of all the paperwork necessary for the Special Needs' Program. Coordinates meetings, provides proper forms, keeps track of compliance.	2004	
Marion Thayer, Librarian	Orders books for the library, fulfill teachers requests for books and assists teachers with finding materials to complement curricular work.	2004	

Teachers and Staff Attrition for the 2015-2016 School Year			
	Number as of the last day of 2015-16 school Year	Departures during the 2015-16 school year	Departures at the end of the school year
Teachers	62	1	4
Other Staff	23	0	1

One teacher left Rising Tide in the middle of the school year for personal reasons. At the end of the school year, three teachers left Rising Tide to move to new locations, and one teacher's contract was not renewed. One adjustment counselor decided to leave because the position was moving from a part-time one to a full-time one and she was unable to make that transition for personal reasons.

BOARD MEMBERS FOR THE 2015-2016 SCHOOL YEAR				
Name	Position on the Board	Committee affiliation(s)	Number of terms served	Length of each term (including date of election and expiration)
Harry Salerno	Chairperson	Curriculum, Finance, Executive	3	6/2007-6/2010 6/2010-6/2013 6/2013-6/2016 6/2016-6/2019
Matthew Quinn	Vice Chairperson	Facilities, Executive	3	4/2007-4/2010 5/2010-4-2013 5/2013-5/2016 5/2016-5/2019
Christen Gurney	Clerk	Curriculum, Executive	2	2/2012-2/2015 2/2015-2/2018
Sharon Riley	Treasurer	Finance, Executive	2	5/2012-5/2015 5/2015-5/2018
Chris Schelleng	Trustee	Finance	2	10/2012-10/2015 10/2015-10/2018
Roy Bruninghaus	Trustee	Facilities	1	10/2013-10/2016
Sandra Kozlowski	Trustee	Public Relations	0	11/2016-11/2019

Appendix D

Additional Required Information

Key Leadership Changes

In 2015-2016, no key leadership changes took place at Rising Tide.

Facilities

During the 2015-2016 school year, no changes were made to Rising Tide's facilities. As mentioned in previous sections, changes will take place during the 2016-2017 school year; however, Rising Tide's location will remain in Plymouth.

Enrollment

Action	Date(s)
Student Application Deadline	February 23, 2016
Lottery	February 25, 2016

Complaints

During the 2015-2016 school year, Rising Tide's Board of Trustees received one letter of complaint, regarding the upper school student leadership group. The Assistant Head of School met with the parent of the student involved and was able to resolve the issue.

Appendix E: Examples for Accountability Plan

Appendix E, Exhibit I: Objective I, Measure 1: Example of a Teacher-Designed Unit Plan that includes the Schoolwide Objectives and Benchmarks Skills

Rising Tide Charter Public School
UNIT PLANNING TEMPLATE

Designer:

Unit Topic:

Prose Poetry - Developing Close Reading Skills
Inside Out and Back Again

Subject Area Essential Question(s):

- How do we use writing to demonstrate what we understand?
- How does the order and structure of our ideas demonstrate impact our ability to communicate effectively?
- How does the use of evidence help support our ideas and make our writing more convincing?
- What strategies can we use to comprehend a text?
- How can we use evidence from a text to support our interpretations?
- How can we use the organization of a text to help us understand what we are reading?
- How do authors use different genres to communicate in different contexts, for different purposes and with different audiences?
- How can we gain critical thinking skills through reading?
- How can discussion deepen our own understanding and help us to understand others' perspectives?

Unit Level Essential Question(s):

- How does the plot structure affect character development?
- How does the use of free verse poetry enhance the mood and tone of the story?
- How do internal and external conflicts affect character development?
- How do critical incidents reveal character?
- What common themes unify the refugee experience?
- How can we tell powerful stories about people's experiences?

What important questions are raised by this topic? What questions will guide inquiry into it?

Goals

A: Skills (Students will be able to - ACTIONS)

Investigator

- Cites evidence from a text that supports own analysis and/or reflection
- Analyze idea development, reasoning, relevance, and text structure through guided discussion and class activities
- Connects new information to prior knowledge
- Incorporates new vocabulary into writing
- Uses valid reasoning and relevant, specific evidence
- analyze how specific dialogue or incidents in a plot propel the action and reveal aspects of a character
- Examine how word choice contributes to meaning and tone in literary and informational text.
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases in literary text (figurative, connotative, and technical meaning)

Communicator

- Demonstrate comprehension of text structure, plot, conflict, setting, character development, and theme through discussion, classwork activities, and writing.
- Clearly constructs and organizes ideas into sentences and paragraphs
- Articulate own ideas during discussion, acknowledge the ideas of others, and use evidence to support your own ideas
- Use evidence from the text to identify a theme or support a theme
- Write an open response paragraph about character development
- Determine the central idea of an informational text.

Self-Directed Learner

- Seeks out help when needed
- Uses feedback to improve/refine skills
- Connects and compares the text to self
- Prepared with materials
- Makes good use of time in and out of the classroom

Community Steward

- Considers and references the ideas of others during discussions and group work
- Incorporates feedback from peers and teachers to develop as a reader and a writer

What specific skills, related to this topic, are stated or implied in the MA Curriculum Framework? In our Schoolwide Objectives and Benchmark Skills? Are there any other specific skills that should be introduced or practiced in this unit?

B: Content Knowledge (Students will know - FACTS, FIGURES, DEFINITIONS)

What factual knowledge must students acquire to fully explore the topic? What content standards from the MA Curriculum Framework connect to this topic?

C: Understandings (Students will GENERALIZE [UNDERLYING CONCEPTS], INTERNALIZE, FIND EVIDENCE, EXPLAIN, REPRESENT IN NEW WAYS, TRANSFER)

- Understand how text structure and word choice creates tone and enhances meaning
- Role of social, political, and cultural interactions in the development of identity
- Personal identity is a function of an individual's culture, time, place, geography, interaction with groups, influences from institutions, and lived experiences
- Role of diversity within and among culture

What should students come to understand as they explore this topic, practice these skills, and grapple with these essential questions?

<p>Evidence of Students’ Reaching Goals: (Ways to assess the demonstration of understanding skills, knowledge and understandings)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Structured notes ● “Getting the Gist” - summarizing nonfiction articles ● Get the gist <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ - figure out what the text is mostly about ❖ ● Reread ❖ ● Cite evidence ❖ ● Use details from the text to make inferences ❖ ● Use context clues to figure out word meanings ❖ ● Talk with others about the text ❖ ● Notice details ❖ ● Answer questions based on the text ❖ ● Pay attention to text structure: titles and headings (in informational text) ❖ ● Consider author’s purpose/perspective ❖ ● Think about how the author’s word choice contributes to tone and meaning ● Answer text-dependent questions ● Forming Evidence-Based Claims: Connecting the Idea of Fleeing and Finding Home with “Inside Out” ● Mid-Unit Assessment: Analyzing an Informational Text about a Refugee Experience - connect refugees’ universal experience of fleeing and finding home (leaving a country and going somewhere new) ● Essay Prompt: Consider the meaning of the novel’s title, <i>Inside Out & Back Again</i>. How does this title relate to the universal refugee experience of fleeing and finding home, and in what ways is Ha’s experience a specific example of this universal experience? ● Vocabulary and grammar quizzes <p><i>How will students demonstrate that they have achieved the goals of this unit? What real-world tasks, challenges, or transfer performances will reveal students’ understanding and proficiency?</i></p>	<p>In Class Independent Work Group Work Discrete Skill Integrated Skills Verbal Response Discussion Presentation Written Response Paper Quiz/Test Performance Task Challenge/Problem</p>
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<p>Inquiry - and Skill-Based Teaching and Learning Ideas:</p> <p>Jigsaws Discussion protocols View photographs and complete “Notice/Wonder” graphic organizer. Write/Pair/Share</p>	<p>Entry Points Clear Information Model Skills Skill Instruction Practice Skills Ongoing Feedback</p>
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Numbered Heads - a discussion process
Silent discussion called a Chalk Talk.

Inquiries
Investigations
Assignments
Challenges
For Individuals
For Small Groups
For Whole Class
Multiple Modes
Verbal
Visual
Kinesthetic
Pacing
Choices
Flexible Groupings
Varied Assignments

What lessons and assignments will help students acquire the knowledge and skills, make meaning of the important ideas, and transfer their learning to new situations? What connections can be made to our local region?

Appendix E, Exhibit II: Objective I, Measure 2: Examples of Teacher-Created Rubrics Based Upon the Rising Tide Schoolwide Objectives and Benchmark Skills

Rubric Created by Grade 7 Science Teacher for a Solar Car Project:

	Expectations	<i>Does not meet Expectations</i> 1-4	<i>Meets Expectations</i> 4-7	<i>Exceeds Expectations</i> 8-10
<u>Communicator</u> Receptive Skills Expressive Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thumbnail sketches showing several well thought out design ideas. Rough sketch for the design including a top view, side view, and front view (orthographic projection). Final “full size” drawing of final design including chassis, solar panel mounts, motor and gear assembly AND MODIFICATIONS. All required aspects of the project were discussed adequately in the Technical Report. 		/10	
<u>Investigator</u> Inquiry Skills Innovation Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical design process followed to create a final prototype of solar car. Your solar car met the goal of the project, and was innovative in its design. 		/10	
		<i>Does not meet expectations</i> 0-2	<i>Meets Expectations</i> 3	<i>Exceeds Expectations</i> 4-5
<u>Self-Directed Learner</u> Self-Awareness Skills Skills in Taking Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remained on task throughout the duration of the project. Followed the format for a technical report (see handout). Completed all aspects of the project fully and on time. Kept track of project materials (journal, diagrams, building materials) 		/5	
<u>Community Steward</u> Skills in Awareness of Others Collaboration Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked respectfully within your group. Collaborated with peers in a useful manner. Maintained a clean and safe workspace. 		/5	

Appendix E, Exhibit III: Objective II, Measure 3

Example of Teacher-Created Unit Plan that Demonstrates Connection to the Plymouth Region

Rising Tide Charter Public School
UNIT PLANNING TEMPLATE
GRADE5

Designer:
Communications & Investigations

Unit Topic: Cranberries

Subject Area Essential Question (s):

- What is my place in the community?
- How is my community connected to the natural world?

Unit Level Essential Question(s):

- Why are cranberries important to my community?
- What do cranberry farmers do throughout the year to prepare for harvest?

Goals

A: Skills (Students will be able to - ACTIONS)

Communicator

Receptive

- Access and read a non-fiction text (identify and define unknown vocabulary, summarize, etc.)
- Listen actively and respectfully (whole class discussions, group discussions, presentations, videos)

Expressive

- Demonstrate Formal and Informal Public Speaking Skills
 - Use eye contact, voice projection, appropriate body language, etc.)
 - Recognize social cues (appropriate tone, timing contributions)
 - Share factual information
- Demonstrate Informal Writing Skills
 - Write legibly
 - Respond specifically and thoroughly to a prompt
 - Demonstrate comprehension, understanding, and self-reflection

Investigator

Inquiry

- Questioning
 - Access prior knowledge to formulate questions about a topic
 - Formulate comprehension and discussion questions based on texts, class discussions, and presentations
- Observing
 - Use all senses
 - Pay attention to details
 - Predict/speculate outcomes
 - Draw Conclusions

Self-Directed Learner

Self-Awareness Skills

- Identify personal challenges, strengths, short and long term goals, and personal learning styles and study habits
- Identify place in community

Community Steward

Skills in Awareness of Others

- Respect Differences
- Demonstrate empathy for others
- Advocate for the wellbeing of others

Collaboration Skills

- Work productively and respectfully in groups
- Demonstrate leadership, cooperation, and compromise
- Demonstrate understanding of the need for collaboration

B: Content Knowledge (Students will know - FACTS, FIGURES, DEFINITIONS)

Bed
Bog
Boom
Buds
Cooperative
Dike
Dry Harvesting
Flow Gates
Peat
Pinheads
Reservoir
Sorting Mill
Water Reels
Wet Harvesting

Cranberry Growers Tasks per Season (Winter, Spring, Summer, Autumn)

C: Understandings (Students will GENERALIZE [UNDERLYING CONCEPTS], INTERNALIZE, FIND EVIDENCE, EXPLAIN, REPRESENT IN NEW WAYS, TRANSFER)

Students will make connections between their communities and the natural world by focusing on cranberries. Reading the central text, *Cranberries: Fruit of the Bog*, students will collaborate in small group Literature Circles geared towards fostering the development of note-taking and discussion skill. Students will perform multiple hands on activities utilizing their five senses as well as produce a persuasive and expressive written piece to demonstrate understanding of the cranberry grower’s yearly seasonal tasks. Students will reflect on the role of cranberries in their community after a culminating field trip to Bog Hollow Farm in Kingston, Massachusetts.

Evidence of Student’s Reaching Goals:

(Ways to assess the demonstration of understanding skills, knowledge and understandings)

Participate in Non Fiction Literature Circles (long term small group activity)
Interactive Class Activities and Assignments (independent and partner work)
Class Discussion based upon Open Response Questions (Verbal and Written Response)
Completion of the Bog Blog (Formal Writing)

Formal
Informal
Formative
Summative
In Class
Independent Work
Group Work
Discrete Skill
Integrated Skills
Verbal Response
Discussion
Presentation
Written Response
Performance Task

	Challenge/Problem
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<p>Inquiry - and Skill-Based Teaching and Learning Ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration and Note-taking Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sharing ideas constructively in a small group ○ Taking on different roles in the group • Record Observations about Cranberries in a variety of activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work with partner on the Cranberry Bounce Test • Create a persuasive written piece (Bog Blog) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Utilize graphic organizer or modified graphic organizer to help organize writing about the different tasks cranberry growers have every season. • Oral Presentations of student created Bog Blogs • Bog Hollow Field Trip 	<p>Entry Points Clear Information Model Skills Skill Instruction Practice Skills Ongoing Feedback Inquiries Investigations Assignments Challenges For Individuals For Small Groups For Whole Class Multiple Modes Verbal Visual Kinesthetic Pacing Choices Flexible Groupings Varied Assignments</p>
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<p>Key Texts and Resources: “Cranberries: Fruit of the Bog” by Diane L. Burns www.cranberries.org</p>

Appendix E, Exhibit IV: Objective III, Measure 1:
Example of Teacher-Created Unit Plan that Demonstrates an Inquiry and Skills-Based Approach:

Rising Tide

UNIT PLANNING TEMPLATE

Unit Topic:

The Fertile Crescent
(Early Civilizations of Mesopotamia, 3000 BCE to 500 BCE)

Subject Area Essential Question(s):

- How do geographical factors shape the history & the people living in a region?
- How are decisions made for the public good?

Unit Level Essential Question(s):

- How did the environment influence the development and values of Mesopotamia and its society?
- How and why did written language develop in Mesopotamia?
- What were the most important achievements of the Mesopotamian empires?
- What can we learn about Babylonian society from Hammurabi's Code?

Goals

A: Skills (Students will be able to - actions)

Communicator:

- Answering specific types of test questions
- Using graphic organizers
- Copying notes from the board when necessary

Investigator:

- Active-studying & Active-reading
- Note-taking from a text, discussion or presentation

B: Content Knowledge (Students will know - facts, figures, definitions)

Political:

- Define & use terms in context: city-state, empire, cuneiform, code of law (codify), ruler

Geographic:

- Locate the Tigris & the Euphrates rivers; identify Sumer, Babylon & Assyria
- Explain the name of the region known as the "Fertile Crescent"
- Connect [ancient] historical events to modern-day Middle East

Cultural:

- Identify polytheism and the religious beliefs of Mesopotamian civilizations
- Describe important achievements, inventions & discoveries of each culture.
- Explain the basic principles of Hammurabi's "Code of Law"

C. Understandings (Students will generalize [underlying concepts], internalize, find evidence, explain, represent in new ways, transfer)

Interactive:

- Creating questions based on texts, discussions, presentations (*considering own perspective, background information & listening to peers/teacher's ideas*).
- Synthesizing Information from Multiple Sources (*making connections to new topics, based on prior knowledge from earlier units/readings*).

Application:

- Predicting Outcomes (*Using context clues, formulating a theory, sorting evidence*).
- Understanding Cause and Effect (*Sequencing events in order/prioritizing, making connections between topics & figures, identifying long-term consequences*).
- Transferring Knowledge to New Contexts (*applying terms & concepts outside of the subject-*

area, making real-world connections to the text, applying learned skills to different challenges).

Evidence of Students Reaching Goals:

(Ways to assess the demonstration of skills, knowledge & understanding)

Daily Tasks:

- Text-pattern note-taking (using models from class) for chapter readings

Class-work:

- Written-responses: Open-response, Media-response & Document-based Questions
- Reader-response & Reader's "theatre" summaries for Gilgamesh Epic excerpts
- Student-generated study guide & reference sheet for unit tests

Projects:

- Group project to analyze the cultural aspects of Babylon through Hammurabi's Code
- Comparative [written] essay, "Gilgamesh and the Modern Epic Story"

Inquiry- and Skill-based Teaching and Learning Ideas: Entry Points

Discussion:

- What is an epic?
- What's a [modern] epic... list examples (Harry Potter, LOTR, Star Wars)
- Why is it important to codify laws? What do laws tell us about the values of a society?

Role-play:

- Reader's "theatre" for Gilgamesh epic (acting out short scenes & speeches)

Slideshow:

- Ancient Sumer culture & "Gilgamesh" (comparison)
- Invading tribes & expanding empires of Mesopotamia

Map-work:

- Modern-day links to ancient Middle Eastern civilizations (Iraq, Iran, Turkey)

Key Texts and Resources:

- Nystrom Atlas of World History
- Prentice Hall World History text
- The Epic of Gilgamesh (Penguin Press)

- www.edsitement.com
- www.bbc.com
- www.unitedstreaming.com

Appendix E, Exhibit IV: Example of Teacher Evaluation that Reflects Teacher Use of an Inquiry and Skills-Based Approach to Student Learning

Year End Review
2015-2016

Individual Responsibilities:

- ...’s Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator, the Middle School Dean of Students, and I agree that she has had a strong first year of teaching at Rising Tide. We appreciate that she is not afraid to ask questions about curriculum and school culture.
- ...’s classes are well structured and it is clear that she places a great deal of thought into her planning of curriculum and classes. She has adjusted to teaching middle school and expresses a clear appreciation for her students.
- ... continues to have strong classroom management skills and tries creative approaches with her students. She consistently approaches teaching and learning in an inquiry and skills-based manner.
- I commend ... for seeking out a variety of resources for her students, including many primary source documents. She utilizes videos and podcasts for her students, so there is a great deal of variety in the materials presented to her students.

Collaborative Responsibilities:

- ... enjoys collaborating with others and frequently seeks out members of her department and school leaders for discussion about students and curriculum.
- ... and members of her grade level team have faced some challenges this year as a team. I appreciate the manner in which Lauren has been willing to be introspective and to work on some of her challenges. I also appreciate her willingness to approach colleagues and try to work things out. As a result of the work the team has done, I look forward to a positive year for them next year.

Professional Responsibilities:

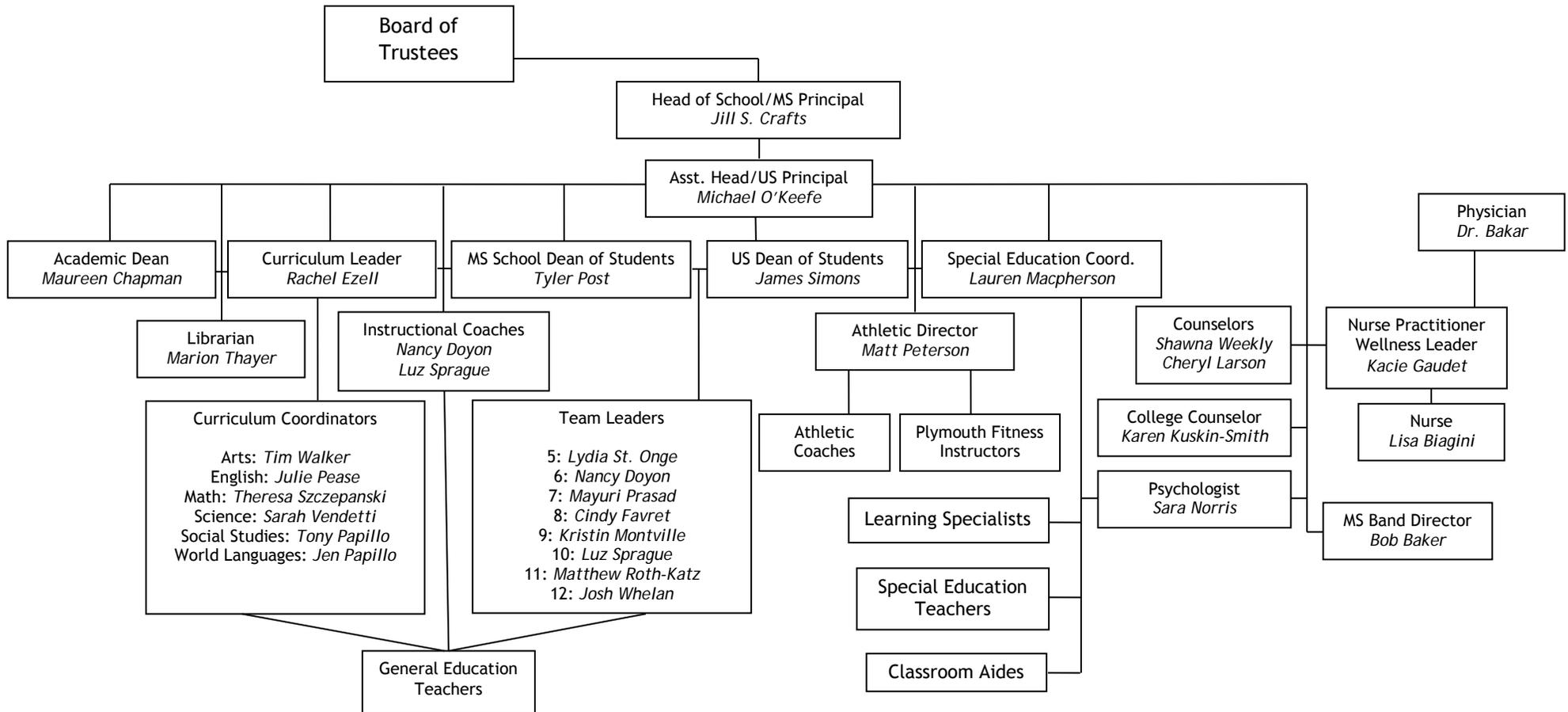
- ... is consistently professional in all areas of her position. She is always on time for work and promptly arrives at meetings. If she needs to miss work, she communicates clearly and leaves thorough lesson plans.

Head of School

A copy of this document will be placed in your personnel file.
I acknowledge receipt of the above.

Teacher _____ Date _____

**Appendix F: Rising Tide Charter Public School
Organizational Chart 2015-2016 (Education and Services)**



**Appendix F, Rising Tide Charter Public School
Organizational Chart 2015-2016 (Operations and Support)**

