

## 2014-15 CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT: COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL

PART 1: SCHOOL INFORMATION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
Name of Charter School:	Year School Opened:
Common Ground High School	1997
Street Address:	City/Zip Code:
358 Springside Avenue	New Haven, CT 06515
School Director:	School Director Contact Information:
Lizanne Cox	lcox@commongroundct.org /203-389-4333
Grades Authorized to Serve in 2014-15:	Charter Term:
9-12	2015-2020
<p><b>1. Executive Summary:</b> Provide a cover letter or executive summary highlighting school progress, performance, accomplishments, and major changes during the 2014-15 school year. Include a brief narrative on the school’s unique model and student population.</p>	
<p>Dear Commissioner Roberge-Wentzell:</p> <p>On an evening in mid-March, nearly four dozen students, parents, teachers, and community members came to the podium at Wilbur Cross High School – taking part in the public hearing on the renewal of Common Ground’s charter. Every single speaker raised her or his voice on behalf of Common Ground, asking the state Department of Education to support our small, community-based public charter school. What these members of the New Haven community shared brings to life much of what makes Common Ground important, and what defined our small school in the 2014-15 school year.</p> <p><b>A diverse, inclusive community.</b> At the hearing, a parent described what Common Ground means to his child: <i>“Common Ground changed our daughter’s life. Her elementary school experiences ... were very difficult. She was severely, constantly bullied because of her petite size and subjected to persistent racial discrimination by teachers and students because Sam is bi-racial ... it wasn’t until Samantha came to Common Ground in the 9th grade that our daughter began to discover herself and the world around her ... Samantha now relishes learning. She is no longer bullied because she lives in a community that teaches respect. She has made many friends and, importantly, has not experienced any racial discrimination. For Samantha, learning has replaced fear.”</i></p> <p>One of Common Ground’s defining characteristics is the diversity of our small student body. In 2014-15, these students arrived from 14 different towns, and from every one of New Haven’s neighborhoods – the city that 65% of our students call home. Nearly three quarters are students of color, more than half of students qualify for free or reduced priced lunch, and 17% qualify for special education supports.</p> <p><b>A school that supports and challenges all students to meet high standards.</b> Far more important than this numerical diversity is our work to build an inclusive, responsive, challenging learning environment that enables every member of our student body to grow and thrive. In 2014-15 – and with renewed intensity in the 2015-16 school year – we take steps toward this goal: from partnering with the New Haven Housing Authority to provide additional support for students living in public housing, to enlisting teaching assistants as important contributors to many of our classes, to engaging our staff and students in challenging conversations about equity.</p> <p>At our renewal hearing, Aridyan Perez – Common Ground ‘15, now at the University of Hartford – described the mix of challenging, authentic experiences and individual support that we aim to provide every student: <i>“I’ve taken some unique classes at Common Ground. Ecologia is a Spanish and Science block class in which you learn science – but you also learn how to say the scientific terms in Spanish. British Literature is a class where you</i></p>	

*learn about Shakespeare and in the second semester, you practice to perform one of Shakespeare's plays. In Green Architecture, you learn about how to live, eat and build sustainably. Environmental Justice is a class where you learn about issues in the environment and then there's a big project at the end of the class where you go out into the community and make a difference...*

*"These teachers do not want to see students fail. There are many opportunities for help at Common Ground like school wide support, office hours and after school labs. I'm a student who needs help from my teachers, and at Common Ground it is easy to access the help I need--all I have to do is ask and set up a time."*

**An incubator for a new, diverse generation of environmental leaders and successful college students.** The mix that Aridyan describes – combining high academic expectations, opportunities for authentic environmental learning, and individualized support – helped Common Ground's students made significant academic strides in 2014-15. This integration of relationships, rigor, and relevance also prepare students for life after graduation. Charlie Dow, class of 2014, spoke about how college prep courses and environmental internships at Common Ground had set the stage for college success and community leadership:

*"I am ... now pursuing a bachelors in chemical engineering from the University of New Haven. Towards the end of my time at Common Ground all seniors were tasked with essentially proving why we should graduate and what we learned through our e-portfolio defenses. As part of this we had to define leadership in our own words and based on our experiences ...*

*"Common Ground provided me the opportunity to indulge in chemistry and engineering related experiences. I helped the chemistry teacher Mr. Horbachuk create compounds that were used to make smoke effects for a play done by the Drama class. It also allowed me to be a teacher's aide in the chemistry class. Common Ground also allowed me to co-create Common Ground's robotics club which is still an after school opportunity for students. I walked into my college experience with several classes that needed to be completed, already completed. With Leaders in Environmental Action for the Future, I worked in Maine with one of my classmates and two other peers surveying a variety of culverts among the Aroostook watershed. With Amistad America I travelled to the Dominican Republic to interview founders of a school and collect water samples."*

In Charlie's graduating class, more than 95% of students were accepted to college, and more than 86% enrolled in the year following graduation – an increase from 75% in the previous graduating class. Every graduate also passed the bar that Charlie describes: defending a portfolio showing their growth as a 21<sup>st</sup> century leader.

**A critical community organization and strong partner for local schools.** Dozens of community members and public school partners showed up to support our renewal, as well. The magnet school coach from a New Haven public school provided testimony about how Common Ground and her school have worked together for nearly a decade. New Haven Superintendent Garth Harries, two public school principals, and more than a dozen community organizations all submitted testimony. Mayor Toni Harp explained why she values Common Ground:

*"Common Ground is a critical community resource. As Mayor of New Haven, I know the enormous difference that Common Ground makes in the lives of children, young people, and adults. It is an anchor in our community, and a model for our state."*

**A laboratory for innovative educational practices.** Jack Gillette, the Dean of Lesley College's School of Education and the past director of Yale's teacher preparation program, built on Mayor Harp's testimony – explaining why he sees Common Ground as a model for other public schools:

*"Common Ground has been an innovator in a number of areas: it has provided a high-quality college bound program that integrates experiential learning in significant ways; it has develop a whole generation of environmental leaders in communities of color; it has created an oasis of safety in a New Haven community that continues to struggle with issues of youth violence; it has become a provider of fresh and healthy food for the most isolated projects in the city; it has provided its students with broad opportunities for social and leadership development through its connections with the community ecology projects on their site; it has created a welcome*

*space for all of the community around it – transforming it from a rundown dead end where trash was routinely dumped, to a state of the art campus that develops deep connections between citizens and the earth.”*

Let us be clear: The charter renewal process foregrounded much of what makes Common Ground a unique and effective learning environment – and It also made abundantly clear that we have a great deal of work ahead. We need to do more to remove the barriers to success for our persistently absent students; though we made some progress in this direction in 2014-15 – reducing chronic absenteeism from 16.6 to 15.3% -- we know we can and must do more. We are serious about the efforts, described above, to build the cultural relevance of our teaching and learning and eliminate internal achievement gaps. We are ready to step up to the new, higher standard of fiscal and governance accountability set by the State Legislature and the State Department of Education. We are genuinely excited about the new, multi-measure system of measuring school performance by which Common Ground will be judged moving forward.

Common Ground is poised and eager for growth in another sense, as well. In 2014-15, we broke ground on the new school building that will allow us to welcome more students, and give these students the learning environment they deserve. Thanks to support from the State Department of Education, the Connecticut General Assembly, and more than 300 individuals and institutions, Common Ground’s students will move into this new building this Spring. We hope that you and your colleagues at the State Department of Education will come celebrate this growth with us, and continue to push us to meet our obligation to our students and community.

Sincerely,

Lizanne Cox  
School Director

Frank Mitchell  
Board Chair

**PART 2: SCHOOL PERFORMANCE**

**2. School Goals:** State the school’s mission statement. Provide the school’s mission-specific, measurable goals. Analyze school progress toward these goals, providing data as appropriate.

Mission Statement:

Common Ground High School will graduate students with the knowledge, skills, and understanding to live healthy, powerful, and productive lives. We do so through authentic learning that develops academic excellence, ecological literacy, strong character, and commitment to community.

Common Ground High School takes the urban environment as its organizing focus. Common Ground uses three sites as laboratories for learning: the urban farm that is the school’s campus, the natural environment of the adjacent West Rock Ridge State Park, and the urban setting of New Haven, Connecticut. Close study of these places develops understanding of local and global issues. Through this study and core academic work, students experience a rigorous high school curriculum that prepares them for competitive colleges, meaningful careers, and purposeful lives.

Common Ground High School is a program of the New Haven Ecology Project, a non-profit center for environmental learning and leadership, whose mission is to cultivate habits of healthy living and sustainable environmental practices within a diverse community of children, young people, adults, and families.

Goal Statement:	Evidence of Progress toward Goal:
All students will make significant educational gains, meet high standards, and graduate college ready.	Common Ground’s central aim is to ensure that all students grow into powerful learners, meet high academic standards, and graduate ready for college success. In 2014-15, Common Ground staff continued our 4-year effort to strengthen our curriculum’s alignment with Common Core, provided individualized support to help students matriculate in college, and rebuilt our academic intervention program to provide additional supports to all students during the school day. We saw measurable progress as a result of these and other strategies:

	<p><b>Reading levels.</b> The average Common Ground student gained 1.79 grade levels in reading over the 2014-15 school year, according to results from the Nelson-Denny reading assessment. While 46% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders entered 2 or more grade levels below in reading, only 18% were 2 or more grade levels behind by the end of the school year. School-wide, the percentage of students scoring more than a full year and more than two full years behind grade level in reading dropped by more than 10 points from start of year to end of year. This progress builds on reading gains between September 2013 and September 2014, when the average student gained 1.84 grade levels.</p> <p><b>Graduation rates.</b> In 2014 – the most recent year for which data are available – 89.7% of students graduated in four years. African American students (100%), Hispanic students (92.3%), and students who qualify for special education supports (100%) all graduated at higher rates than the school average. Students who qualified for free/reduced lunch graduated at a lower rate (86.4%), but still surpassed the state average for all students.</p> <p><b>College acceptance, matriculation, and persistence.</b> For Common Ground, college success is one of the most important indicators of academic achievement. In the class of 2015, 92% of students were accepted to college. African American (93%) and Latino (93%) students were admitted to college at rates slightly higher than their white (89%) counterparts. These graduates are now studying at the Earlham College, Evergreen College, Gateway Community College, Green Mountain College, Housatonic Community College, Marymount Manhattan College, Southern Connecticut State University, Sterling College, University of Connecticut, University of Hartford, University of Maine, and University of New Hampshire.</p> <p>In the class of 2014 – the most recent year for which we have full-year college matriculation data – 96% of students were accepted to college, and 86% of all graduates enrolled in college in the year following graduation. This represents a significant increase from the class of 2013, when 75% of students matriculated in the year following graduation. In the class of 2013, 82% of graduates who enrolled in the year following graduation persisted into the second year of college.</p> <p>Below, we share data from standardized tests and school-wide benchmark assessments that provide additional evidence of students’ academic growth and standard mastery. These test results, and the indicators described above, inform our priorities for 2015-16 – described in the section on academic achievement, below.</p>
<p>All Common Ground students will grow into powerful environmental leaders, and develop the skills and understanding they need to tackle complex environmental challenges.</p>	<p>Just as we believe that every Common Ground student can meet high academic standards and succeed in college, we also believe that every one of our students can grow to become a powerful environmental and community leader.</p> <p><b>Increasing access to environmental learning and leadership opportunities.</b> To support students’ leadership growth, Common Ground continued to build leadership opportunities into academic courses and after-school programs in 2014-15. Last year, at least 88% of Common Ground courses integrated substantive performance tasks, projects, or lessons focused on Common Ground’s site or the surrounding community, aligned with Common Ground’s school-wide environmental leadership standards. For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students in the team taught Biodiversity class analyzed the impact of urban habitat restoration efforts on insect biodiversity (an important predictor of bird biodiversity), and shared their findings through presentations and papers with staff of the U.S. Fish &amp; Wildlife Service and Audubon Connecticut.</li> </ul>

- Students in LEAP – Common Ground’s accelerated math course for students who enter high school not yet ready for Algebra – calculated the true cost of the eggs laid by Common Ground’s chickens, and presented their findings to Common Ground’s farm staff.

**Choosing environmental learning & leadership.** Beyond their classes, at least 70% of students chose to engage in environmental learning and leadership. For instance:

- 59 students took on paid environmental work through our Green Jobs Corps
- 54 students shared substantial learning and leadership experiences through Common Ground’s Presentations of Learning, which take place twice per year.
- 22 seniors chose to focus their capstone projects on community issues related to the environment – for instance, using community greenspaces and street trees to address neighborhood violence, addressing disproportionate access to the natural world among city residents, and raising awareness about sustainable food choices.
- 13 students helped to operate small business ventures based on products of Common Ground’s urban farm.
- 6 students completed summer internships with The Nature Conservancy on conservancy land across the country.

In 2014-15, we worked to expand our definition of environmental leadership to include the social environment – and, in particular, community-based social justice issues that are relevant to our racially and economically diverse student body. More than two dozen students participated in the Millions March and Climate March in New York, and engaged in deliberative reflection on the impact of these events, for instance. Students helped to lead a workshop on food justice and racial equality at the Connecticut conference of the Northeast Organic Farmer’s Association, and shared their work on racial justice issues at city-wide poetry slams and a New Haven’s Earth Day Youth Summit, as well.

**Leadership growth and competence.** These leadership and learning opportunities come together in electronic portfolios, which challenge students to demonstrate their growth as environmental leaders and prove their competence in 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. For the second consecutive year, 100% of Common Ground seniors successfully defended their portfolios before an audience of teachers, peers, and families. For the first time, sophomores completed a portfolio audit, as well, scaffolding their progress toward this Common Ground graduation requirement. To support deep and polished reflections, seniors were coached by a portfolio reviewer as they revised their online portfolios. Students’ final portfolios included artifacts from and reflections on a range of leadership experiences: from research on the relationship between neighborhood income and water quality in New Haven’s rivers, to successful completion of dual enrollment courses at local colleges, to the creation of educational gardens at local schools and home daycare providers.

**Leadership self-perception and confidence.** School-wide survey data provide additional information on whether students see themselves as leaders and believe they are competent to take on leadership. In 2014-15, 85% of students agreed that they preferred to be a leader than a follower, though only 61% of students say they are usually a leader in groups and 69% agree that they can usually organize people to get things done.

In 2015-16, Common Ground is working to support all students’ growth as leaders, continue to expand opportunities for learning and leadership related to the City of New



	<p>Haven and social justice issues, build shared ownership of the portfolio process, and strengthen opportunities for reflection. Concretely, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit our curriculum to ensure that all courses (1) include substantive opportunities for student leadership and leadership growth, (2) mobilize our site and city as learning laboratories, (3) engage students in relevant, real-world challenges, and (4) build mastery of academic standards.</li> <li>• Focus the work of our new curriculum consultant and environmental leadership coordinator based on the results of this audit.</li> <li>• Identify a of transferrable leadership skills that students can grasp and adults can use to organize their work, and roll these out across our courses and programs: as a step toward mastery-based grading, as a tool for student-led family-teacher conferences, as a core part of students’ portfolios, etc.</li> <li>• Continue to strengthen the e-portfolio process and template – for instance, by challenging students to look at growth in a specific leadership domain across a set of experiences, rather than simply identifying how an individual experience demonstrates their leadership capacity.</li> </ul>
<p>Common Ground will build an inclusive, equitable, positive school climate that supports all students’ success and leadership.</p>	<p>If academic success and leadership growth for <u>all</u> students are our primary goals, then building a school culture that engages and welcomes all students, and that creates opportunities to reduce racial and economic isolation, is a critical step toward this goal. In 2014-15, Common Ground focused concerted effort on school culture and climate. We continued a multi-year move toward a restorative justice approach to discipline, with the goal of keeping students in school and repairing the school community after it has been damaged. Within this context, we disaggregated discipline data, replaced detentions with opportunities for reflection and reparation, and provided all-staff training on restorative approaches. At the same time, we significantly strengthened our systems for responding to attendance gaps and declines in academic performance – tracking these data much more closely, and responding much more quickly and strategically. We also entered into a multi-year partnership with Co-Creating Effective and Inclusive Organizations (CEIO) – aiming to build a more equitable and inclusive organizational culture, ensure that our policies reflect this commitment to diversity and equity, and strengthen our staff’s capacity to engage racially and economically diverse students and families.</p> <p>In 2014-15, several indicators point to progress in building an inclusive, positive culture:</p> <p><b>Increased racial, geographic, and economic integration.</b> Bringing together a diverse student body is an important part of Common Ground’s mission, but doing so does not guarantee that the school is an inclusive environment. In 2014-15, we employed a range of strategies to ensure that 100% of our students are involved in meaningful interactions with students and adults from backgrounds different that their own. As a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of students are involved in school-wide activities that promote integration, belonging, and student voice – including deliberative town hall meetings, mix-it-up activities co-facilitated by students and staff, student-led orientation activities, class expeditions, Day of Silence, and our annual all-school hike, for instance.</li> <li>• Only 5% of students disagree (4%) or strongly disagree (1%) with the statement, “The school is safe and accepting regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation or ability” – a number we would like to see shrink more in the coming year.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Community service.</b> More than 91% of students completed 10 or more hours of community service, and the average Common Ground student completed 32.65 hours of service during the 2014-15 school year.</p> <p><b>Student leadership.</b> Above and beyond school-wide opportunities for student voice and leadership like Common Ground’s Town Hall Meetings, last year at least 78% of students chose to participate in a substantive leadership or leadership development activity outside their classes. This number includes the environmental leadership opportunities described earlier in this report, as well as other activities designed to increase student voice and develop leadership skills. For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 students took on sustained, active mentoring roles for younger students through Common Ground’s peer mentoring program.</li> <li>• 6 students sustained Common Ground’s technology systems through Geek Squad.</li> <li>• 12 students were leaders in our Gender and Sexuality Awareness (GSA) program.</li> </ul> <p><b>After-school engagement.</b> 98% of Common Ground students participated in learning opportunities offered through Common Ground’s out-of-school learning center, supported by 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Community and State After-School Grant Program funding. In addition, 62% of students participated in these programs on 30 or more days – the equivalent of 1 day per week when programs are offered.</p> <p><b>Reductions in serious disciplinary issues.</b> The number of suspensions decreased from 25 in 2013-14 to 19 in 2014-15, and the number of expulsions remained at zero. We are committed to continuing this downward trend in 2015-16, as we implement the restorative justice approaches outlined elsewhere in this report.</p> <p>In 2015-16, we are continuing and redoubling the efforts we began in the last year. For the first time, we have made building an inclusive, equitable, positive school culture one of the organizing goals of our school improvement plan. Within this context, we are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launching a more comprehensive approach to peer mediation and peer mentoring, engaging Community Mediation, Inc. as a partner in this work.</li> <li>• Engaging CEIO to promote staff understanding of the root causes of systemic racism, and to develop staff’s capacity to create culturally relevant and classrooms.</li> <li>• Focus monthly staff meetings on (1) building our capacity for restorative justice and student support, and (2) engaging staff in exploration of the City of New Haven, the city from which most of our students come.</li> <li>• Create the conditions to support full participation in this spring’s climate survey, and use parent and student data to guide the next phase of climate work.</li> </ul>
<p>Common Ground’s staff will model effective teaching practices, continuously grow as educators, and support educational change and</p>	<p>Common Ground – like many charter schools – was envisioned as a laboratory school, helping our own teachers to improve their practice while offering support to other schools and educators, as well. In 2014-15, Common Ground continued to grow into this vision.</p> <p>Last year, 100% of Common Ground teachers and administrator developed professional development plans aligned with Common Ground’s mission and goals, and with the State teacher evaluation framework. One hundred percent of Common Ground’s full-time teachers completed at least 20 hours of professional development aligned with these professional growth plans, as well; the average Common Ground teacher joined in 43.7</p>

<p>improvement at other schools across and beyond Connecticut.</p>	<p>hours of professional development. All teachers participated in on-site, ongoing, embedded professional development focused on (1) strengthening literacy integration and problem-solving across the curriculum, and (2) embedding active, authentic learning and leadership opportunities in every course. In addition, faculty participated in professional development aligned with their individual professional goals.</p> <p>Beyond our own faculty, Common Ground hosted immersive, site-based professional development experiences for more than 150 educators from across New England, and provided multi-faceted support to more than a dozen New Haven public schools working to integrate school gardens and schoolyard habitats into their curricular. We also organized and secured resources for the first state-wide conference on farm-to-school and school gardening efforts, partnered with Library of American in the development of a new teacher’s guide on using powerful environmental texts to develop Common Core literacy, and authored a book chapter on using urban agriculture as a context for STEM learning.</p> <p>In 2015-16, Common Ground is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focusing professional development, as noted above, on (1) building an inclusive, responsive school and helping all students achieve equitable outcomes, and (2) implementing restorative discipline approaches, Universal Design for Learning, and more effective approaches to student support across the building.</li> <li>• Dedicating one faculty meeting per month to exploring Common Ground’s site and the City of New Haven – focused on building (1) relationships between Common Ground staff and community partners, (2) understanding of the city from which most of our students arrive, and (3) competence in using our site as a learning laboratory.</li> <li>• Hosting a series of four day-long Learning Exchanges, bringing together educators from urban public high schools across Connecticut and the region to share emerging best practices and tackle common challenges.</li> <li>• Continuing to grow the work of our School Garden Resource Center to include a total of at least 16 New Haven public schools, all working to mobilize outdoor classrooms, schoolyard habitats, and edible gardens as learning resources.</li> </ul>
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**3. Student Achievement:** Provide data summarizing school performance and academic achievement. Using the blank space provided, include data evidencing student growth and progress toward closing achievement gaps, including an analysis of normed benchmark assessment data.

Performance Metric:	*2011-12:	*2012-13:	*2013-14:	2014-15:
Average daily attendance rate: See June 2015 PSI Report for data	94.6	94.0	94.4	93.5
Chronic absenteeism rate: See June 2015 PSIS Report for data	12.8	14.5	16.6	15.3
Number of in-school suspensions:	17	4	13	10
Number of out-of-school suspensions:	3	1	12	9
Number of expulsions:	2	1	0	0
Percent of students with 1+ suspension/expulsion:	11.5	3.6	8.9	4
Cohort graduation rate (if applicable):	90.3	89.5	89.7	N/A
Holding power rate (if applicable):	93.5	94.7	89.7	N/A



Overall School Performance Index (SPI):	65.3	73.8	62.3	N/A
Overall host District Performance Index (DPI):	52.1	53.3	49.9	N/A

As shared earlier in this report, the academic growth and achievement of all students is Common Ground’s first and most critical goal. The evidence described above – including significant gains in reading levels, graduation rates significantly above the state average for all of our subgroups, high and increasing college matriculation and persistence rates – are among the most important indicators of our students’ progress. This evidence also aligns with the State’s new multi-measure accountability system, which Common Ground wholeheartedly supports.

The 2014-15 administration of the SBAC and CAPT test provides another indicator of our students’ progress:

- Common Ground students performed just above the state average in math, and slightly below the state average in English/Language Arts. Statewide, 30.6% of 11th graders met or exceeded the bar set by the math test; at Common Ground, 31.3% did so. State-wide, 53.4% of students met or exceeded the achievement level in ELA; at Common Ground, 46.9% did so.
- Common Ground also analyzed at average school performance across the magnet, charter, and district public high schools serving students in Connecticut’s largest cities — Hartford, Bridgeport, New Haven, and Stamford. Common Ground students did well compared to their peers at these schools. At the average school serving these cities, 20.7% of students met or exceeded standards in math, and 36.3% of students met or exceeded standards in English/Language Arts. This not a perfect comparison, but it does provide a sense of where we stand — and also helps identify schools from which we can learn.
- 61% of Common Ground students earned proficient scores on the state-wide CAPT science test in 2015, down from 72.5% in 2014. Since 2007, the percentage of our students earning proficient and goal scores on the Science CAPT, and on each of the other sections of the CAPT test, has more than doubled.

Whatever our students’ past gains, and however they compare to the state average and scores of schools serving similar students, we are not satisfied with these results. Common Ground appreciates the higher bar set by SBAC and Common Core, and will support all our students in meeting this standard. We are particularly eager to understand how students of color, low-income students, and students qualifying for special education supports are performing on these measures. Because of our small school size, the state has not shared data on performance by these subgroups, but we hope that they will be available for at least internal use soon.

For several years, Common Ground has also administered a set of internally developed benchmark assessments, measuring students’ mastery and growth of Common Core English/Language Arts and Math standards. These assessments provide some additional evidence of whole school, grade level, and subgroup performance. For instance, in Algebra 2 – a critical college readiness course – between 83 and 88% of students earned scores demonstrating mastery on each of the major unit assessments. Between our first and second English/Language Arts assessments, the goal-level gap between our students of color and white students decreased significantly.

However, as we indicated in our 2013-14 annual report, we have serious concerns about the validity and reliability of these internal benchmarks. The results do not track with the most recent SBAC results, nor do they seem to accurately track change in students’ mastery of standards over time. While we value being able to develop ELA benchmark assessments that are focused on topics and texts that reflect our environmental mission, and will continue to administer these assessments twice a year, we have moved to an externally validated system of benchmark assessments that – starting this year – will provide much more helpful, reliable, and easily disaggregated data. This year, we are:

- Implementing MAP assessments as our new school-wide benchmarks in reading and math – providing significantly more accurate, timely information on individual student and school-wide progress.
- Utilizing assessment data from MAP, Nelson-Denny, math unit tests, and school-wide writing

assessments to identify students requiring intervention and connect these students with supports.

- Moving toward the SAT as our new capstone assessment, and evaluate our curriculum’s alignment with SAT – recognizing this tests’ strengthened alignment with Common Core, its new place in state accountability, and its important role in college admissions.
- Engaging Common Ground’s diversity committee and a newly hired curriculum consultant to audit and increase the cultural relevance of Common Ground’s curriculum, and provide targeted professional development to faculty that builds their capacity for culturally relevant teaching.

4. **Best Practice:** In 250 words or less, summarize an emerging best practice at your school in the areas of academics, instruction, or school climate. Describe the concrete strategy and its impact on student learning and/or the school climate referencing quantitative data. Provide evidence of collaboration with local school districts in this area, as appropriate.

From the beginning, Common Ground has mobilized our place – an urban farm, on the edge of a state park, within the City of New Haven – as our laboratory for learning. Initially, this place-based approach was primarily grounded in team-taught, interdisciplinary block classes. For instance, students in Environmental Justice (co-taught by Science and Social Studies teachers) conducted research on the disproportionate effects of pollution on low income communities of color, and analyzed the policies and political actions that could reverse this discrimination. Increasingly, our teachers have embedded site-based learning experiences in traditional academic courses, as well. For instance:

- Students in Algebra 2 monitor pH of water and soil on Common Ground’s site, building their knowledge of logarithmic scales, while also practicing data analysis, visualization, and presentation.
- In French and Spanish courses, our urban farm is a primary learning lab; students practice leadership and conversational language while planting, harvesting, and cooking in small teams.

Common Ground is ready to work with other urban public high schools who share our commitment to mobilizing the urban environment as our learning laboratory. This year, Common Ground is hosting a series of learning exchanges, focused on building a community of practice among these like-minded schools. Learning exchanges will focus on teaching our cities (using the urban environment as a learning lab), authentic assessment (moving toward mastery-based grading), city math (building culturally relevant math instruction by using math to tackle urban problems), and developing school-wide strategies to promote student leadership.

**PART 3: STEWARDSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND MANAGEMENT**

5. **Financial Documents:** (1) As required by C.G.S. § 10-66cc(b)(2), submit FY 2014 certified audit statements, including the statement of activities (showing all revenues from public and private sources, expenditures, and net operating gain/loss), balance sheet, and statement of cash flows. (2) Provide the FY 2015 budget comparing submitted budget versus actual figures, with summary explanations of all major variances. (3) Provide a FY 2016 board-approved budget, summarizing all assumptions and major variances from FY 2015.

6. **Financial Condition:** Provide the following financial data for FY 2015.

Total margin (net income / total revenue):	<b>0.048</b>
Debt to asset ratio (total liabilities / total assets):	<b>0.19</b>
Debt service coverage ratio (net income + depreciation + interest expense) / (principal + interest payments):	<b>N/A –Common Ground carries essentially no debt</b>
Current asset ratio (current assets / current liabilities):	<b>1.13</b>
Days of unrestricted cash ((total expenditures - depreciation) / 365):	<b>92 days</b>
Cash flow (change in cash balance):	<b>+523,291</b>

**7. Governing Board:** Consistent with C.G.S. § 10-66bb(d)(3)(A), provide the following information for all governing board members.

Name:	Occupation:	Board Role/Term:	Mailing/Email:	Background Check:
Wm Frank Mitchell	Historian	Chair, 2014-17	924-6 Quinnipiac Ave New Haven, CT 06513 wfrankm@cshore.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Michael Doolittle	Photographer	Vice Chair, 2014-17	119 Everit St., #214 New Haven, CT 06511 mikedools@gmail.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Kim Futrell	City of New Haven	Treasurer, 2013-16	31 Saint James Street Hamden, CT 06514 kmiche72@gmail.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Claudia Merson	Yale Office of New Haven and State Affairs	School Committee Chair, 2014-17	18 Everit Street New Haven, CT 06511 claudia.merson@yale.edu	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Wendy Battles	Yale University/ Health Consultant	Member, 2014-17	148 Everit Street New Haven, CT 06511 wendy.battles@yale.edu	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Monique Frasier	Teacher	Faculty Representative , 2014-16	1220 Whitney Ave, 2B Hamden, CT 06517 <a href="mailto:mfrasier@commongroundct.org">mfrasier@commongroundct.org</a>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Benjamin Gardner	Pollen – Urban Gardening & Beekeeping	Member, 2013-16	37 Carmel Rd Bethany, CT 0652 benjaminjg@gmail.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
John Jessen	New Haven Free Public Library	Member, 2013-16	1931 Chapel Street New Haven, CT 06515 john.jessen@nhfpl.org	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Beth Klingher	Artist & Educator	Member, 2015-18	228 Everit Street New Haven, CT 06511 bklingher@gmail.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Jane Lee	Yale University Business Operations	Member, 2015-18	621 Chapel Street New Haven, CT 06511 jane.lee@yale.edu	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Robert Parker	Retired Principal & Communications Executive	Member, 2015-18	195 Livingston Street New Haven, CT 06511 rdbobparker@gmail.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Babz Rawls Ivy	Inner City News	Parent Representative , 2014-16	481 Bellevue Rd New Haven, CT 06511-1617 babz@penfieldcomm.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Melissa Spear	Common Ground	Executive Director (ex officio)	350 Amity Road Bethany, CT 06525 mspear@nhep.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

**8. Renewal Terms and Corrective Items:** Provide an update on terms and conditions established in the charter school’s most recent renewal; summarize actions taken and progress data to substantiate efforts to address such terms and conditions of renewal. Please note the chart below is pre-populated to include terms and conditions identified in the school’s last renewal resolution.

Standard/ Indicator:	Term or Condition:	Progress Update:
1.3 School Culture and Climate	Plan to target chronic absenteeism reduction. Plan due to CSDE on September 30, 2015.	<p>Even before the charter renewal process had identified chronic absenteeism as an area of improvement, Common Ground had recognized this as a problem and put an initial response plan into place. This work resulted in a measurable drop in chronic absenteeism from 2013-14 (16.6%) to 2014-15 (15.3%). This rate is still too high – and chronic absenteeism rates for Latino students (23%) and students qualifying for special education supports (22%) demand focused action. Recognizing that we can and must do more, we are taken the following steps in 2015-16:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilize our student support team to communicate absences and academic performance to staff and parents regularly, and to develop targeted plans to turn around attendance patterns of chronically absent students.</li> <li>• Implement specific Universal Design for Learning strategies schoolwide, and provide training and support to teachers to ensure they are implemented with fidelity.</li> <li>• Create a Latino/Hispanic support team to help connect Hispanic students to afterschool activities and programs, engage alumni as mentors, and identify other ways to improve attendance for this subgroup.</li> <li>• Identify &amp; break down barriers that prevent special education students from attending school daily.</li> </ul> <p>These strategies are described in greater detail in a separate plan, submitted concurrently with this annual report.</p>
2.2 Financial Management	Updates to policies and procedures for accounting functions and financial controls.	Common Ground’s Accounting Manual was revised per the recommendations of the SDE Renewal Review Team and revisions were approved by Board in April of 2015.
2.3 Governance and Management	Update board policies for background checks, nepotism and posting public meetings on the school’s Web site requirements.	Common Ground’s Bylaws and Employee Manual were updated per the recommendations of the SDE Review Team and revisions were approved by the Board in April of 2015. All board meetings are posted as required.
<p>9. <b>Best Practice:</b> In 250 words or less, summarize an emerging best practice at your school in the areas of stewardship, governance, and management (e.g., financial management, technology, school operations). Describe the concrete strategy and its impact on the school referencing quantitative data. Provide evidence</p>		

of collaboration with local school districts in this area, as appropriate.

Common Ground High School was founded in 1997 by the New Haven Ecology Project – a community-based environmental education non-profit, which since 1991 has cultivated habits of healthy living and sustainable environmental practice within a diverse community of children, young people, adults, and families. Today, this non-profit operates a community environmental center that engages more than 14,000 children and adults in educational opportunities, and an urban farm that shares grows more than 8,000 pounds of food for the New Haven community, as well as being the non-profit home for Common Ground High School. While it is ongoing, challenging work to integrate these three parts of Common Ground, we also see significant advantages of operating charter high schools within a community non-profit. For instance:

- Students and families at Common Ground High School have access to a different set of supports and opportunities because of the work of Common Ground’s non-profit. For instance, Common Ground’s Green Jobs Corps – a program of our community non-profit – engages our students in paid environmental jobs that build transferrable skills, contribute to family income, anchor students in school, apply our environmental curriculum, and make real contributions to the local community.
- As a community non-profit, Common Ground is staffed to partner with other public schools without taking Common Ground staff away from the core work of teaching. For more than 10 years, Common Ground’s environmental education center has offered school field trips and after-school programs that engage New Haven Public School students. Over time, these partnerships with New Haven schools have grown; today, we have multi-faceted partnerships with more than a dozen local public schools, providing a mix of professional development, support in creating outdoor classrooms, opportunities to network with like-minded teachers, on- and off-site after-school programs, and more.
- As a community organization, Common Ground has a long-standing, deep relationship with the New Haven community. We have partnerships with more than two dozen other community-based non-profits, and have a board of directors with deep roots in the local community. As a result, Common Ground is valued and respected by individuals who have concerns about other charter schools, and is able to respond to community needs much more effectively than if we did not have these connections.
- The staff of Common Ground’s non-profit and Common Ground High School provide complementary strengths. For instance, educators in our community environmental education programs and teachers at Common Ground high school bring different educational backgrounds and pedagogical approaches from which their peers can learn.

#### PART 4: STUDENT POPULATION

**10. Enrollment and Demographic Data:** Provide 2014-15 student demographic and enrollment information.

Grades Served:	9-12	Student Enrollment:	180
% Free/Reduced-Price Lunch:	53%	% Black:	32%
% Special Education:	17%	% Hispanic:	36%
% Limited English Proficiency:	1%	% Caucasian:	28%

2014-15 Enrollment by Grade Level:

PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	54	59	33	34	<b>180</b>

**11. Enrollment Efforts:** Summarize the school’s efforts to attract, enroll, and retain a diverse and representative student population, including minority students, low-income students, English learners, and students with disabilities.

Common Ground reaches out to students of all educational backgrounds to become our students, and is fully committed to educating and graduating every student who walks through our doors. We attract and enroll students who belong to special populations by:

- A comprehensive student recruiting plan that includes (1) mail to all students and families in surrounding districts, (2) visits to all schools who offer us the opportunity to meet with prospective students, (3) open houses and opportunities to shadow at Common Ground, (4) bilingual recruitment brochures, and (5) translators available for student interviews, shadows, and open houses. These opportunities actively engage all interested students, regardless of educational background.
- Close cooperation with special educators, guidance counselors, and middle school teachers from sending schools and districts in order to support the smooth transition of students with specific learning needs into the Common Ground community.
- An intake process – including informational interviews, mandatory family orientations, and benchmark testing – that welcomes students and provides the information we need to meet their needs.

The results of these efforts are measurable. Common Ground's student body reflects our commitment, laid out in our school charter, to overcome racial and geographic isolation:

- The percentage of minority (72%) and non-minority (28%) students reflects our goal of educating a racially diverse student body and reducing racial isolation. In 2014-15, Common Ground' student body was approximately 36% Hispanic, 32% African-American, and 28% white, with 53% of students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch – creating a variety of opportunities for interactions among students of different racial and economic backgrounds, a core goal of Common Ground.
- In 2014-15, 35% of Common Ground students came from suburban communities, and 65% from the City of New Haven. These numbers reflect Common Ground's commitment to reduce geographic isolation and engage students from both urban and non-urban communities.

As a small charter school, the percentage of students in identified special populations varies significantly from year to year. At the same time, Common Ground serves a significant number of students in these populations:

- **Special Education Status:** In 2014-15, the percentage of Common Ground students who qualify for special education services was 17%, significantly exceeding sending district and state averages.
- **Free and Reduced Lunch:** In 2014-15, the percentage of students qualifying for free/reduced lunch was approximately 53% – significantly above the state average.
- **History of Low Academic Performance:** In 2014-15, 46% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders entered two or more grade levels behind in reading, according to results of the Nelson-Denny assessment.

The number of Common Ground students who are classified as English Language Learners has been historically small; only 1% of students were officially designated ELL in 2014-15. Common Ground has, however, taken a number of steps to welcome families whose native language is not English: including translating recruiting materials into Spanish, and offering translation services at recruiting and family events. We are actively working to strengthen relationships with middle schools with large Hispanic and immigrant populations, as well.

We believe that all of our students can reach high academic standards and grow into powerful leaders. We use a variety of strategies to retain and support students who face barriers to academic success:

- Special education services are planned in close partnership with sending school districts; Common Ground's full time certified special educator works with aides, part-time staff, and district staff to ensure that students' educational needs are met.
- Common Ground's Student Support Team – including social workers, student affairs staff, and school



nurse – develop, implement, and monitor individual support plans for all students who face barriers to educational success, in order to promote their retention.

- Intensive academic intervention programs provide support to 100% of students during the school day, with additional opportunities for academic support after school.
- Small advisory group support students from grades 9-12.
- Green Jobs Corps, a year-long youth employment and leadership development program, connects more than 50 students with paid work placement opportunities, a year-long career and leadership curriculum, and a range of wraparound supports. Space in Green Jobs Corps are specifically reserved for students who face multiple barriers to educational success – including family income significantly below the poverty line, history of behavioral and social difficulties, low academic performance, etc.

These strategies make a measurable difference in the educational outcomes of Common Ground students:

- In 2014-15, Common Ground focused concerted attention on helping more students make progress toward on-time graduation. As a result, the percentage of students earning enough credit to advance to the next grade increased from 70% in 2013-14 to 88% in 2014-15. The percentage of freshmen earning enough credit to become sophomores increased from 79% to 93%.
- In 2014, Common Ground’s 4-year graduation rate (89.7%) was significantly above the state average.
- In the class of 2015, 92% of students were accepted to college. Analysis conducted for Newsweek’s “Beating the Odds” list placed Common Ground among the nations’ top 500 high schools for helping low-income students succeed in college, one of four Connecticut high schools to make this list.

We will continue to work, concertedly and tirelessly, to ensure that we recruit and retain high needs students – and that we help all students reach high academic standards, regardless of the barriers they face.

**12. Waitlist Data:** Provide waitlist totals below, illustrating demand and community support for the school.

2011-12 Waitlist:	2012-13 Waitlist:	2013-14 Waitlist:	2014-15 Waitlist:
69	109	83	171

**13. Best Practice:** In 250 words or less, summarize an emerging best practice at your school in the areas of student populations (e.g., family and community engagement, recruitment processes, retention strategies). Describe the concrete strategy and its impact on the school referencing quantitative data. Provide evidence of collaboration with local school districts in this area, as appropriate.

In response to concerns about a growing chronic absenteeism problem and in recognition of the importance of communication and a “village” response to that problem, Common Ground added a Student Support staff position in 2014-2015. The Student Support Liaison works to gather detailed information about attendance, academic performance, and social and emotional concerns for students who are at high risk of school failure due to chronic absenteeism. That information is shared, as appropriate, with teachers, counselors, external agencies and Common Ground’s Student Support Services Team (SSST), and a comprehensive student support plan is developed. The liaison also facilitates family visits both off and on-site.

Developing and fostering relationships with the many organizations in the local New Haven area that work to support families in need is one of the Student Support Liaison’s most important responsibilities. Last year, our Student Support Liaison worked closely with the New Haven Family Alliance, the Housing Authority of New Haven, Junior Republic, Child Youth and Family Support Center, Clifford Beers, Integrated Health & Wellness, Yale Child Studies Center. Last year these agencies provided food, shelter, health care, transportation, and counseling to our families in need.

Through the efforts of our Liaison, Common Ground’s chronic absenteeism rate decreased by 8% from 16.6% in 2013-14 to 15.3 % in 2014-15. This work is being continued and intensified in the 2015-2016 school year.

## APPENDIX B: STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

It is imperative that charter schools – as with all other public schools – adopt and uphold the highest ethical and legal standards while delivering excellent academic opportunities for students and their families.

As the authorized representative of Common Ground High School, to the best of my knowledge, I affirm that:

1. All board members and staff have satisfactorily completed background checks, including a state and national criminal records check and a record check of the Department of Children and Families Child Abuse and Neglect Registry.
2. If applicable, all charter school management organization (CMO) staff members have satisfactorily completed background checks, as described in (1).
3. All contractors, if the nature of the contractor's work entails close proximity to students in the judgment of the Governing Board, have satisfactorily completed background checks, as described in (1).
4. Records of any and all background checks are on file at Common Ground High School and available for random audit by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE).
5. Common Ground High School has adopted written anti-nepotism and conflict of interest policies, and that no member or employee of the Governing Board has a personal or financial interest in any asset, real or personal, of the charter school.
6. No board member of Common Ground High School serves on the board of another charter school or CMO.
7. All public funds received by Common Ground High School have been, or are being, expended prudently and in a manner required by law.
8. All Governing Board meetings are open and accessible to the public, and that Common Ground High School has posted, and continues to post, on any Internet website that the Governing Board operates, the schedule, agenda, and minutes of each Governing Board meeting, including any meeting of a subcommittee of the Governing Board.
9. Common Ground High School does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws.

By signing this Statement of Assurances on behalf of the Governing Board of Common Ground High School, I acknowledge that I understand the terms contained herein and affirm the validity of each statement to the best of my knowledge. I further understand that Common Ground High School may be subject to random audit by the CSDE to verify these statements.

**Signature:**



**Name of Board Chairperson:**

Wm Frank Mitchell

**Date:**

September 28, 2015

## 2016-17 PRELIMINARY ENROLLMENT REQUEST COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL

**Directions:** On an annual basis, charter schools must submit an enrollment request for the following school year. Consistent with C.G.S. § 10-66bb(c), the State Board of Education considers enrollment requests in the context of each school’s charter and record of student achievement.

C.G.S. § 10-66bb(c)(2) places an enrollment cap on the number of students that a state charter school may enroll. However, charter schools with a demonstrated record of achievement may seek a waiver. If the submitted 2016-17 enrollment request requires an enrollment waiver, please specify that below.

1. Complete the table below providing the school’s enrollment and growth history. Submit an enrollment request and growth projections for the upcoming school year.															
School Year:	Actual Enrollment:														
	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2012-13											58	44	35	32	169
2013-14											71	38	43	28	180
2014-15											54	59	33	34	180
2015-16											56	48	51	32	187
School Year:	2016-17 Enrollment Request:														
	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2016-17											55	51	43	46	195
2. Based on the request entered above, is the school seeking a waiver to the enrollment cap described in C.G.S. § 10-66bb(c)(2)?													<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		
3. Provide a rationale for the enrollment request, including a synopsis of all relevant assumptions.															
<p>Common Ground is ready to grow our student body from 185 to 225 students, incrementing by 10 students in 2016-17, 15 students in 2017-18, and 15 students in 2018-19. This relatively slow rate of increase mirrors previous periods of Common Ground’s growth, and gives us confidence that we can sustain positive school culture and build appropriate educational opportunities as we expand our reach.</p> <p>We undertake this expansion in large part because of the demand among prospective students and their families. For the 2013-14 school year, Common Ground received applications from 150 prospective students to fill 67 open seats. The number of applications for 2014-15 increased to 222, while the number of open seats decreased to 51. Common Ground’s staff and board are committed to respond to this unmet need for the educational opportunities and impact that we create.</p> <p>Just as importantly, expanding from 185 to 225 seats will also allow us to better meet the educational needs of our students. As we have grown our student body to from 150 to 185, we have been able to add a certified chemistry and physics teacher, expand from 0 to 6 advanced placement courses, and develop more intensive intervention programs for students who need them. Additional course offerings and certified staff allow us to better meet the individual needs of students, including those most struggling to reach high academic standards. At 225 students, we will be able to offer additional sections of courses like chemistry and physics, expand advanced English offerings, and develop a much more robust set of arts courses, for instance.</p> <p>Pro forma budget projections demonstrate an additional benefit of expansion. The current per pupil funding for</p>															

charter schools is not adequate to meet the educational needs of our students. At present, we must raise more than \$3,000, per student per year, to supplement state and federal funding – and even this level of fundraising activity leaves us at a per pupil funding rate significantly below the New Haven average. Our budget projections indicate that growing to 225 can help us realize additional economies of scale – operating more efficiently, and realizing some cost savings.

4. Summarize the school’s plans to successfully expand and accommodate the needs of the students served (e.g., programming, staffing, facilities, and class size).

Thanks to facilities funding from the State of Connecticut, and from more than 300 individuals, foundations, and businesses, Common Ground is well into construction on a new school building that will support this growth to 225 students. Preliminary earth work, the foundation, and the exterior of the building are all complete; we are on track to complete construction by this spring. This new building – including two outstanding science labs, a dedicated art classroom, and a half court gym – will allow us to enhance the educational opportunities we provide students. At present, Common Ground’s science classrooms do not include any prep space, and are shared with non-science classes, preventing our students from taking on the more sophisticated experiments involved in Advanced Placement or honors courses. Our largest gathering space – our school cafeteria – barely holds our entire student body for assemblies, and does not support the high-quality physical education and drama programs our teachers have created. At present, we can only offer one level of art course, and our students are demanding more. Additional facilities, possible at 225 students, will allow us to better meet our students’ educational needs.

We have already begun to expanding Common Ground’s course offerings, student supports, programs, and staff to engage a larger student body. The transition to 225 students creates the opportunity to re-build Common Ground’s curriculum – with the goal of strengthening vertical and horizontal alignment, increasing the diversity of course offerings, ensuring cultural relevance, building standards alignment, and integrating active authentic environmental learning across all courses. Faculty and school leadership began to plan for this transition during the 2013-14 school year. In 2014-15, renewal presented the opportunity to complete an initial round of curricular improvement and documentation work, and add additional teaching capacity in math and French. In 2015-16, Common Ground has increased staffing in art and special education, and brought on a curriculum consultant to support the next stage of curriculum development. We are excited and ready to continue this work.

## Common Ground High School: Budget vs. Actuals, FY 2014<sup>1</sup>

Revised 08/31/2015		CGHS Actuals thru 06/30/15	CGHS FY '14-'15 Budget
<b>INCOME</b>			
<b>Direct Contributions</b>			
	Individual Giving (incl Ann Appeal)	60,000	60,000
	Feast	15,611	14,563
	Rock to Rock	14,000	
	Common Table		
<b>Total Direct Contributions</b>		<b>89,611</b>	<b>74,563</b>
<b>Rev from Non-Gov Grants</b>			
	Business/Corporation/Sponsorships	42	-
	Private Foundation	534,756	355,000
<b>Total Rev from Non-Gov Grants</b>		<b>534,798</b>	<b>355,000</b>
<b>Federal Grants</b>			
	21c/WIA	84,930	45,357
	Child Nutrition Grants	6,500	7,000
	Title 1 Reg	69,464	62,000
	Title 2 PD	9,305	10,000
	Breakfast	10,047	9,000
	Lunch	32,616	35,000
	USAC	14,320	14,320
<b>Total Federal Grants</b>		<b>227,182</b>	<b>182,677</b>
<b>State Grants</b>			
	Enrollment Grant	1,980,000	1,980,000
	After School Program	80,694	155,694
	Other State Grants	3,000	
<b>Total State Grants</b>		<b>2,063,694</b>	<b>2,135,694</b>
<b>Other Revenue</b>			
	NHEP/CGHS	36,756	36,756
	Misc	20,953	5,000
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>		<b>57,709</b>	<b>41,756</b>

<sup>1</sup> Note: The actual income and expenditures included in this budget have not yet been subject to external audit.

<b>Investment Revenue</b>			
	Interest	175	1,000
<b>Total Investment Revenue</b>		<b>175</b>	<b>1,000</b>
<b>Other Sources of Revenue</b>			
	Special Ed Fees	149,381	125,000
	Student Activities	9,853	15,000
	Product Sales		13,000
<b>Total Other Sources Revenue</b>		<b>159,234</b>	<b>153,000</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b>3,133,344</b>	<b>2,943,689</b>
<b>Transfers: Temporarily Restricted Net Assets</b>			
	Other Foundations	17,668	40,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE PLUS TRANSFERS IN</b>		<b>3,151,012</b>	<b>2,983,689</b>
<b>PERSONNEL EXPENSE</b>			
<b>Salaries &amp; Wages</b>			
	Salaries + Stipends	1,635,034	1,658,535
	Wages	118,812	71,096
<b>Total Salary &amp; Wages</b>		<b>1,753,846</b>	<b>1,729,631</b>
<b>Employee Benefits</b>			
	Health	207,786	200,111
	Life	3,134	3,072
	Dental	22,959	23,011
	Disability	14,464	13,023
<b>Total Employee Benefits</b>		<b>248,343</b>	<b>239,217</b>
<b>Payroll Taxes</b>			
	Medicare @ .0145	23,621	25,080
	Social Security @ .062	39,450	51,270
	Unemployment	27,057	17,334
	CT WH	50	
<b>Total Payroll Taxes</b>		<b>90,178</b>	<b>93,684</b>
<b>Total Personnel Expense</b>		<b>2,092,367</b>	<b>2,062,531</b>
<b>OTHER EXPENSE</b>			



<b>Contract Services</b>			
	Accountant	17,557	15,000
	Legal	850	5,000
	Outside Contract Services	95,297	86,540
	NHEP/CGHS	281,558	278,167
	Purchased Prof Svs (ASP)	36,533	15,428
<b>Total Contract Services</b>		<b>431,795</b>	<b>400,135</b>
<b>Non-Personnel Expenses</b>			
	Advertising/Publicity/Printing/Mailing Service	7,343	10,000
	Internet	14,300	14,300
	Internal Connections Basic Maint	5,300	5,304
	Hardware	34,013	28,000
	Software	996	3,000
	License Fees	6,083	7,040
	Office Supplies	11,546	12,500
	Kitchen Supplies	7,960	3,500
	Cleaning/Rest Room Supplies	3,923	3,500
	Telephone	2,567	4,400
	Postage	2,238	2,200
	Copy Machine Lease & Copies/Photo Copies	13,268	12,000
	Misc Fees/Fingerprinting	6,123	2,500
<b>Total Non-Personnel Expenses</b>		<b>115,660</b>	<b>108,244</b>
<b>Facilities</b>			
	Rent	12,000	12,000
	Oil	9,455	10,000
	Water	6,023	1,200
	Electricity	13,504	10,000
	Trash & Recycling	1,999	1,500
	Alarm	1,055	1,200
	WPCA	1,024	1,000
	Propane	734	1,500
<b>Total Facilities</b>		<b>45,794</b>	<b>38,400</b>
<b>Equipment and Maintenance</b>			
	Building Maintenance	5,884	5,000
	Site Maintenance	1,117	1,000
	Tools and Equipment	2,691	1,000
	Site Projects & Maintenance	1,886	2,000

	Vehicle Maintenance	2,203	3,000
	Capital Improvements	1,809	
<b>Total Equipment &amp; Maintenance</b>		<b>15,590</b>	<b>12,000</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
	Buildings	30,156	30,156
	Leasehold Improvements	5,409	4,981
	Furniture/Equipment	19,357	25,000
<b>Total Depreciation</b>		<b>54,922</b>	<b>60,137</b>
<b>Travel &amp; Meeting Expenses</b>			
	Travel	2,613	2,000
	Confereces & Meeting Expenses, includes lodging	211	1,500
<b>Total Travel &amp; Meeting Expenses</b>		<b>2,824</b>	<b>3,500</b>
<b>Instructional Expenses</b>			
	Classroom Supplies	40,695	22,200
	Textbooks	9,815	10,000
	Periodicals/Subscriptions	423	250
	Assessment	2,532	4,000
	Professional Development	4,042	5,000
	Program & Festival Supplies	324	
	Food	3,392	3,000
	Farm & Garden Supplies		
	Animals		1,000
	Activity/Field Trip Fees	1,108	500
	Buses/Transportation	5,424	3,500
	Tools, Bldg & Project Supplies	7,281	1,500
	Financial Aid/Scholarships	280	2,500
	Transaction/Registration Fees	134	
	Cost of Goods Sold	1,499	1,500
	Program Stipends	1,720	2,500
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>		<b>78,669</b>	<b>57,450</b>
<b>Breakfast, Lunch, Snack</b>			
	Breakfast	16,112	15,000
	Lunch & Snack	82,519	75,000
<b>Total Breakfast, Lunch, Snack</b>		<b>98,631</b>	<b>90,000</b>
<b>Insurance</b>			
	Commerical & Liability	35,815	24,300

	D & O	1,310	1,500
	Workers Comp	10,469	30,000
<b>Total Insurance</b>		<b>47,594</b>	<b>55,800</b>
<b>Other Expenses</b>			
	Interest	159	
	Association/M'ship Dues	4,194	5,000
	Misc/Other	4,741	5,000
	Bad Debt	6,253	
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>		<b>15,347</b>	<b>10,000</b>
<b>Student Services</b>			
	Student Activities/Stipends		15,000
	Parent Activities		
	Pupil Services		
<b>Total Student Services</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>15,000</b>
<b>Event Expenses</b>			
	Feast from the Fields	32	
<b>Total Event Expenses</b>		<b>32</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Debt Reduction</b>			<b>6,986</b>
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>		<b>906,859</b>	<b>857,652</b>
<b>Total Operating Expense</b>		<b>2,999,226</b>	<b>2,920,183</b>
<b>GROSS REVENUE</b>		<b>151,786</b>	<b>63,506</b>

## Common Ground High School Board Approved Budgets FY 2015 and FY 2016

		CGHS FY '14-'15 Budget	CGHS FY '15-'16 Budget
<b>INCOME</b>			
<b>Direct Contributions</b>			
	Individual Giving (incl Ann Appeal)	60,000	120,000
<b>Events</b>			
	Feast	14,563	15,000
	Rock to Rock		10,000
	Common Table		1,750
<b>Total Donation Income</b>		<b>74,563</b>	<b>146,750</b>
<b>Rev from Non-Gov Grants</b>			
	Business/Corporation/Sponsorships	-	4,000
	Private Foundation	355,000	305,750
<b>Total Rev from Non-Gov Grants</b>		<b>355,000</b>	<b>309,750</b>
<b>Federal Grants</b>			
	21C	45,357	49,018
	Child Nutrition Grants	7,000	3,000
	Title 1 Reg	62,000	68,000
	Title 2 PD	10,000	10,000
	Breakfast	9,000	7,000
	Lunch	35,000	25,000
	USAC	14,320	8,700
<b>Total Federal Grants</b>		<b>182,677</b>	<b>170,718</b>
<b>State Grants</b>			
	Enrollment Grant	1,980,000	2,035,000
	After School Program	155,694	50,000
<b>Total State Grants</b>		<b>2,135,694</b>	<b>2,085,000</b>
<b>Other Revenue</b>			
	NHEP/CGHS	36,756	42,067
	Misc	5,000	5,000
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>		<b>41,756</b>	<b>47,067</b>
<b>Investment Revenue</b>			
	Interest	1,000	750

<b>Total Investment Revenue</b>		<b>1,000</b>	<b>750</b>
<b>Other Sources of Revenue</b>			
	Special Ed/Special Project Fees	125,000	180,000
	Student Activities	15,000	12,750
	Product Sales	13,000	9,600
<b>Total Other Sources Revenue</b>		<b>153,000</b>	<b>202,350</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b>2,668,689</b>	<b>2,687,385</b>
<b>Transfers In</b>		40,000	79,680
<b>TOTAL REVENUE PLUS TRANSFERS IN</b>		<b>2,983,689</b>	<b>3,042,065</b>
<b>PERSONNEL EXPENSE</b>			
<b>Salaries &amp; Wages</b>			
	Salaries + Stipends	1,658,535	1,749,805
	Wages	71,096	116,292 <sup>2</sup>
<b>Total Salary &amp; Wages</b>		<b>1,729,631</b>	<b>1,866,097</b>
<b>Employee Benefits</b>			
	Health	200,111	208,302
	Life	3,072	3,244
	Dental	23,011	27,166
	Disability	13,023	15,110
<b>Total Employee Benefits</b>		<b>239,217</b>	<b>253,822</b>
<b>Payroll Taxes</b>			
	Medicare @ .0145	25,080	27,058
	Social Security @ .062	51,270	40,246
	Unemployment	17,334	18,661
<b>Total Payroll Taxes</b>		<b>93,684</b>	<b>85,965</b>
<b>Total Personnel Expense</b>		<b>2,062,531</b>	<b>2,205,884</b>
<b>OTHER EXPENSE</b>			
<b>Contract Services</b>			
	Accountant	15,000	18,000
	Legal	5,000	5,000

<sup>2</sup> Reflects additional after-school and student support staffing.

	Outside Contract Services	86,540	76,678
	NHEP/CGHS	278,167	262,217
	After School Program Contractors	15,428	30,400
	<b>Total Contract Services</b>	<b>400,135</b>	<b>392,295</b>
	<b>Non-Personnel Expenses</b>		
	Advertising/Publicity/Printing/Mailing Service	10,000	8,000
	Internet	14,300	10,000
	Internal Connections Basic Maint	5,304	11,000
	Hardware	28,000	18,000
	Software	3,000	3,000
	License Fees	7,040	21,770 <sup>3</sup>
	Office Supplies	12,500	13,000
	Kitchen Supplies	3,500	3,000
	Cleaning/Rest Room Supplies	3,500	3,500
	Telephone	4,400	1,700
	Postage	2,200	2,000
	Copy Machine Lease & Copies/Photo Copies	12,000	12,000
	Misc Fees/Fingerprinting	2,500	2,500
	<b>Total Non-Personnel Expenses</b>	<b>108,244</b>	<b>109,470</b>
	<b>Facilities</b>		
	Rent	12,000	13,000
	Oil	10,000	10,000
	Water	1,200	6,000
	Electricity	10,000	10,000
	Trash & Recycling	1,500	1,500
	Alarm	1,200	1,000
	WPCA	1,000	800
	Propane	1,500	1,500
	<b>Total Facilities</b>	<b>38,400</b>	<b>43,800</b>
	<b>Equipment and Maintenance</b>		
	Building Maintenance	6,000	2,500
	Site Maintenance	2,000	1,500
	Tools and Equipment	1,000	1,000
	Vehicle Maintenance	3,000	3,000
	Capital Improvements		2,000

<sup>3</sup> Reflects license fees for networking infrastructure.



<b>Total Equipment &amp; Maintenance</b>		<b>12,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
	Buildings	30,156	30,156
	Leasehold Improvements	4,981	4,981
	Furniture/Equipment	25,000	25,000
<b>Total Depreciation</b>		<b>60,137</b>	<b>60,137</b>
<b>Travel &amp; Meeting Expenses</b>			
	Travel	2,000	2,500
	Conferences & Meeting Expenses, includes lodging	1,500	2,400
<b>Total Travel &amp; Meeting Expenses</b>		<b>3,500</b>	<b>4,900</b>
<b>Instructional and Program Supplies</b>			
	Classroom Instructional Supplies	22,200	20,000
	Textbooks	10,000	12,000
	Periodicals/Subscriptions	250	350
	Assessment	4,000	4,000
	Professional Development	5,000	5,000
	Program & Festival Supplies		150
	Program Food	3,000	3,800
	Farm and Market Supplies		
	Animals	1,000	1,000
	Activity/Field Trip Fees	500	2,000
	Buses/Transportation	3,500	3,000
	Program Tools and Equipment	1,500	3,100
	Transaction/Registration Fees		150
	Financial Aid/Scholarships	2,500	1,500
	Cost of Goods Sold	1,500	1,500
	Program Stipends/Mini-Grants	2,500	750
<b>Total Instructional and Program Supplies</b>		<b>57,450</b>	<b>58,300</b>
<b>Breakfast, Lunch, Snack</b>			
	Breakfast	15,000	15,000
	Lunch & Snack	75,000	65,000
<b>Total Breakfast, Lunch, Snack</b>		<b>90,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>
<b>Insurance</b>			
	Commerical & Liability	24,300	28,000

	D & O	1,500	1,625
	Workers Comp	30,000	15,035
<b>Total Insurance</b>		<b>55,800</b>	<b>44,660</b>
<b>Other Expenses</b>			
	Association/M'ship Dues	5,000	5,000
	Misc/Other	5,000	5,000
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>		<b>10,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>
<b>Student Services</b>			
	Student Activities/Stipends	15,000	12,750
<b>Total Student Services</b>		<b>15,000</b>	<b>12,750</b>
<b>Debt Reduction</b>		<b>6,986</b>	<b>6,986</b>
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>		<b>857,652</b>	<b>833,297.74</b>
<b>TOTAL ALL EXPENSES</b>		<b>2,920,183</b>	<b>3,039,182</b>
<b>NET REVENUE</b>		<b>63,506</b>	<b>2,883</b>

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
AS OF JUNE 30, 2014**

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL**

**BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
AS OF JUNE 30, 2014**

**TOGETHER WITH INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORTS  
AND SUPPLEMENTAL REPORTS**



**HENRY, RAYMOND  
& THOMPSON, LLC**

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*Certified Public Accountants*

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT**

To the Board of Education of  
Common Ground High School  
New Haven, Connecticut

### **Report on the Financial Statements**

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, the aggregate discretely presented component units, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of Common Ground High School, a State of Connecticut Charter School, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2014, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the School's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

### ***Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements***

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### ***Auditor's Responsibility***

Our responsibility is to express opinions on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or



error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

### ***Opinions***

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, the aggregate discretely presented component units, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of Common Ground High School as of June 30, 2014, and the respective changes in financial position for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

### ***Other Matters***

#### *Required Supplementary Information*

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the management's discussion and analysis on pages 5 through 9 be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

#### *Other Information*

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming opinions on the financial statements that collectively comprise Common Ground High School's basic financial statements. The combining and individual nonmajor fund financial statements are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the basic financial statements. The Schedule of Expenditures of State Financial Assistance is presented for purposes of additional analysis as required by the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management under the Connecticut Single Audit Act (C.G.S. Sections 4-230 to 4-236), and is also not a required part of the basic financial statements.

The combining and individual nonmajor fund financial statements and the Schedule of Expenditures of State Financial Assistance are the responsibility of management and were derived from and relate directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements. Such information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements or to the basic financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the combining and individual nonmajor fund financial statements and the Schedule of Expenditures of State Financial Assistance are fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the basic financial statements as a whole.

**Other Reporting Required by *Government Auditing Standards***

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated October 1, 2014, on our consideration of Common Ground High School's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering Common Ground High School's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

*Henry, Raymond & Thompson, LLC*

Henry, Raymond & Thompson, LLC  
South Windsor, Connecticut  
October 1, 2014

**MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION  
AND ANALYSIS**

**(UNAUDITED)**

As management of Common Ground High School, we offer readers of the School's financial statements this narrative overview and analysis of the financial activities of the School for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2014.

### **Overview of the Financial Statements**

This discussion and analysis is intended to serve as an introduction to Common Ground High School's basic financial statements. The School's basic financial statements are comprised of three components: (1) Government-Wide Financial Statements, (2) Fund Financial Statements and (3) notes to the financial statements. This report also contains other supplementary information in addition to the basic financial statements themselves.

The Government-Wide Financial Statements are designed to provide readers with a broad overview of the School's finances, in a manner similar to a private-sector business.

The Statement of Net Position presents information on all of the School's assets and liabilities, with the difference between the two reported as net position. Over time, increases or decreases in net position may serve as a useful indicator of whether the financial position of the School is improving or deteriorating.

The Statement of Activities presents information showing how the School's net position changed during the fiscal year. All changes in net position are reported when the underlying event giving rise to the change occurs, regardless of the timing of related cash flows. Thus, revenues and expenses are reported in this statement for some items that will only result in cash flows in future fiscal periods (e.g., uncollected revenues and earned but unused compensated absences).

Both of the Government-Wide Financial Statements distinguish between functions of the School that are principally supported by intergovernmental revenues (governmental activities) from functions that are intended to recover all or a significant portion of their costs through user fees and charges (business-type activities). The School activities of Common Ground High School include the operation and management of the School and are designed to provide a college preparatory curriculum, which is structured to overcome the educational problems typically found in the inner city. The business-type activities of the School primarily include student activity fees, which are immaterial to the Financial Statements, but are properly included in the School's Statement of Activities.

Fund Financial Statements – A fund is a grouping of related accounts that is used to maintain control over resources that have been segregated for specific activities or objectives. The School uses fund accounting to ensure and demonstrate compliance with finance-related legal requirements. All of the funds of the School can be divided into two categories, governmental funds and proprietary funds.

Governmental Funds – Governmental funds are used to account for essentially the same functions reported as governmental activities in the Government-Wide Financial Statements. However, unlike the Government-Wide Financial Statements, governmental fund financial statements focus on current sources and uses of spendable resources, as well as on balances of spendable resources available at the end of the fiscal year. Such information may be useful in evaluating a government's near-term financing requirements.

Because the focus of governmental funds is narrower than that of the Government-Wide Financial Statements, it is useful to compare the information presented for governmental funds with similar information presented for governmental activities in the Government-Wide Financial Statements. By doing so, readers may better understand the long-term impact of the School's near-term financing decisions. Both the governmental funds balance sheet and the governmental fund statement of revenues, expenditures and changes in fund balance provides a reconciliation to facilitate this comparison between governmental funds and governmental activities.

Proprietary Funds have not been separately presented in the fund financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2014 because management does not consider them material when taken in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole. Proprietary funds would include enterprise funds, which are used to report the same functions presented as business-type activities in the Government-Wide Financial Statements. Revenues from enterprise fund operations have been reported in the general fund.

Notes to the Financial Statements – The notes provide additional information that is essential to a full understanding of the data provided in the Government-Wide and Fund Financial Statements.

The following table provides a comparison of Common Ground High School's operations for the years ended June 30, 2014 and 2013:

	<u>June 30, 2014</u>	<u>June 30, 2013</u>
<b>Revenues:</b>		
Connecticut per pupil funding	\$ 1,890,000	\$ 1,672,800
Operating grants & contributions	289,303	235,752
Unrestricted revenues & contributions	538,767	602,129
Unrestricted investment income	644	584
Temporarily restricted revenues & contributions	500	105,890
Capital project contribution and grant revenue	952,385	655,268
In-kind revenues	244,929	159,332
<b>Total</b>	<u>\$ 3,916,528</u>	<u>\$ 3,431,755</u>
<b>Expenditures:</b>		
Instructional expenditures	\$ 1,332,599	\$ 1,222,431
Support services-students	265,650	194,816
Instructional improvements	391,461	270,258
General administration	95,767	168,881
School administration	464,251	390,704
Plant operation and maintenance	135,597	118,150
Student transportation	6,391	10,832
Food service	248,654	227,030
Depreciation	60,601	60,173
<b>Total</b>	<u>\$ 3,000,971</u>	<u>\$ 2,663,275</u>
<b>Increase in Net Position</b>	<u>\$ 915,557</u>	<u>\$ 768,480</u>

The following table provides a comparison of the Common Ground High School's financial position and net position for the years ended June 30, 2014 and 2013:

	<u>June 30, 2014</u>	<u>June 30, 2013</u>
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 222,251	\$ 461,852
Grants receivable	11,150	60,842
Accounts receivable	44,888	45,564
Due from New Haven Ecology Project	149,032	-
Prepaid expenses and other current assets	2,880	29,487
Capital Assets:		
Buildings	904,658	904,658
Construction in Progress	1,982,399	1,030,014
Furniture and equipment	234,874	259,901
Leasehold improvements	79,420	73,874
Vehicles	34,998	34,998
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>(536,705)</u>	<u>(502,013)</u>
Total capital assets, net of depreciation	<u>2,699,644</u>	<u>1,801,432</u>
 Total Assets	 <u>\$ 3,129,845</u>	 <u>\$ 2,399,177</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 214,701	\$ 385,126
Loans payable	6,962	14,037
Deferred revenue	22,113	-
Due to New Haven Ecology Project	<u>-</u>	<u>29,502</u>
 Total Liabilities	 <u>\$ 243,776</u>	 <u>\$ 428,665</u>
<b>Net Position (Deficit)</b>		
Net investment in capital assets	\$ 2,699,644	\$ 1,801,432
Restricted net position	22,678	85,647
Unrestricted net position	<u>163,747</u>	<u>83,433</u>
 Total Net Position	 <u>\$ 2,886,069</u>	 <u>\$ 1,970,512</u>
 Total Liabilities and Net Position	 <u>\$ 3,129,845</u>	 <u>\$ 2,399,177</u>

### **Comparison of June 30, 2014 to June 30, 2013**

Common Ground High School received total funding revenues of \$3,916,028 and \$3,325,865 for the years ended June 30, 2014 and 2013, respectively. All revenues are used to support the schools programs. The School received State of Connecticut Charter School per pupil funding of \$1,890,000 and \$1,672,800 for the years ended June 30, 2014 and 2013, respectively. Included in total revenue for the years ended June 30, 2014 and June 30, 2013 is \$465,598 and \$655,268, respectively, provided by the State of Connecticut to increase instructional space. The School received \$244,929 for the year ended June 30, 2014 of in-kind support from the State of Connecticut Teachers Retirement Fund to support teachers' retirement. Revenue is directly affected by the number of students the State of Connecticut is

willing to fund in any given year.

Common Ground High School incurred expenditures of \$3,000,971 and \$2,663,275 for the years ended June 30, 2014 and 2013, respectively. All expenditures are incurred to support school programs.

Net position increased by \$915,557 during the most recent fiscal year compared to \$768,480 in the preceding year. The assets of the School exceeded liabilities by \$2,886,069 and \$1,970,512 for the years ended June 30, 2014 and 2013, respectively. Capital assets, net of related debt, amounted to \$2,699,644 and \$1,801,432 for the years ended June 30, 2014 and 2013, respectively.

Capital expenditures totaled \$965,341 for the year ended June 30, 2014 as compared to \$674,311 in fiscal year 2013. The 2014 capital outlays were attributable to computer hardware and software, equipment, and construction in progress and were funded by a grant of \$465,598, a contribution from New Haven Ecology Project, Inc. of \$486,787, and a transfer of \$12,956 from the general fund. The 2013 capital outlays were attributable to computer hardware and software, and construction in progress and were funded by a grant of \$655,268 and a transfer of \$19,043 from the general fund.

At the close of the current fiscal year, the School's governmental funds reported combined ending fund balances of \$186,425. Capital project funds showed a fund balance of zero at year-end, while the general fund and special revenue fund showed balances of \$168,795 and \$17,630 respectively.

Common Ground High School's largest asset is its capital assets, which includes building and improvements, furniture, equipment and vehicles. The gross assets and accumulated depreciation amount to \$3,236,349 and \$536,705 for the year ended June 30, 2014 and \$2,303,445 and \$502,013 for the year ended June 30, 2013. Depreciation expense is \$60,601 and \$60,173 for the years ended June 30, 2014 and 2013, respectively. The increase in assets, accumulated depreciation and depreciation expense are a result of the capital expenditures incurred during the year ended June 30, 2014. The School uses these capital assets to operate and manage the school; consequently, these assets are not available for future spending. There is no outstanding debt in relation to these assets.

### **Financial Analysis of the Common Ground High School's Funds**

The focus of the School's governmental funds is to provide information on near-term inflows, outflows and balances of spendable resources. Such information is useful in assessing the Common Ground High School's financing requirements. In particular, unreserved fund balance may serve as a useful measure of a school's net resources available for spending at the end of the fiscal year.

At the end of the current fiscal year, the Common Ground High School's governmental funds reported a combined fund balance of \$186,425 as compared to \$169,080 for the year ended June 30, 2013. Unrestricted net position for the year ended June 30, 2014 was \$163,747.

### **Capital Assets**

Common Ground High School's investment in capital assets for its governmental and business-type activities as of June 30, 2014 amounts to \$2,699,644 (net of accumulated depreciation). This investment in capital assets includes building, improvements, furniture, equipment and vehicles. The cost of acquisition of capital assets was \$965,341 during the year ended June 30, 2014 and was funded by grant proceeds of \$465,598 provided by the State of Connecticut Charter School Building Project and Improvements Grant, a contribution from New Haven Ecology Project, Inc. of \$486,787, and the remaining \$12,956 was provided by a transfer from the General Fund.

### **Budgetary Reporting**

The School is not legally required to adopt a budget. As disclosed in Note 1 to the attached financial statements, an annual budget is approved by the Governing Board as a management tool. Since an annual budget is not legally required, and since a management budget is subject to ongoing review and potential change, these financial statements do not include comparisons of adopted budget with actual data on a budgetary basis. Likewise, our management discussion and analysis does not include any significant variations between budget amounts and actual results.

### **Request for Information**

This financial report is designed to provide a general overview of Common Ground High School's finances. If you have any questions about this report or need any additional information, contact Common Ground High School at 358 Springside Avenue, New Haven, Connecticut 06515, or call (203) 389-4333.



## **BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL  
GOVERNMENT-WIDE STATEMENT OF NET POSITION  
JUNE 30, 2014**

	<b>Charter School Activities</b>	<b>Business Type Activities</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 222,251	\$ -	\$ 222,251
Grants receivable	11,150	-	11,150
Accounts receivable	44,888	-	44,888
Due from New Haven Ecology Project	149,032	-	149,032
Prepaid expenses and other current assets	2,880	-	2,880
<b>Capital Assets:</b>			
Buildings	904,658	-	904,658
Construction in Progress	1,982,399	-	1,982,399
Furniture and equipment	234,874	-	234,874
Leasehold improvements	79,420	-	79,420
Vehicles	34,998	-	34,998
Less accumulated depreciation	(536,705)	-	(536,705)
Total capital assets, net of depreciation	<u>2,699,644</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,699,644</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b><u>\$ 3,129,845</u></b>	<b><u>\$ -</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 3,129,845</u></b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 214,701	\$ -	\$ 214,701
Loans payable	6,962	-	6,962
Deferred revenue	22,113	-	22,113
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b><u>\$ 243,776</u></b>	<b><u>\$ -</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 243,776</u></b>
<b>Net Position</b>			
Net investment in capital assets	\$ 2,699,644	\$ -	\$ 2,699,644
Restricted net position	22,678	-	22,678
Unrestricted net position	163,747	-	163,747
<b>Total Net Position</b>	<b><u>\$ 2,886,069</u></b>	<b><u>\$ -</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 2,886,069</u></b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Position</b>	<b><u>\$ 3,129,845</u></b>	<b><u>\$ -</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 3,129,845</u></b>

Notes to these financial statements are an integral part of the basic financial statements

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL  
GOVERNMENT-WIDE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES  
YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2014**

Functions/Programs	Program Revenues			Net (Expense) Revenue and Changes in Net Position		
	Expenses	Operating Grants and Contributions	Capital Grants and Contributions	Business-		
				Charter School Activities	Type Activities	Total
Instructional	\$ 1,332,599	\$ 138,474	\$ -	\$ (1,194,125)	\$ -	\$ (1,194,125)
Support services-students	265,650	80,694	-	(184,956)	-	(184,956)
Instructional improvements	391,461	-	-	(391,461)	-	(391,461)
General administration	95,767	-	-	(95,767)	-	(95,767)
School administration	464,251	8,950	-	(455,301)	-	(455,301)
Plant operation and maintenance	135,597	-	-	(135,597)	-	(135,597)
Student transportation	6,391	-	-	(6,391)	-	(6,391)
Food service	248,654	61,185	-	(187,469)	-	(187,469)
Depreciation	60,601	-	-	(60,601)	-	(60,601)
Capital project-construction	-	-	952,385	952,385	-	952,385
Total Activities	\$ 3,000,971	\$ 289,303	\$ 952,385	\$ (1,759,283)	\$ -	\$ (1,759,283)

Notes to these financial statements are an integral part of the basic financial statements

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL  
GOVERNMENT-WIDE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES, CON'T  
YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2014**

Functions/Programs	Program Revenues		Net (Expense) Revenue and Changes in Net Position	
	Operating Grants and Contributions	Capital Grants and Contributions	Charter School Activities	Business-Type Activities
General Revenues:				
Connecticut per pupil funding			1,890,000	-
In-kind revenues			244,929	-
Unrestricted contributions			364,513	-
Unrestricted investment income			644	-
Other unrestricted revenues			174,254	-
Temporarily restricted contributions			500	-
Total General Revenues			2,674,840	-
Change in Net Position			915,557	-
Net Position - beginning of the year			1,970,512	-
Net Position - end of the year			\$ 2,886,069	\$ 2,886,069

Notes to these financial statements are an integral part of the basic financial statements

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL  
COMBINED BALANCE SHEET – ALL FUND TYPES AND ACCOUNT GROUPS  
JUNE 30, 2014**

	<u>General</u>	<u>Capital Projects</u>	<u>Special Revenue</u>	<u>Total Memorandum Only</u>
<b>Assets</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 222,251	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 222,251
Grants receivable	-	-	11,150	11,150
Accounts receivable	38,408	-	6,480	44,888
Due from New Haven Ecology Project	149,032	-	-	149,032
Prepaid expenses and deposits	2,880	-	-	2,880
<b>Total Assets</b>	<u>\$ 412,571</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 17,630</u>	<u>\$ 430,201</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>				
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 214,701	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 214,701
Loans payable	6,962	-	-	6,962
Deferred revenue	22,113	-	-	22,113
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<u>243,776</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>243,776</u>
<b>Fund Balance</b>				
Restricted	22,678	-	-	22,678
Unassigned	146,117	-	17,630	163,747
<b>Total Fund Balance</b>	<u>168,795</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>17,630</u>	<u>186,425</u>
<b>Total Liabilities and Fund Balance</b>	<u>\$ 412,571</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 17,630</u>	<u>\$ 430,201</u>

Notes to these financial statements are an integral part of the basic financial statements

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL  
RECONCILIATION OF THE GOVERNMENT FUNDS  
BALANCE SHEET TO THE STATEMENT OF NET POSITION  
JUNE 30, 2014**

Total Fund Balances - Governmental Funds	\$ 186,425
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Amounts Reported for Governmental Activities in the Statement of Net Position are Different Because:

Capital assets used in governmental activities are not financial resources and therefore are not reported as assets in governmental funds. The cost of the assets is \$3,236,349 and the accumulated depreciation is \$536,705:

<u>2,699,644</u>
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Total Net Position	<u><u>\$ 2,886,069</u></u>
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Notes to these financial statements are an integral part of the basic financial statements

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL  
COMBINED STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND  
CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES  
ALL GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPES  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2014**

	<u>General</u>	<u>Capital Project Revenue</u>	<u>Special Revenue</u>	<u>Totals</u>
<b>Revenues</b>				
Intergovernmental Revenue	\$ 1,890,000	\$ 465,598	\$ 289,303	\$ 2,644,901
Other	545,795	486,787	-	1,032,582
In-kind	244,929	-	-	244,929
Interest	644	-	-	644
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<u>2,681,368</u>	<u>952,385</u>	<u>289,303</u>	<u>3,923,056</u>
<b>Expenditures</b>				
Instructional	1,124,622	-	207,977	1,332,599
Support services: students	265,650	-	-	265,650
Instructional improvements	95,767	-	-	95,767
School administration	381,125	-	10,336	391,461
General administration	413,320	-	50,931	464,251
Operation and maintenance of plant	135,597	-	-	135,597
Student transportation	6,391	-	-	6,391
Food service	-	-	248,654	248,654
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<u>2,422,472</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>517,898</u>	<u>2,940,370</u>
Acquisition of fixed assets/construction	-	961,042	4,299	965,341
	<u>2,422,472</u>	<u>961,042</u>	<u>522,197</u>	<u>3,905,711</u>
Excess(deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	258,896	(8,657)	(232,894)	17,345
<b>Other Financing Sources (Uses)</b>				
Transfers from Other Funds	-	8,657	238,968	247,625
Transfers (to) Other Funds	<u>(247,625)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(247,625)</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues and other financing sources over expenditures and other financing uses	11,271	-	6,074	17,345
Fund balance, beginning of the year	<u>157,524</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>11,556</u>	<u>169,080</u>
Fund balance, end of the year	<u>\$ 168,795</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 17,630</u>	<u>\$ 186,425</u>

Notes to these financial statements are an integral part of the basic financial statements

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL  
RECONCILIATION OF THE GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS STATEMENT  
OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN FUND  
BALANCES TO THE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES  
YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2014**

Total Net Change in Fund Balances - Governmental Funds	\$	17,345
<p>Amounts Reported for Governmental Activities in the Statement of Activities are different because:</p>		
Capital outlays are reported in governmental funds as expenditures. However, in the Statement of Activities, the cost of those assets is allocated over their estimated useful lives as depreciation expense. This is the amount by which capital outlays exceed depreciation expense for the period:		904,740
Loss on Disposal of Assets		<u>(6,528)</u>
Change in Net Position	\$	<u><u>915,557</u></u>

Notes to these financial statements are an integral part of the basic financial statements



**Common Ground High School  
Notes to Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014**

**Note 1 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies**

**General Statement**

Common Ground High School (a "State Charter School") is a public, nonsectarian school located in the City of New Haven. The School was founded in 1997 to provide a college preparatory curriculum designed to overcome the educational problems typically found in the inner city.

In accordance with the provisions of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, The New Haven Ecology Project, Inc. was granted, on August 7, 1997, a charter to operate Common Ground High School. A charter school, as defined by the Connecticut statutes, is a public, nonsectarian school, which is established under a charter granted pursuant to the provisions of the statutes, acts as a public agency, and operates independently of any local or regional board of education in accordance with the terms of its charter and the provisions of the statutes. The charter was renewed last in June of 2010 through June 30, 2015 and shall be operated in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, and the terms of its charter.

Common Ground High School and The New Haven Ecology Project are related through a common board of directors and management team. Common Ground High School is considered to be a reporting entity, which is separate and distinct from The New Haven Ecology Project, Inc. The accounting policies of the school conform to generally accepted accounting principles as applied to governmental entities. The following is a summary of the more significant policies.

**Financial Reporting Entity**

The School is governed by a Board of Directors (The Governing Board). The Board reviews the educational progress, the school program, school management, finances, and legal issues, and is responsible for ensuring that the School lives up to its mission, charter, and additional requirements of the State of Connecticut Board of Education. The School receives funding for local, state and federal government sources and must comply with concomitant requirements of these funding source entities.

The basic financial statements of the School include only the funds of the School, as no component units exist based on operational or financial relationships with the School.

**Government-Wide and Fund Financial Statements**

**Government-Wide Financial Statements**

The statement of net position and the statement of activities display information about the School and include the financial activities of the overall government agency (School), except for fiduciary activities. Eliminations have been made to minimize the double counting of internal activities. The statements are intended to distinguish between governmental and business-type activities. Governmental activities for the school are generally financed through intergovernmental revenues. Business type activities are financed, in whole or in part, by fees charged to external parties.

The statement of net position presents the School's non-fiduciary assets and liabilities, with the difference reported as net position. Net position is reported in three categories:

**Common Ground High School  
Notes to Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014**

***Invested in capital assets, net of related debt*** – This category consists of capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation and amortization and reduced by outstanding balances for capital lease obligations related to the leased building.

***Restricted net position*** – This category consists of net position whose use is restricted either through external restrictions imposed by creditors, grantors, contributors and the like, or through restrictions imposed by law through constitutional provisions or enabling legislation.

***Unrestricted net position*** – This category consists of net position, which does not meet the definition of the two preceding categories.

When both restricted and unrestricted resources are available for use, it is the School's policy to use the restricted sources first, the unrestricted resources, as they are needed.

The statement of activities demonstrates the degree to which the direct expenses of a given function are offset by program revenues. Direct expenses are those that are clearly identifiable with a specific function. Program revenues include 1) grants that are restricted to meeting the operational requirements of the School and 2) unrestricted contributions from non-governmental sources.

**Fund Financial Statements:**

The fund financial statements provide information about the School's funds, including, if applicable, fiduciary funds. Separate statements for each fund category – governmental and fiduciary – are presented. The emphasis of fund financial statements is on major governmental funds, each displayed in a separate column. All remaining governmental funds are aggregated and reported as major funds.

The School reports the following major governmental funds:

The general fund is the School's primary operating fund. It accounts for all financial resources of the School, except those required to be accounted for in another fund.

The special revenue fund accounts for revenue sources that are legally restricted to expend for specific purposes (not including expendable trusts or major capital projects).

The capital projects fund is used to account for financial resources used to acquire or construct major capital facilities such as buildings and improvements. There were capital projects during the year ended June 30, 2014.

**General Fund:**

The General Fund is the main operating fund of the School. This fund is used to account for all financial resources not accounted for in other funds. All general revenues and other receipts that are not restricted by law or contractual agreement to some other fund are accounted for in this fund. General operating expenditures, fixed charges and capital improvement costs that are not paid through other funds are paid from the General Fund.

**Common Ground High School  
Notes to Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014**

**Measurement Focus and Basis of Accounting**

Measurement focus refers to what is being measured; basis of accounting refers to when revenues and expenditures are recognized in the accounts and reported in the financial statements. Basis of accounting relates to the timing of the measurement made, regardless of the measurement focus applied.

**Government-Wide Financial Statements**

The Government-Wide Statements and Fund Financial Statements for proprietary funds are reported using the economic resources measurement focus and the accrual basis of accounting. The economic resources measurement focus means all assets and liabilities (whether current or non-current) are included on the statement of net position and the operating statements present increases (revenues) and decreases (expenses) in net total position. Under the accrual basis of accounting, revenues are recognized when earned. Expenses are recognized at the time the liability is incurred.

**Government Fund Financial Statements**

Governmental Fund Financial Statements are reported using the current financial resources measurement focus and are accounted for using the modified accrual basis of accounting. Under the modified accrual basis of accounting, revenues are recognized when susceptible to accrual; i.e., when they become both measurable and available. "Measurable" means the amount of the transaction can be determined and "available" means collectible within the current period or soon enough thereafter to be used to pay liabilities of the current period. A one-year availability period is used for recognition of all Governmental Fund revenues. Expenditures are recorded when the related fund liability is incurred. However, debt service expenditures, except for interest payable accrued at the debt issuance date for which cash is received with the debt proceeds, as well as expenditures related to compensated absences and arbitrage are recorded only when payment has matured and will be payable shortly after year-end.

Governmental funds include the following fund types:

The general fund is the School's primary operating fund. It accounts for all financial resources of the School, except those required to be accounted for in another fund.

The special revenue fund accounts for revenue sources that are legally restricted to expend for specific purposes (not including expendable trusts or major capital projects).

The capital projects fund is used to account for financial resources used to acquire or construct major capital facilities such as buildings and improvements.

Fiduciary Fund Types:

Fiduciary funds are used to account for assets held on behalf of outside parties. Agency funds generally are used to account for assets that the School holds on behalf of others as their agent. The School does not currently have fiduciary or agency funds.

**Common Ground High School  
Notes to Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014**

**Cash Equivalents**

The School considers all liquid debt instruments with an original maturity of three months or less to be cash equivalents. There were no cash equivalents as of June 30, 2014.

**Capital Assets**

Tangible assets with a useful life greater than one year and a value greater than \$500 are recorded at cost on the statement of net position. Donated fixed assets are recorded at their estimated fair value at the date of donation. Depreciation is calculated over estimated useful lives using the straight-line method.

The cost of normal maintenance and repairs that do not add to the value of the asset or materially extend assets lives are not included in the general fixed assets account group.

Capital assets of the School are depreciated using the straight-line method over the following estimated useful lives:

Assets	Years
Land	-
Building and improvements	10 - 30
Furniture and equipment	5 - 10
Vehicles	5

**Reserved Fund Balance**

Reservations of fund balance represent amounts that are not appropriable or are legally segregated for a specific purpose.

**Basis of Appropriating and Budgeting**

The Governing Board approves an annual budget as a management tool. The School is not legally required to adopt a budget. Since an annual budget is not legally required, and since management's budget is subject to ongoing review and potential change, these financial statements do not include comparisons of adopted budget with actual data on a budgetary basis.

**Compensated Absences**

Common Ground High School did not establish a policy to permit employees to accumulate earned, but unused, vacation and sick pay benefits. As such, no liability was accrued for the year ended June 30, 2014.

**On-Behalf Payments**

The State of Connecticut, Teachers Retirement Fund contributed approximately \$244,929 to the retirement funds of the teachers at the School (see Note 5).

**Common Ground High School  
Notes to Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014**

**Use of Estimates**

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

**Subsequent Events**

As of October 1, 2014, the School evaluated all subsequent events and noted no recognized or non-recognized events or transaction subsequent to June 30, 2014. Financial Statements for the School were available to be issued as of October 1, 2014.

**Income Taxes**

On December 30, 1997, Common Ground High School's parent organization, New Haven Ecology Project, Inc. was granted exemption from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Accordingly, no provision for federal income taxes has been made in the accompanying financial statements. In addition, Common Ground High School's parent organization, New Haven Ecology Project, Inc. has been determined by the Internal Revenue Service not to be a "private foundation" within the meaning of Section 509(a) of the Internal Revenue Code.

**Note 2 – Cash, Cash Equivalents and Investments**

The deposit of public funds is controlled by the Connecticut General Statutes (Section 7-402). Deposits may be made in a "qualified public depository" as defined by Statute or in amounts not exceeding the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation insurance limit in an "out of state bank," as defined by the Statutes, which is not a "qualified public depository". The Connecticut General Statutes (Section 7-400) permit municipalities to invest in: 1) obligations of the United States and its agencies, 2) highly rated obligations of any state of the United States or of any political subdivision, authority or agency thereof, and 3) shares or other interests in custodial arrangements or pools maintaining constant net asset values and in highly rated no-load open end money market and mutual funds (with constant or fluctuating net asset values) whose portfolios are limited to obligations of the United States and its agencies, and repurchase agreements fully collateralized by such obligations. Other provisions of the Statutes cover specific municipal funds with particular investment authority. The provisions of the Statutes regarding the investment of municipal pension funds do not specify permitted investments. Therefore, investment of such funds is generally controlled by the laws applicable to fiduciaries and the provisions of the applicable plan.

The Statutes (Sections 3-24f and 3-27f) also provide for investment in shares of the State Short-Term Investment Fund (STIF) and the State Tax Exempt Proceeds Fund (TEPF). These investment pools are under the control of the State Treasurer, with oversight provided by the Treasurer's Cash Management Advisory Board, and are regulated under the State Statutes and subject to annual audit by the Auditors of Public Accounts. Investment yields are accounted for on an amortized-cost basis with an investment portfolio that is designed to attain a market-average rate of return throughout budgetary and economic cycles. Investors accrue interest daily based on actual earnings, less expenses and transfers to the designated surplus reserve, and the fair value of the position in the pool is the same as the value of the pool shares.

**Common Ground High School  
Notes to Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014**

**Deposits**

***Deposit Custodial Credit Risk***

Custodial credit risk is the risk that, in the event of a bank failure, the School's deposit will not be returned. The School does not have a deposit policy for custodial credit risk. The deposit of public funds is controlled by the Connecticut General Statutes. Deposits may be placed with any qualified public depository that has its main place of business in the State of Connecticut. Connecticut General Statutes require that each depository maintain segregated collateral (not required to be based on a security agreement between the depository and the municipality and, therefore, not perfected in accordance with federal law) in an amount equal to a defined percentage of its public deposits based upon the depository's risk-based capital ratio. Based on the criteria described in GASB Statement No. 40, *Deposits and Investment Risk Disclosures*, the School's entire bank balance of \$222,251 was fully insured under FDIC Temporary Liquidity Guarantee Program.

As of the year ended June 30, 2014, the School did not hold any investments.

**Note 3 – Capital Assets**

The following is a summary of changes in general capital assets for the year ended June 30, 2014:

	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Accumulated Depreciation</b>	<b>Capital Assets, net</b>
Balance July 1, 2013	\$ 2,303,445	\$ (502,013)	\$ 1,801,432
Additions	965,341	(60,601)	904,740
Deductions	(32,437)	25,909	(6,528)
Balance June 30, 2014	\$ 3,236,349	\$ (536,705)	\$ 2,699,644

The cost of acquisition of capital assets was \$965,341 during the year ended June 30, 2014 and was funded by grant proceeds of \$465,598 provided by the State of Connecticut Charter School Building Project and Improvements grant, a contribution of \$486,787 from New Haven Ecology Project, Inc., and \$12,956 provided by a transfer from the General Fund. The funding was primarily for computer hardware and software, instructional equipment, and construction in progress. Depreciation expense was \$60,601 for the year ended June 30, 2014.

**Note 4 – Loans Payable**

Common Ground High School has an interest-free loan with a face amount of \$23,869.50, payable to The United Illuminating Company, in monthly installments of \$497.29 over a term of 48 months maturing in

**Common Ground High School  
Notes to Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014**

October 2015, with principal outstanding at June 30, 2014 of \$6,962. The following is a summary of the loan activity for the year ended June 30, 2014:

Balance July 1, 2013	\$	13,427
Payments	\$	<u>(6,465)</u>
Balance June 30, 2014	\$	<u><u>6,962</u></u>

The approximate future principal payments to be made are as follows:

<u>Year-Ending</u>	
6/30/2015	\$ 5,967
6/30/2016	995
6/30/2017	-
6/30/2018	-
6/30/2019	<u>-</u>
Total	<u><u>\$ 6,962</u></u>

**Note 5 – State Teachers Retirement System**

The faculty and professional personnel of the School participate in a contributory defined benefit plan, established under Section 167a of the Connecticut General Statutes, which is administered by the Connecticut State Teachers Retirement Board.

Certain part-time and all full-time certified teachers are eligible to participate in the plan. The School does not and is not legally responsible to contribute to the plan. After five years of service, teachers are fully vested in their own contributions. After 10 years of service, teachers are fully vested in the monthly pension benefit which is payable at the age of sixty. The State of Connecticut contributes based on actuarially determined amounts. In accordance with the provisions of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 24, the School has reported “on-behalf” payments of approximately \$244,929, made by the State of Connecticut into the teachers retirement system, as intergovernmental revenues and instruction expenditures of the general fund in the accompanying combined statement of revenues, expenditures and changes in fund balance (deficit) and as in-kind revenue and instructional expense in the accompanying Government-Wide statement of activities. The funding level was determined based on an actuarial valuation of the plan as a whole, which does not provide actuarial information on an individual basis. For the year ended June 30, 2014, the School’s teachers contributed \$71,631 to the plan and covered payroll for the year was approximately \$988,014.

**Note 6 - Contingencies and Risk Management**

The School is exposed to various risks of loss related to torts; theft or damage to, and distribution of assets; errors and omissions; injuries to employees; and natural disasters. However, there are currently no suits or

**Common Ground High School  
Notes to Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014**

claims pending against the School.

The School maintains commercial insurance coverage for all risks of loss, including workers' compensation and employee health and accident insurance. Settled claims resulting from these risks have not exceeded commercial insurance coverage.

**Note 7 - Economic Dependency**

The School received approximately 62% and 70% of its funding from the State of Connecticut for the years ended June 30, 2014 and 2013, respectively, to fund the operations of the charter school programs.

**Note 8 – Related Party Transactions**

Common Ground High School utilizes a school building, which was constructed by The New Haven Ecology Project, Inc. In addition to the school building, Common Ground High School utilizes instructional space and approximately twenty acres of land located at 358 Springside Avenue, which is adjacent to West Rock Ridge State Park, in New Haven, Connecticut. The use of the property is controlled under the terms of an agreement with the City of New Haven.

Under the terms of the agreement, the City of New Haven granted The New Haven Ecology Project, Inc. a license to use this site for a period of ten years. The time period referenced in the agreement began on September 1, 2010 and will end August 31, 2020. Common Ground High School had rent expense of \$13,500 for the year ended June 30, 2014. In addition to the occupancy costs, Common Ground High School paid The New Haven Ecology Project, Inc. \$171,503 for business, administrative, instructional, and program support, social worker/student support, publicity and development.

The School has a balance due from The New Haven Ecology Project of \$149,032 as of June 30, 2014.

**Note 9 – Grants Awarded**

The majority of the school's operating budget is funded by various Federal and State of Connecticut grants. These grants are recorded as revenues as the underlying expenditures are incurred. The following grants have been awarded and are available for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015:

<u>Grant</u>	<u>Amount Awarded</u>	<u>Amount Expended</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Title I	\$ 69,464	\$ -	\$ 69,464
Title II PD	10,193	-	10,193
Charter School - Per Pupil	1,980,000	-	1,980,000
After School Program	80,694	-	80,694
21c After School Program	65,357	-	65,357



**Common Ground High School  
Notes to Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014**

**Note 10 – Temporarily Restricted Net Position**

The School has a balance of donor imposed temporarily restricted contributions of \$22,678. Temporarily restricted position is available for the following purposes or periods:

<u>Project</u>	<u>June 30, 2014</u>
Aspire Local High School Impact Initiative	\$ 22,178
Food Corps	<u>500</u>
	<u>\$ 22,678</u>

**COMBINING AND INDIVIDUAL FUND  
STATEMENTS AND SCHEDULES**

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL  
BALANCE SHEET - GENERAL FUND  
JUNE 30, 2014**

<b>Assets</b>	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 222,251
Grants receivable	-
Accounts receivable	38,408
Due from New Haven Ecology Project	149,032
Prepaid expenses and deposits	<u>2,880</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 412,571</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>	
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 214,701
Loans payable	6,962
Deferred revenue	<u>22,113</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>243,776</u>
<b>Fund Balance</b>	
Restricted net position	22,678
Unrestricted net position	<u>146,117</u>
Total Fund Balance	<u>168,795</u>
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	<u>\$ 412,571</u>

Notes to these financial statements are an integral part of the basic financial statements

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL  
STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND  
CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES-GENERAL FUND  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2014**

<b>Revenues</b>	
Intergovernmental Revenue	\$ 1,890,000
Other	545,795
In-kind	244,929
Interest	644
Total Revenues	<u>2,681,368</u>
<b>Expenditures</b>	
Instructional	1,124,622
Support services: students	265,650
Instructional improvements	381,125
School administration	95,767
General administration	413,320
Operation and maintenance of plant	135,597
Student transportation	6,391
Food service	-
Total Expenditures	<u>2,422,472</u>
Excess of revenues over expenditures	258,896
<b>Other Financing Sources (Uses)</b>	
Transfers from other funds	-
Transfers (to) other funds	<u>(247,625)</u>
Excess of revenues and other financing sources over expenditures and other financing uses	11,271
Fund balance, beginning of the year	<u>157,524</u>
Fund balance, end of the year	<u>\$ 168,795</u>

Notes to these financial statements are an integral part of the basic financial statements

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL  
BALANCE SHEET – CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND  
JUNE 30, 2014**

	<b>Total (Memorandum Only)</b>
<b>Assets</b>	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ -
Grants receivable	-
Accounts receivable	-
Prepaid expenses	-
	-
Total Assets	\$ -
<b>Liabilities</b>	
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ -
Deferred revenue	-
	-
Total Liabilities	-
<b>Fund Balance</b>	
Unrestricted net position	-
	-
Total Fund Balance	-
	-
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	\$ -

Notes to these financial statements are an integral part of the basic financial statements

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL  
STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES  
AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES –  
CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2014**

<b>Revenues</b>	
Intergovernmental Revenue	\$ 465,598
Other	486,787
	<hr/>
Total Revenues	952,385
	<hr/>
<b>Expenditures</b>	
Instructional	-
Support services: students	-
Instructional improvements	-
School administration	-
General administration	-
Operation and maintenance of plant	-
Student transportation	-
Food service	-
	<hr/>
Total Expenditures	-
Acquisition of fixed assets	961,042
	<hr/>
	961,042
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	(8,657)
<b>Other Financing Sources (Uses)</b>	
Transfers from other funds	8,657
Transfers (to) other funds	-
	<hr/>
Excess of revenues and other financing sources over expenditures and other financing uses	-
Fund balance, beginning of the year	-
	<hr/>
Fund balance, end of the year	\$ -
	<hr/> <hr/>

Notes to these financial statements are an integral part of the basic financial statements

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL**  
**COMBINING BALANCE SHEET - SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS**  
**JUNE 30, 2014**

	<b>School Lunch Fund</b>	<b>Special School Grants and Programs</b>	<b>Total (Memorandum Only)</b>
<b>Assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Grants receivable	11,150	-	11,150
Accounts receivable	-	6,480	6,480
Prepaid expenses	-	-	-
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 11,150</u>	<u>\$ 6,480</u>	<u>\$ 17,630</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Deferred revenue	-	-	-
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
Total Liabilities	-	-	-
<b>Fund Balance</b>			
Restricted net position	-	-	-
Unrestricted net position	11,150	6,480	17,630
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
Total Fund Balance	<u>11,150</u>	<u>6,480</u>	<u>17,630</u>
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	<u>\$ 11,150</u>	<u>\$ 6,480</u>	<u>\$ 17,630</u>

Notes to these financial statements are an integral part of the basic financial statements

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL**  
**COMBINING STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES**  
**AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES - SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS**  
**FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2014**

	<u>Breakfast and Lunch Fund</u>	<u>Special School Grants and Programs</u>	<u>Total (Memorandum Only)</u>
<b>Revenues</b>			
Intergovernmental Revenue	\$ 61,185	\$ 228,118	\$ 289,303
Other	-	-	-
Total Revenues	<u>61,185</u>	<u>228,118</u>	<u>289,303</u>
<b>Expenditures</b>			
Instructional	-	207,977	207,977
Support services: students	-	-	-
Instructional improvements	-	10,336	10,336
School administration	-	-	-
General administration	-	50,931	50,931
Operation and maintenance of plant	-	-	-
Student transportation	-	-	-
Food service	248,654	-	248,654
Total Expenditures	<u>248,654</u>	<u>269,244</u>	<u>517,898</u>
Acquisition of Fixed Assets	-	4,299	4,299
Excess(deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	<u>(187,469)</u>	<u>(45,425)</u>	<u>(232,894)</u>
<b>Other Financing Sources (Uses)</b>			
Transfers From Other Funds	189,943	49,025	238,968
Transfers (to) Other Funds	-	-	-
	<u>189,943</u>	<u>49,025</u>	<u>238,968</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues and other financing sources over expenditures and other financing uses	2,474	3,600	6,074
Fund balance, beginning of the year	<u>8,676</u>	<u>2,880</u>	<u>11,556</u>
Fund balance, end of the year	<u>\$ 11,150</u>	<u>\$ 6,480</u>	<u>\$ 17,630</u>

Notes to these financial statements are an integral part of the basic financial statements



**STATE SUPPLEMENTAL REPORTS**

**SCHEDULE OF STATE FINANCIAL  
ASSISTANCE AND INDEPENDENT  
AUDITOR'S REPORT THEREON**



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**REPORT ON COMPLIANCE FOR EACH MAJOR STATE PROGRAM; REPORT ON  
INTERNAL CONTROL OVER COMPLIANCE; AND REPORT ON THE SCHEDULE OF  
EXPENDITURES OF STATE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE REQUIRED BY THE STATE SINGLE  
AUDIT ACT**

**Independent Auditor's Report**

To the Board of Education  
of Common Ground High School  
New Haven, Connecticut

**Report on Compliance for Each Major State Program**

We have audited Common Ground High School's compliance with the types of compliance requirements described in the Office of Policy and Management's *Compliance Supplement* that could have a direct and material effect on each of Common Ground High School's major state programs for the year ended June 30, 2014. Common Ground High School's major state programs are identified in the summary of auditors' results section of the accompanying schedule of findings and questioned costs.

***Management's Responsibility***

Management is responsible for compliance with the requirements of laws, regulations, contracts and grants applicable to its state programs.

***Auditor's Responsibility***

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on compliance for each of Common Ground High School's major state programs based on our audit of the types of compliance requirements referred to above. We conducted our audit of compliance in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America; the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and the State Single Audit Act (C.G.S. Sections 4-230 to 4-236). Those standards and the State Single Audit Act require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether noncompliance with the types of compliance requirements referred to above that could have a direct and material effect on a major state program occurred. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence about Common Ground High School's compliance with those requirements and performing such other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion on compliance for each major state program. However, our audit does not provide a legal determination of Common Ground High School's compliance.

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### ***Opinion on Each Major State Program***

In our opinion, Common Ground High School, complied, in all material respects, with the types of compliance requirements referred to above that could have a direct and material effect on each of its major state programs for the year ended June 30, 2014.

### **Report on Internal Control over Compliance**

Management of Common Ground High School, is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal control over compliance with the types of compliance requirements referred to above. In planning and performing our audit of compliance, we considered Common Ground High School's internal control over compliance with the types of requirements that could have a direct and material effect on each major state program to determine the auditing procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on compliance for each major state program and to test and report on internal control over compliance in accordance with the State Single Audit Act, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control over compliance. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of Common Ground High School's internal control over compliance.

*A deficiency in internal control over compliance* exists when the design or operation of a control over compliance does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement of a state program on a timely basis. *A material weakness in internal control over compliance* is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control over compliance such that there is a reasonable possibility that material noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement of a state program will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. *A significant deficiency in internal control over compliance* is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control over compliance with a type of compliance requirement of a state program that is less severe than a material weakness in internal control over compliance, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control over compliance was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control over compliance that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. We did not identify any deficiencies in internal control over compliance that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

The purpose of this report on internal control over compliance is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over compliance and the results of that testing based on the requirements of the State Single Audit Act. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other purpose.

### **Report on Schedule of Expenditures of State Financial Assistance Required by the State Single Audit Act**

We have audited the financial statements of Common Ground High School, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2014 and have issued our report thereon dated October 1, 2014, which contained an unmodified opinion on those financial statements. Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements as a whole. The accompanying Schedule of Expenditures of State Financial Assistance is presented for purposes of additional analysis as required by the State Single Audit Act and is not a required part of the financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management

and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the Schedule of Expenditures of State Financial Assistance is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

*Henry, Raymond & Thompson, LLC*

Henry, Raymond & Thompson, LLC  
South Windsor, Connecticut  
October 1, 2014

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL  
SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF STATE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2014**

<u>State Grantor Pass-Through Grantor Program Title</u>	<u>State Grant Program Core-CT Number</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
<b>Connecticut Department of Education:</b>		
Charter Schools	11000-SDE64000-17041-84179	\$ 1,890,000
Health Foods Initiative	11000-SDE64370-16212-82010	\$ 1,878
School Breakfast Program	11000-SDE64370-17046	\$ 3,098
Child Nutrition Program (School Lunch State Match)	11000-SDE64370-16211-82051	\$ 917
After School Program	268-000 11000-17084-2014-82079-170003	\$ 80,694
Charter School Building Project and Improvements	268-000 12052-43003-2014-82079-SDE00005	\$ 465,598
<b>Connecticut Department of Agriculture:</b>		
Agricultural Viability	12060-DAG42710-90456-72002	\$ 24,535
Total State Financial Assistance		<u>\$ 2,466,720</u>

Notes to the basic financial statements are an integral part of this schedule of supplementary information

Notes to the schedule of expenditures of state financial assistance are an integral part of this schedule of supplementary information

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL  
NOTES TO SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES  
OF STATE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2014**

The accompanying Schedule of Expenditures of State Financial Assistance includes state grant activity of Common Ground High School under programs of the State of Connecticut for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2014. Various departments and agencies of the State of Connecticut have provided financial assistance through grants and other authorizations in accordance with the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut. These financial assistance programs fund the operation of a state charter school.

**Note 1 – Summary of Significant Accounting Policies**

The accounting policies of Common Ground High School’s conform to accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America as applicable to governmental entities.

The information in the Schedule of Expenditures of State Financial Assistance is presented based upon regulations established by the State of Connecticut, Office of Policy and Management.

**Basis of Accounting**

The expenditures reported on the Schedule of Expenditures of State Financial Assistance are reported on the modified accrual basis of accounting. In accordance with Section 4-236-22 of the Regulations to the State Single Audit Act, certain grants are not dependent on expenditure activity, and accordingly, are considered to be expended in the fiscal year of receipt. These grant program receipts are reflected in the expenditures column of the Schedule of Expenditures of State Financial Assistance.

**Note 2 – Loan Programs**

In accordance with Section 4-236-23(a)(4)(F) of the Regulations to the State Single Audit Act, the notes to the Schedule of Expenditures of State Financial Assistance shall include loans and loan activities.

The following is a summary of the various loan program activity for the year ended June 30, 2014:

The United Illuminating Company

Issue Date	September 30, 2011
Interest Rate	0.00%
Original Amount	\$ 23,870
Balance July 1, 2013	\$ 13,427
Payments	\$ (6,465)
Balance June 30, 2014	<u>\$ 6,962</u>



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& THOMPSON, LLC**

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**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL  
REPORTING AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS BASED ON AN AUDIT OF  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH  
GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS**

To the Board of Education  
of Common Ground High School  
New Haven, Connecticut

We have audited, in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, the aggregate discretely presented component units, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of Common Ground High School, a State of Connecticut Charter School, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2014, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise Common Ground High School's basic financial statements, and have issued our report thereon dated October 1, 2014.

**Internal Control over Financial Reporting**

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered Common Ground High School's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) to determine the audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Common Ground High School's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of Common Ground High School's internal control.

A *deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material



weaknesses or, significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

### **Compliance and Other Matters**

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether Common Ground High School's financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

### **Purpose of this Report**

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the entity's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

*Henry, Raymond & Thompson, LLC*

Henry, Raymond & Thompson, LLC  
South Windsor, Connecticut  
October 1, 2014

**COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL  
SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS AND QUESTIONED COSTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2014**

**I. SUMMARY OF AUDITOR'S RESULTS**

*Financial Statements*

Type of auditor's opinion issued:

Unmodified

Internal control over financial reporting:

- Material weakness(es) identified?                   —    Yes    X    No
- Significant deficiency(ies) identified?           —    Yes    X    None reported

Noncompliance material to financial statements noted?   —    Yes    X    No

*State Financial Assistance*

Internal control over major programs:

- Material weakness(es) identified?                   —    Yes    X    No
- Significant deficiency(ies) identified?           —    Yes    X    None reported

Type of auditor's opinion issued on compliance for major programs:

Unmodified

Any audit findings disclosed that are required to be reported in accordance with Section 4-236-24 of the Regulations to the State Single Audit Act?   —    Yes    X    No

- The following schedule reflects the major programs included in the audit:

<u>State Grantor and Program</u>	<u>State Core-CT Number</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
<b>Connecticut Department of Education:</b>		
Charter Schools	11000-SDE64000-17041-84179	\$ 1,890,000
After School Program	268-000 11000-17084-2014-82079-170003	\$ 80,694
• Dollar threshold used to distinguish between Type A and Type B programs		<u>\$ 200,000</u>