



World Learner School

ISD # 4016

SCHOOL YEAR 2015-16  
WORLD'S BEST WORKFORCE & ANNUAL REPORT

**Table of Contents**

1. School Information – Page 3
2. Implementation of Primary and Additional Statutory Purposes – Page 5
3. Student Enrollment & Demographics – Page 5
4. Student Attendance, Attrition & Mobility – Page 6
5. Educational Approach and Curriculum – Page 7
6. Innovative Practices & Implementation – Page 13
7. Academic Performance: Goals & Benchmarks – Page 15
8. Educational Effectiveness: Assessment & Evaluation – Page 20
9. Student & Parent Satisfaction – Page 31
10. Environmental Education – Page 31
11. Governance and Management – Page 34
12. Staffing – Page 40
13. Operational Performance – Page 43
14. Finances – Page 44
15. Future Plans – Page 47

## **1. School Information**

World Learner School  
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### **Mission Statement**

The World Learner School's mission is to create a school that supports an experiential collaborative Montessori learning program that empowers children to unfold their full potential as whole and unique persons in classroom, local and world communities.

### **Grades Served**

The World Learner School serves children who are in first through eighth grade. Combining mixed age levels creates classroom communities. Our lower elementary level combines grades 1-3. Our upper elementary level combines grades 4-6. The middle school of WLS features students in grades 7 and 8.

### **History of World Learner School**

Local families and Jonathan Montessori School staff started the World Learner School with an interest in extending Montessori education beyond the preschool years. Jonathan Montessori has, since 1972, offered high-quality preschool experiences to children 2½ to 6 years old. Both schools are non-profit organizations where parents are highly involved in the leadership of the school and in the classroom support. It was the vision of these families and of the Jonathan Montessori staff that led to the creation of The World Learner School. While several options were considered for creating a Montessori elementary school, the concept of a charter school was the first choice. Charter schools are public schools and funding comes from the State's per pupil allocation, as it does for other public schools. Therefore, tuition is not charged to families for their child's attendance. The families and staff who developed the school wanted to create a learning community open to all families without finances being a concern.

The school opened on September 5, 1995 with one class of children 6 to 8 years old and was sponsored by ISD 112. The class was made up of learners with both previous Montessori experience and those who had not attended a Montessori preschool. Since some of the children were familiar with the Montessori materials and learning procedures they served as mentors to new students entering the class.

The following year, the school expanded to include another class of children 6 to 9 years old. The World Learner School was housed in the lower level of the Jonathan Montessori building and at that point filled both classrooms in that space.

During the 1997-1998 school year, the school added its first upper-level class consisting of 12 children 9 and 10 years old. These students became pioneers, attending class at the campus of The World Learner School in downtown Chaska. With the completion of our building project in 1999, the upper elementary class joined the rest of the school in the Jonathan Montessori building in December of 1999. In January 2003, another building renovation project and expansion was completed resulting in a space of 26000 square feet and the building was owned by the JMS/WLS Building Company. In 2004-2005 we added our middle school which serves 7th and 8th grade students, and we graduated our first eighth graders on June 7, 2006. In 2009, state statutes changed and charter schools needed an authorizer to oversee many

facets of charter school operation. ISD 112 was not an approved authorizer and WLS initiated conversations with Audubon Center of the North Woods about an authorizing relationship. In late June 2011, WLS was approved to be authorized by ACNW. In 2011, WLS and JMS determined the need for more space for each school. In addition, JMS needed to market themselves separately from WLS. Therefore, JMS moved out of the building and down Hundertmark Road to the facility previously owned by a church. WLS refinanced the mortgage of the entire building with the newly reorganized WLS Building Company and began occupancy of the entire building in fall of 2012. In 2014, another small building project added 850 square feet and a 4<sup>th</sup> classroom for our middle school. In addition, other classrooms in the building were slightly renovated to better suit the needs of the school. This year WLS enrollment was at 209 students and we expect to top 216 during 2016-2017!

### **Authorizer Information**

Upon formation of World Learner School in 1995, the school was sponsored by ISD 112, Schools of Eastern Carver County. The relationship between the two entities was cordial and supportive. However, state statutes were changed for sponsors as the title shifted to authorizer. Responsibilities were enhanced and expectations were raised. Through informational sessions with MN Department of Education and conversations between ISD 112 and WLS, ISD 112 determined they did not have the capacity to authorize WLS.

WLS began evaluating available and approved authorizers. Audubon Center of the North Woods emerged as a viable option. ACNW's environmental education focus was a match for WLS's views and mission. In addition, several other Montessori charter schools were already authorized by ACNW, allowing for opportunities for networking and conversations centered around the same pedagogy.

In spring of 2011, WLS' application for authorization transfer earned approval from the Audubon Center of North Woods Board of Directors and the MN Department of Education. The original contract between WLS and ACNW was for 3 years and a one-year extension was granted in 2014-2015. WLS and ACNW engaged in the renewal process in 2014-2015 which resulted in a new 5 year contract between the entities for 2016-2020.

The authorizing mission of ACNW is to ensure quality academic and environmental literacy outcomes for students in Minnesota by conducting effective oversight and evaluation of its authorized schools, providing strategic support to schools, and making informed and merit-based decisions about its portfolio of charter schools.

The authorizing vision of ACNW is to authorize a portfolio of high performing charter schools that instill a connection and commitment to the environment in their school communities, while working towards a healthy planet where all people live in balance with the Earth.

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## **2. Implementation of Primary and Additional Statutory Purposes**

### **Statutory Purposes**

*Improve Pupil Learning* - The World Learner School strives annually to improve the development of each individual child by encouraging self-discipline and self-satisfaction. The curriculum features time for silence and reflection, cultivating awe and wonder, respecting nature, caring for the earth, understanding and accepting others and fostering virtues such as love, peacefulness, kindness and compassion.

The integrated curriculum of the Montessori philosophy encourages children to see the critical relationship among all subjects and among all aspects of life. The teachers follow Dr. Maria Montessori's plan for Cosmic Education – presenting the universe first and then relating subsequent learning to its place in the cosmos.

The program of the World Learner School gives students basic learning skills, confidence, self-esteem, an appreciation of other cultures and peaceful techniques for conflict resolution – qualities that will serve them well in future learning situations.

*Increase Learning Opportunities for Pupils* - The World Learner School's mission statement describes a collaborative and experiential mode of education that promotes students to engage in learning opportunities as the students' interests drive such opportunities. By teaching students according to this mission statement, WLS views the entire world as the learning environment. Students often are inspired by a lesson from a teacher or from a concept from a book. They are then guided to find relevant examples of the lesson in the real world. The classroom then expands into the community to offer increased learning opportunities for students every day.

*Encourage the Use of Different and Innovative Teaching Methods* - The World Learner School features a curriculum and pedagogy based on the work of Dr. Maria Montessori during the late 1800's and early 1900's. Although the method is over 100 years old, Montessori focuses on the individual child and insists that each child will educate him or herself. It is the responsibility of Montessori education to cultivate an innate, natural desire to learn. In the Montessori classroom this objective is approached in two ways: first, by allowing each child to experience the excitement of learning by offering choice rather than by being forced; and second, by helping to perfect all the natural tools for learning so that the ability will be at a maximum in future learning situations. The Montessori method is an innovative and successful way of educating children.

## **3. Student Enrollment & Demographics**

World Learner School enrollment continues to be strong, maintaining more than 200 students in grades 1 – 8. As WLS is a school of choice in a community of good schools, enrollment is a constant area of focus. Families do at times make different choices for children throughout the year, leaving WLS for other school options, including homeschool. WLS closely watches enrollment and budget implications. WLS is located in Chaska, MN in Carver County. The community is an affluent area and as a result most students enrolled at WLS do not meet guidelines for free/reduced status. Most students at WLS are Caucasian, comprising about 85% of the enrollment in 2015-2016. The tables below outline recent trends in enrollment and demographics.

**Student Enrollment**

<b>Number of Students Enrolled</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17 (est.)</b>
Kindergarten	x	x	x
1st Grade	27	27	27
2nd Grade	28	31	27
3rd Grade	24	27	31
4th Grade	23	21	28
5th Grade	35	26	27
6th Grade	23	35	27
7th Grade	25	22	35
8th Grade	24	24	22
9th Grade	x	x	x
10th Grade	x	x	x
11th Grade	x	x	x
12th Grade	x	x	x
<b>Total</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>223</b>

**Student Demographics**

<b>Demographic Trends</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17 (est.)</b>
Total Enrollment	209	213	216
Special Education	13.8%	16.6%	17%
English Learners	1.9%	1.9%	2%
Free/Reduced Priced Lunch	9.6%	10.5%	12%
Black, not of Hispanic Origin	3.3%	3.8%	3%
Hispanic/Latino	4.8%	3.8%	4%
Asian/Pacific Islander	4.8%	7.6%	7%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0%	0%	0%
White, not of Hispanic Origin	88.5%	84.8%	86%

**4. Student Attendance, Attrition & Mobility**

**Student Attendance**

World Learner School student attendance continues to be very high. There are times when students enjoy prolonged vacations that mesh with the mission of WLS to explore the world and engage in learning outside of the school walls. WLS allows for absences for this reason. WLS administration does review attendance patterns of students twice per year in the fall and spring. Families of students who have missed more than 8 days are reminded of the attendance policy via a written letter as a reminder of importance of school attendance. The table bellows outlines attendance rates:

	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>
<b>Overall Student Attendance Rate</b>	95.7%	98.47%	94.5%

**Student Attrition**

World Learner School does maintain student retention rates favorably. World Learner School’s mission and innovative practices are unique to many people. WLS is located in an active and viable community with educated, affluent families. WLS is proud of our strong history of providing a pure, authentic Montessori education to students. We realize that some families have different values for their children and we respect those values. With that in mind, WLS remains committed to our beliefs and pedagogy without reservation. We understand that parents have choices for their child’s education in this area of the metro and WLS is proud to be an available choice. We respect that every family will make the best choice they can and that at times, WLS may not be the choice. WLS will continue to provide an experiential, Montessori education to our community. The table below shows the percentage of students who were enrolled 95% or more of the school year.

2014-2015	<b>96.6%</b>
2015-2016	<b>94.2%</b>

**Student Mobility**

World Learner School maintains a low mobility rate

	<b>Summer Transfers In</b>	<b>Number of students on Oct. 1</b>	<b>Total Mid-Year Transfers</b>	<b>Mobility Index* (as a percent)</b>
<b>2013-14</b>	0	210	7	3.33%
<b>2014-15</b>	0	209	12	5.74%
<b>2015-16</b>	MDE Data is One year behind and not yet available for 2015-2016			

\* Total mid-year transfers divided by number of students on October 1.

**5. Educational Approach & Curriculum**

**Montessori Education**

Montessori is a method of education that is based on hands-on learning, collaborative play and self-directed activity. In Montessori classrooms, children make creative choices in their learning while the classroom and the teacher offer age appropriate activities and lessons to guide the process. Children work in groups and individually to discover people, places and knowledge of the world. Montessori classrooms are specifically designed to meet the developmental needs of children within this age range. Dr. Maria Montessori discovered that experiential learning in this type of classroom led to a deeper understanding of language, math, science, music, social interactions and so much more. Each tool and material in a beautifully designed Montessori classroom supports specific aspects of a child’s development, creating a match between the child’s natural interests and the available activities. Because of this match children can learn through their own experience at their own pace. Children are allowed to follow their natural curiosities that exist in all humans, to build a solid foundation for life-long learning.

**Dr. Maria Montessori**

Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1952) was an Italian physician and anthropologist (twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize) who studied how children develop socially, intellectually, physically, and spiritually. Through her careful observations of children all over the world, she discovered universal patterns of

development which are found in all children regardless of their culture. She believed that each child is born with a unique potential to be revealed, rather than a “blank slate” waiting to be written upon.

Dr. Montessori created an educational method based upon these natural patterns and grounded in a profound respect for all life. Over the past one hundred years, children throughout the world have benefited from this educational approach that supports, nurtures, and protects natural development.

### **The Montessori Philosophy and Curriculum**

*“The essence of independence is to be able  
to do something for one’s self.  
Adults work to finish a task, but the child works  
in order to grow, and is working to create the adult,  
the person that is to be.”  
- Maria Montessori*

The general philosophy for each child in our school is to provide Montessori education, which is an education of independence and freedom. In order to develop physical, intellectual and spiritual powers to the fullest, the child must have freedom. This is obtained in our classrooms through the practice of independence, order and self-discipline. We believe that self-motivation is the single most important impulse to guide the children through their learning.

Each child is viewed as an individual learner, with unique learning style and capabilities. The children are allowed to move through the elementary curriculum at their own pace. This is why the multi-age grouping works so well. Something that may have held little interest for a first-year student, may become fascinating in the second or third year. In this way children experience the freedom to make choices in their work, and develop a sense of control over their education. This also virtually eliminates the child’s fear of being “behind.”

The mixing of ages also helps to strengthen the social development of the child. The relationships formed between the younger and older children are invaluable. The younger children look to the older children as inspiration in both behavior and work. The older children take pride in guiding the young ones through the ways of the classroom. The three-year cycle also helps the children build an extremely strong bond with their teacher. The teacher and child get to know and trust each other in a most profound way.

The teacher is responsible for helping guide the children to find their own motivation for learning. By preparing the environment and observing each child carefully, the teacher “follows the child.” Children expand their knowledge by being guided toward materials that reflect their interests.

The Montessori teacher has, what Maria Montessori calls, a “Cosmic Task.” This task is to work with the children’s imagination to help them realize the interconnectedness of the universe. One of the foundations of Montessori education is to present the concrete, which leads to the abstract. By first striking the child’s imagination with a wonderful story or lesson, the teacher taps into the child’s self-motivation to begin a search for more information.

In short, the Montessori elementary and middle school classrooms provides the children with the freedom to learn at their own pace in a varied age group, with a teacher to help guide them through the curriculum.

### **General Educational Goals of the Montessori Program**

#### ***Goals: Physical Development***

- Developing a body whose movements are mastered and controlled;
- Developing the fine coordination necessary for writing and manipulation of materials;
- Learning sports and games which can be enjoyed into adulthood;

#### ***Goals: Emotional Development***

- An awareness of one's own feelings;
- Sensitivity to and consideration for the feelings of others;
- Developing a good self-image;

#### ***Goals: Intellectual Development***

- The mastery of skills (such as reading, writing, etc.) in order to be able to pursue knowledge;
- An understanding of how to find information and use various media;
- To become a learner who can learn with a minimum of assistance from an adult;

#### ***Goals: Knowledge Development***

- A sense of stewardship of the earth and all life;
- An understanding of the evolution of life;
- An understanding that all people have the same basic needs;
- An appreciation for the variety of ways in which needs are met;
- An awareness of the integration and interdependence of humankind and nature;
- An awareness of the interdependence of people and nations, with a desire for cooperation and peace.

### **Overview: Language**

Language is an important part of the entire Montessori curriculum. Our presentations in language guide the children toward a conscious awareness of language, for its own interest's sake, and as a means to use language more effectively. There is a great variety of lessons in word study, penmanship, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization. Much of the child's experience in reading and writing comes through work in other areas of the curriculum, such as geography, history, botany, etc.

Because children have different learning styles, they are provided with different means for learning to read within the environment. In this way, the children will be able to select the components of reading which fit their learning style and put them together in the way that is best for them.

World Learner School is unique in having a specially-trained Reading Guide, who works with children who need extra guidance in reading. In addition, a Literacy Interventionist works with children following lessons from Montessori teachers as a way to enhance the learning.

**Overview: Mathematics**

Manipulation of concrete and symbolic materials with built-in error control develops sound mathematical skills and guides the children from the concrete toward the abstract.

As in other parts of the Montessori curriculum, experience with a material comes first, then the spoken language or naming. This is followed by the symbolic representation or written symbol. So, the sequence is: the material, related language, and then its symbolic representation, and all along the way there is the essential recognition of the associations among these various features.

**Overview: Geometry**

Geometry in Montessori follows the historical development of the subject. Geometry is experienced in a sensorial manner through manipulation of plane and solid geometric figures. These materials inspire creative activity that involves two and three-dimensional construction of various forms, artistic drawings, and ornamentation.

**Overview: Social Studies and Science**

Social studies and science at the elementary level are integrated in the classroom as they are in life. Therefore, there are no clear distinctions among the various areas that are included in this section. These two classes are two of the main four subjects taught at the middle school level. Even when taught separately, every effort is made to integrate all subject areas.

Montessori biology is structured in such a way as to guide the children toward a means of classification - so that they can structure and relate the facts of biology. The ultimate goal is an ecological view of life and a feeling of responsibility for the environment. The child will see that each individual life on earth is selfish in its own way, but also each serves the good of the whole in its own way. Montessori calls this the "Cosmic Plan."

Montessori history follows the development of the solar system, life on earth, the development of humankind, early civilizations, and recorded history. The child sees the long labor of humankind needed to accomplish all that is enjoyed here today.

The study of geography is designed to show how the physical configurations of the earth contribute to history. The study of geography and physical geography is the basis for the study of economic geography - which shows the interdependence of all people.

The first science experiments are designed to give the child basic knowledge which will make possible the understanding of the development of the solar system, the earth and its configurations, life on earth, and the needs of plants and animals.

**Overview: Foreign Language**

The Montessori teachers integrate Spanish into the lower elementary curriculum. The classrooms have invested in a Spanish Montessori materials that mimic the English Montessori materials and are used to accentuate language skills.

**Overview: Art**

In the Montessori class, the adult aids the children in the development of skills in order that they may

creatively express themselves through various media. In addition to art expression for its own sake, art is an integrating factor in the rest of the curriculum. The child may utilize art in such ways as geometrical drawings, geographical maps, mathematical graphing, or illustrations for history, botany, zoology, social studies, geology, geography, etc.

### **Overview: Music**

Our music program includes singing, the playing of instruments, rhythm, notation, composition, music theory, and music appreciation.

We make a special effort to provide choices in music for students at all levels.

Singing provides opportunities for understanding scales, expression of feelings, and understanding other cultures. Singing provides children with a repertoire of melodies that they can use in the production and analysis of music.

The emotion expressed by a piece of music such as a folk song, a symphony, or a marching tune can be absorbed, felt, and recognized by children. This in turn may lead to quiet listening and contemplation, to expression of the feeling in writing or in art, to the examining of qualities and characteristics of different musical instruments, or to the understanding of an era or a group of people through the music which they produced. This may lead to the study of style and musical form. The opportunities for expansion are limitless. The World Learner School offers other musical opportunities that vary from year to year, either during or after school, such as private instrument lessons, band, jazz band, rock band, and choir.

### **Overview: Physical Education**

The World Learner School utilizes its easy access to the outdoors, as well as the services of the Chaska Community Center as well as other local facilities for physical fitness, swimming and other activities. The children also have daily recess, held outdoors whenever possible.

Biological studies relating to physical education include human anatomy, physiology and nutrition. Practical life areas such as carpentry, sewing, weaving, etc. and movement activities in the music area also relate. A focus on the development of skills that can be used in later life is the emphasis, along with the challenge of competing with oneself rather than competing with others.

### **Subjects: Summary**

The Montessori Elementary and Middle School programs are based on developmental psychology first put forward by Maria Montessori. This type of learning takes place in a multi-aged classroom that offers the opportunity for children to remain with the same teacher for multiple years. This establishes intimate contact among the children, the teacher and the work. It permits a variety of approaches, using dynamic, colorful, concrete manipulatives from which abstract concepts are drawn. Materials are used throughout the curriculum, in math, language, geometry, geography, history, biology, art, music and natural sciences.

### **Special Education Program**

Special Education is programming designed to support students who have been evaluated and determined to meet Minnesota criteria for having a disability that impairs learning. The goal of WLS

Special Education is to remove any obstacles that prevent a child from learning alongside his peers. This can be achieved through direct teaching, modifications to general education and accommodations to the general education environment.

Students are initially referred to the Child Study Team by teacher or parent with concerns about the development of the child. Following data collection, the team will identify interventions that must be completed to determine if specialized supports can successfully aid a student in learning. Following dissemination of the data of the interventions, the Child Study Team will determine if evaluation is warranted.

Students are then evaluated by a multi-disciplinary team that includes a special education teacher, school psychologist and general education teacher. Additional interventionists may include Autism consultant, occupational therapist, speech and language pathologist, teacher of deaf/hard of hearing, audiologist, reading guide, or paraprofessional. Other interventionists are contracted as needed. The evaluation determines if the student meets criteria set by the state of MN.

Following the evaluation that qualifies the student for special education, the team will generate an Individual Evaluation Plan. This plan will include all of the relevant components that support the student through the educational curriculum for the year.

### **English Learner Program**

ESL (English as Second Language) or ELL (English Language Learner) is a program designed to provide students who speak another language with the English skills necessary to succeed in all areas of school and out in the real world. Our goal is to enable them to take full advantage of their education by achieving academic language proficiency in Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking.

Students who are identified as English Learners (ELs) are primarily served in the general education classroom in an inclusion model. Service time and frequency are determined according to scores on the W-APT or ACCESS test annually.

### **Staffing Procedures**

Montessori teachers at WLS are certified in the Montessori Method, with both the main training schools represented: Association Montessori International (AMI) and American Montessori Society (AMS). Philosophy and practice are highly integrated in Montessori training, and every Montessori teacher must make a sincere commitment to the philosophy, to the child, and to self-preparation. All teachers in a public school such as ours must meet or be working toward the general state licensing requirements for teaching as well. There are situations when teachers are in training, either for Montessori certification or for licensure. Each teacher in training works closely with the Director on his or her timeline for completion of training or licensure.

In addition to Montessori certification, all WLS teachers possess MN Teaching Licensure issued by the Board of Teaching.

### **School Calendar and Operational Hours**

World Learner School Board of Directors approves an annual calendar for the district. For FY16, the school calendar has 173 days of student contact and 12 days of teacher and environment development.

The school hours of operation are 7 am – 6 pm. From 7 am – 9:15 am, the Before Care Program offers child care. School begins at 9:20 and ends at 3:50 pm. After Care Program is offered from 3:50 pm – 6:00 pm.

## **6. Innovative Practices & Implementation**

### **Statutory Purposes**

*Improve Pupil Learning* - The World Learner School strives annually to improve the development of each individual child by encouraging self-discipline and self-satisfaction. The curriculum features time for silence and reflection, cultivating awe and wonder, respecting nature, caring for the earth, understanding and accepting others and fostering virtues such as love, peacefulness, kindness and compassion.

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### **Other Programs**

#### *School-Age Care Programs*

The World Learner School offers a before and after school care program for elementary students. Hours for the program are from 7:00 a.m. to 9:10 a.m. and 3:50 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. sharp. General sign-up is done at the beginning of each school year. Drop in care is available on a space-available basis.

WLS School-Age Care Program does consistently employ 2 supervisors for the entire operation of the program. Activities include art and craft activities, free play, and gross motor activities.

*Pre-school Program*

WLS provides education services only to students in grades 1-8. Therefore, there is no pre-school program.

**Successes and Challenges**

*Key Successes*

World Learner School was able to experience many successes during the year. The enrollment continued to be strong and 211 students were present when the school year began. WLS staff worked to accommodate the needs of students through participation in variety of on-site and off-site experiential learning activities. Many students participated in individualized lessons that allowed for remedial instruction as well as advanced instruction throughout content areas.

The WLS Middle School continues to expand and experience great success for adolescent children. The entire middle school space allowed for the Middle School staff and students to enjoy varied and large projects as a result of content learning. The Middle School Odyssey trip to Chicago proved to be a deeply enriching study in the use of public transit, urban architecture and the impact of the Great Lakes on business and commerce. Middle School students successfully implemented a micro-economy in the deployment of several Parents Night Out, providing child care services.

The Upper Elementary students enjoyed a fantastic trip to Deep Portage Conservation Camp right away in the fall of 2015. This 4-day trip allowed for deep community building as well as individual confidence strengthening. The weather was very mild with minimal precipitation. Students and adults enjoyed the wonderful opportunities to learn and commune in nature. The pleasant and the tired smiles that returned on Thursday afternoon were beautiful to witness.

Lower Elementary students were able to go out into the community for a variety of outings and physical education experiences. Visits to local businesses, parks, landmarks and community resources provided an experiential component to the education of our youngest students.

WLS successfully updated our new teacher evaluation process in 2015-2016. The revised process includes a 3-year cycle and allows for thoughtful and engaging conversations about the art and science of teaching in a public Montessori school.

The WLS Board of Directors successfully embarked on a series of tasks to examine the administration of the school including a revision to the job description of the Director, analysis of the director job composite, development of director succession plan, and revision of the performance evaluation of the director. As a result of the analysis of the administration, the WLS Board of Directors successfully created and budgeted for a new part-time Assistant Director. This position will support administration as well as classroom staff in considerable ways.

*Key Challenges*

One of the key challenges of 2015-2016 revolved around the implementation of the revised teacher evaluation system. The system was revised in summer 2015 following initial approval in 2014. The

revision allows for the process to occur over a 3-year cycle that will allow teachers and administration to collect helpful data and offer thoughtful feedback on teaching practices.

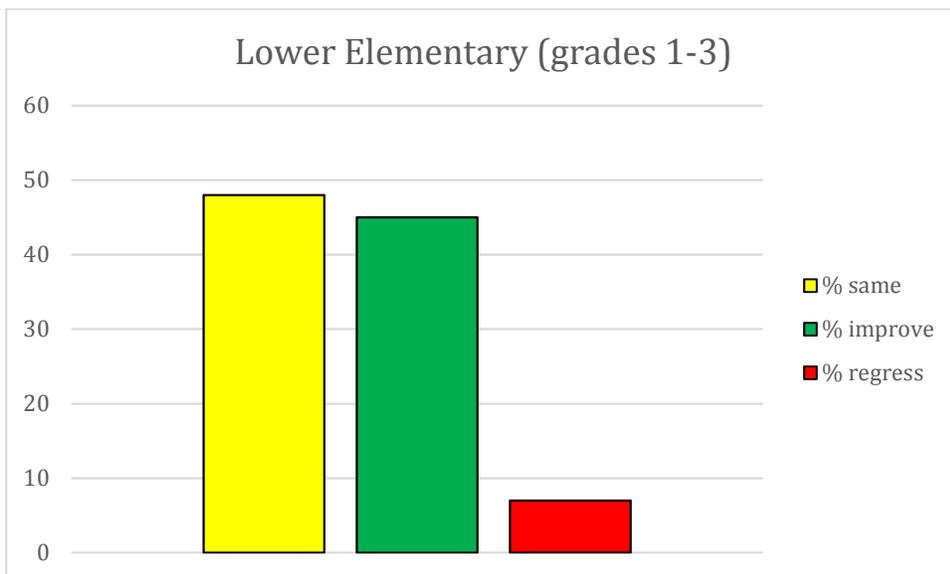
Another challenge in 2015-2016 was stable enrollment. In late summer and early fall, WLS lost about 15 students for various reasons. While the school was able to replace most students, the challenge of integrating so many new children into the Montessori philosophy was difficult for many classrooms for several months. In addition, a couple of grades experienced low waiting lists and were not able to maintain full enrollment. As a result, the WLS Board of Directors did engage in conversations about marketing and retention during the course of the school year.

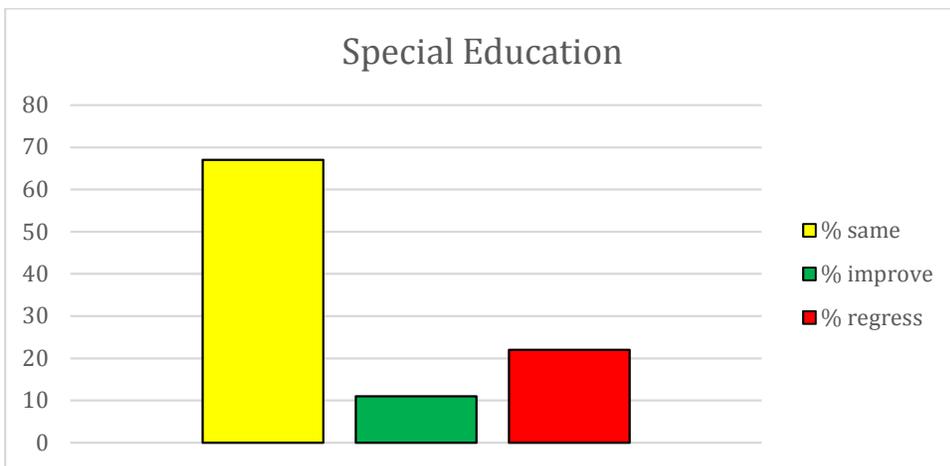
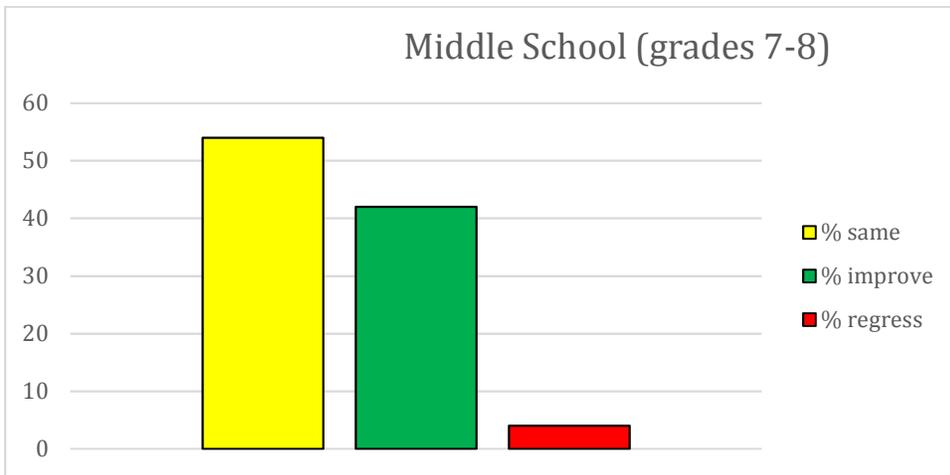
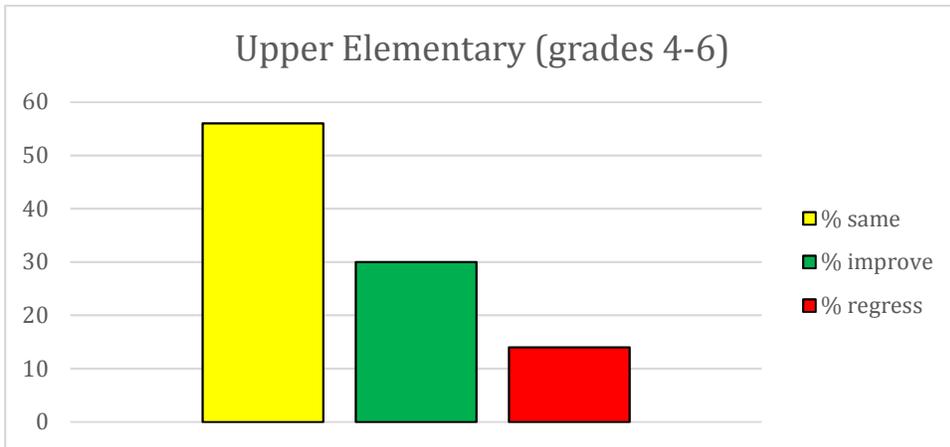
## 7. Academic Performance: Goals & Benchmarks

### Indicator 1: Mission Related Goals

**Goal:** In aggregate, from FY15-FY20 (through winter FY20) at least 90% of students in grades 1-8 enrolled at WLS will participate in the survey. Of those students surveyed, at least 75% will demonstrate progress by the end of the school year.

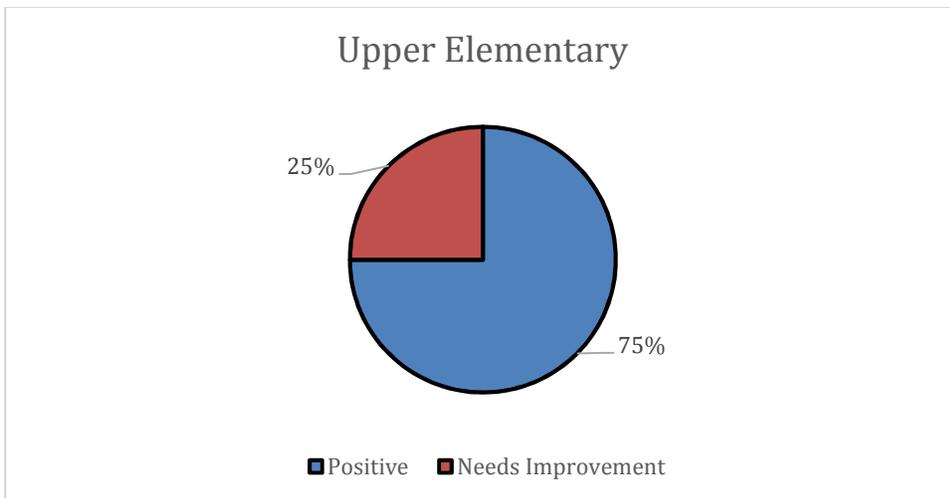
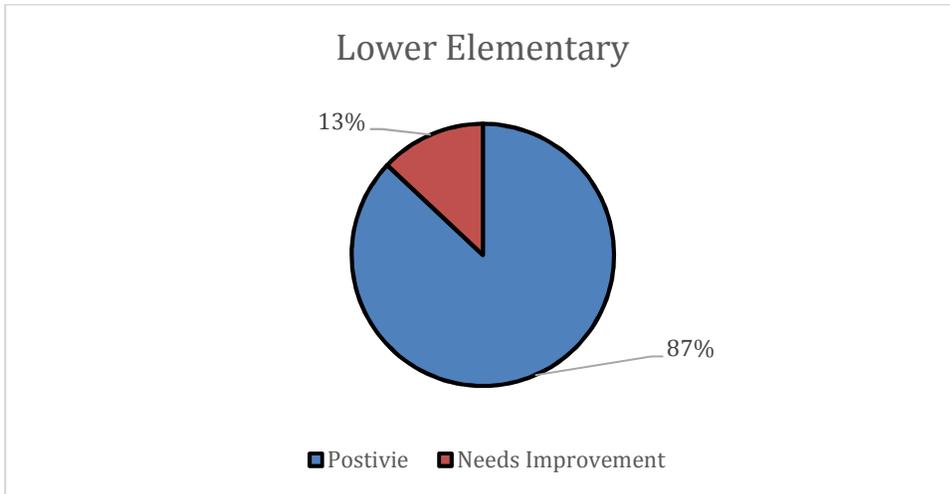
**Key Measures & Results for this Goal:** World Learner School’s mission of providing an experiential, collaborative model of education allows for the development of the whole child. WLS teachers administer a student engagement survey annually that measures student development at a personal level. Annual progress is measured in the fall and spring. Teachers completed Student Independence Rubrics for 95% of students in FY16. Students were evaluated on their level of independence in the classroom environment both in the fall and in the spring. The rubrics were analyzed at the end of FY16 to determine if students’ independence remained the same, improved, or regressed. Overall, 95% of students were evaluated. The majority of students remained the same or improved their independence level throughout the year with 36% of students improving. Forty-five percent of lower elementary students (grades 1-3), 30% of upper elementary students (grades 4-6) and 42% of middle school students (grades 7-8) improved in their level of independence. WLS will continue to work to improve the percentage of students improving their independence through grace and courtesy lessons, individual work plans, and class meetings.

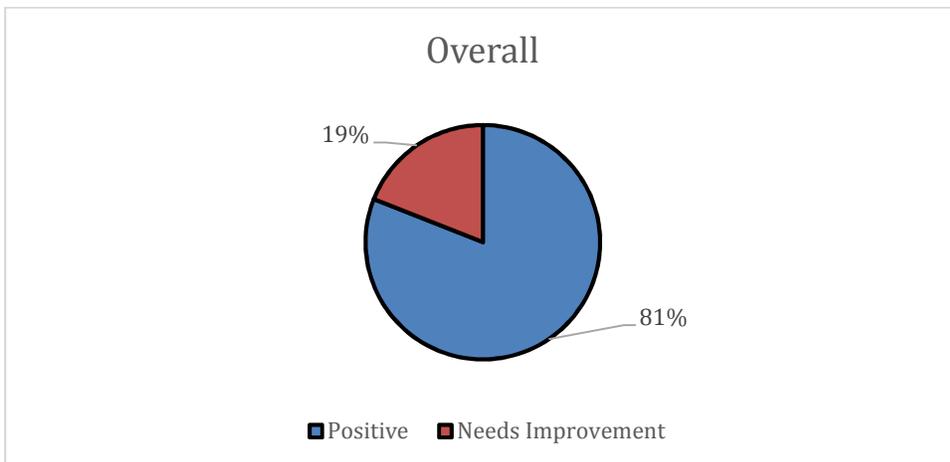
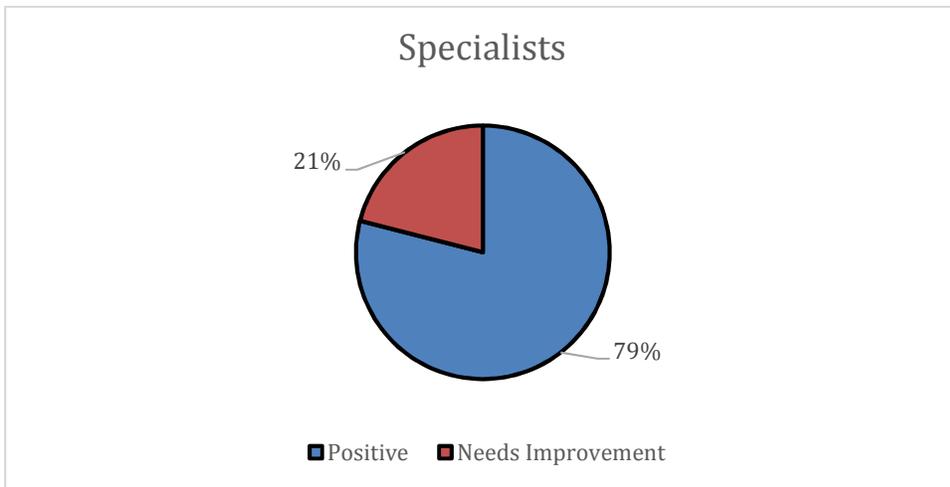
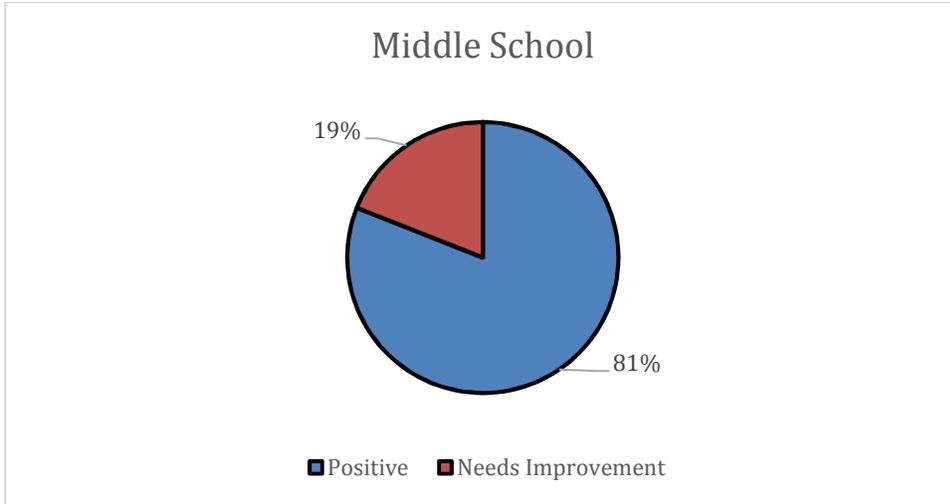




Students are asked to evaluate themselves and their progress as a community member and as a student at WLS. The general survey is used to gather this information. The survey includes questions regarding the classroom environment, the child's feelings about being a community member, and the child's perceptions of the teacher. In FY16, 218 were surveyed in the fall and spring. Lower elementary students reported 86% positively in the fall and 87% positively in the spring. Upper elementary students

reported 80% positively in the fall and 75% positively in the spring. Middle school reported 83% positively in the fall and 81% positively in the spring. Specialists include the music teacher, EL instructor, reading interventionist and special education teachers. Overall, students reported 82% positively in the fall and 79% positively in these classes during the spring. The General Survey indicates that students feel positively about their classroom environment, their teacher cares about them, and feel they are an important part of the WLS community. Classroom teachers and specialists will analyze student responses and develop plans for the classroom or individuals to address concerns. Graphs below represent the outcomes from the survey for the spring of 2016.





**Indicator 2: English Language Learners**

**Goal:** The school does not have a contractual goal in this indicator area as it does not serve a significant population of English Learners.

**Key Measures & Results for this Goal:** World Learner School administered the ACCESS test to two students in 2015-2016. Both students scored 6.0 out 6.0 indicating English Language Proficiency. These students will be assessed with the ACCESS test in 2016-2017.

**Indicator 3: Reading Growth**

**Goal:** Over the period of the contract, WLS students will demonstrate growth in reading as measured by state assessments and nationally normed assessments.

**WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal:**

Reading Well by 3rd Grade

Career and College Ready

**Key Measures & Results for this Goal:** During the 2015-16 academic year, 52% of first years met their projected RIT growth from fall to spring. Students in grades 2-8 were given the NWEA assessment that did not measure RIT growth. The increase in the median RIT score from fall to spring for each grade (2-8) was calculated. See the table below for results:

Increase in Median RIT

Grade	Reading
2	15.9
3	11.7
4	8.8
5	6.2
6	5.8
7	4.3
8	-2.1

In addition, analysis of individual data finds that 48% of WLS students who took the NWEA assessment in fall and spring of FY16 made progress as measured by increase in percentile ranks. The table below outlines grade specific information.

Percent Made Progress

Grade	Reading
1	54%
2	48%
3	50%
4	44%
5	52%
6	44%
7	48%
8	54%

WLS will administer the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress that tracks projected RIT goals for individual student. First years almost met the goal for 2015-2016. Administrators and teachers will examine strategies for improving students’ success in reaching their projected RIT improvement.

In 2016, WLS students were identified by the MN Department of Education as demonstrating improvement in the “On Track for Success” marker. Up 5.3% from 2015, 63.2% of students were found to hit the MDE target. Additionally, 75.5% of WLS students made medium or high growth in reading according to the 2016 assessment. The table below outlines specific data related to this measurement.

<b>READING</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
Percent of students “On Track for Success”	73.5%	64.3%	57.9%	63.2%
Percent of students making High, Medium, and Low Growth				
High	35.9%	19.4%	29.4%	34.9%
Medium	45.3%	46.5%	41.2%	40.6%
Low	18.8%	34.1%	34.5%	24.5%

**Indicator 4: Math Growth**

**Goal:** Over the period of the contract, WLS students will demonstrate growth in math as measured by state assessments and nationally normed assessments.

**WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal:**

Career and College Ready

**Key Measures & Results for this Goal:**

During the 2015-16 academic year, 57% of first years met their projected RIT growth from fall to spring. Students in grades 2-8 were given the NWEA assessment that did not measure RIT growth. The increase in the median RIT score from fall to spring for each grade (2-8) was calculated. See the table below for results:

Increase in Median RIT

Grade	Math
2	19.5
3	13.2
4	10.1
5	11.9
6	9.4
7	1
8	3.2

In addition, analysis of individual data finds that 52% of WLS students who took the NWEA assessment in fall and spring of FY16 made progress as measured by increase in percentile ranks. The table below outlines grade specific information.

Percent Made Progress

Grade	Math
1	56%
2	67%
3	48%
4	42%
5	52%
6	49%
7	36%
8	63%

In 2016, WLS students were identified by the MN Department of Education as demonstrating improvement in the “On Track for Success” marker. Up 15.2% from 2015, 55.2% of students were found to hit the MDE target. Additionally, 77.5% of WLS students made medium or high growth in math according to the 2016 assessment. The table below outlines specific data related to this measurement.

MATH	2013	2014	2015	2016
Percent of students “On Track for Success”	62.3%	61.3%	40%	55.2%
Percent of students making High, Medium, and Low Growth				
High	36.8%	22.5%	27.7%	27.0%
Medium	41%	41.9%	49.6%	50.5%
Low	22.2%	35.7%	22.7%	21.9%

**Indicator 5: Reading Proficiency**

**Goal:** Over the period of the contract, WLS students will meet or exceed the standards in reading as measured by state assessments.

**WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal:**

- Reading Well by 3rd Grade
- Career and College Ready
- Achievement Gap Closure

**Key Measures & Results for this Goal:**

<b>Proficiency Rate, Reading</b>						
	<b>WLS</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Chaska Elementary ISD 112</b>	<b>Bright Water Montessori</b>	<b>New Discoveries Montessori</b>	<b>Swan River Montessori</b>
2015 - MCA III	66.4	59.5	68.2	57.9	65.9	74.1
2016 - MCA III	71.0	59.9	61.9	52.1	58.2	79.2

<b>Proficiency Rate, Reading (MCA III) Special Education Population</b>		
	<b>WLS</b>	<b>State</b>
2015 - MCA III	37.0	30.0
2016 - MCA III	51.9	30.4

<b>Proficiency Rate, Reading (MCA III) Free/Reduced Population</b>		
	<b>WLS</b>	<b>State</b>
2015 - MCA III	33.3	59.5
2016 - MCA III	x	59.5

<b>Proficiency Index, Reading</b>						
	<b>WLS</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Chaska Elementary ISD 112</b>	<b>Bright Water Montessori</b>	<b>New Discoveries Montessori</b>	<b>Swan River Montessori</b>
2015 - MCA III	77.4	69.1	76.4	62.0	73.8	82.5
2016 - MCA III	80.9	69.4	71.9	58.2	66.3	83.3

<b>Proficiency Index, Reading Students in Grade 3</b>						
	<b>WLS</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Chaska Elementary ISD 112</b>	<b>Bright Water Montessori</b>	<b>New Discoveries Montessori</b>	<b>Swan River Montessori</b>
2015 - MCA III	72.7	57.5	54.2	63.6	70.	74.1
2016 - MCA III	66.7	58.9	41.3	47.4	53.1	73.1

Reading proficiency at World Learner School is measured by participation in the MN Comprehensive Assessment for students in grades 3-8. Performance on this assessment continues to be an area of strength for WLS.

In 2016, WLS students made gains in proficiency from 2015, up 4.6% to 71.0 % proficient, significantly higher than the state average of 59.9% proficient. WLS did perform considerably better than Chaska Elementary, Bright Water Montessori and New Discoveries Montessori. WLS students were not as proficient as Swan River Montessori.

Students eligible for special education were significantly more proficient in 2016 than the state average, achieving 51.9% proficiency compared to 30.4% proficiency. This was also an improvement of almost 15% from 2015.

The cluster of WLS students identified as eligible for free or reduced meals was not large enough for measurement of proficiency in 2016.

WLS also analyzed data for students in grade 3 as a measure of the Read Well by Grade 3 initiative. Students at WLS exceeded the state average of proficiency in 2016. In addition, WLS students achieved higher proficiency than Chaska Elementary, Bright Water Montessori, and New Discoveries Montessori.

**Indicator 6: Math Proficiency**

**Goal:** Over the period of the contract, WLS students will demonstrate proficiency in math as measured by state assessments.

**WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal:**

- Career and College Ready
- Achievement Gap Closure

**Key Measures & Results for this Goal:**

Proficiency Rate, Math (MCA III)						
	WLS	State	Chaska Elementary ISD 112	Bright Water Montessori	New Discoveries Montessori	Swan River Montessori
2015 – MCA III	50.0	60.2	64.4	45.6	48.3	67.9
2016 – MCA III	55.6	61.3	63.0	47.9	46.9	77.0

Proficiency Rate, Math (MCA III) Special Education Population		
	WLS	State
2015 – MCA III	33.3	30.9
2016 – MCA III	44.4	30.4

<b>Proficiency Rate, Math (MCA III) Free/Reduced Population</b>		
	<b>WLS</b>	<b>State</b>
2015 – MCA III	18.8	40.8
2016 – MCA III	x	39.7

<b>Proficiency Index, Math (MCA III)</b>						
	<b>WLS</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Chaska Elementary ISD 112</b>	<b>Bright Water Montessori</b>	<b>New Discoveries Montessori</b>	<b>Swan River Montessori</b>
2015 - MCA III	67.7	70.8	77.0	57.4	57.9	75.6
2016 - MCA III	65.6	70.0	74.1	63.4	59.7	83.8

Math proficiency at World Learner School is measured by participation in the MN Comprehensive Assessment for students in grades 3-8. Performance on this assessment continues to be an area of improvement for WLS.

In 2016, WLS students made gains in proficiency from 2015, up 5.6% to 55.6 % proficient, but were still short of the state average of 61.3% proficient. While WLS did perform considerably better than Bright Water Montessori and New Discoveries Montessori, WLS students were not as proficient as Chaska Elementary or Swan River Montessori.

Students eligible for special education were significantly more proficient in 2016 than the state average, achieving 44.4% proficiency compared to 30.4% proficiency. This was also an improvement by more than 11% from 2015.

The cluster of WLS students identified as eligible for free or reduced meals was not large enough for measurement of proficiency in 2016.

<b>Indicator 7: Science Proficiency (and Growth)</b>
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**Goal:** Over the period of the contract, WLS students will demonstrate proficiency in science as measured by state assessments.

**WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal:**

- Career and College Ready
- Achievement Gap Closure

**Key Measures & Results for this Goal:**

<b>Proficiency Rate, Science (MCA III) Grade 5</b>						
	<b>WLS</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Chaska Elementary ISD 112</b>	<b>Bright Water Montessori</b>	<b>New Discoveries Montessori</b>	<b>Swan River Montessori</b>
2015 - MCA III	71.4	59.3	69.3	62.5	43.5	52.6
2016 - MCA III	69.6	61.6	68.7	x	42.3	88.2

<b>Proficiency Rate, Science (MCA III) Grade 8</b>					
	<b>WLS</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Chaska MS West ISD 112</b>	<b>Chaska MS East ISD 112</b>	<b>Cologne Academy</b>
2015 - MCA III	38.1	45.9	44.5	51.8	48.1
2016 - MCA III	52.4	47.5	54.0	54.8	36.8

<b>Proficiency Rate, Science (MCA III) Special Education Population</b>		
	<b>WLS</b>	<b>State</b>
2015 - MCA III	18.2	28.4
2016 - MCA III	66.7	30.2

<b>Proficiency Rate, Science (MCA III) Free/Reduced Population</b>		
	<b>WLS</b>	<b>State</b>
2015 - MCA III	x	32.9
2016 - MCA III	x	34.7

Science proficiency at World Learner School is measured by participation in the MN Comprehensive Assessment for students in grades 5 and 8. Performance on this assessment continues to be predominantly good.

Students in grade 5 in 2016 were more proficient than the state average as well as more proficient than local school Chaska Elementary and fellow Montessori school New Discoveries Academy. Swan River Montessori School did achieve higher percent proficiency than WLS.

In 2016, Students in grade 8 achieved a higher proficiency than the state average but did not perform as well as local schools, Chaska Middle School West and Chaska Middle School East. The difference was marginal though. In comparison to local charter school Cologne Academy, WLS 8<sup>th</sup> grade students were

more proficient by more than 15%. There are no other public, strictly Montessori schools with grade 8 for comparison.

Students eligible for special education were significantly more proficient in 2016 than the state average, achieving 66.7% proficiency compared to 30.2% proficiency.

The cluster of WLS students identified as eligible for free or reduced meals was not large enough for measurement of proficiency in 2016.

**Indicator 8: Proficiency or Growth in Other Curricular Areas or Educational Programs**

**Goal:** The school does not have a contractual goal in this optional indicator area.

**Indicator 9: Post-Secondary Readiness**

**Goal:** The school does not have a contractual goal in this indicator area as it does not serve high school students.

**Indicator 10: Attendance**

**Goal:** Over the period of the contract, WLS students will attend the school at high rates.

**WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal:**

**Key Measures & Results for this Goal:**

World Learner School students were in attendance 94.5% of the 2015-2016 school year.

**Indicator A: Federal and State Accountability**

Below is key data from MN Department of Education’s MMR report card. The MMR system has been evolving at the state level and the system does have its own strengths and limitations.

<b>Multiple Measurements Rating (MMR) is 59.04%</b>	
<b>Proficiency</b>	<b>12.52 points</b>
Weighted percentage of subgroups reaching targets	50.1%
<b>Growth</b>	<b>14.35 points</b>
Average Growth Z-Score	0.0526
<b>Achievement Gap Reduction</b>	<b>17.41 points</b>
Achievement Gap Reduction Score	-0.0983
<b>Graduation</b>	<b>XX.XX points</b>
Weighted percentage of subgroups reaching targets	XX.X%
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>44.28 points</b>
Possible points	75 points

<b>Focus Rating (FR) is XX.XX%</b>	
<b>Achievement Gap Reduction</b>	<b>17.41 points</b>
Achievement Gap Reduction Score	-0.0983
<b>Focused Proficiency</b>	<b>12.50 points</b>
Weighted percentage of subgroups reaching targets	50.0%
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>29.91 points</b>
Possible points	50 points

World Learner School did not participate in the National Association of Education Progress in 2015-2016.

## 8. Educational Effectiveness: Assessment & Evaluation

### WLS Assessment Process

Our general approach to assessment is to recognize the value of assessment tools to inform parents, teachers, and students about skill levels and rates of progress. At the same time, we want to recognize the limitations of each tool, and to use a combination of tools to give a comprehensive and accurate assessment. We also want to integrate assessment tools into routine work, defining a rightful place for them in each child's educational experience.

Here is a schedule of assessment activities that we do at The World Learner School, with a bit of explanation about each:

### Measures of Academic Progress

WLS administers the MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) test, which is used by ISD 112 and a growing number of schools in Minnesota and around the country. The reasons are numerous:

- To coordinate closely with ISD 112 for the purpose of comparing and sharing data;
- To administer a test which is more closely aligned with the Montessori curriculum and the Minnesota State Standards;
- To use a test which is closely connected to learning and to guiding subsequent teaching, rather than a score-oriented once-a-year dramatic and sometimes stressful event;
- To better organize and display our testing data in a variety of ways for a variety of purposes;
- To shift the medium for testing from paper and pencil to the computer;

The MAP test is administered in Reading and Math for all students in grades 1-8, most likely two times per year, in the fall and spring. It is also administered in Science for grades 4, 7, and 8. The tests are designed so that each task is isolated on the computer screen; that is, the student will see only words and pictures that pertain to the task at hand. The format is multiple choice. The test adapts to the level of the student as he/she proceeds. You can infer from it that the student's score is going to be more meaningful as a reflection of the level they were functioning at on the test, rather than a tally of right and wrong answers.

For more on the MAP test, visit this website:

<http://www.nwea.org/products-services/computer-based-adaptive-assessments>

### **General Achievement Tests**

Teachers may opt to administer, in the first days of school, a test that we have developed ourselves which we call the General Achievement Test for Measuring Achievement in a Montessori Environment, or GAT, for short. The purpose of administering the GAT pre- and post was to get an early reading on students' skills, and target weak spots for focused work. We will still be doing early diagnosis of academic skills, but the GAT will be only one way in which that information is gathered. As a kind of parallel effort to continue early assessment which guides our emphases with each child, we will be working more from the teacher side, consolidating and coordinating the way in which we document which child has had which lesson, and the subsequent level of their mastery, among all the 1500 or so Montessori lessons there are for each teacher to give.

### **Conferences**

We consider conferences the mainstay of our reporting plan. Conferences consist of discussion of general performance, the portfolio of work, the student's self-assessment, parent input (we have a form for parents to fill out ahead of time), the record of lessons given to the student, and test results.

### **MN Comprehensive Assessments (specific grades)**

MCA is the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment. This is a standardized test required by the state. Currently, the MCA requires all 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to participate in the Reading and Math Assessments utilizing a computer based model. 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students also are required to participate in the Science Assessment.

The tests are administered in March or April and results are delivered to schools and families in late summer. The scores are reported to parents in a format that compares their child's scores with scores of other children at their child's age/grade level in the state. This test is really a proficiency test, in that it measures general levels of skill in general skill areas. We practice for it, but the practice is in the format, not the content. The content of this test is meant to be so general that children from anywhere in the state should be able to score within the average if they have been attending school and learn at an average rate.

One asterisk on this test is that it doesn't allow for spontaneity, and if Montessori children have rightly pursued their interest in an academic area, they may not have had much time for some other area. In our view, they might be well balanced, but on the test they may have weak scores in an area that they have acceptably made a lower priority. Of course, over time it is our responsibility to guide them toward a more thoroughly rounded balance of interests and skills.

### **Year-End Progress Reports**

We report results from the tests as well as some general performance observations. These are sent out after the end of the school year.

### **Instruction Review, Professional Development and Teacher Quality Assurances**

Instruction is discussed at every staff meeting as teachers engage in Professional Learning Communities, aimed at providing a prepared environment to allow for the Montessori mission of the school to be realized. During years when budgets were tight, professional development involved all staff participating in the same learning opportunity. WLS hired a Montessori expert to observe all teachers and provide feedback centered on an authentic Montessori experience. In addition, a Montessori expert

provided in-depth in-services to teachers, focused on math and language lessons and materials. These opportunities strengthened the entire staff. In future years, as the budget allows, teaching staff will be granted personal budgets for expenditure on experiences that will enhance personal development. This money may be tied directly to areas for improvement identified in the teacher evaluation. All of these strategies improve instruction and provide a professional culture that supports teacher quality, performance and effectiveness and maximizes student learning.

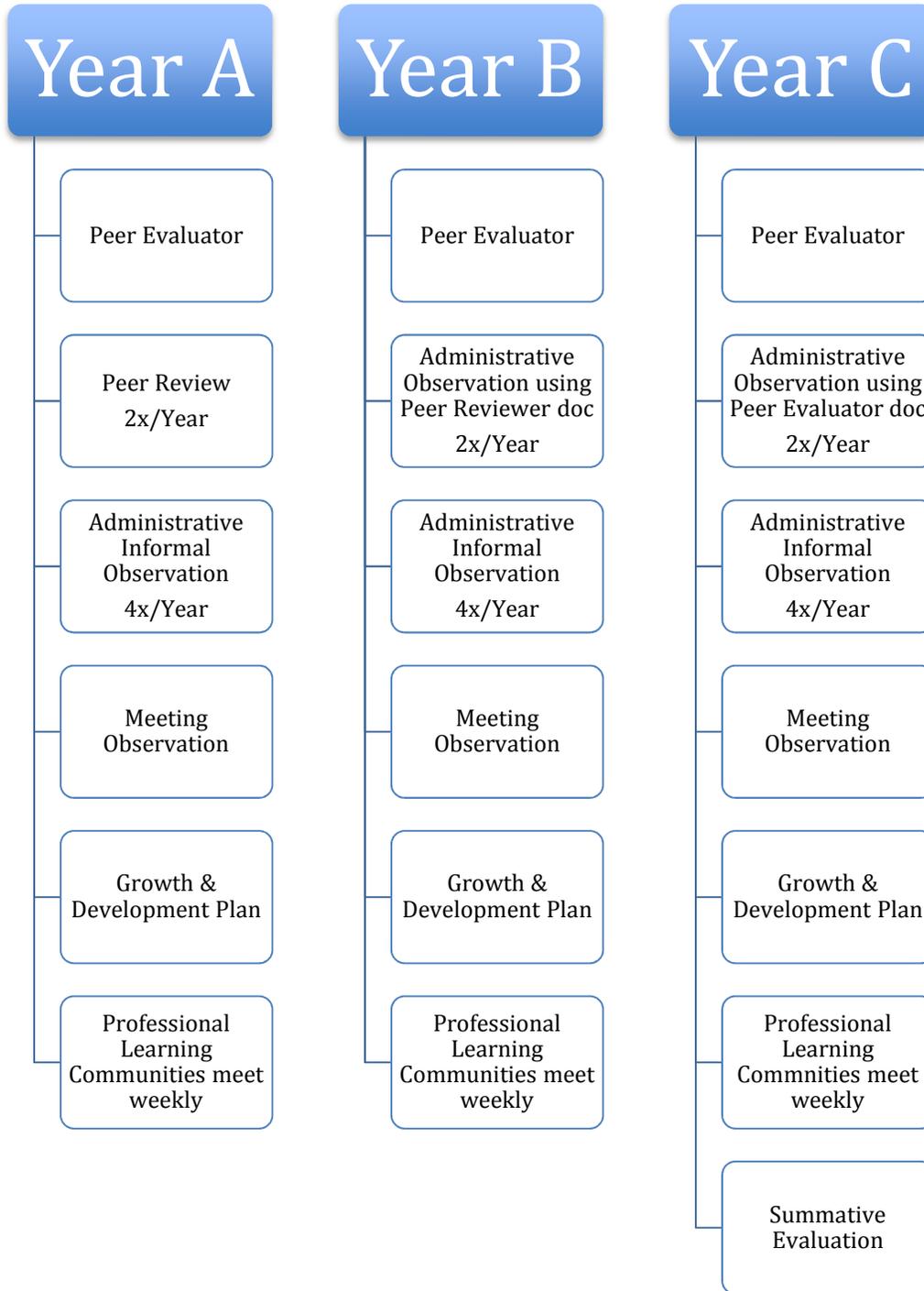
### **Remediation and Acceleration Practices**

Montessori is a pedagogy of education that ‘follows the child’. Many lessons are delivered in small group or individual settings. This allows for remediation or acceleration practices to occur naturally within a multiage classroom. However, there are circumstances in which additional intervention is needed. Based on observations of teachers, portfolio reviews and test data, students may receive additional remediation from a WLS interventionist. In addition, students who need acceleration may participate in lessons at the level above their traditional placement.

### **Teacher Evaluation**

The World Learner School teacher evaluation process is based on a three-year review cycle that includes a growth and development plan, opportunity to participate in a professional learning community, peer review, administrative informal classroom observations and at least one summative evaluation performed by a qualified trained evaluator.

The three-year cycle will be as follows:



**Teacher Distribution**

World Learner School distributes teachers based on experience, licensure, and Montessori credentials.

## 9. Student & Parent Satisfaction

During the spring of 2016, the WLS Board of Directors sent out our annual family survey. Designed to gather information in an anonymous fashion, the survey results provided some valuable insight on the perceptions of World Learner School. Overall, the survey results were very positive. Percentage viewpoints includes:

- 97% agree or strongly agree that they feel welcome
- 99% feel WLS students are respectful
- 97% feel staff and students are mutually respectful
- 86% have one or two children at WLS
- 97% of students feel safe
- 92% feel curriculum meets their child's needs
- 90% are satisfied with academic and social progress
- 87% felt their child's needs were understood and that they felt well informed on progress

The Board also reviewed commentary that provided a more critical lens. This data allows for the Board and the WLS Staff to analyze concrete suggestions for improvement. The most common threads of concern were:

- Desire to have their child pushed/challenged more academically, especially in math
- Lack of communication in regards to exactly where their child was academically
- Need for improved communication/work completion information in Middle School

Our staff have discussed the concerns and talked about ways to improve, specifically in these areas. We do appreciate the information and share the desire for WLS to be the best Montessori school in MN and an excellent school in our west metro area. We will be working on strategies over the course of the school year.

## 10. Environmental Education

The mission of World Learner School's authorizer, the Audubon Center of the North Woods, is to instill a connection and commitment to the environment in people of all communities through experiential learning. ACNW defines environmental education as the implementation of values and strategies that foster learning and create environmentally literate citizens who engage in creating healthy outcomes for individuals, communities, and the Earth. The overarching goal of environmental education is an environmentally literate citizenry. The test of environmental literacy is the capacity of an individual to work individually and collectively toward sustaining a healthy natural environment. This requires sufficient awareness, knowledge, skills, and attitudes in order to create a healthy planet where all people live in balance with the Earth. As part of our contract with our authorizer, we have agreed to the following environmental education goal:

Staff, students and parents at World Learner School will increase their environmental literacy, and develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to support a sustainable, healthy environment.

**Indicator Area 1: EE-based Curriculum Components and Indicator Area 3: Promote Environmental Stewardship**

A tenet of the philosophy of Montessori education is based in peaceful conservation of our environment. Many grace and courtesy lessons are presented to students encouraging care of environment and students are responsible for daily tasks to keep the classroom and school environment clean and prepared for the next day. Classroom lessons and structures are aimed at inspiring students to reduce, reuse and recycle, leaving our community better than it was initially. Classrooms work to individually interpret and apply strategies to achieve the school wide goal. Composting and care for outdoor environments are daily components of WLS life.

**Indicator Area 2: Field Trips to Natural Areas**

Students in grades 4-6 traveled to Deep Portage Conservation Camp for a week-long study of environmental issues in September. The trip occurred during the fall in order for students to observe the various habitats active during the fall, lake attributes, strategic use of wood for wood burning stoves, exploration of physical fall activities, animal survival, and compass navigation in the fall.

Other times the Upper Elementary ventured to natural areas include: Water Treatment Plant, Crystal Caves, and Lake Grace.

Several middle school excursions reinforced environmental education learning. Middle school students spent 4 days in September in a self-sufficient camping endeavor aimed at reducing their environmental footprint and study of natural life in a river area. In addition, a bike hike to Spring Peeper Meadow in May allowed for study of natural vegetation and wildlife in a wetland area. At the tail end of the school year, middle school students fled the urban campus to study river habitat on a canoe trip in June, successfully using ACNW EE Matching Funds. Middle school students completed several occupation units designed at guiding students to make connections between curriculums and themes. In addition, MS students visited Gale Woods farms several times to study vermiculture composting and sheep maintenance. Students also helped with several tasks to help the farm in ecology maintenance. Students in middle school visited the water treatment plant and the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago. Finally, a great addition to the middle school occupation curriculum is the care and maintenance of a small chicken population at WLS.

WLS's youngest students also find ways to explore nature while staying a bit closer to home. Over the year some of the daytrips the Lower Elementary took include: Murphy's Landing, MN Raptor Center, The Works Museum, MN Landscape Arboretum, and a local farm.

In addition, all of our students are able to enjoy nature daily with these local play areas:

*The Back Yard:* The boundary of the school grounds is the walking/bike path, which circles around the back of the school. The playground there has some very nice equipment. There is plenty of space for games. There are also some nice wooded areas where the children can build forts or play games.

*The Field:* This is the area on the north side of Hundertmark Road. It is accessible through the underpass, so generally it is not necessary to cross any street in order to get there. It is a five-minute

walk from the school. There is a baseball diamond and backstop there. The huge open area is used for dodgeball, capture the flag, soccer and many other games. The children are allowed to go into the woods and along the creek as long as a teacher can see them.

*The Creek:* The children are allowed to go near the creek, to wade in the creek if they have appropriate footwear, and to walk on the ice in the winter as long as they are supervised closely by a teacher. The creek is about one-foot-deep at its deepest point. We believe that children's natural attraction to the creek should be encouraged in a safe, educational and fun way.

*Lake Grace:* The Lake Grace Park is about a ten-minute walk from the school. It has a large, open play area, horseshoe game setup, basketball hoop with asphalt slab and a beach. The children can make structures in the sand and are allowed to wade in the shallow water with bare feet in warm weather or with wader boots in colder weather. They are not allowed to play in such a way as to get their clothes wet.

#### **Indicator Area 4 & 5: EE Elective Trend Areas**

WLS Environmental Educator Wendy Szczepanski supported the staff in engaging in efforts to teach about composting procedures and processes to students. Wendy's expertise in the area and dedication to the WLS Compost Bin were key to the success of the program. She engaged in additional reading and study of composting to be able to support WLS staff in the endeavor. Finally, a WLS teacher, WLS Board Chair and WLS Director attended the ACNW Leader's Retreat in November 2015 that featured opportunities for environmental education.

WLS staff also appreciate opportunities to engage in outdoor recreation. Staff explored ways for field trips and other excursions to enhance the exposure and relationships between students and nature.

#### **Indicator Area 6: Commitment**

World Learner School is committed to providing experiences for students in environmental literacy. The board approves and supports funding (including fundraising activities) for students to attend these experiences. In addition, the board and school are committed to providing several activities for WLS Middle School students including fall camping and excursions to local environmental educational locations.

#### **Indicator Area 7: Science Proficiency**

This indicator is addressed in section 7, indicator 7 of this annual report.

#### **Indicator Area 8: Environmental Literacy**

WLS students in grades 4 – 8 participated in a rubric evaluation of their individual understanding of environmental issues and participation in environmental activities.

All students in grades 4-8 completed an evaluation. The evaluation was divided into two parts, understanding of environmental issues and participation in environmental activities. The evaluation was administered twice over the year. Students enrolled in September took the evaluation. Again in May, all students enrolled in grades 4-8 took the evaluation. The results were tabulated and reviewed.

On the section to assess understanding of environmental issues, 75 Upper Elementary (grades 4-6) students took both surveys. Results indicate that 13% demonstrated a decrease in understanding, 39% maintained the same level of understanding, and 48% experienced a growth in understanding. The greatest gain was 2x the fall score.

Of the 44 MS students that took both surveys, 9% demonstrated a decrease in understanding, 41% maintained the same level of understanding, and 50% experienced a growth in understanding. The greatest gain was 2x the fall score as well for this age of student.

WLS teachers reviewed individual responses to the participation section but did not quantify the results. WLS staff will outline a process to quantify the results of the survey for participation in environmental activities during 2016-2017.

## 11. Governance & Management

### Board of Directors

The Board of Directors manages the World Learner School under a contract with Audubon Center of the North Woods. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 124.D10 (Subd. 4) (g) and (i), the majority of the Board may be comprised of licensed teaching staff of WLS. There must be at least 5 members, with one being a parent of a student enrolled in the school and one interested community member, not employed by the school or the parent of a student of the school. As of this writing the Board has 9 members.

The Board creates governing policies and procedures for smooth operation of the school. The Board also evaluates the administration and ensures the school is in compliance with state and federal law. The Board ensures the school is fiscally sound and providing opportunities for academic success in a Montessori environment.

Member Name	Board Position	Affiliation	Date Elected	Date Seated	Term End Date	Email Address
Bob Davis	Chair	Community Member	3.18.14	7.28.14	6.30.16	bdavis@wlschaska.org
Mitra Rahimi	Member	Teacher	11.24.15	11.24.15	8.24.15	mrahimi@wlschaska.org
Ashley Godinez	Member	Teacher	3.24.15	7.27.15	6.30.16	agodinez@wlschaska.org
Patti Quinn	Treasurer	Teacher	3.24.15	7.27.15	6.30.17	pquinn@wlschaska.org
Jody Luck	Member	Parent	3.24.15	7.27.15	6.30.17	jluck@wlschaska.org
Michelle Strain	Member	Parent	7.27.15	7.27.15	6.30.17	mstrain@wlschaska.org
Debi Forsyth	Member	Parent	7.27.15	7.27.15	6.30.16	dforsyth@wlschaska.org

Melissa Bullerman	Secretary	Teacher	3.24.15	7.27.15	6.30.16	mbullerman@wlschaska.org
Amy Tripp	Member	Teacher	3.24.15	7.27.15	6.30.17	atripp@wlschaska.org
Tina Lyder	Member	Teacher	8.24.15	8.24.15	6.30.17	tlyder@wlschaska.org

**Board Training and Development**

World Learner School does have a board policy regarding the development of directors on the Board. The policy recognizes the statutory requirements for Board Training and encourages additional hours of training for each director. WLS Board of Directors engaged with a consultant to provide feedback on board meeting protocol and support the process and tasks related to the Director. The table below outlines information about annual training for the WLS Board Members.

FY16 Board Member Training

Board Member	Governance	Employment	Financial	Additional	Notes
Rahimi, Mitra	1.22.15			Benefits 4.27.15	Appointed November 2014 Resigned July 2015
Davis, Bob	10.7.14 9.19.15	6.11.15 9.19.15	9.22.14 9.28.15	Audit 11.24.14, ACNW Retreat - 11.13.14-11.14.14, Benefits 4.27.15, Board Chair 6.1.15, Executive Director Performance Reviews 6.1.15, Board Boot Camp 5.29.15, ACNW Retreat - 11.13.15-11.14.15, Audit – 11.23.15, Director Performance Review – Yearlong FY16	Took Office July 2014
Strain, Michelle	9.19.15	9.19.15	9.28.15	Audit – 11.23.15, Director Performance Review – Yearlong FY16	Took Office July 2015
Luck, Jody	9.19.15	9.19.15	9.28.15	Audit – 11.23.15, Director Performance Review – Yearlong FY16	Appointed July 2015
Quinn, Patti	10.8.11, 1.22.15 9.19.15	10.8.11 9.19.15	10.8.11, 9.23.13, 9.22.14 9.28.15	Audit 11.25.13, Data Privacy 1.27.14, Audit 11.24.14, ACNW Retreat - 11.13.14-11.14.14, ACNW Retreat - 11.13.15-11.14.15, Audit – 11.23.15, Director Performance Review – Yearlong FY16	Took Office July 2015
Forsyth, Debi	9.19.15	9.19.15	9.28.15	Audit 11.23.15, Director Performance Review – Yearlong FY16	Appointed July 2015
Tripp, Amy	9.19.15	9.19.15	9.28.15	Audit 11.23.15, Director Performance Review – Yearlong FY16	Took Office July 2015
Bullerman, Melissa	1.14.15 9.19.15	7.21.14, 1.14.15 9.19.15	9.22.14, 1.14.15 9.28.15	Audit - 11.24.14, Benefits 4.27.15, Audit – 11.23.15, Director Performance Review – Yearlong FY16	Took Office July 2014
Godinez, Ashley	1.14.15 9.19.15	7.21.14, 1.14.15 9.19.15	9.22.14, 1.14.15 9.28.15	Audit - 11.24.14, Benefits 4.27.15, Audit – 11.23.15, Director Performance Review – Yearlong FY16	Took Office July 2014
Lyder, Tina	9.19.15	9.19.15	9.28.15	Audit 11.23.15, Director Performance Review – Yearlong FY16	Appointed August 2015

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the charter contract and school bylaws relating to operations of the school. No board members have any relation to each other.

The WLS Board of Directors meets requirements according to statute regarding composition with 1 community member, 3 parents and 5 teachers. Open meeting laws are followed. The meeting is conducted efficiently while following the agenda that is published several days prior to the meeting along with all related documents. The board reviews and approves policies and performs the evaluation of the Director. The board reviews all financial documents and approves the annual budget and all budget revisions. In addition, academic information is also reviewed by the board.

### **Management**

In June of each year, the School board modifies or affirms the Director's Job Description and conducts initial discussion with the Executive Director about potential Professional Performance Goals and measures of success for the upcoming school year. In August, the School Board adopts Professional Performance Goals for Director for the upcoming school year, including the measures of success that will be used for the mid-year and end of year formative and summative evaluations. Through the fall the Director engages in tasks to achieve these goals. In December and January, data is collected to provide evidence related to the measures of success previously identified for use in the Director's mid-year formative Professional Performance Evaluation. The school board conducts mid-year formative Professional Performance Evaluation with the Director. In May, data is collected to provide evidence related to the measures of success previously identified for use in the Director's end of year summative Professional Performance Evaluation. In June, the school board completes the Director Professional Performance Evaluation from the prior school year. The school board modifies or affirms the Director's Job Description and conducts initial discussions with the Executive Director about potential Professional Performance Goals and measures of success for the upcoming school year.

In 2015-2016, the Board of Directors hired an outside consultant to review the organizational structure of World Learner School. Through this process, the Board adopted a revised job description of the Director, a Director Succession policy, and a Director Evaluation policy. Throughout the process, it was evident that the work load for the Director exceeded the capacity for one individual. The Board and the Director agreed on a goal for the Director to research and present options to the Board for additional organizational support. As a result, the Board adopted a budget that included an Assistant Director position for FY17. This position will offer administrative support for the Director and Office Manager. It will be a trial position and will require careful budgeting for the position to become a long-term support for WLS.

### **List of Administrators and Qualifications**

Deana Siekmann is the director of WLS and has been serving WLS as director since 2009. Ms. Siekmann began her work with WLS in 2002 as the special education teacher. Ms. Siekmann holds licensure in the state of MN in general elementary education, specific learning disabilities, emotional/behavioral disorders, K-12 principal administration and special education directorship. Ms. Siekmann is responsible for all academic, financial, employment and governance aspects of the school. Ms. Siekmann is supported in administration by Shireen Mahabadi who serves as Office Manager.

**Professional Development Plan For 2015-2016 for Deana Siekmann, WLS Director,**  
The Director will provide leadership, supervision, direction, and oversight to the following:

**Essential Functions and Duties for 2015-2016**

**1. Business and Finance**

Indicators of Success: Revenues and Expenditures are accurate, timely and within board approved budgeted amounts; alerts the WLS board to significant variances and recommends solutions; annual audit is “clean.”

As Measured by: Monthly Financial Reports, annual audit, authorizers annual financial report

**2. Testing/Reporting/DAC**

Indicators of Success: Testing and reporting is done on a timely basis, including reports to the WLS board.

As Measured by: MDE reports and WLS board meeting agendas

**3. Authorizer/MDE Compliance**

Indicators of Success: All MDE requirements and Authorizer Contract requirements are met on a timely basis.

As Measured by: MDE monitoring reports and Authorizer annual operations report

**4. WLS Board Support**

Indicators of Success: Effectively communicates with the board about priorities established by the WLS board; maintains ongoing communication with all WLS board members; accurately reports significant policy data to the WLS board; and provides forward looking guidance for the WLS board’s consideration; maintains professional relationships with all WLS board members.

As Measured by: WLS Board meeting agendas; survey data from WLS board members specific to the above indicators.

**5. Internal/External Communication/Relationships**

Indicators of Success: Effectively communicates important and timely information to internal and external audiences including, but not limited to families, staff, students, and community members. Establishes productive and helpful relationships with families, staff, community organizations and others.

As Measured by: Communications and community relations log maintained by the director that includes the dates and nature of the activities conducted or participated in by the director and a survey of randomly selected members of internal and external audiences.

**6. Human Resources**

Indicators of Success: Recruitment, hiring, training, and support of all WLS staff are accomplished in a timely and effective manner in compliance with all pertinent state and federal laws. Except in unforeseen and unusual circumstances, the school will be fully staffed with well-trained and highly

skilled staff members.

As Measured by: Student learning outcomes as measured on goals established with the authorizer. Document review of recruitment, hiring, and training practices and the perceptions of families and staff as to the overall training and skill levels of the school staff.

### **7. Teacher Evaluations**

Indicators of Success: Teacher evaluations are completed in accordance with the teacher evaluation policy and MDE requirements.

As Measured by: Director maintained log of specific teacher evaluation activities, including progress and completion dates.

### **8. Director Professional Development**

Indicators of Success: The director develops a proposed annual professional development plan.

As Measured by: Documentation submitted by the director verifying participation in the board approved director professional development plan.

### **9. Legal**

Indicators of Success: The director ensures that the school is operated within its legal parameters at all times and is the school's representative in legal matters or when legal questions arise.

As Measured by: No complaints or actions are reported as to the school operating within its legal parameters. If necessary, the director will document any instances when he/she was called upon to serve as the school's representative in legal matters or when legal questions arose during the year.

### **10. Instruction/Montessori**

Indicators of Success: The director provides both direct and indirect support to the instructional program of the school and to individual teachers; coordinates the work of any Montessori related resources that may be made available to staff at the school.

As Measured by: Director maintained log of support activities and a survey of randomly selected teachers about the level of support received from the director.

### **11. School Operations**

Indicators of Success: All facets of the daily operation of the school, including the food service, transportation, facility, and others similar to those, are carried out in a safe, orderly, timely and professional manner.

As Measured by: Survey data from randomly selected WLS staff and family members.

### **12. Other duties as assigned by the WLS board from time to time**

Indicators of Success: To be determined when assigned

As Measured by: To be determined when assigned

### **Specific Goals for 2015-2016**

**1. Research cost effective options to provide adequate and appropriate administrative support to the school staff and to the school community.**

Indicator of Success: Options are identified that indicate the strengths and costs of each option.

As Measured by: Comprehensive written and oral reports are provided to the board that includes all of the requested information. The reports will be completed in time for any budgetary considerations to be included in the development of the FY17 WLS Budget.

**2. Research, and evaluate options to upgrade the outdoor learning space at World Learner School, including potential costs for each option, and a timeline for completion of the project.**

Indicator of Success: Options are researched, evaluated, costs are determined, and presented to the board for approval.

As Measured by: Comprehensive written and oral reports are provided to the board that includes all requested information. The reports will be completed in time for any budgetary considerations to be included in the development of the FY17 WLS Budget.

### **Professional Development Goals/Areas of Focus for 2016-17:**

The essential functions and duties will remain the same as stated in the summary above. In addition, the following specific professional performance goals will be in place for 2016-2017:

**1. Budget Development: Create and implement an annual budget development timeline and process that actively involves the school board and is transparent.**

Indicator of Success: A process and timeline for budget development and approval is created and approved by the school board. The process includes activities during which the school board will discuss and establish budget priorities for the 2017-2018 school year.

As Measured by: Following the board approved timeline and process, including board member participation in the public budget discussions, the school's FY18 Operating Budget is adopted prior to June 30, 2017.

**2. Recruitment of New Families and Retention of Current Families: Research best practices in charter school recruitment and retention of students, develop and implement a plan for WLS. The plan may be multi-year in nature.**

Indicator of Success: The director will research the best practices used by highly successful charter schools in terms of student/family recruitment and retention, and will develop and implement a plan for WLS.

As Measured by: The director will provide the board with the finding of her research into best practices for recruitment and retention of students/families, a written action plan and implementation timeline for it, including any resources needed (financial, human, etc).

**3. Identify Potential Activities, Strategies, or Programs to Further the Board’s Work in Long Range Visioning for the School.**

Indicator of Success: The director will research the contemporary leading edge educational ideas being discussed and/or implemented elsewhere in the World of Montessori Schools.

As Measured by: The director will provide written mid-year and end of year reports on her findings and recommendations relative to future visioning for WLS’s future, for its consideration.

**12. Staffing**

World Learner School students are placed into multi-age classrooms at all levels. There are three classrooms of students at the Lower Elementary level with students in grades 1-3. There are three classrooms of students in grades 4-6 in the Upper Elementary level. All lower and upper elementary classrooms are led by a MN licensed teacher who also is fully certified in Montessori philosophy.

In the Middle School level, all the students are in one general class but are taught in four subject divisions at any one time. These subject divisions are in math, language arts, humanities (social studies) and science. Other curriculum areas are taught through deliverance of standards-based lessons that culminate in a project presentation. The MS team is led by a MN licensed and Montessori certified teacher. An additional full-time and two part-time teachers (both with MN licenses) fill out the MS staff.

Special education services are also fully implemented at WLS with the employment of 3 full-time special education teachers to provide instruction for students eligible for special education. World Learner School does contract for services for a special education director, school psychologist, speech/language therapist, occupational therapist, audiologist, teacher of deaf/hard of hearing, consultation with teacher of developmental cognitive delays, and consultation with psychologist expert in autism spectrum disorders.

Music, choir and band were taught in 2015-2016 by a MN licensed music teacher. Lessons were created in a way to implement the Montessori philosophy. Lessons were delivered in the general education classroom as well as in the music classroom.

In addition to the teaching staff at WLS, several assistant staff were hired to support the teachers and students. Some staff were specifically associated with special education plans while other staff remained general education at large.

The Charts below outline Teaching Staff and Support Staff for FY16 and FY17 respectively.

**FY16 Teaching Staff**

<b>Name</b>	<b>File Folder Number</b>	<b>Assignment/ Subject</b>	<b>Years Employed by the School</b>	<b>Left During 14-15</b>	<b>Not Returning 15-16</b>
Baker-Rantala, Carrie	444585	Elementary	9		
Carlston, Emily	481915	Elementary	1		
Bullerman, Melissa	449853	Elementary	6		
Decker, Ann	282379	Music	14		
Maher, Eva	463737	Middle School Math	1		
Tripp, Amy	475337	Special Education	3		
Godinez, Ashley	447823	Elementary	6		
Quinn, Patricia	412229	Elementary	13		
Gleason, Rachel	468116	ESL	3		
Andy Burns	479962	Middle School Social	1		
Szczepanski, Wendy	421644	Middle School Science	9		x
Waller, Lisa	450631	Elementary	5		
Wilson, Beth	375061	Middle School LA	14		
Megan Barrett	447401	Elementary Relief/Reading	1		
Tina Lyder	487633	Special Education	2		
Heather Guldan	467294	Special Education	1		

**FY16 Administrative and Support Staff**

<b>Name</b>	<b>File Folder Number</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Years Employed by the School</b>	<b>Left During 14-15</b>	<b>Not Returning 15-16</b>
Mahabadi, Shireen		Office Manager	10		
Black, Jessica		Paraprofessional	2		x
Otte, Jamie	456141	Paraprofessional	6		
Pascual-Lee, Bonnie		Assistant	5		
Darsow, Michelle		Assistant	3		
Siekmann, Deana	380028	Director	14		
Squires, Karen		Reading Guide	16		
Johnson, Julie		Paraprofessional	3		x
Riley Baecker, Teresa		Paraprofessional	3	x	x
Gleason, Rachel	468116	Paraprofessional	3		
Rowe, Tonia		Paraprofessional	3		
Williams, Alicia		Assistant	4		
Sherman, Allison		Paraprofessional	1		

**FY17 Teaching Staff**

<b>Name</b>	<b>File Folder Number</b>	<b>Assignment/ Subject</b>
Baker-Rantala, Carrie	444585	Elementary
Carlston, Emily	481915	Elementary
Bullerman, Melissa	449853	Elementary
Decker, Ann	282379	Music
Maher, Eva	463737	Middle School Math
Tripp, Amy	475337	Special Education
Godinez, Ashley	447823	Elementary
Quinn, Patricia	412229	Elementary
Gleason, Rachel	468116	ESL
Burns, Andy	479962	Middle School Social
Forsyth, Debi	364864	Elementary
Waller, Lisa	450631	Elementary
Wilson, Beth	375061	Middle School LA
Barrett, Megan	447401	Elementary Relief/Reading
Lyder, Tina	487633	Special Education
Guldan, Heather	467294	Special Education

**FY17 Administrative and Support Staff**

<b>Name</b>	<b>File Folder Number</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
Mahabadi, Shireen		Office Manager
Rowe, Tonia		Paraprofessional
Otte, Jamie	456141	Paraprofessional
Pascual-Lee, Bonnie		Assistant
Darsow, Michelle		Assistant
Siekmann, Deana	380028	Director
Squires, Karen		Reading Guide
Gleason, Rachel	468116	Paraprofessional
Tiffany Priest		Paraprofessional
Williams, Alicia		Assistant
Sherman, Allison		Paraprofessional

**2015-16 Teacher Professional Development Activities:**

Staff at World Learner School engaged in a variety of professional Development Activities during 2015-2016. Below is a list of activities attended by all staff:

- Medication Distribution, Data Privacy & Mandated Reporting
- First Aid
- Wellness Doctors Presentation
- CPR
- Transportation Guidelines/Van Training
- Staff Retreat about Personalities and Understanding Similarities and Differences
- New Employee Orientation
- Director Evaluation Process
- Special Education Referral

- 403b Informational Session
- Pottery Exploration
- Dealing with Difficult Behavior In-service

In addition, teaching staff participated in opportunities for professional development focused on teaching strategies. Below is a list of activities in this vein of development:

- Teacher relicensure
- 6-week book study on one of two titles – Love of Learning by Michael Duffy, Lost at School by Ross Greene
- Orton Gillingham Overview
- Writing Standards Review
- Math Benchmarks and Math Standards
- MCA Data review and strategy discussion
- Dealing with Difficult Behavior

Individual teaching staff members received professional development benefits in the form of hours and money to grow as professionals according to individual plans tied to evaluation. The following list outlines some of the endeavors in this area:

**Teacher Retention:**

World Learner School retains a high percentage of teachers from year to year. WLS offers very competitive compensation as well as teaching autonomy. Combined with board structure of a majority of teachers and collaborative leadership, WLS is a good place for Montessori professionals to work. The teacher that left WLS in 2015-2016 retired from education. All other teaching staff will return for FY17.

<b>Percentage of Licensed Teachers from 2015-16 not returning in 2016-17 (non-returning teachers/total teachers from 2015-16 X 100)</b>	<b><u>6%</u></b>
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**13. Operational Performance**

World Learner School operations are efficient and rigorous to meet the demands of federal, state and authorizer expectations. WLS materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the charter contract related to all aspects of school operations. Appropriate and safe student transportation practices are followed. WLS maintains food service and school nursing compliance and has an appropriate emergency action plan. Admissions and hiring procedures are in line with the rights of individuals and do not violate any civil liberties. Annual background checks are completed on all employees and volunteers. WLS engages in complete and compliant reporting requirements through various entities. A recent evaluation of WLS operations by authorizer Audubon Center of the North Woods found no evidence of non-compliance in any area of operations.

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the charter contract relating to overall operations of the school.

Reporting of all relevant requirements to the ACNW, MDE and other agencies is at 100% compliance including all submissions to EpiCenter, ACNW’s reporting system. In addition, WLS completes all

MDE reports including MARSS (student record system), STAR (teacher reporting record system), DIRS (student discipline reporting system), UFARS and EDRS (enrollment and financial reporting systems), and successful lease aid applications. WLS is able to maintain payroll success through a relationship with PayChex and our business manager to pay taxes and employee benefits timely and correctly. The WLS website is compliant with statutory and authorizer expectations.

WLS maintains appropriate fire inspections and fire records including all drills. The school facility and grounds are maintained well with full compliance with fire code. The physical space provides a safe, positive learning environment for children. The emergency management plan is updated yearly. In 2012-2013, WLS authorized the expenditure to place a protective 3M film over all ground level windows to thwart intrusions. In addition, Motorola radios were purchased for staff to utilize within and outside of the building to increase communication and safety.

Student due process is maintained and privacy rights of students and staff is respected. This includes provisions and procedures for protection of civil rights and student's liberties, including First Amendment protections and the Establishment Clause restrictions prohibiting public schools from engaging in religious instruction. WLS conducts discipline pursuant to the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act and maintains the security of records and provides access to students records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and other applicable authorities.

## **14. Finances**

For questions regarding school finances and for complete financials for 2015-16 and/or an organizational budget for 2016-17, contact:

World Learner School  
112050 Hundertmark Road  
Chaska, MN 55318

World Learner School contracts with a business management company, SandMark Services, LLC. Sandy Schmidt is the business manager for WLS from SandMark Services, LLC.

World Learner School (WLS) was audited by an independent auditor and the Board of Directors is scheduled to approve the audited Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016 at the October 2016 Board meeting. There were no findings during this audit cycle. The audit will be submitted to MDE and ACNW by the December 31, 2016 compliance date. World Learner School also earned the MDE School Finance Award for the past several years.

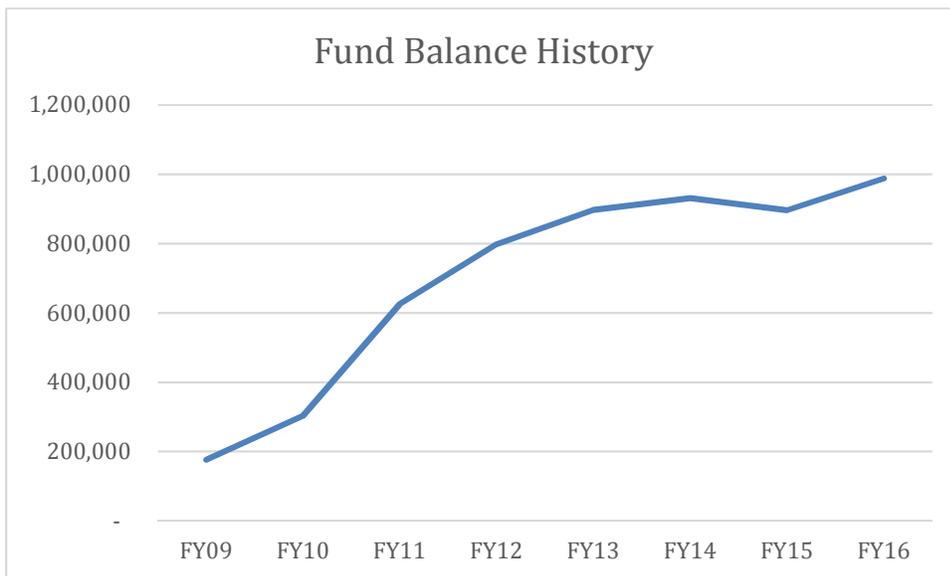
### **Overview**

WLS maintained a positive cash flow during the fiscal year and did not have a need to access a line of credit. WLS did invest in several CD's during the year to ensure that the school's accounts were insured according to FDIC limits and MN statute. Revenue and expenditures are outlined in the table below. The FY16 Fund Balance Reserve for all funds is \$988,178. This is an increase of \$91,374 from the prior year.

<b>FY16 Finances</b>	<b>Fund 1</b>	<b>Fund 2</b>	<b>Fund 4</b>
Total Revenues	2,210,267	29,889	31,240
Total Expenditures	2,103,478	29,889	46,655
Net Income	106,788	-0-	(15,415)
Total Fund Balance	847,666	-0-	140,512

Executing financial oversight that results in a healthy fund balances will help the school remain intact and highly effective during the future tumultuous years. The School receives the majority of its funding from the State of MN. Funding is generated through the several complex formulas based on our enrollment (ADM).

The School’s enrollment met its target of 220 pupil units or WADM as had been noted in the revised budget plan. Due to enrollment drops during the year, the School had revised its plan. The School added students from its waiting list and reduced its original plan by 3.80 WADM. The chart below displays WLS’s fund balance history and the positive growth.



**Revenues**

The majority of the General Fund revenue is received from the State of MN and is generated through complex formulas based on the School’s average daily membership (ADM) and weighting of the membership by grade level (WADM) also known as pupil units.

The General Fund revenue was better than planned by \$22,500. This was mostly due to the implementation of the Sp Ed 3<sup>rd</sup> party billing initiative for Sp Ed students with various health needs. Due to its first year of implementation it was unknown how much revenue might be generated. This revenue is required to be spent on future Sp Ed costs and will become part of the next year Sp Ed budget expenditures.

The Food Service Fund receives the majority of its revenue from student sales for the lunch and milk program. The original budget had not been revised during the fiscal year. The Food Service Fund revenue overall was \$1,320 better than anticipated. Due to this additional revenue,

the School was able to reduce the amount of funds transferred from General Fund for the shortfall of the Food Service program. The School had anticipated an increase in federal funding for the milk program and had reduced the price of the milk tickets accordingly. The additional federal funding was able to exceed the lower revenue from the reduced prices.

The School operates the Community Service Fund for The Before and After Care School Program. This fund generates revenue based on fees established for the program. The Community Service Fund revenue was \$5,240 better than anticipated. The Board had revised the revenue budget down by \$15,300 due to less participation in the program but had reduced the budget \$5,240 more than required. A survey has been conducted with parents to help anticipate future participation of the program.

### **Expenses**

The majority of the expenditures for the school's General Fund is staff compensation and facilities. General Fund expenditures during this fiscal year, after spending the past couple of years focused on facilities improvement, focused on developing the Charter School's education program, curriculum and materials, and supporting an administrative and service structure to manage, support and monitor achievement of the Charter School's education goals and mission. The Board and Administration set implemented the planned expansion of the leadership team for the next fiscal year to provide added resources to staff on academic goals. In addition, plans for an outdoor environment project and enhanced environmental academics planned for the coming fiscal year were engaged in coordination with the Community Service Fund.

Food Service Fund expenditures were within \$52 of the overall budget. The original budget had not been revised during the fiscal year.

Community Service Fund expenditures were less than the revised budget by \$825. Employee compensation was less by \$440 and supplies less by \$385. Although participation has decreased in the Before and After school program the employee compensation and supplies remains fairly stable due to the required safety of the students in the program. The Board plans to monitor participation throughout the next fiscal year.

### **Net Income and Fund Balance**

The overall General Fund (Fund 1) fund balance increase of \$106,788 was better than the revised budget plan by \$70,529. This increase can be attributed to approximately \$20,000 in revenue from SpEd 3<sup>rd</sup> party billing and conservative spending of approximately \$50,000 mostly in the areas of School support, Instructional support and less Sp Ed costs related to students IEPs. The ending General Fund balance of \$847,666 at fiscal year-end represents 40% of its annual operating expenditures and aligns with the long-range planning to offset vulnerabilities, meet unexpected cash flow needs and meet the facility bonded debt ratio.

The Food Services Fund (Fund 2) was basically on target with the revised budget plan for the year. The Community Services Fund (Fund 4) fund balance improved approximately \$6,000 over the revised budget plan.

Overall, the School's financial health is very good. The Board and Administration follow good budget planning practices and monitors to stay on track.

### **World's Best Work Force Budget (WBWF)**

WLS resources for the WBWF initiative can be found in many areas of the school's financials:

- Technology resources (computers, software and contracted services) provided for the enhancement of academic learning and included NWEA testing and Follet software
- Staffing resources included a Testing Coordinator, time allowance for parent/teacher conferences, ELL licensed teacher as needed, and small group delivery of academic lessons. WLS does employ a full time interventionist to support reading initiatives. In addition, for FY16 a part-time Secondary Teacher Assistant was added to allow additional time for licensed staff to work with students.
- Professional Development resources provided to all instructional staff.
- Environmental and field trip activities provided for enhanced and hands on education.
- Various education units at the Secondary level to explore interest and future career opportunities.

## **15. Future Plans**

World Learner School passed a budget in June 2016 that included some significant future plans for the school.

During summer 2016, WLS will embark on a multi-phase project to enhance the backyard environment of the school. Phase 1 will be implemented during summer 2016 and will include an \$80000 improvement to the backyard, mainly related to drainage and water management. This will allow for the backyard play area to be accessible and minimize the muddy and wet status of the yard. Natural play structures (boulders and logs) will be inserted as an erosion barrier on the hillside, sand will be laid at the bottom of the hill, drain tile will be inserted to lead water away from the building to rain gardens and grass will be planted and sod installed to stabilize the yard. Future phases will be implemented as funds are available.

Another significant addition to the WLS FY2017 budget was the inclusion of an Assistant Director. Some of the main supports this position will provide include testing administration, interventions for students, parent education, PTO liaison, staff development, environmental and instruction observation, operational support. This position was identified as needed through the Board work with an outside consultant during fall of 2015.

WLS will be investing in more technology in 2016-2017. 25 Chromebooks were purchased in summer of 2016. These devices will be used for testing throughout the year, allowing classroom devices to remain available for student and teacher use during testing. In addition, the Chromebooks will be available on a cart for classrooms to use for large group lessons related to technology, typing, or other reasons that technology would be helpful.