

PRAIRIE CROSSING CHARTER SCHOOL

Strategic Plan 2004-2007



Where learning comes naturally...

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Strategic Plan 2004-2007

Purpose Statement

This formal document sets forth the strategic plan for Prairie Crossing Charter School. The plan serves as the school's compass in all goal setting, decision-making, resource allocation, and long term planning for the school as a whole.

This community wide endeavor provided opportunity for board members, administration, staff, parents and community members to join together in reviewing the school's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities. The end result is an exciting plan that will successfully move PCCS into the next re-charter and beyond.

Task Force Reports

The Prairie Crossing Charter School (PCCS) strategic planning process will include seven task forces. The responsibility of each task force will be to make recommendations as to what might be considered for inclusion in the Strategic Plan relative to its area of review. These recommendations will be presented to the Board of Directors who will review the recommendations from all of the task forces and provide direction relative to the preparation of a draft of the Strategic Plan.

MISSION AND VISION – will review

- ❑ **the Mission as outlined in the Charter.**
- ❑ **the Vision currently being crafted by the Administration.**
- ❑ **the current and emerging needs and direction of the School.**
- ❑ **... and will provide:**
- ❑ **an affirmation of the current Mission and Vision statements and/or revisions to them.**

The Mission and Vision statements will be reaffirmed or approved by March 1st and will establish the parameters for deliberation by the following Task Forces.

Mission/Vision Task force: Board of Directors, PCCS Administration, Steve Barg, Elizabeth Stearns and Laura Fay.

Mission Statement

Prairie Crossing Charter School is a child-centered community of learners. We use an ecological, integrated, experiential approach to learning, which utilizes unique environmental and community resources. We develop students who demonstrate environmental stewardship and responsible, global citizenship.

Vision Statement

We envision a small, public school where...

1. Students and teachers are outside daily, immersed in the natural world learning about nature and culture through rich, first-hand contact with world around them. Children and teachers are guided by the cycles and patterns of growth, rainfall, migration, and the changing of the seasons as they learn about the natural world.
2. Children learn about the life cycles of animals and plants as well as the interdependence of life, including our use of plants and animals for food, through their observations, projects and real work on the farm, prairies, woodlands and wetlands that surround the school.

3. Every child is known well by the teachers, and his or her gifts, talents and special needs are recognized and addressed.
4. The school day and year are driven by curiosity and a commitment to learning rather than by mandates or the bell. Teachers have the freedom to shape day-to-day activities based on learning opportunities and teachable moments as well as on a set of rigorous academic standards.
5. The school serves as the anchor of a Conservation Learning Center that includes a conservation resource library, educational workshops and conferences. Teachers, administrators, and other staff members and parents model lifelong learning and environmental stewardship through consistent practices and behavior both in and out of the classroom. Parents, community members, and other individuals share in the learning experience through symposia and round tables sponsored by the PSO and other community organizations.
6. Learning experiences involve a broad community of learners. Children of different ages and abilities work together and with members of other schools, citizens groups, and service organizations. Sometimes they learn within single-grade level classes, sometimes in multi-age classes, and sometimes in groups that include multiple grade levels. All members of the community share questions, misunderstandings, and knowledge both to deepen their own knowledge and to help others do the same.
7. Members of the community show respect and care for each other, for those in the communities that surround us, and for people throughout the world. Children learn to understand and appreciate other cultures. Through their study of the Spanish language in every grade, they gain an enriched sense of Hispanic cultures.
8. Students practice the art of learning and discover how it leads to high achievement. They work on projects that are needed and useful to learn why technique, accuracy, clarity of thought and clear communication are important. Adults hold high expectations for students and help them unfold their potential.
9. Teachers, administrators, and other staff members collaborate to promote a sense of collective purpose. Teachers reflect together on their practices, critically analyze learning situations in their classrooms, and suggest and engage in creative strategies to provide settings that enable each child to meet the high expectations.
10. Parents play an integral role in the educational experience of the children through volunteer opportunities inside and outside the classroom, leadership positions, and reinforcement at home.
11. Children experience and practice the arts and humanities as an integrated part of their studies in social studies, science, and mathematics.
12. Students come to understand that natural and human communities are one and that environmental stewardship and civic responsibility go hand in hand. They gain a love for learning and a care for the earth and its citizens that continue to develop after they have graduated.

Guiding Principles

1. **An integrated approach to learning centered around the environment.** The natural world is inherently interesting to children and therefore serves as a setting and springboard for learning all subjects at Prairie Crossing Charter School. Teachers help students to deepen their understanding of the world by connecting all disciplines and to communicate their awe and understanding to others.
2. **Love of learning.** Prairie Crossing Charter School students have time and opportunity to learn through their senses, experiences, and discoveries, sparked by curiosity and a sense of wonder. They experience the joy and excitement that comes when hard work leads to understanding and competence.
3. **Search for excellence in all we do.** We seek to define and achieve excellence in all we do. We recognize many different types and measures of excellence. We strive to achieve it personally and collectively.
4. **A sense of place.** The children of Prairie Crossing Charter School will experience firsthand the ecology of the land that surrounds the school. They will understand that we are all part of the earth and it is part of us. A strong sense of place within the natural and human community, both local and worldwide, will be the legacy of Prairie Crossing Charter School.
5. **A small school that fosters learning.** The best learning takes place when teachers can give individual attention to each child and the overall school community is small enough for everyone to know and support each other. Therefore we will stay a small school with small classes.
6. **A community of learners.** Prairie Crossing Charter School is a dynamic endeavor where teachers can learn and students can teach, where young people see adults grow in knowledge, adults take pleasure in watching children's knowledge expand, and where people delight in sharing information and wisdom.
7. **A constructivist way of learning and teaching.** Constructivism helps students build meaning from their experiences, prior knowledge, and observations. It also confronts them with new situations that require them to reconstruct their knowledge.
8. **Character development woven into the fabric of learning.** Prairie Crossing Charter School intentionally incorporates character development into its daily curriculum and activities. Teachers, administrators, students, and families work together to assure the healthy development of every child and to address moral and ethical issues so that each has the knowledge, skills, and resiliency to act with integrity.
9. **Accountability and responsibility:** We pay close attention to leadership, governance, and management at Prairie Crossing Charter School. This includes maintaining our charter, meeting state requirements, and ensuring financial viability. Ultimately we are most accountable for the children learning.
10. **Contribution to public education.** In return for the freedom it has been granted as a charter school, Prairie Crossing Charter School seeks ways to offer its integrated environmental curriculum to other schools. We document the effective and innovative aspects of our programs and teaching methods, offer professional development programs to other educators, and partner with other schools in the exciting enterprise of learning.

ASSESSMENT - will review:

- ❑ **how to best provide for the needs of students with special needs.**
- ❑ **accountability and assessment (program and student) practices.**
- ❑ **how to best implement the responsibility outlined in the Charter to disseminate *best practice* relative to an environmentally based curriculum to public and private schools.**
- ❑ **. . . and will provide**
- ❑ **a report outlining its recommendations in the above areas.**

Assessment Task Force: Minerva Cruz-Familiar, Kathy Kibetlewski, Dennis Munk, Jay Thomas, Brian VanderYacht

This report summarizes the work to date of the Assessment Committee and presents short-term and long-term strategies for both student support and assessment at Prairie Crossing Charter School.

The first task of the committee was to develop a strategy for identifying students who may be experiencing difficulty or a decline in performance and for helping PCCS parents and faculty to communicate more effectively as they address their concerns. To this end, the committee drafted a parent/faculty questionnaire which we intend as a first step in beginning discussions about student performance. The committee recommends that the document be placed on the PCCS website as a resource for parents and teachers. The checklist details examples of student behaviors or changes in performance that might lead parents to initiate a conversation with a PCCS faculty member. Next, the checklist provides an array of questions that a parent of a PCCS student might expect from the child's teacher. It is the consensus of the committee that the instrument should be direct without being intrusive and that parents will become familiar with the protocol for initiating discussions with appropriate faculty and staff. A copy of the checklist is provided in the appendix.

The next task was to begin examining current assessment practices at PCCS and to develop a plan for PCCS faculty to more regularly reflect on their own assessment practices. The first step in this charge was to develop and "assessment of assessment" instrument to administered to PCCS faculty before the end of the 2003-2004 school year. This brief survey asks faculty to reflect on their current assessment practices and to identify 1) the regularity with which they use various practices 2) methods with which they are particularly confident or less than confident 3) specific uses of assessment in students' overall performance and 4) ways in which assessment informs classroom practice. The data gathered from this survey will be reviewed and will be used to inform possible areas for professional development among PCCS faculty during the next school year. The survey instrument is provided in the appendix.

COMMUNICATION AND EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS - will review:

- ❑ **current practices and reasonable alternatives to student recruitment to assure that the School will be more reflective of the general population in the area being served by PCCS, including the recruitment of poor and minority students.**
- ❑ **communications internal and external to the organization.**
- ❑ **volunteer service, what is currently being done to encourage and retain dedicated volunteers and how to secure more volunteer assistance for the school as it enlarges and adds programs.**

... and will provide

- 1 a report outlining findings and recommendations relative to these areas.**

Communication Task Force: Rob Heinrich, Vicki Hemrich, Laurie Johnston, Susan Niederlander, Andrew Sagartz, and Christine Wald

Student Recruitment

Prairie Crossing Charter School's charter includes an Outreach Plan to address an ISBE concern that the school has not made a sufficient effort to inform and recruit minority and underprivileged students within its constituent boundaries. Current practice includes:

- 1 General information, enrollment information, and other important policy documents are available in Spanish, both in print and on the website.
- 2 Information about the school, including the transportation policy, fee waiver policy, and volunteer policy, are provided to day care centers during the fall.
- 3 Each January, school enrollment information is provided to local newspapers having Spanish outlets. Similar information is provided to several local radio stations.
- 4 Also beginning in January, presentations about the school are made at numerous day care centers, with an emphasis on those located in highly Spanish-speaking communities and underprivileged communities.
- 5 School information is also provided to a number of local community agencies that work with low-income families.

Task Force Recommendations concerning Student Recruitment

1. Increase visibility of PCCS in the community through developing and consolidating relationships with other schools. This may be facilitated through joint coordination of science/environmental field trips to our site or through offering environmental studies curriculum units to other schools.

Relationships with:

- a) Grayslake, Woodland, and Fremont elementary schools will increase our school's local profile as a valuable resource to the community-at-large.
- b) Area Preschools will give parents and students exposure to PCCS.
- c) North Chicago/Waukegan elementary schools will help fulfill school's outreach mission to minorities, build a wider positive school image, provide unique opportunities to our students, and will likely facilitate grant applications.
- d) Private schools, e.g. Montessori, will broaden our base of support.
- e) Homeschool teachers will also increase identification of PCCS as a significant community resource.

We have an opportunity to work with the Prairie Crossing Institute to offer CEUs to teachers, e.g. through offering environmental science summer workshops.

2. Develop a Public Relations or Media staff position. With respect to recruitment specifically, we must better publicize the school through publications that are disseminated to minority groups within our boundaries.
3. The Task Force has facilitated the placement of reference maps in the PCCS office. One map outlines the PCCS school district with street names. The other map indicates the areas in the PCCS school district that contain Hispanic populations. It also includes Census block groups. Additionally, an excel spreadsheet is available that provides some detail information about the Census block groups.

Internal/External Communications

At present, the main sources of communication are the PSO, School Office (Principal and Director), and the School Board. Current methods of providing information include paper copy, e-mail, and the school website.

Task Force Recommendations concerning Internal and External Communications

1. Make greater use of electronic vs. paper media for the dissemination of school information. Specifically, we believe we should:
 - a. Routinely put important documents on the school website, e.g. Parent-Student handbook, policies.
 - b. Hyperlink the school newsletter to the website to increase parent familiarity and habit of using the website as a main source of school information.
 - c. Develop and put FAQs on website
2. Combine the School newsletter, PSO newsletter, and Board news into one online publication to be published weekly.
3. Develop a Public Relations or Media staff position. We need to cultivate relationships with local media and increase utilization of them to disseminate

- positive information about PCCS. We have the power to influence and shape relationships with local media through provision of positive press releases, providing names of potential interviewees, etc.
4. Provide a link on the PCCS webpage encouraging people to patronize our school sponsors, e.g. auction donors. This will help build reciprocally beneficial relationships with sponsors.
 5. Provide an Electronic “Question Box” to parents, e.g. a button on the website. This format will allow the questions and answers to be published on the website.
 6. Improve communication with the Prairie Crossing Homeowners Association by requesting a regular column in their monthly newsletter. We also recommend requesting that a PCCS board member (a Prairie Crossing resident) attend the PCHOA board meetings.

Volunteer Services

Volunteer services contributed by parents are essential to the success of our school. The need for this effort will continue to grow with the school’s growth.

Current practices for recruiting volunteers include:

- 1) At the beginning of each school year an Ice Cream Social is scheduled for the parents and children of PCCS. At this event, forms are laid out on tables for parents to volunteer their services. Some services include working on small fundraisers, large fundraisers, carpool, and classroom assistance. Other services are providing donations of water, pop, cookies, muffins, etc. for the fundraisers;
- 2) Throughout the year opportunities to volunteer are posted in various school publications, such as the PSO newsletter, Friday Newsletter from the Principal and Director, Friday Classroom Newsletter, Classroom coordinator memos, and e-mails from the School Board President;
- 3) Volunteer project coordinators personally solicit parent volunteers through direct contact. This is currently the most effective recruiting tool we have.

Task Force Recommendations concerning Volunteer Services

1. Begin to define volunteer job descriptions, tasks, time requirements, and job-specific FAQs. We recommend starting with the more major routine, well-known jobs, such as Classroom Coordinator. These volunteer task descriptions should be posted to the website as part of a common “reference library” for parents.
2. We should compile an annual access database of volunteer resources that coordinators can use to draw upon. This means parents would fill out a volunteering interest/skills inventory during the summer.
3. Develop a campaign to promote volunteering as a positive opportunity rather than a burdensome duty. This could include insertion of quotes in newsletters, small articles by parents of what they’ve gained from their volunteer activities, and so on. This can be tied into school character education initiatives, which emphasize modeling good citizenship.
4. Hold an annual volunteer appreciation night/dinner.

PROGRAM will review:

- ❑ **current academic program offerings as well as what might appropriately be considered for the future.**
- ❑ **appropriate co-curricular and extra-curricular programs.**
- ❑ **how to best implement the responsibility outlined in the Charter to disseminate *best practice* relative to an environmentally based curriculum to public and private schools.**
- ❑ **... and will provide**
- ❑ **a report outlining its recommendations in the above areas.**

Program Task Force: Barry Berk, Linda Brazdil, Naomi Dulin, Dolores Earles, Amy Heinrich, Catherine Johnson, Cheryl Pytlarz and Ellen Winick

A major portion of our time was spent on item number two. We began first to develop criteria for academic programs to be used by our school. The criteria were culled from the following documents:

- 1 The Charter (original)
- 2 The Mission Statement
- 3 The Guiding Principles, and
- 4 The Vision.

These criteria were then used to develop a pictorial curriculum model. (See appendix.)

We used one meeting to examine some of the integrated units that have been developed thus far. We found that it was a good start yet needs more work. The teachers each have their own copies of these units and may well have made them more complete. It would be good to find a way to continually update and refine the original units as well. It does need to be mentioned that in these units some of the activities need to be seen as essential lessons for that particular grade level and others seen as options. You have to eat the entree yet can have the dessert of your choice.

Our last meeting was spent on the discussion of co/extra curricular programs. We brainstormed a huge list then refined it by categorizing the activities into the following.

<i>Sports</i>	Interscholastic Intramural		
<i>Environmental</i>	Pumpkin Club Bird watching Hen House Helpers	Canoeing Enviro-cise Gardening	Orienteering
<i>Arts</i>	Theater Chorus	Photography Band	Arts & Crafts club

Academic

Chess
Newspaper
Yearbook

Debate
Academic Competitions
Spanish

Character Education Student Government
Peer Mediation
Community Service

For many of the sports activities the school will rely heavily upon the ability of our parents to volunteer to coach. The various clubs depend upon a faculty or staff member who has the desire and will be paid a stipend by the school.

STAFFING will review:

- 2 the recruitment, deployment, , mentoring of new staff , development, workplace environment and retention of staff to assure that the staff is highly competent.**

...and will provide:

- 3 a report outlining its recommendations in the above areas.**

Staffing Task Force: Scott Dahlberg, John Rizzo, Mark Plaster

We have determined that all functions of the school related to staffing [Recruitment, mentoring, development, evaluation, and retention] should be clearly tied to the Guiding Principles of PCCS. In fact, the school should develop systems and policies that integrate recruiting, mentoring, developing, and retaining staff, so that people who are well-matched with the Mission, Vision, and Guiding Principles join and thrive at PCCS.

RECRUITMENT: One natural outgrowth of our Guiding Principle “Search for excellence in all we do” is for us to find and hire excellent educators with enthusiasm for our school’s unique mission, size, and structure.

1. Targeted search beyond the traditional educational avenues for qualified educators with interests in pursuing and promoting the Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles.
2. Multilevel screening and review to match candidates to the PCCS Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles.
3. Team based evaluation combined with realistic job simulation.

MENTORING : Once selected, staff should given the necessary assistance to understand and promulgate the specific integrated approach functioning at PCCS. By assisting “new” staff in orientation it will provide that sense of place, help build the community of learners that includes teachers and strengthens the constructivist way of learning and teaching.

1. Commit PCCS resources of time, space and finances.
2. Every new teacher partnered with experienced staff; including new to teaching and new to PCCS.
3. Provide assistance and guidance to experienced staff in developing mentoring skills.
4. Sharing of craft knowledge among master teachers as a means of developing and refining “best practices.”

DEVELOPMENT : Through specific policy goals, PCCS can encourage the character and educational development of the staff. Advanced learning and training opportunities broaden the expertise of individual staff which can be disseminated to other staff

members to benefit PCCS student and the community as a whole. Acknowledging new achievements brings a sense of accomplishment and encourages that stride for excellence in everything we do.

1. Per Capita expenditure to facilitate staff development expectations
2. Developing curriculum specialties
3. Recognition of areas of expertise as a resource for staff and community
4. Distribution of special assets to staff
5. Distribution of special assets to the community

EVALUATION: At PCCS, we strive for excellence in all we do. We recommend that evaluation of our progress take place through thoughtful reflection and assessment against clear and challenging goals.

1. Create culture that values and rewards excellent performance.
2. Create a comprehensive evaluation procedure that reviews the collaborative efforts of staff performance and adherence to the Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles.
3. Evaluation process is aligned with Recruitment, Retention & Development principles and expectations.

RETENTION: Our goal is to create the policies and working environment that enable us to attract and engage the teachers, staff and administration that will help us achieve our vision for PCCS.

1. Develop compensation structure that is market based but is also creative and unique in providing intangible benefits.
2. Communicating both tangible and intangible benefits of participating in the PCCS family. i.e. TRS payments, HMO, casual & comfortable work atmosphere, environmental assets (trails, farm, community, fitness center)
3. Few and flexible policies and procedures focused on creating a teacher friendly environment with a balanced work life.

FINANCE will review:

- ❑ **financial needs of PCCS over the next five years.**
- ❑ **... and will provide:**
- ❑ **alternatives relative to funding the School during this period and into the future.**

Finance Task Force: Laura Fay, Becky Boyer, Mary Burks, Wesley Ley

See appendix for report

Task Force Recommendations

Assessment

- ❑ Develop a more wholistic assessment that evaluates the range of exceptionality
- ❑ Define “giftedness”
- ❑ Articulate the school’s approach to challenging children
- ❑ Consider holding a PSO Round Table discussion on the topic
- ❑ Have task force continue to assist the Administration

Communication and External Relations

- ❑ Outreach to preschools and daycare centers.
- ❑ Track how applicants found out about the school
- ❑ Coordinate CEU workshops with Prairie Crossing Institute
- ❑ Develop a Public Relations/Media staff position
- ❑ Place important documents on the PCCS website
- ❑ Hyperlink newsletters to the website
- ❑ Develop FAQ’s on website
- ❑ Consolidate Friday newsletter with board news
- ❑ Include web site link with event sponsors
- ❑ Provide electronic “Question Box” for parents.
- ❑ Improve communication with Prairie Crossing Homeowners Assoc by submitting monthly column in newsletter and PCCS board member liaison to attend HOA meetings.
- ❑ Make volunteer job descriptions available and on-line
- ❑ Create time/talent survey for PSO volunteer needs
- ❑ Put school forms on line
- ❑ Develop volunteer PR plan
- ❑ Hold annual end of year volunteer appreciation picnic

Program

- ❑ 2004-2005: Curriculum should be the primary focus, including goals and big ideas for each grade level
- ❑ 2004-2005: Design experience/project for eighth grade
- ❑ 2004-2005: Preparing graduation traditions that are consistent with philosophy of school
- ❑ 2005-2006: focus should be constructivist education and integrated teaching methods
- ❑ Consider a standing Curriculum/program Advisory Committee

Staffing

- ❑ 2004-2005: focus should be staff mentoring and training, including budgeting of funds, resources (including) time for these purposes.
- ❑ Establish listening sessions or “focus groups” with staff
- ❑ Determine the right amount of turnover
- ❑ Determine leadership positions for master teachers

Finance

- ❑ Finalize 5-year forecast
- ❑ Finalize financial policies
- ❑ Annually compare prior year budget/forecasts to actual results
- ❑ Annually revise/update 5-year forecast
- ❑ Annually address issues/recommendations provided by accountants related to audit
- ❑ Develop comprehensive framework to provide regular financial reporting
- ❑ Develop a forum for PCCS community comments/suggestions regarding financial oversight
- ❑ Provide recommendations as requested by staff or Board
- ❑ Submit annual root cause analysis of variances between budget/forecast and actual results
- ❑ Assess any adverse findings or significant policy recommendations from external auditors
- ❑ Survey staff/board to evaluate responsiveness to ad hoc requests
- ❑ Survey PCCS community to evaluate satisfaction with financial reporting and accountability

Prairie Crossing Charter School Goals

Educational curriculum

Prairie Crossing Charter School will develop and have in place a curricular model which includes a cohesive, integrative curriculum for K-8th grade; staff development to understand, design, and teach the curriculum well; and assessment of student progress on the goals as indicated in the PCCS mission statement.

Staffing

Prairie Crossing Charter School will effectively support its staff by successfully integrating recruitment, mentoring, professional development and retention techniques that mirror the mission, vision and guiding principles of the school.

Communication & External Relations

Prairie Crossing Charter School will develop and have in place a reliable system of distributing information whereby all parents, administration, staff, and board members are provided with timely access (electronic and/or print) to regularly updated information about the School and its operations, and which allows others to obtain general information about the School.

Prairie Crossing Charter School will develop and have in place a reliable internal communication process in place, whereby parents, administration, staff, and board members enter into dialogue regarding important school issues.

Prairie Crossing Charter School will develop and have in place a reliable system of external communications with the larger community in order to promote the school, its mission and vision, and enhance relationships.

Financial Management

Prairie Crossing Charter School will provide a comprehensive financial framework to assure that resources are available and prudently managed to optimize the educational opportunities for our learners.

Fundraising

Prairie Crossing Charter School will effectively utilize parents and staff members to fundraise in support of both the capital campaign and the operating budget. The School will fundraise for purposes and with methods that address the targeted financial needs of the School.

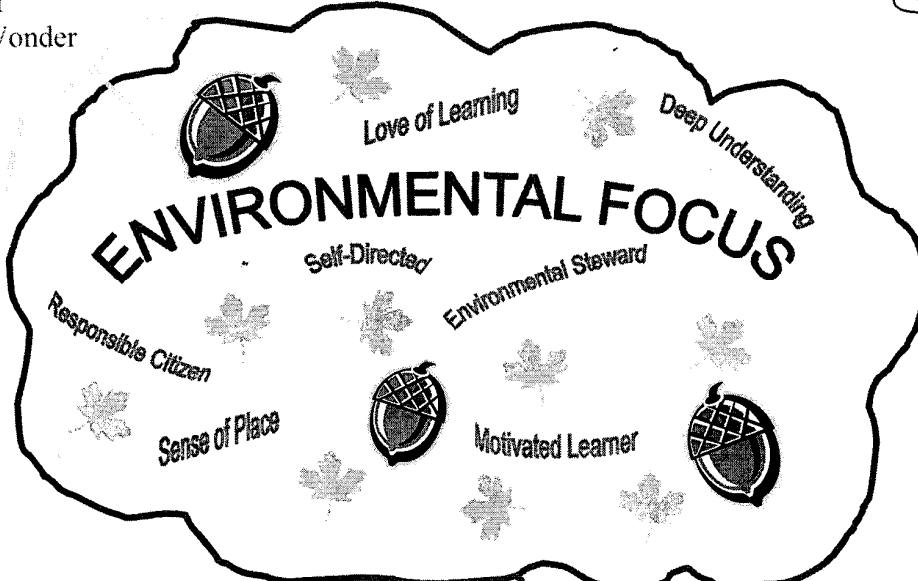
New School Campus

The Prairie Crossing Charter School campus will be a strong positive support to the school's ongoing functioning and development. The whole campus will be set up and used in a manner that reinforces a sound organizational structure and a sense of place.

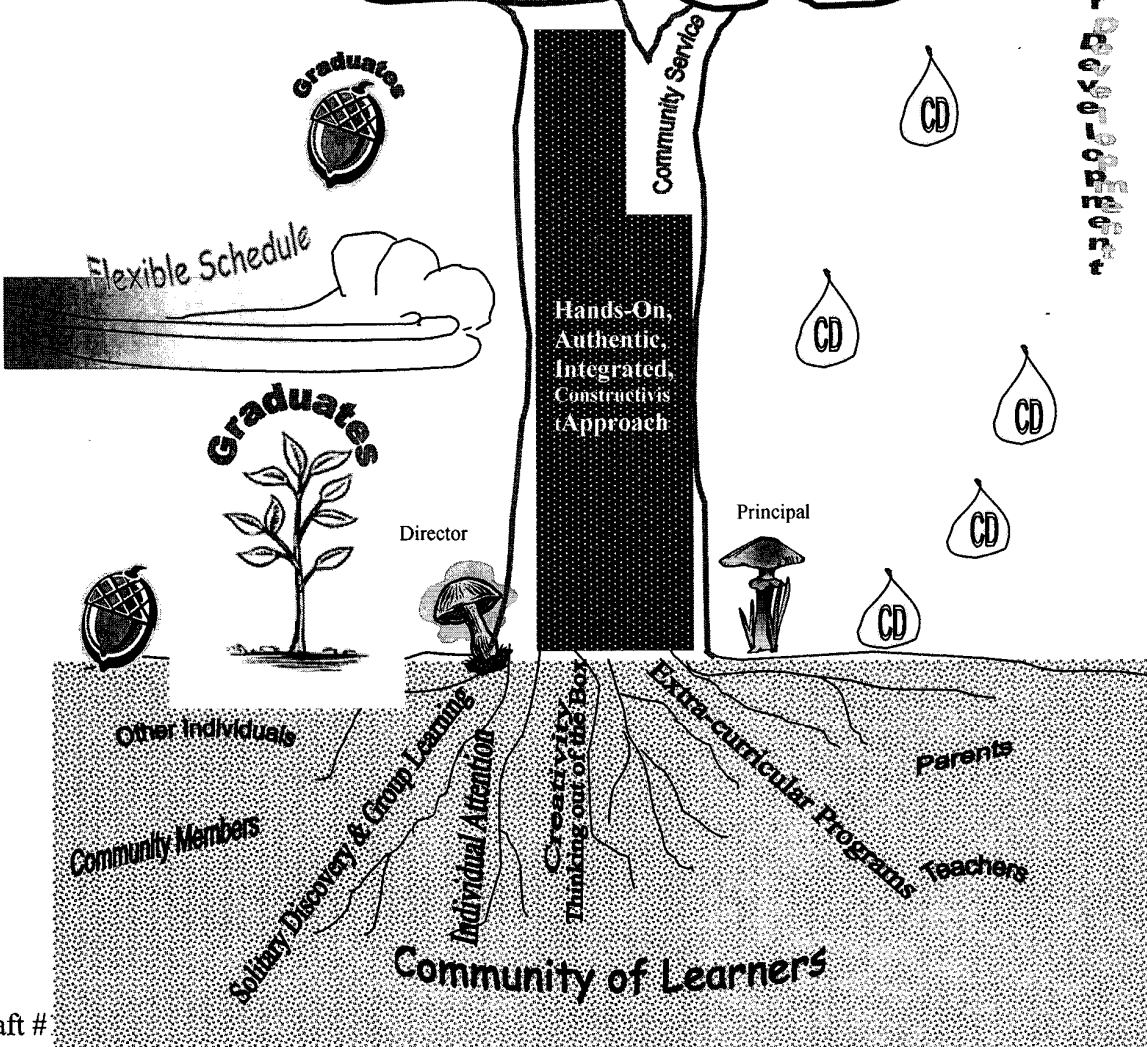
APPENDIX

PCCS Curriculum Development

Sense of Wonder



Community of Learners



Draft #

The purpose of this survey is to determine the types of assessment that the PCCS faculty is currently using in the classroom and the ways in which assessment is informing teaching and learning. Please indicate on the scale below how often you implement the following assessment methods.

	<u>Never</u>				<u>Very Often</u>
Teacher-made tests	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	<input type="checkbox"/> _2	<input type="checkbox"/> _3	<input type="checkbox"/> _4	<input type="checkbox"/> _5
Standardized tests	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	<input type="checkbox"/> _2	<input type="checkbox"/> _3	<input type="checkbox"/> _4	<input type="checkbox"/> _5
Oral examinations/interviews	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	<input type="checkbox"/> _2	<input type="checkbox"/> _3	<input type="checkbox"/> _4	<input type="checkbox"/> _5
Observation checklists	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	<input type="checkbox"/> _2	<input type="checkbox"/> _3	<input type="checkbox"/> _4	<input type="checkbox"/> _5
Portfolio assessments	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	<input type="checkbox"/> _2	<input type="checkbox"/> _3	<input type="checkbox"/> _4	<input type="checkbox"/> _5
Records of teacher observations or anecdotes	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	<input type="checkbox"/> _2	<input type="checkbox"/> _3	<input type="checkbox"/> _4	<input type="checkbox"/> _5
Student self-assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	<input type="checkbox"/> _2	<input type="checkbox"/> _3	<input type="checkbox"/> _4	<input type="checkbox"/> _5
Peer-assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	<input type="checkbox"/> _2	<input type="checkbox"/> _3	<input type="checkbox"/> _4	<input type="checkbox"/> _5
Videotape assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	<input type="checkbox"/> _2	<input type="checkbox"/> _3	<input type="checkbox"/> _4	<input type="checkbox"/> _5
Performance assessments	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	<input type="checkbox"/> _2	<input type="checkbox"/> _3	<input type="checkbox"/> _4	<input type="checkbox"/> _5
Rubrics	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	<input type="checkbox"/> _2	<input type="checkbox"/> _3	<input type="checkbox"/> _4	<input type="checkbox"/> _5
Pre-test/post-test	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	<input type="checkbox"/> _2	<input type="checkbox"/> _3	<input type="checkbox"/> _4	<input type="checkbox"/> _5
Assessments provided w/published curriculum	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	<input type="checkbox"/> _2	<input type="checkbox"/> _3	<input type="checkbox"/> _4	<input type="checkbox"/> _5

1. Are there particular assessment practices that you are uncomfortable using in your classroom?
If so, why are you uncomfortable using the assessments?

2. Are there particular assessment practices that you find yourself using most frequently? If so, what is that form of assessment, and why do you use it regularly?

3. Are your students' parents aware of the assessments that constitute your end of semester grades? How do you communicate this to parents?

4. Do you customize assessments based on students' individual differences? If so, how do you do so?

5. How do you use assessment results to inform your pedagogy?

6. How do your assessment practices align with constructivist teaching and learning?

7. Are there any assessment practices that you would like to know more about? If so, which practices?

Prairie Crossing Charter School is a child-centered community of learners. PCCS recognizes that each student brings unique talents, experiences, and interests to the classroom, and our community of teachers, parents, and students understands that, at times, students' academic experiences and performance may be influenced by factors outside the school. In order to effectively recognize and address parents' and students' concerns about changes in school performance, PCCS asks that parents be attentive to changes in their children's attitudes toward and performance in school. The PCCS faculty and staff intend to work closely with parents, and in order to effectively meet students' needs, we provide a short list of checkpoints and steps for parents to take in working with the PCCS faculty in meeting their children's short-term needs.

Wondering about your child's school performance?

First, ask yourself the following questions about your child:

1. Has my child demonstrated a sudden decline in performance (for example, low grades, low test scores) in one or more academic areas?
1. Does my child regularly come home and say that he/she does not understand the content being taught?
2. Does my child frequently express a negative attitude toward schoolwork?
3. Does my child's performance appear to be significantly below grade level expectations?
4. Does my child have difficulty paying attention and completing schoolwork?

Steps for parents with concerns about their child's performance

1. First, contact your child's teacher in person, by phone, in writing, or by email and share your concerns.
2. Anticipate the following questions from your child's teacher:
 - What problems have you observed in your child, and how long have they persisted?
 - Have you talked to your child about these problems?
 - Do you have any idea about why these problems may be occurring?
 - What steps have you taken to address these problems?
 - Has anything happened outside of school (e.g., health, family issues) that might contribute to these problems? If so, what was the nature of this issue?

Financial Forecast (5-year)

Please contact the PCCS office to formally request this document

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2003-2004**

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