



Justin Vernon  
*Head of School*

Marlena Alfonso  
*Director of Curriculum  
and Instruction*

Victoria Crisp  
*Head of Student Services*

Hai Son  
*Head of Operations*

Brenda Pena  
*Head of Family and Community  
Engagement*

---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 9, 2015

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Jane Lane  
617-543-6067

## **Bentley Receives Highest Ranking in School's History**

SALEM, MA – The Bentley Academy Charter School's (former Bentley 3-5) percentile ranking jumped a powerful six percentage points, bringing the school into the double-digits for the first time in the school's history. Schools are ranked across the Commonwealth based on their overall performance relative to similar schools (i.e. elementary). The 2015 Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Accountability Report for the Bentley shows strong improvement in both overall academic achievement and growth. This annual report outlines a school's growth and achievement over a single year, and cumulatively over the past four years. Previously, the school ranked in the lowest 7% of schools; Bentley students are now in the 13<sup>th</sup> percentile, the best in the school's history. In addition, Bentley students of all subgroups (e.g., English Language Learners, High Needs) received a rating of "On Target" or "Above Target" for both English Language Arts growth and mathematics growth for the 2014-15 school year propelling them closer to their four year targets.

The newly-released Accountability Report shows that for the first time, both English Language Learners and Hispanic students met their cumulative four-year targets. This is an improvement from the 2014 results, in which no student groups achieved their target goals. "I'm very proud of all of our students and their teachers. It's fantastic to see our English Language Learners and our Hispanic students making such significant leaps in achievement and growth," Dean of Curriculum and Instruction, Marlena Afonso said.

Kris Wilson, a Bentley Academy Charter School Trustee, added, "Mr. Vernon and Ms. Afonso have been keeping the Board of Trustees informed on how the school is doing this school year. With what we've seen in the latest Accountability Report and what we've been hearing about this school year, we feel like Bentley is poised to move up and out of Level 4." DESE describes Level 4 schools as "the state's most struggling schools based on an analysis of four-year trends in absolute achievement, student growth, and improvement trends as measured by MCAS," – *Mass.gov website*. "The report is certainly encouraging, but we all recognize there is much more work to do. We are clear on what our mission is and what our goal is for this school year. We want to move this school out of Level 4," said Head of School, Justin Vernon.



Justin Vernon  
*Head of School*

Marlena Alfonso  
*Director of Curriculum  
and Instruction*

Victoria Crisp  
*Head of Student Services*

Hai Son  
*Head of Operations*

Brenda Pena  
*Head of Family and Community  
Engagement*

---

Last year, the Bentley 3-5 was operated by Blueprint School Network with Mr. Vernon as Principal. Over the summer, the school converted to the Bentley Academy Charter School (a K-5 charter school within Salem Public Schools) with an independent Board of Trustees.

The school will be holding a series of Open Houses every Tuesday at 8:30a.m. and every Thursday at 6:30p.m. starting in January 2016. BACS is a free public school that admits via a lottery system any student who is a Salem resident. Applications for admission will be available starting in January 2016 on the Bentley Academy website: [www.bentleyacademy.org](http://www.bentleyacademy.org).