

2015–2016 Programmatic Profile and Educational Performance

Report Date: October 2016



Milwaukee Math and Science Academy

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This report includes text from Milwaukee Math and Science Academy's student/parent handbook and/or staff handbook. CRC obtained permission from the school to use this text for the purposes of this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
for
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy
2015–16

This is the fifth annual report on the operation of Milwaukee Math and Science Academy (MMSA). It is a result of intensive work by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC), MMSA staff, and the Children’s Research Center (CRC). Based on the information gathered and discussed in the full report, CRC has determined the following findings.

I. CONTRACT COMPLIANCE SUMMARY

MMSA met or substantially met all of the educational provisions in its contract with the City of Milwaukee and subsequent requirements of the CSRC. One teacher hired in mid-January 2016 did not hold a current license or permit as of the date of this report.

See Appendix A for a list of contract provisions and report page references.

II. EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

A. Local Measures

1. Primary Measures of Academic Progress

CSRC requires the school to track student progress in reading, writing, mathematics, and special education throughout the year to identify students in need of additional help and to assist teachers in developing strategies to improve the academic performance of all students.

This year, MMSA’s local measures of academic progress resulted in the following.

Reading:

Overall, 49.8% (134 of 269) of K5 through eighth-grade students who took the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests in the fall met their target reading score on the spring test administration.

Math:

Overall, 61.3% (165 of 269) of K5 through eighth-grade students who took the MAP in the fall met their target math score on the spring test administration.

Writing:

More than half (56.1%, or 151 of 269) of the K5 through eighth graders who completed both a fall and spring writing sample increased their average score by at least one point on the spring writing sample.

Special Education:

Most (18 of 20, or 90.0%) of the students met or made progress on at least 75.0% of the goals at the time of their annual Individualized Education Program (IEP) review.

2. Secondary Measures of Academic Progress

To meet City of Milwaukee requirements, MMSA identified measurable education-related outcomes in attendance, parent involvement, and special education records. Results are described below.

- Average student attendance was 91%, exceeding the school's goal of 90.3%.
- Overall, parents of 192 (67.4%) of 285 students attended at least two family-teacher conferences, falling short of the school's goal of 75.0%.
- MMSA developed and maintained records for all special education students.

B. Year-to-Year Academic Achievement on Standardized Tests

MMSA administered all required standardized tests noted in their contract with the City of Milwaukee. However, data regarding year-to-year academic achievement for fourth- through eighth-grade students on Department of Public Instruction (DPI) standardized tests are not available this year due to the discontinuance of the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE).

One year-to-year measure that can be reported is the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) reading benchmark assessment for second graders. On that assessment, 100% of the second graders who were at or above the benchmarks at the end of first grade (spring of 2015), remained at or above the benchmark in spring of 2016.

C. School Scorecard

MMSA scored 78.6% (C+) on the CSRC scorecard this year, which places the school at the "Promising/Good" level. This compares with 72.6% on the 2014–15 scorecard, 66.4% on the 2013–14 scorecard, and 64.4% on the 2012–13 scorecard.

III. SURVEY/INTERVIEW RESULTS

Every other year, CRC conducts parent surveys and interviews board members, teachers, and students to obtain feedback on their perceptions about the school. This year, parents and students were offered the ability to complete their surveys online. Teachers and board members were interviewed personally. Response rates and key results are included below.

- More than half (55.7%, or 117 of 210) of MMSA families completed surveys. Of those:
 - » Most (92.3%) would recommend this school to other parents; and
 - » More than three quarters (86.3%) rated the school's overall contribution to their child's learning as "excellent" or "good."
- Most of the 44 seventh- and eighth-grade students who completed surveys indicated:

- » They had improved their reading and math abilities;
- » The school had afterschool activities; and
- » The marks they received on their classwork, homework, and report cards were fair.
- Three of the four MMSA board members participated in interviews. Of those:
 - » All three rated the school as “good” overall; and
 - » Their main suggestion for school improvement was increasing financial resources.
- Thirteen instructional staff were interviewed.
 - » These teachers had been teaching at MMSA for one to three years.
 - » Teacher opinions regarding school climate included the following.
 - More than half of the teachers said that adults in the school respect students and their different points of view.
 - Three quarters agreed that staff typically work well with one another.
 - More than half agreed that all families are encouraged to become involved in school.
 - » Eleven of the teachers indicated that the administrative leadership at the school was a very important reason for continuing to teach at MMSA; the other top “very important” reasons were the age/grade level of the students and the discipline.
 - » Teacher opinions regarding overall school performance included the following.
 - The student-teacher ratio, individual teacher performance, and progress toward becoming a high-performance school were primarily “good” or “excellent.”

Eight of the 13 teachers rated adherence to discipline policy, parent involvement, and shared leadership as “fair” or “poor” according to eight of the 13 teachers interviewed.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The CSRC placed MMSA on probation with six specific conditions at its meeting on December 16, 2014. The conditions for probation were stated in a letter from the CSRC to the school's leadership dated January 6, 2015. In the fall of 2015, the CSRC reviewed the school's progress and decided to extend the probation through the first semester of the 2015–16 school year. A copy of the probation extension letter, dated October 30, 2015, is included in Appendix E.

MMSA addressed all of the recommendations for school improvement included in the 2014–15 academic reports. The school also met all of the CSRC's conditions of the probation extension, and the school's probationary status was lifted at the CSRC meeting on February 24, 2016. At this same meeting, the CSRC approved a five-year extension of the school's charter contract with the city.

Based on results in this report and in consultation with school staff, CRC recommends that the school continue a focused school improvement plan by engaging in the following activities for the 2016–17 academic year.

- Continue to focus on strategies and professional development in the areas of reading and writing.
- Continue to implement the culture of positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) and other strategies to reduce the incidence of in-school and out-of-school suspensions.
- Continue to focus professional development and classroom strategies to meet the needs of English as a Second Language (ESL) students.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ONGOING MONITORING

The school adopted strategies to ensure that all of the recommendations for school improvement in the 2014–15 report were implemented, and the school met or substantially met all of the provisions of its contract with the City of Milwaukee. In addition, MMSA scored 78.6% (C+) on the CSRC scorecard for 2015–16, indicating the school is at the promising/good level. This compares with 72.6% the previous year. Because of the solid trend of continuous growth on the multiple measures scorecard and the school's ability to meet all of the other recommended and required conditions, CRC recommends that the school continue receiving regular annual academic monitoring and reporting.

I. INTRODUCTION

This is the fifth annual program monitoring report to address educational outcomes for Milwaukee Math and Science Academy (MMSA), one of 10 schools chartered by the City of Milwaukee for the 2015–16 academic year. This report focuses on the educational component of the monitoring program undertaken by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) and was prepared as a result of a contract between CSRC and the Children’s Research Center (CRC).¹

In order to gather the information presented in this report, CRC staff:

- Assisted the school in developing its student learning memorandum (or “learning memo”);
- Visited the school in the fall to conduct a structured interview with the principal and the instructional coordinator and to clarify the data requirements and data submission process;
- Made additional site visits during the year to observe classroom activities, student-teacher interactions, parent-staff exchanges, and overall school operations.
- Conducted a structured interview with the principal and the instructional coordinator/dean of students at the end of the school year to review the year and develop initial recommendations for school improvement;
- Read case files for selected special education students to ensure that individualized education programs (IEPs) were up to date;
- Verified instructional staff licensure utilizing the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) website;
- Accompanied the chair of the CSRC in attending an MMSA board of directors meeting;
- Interviewed teachers and other instructional staff at the school using a structured interview guide;
- Contacted all members of the school’s board of directors for interviews, which they conducted with all respondents using a structured interview guide;
- Attempted to survey parents of all students enrolled in the school with a survey offered in paper form or online and attempted at least two follow-up phone contacts for parents who did not submit a survey; and

¹ CRC is a nonprofit social science research organization and a center of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency.

- Conducted an online survey process for the seventh- and eighth-grade students.

The school provided electronic and paper data to CRC. Data were compiled and analyzed by CRC, with results presented in this report.

II. PROGRAMMATIC PROFILE

Milwaukee Math and Science Academy
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Milwaukee, WI 53212

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www.mmsacademy.org

Principal 2015–16 Academic Year: Mr. David Chief

MMSA is located on the north side of the City of Milwaukee and is the first school in Wisconsin to be operated by Concept Schools, a nonprofit educational management organization based in Chicago. Concept Schools manages more than 30 schools throughout the Midwest that are chartered through their local city in order to provide quality education to local residents. The Concept model is designed to provide a rigorous college preparatory curriculum with a particular emphasis on achievement in mathematics, science, and technology.²

A. School Management and Board of Directors

MMSA is governed locally by a volunteer board of directors. The board, along with Concept Schools, has ultimate responsibility for the success of the school and is accountable directly to the City of Milwaukee and DPI to ensure that all terms of the school's charter are met. The board meets on a regular basis.

² Concept Schools website: www.conceptschoools.org

The school's management team consists of the principal, two deans of students, and an instructional coordinator. Opportunities for management support are also provided by Concept Schools staff. Of note is that this year represents the third year the school has been led by the same principal; it is the second year under the leadership of the same instructional coordinator.

At the beginning of the year, the school's board of directors consisted of five members, with the chair and the vice-chair/treasurer serving this year and the past three years. Two of the remaining three board members were there for the 2015–16 school year, and one moved out of state during the year.

B. Educational Methodology

1. Philosophy (Mission and Vision)³

MMSA fosters an environment of inquiry and a love of learning to prepare students to thrive in STEM-focused high schools, colleges, and the world. The school's vision is for its students to enter high school ready to tackle any academic challenge and excel in the STEM subjects. Specifically, as listed in the school's 2015–16 handbook, the school aims to:

- Meet and exceed the national norms on Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments;
- See a student attendance rate of 93% and a student retention rate of 90%;
- Establish an effective character education program and embed it in curriculum;
- Maintain a high staff retention rate;
- Provide excellent parent and student satisfaction;
- Provide engaging, diverse, and effective extracurricular activities; and
- Involve parents and the community in productive ways.

³ From the school's website: www.mmsacademy.org

MMSA exists for the welfare and dignity of each child. Education is student centered, and each child is recognized as a unique individual with unique interests, needs, and abilities. MMSA aims to develop responsive, productive, and civic-minded youth by inspiring them to follow their dreams while making the world a better place for themselves and others. MMSA is focused on core knowledge and essential skills so that children may achieve the mastery upon which further learning will be built. Another purpose of the school is to foster productive attitudes toward work, family, and community. When students have a positive attitude toward school, their perception of “school” transforms. MMSA will strive to lead each and every student toward these accomplishments by using a curriculum aligned to the Wisconsin Academic Standards, which is essential to future success in school and at work. The standards are reinforced and reviewed to prepare students for standardized tests. Both in-class preparation and afterschool instruction are provided to ensure a higher level of achievement for each student.

2. Educational Programs and Curriculum

Beginning in the very early grades, MMSA prepares students for college by creating a learning environment of high expectations and standards. All students are exposed to a rigorous curriculum in subjects like language arts, physical education, and social studies. MMSA provides an extra emphasis on math, science, and technology to prepare students to be competitive in the global world. Graduation requirements, discipline, promotion policies, and homework policies all reflect high standards.

In order for students to succeed, MMSA provides a comprehensive support system to ensure success for all. This includes, but is not limited to, before- and afterschool tutoring, peer tutoring, Saturday schools, summer/winter programs, and pull-out programs.

Students are assessed on an ongoing basis, every six to nine weeks, to determine their growth and improvement. Teachers then analyze the assessment results to develop specific strategies, within

the classroom and academic support, to ensure that all students attain mastery level on what they are learning in the classroom. In an effort to encourage students, parents have online access to such assessment data in order to see their child's progress throughout the school year.

Second- through eighth-grade students are assigned a letter grade following a standard numerical scale associated with each letter. Kindergarten and first-grade student progress is monitored with report cards on which student skills are rated from advanced to below basic in the following subjects: independent learning and social behavior, mathematics, reading, science, social studies, and writing. These students also are assessed on the level of effort put forth in each subject on a scale ranging from "consistently focuses on learning" to "no evidence of effort." The school has a stated promotion policy as well as attendance and dress code policies. Transportation is provided by MMSA for students who live from one to 10 miles from the school.⁴

C. Student Population

At the beginning of the year, 337 students were enrolled at MMSA.⁵ An additional 27 students enrolled after the school year started, and 60 students withdrew from the school prior to the end of the year. Of those 60 students, 20 (33.3%) withdrew due to parent concerns around student behaviors and/or needs; 14 (23.3%) moved out of state or out of town; six (10.0%) withdrew due to family issues; five (8.3%) withdrew because their parents were not satisfied with the services offered at the school; three (5.0%) students withdrew, and the school was unable to contact the family to determine their reasons; two (3.3%) withdrew due to administration-related issues; two (3.3%) withdrew for discipline adaptation issues; and eight (13.3%) withdrew for other reasons.⁶ Of the 337 students who started the

⁴ Information from the 2015–16 *Parent/Student Handbook*.

⁵ As of September 18, 2015.

⁶The administrator reported that "administration-related" and "discipline adaptation" both refer to cases where parents withdrew their students as a result of too many disciplinary referrals or before expulsion proceedings were implemented. "Other" was the category used when the school was unable to contact a parent to determine the reason for withdrawal.

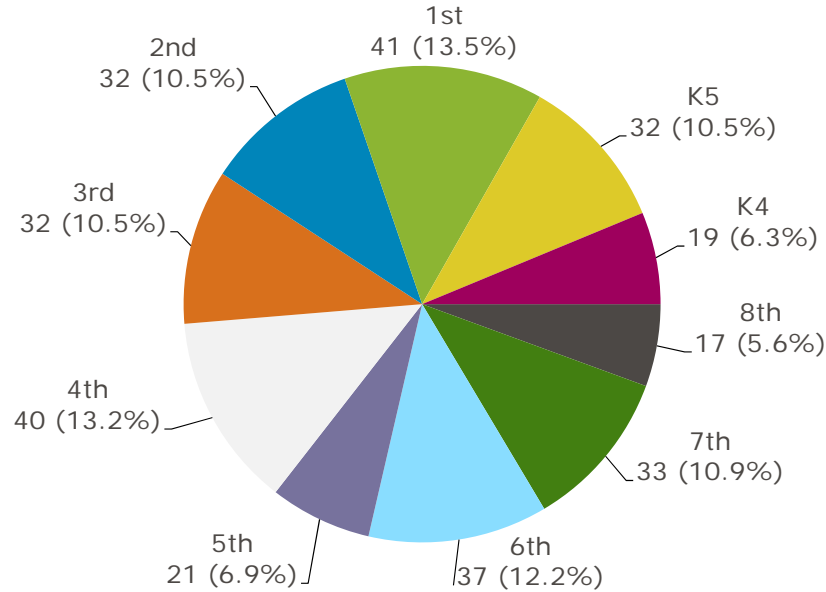
year at the school, 285 remained enrolled at the end of the year, representing an 84.6% retention rate.

This compares to a retention rate of 83.5% in 2014–15.

At the end of the year, 304 students were enrolled at MMSA.

- Most (291, or 95.7%) of the students were African American, nine (3.0%) were Hispanic/Latino, two (0.7%) were multiracial, one (0.3%) was Caucasian/White, and one (0.3%) was Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.
- Girls numbered 174 (57.2%); boys, 130 (42.8%).
- Special education needs were reported for 39 (12.8%) students, of which 13 had other health impairments (OHI), nine had special needs in speech/language (SPL), seven had specific learning disabilities (SLD), three had SPL/OHI, two had significant developmental delay (SDD)/SPL, one had cognitive disabilities (CD)/SPL, one had emotional/behavioral disabilities (EBD), one had EBD/OHI, one had SDD, and one had SLD/OHI.
- Due to the high percentage of students who met eligibility requirements for free or reduced lunch prices (296 [97.4%] for free and four [1.3%] for reduced), all students became eligible.
- The largest grade level was first, with 41 students (Figure 1).

Figure 1
**Milwaukee Math and Science Academy
 Student Grade Levels*
 2015–16**



N = 304
 *At end of the school year.

On the last day of the 2014–15 academic year, 277 MMSA students were eligible for continued enrollment during the 2015–16 academic year. Of those, 186 were enrolled on the third Friday in September 2015, representing a return rate of 67.1%, which compares to 68.3% the prior year.

D. School Structure

1. Areas of Instruction

MMSA’s curriculum included instruction in English/reading/literacy, mathematics, social studies, science, art, music, physical education/health, character education, and computer science. Students were exposed to core subjects daily and participated in art, music, physical education, and computer science two to three times per week. Special education programming was provided to

students identified as needing an IEP. Students who met the criteria for special education services were monitored and reviewed so that appropriate adjustments could be made to their plans. Students received four report cards during the year, which were mailed to their homes.⁷

2. Classrooms

The school began the year with 18 classrooms: one full-day K4; two K5; three first-grade rooms; two each for second, third, and fourth grades; one fifth-grade classroom; two each for sixth- and seventh-grades; and one eighth-grade classroom.

Classrooms held 20–22 students each. This year, K4 was an all-day program, and the K4 through fifth-grade classrooms each had an assigned teacher. The middle school grades (sixth, seventh, and eighth) had six subject-matter teachers—two for English/language arts, two for math, and one each for science and social studies

The school began the year with three teacher aides, but during the year a total of six were employed (one left in October 2015). The school building had an art room, a room for special education individual and small-group work, a library, and a gymnasium. Breakfast and lunch were served in a cafeteria adjacent to the kitchen.

3. Teacher Information

During the school year, a total of 21 classroom teachers and 12 additional instructional staff were employed. The school year began with 19 classroom teachers, nine of whom were new to the school. The eight instructional staff at the beginning of the year included a physical education teacher, an art teacher, a music teacher, two special education teachers, one character-education teacher, one

⁷ See the 2015–16 *Parent/Student Handbook*.

full-time building-wide substitute, and a school psychologist. The school contracted for the services of a speech pathologist.

After school began, MMSA replaced two classroom teachers and the music teacher. During the year, the school added a full-time social worker⁸, a reading teacher, and an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher⁹. The school also employed six teacher aides throughout the year.

Administrative and other support staff included the principal, an instructional coordinator, two deans of students, an IT coordinator, two secretaries, two custodial maintenance positions, an athletic director, and a security person.

Of the 19 classroom teachers who began the year, 17 were eligible to remain at the school all year.¹⁰ Of those 17, 16 remained for the entire year, representing a teacher retention rate of 94.1%. Due to illness, the science teacher for sixth, seventh, and eighth grades resigned at the end of February 2016. Of the eight instructional staff who began the year, seven were eligible to stay.¹¹ All seven remained the entire year for a retention rate of 100%. The total retention rate for all instructional staff, including classroom teachers, was 95.8% (23 of 24 eligible to remain all year).

At the end of the 2014–15 school year, 12 classroom teachers and six other instructional staff were eligible to return in the fall of 2015. Ten of the 12 classroom teachers returned for a return rate of 83.3%. Four (66.7%) of the six other instructional staff returned. Overall, 14 (77.8%) of the 18 eligible staff returned.

⁸ The social worker employed part time in 2014–15 did not want to take a full-time position, but helped out until the full-time social worker was hired in late September 2015. The full-time social worker was fired in late March 2016.

⁹ The principal reported that approximately 43 Somalian students enrolled at MMSA in the fall.

¹⁰ The K5 teacher was fired in October 2015, and the science and social studies teacher for fourth and fifth grades was fired in January 2015.

¹¹ The music teacher passed away in November 2015. That position was refilled in January 2016.

License information on the DPI website indicated that all instructional staff employed at the end of the year held valid DPI licenses or permits except for the fourth/fifth-grade science/social studies teacher who was hired in mid-January 2016.¹²

Teachers were evaluated through the use of a rubric that covered skills with points assigned in the areas of planning and preparation (10%), instruction (50%), classroom management (35%), and professional attributes (5%).

Teachers and leadership participated in the following 2015–16 professional development opportunities appropriate for their various positions at the school.¹³

Topic/Event
<p>Concept-Sponsored Professional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership Summit • Teacher Institute • Development Sessions (speaker and small-group breakout sessions)
<p>Professional Development Session Provided by MMSA Staff Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Information System (SIS) Training for New Teachers • RTI Training • Building Positive School Culture • Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) MAP Data Analysis • Educator Effectiveness Teachscape Training • Best Practices • Writing Strategies • Educator Effectiveness Teachscape Training: Second Session
<p>Professional Development Provided by Outside Agencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) • Six Traits of Writing • Compass Learning Training • Family Engagement • Restorative Justice • Forward Exam Training • Six Traits of Writing Coaching • Wisconsin State Reading Association Convention

¹² The DPI teacher license website indicated that this teacher had a license that expired in June, 2013.

¹³ The school provided a complete attendance list for each of the professional development opportunities, which is not included in this report.

During the interview process, teachers were asked about professional support. Six rated this area as excellent or good, while four rated this area as fair and three as poor.

Teachers also were asked about the performance review procedure. Ten of the 13 teachers strongly agreed or agreed that the school has a clear teacher performance assessment process. Seven were satisfied with the school's teacher performance assessment criteria, and 11 agreed that student academic performance is an important part of teacher assessment.

Parents were asked about the school staff, and 70.1% strongly agreed with this statement: "I am comfortable talking with the staff." A large proportion (81.2%) of the parents indicated that they were satisfied with the overall performance of the staff. More than 75% of the parents strongly agreed (43.6%) or agreed (33.3%) that people in this school treat each other with respect.

Well over half (66%) of the seventh- and eighth-grade students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that the teachers help them to succeed in school. More than half (25 of 44 [56.8%]) also indicated that teachers respect students.

4. Hours of Instruction/School Calendar

The regular school day for all students began at 8:05 a.m. Breakfast was served from 7:30 to 7:50 a.m. each morning. Homeroom was held from 7:55 to 8:05 a.m. Students were dismissed at 3:10 (first through third grades) or 3:15 (fourth through eighth grades). On Mondays and Tuesdays, tutoring was available from 3:30 to 4:00 p.m.; clubs occurred during this time on Thursdays. Typically, a monthly early dismissal at 12:30 allowed for professional development activities.

The first day of school was August 25, 2015, and the last day of school was June 14, 2016.¹⁴ The school published the calendar in the parent handbook. MMSA has met the City of Milwaukee's requirement to publish an annual calendar.

¹⁴ The 2015–16 calendar was published on the school's website.

5. Parent and Family Involvement

The *MMSA Parent/Student Handbook* states that education is a shared responsibility, and successful operation of a school depends on the cooperation of everyone concerned—students, parents, and staff. The goal of MMSA is to create a partnership among the members of this triad. Each member is responsible for doing his or her part to make the school a place where everyone can achieve his or her goals and work together in harmony. Parents are invited to contact any member of the school staff if they need assistance with any problems or concerns. In addition, parents and students are asked to review the *Parent/Student Handbook* and complete a statement of understanding.

The school provided a parent/student orientation before school began. Parents at MMSA could follow along their children's classroom activities, homework, assignments, and grades via the Internet. All teachers at the school used Concept Schools' student information system, a grade book that lets teachers securely publish grades and class activities on the Internet for students and parents. Parents received their passwords when they came for open house, parent/teacher conferences, or upon request. Parents could log in and see what was published daily by the teachers. All families were provided login information and passwords for the online grading system. Parents seeking a more involved role in the school were invited to join the MMSA Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Elections are held annually for PTO positions, and meetings are generally held monthly in the evenings from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m.

According to the 2015–16 *Parent/Student Handbook*, parents are expected to attend conferences after each of the first two quarters and at other times as requested by the classroom teacher, principal, or dean. Parents are welcome and encouraged to volunteer or observe in daily activities at the school. Many family-centered activities were offered throughout the year, including a student/parent orientation in August, a science fair, and PTO meetings. Other events were "Spooky Night," an honor roll dinner at the end of each quarter, a holiday concert, eighth-grade high school

night, literacy night, a Scholastic book fair, a Black history program, parent breakfasts, a student/staff basketball game, men's meetings, Chant Battle, a welcome dinner for Somalian families, and eighth-grade graduation in June.

Parents and teachers were asked about parental involvement during the survey/interview process. Nearly all (92.3%) of the parents indicated that they felt welcome at their child's school. When asked what they liked most about the school, responses included communication with the parents.

Ten of the school's 13 teachers who were interviewed agreed/strongly agreed that the staff at this school encourage all families to become involved in school activities. However, only one of the teachers rated parent involvement as "good." Eight said "fair," and four said "poor."

6. Waiting List

In September 2015, the school reported a waiting list of 36 students; eight were for K4 and the remainder spanned all the grades. As of June 1, 2016, the school reported no students waiting for fall openings.

7. Disciplinary Policy

MMSA's goal is to help every student meet his/her intellectual, social, physical, and emotional potential. Everything in and about the school has been designed to create an orderly and distraction-free environment in which all students can learn effectively and pleasantly.

This year the school initiated a program based on PBIS. Staff kicked off this program prior to this school year and reintroduced the system to MMSA during the first week of school. The school's behavioral expectations are to:

- Be safe;
- Be respectful; and
- Be responsible.

The school's 2015–16 *Parent/Student Handbook* explains the policy and procedures regarding student conduct and discipline. The handbook covers expectations, unacceptable student behaviors, formal disciplinary policies and procedures, and the school-wide discipline system. The discipline system includes defined rules, expectations, and consequences. The handbook includes a chart outlining specific situations in which preventive discipline strategies can be used as well as appropriate consequences. Afterschool and Saturday detention, in- and out-of-school suspensions, and expulsions are explained along with due process rights.

This year, teachers and parents were asked about the discipline policy at the school. Of the 13 teachers interviewed, 12 indicated that the discipline at the school is a "very important" or "somewhat important" reason for continuing to teach there. One of the teachers rated the school's adherence to the discipline policy as good, while eight rated this area as "fair," and four as "poor."

8. Graduation and High School Information

This year the character-education teacher worked with students individually to help with the high school application process. The school hosted a recruitment event for eighth graders and their families where high schools came and shared information and enrollment procedures. MMSA posted acceptance letters on the school's walls to encourage all students to apply to high school and celebrate their acceptance.

All 17 eighth-grade students at the end of the year graduated. At the time of this report, 12 eighth graders are enrolled at the following high schools: Pulaski (one), Messmer (seven), James Madison Academic Campus (one), Milwaukee High School of the Arts (one), Milwaukee Marshall (one), and Golda Meir (one). Five students had not enrolled.

The school has not developed a formal plan to track the high school achievements of its graduates.

9. Activities for School Improvement

The following describes MMSA's responses to the activities recommended in the programmatic profile and educational performance report for the 2014–15 academic year.

- Recommendation: Continue the summer reading program.

Response: During the summer of 2015, MMSA conducted a four-week summer reading program consisting of three instructional hours each day. More than 40 students were offered remedial reading classes, which focused on building foundational reading skills, comprehension, summarizing, and writing. The reading program also provided activities centered on inspiring students to become lifelong readers. The summer's theme was "Author Spotlight." Each grade level chose an age-appropriate author on whom to focus their literacy activities, and at the end of the four weeks, students presented their work inspired by that author. Authors included Dr. Seuss, Eric Carle, Patricia Polacco, Shel Silverstein, and Roald Dahl.

MMSA planned to extend the 20-day 2016 summer school program to fifth graders. Again, the program will emphasize reading skills but also will include some math. The school will strongly encourage approximately 30-35% of students in each grade level who are considered "behind in reading" to attend the summer reading program. MMSA staff will make daily phone calls and some home visits to the parents of students who are signed up but do not attend. The model for the summer of 2016 includes guided reading, shared reading, and read-alouds. Teachers will use Compass Learning to assign work based on a student's individual needs as well as Accelerated Reader. Teachers also have access to Common Core Support Coach by Triumph Learning, which helps build foundational skills to understand fiction and nonfiction text.

- Recommendation: Continue to focus on strategies and staff resources that will result in continued growth in reading.

Response: As indicated in the school's mid-year report to the CSRC, MMSA continued to have an extra reading class for all students in kindergarten through second grade. Each group met twice per week for a total of 90 extra minutes of reading instruction beyond the regular classroom instruction in foundation skills: phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, and fluency.

MMSA's management company, Concept Schools, re-configured their curriculum directors to have one director for kindergarten through second grade and support from content-specific curriculum directors for the third- through eighth-grade teachers.

The kindergarten through second-grade teachers continue to implement interdisciplinary units, including a large block of time for English/language arts each day. The curriculum director for those grades provided a book list for each grade level

that included at least 15–20 books per unit, supporting the science and social studies concept in that unit. Each MMSA teacher received at least 90 new trade books at the beginning of the 2015–16 school year to support their unit needs.

MMSA teachers attended professional development sessions with a focus on literacy and interdisciplinary units. All reading teachers continue to work with the scope and sequence created by the Concept curriculum directors.

MMSA reading and math teachers use Compass Learning (Odyssey) with their students twice per week during regularly scheduled time in the media center. This program allows students to work at their own pace on the material and concepts assigned to them after taking the NWEA MAP test. It also allows teachers to assign work to students based on concepts that are being taught in class.

MMSA reading teachers effectively use Reading A–Z, which helps teachers both find appropriate text for each student’s individual reading level and monitor progress. Teachers can check reading behaviors and fluency with running records, check comprehension with retelling rubrics, and check overall comprehension with text quizzes. The teachers often use this program to print leveled readers and books, including high-frequency words to send home with students as homework.

Teachers continue to explore other online resources to find literacy activities to engage their students, such as ABCya, Lyrics2Learn, ReadWorks, Measuring Up, BOOK IT!, and SpellingCity.

All of the reading/ELA teachers, including the school’s two special education teachers, are now members of a professional reading organization, the Wisconsin State Reading Association (WSRA). This allows for a literacy community with research and intervention sharing as well as attending the WSRA convention.

Six teachers attended the WSRA convention at the beginning of February.

All students in grades fourth through eighth are invited to attend Saturday School sessions. Saturday School runs for eight Saturdays during the second semester from 9:00 a.m. to noon. The focus is on reading and math interventions.

MMSA staff included a full-time teacher to provide Title I services to students who are academically behind; four teaching assistants (one works with K4 students, one works with K5 and third grade, one works with first and second grade, and one recently was hired to work with fourth and fifth grade); the sixth grade ELA teacher, who provides reading interventions for struggling sixth- through eighth-grade students during two periods of the day; and a full-time building substitute teacher, who provides reading support for the younger students when needed.

- Recommendation: Provide more professional development in the areas of reading and writing (literacy), with a new emphasis on how to measure writing skills at all levels.

- Recommendation: Focus on writing improvement throughout the academic year by using the fall writing sample to inform teaching interventions and strategies.

Response: The school decided to return to using the Six Traits of Writing during the 2015–16 school year for the purpose of student instruction and assessment. The rubric for kindergarten through second grade is an eight-point scale, and the third- to eighth-grade rubric is a six-point scale.

Writing across the curriculum was a focus during the Teacher Institute in August 2015. Joan LoPresti, a representative from the Milwaukee Teacher Education Center, came to MMSA to present a workshop to review the writing method and introduce the six traits. Teachers participated in the writing process, then used their own writing to assess their work based on the rubric for third- through eighth-grade students. Although teachers assessed all areas of the six traits, the main focus was on the traits of ideas, voice, and word choice. Ms. LoPresti brought many authentic student samples—narrative and informational—for the MMSA teachers to assess. Discussions often led to critical conversations at each grade level and within content areas so that teachers understood the school’s student expectations.

This professional development workshop continued in October with a focus on doing research in the classroom and how teachers can facilitate informative writing. Ms. LoPresti provided teachers with resources to use in their writing lessons and shared examples of MMSA student writing from the pre-assessment given in September 2015. Ms. LoPresti returned during the second semester to work with six teachers, providing each with four hours of coaching in the area of writing.

Also throughout the year, MMSA’s teachers implemented the writing tasks included by the Concept curriculum directors in each subject content unit.

The instructional coordinator (IC) checked each teacher’s lesson plan several times per month. During this check, the IC looked to see that the teacher included explicit writing instruction in their lessons. The director and IC also looked for writing instruction during classroom walkthroughs and observations. Teachers received verbal feedback or follow-up emails.

- Recommendation: Clarify and implement appropriate IEP development and review. Consider requiring both goals and subgoals for each IEP.

Response: Recognizing an error in the way special education goals were established in the 2014–15 school year, the school clarified its outcomes to include both goals and subgoals for each special education student’s IEP. Therefore the school defined progress on goals as meeting at least 80% of the subgoals under each goal.

The special education teachers and instructional coordinator met to discuss goals for the school year. The special education team, including the special education teacher, regular education teachers, and local education agency representative were asked to write IEPs with goals and subgoals for all students. As IEPs for new students are adopted, goals are rewritten to be more specific according to the individual child’s

ability level. The IEP team works diligently to break down the Common Core Standards into goals that are measurable and more specific to the student's level.

MMSA's special education staff also make contact with outside services such as Wraparound Milwaukee and its Mobile Urgent Treatment Team, counselors, therapists, medical doctors, and psychologists in order to support students with special needs.

- Recommendation: Continue to provide enrichment opportunities for students who are functioning above grade level. Address and implement strategies to increase student attendance, retention, and return rates.

Response: MMSA initiated a new mentoring program for students this year and also increased efforts to include more student participation in Concept Schools network-wide events.

MMSA high performing students continue to participate in the following activities.

- » Concept Young Scholars Program (CYSP) is a mentoring program that focuses on academic challenges, healthy lifestyle, building confidence, volunteerism, exploration, and many fun activities. Students who register for CYSP set goals in four areas: personal development, voluntary public service, physical fitness, and expedition/exploration. Each student selects an advisor who helps him/her set achievable goals, assists in planning activities, and monitors student progress. Each scholar has a chance to earn a Gold, Silver, or Bronze medal. Scholars who earn a medal are rewarded at the end of the school year in an award ceremony.

During the first semester, 41 MMSA students were part of CYSP, with six teacher mentors checking in with those students each week. Events that students participated in this year included Salvation Army bell ringers, volunteering for Santa Hustle, Jewish Museum tour, the MMSA Middle School Lock-In, volunteering for Fight for Air, Hunger Task Force food sort and food box making, and MacKenzie Center overnight trip. At the end of the year, 14 MMSA students met the gold medal standard, 11 met silver, and six met Bronze.

Concept Schools host the CONSEF Science Fair each spring in Cleveland, Ohio; eight MMSA students qualified to attend this year.

- » MMSA has a STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) team of students who meet regularly to conduct experiments, explore math problems, and prepare for the local MMSA science fair and CONSEF.
- » MMSA continues to build its robotics program, hosting a robotics team that participates in several competitions (Concept Sumobot, FLL-First Lego League, and FTC-FIRST Tech Challenge). The team also completed a competition at Marquette High School.

- » MMSA hosts a spelling bee, MathCon for students excelling in math, and a writing competition for third through eighth graders.
 - » Other enrichment clubs at MMSA include Spanish club, world cultures club, kids club, book club, sports club, art club, student government, drama club, and Students for Justice and Community Leadership.
 - » The character-education teacher enrolls student leaders in academic enrichment programs through local community resources such as UW-Milwaukee, Marquette University, and College for Kids Saturday Academy.
- Recommendation: Continue the implementation of strategies to increase student attendance, retention, and return rates.

Response: MMSA has continued to implement strategies to increase student attendance, retention, and return rates this year revolving around the following five topics.

- » Effective policies
- » Communication with parents
- » Parental involvement
- » Recognition and awards
- » A motivating school culture

The specific strategies included recognition of students with high attendance rates on a weekly and monthly basis, a revised attendance policy that clearly outlines consequences in the student/parent handbook, and parent participation events (parent orientation, “Spooky Night,” honor roll banquets at the end of each quarter, eighth-grade high school night, eighth-grade high school application night, PTO meetings, literacy nights, parent breakfasts, MMSA science fair, Black History Month celebrations, end-of-year celebration, parent surveys throughout the year, men’s meetings, chant battle, student/staff basketball game, and welcome dinner for the new Somalian families.)

The school believes that student retention and return rates are increased by creating a safe, high-achieving, and nurturing school environment with clear behavior expectations. Therefore, the school continues to have two deans of students and has implemented several strategies to increase communication between the school staff, teachers, and parents.

MMSA implemented the following strategies to promote a culture of high achievement.

- » Each classroom represents a university.
- » Positive affirmations are posted in and around each classroom.

- » The PBIS matrix of expected behaviors is posted in each classroom, with reminders in the halls, bathrooms, and other common areas.
- » The school's mission and pledge are used regularly.
- » Common language is used to redirect students about expectations.
- » College-bound choices are referenced regularly.
- » A wide array of enrichment programs and activities are offered.
- » Summer enrichment programs are offered to fifth-, sixth-, and seventh-grade students with good grades (four weeks, seven or eight students per week).
- Recommendation: Continue strategies to retain teachers throughout the school year and encourage teachers to return year after year.

Response: MMSA continued to implement strategies and support teachers so they are likely to return year after year by carrying out the following activities.

- » Offered a more competitive salary scale to attract quality teachers and keep the ones who are working toward the school's vision.
- » Began contract negotiations and discussions with current staff in February in order to anticipate their expectations before making other decisions.
- » Continued to support teachers with an administration team consisting of director/principal, instructional coordinator, and two deans of students.
- » Continued to employ two deans to deal with discipline and resolve problems. Along with added efficiency, two deans are able to focus on smaller groups of students and parents and form stronger bonds with them. Since the students are equally divided amongst the two deans, the deans have more time for:
 - Classroom visits and observations;
 - An open-door policy to listen to teacher questions or concerns;
 - Providing opportunities for teachers to become involved in the school community, grow professionally, and take on leadership roles by participating in one or more working committees (RTI committee, special events committee, positive culture committee, and PBIS committee);
 - Providing teacher recognition for accomplishments;
 - Organizing afterschool events; and
 - Providing treats.

In the fall of 2016, CSRC was concerned about the number of out-of-school and in-school suspensions during the 2014–15 school year. Therefore an additional recommendation was added.

- Recommendation: Submit an explanation of the specific measures taken during the first half of the 2015–16 academic year to reduce the number of out-of-school and in-school suspensions, including any professional development activities regarding appropriate behavioral responses.

Response: The school hired a full-time social worker to work as a liaison between the school and its families. The social worker also meets with students who have issues with negative behaviors and social conflicts and conducts “check-in” and “check out” meetings with students as part of their behavioral contract.

The school has added character education to all of the students’ schedules. The character-education teacher is a licensed guidance counselor who meets with each class twice per week and covers topics such as skills for learning, emotion management, problem solving, empathy, communication, bullying prevention, substance abuse prevention, conflict resolution, and goal setting. MMSA adopted the character-education curriculum called Second Step, published by the Committee for Children.

The school added a parent liaison to the staff who acts as a liaison between the teachers and the Somali students. He meets with the Somali families to communicate the school’s expectations, discipline policy, academic responsibilities, and school events.

The school has implemented PBIS, restructured the discipline policy, and forged collaborations with outside community organizations. New parents and students were required to attend a pre-enrollment meeting to gain insight on the goals and expectations of MMSA. Returning parents and students were required to attend an orientation meeting during MMSA’s open house before the start of the school year. PBIS training was provided to the deans and teachers during the summer of 2015 and first semester. Teachers who needed more experience with PBIS are coached by the two deans and the special education staff.

The school created a PBIS committee that met weekly during the first semester and monthly during the second semester. The committee discussed new strategies and addressed concerns. The committee targeted teachers who struggled with classroom management and provided support such as brainstorming strategies to better manage the learning environment. The committee also implemented “Reset” to re-introduce the students to school-wide procedures and expectations. This resulted in new posters about expected behaviors throughout the school for teacher use during the second semester.

Since some students struggle with anger management and lack of self-control, the administrative team, athletic director, special education teachers, and security staff

attended a Crisis Prevention Institute to learn how to safely manage disruptive and assaultive behaviors and de-escalate conflicts.

The school found afterschool and Saturday detentions to be ineffective in deterring negative behavior, due primarily to transportation issues. These have been replaced with lunch detentions.

Additional efforts included the use of behavior plans with SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, results-, and time-bound) goals for individual students with behavioral problems; the incorporation of restorative practices/justice into the school culture; meetings with outside agencies such as wraparound, counselors, psychologists, and special education advocates; and a variety of positive reinforcements for appropriate behavior (Hawk Pucks, dances, award programs, and special treats).

Based on results in this report and in consultation with school staff, CRC recommends that the school continue a focused school improvement plan by engaging in the following activities for the 2016–17 academic year.

- Continue to focus on strategies and professional development in the areas of reading and writing.
- Continue to implement the PBIS culture and other strategies to reduce the incidence of in-school and out-of-school suspensions.
- Continue to focus professional development and classroom strategies to meet the needs of ESL students.

III. EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

To monitor the performance of MMSA as it related to the CSRC contract, a variety of qualitative and quantitative information was collected at specified intervals during the past several academic years. This year, MMSA established goals related to attendance, parent participation, and special education student records. In addition, the school identified local and standardized measures of academic performance to monitor student progress.

This year, the local assessment measures included student progress in reading; mathematics; writing skills; and, for special education students, IEP progress. The standardized assessment measures used were the PALS and the Wisconsin Forward Exam.

A. Attendance

CRC examined student attendance two ways: The first reflects the average time students attended school; the second includes excused absences. Both rates include all students enrolled at any time during the school year. MMSA established a goal to maintain an average daily attendance rate of 90.3%. The school considered a student present if he/she arrived at school no later than 10:00 a.m. and remained in class for the rest of the school day or arrived at school by 8:00 a.m. and remained in class until at least 1:00 p.m. Attendance data were available for 364 students enrolled during the year. On average, students attended 91.0% of the time, exceeding the school's goal.¹⁵ When excused absences were included, the attendance rate rose to 91.7%.

CRC also examined the time students spent, on average, in suspension (in- or out-of-school). Throughout the school year, 163 students from K4 through eighth grade were suspended at least once. Of those students, 144 spent, on average, 3.7 days out of school on suspension, and 71 students spent an average of 1.5 days in school and on suspension.¹⁶ Note that some students were given both in- and out-of-school suspensions during the year.

B. Parent Participation

At the beginning of the academic year, the school set a goal that parents of 75.0% of students enrolled all year would attend a minimum of two of the four parent-teacher conferences. Phone calls

¹⁵ Individual student attendance rate was calculated by dividing the total number of days present by the total number of days that the student was enrolled. Individual rates were then averaged across all students.

¹⁶ This compares to, on average, 4.1 days out of school on suspension and 1.6 days in school and on suspension.

and home visits were acceptable alternatives for parents who were unable to attend conferences. This year, 285 students were enrolled at the time of all four conferences (i.e., for the year). Results indicated that parents of 192 (67.4%) children attended at least two conferences, falling short of the school's goal.

C. Special Education Needs

This year, the school set a goal to develop and maintain records for all special education students. During the school year, 50 special education students were enrolled at MMSA.¹⁷ Five of these students withdrew before the time of their IEP. Additionally, six students received an IEP but withdrew before the end of the school year. The school held annual reviews and maintained records of the remaining 39 (100.0%) students.

In addition, CRC conducted a review of a representative number of files during the year. This review showed that students had current evaluations indicating their eligibility for special education services, IEPs were reviewed in a timely manner, and parents were invited to develop and be involved in their children's IEPs.

D. Local Measures of Educational Performance

Charter schools, by their definition and nature, are autonomous schools with curricula that reflect each school's individual philosophy, mission, and goals. In addition to administering standardized tests, each charter school is responsible for describing goals and expectations for its students in the context of that school's unique approach to education. These goals and expectations are established by each City of Milwaukee–chartered school at the beginning of the academic year to measure the educational performance of its students. These local measures are useful for monitoring

¹⁷ An additional eight students were given an initial assessment but were determined ineligible for special education services.

and reporting progress, guiding and improving instruction, clearly expressing the expected quality of student work, and providing evidence that students are meeting local benchmarks. The CSRC expectation is that schools establish local measures in reading, writing, math, and special education.

MMSA used the MAP as a local measure of math and reading progress.

1. Reading and Math Progress for K5 Through Eighth Graders Using MAP Target RIT Score

MAP is a series of tests that measures student skills in reading, math, and language usage. The test yields a Rausch Unit (RIT) scale score that shows student understanding, regardless of grade level, which allows easy comparison of student progress from the beginning to the end of the year and/or from one year to the next. Results provide educators with the information necessary to build curriculum to meet their students' needs. Students who complete the MAP tests in reading and math in the fall receive an overall score as well as a unique target score based on his/her grade level and fall test score (target RIT) that the student should strive to meet on the spring test. MMSA elected to measure student progress in reading and mathematics by examining the percentage of students who met their target RIT scores on the spring tests. Specifically, the school's local measure goal for MAP reading and math results was that at least 70.0% of students who completed the fall and spring reading assessments would meet their target RIT score on the spring assessment, and at least 70.0% of students who completed the fall and spring math assessments would meet their target RIT score on the spring assessment.

a. *Reading*

Of the 269 students who completed both the fall and spring reading test, 134 (49.8%) met their target reading score on the spring 2016 test administration (Table 1). This falls short of the school's goal of 70.0%.

Table 1			
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy			
Local Measures of Academic Progress: MAP Reading Assessment			
K5 Through 8th Grades			
Based on Target RIT Scores			
Grade	N	Met Target RIT Score in Spring 2016	
		n	%
K5	28	10	35.7%
1st	40	21	52.5%
2nd	30	7	23.3%
3rd	32	9	28.1%
4th	38	11	28.9%
5th	21	10	47.6%
6th	30	25	83.3%
7th	34	31	91.2%
8th	16	10	62.5%
Total	269	134	49.8%

b. *Math*

Of the 269 students who completed both the fall and spring math test, 165 (61.3%) met their target math score on the spring 2016 test administration (Table 2), falling short of the goal of 70.0%.

Table 2			
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy			
Local Measures of Academic Progress: MAP Math Assessment			
K5 Through 8th Grades			
Based on Target RIT Scores			
Grade	N	Met Target RIT Score in Spring 2016	
		n	%
K5	28	18	64.3%
1st	40	24	60.0%
2nd	30	20	66.7%
3rd	32	16	50.0%
4th	37	13	35.1%
5th	22	15	68.2%
6th	30	24	80.0%
7th	34	25	73.5%
8th	16	10	62.5%
Total	269	165	61.3%

2. Writing

To assess student writing skills, MMSA used the Six Traits of Writing. Students completed writing samples on October 2, 2015, and again between May 15 and 31, 2016. Writing prompts were the same for both samples and based on grade-level topics with a focus on the narrative genre. Students in K5 through second grade could score between zero and eight points on each writing sample, and students in third through eighth grades could score between zero and six points on each writing sample. MMSA’s local measure writing goal for K5 through eighth graders was that at least

55.0% of all students who completed the writing sample in both the fall and spring would increase their average score by at least one point.

Of the 269 K5 through eighth-grade students who completed both a fall and spring writing sample, 151 (56.1%) increased their average score by at least one point on the spring writing sample (Table 3), meeting the school’s goal of 55.0%.

Table 3			
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy			
Local Measures of Academic Progress: Six Traits of Writing			
K5 Through 8th Grades			
Grade	N	Increased Average Score by One Point or More on Spring Writing Sample	
		n	%
K5	28	21	75.0%
1st	40	35	87.5%
2nd	30	18	60.0%
3rd	32	27	84.4%
4th	38	16	42.1%
5th	21	12	57.1%
6th	30	10	33.3%
7th	34	12	35.3%
8th	16	0	0.0%
Total	269	151	56.1%

3. IEP Progress for Special Education Students

CSRC expects students in special education services to make routine progress on a yearly basis. This year, MMSA set the goal that special education students would meet or make progress on 75.0% of their goals by the time of their annual review. Progress is defined as meeting at least 80% of the subgoals under each goal. During 2015–16, IEPs for 20 students were implemented for a full year

at MMSA and those students were enrolled for the entire 2015–16 school year¹⁸. Of the 20 students whose IEPs were implemented for a full year at MMSA, 18 (90.0%) met either requirement: Either they met the goal itself or they made at least 80% of their subgoals under each goals (met or made progress on 75.0% of their IEP goals).

E. External Standardized Measures of Educational Performance

In 2015–16, DPI required that all schools administer PALS assessments to K4 through second graders, the Forward Exam to third through eighth graders in reading and language arts, science and social studies to fourth and eighth graders. These tests and results are described in the following sections.

1. PALS

Beginning in 2014–15, DPI required that all students in K4 through second grade take the PALS assessment in the fall and spring of the school year. PALS aligns with both the Common Core English standards and the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards.

The PALS assessment is available in three versions: the PALS-PreK for K4 students, the PALS-K for K5 students, and the PALS 1–3 for students in first through third grades.¹⁹ The PALS-PreK includes five required tasks (name writing, uppercase alphabet recognition, beginning sound awareness, print and word awareness, and rhyme awareness). Students complete two additional tasks (lowercase alphabet recognition and letter sounds) only if they reach a high enough score on the uppercase

¹⁸ An additional four students had IEPs implemented for a full year at MMSA but withdrew before the end of the 2015–16 school year.

¹⁹ Although the PALS 1–3 can be used for students in third grade, DPI only requires the test for K4 through second graders; third-grade students are tested using the Forward Exam.

alphabet task. Finally, schools can choose whether or not to administer one optional task: nursery rhyme awareness. Because this task is optional, CRC will not report data on nursery rhyme awareness.

The PALS-K includes six required tasks (rhyme awareness, beginning sound awareness, alphabet knowledge, letter sounds, spelling, and concept of word) and one optional task (word recognition in isolation). The PALS 1–3 comprises three required tasks (spelling, word recognition in isolation, and oral reading in context). The PALS 1–3 also includes one additional required task for first graders during the fall administration (letter sounds) and additional tasks for students who score below the summed score benchmark. These additional tasks are used to gather further diagnostic information about those students.

For the PALS-K and PALS 1–3, specific task scores are summed for an overall summed score. For the PALS 1–3, the fall and spring summed scores are calculated using different task combinations. The summed score is then compared to benchmarks set for each grade level and test administration. Reaching or surpassing the benchmark is not an indicator that the student is reading at grade level; the benchmark simply helps teachers identify which students may have difficulty learning to read. For example, if a student’s summed score is below the designated benchmark for his/her grade level and test administration, the student is identified as requiring additional instruction to master basic literacy skills.²⁰ Students who are at or above the benchmark have the basic skills required to, with targeted instruction, continue learning to read without intervention. Teachers may use PALS assessment results to help plan classroom reading and spelling instruction according to student needs.

There is no similar summed score or set benchmarks for the PALS-PreK. Because students enter K4 with different levels of exposure to books, letters, and sounds, the purpose of the PALS-PreK is to learn students’ abilities as they enter K4 in the fall. In the spring, developmental ranges for each PALS task indicate whether the student is at the expected developmental stage for a 4-year-old child.

²⁰ Information retrieved from <http://www.palswisconsin.info>

a. *PALS-PreK*

A total of 21 K4 students completed the PALS-PreK in the fall, and 19 students completed the spring assessment; 19 students completed both. Although the spring developmental ranges relate to expected age-level development by the time of the spring semester, CRC applied the ranges to both test administrations to see whether more students were at or above the range for each test by the spring administration. The number of students at or above the developmental range increased for each task from fall to spring (Table 4). By the time of the spring assessment, 13 (68.4%) of 19 students who completed both were at or above the developmental range for five or more tasks, and nine (47.4%) were at or above the range for all seven tasks (not shown).

Table 4				
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy				
PALS-PreK for K4 Students				
Students at or Above the Spring Developmental Range				
2015–16				
(N = 19)				
Task	Fall		Spring	
	n	%	n	%
Name Writing	11	57.9%	18	94.7%
Uppercase Alphabet Recognition	8	42.1%	14	73.7%
Lowercase Alphabet Recognition	6*	100.0%	13**	76.5%
Letter Sounds	5*	83.3%	11**	64.7%
Beginning Sound Awareness	14	73.7%	18	94.7%
Print and Word Awareness	14	73.7%	17	89.5%
Rhyme awareness	14	73.7%	15	78.9%

*Out of six students who qualified to complete the lowercase and letter sound tasks in the fall.

**Out of 17 students who qualified to complete the lowercase and letter sound tasks in the spring.

b. *PALS-K and PALS 1–3*

As mentioned above, each of these tests has a summed score benchmark for the fall and spring (Table 5). The fall and spring summed score benchmarks are calculated using different task

combinations. Therefore, the spring benchmark may be lower than the fall benchmark. Additionally, student benchmark status is only a measure of whether the student is where he/she should be developmentally to continue becoming a successful reader; results from fall to spring should not be used as a measure of individual student progress.

Table 5		
PALS-K and PALS 1–3 Published Summed Score Benchmarks		
PALS Assessment	Fall Benchmark	Spring Benchmark
PALS – K	28	81
PALS — 1st Grade	39	35
PALS — 2nd Grade	35	54

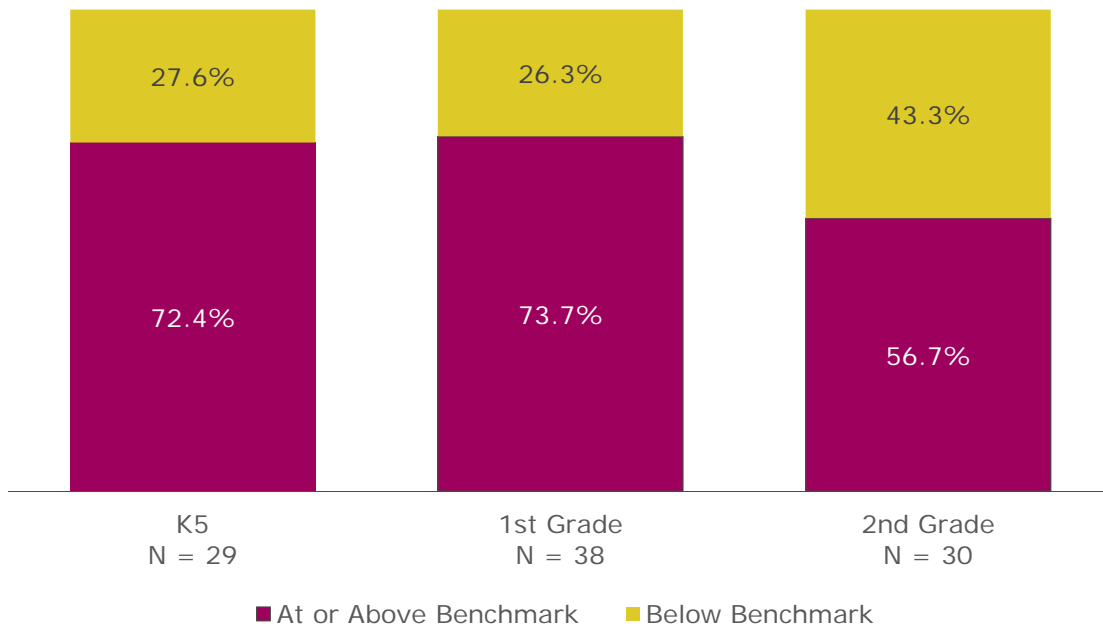
CRC first examined reading readiness for any student who completed the fall or spring tests. For K5 and first grade, a larger percentage of students who completed the fall test were at the fall benchmark compared to the percentage of students who completed the spring test (Table 6).

Table 6			
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Reading Readiness for K5, 1st, and 2nd Graders Fall 2015 and Spring 2016			
Grade Level and Test Period	N	Students at or Above Benchmark	
		n	%
K5			
Fall	34	32	94.1%
Spring	32	23	71.9%
1st Grade			
Fall	44	38	86.4%
Spring	41	29	70.7%
2nd Grade			
Fall	32	18	56.3%
Spring	33	18	54.5%

Next, CRC looked at spring benchmark status for students who had completed both the fall and spring PALS: 29 K5 students, 38 first graders, and 30 second graders. At the time of the spring assessment, 72.4% of K5 students, 73.7% of first graders, and 56.7% of second graders were at or above the spring summed score benchmark for their grade level (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Spring 2016 Reading Readiness Students With Fall and Spring PALS Scores



2. Wisconsin Forward Exam for Third Through Eighth Graders²¹

In the spring of 2016, the Wisconsin Forward Exam replaced the Badger Exam and the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination as the state's standardized test for English/language arts and math for students in third through eighth grades, science for students in fourth and eighth grades, and social studies for students in fourth, eighth, and tenth grades. The Forward Exam was administered in the spring of the school year.²² The test is computerized but not adaptive based on student responses. The Forward Exam was developed and administered by the Data Recognition Center (DRC), a Minnesota-based company with a local office in Madison, Wisconsin. DRC will also be responsible for reporting results.

The Forward Exam is a summative assessment that provides information about what students know in each content area. Each student receives a score based on their performance in each subject tested. Scores are translated into one of four levels: advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic.

One hundred and seventy-one third through eighth graders completed the English/language arts and math assessments in the spring of 2016. Of all students enrolled in the school for the entire school year (i.e., third Friday of September until the Forward test in the spring), 9.4% were proficient or advanced in English/language arts and 5.3% were proficient or advanced in math. Results by grade level are presented in Figures 3 and 4.²³

²¹ Information taken from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction website and Wisconsin Forward Exam family brochure. For more information, visit <http://dpi.wi.gov/assessment/forward> and <http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/assessment/pdf/Forward%20brochure%20for%20families.pdf>.

²² The Wisconsin Forward Exam testing window was March 28 – May 20, 2016.

²³ This cohort of students is different than the cohort who were enrolled on the day of the assessment, which also includes students who enrolled during the school year. Among all 184 third through eighth grade students enrolled on the day of the test, 8.7% were proficient or advanced in English/language arts and 4.9% were proficient or advanced in math.

Figure 3

Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Forward Exam English/Language Arts Assessment 2015–16

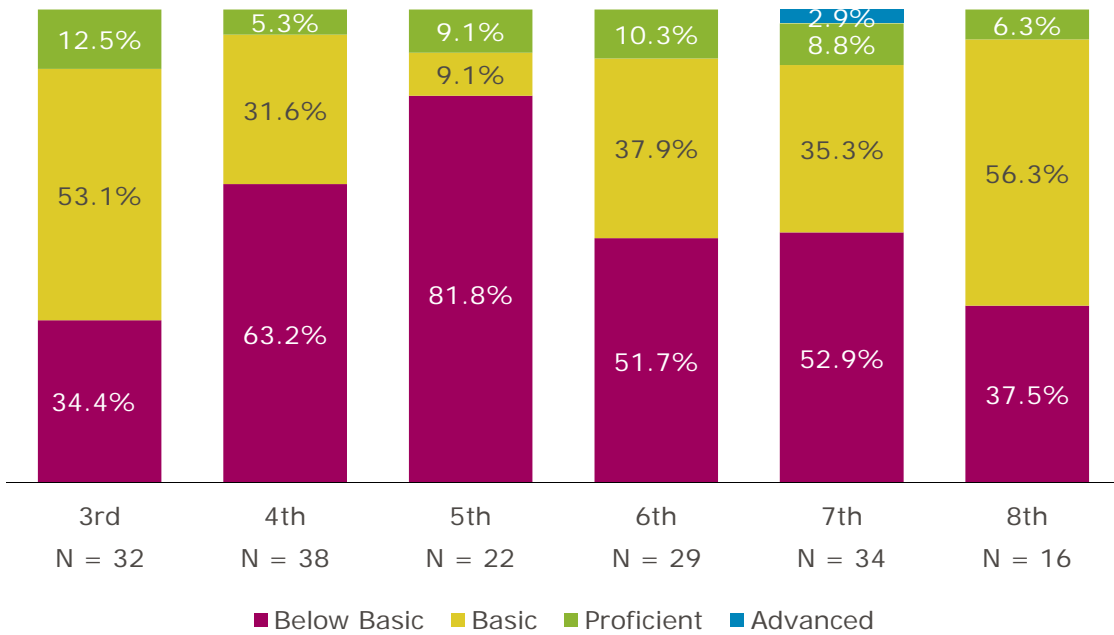
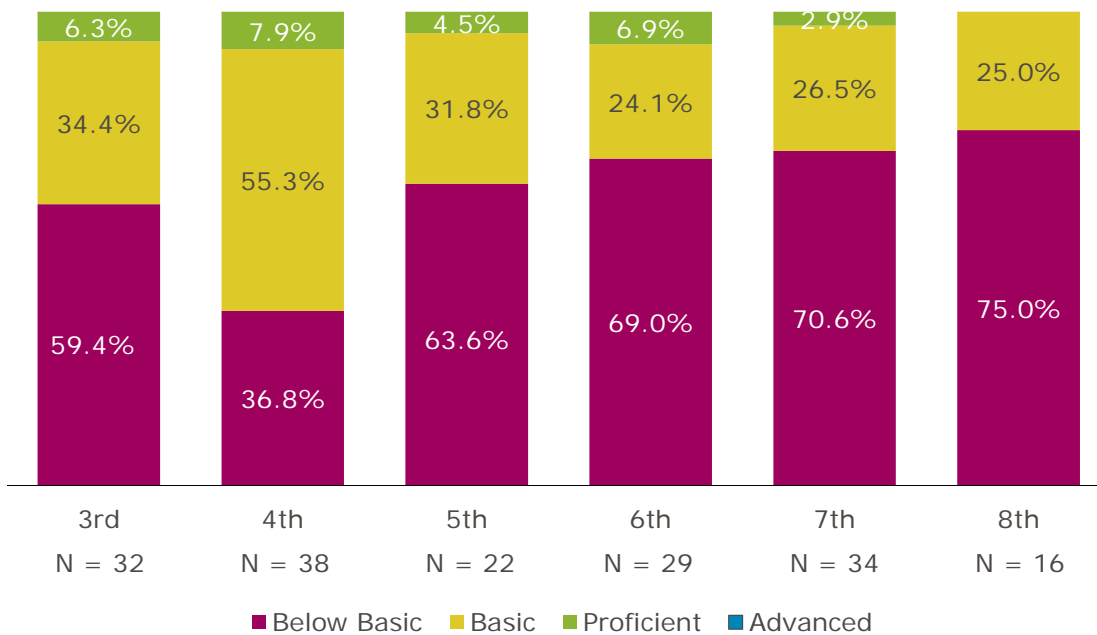


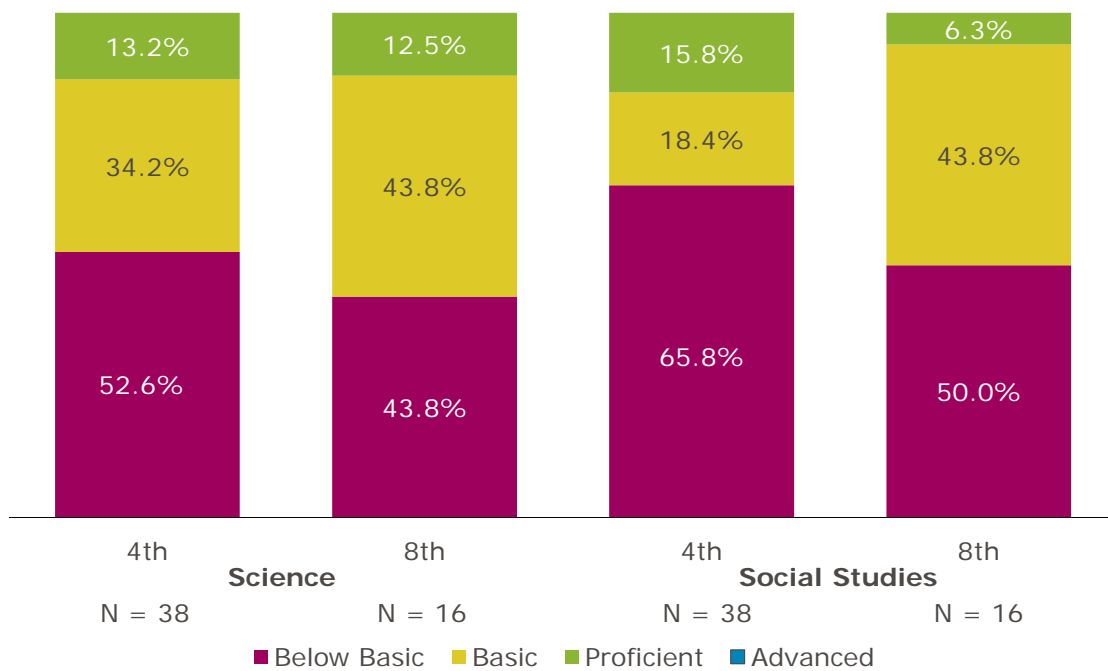
Figure 4

Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Forward Exam Math Assessment 2015–16



Among 54 fourth and eighth graders who completed the social studies and science tests, 13.0% were proficient or advanced in social studies and 13.0% were proficient or advanced in science (Figure 5).

Figure 5
**Milwaukee Math and Science Academy
 Forward Exam Social Studies and Science Assessments
 2015–16**



F. Multiple-Year Student Progress

Year-to-year progress is measured by comparing scores on standardized tests from one year to the next. Year-to-year progress/performance expectations apply to all students with scores in consecutive years. In the fall of 2013, students in K4 through second grade began taking the PALS reading assessment. The PALS summed score benchmark is intended to show teachers which students require additional reading assistance—not to indicate whether the student is reading at grade level.

Additionally, the three versions of the test (PALS PreK, PALS, and PALS 1–3) include different formats, sections, and scoring. For these reasons, an examination of PALS results from one test to another provides neither a valid nor reliable measure of student progress. Therefore, CRC examined results for students who were in first grade in 2015 and second grade in 2016 who had taken the PALS 1–3 during two consecutive years. The CSRC’s proposed performance expectation is that at least 75.0% of students who were at or above the summed score benchmark in first grade will remain at or above the summed score benchmark as second graders in the subsequent school year. This year, year-to-year reading readiness will be used as baseline data to confirm that expectation.

Data regarding year-to-year academic achievement on the DPI standardized tests for third through eighth graders are not available this year due to this being the first year of application of the Wisconsin Forward Exam to third through eighth graders. Forward exam results from 2015–16 will be used as baseline data to measure student progress from 2015–16 to 2016–17; results will be available at that time.

1. Second-Grade Progress Based on PALS²⁴

Thirty-three students completed the PALS spring assessment in 2014–15 as first graders and 2015–16 as second graders. Based on PALS results from the spring of 2015, 18 of those students were at or above the spring summed score benchmark as first graders; 18 (100.0%) of those students remained at or above the summed score benchmark in the spring of 2016 as second graders.

G. CSRC School Scorecard

In the 2009–10 school year, CSRC piloted a scorecard for each school that it charters. The pilot ran for three years, and in the fall of 2012, CSRC formally adopted the scorecard to help monitor school

²⁴ These results will be included in the CSRC pilot school scorecard.

performance. The scorecard includes multiple measures of student academic progress, such as performance on standardized tests and local measures.²⁵ It also includes point-in-time academic achievement and engagement elements, such as attendance and student and teacher retention and return. The score provides a summary indicator of school performance. The summary score is then translated into a school status rating.

In 2014, CSRC approved a new scoring system in order to make the scorecard percentages more meaningful and provide schools with greater opportunities to exhibit improvement. The new scoring system is based on the following scale.

A	93.4% – 100%	C	73.3% – 76.5%
A–	90.0% – 93.3%	C–	70.0% – 73.2%
B+	86.6% – 89.9%	D+	66.6% – 69.9%
B	83.3% – 86.5%	D	63.3% – 66.5%
B–	80.0% – 83.2%	D–	60.0% – 63.2%
C+	76.6% – 79.9%	F	0.0% – 59.9%

The percentage score is still translated into a school status level as in previous years, with small changes to the status-level cut scores. The previous and newly adopted cut scores are shown in Table 7.

Table 7		
City of Milwaukee		
Educational Performance Rating Scale for Charter Schools		
School Status	Scorecard Total %	
	Previous	Scale Adopted 8/12/14
High Performing/Exemplary	100% – 85%	83.3% – 100.0% (B to A)
Promising/Good	84% – 70%	70.0% – 83.2% (C– to B–)
Problematic/Struggling	69% – 55%	60.0% – 69.9% (D– to D+)
Poor/Failing	54% or less	0.0% – 59.9% (F)

²⁵ In 2013–14, the PALS assessment replaced the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT) measures for first- and second-grade students.

CSRC uses the score and rating to guide decisions regarding whether to accept a school's annual education performance and continue monitoring as usual and whether to recommend a school for a five-year contract renewal at the end of its fourth year of operation under its current contract. CSRC's expectation is that schools will achieve a rating of 70.0% (promising/good) or more; if a school falls under 70.0%, CSRC will carefully review the school's performance and determine whether a probationary plan should be developed.

MMSA scored 78.6% (C+) this year, which places the school at the promising/good level. This compares with 72.6% on the 2014–15 scorecard, 66.4% on the 2013–14 scorecard, and 64.4% on the 2012–13 scorecard.²⁶

H. DPI School Report Card

At the time of this report, DPI has not published report cards for any school for the 2015–16 school year.

I. Parent/Teacher/Board Satisfaction Regarding Student Academic Progress

Based on 117 parent surveys:

- More than 86% of parents agreed/strongly agreed that their child is learning what is needed to succeed in later grades;
- Almost 90% (88.9%) of parents indicated that the staff keeps them informed about their child's academic performance;
- Nearly all (92.3%) of the parents agreed/strongly agreed that they and their child clearly understand the school's academic expectations; and
- A majority (86.3%) of parents rated the school's overall contribution to their child's learning as excellent or good.

²⁶ Due to the shift in standardized tests, WKCE results were not available again this year, so the scorecard percentage is based on the measures that were available at the time of this report.

Of the 13 teachers interviewed:

- Seven rated their students' academic progress as good, five as fair, and one as poor;
- All 13 considered the educational methodology/curriculum approach at the school as an important reason for continuing to teach at MMSA; and
- Six rated the program of instruction as excellent or good and four as fair.

Of the 44 seventh- and eighth-grade students surveyed:

- Nearly all (41, or 93.2%) agreed that their reading/writing skills had improved; and
- Most (38, or 86.4%) agreed that their math skills had improved.

Of the three board members interviewed:

- Two agreed that the students were making significant academic progress;
- All three agreed that the school is making progress toward becoming a high-performing school; and
- On a scale of good to excellent, all three rated the school as good overall.

IV. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report covers the fifth year of MMSA's operation as a City of Milwaukee charter school. MMSA's probationary status was lifted because the school addressed all of the conditions of probation extension set forth by the city's CSRC. The school adopted strategies to ensure that all of the recommendations for school improvement in the 2014–15 report were implemented and has met or substantially met all of the provisions of its contract with the City of Milwaukee. In addition, MMSA's score on the CSRC scorecard for 2015–16 is 78.6% (C+), indicating the school is at the promising/good level. This compares with 72.6% the previous year. Because of the solid trend of continuous growth on the multiple measures scorecard and the school's ability to meet all of the other recommended and required conditions, CRC recommends that the school continue to receive regular annual academic monitoring and reporting.

Appendix A

Contract Compliance Chart

Table A
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy
Overview of Compliance for Education-Related Contract Provisions
2015–16

Section of Contract	Education-Related Contract Provision	Report Reference Page(s)	Contract Provision Met or Not Met
Section B	Description of educational program	pp. 3–5	Met
Section B	Annual school calendar provided	p. 11	Met
Section C	Educational methods	pp. 3–5	Met
Section D	Administration of required standardized tests	pp. 29–36	Met
Section D	<u>Academic criterion #1</u> : Maintain local measures in reading, math, writing, and IEP goals, showing pupil growth in demonstrating curricular goals.	pp. 24–29	Met
Section D and subsequent CSRC memos	<u>Academic criterion #2</u> : Year-to-year achievement measures; PALS year-to-year expectations for 2nd-grade students; year-to-year results were not available for 3rd–8th graders this year.	p. 37; N/A	Met; N/A
Section D and subsequent CSRC memos	<u>Academic criterion #3</u> : Year-to-year achievement measures; progress for students below grade level or proficiency level was not available this year.	N/A	N/A
Section E	Parental involvement	pp. 12–13	Met
Section F	Instructional staff hold a DPI license or permit to teach	p. 10	Substantially Met*
Section I	Maintain pupil database information for each pupil	pp. 5–7	Met
Section K	Disciplinary procedures	pp. 13–14	Met

*A fourth/fifth-grade science/social studies teacher hired in mid-January did not hold a current license or permit at the time of this report.

Appendix B

Student Learning Memorandum

Student Learning Memorandum for Milwaukee Math and Science Academy

To: NCCD Children’s Research Center and Charter School Review Committee
From: Milwaukee Math and Science Academy
Re: Learning Memo for the 2015–16 Academic Year
Date: October 13, 2015

This memorandum of understanding includes the *minimum* measurable outcomes required by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) to monitor and report students’ academic progress. These outcomes have been defined by the leadership and/or staff at Milwaukee Math and Science Academy (MMSA) in consultation with staff from the NCCD Children’s Research Center (CRC) and CSRC. The school will record student data in the Concept School SIS database and/or MS Excel spreadsheets and provide the data to CRC, the educational monitoring agent contracted by CSRC. Additionally, paper test printouts or data directly from the test publisher will be provided to CRC for all standardized tests unless CRC has direct access to the results from the test publisher. All required elements related to the outcomes below are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section. CRC requests electronic submission of year-end data on the fifth day following the last day of student attendance for the academic year, or June 22, 2016.

Enrollment

MMSA will record enrollment dates for every student. Upon admission, individual student information and actual enrollment date will be added to the school’s database. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Termination/Withdrawal

The exit date and reason for every student leaving the school will be determined and recorded in the school’s database. Specific reasons for each expulsion are required for each student. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Attendance

The school will maintain appropriate attendance records and maintain an average daily attendance rate of 90.3%. A student is considered present for the day if he/she arrives at school no later than 10:00 a.m. and stays the rest of the day or arrives on time in the morning (8:00 a.m.) and stays at least until 1:00 p.m. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Parent/Guardian Participation

Parents of at least 75% of the students who attend all year will participate in at least two of the four parent-teacher conferences. Home visits and alternative face-to-face visits at school will be acceptable alternatives for parents who are unable to attend scheduled conferences. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Special Education Needs Students

The school will maintain updated records on all students who received special education services at the school, including students who were evaluated but not eligible for services. Required data elements related to the special education outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

Academic Achievement: Local Measures²⁷

Mathematics and Reading for K5 Through Eighth-Grade Students

Students will complete Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) reading and math tests in the fall and spring of the school year.

- At least 70% of the students who completed the fall MAP reading test will meet their target Rasch unit (RIT) score in the spring.
- At least 70% of the students who completed the fall MAP math test will meet their target RIT score in the spring.

Required data elements related to these outcomes are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

Writing for K5 Through Eighth-Grade Students

Writing progress will be measured using the Six Traits of Writing.²⁸ The rubric for K5 through second grade consists of an eight-point scale, and the rubric for third through eighth grade consists of a six-point scale for each of the six traits. All students will complete a writing sample no later than October 2, 2015, and again between May 15 and May 31, 2016. The grade-level prompt for both writing samples will be the same, with a focus on a narrative genre for K5 through eighth grade students.

Of the students with both fall and spring writing samples, 55% will increase their average score by at least one point.²⁹

²⁷ Local measures of academic achievement are classroom- or school-level measures that monitor student progress throughout the year (formative assessment) and can be summarized at the end of the year (summative assessment) to demonstrate academic growth. They are reflective of each school's unique philosophy and curriculum. CSRC requires local measures of academic achievement in the areas of literacy, mathematics, writing, and IEP goals.

²⁸ The six traits are: ideas, organization, voice, sentence fluency, word choice, and conventions.

²⁹ Writing genres include expository, descriptive, persuasive, and narrative.

Special Education

Students with individualized education programs (IEP) who have been enrolled at MMSA for the full year of IEP implementation will meet or make progress on 75% of their goals. Progress is defined by meeting at least 80% of the subgoals under each goal at their annual review or reevaluation. Progress on IEPs will be monitored through special education progress reports attached to the regular education progress reports. Required data elements related to these outcomes are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Academic Achievement: Standardized Measures

The Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening for K4 Through Second-Grade Students³⁰

The Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) will be administered to all K4 through second-grade students in the fall and spring of each school year within the timeframe required by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI).

DPI-Required Assessment for Third Through Eighth-Grade Students

DPI-required assessments will be administered on an annual basis in the timeframe identified by DPI (i.e., spring of 2016). Required data elements related to this outcome will be described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section as soon as the reporting elements are known.

Year-to-Year Achievement³¹

1. CRC will report results from the DPI-required standardized assessment. Data from 2015–16 will serve as baseline data for subsequent years. If possible, beginning in the 2016–17 school year, CRC will also report year-to-year progress for students who completed the assessment in consecutive school years at the same school. When year-to-year data are available, CSRC will set its expectations for student progress, and these expectations will be effective for all subsequent years.
2. Data from the 2015 spring PALS assessment will be used as baseline data. CSRC’s expectation for students maintaining reading readiness is that at least 75% of students who were in first grade in the 2014–15 school year and met the summed score benchmark in the spring of 2015 will remain at or above the second-grade summed score benchmark in the spring of 2016.

³⁰ Students who meet the summed score benchmark have achieved a level of minimum competency and can be expected to show growth given regular classroom literacy instruction. It does not guarantee that the student is at grade level. Information from <http://www.palswisconsin.info>.

³¹ CSRC will not have year-to-year achievement measurements for students in K4 and K5.

Appendix C

Trend Information

Table C1					
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Student Enrollment and Retention					
School Year	Number Enrolled at Start of School Year	Number Enrolled During Year	Number Withdrew	Number at End of School Year	Number and Rate Enrolled for Entire School Year
2011-12	154	21	23	152	133 (86.4%)
2012-13	240	31	63	208	185 (77.1%)
2013-14	316	26	74	268	248 (78.5%)
2014-15	333	23	60	296	278 (83.5%)
2015-16	337	27	60	304	285 (84.6%)

Table C2	
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Student Return Rate	
School Year	Return Rate
2012-13	75.7%
2013-14	71.6%
2014-15	68.3%
2015-16	67.1%

Table C3	
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Student Attendance	
School Year	Attendance Rate
2011-12	88.8%
2012-13	87.2%
2013-14	88.6%
2014-15	89.7%
2015-16	91.0%

Table C4	
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Parent/Guardian Participation Rate	
School Year	Parent/Guardian Participation Rate
2011–12	48.9%
2012–13	69.2%
2013–14	66.9%
2014–15	72.3%
2015-16	67.4%

Table C5	
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy CSRC Scorecard Score	
School Year	Scorecard Result
2011–12	59.2%
2012–13	64.4%
2013–14	66.4%
2014–15	72.6%
2015-16	78.6%

Table C6					
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Teacher Retention					
Teacher Type	Number at Beginning of School Year	Number Started After School Year Began	Number Terminated Employment During the Year	Number at End of School Year	Retention Rate: Rate Employed at the School for Entire School Year
2011–12					
Classroom Teachers Only	8	0	1	7	87.5%
All Instructional Staff	14	0	1	13	92.9%
2012–13					
Classroom Teachers Only	12	0	1	11	91.7%
All Instructional Staff	21	0	1	20	95.2%
2013–14					
Classroom Teachers Only	14	2	4	12	71.4%
All Instructional Staff	23	2	4	21	82.6%
2014–15					
Classroom Teachers Only	18	1	2	17	88.9%
All Instructional Staff	29*	1	3	27	88.9%
2015-16					
Classroom Teachers Only	19	2	3*	16	94.1%**
All Instructional Staff	27	6	1***	23	95.8%****

*Two teachers were fired during the year; one left due to illness.

**Sixteen of the 17 eligible teachers remained the entire school year.

***A music teacher passed away during the school year.

****Twenty-three of 24 eligible staff remained the entire year for a total retention rate of 25.8%

Table C7			
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Teacher Return Rate*			
Teacher Type	Number at End of Prior School Year	Number Returned at Beginning of Current School Year	Return Rate
2011–12			
Classroom Teachers Only	N/A	N/A	N/A
All Instructional Staff	N/A	N/A	N/A
2012–13			
Classroom Teachers Only	7	7	100.0%
All Instructional Staff	13	10	76.9%
2013–14			
Classroom Teachers Only	12	1	8.3%
All Instructional Staff	19	6	31.6%
2014–15			
Classroom Teachers Only	10	8	80.0%
All Instructional Staff	17	14	82.4%
2015–16			
Classroom Teachers Only	12	10	83.3%
All Instructional Staff	18	14	77.8%

*Includes only teachers who were eligible to return, i.e., offered a position for fall.

Appendix D

CSRC 2015–16 School Scorecard

**City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee
School Scorecard**

r: 6/15

K5–EIGHTH GRADE

STUDENT READING READINESS: GRADES 1–2		
• PALS—% 1st graders at or above spring summed score benchmark this year (5.0)		
• PALS—% 2nd graders who maintained spring summed score benchmark two consecutive years (5.0)		10%
STUDENT ACADEMIC PROGRESS: GRADES 3–8		
• WKCE reading—% maintained proficient and advanced (7.5)		
• WKCE math—% maintained proficient and advanced (7.5)		
• WKCE reading—% below proficient who progressed (10.0)		35%
• WKCE math—% below proficient who progressed (10.0)		
LOCAL MEASURES		
• % met reading (3.75)		
• % met math (3.75)		
• % met writing (3.75)		15%
• % met special education (3.75)		
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: GRADES 3–8		
• WKCE reading—% proficient or Advanced (7.5)		
• WKCE math—% proficient or advanced (7.5)		15%
ENGAGEMENT		
• Student attendance (5.0)		
• Student reenrollment (5.0)		
• Student retention (5.0)		25%
• Teacher retention (5.0)		
• Teacher return* (5.0)		

HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENT ACADEMIC PROGRESS: GRADES 9, 10, and 12		
• EXPLORE to Aspire—composite score at or above benchmark on EXPLORE and at or above benchmark on the ACT Aspire (5.0)		
• EXPLORE to Aspire—composite score below benchmark on EXPLORE but increased 1 or more on Aspire (10.0)		30%
• Adequate credits to move from 9th to 10th grade (5.0)		
• Adequate credits to move from 10th to 11th grade (5.0)		
• DPI graduation rate (5.0)		
POSTSECONDARY READINESS: GRADES 11 and 12		
• Postsecondary acceptance for graduates (college, university, technical school, military) (10.0)		
• % of 11th/12th graders tested (2.5)		15%
• % of graduates with ACT composite score of 21.25 or more (2.5)		
LOCAL MEASURES		
• % met reading (3.75)		
• % met math (3.75)		
• % met writing (3.75)		15%
• % met special education (3.75)		
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: GRADE 10		
• WKCE reading—% proficient and advanced (7.5)		
• WKCE math—% proficient and advanced (7.5)		15%
ENGAGEMENT		
• Student attendance (5.0)		
• Student reenrollment (5.0)		
• Student retention (5.0)		25%
• Teacher retention (5.0)		
• Teacher return* (5.0)		

*Teachers not offered continuing contracts are excluded when calculating this rate.

Note: If a school has less than 10 students in any cell on this scorecard, CRC does not report these data. This practice was adopted to protect student identity. Therefore, these cells are reported as not available (N/A) on the scorecard. The total score is calculated to reflect each school's denominator.

Table D					
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Charter School Review Committee 2015–16 Scorecard					
Area	Measure	Max. Points	% Total Score	Performance	Points Earned
Student Reading Readiness : 1st–2nd Grades^{32,33}	% 1st graders at or above spring summed score benchmark this year	5.0	10.0%	73.7%	3.7
	% 2nd graders at or above spring summed score benchmark this year	5.0		100%	5.00
Student Academic Progress: 3rd–8th Grades	WKCE reading: % maintained proficient and advanced	7.5	35.0%	N/A	N/A
	WKCE math: % maintained proficient and advanced	7.5		N/A	N/A
	WKCE reading: % below proficient who progressed	10.0		N/A	N/A
	WKCE math: % below proficient who progressed	10.0		N/A	N/A
Local Measures	% met reading	3.75	15.0%	49.8%	1.9
	% met math	3.75		61.3%	2.3
	% met writing	3.75		56.1%	2.1
	% met special education	3.75		90%	3.4
Student Achievement: 3rd–8th Grades	WKCE reading: % proficient or advanced	7.5	15.0%	N/A	N/A
	WKCE math: % proficient or advanced	7.5		N/A	N/A
Engagement*	Student attendance	5.0	25.0%	91.0%	4.6
	Student reenrollment	5.0		67.1%	3.4
	Student retention	5.0		84.6%	4.2
	Teacher retention rate	5.0		95.8%	4.8
	Teacher return rate	5.0		77.8%	3.9
TOTAL		50			39.3
K5–EIGHTH GRADE SCORECARD PERCENTAGE					78.6%

Note: To protect student identity, CRC does not report results for cohorts of fewer than 10 students. Therefore, these cells are reported as not available (N/A).

*Teacher retention and return rates reflect all eligible instructional staff (classroom teachers plus other staff).

³² The PALS replaced the SDRT as the standardized measure for students in first and second grades.

³³ Includes students who completed both the fall and spring PALS.

Appendix E

MMSA Probation Extension Letter



Chair
Kevin Ingram

Committee Members
Desiree Pointer-Mace
Glenn Steinbrecher
Melinda Scott Krei
Gayle Peay
Joyce Mallory

Charter School Review Committee

October 30, 2015

Mr. David Chief, Principal
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy
110 West Burleigh Street
Milwaukee, WI 53212

Mr. Serdar Bozdag, PhD, President of the Board of Directors
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy
3910 W. Jerelin Dr.
Franklin, WI 53132

Dear Mr. Chief and Mr. Bozdag,

On September 10, 2015, the Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) received and accepted the Milwaukee Math and Science Academy (MMSA) 2014–15 *Programmatic Profile and Educational Performance* report from the Children’s Research Center (CRC). That report included the following CRC Recommendation:

MMSA addressed all of the conditions of probation set forth by the City of Milwaukee CSRC, adopted strategies to ensure that all of the recommendations for school improvement in the 2014–14 report were implemented, and has met all of the provisions of its contract with the City of Milwaukee. In addition, MMSA’s score on the CSRC scorecard for the 2014–15 is 72.6%. Because of the solid trend of continuous growth on the multiple measure scorecard and the school’s ability to meet all of the other recommended and required conditions, CRC recommends that the school’s probationary status be lifted with the school continuing to receive regular annual academic monitoring and reporting with an emphasis on the school’s sustained progress.

The CSRC members expressed concern that the progress made during the 2014–15 academic year may not be sustained over the 2015–16 academic year. Due to this concern, the CSRC did not lift MMSA’s probationary status and asked MMSA to provide a report at the middle of the 2015–16 school year with the possibility of lifting the school’s probationary status at that time.

Please submit a written report to the CRC as soon as possible after the end of the second quarter (January 22, 2016), but no later than February 5, 2016, addressing the progress that MMSA has made during the first half of the school year to address the recommendations for school improvement in the 2014–15 annual report. The recommendations areas follow.

- Continue the summer reading program.
- Continue to focus on strategies and staff resources that will result in continued growth in reading.

- Provide more professional development in the areas of reading and writing (literacy), with a new emphasis on how to measure writing skills at all levels.
- Focus on writing improvement throughout the academic year by using fall writing sample to inform teaching interventions and strategies.
- Clarify and implement appropriate Individualized Education Program (IEP) development and review. Consider requiring both goals and subgoals for each IEP.
- Continue to provide enrichment opportunities for students who are functioning above grade level. Address and implement strategies to increase student attendance, retention, and return rates.
- Continue the implementation of strategies to increase student attendance, retention, and return rates.
- Continue the strategies to retain teachers throughout the school year and to encourage teachers to return year after year.

In addition, submit an explanation of the specific measures taken during the first half of the 2015–16 academic year to reduce the number of out-of-school and in-school suspensions. This explanation should include any professional development activities regarding appropriate behavioral consequences.

Also, please provide a list of the school’s administrative leadership and a list of the board of directors in place (including the date appointed to the board) at the end of the first semester.

Within five days after the end of the first semester, January 22, 2016, provide CRC the engagement data available through January 22, 2016, so that CRC can preliminarily assess the engagement indicators on the scorecard. The following are specifically requested.

- Student attendance
- Student reenrollment (return rate)
- Student retention for the first semester
- Instructional staff return rate (i.e., the fall instructional staff roster)
- Instructional staff retention rate for the first semester; (i.e., the mid-year instructional staff roster)

CRC will compute the preliminary scorecard engagement data, review all of the information submitted by MMSA, request any clarifications needed, and make a recommendation to the CSRC. The CSRC will then review all of the information and meet to address reconsideration of MMSA’s probationary status.

Sincerely,

Kevin Ingram
Chair, Charter School Review Committee

Appendix F

Teacher Interview Results

In the spring of 2016, CRC interviewed 13 teachers regarding their reasons for teaching and overall satisfaction with the school. Interviews included teachers from all grades at the school, plus a special education teacher.

The teachers interviewed had been teaching for an average of 3.6 years. The number of years teaching at MMSA ranged from one year to three years.

Eleven (84.6%) teachers rated the school's overall progress in contributing to students' academic progress as good, one teacher rated the school's progress as fair, and one teacher rated the school's progress as poor.

Three quarters of teachers (76.9%) agreed or strongly agreed that the school has clear teacher performance assessment processes, but only about half the teachers (53.8%) were satisfied with the performance assessment criteria (Table F1).

Table F1					
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Teacher/Instruction Staff Assessment 2015–16 (N = 13)					
	Frequency				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	n	n	n	n	n
The school has a clear teacher performance assessment process	2	8	2	1	0
I am satisfied with my school's teacher performance assessment criteria	1	6	4	2	0
Student academic performance is an important part of teacher assessment	1	10	2	0	0

While only half (53.8%) of the teachers agreed that adults who work in the school respect students and their different points of view, most (76.9%) teachers agreed or strongly agreed staff at the school typically work well together (Table F2).

Table F2					
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy					
School Climate					
2015-16					
(N = 13)					
	Frequency				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	n	n	n	n	n
Adults who work in this school respect students and their different points of view	0	7	2	4	0
Staff at this school typically work well with one another	3	7	2	1	0
Staff at this school encourage all families to become involved in school activities	2	5	4	1	0

When asked to rate the importance of various reasons for continuing to teach at the school, all teachers rated educational methodology, general atmosphere, and administrative leadership as somewhat important or very important for teaching at this school (Table F3).

Table F3				
Reasons for Continuing to Teach at Milwaukee Math and Science Academy				
2015-16				
(N = 13)				
Reason	Importance			
	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Somewhat Unimportant	Not at All Important
Financial considerations	7	4	0	2
Educational methodology/ curriculum approach	6	7	0	0
Age/grade level of students	9	3	1	0
Discipline	8	4	1	0
General atmosphere	7	6	0	0
Class size	5	7	1	0
Administrative leadership	11	2	0	0
Colleagues	4	6	3	0
Students	7	2	1	2

CRC asked teachers to rate the school’s performance related to class size, materials and equipment, and student assessment plan, as well as shared leadership, professional support and development, and the school’s progress toward becoming an excellent school. Teachers most often rated class size/student ratio as excellent or good. Performance as a teacher, progress toward becoming a high-performing school, and students’ academic progress were most often rated as good by teachers. Regarding professional support, one of the 13 teachers rated it as excellent; five teachers rated it as good; four teachers rated it as fair; and three teachers rated it as poor (Table F4).

Table F4				
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy				
School Performance Rating				
2015–16				
(N = 13)				
Area	Rating			
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Class size/student-teacher ratio	3	9	1	0
Program of instruction	1	5	6	1
Shared leadership, decision making, and accountability	0	3	8	2
Professional support	1	5	4	3
Progress toward becoming a high-performing school	1	8	2	2
Your students’ academic progress	0	7	5	1
Adherence to discipline policy	0	1	8	4
Instructional support	1	2	7	3
Parent-teacher relationships	0	6	7	0
Teacher collaboration to plan learning experiences	2	5	5	1
Parent involvement	0	1	8	4
Your performance as a teacher	2	9	2	0
Administrative staff’s performance	0	6	4	2

When asked to name two things they liked most about the school, multiple teachers identified:

- Collaborative and honest relationships between administrators and teachers; and
- The families and welcoming environment of the school.

Things teachers reported liking least about the school include:

- Inconsistent disciplinary consequences;
- Teachers not treated professionally by administration; and
- Low pay.

Barriers cited by teachers as possibly affecting their decisions to remain at the school include:

- Administrative turnover; and
- Salary

Appendix G

Parent Survey/Interview Results

Parent opinions are qualitative in nature and provide a valuable measurement of school performance. To determine parent satisfaction with the school, parental involvement with the school, and an overall evaluation of the school, each school distributed paper surveys during spring parent-teacher conferences and offered the ability to complete the survey online. CRC made at least two follow-up phone calls to parents who had not completed a survey. If these parents were available and willing, CRC completed the survey over the telephone. Surveys representing 117 (55.7%) of 210 MMSA families were completed and submitted to CRC.

Most parents either agreed or strongly agreed that they are comfortable talking with staff (94.9%), feel welcome at MMSA (92.3%), clearly understand the school’s academic expectations (92.3%), and staff recognize their child(ren)’s strengths and weaknesses (91.5%) (Table G1).

Table G1												
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy												
Parent Satisfaction With School												
2015–16												
(N = 117)												
Factor	Response											
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No Response	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
I am comfortable talking with the staff	82	70.1%	29	24.8%	4	3.4%	0	0.0%	1	0.9%	1	0.9%
The staff keep me informed about my child’s academic performance	77	65.8%	27	23.1%	5	4.3%	4	3.4%	3	2.6%	1	0.9%
I am comfortable with how the staff handles discipline	51	43.6%	33	28.2%	13	11.1%	8	6.8%	9	7.7%	3	2.6%
I am satisfied with the overall performance of the staff	52	44.4%	43	36.8%	18	15.4%	3	2.6%	1	0.9%	0	0.0%
The staff recognize my child’s strengths and weaknesses	69	59.0%	38	32.5%	7	6.0%	2	1.7%	0	0.0%	1	0.9%
I feel welcome at my child’s school	79	67.5%	29	24.8%	2	1.7%	5	4.3%	0	0.0%	2	1.7%
The staff respond to my worries and concerns	56	47.9%	46	39.3%	8	6.8%	3	2.6%	2	1.7%	2	1.7%
My child and I clearly understand the school’s academic expectations	72	61.5%	36	30.8%	5	4.3%	3	2.6%	0	0.0%	1	0.9%

Table G1

**Milwaukee Math and Science Academy
Parent Satisfaction With School
2015–16
(N = 117)**

Factor	Response											
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No Response	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
My child is learning what is needed to succeed in later grades or after high school graduation	62	53.0%	39	33.3%	12	10.3%	2	1.7%	1	0.9%	1	0.9%
My child is safe in school	70	59.8%	31	26.5%	8	6.8%	4	3.4%	2	1.7%	2	1.7%
People in this school treat each other with respect	51	43.6%	39	33.3%	13	11.1%	10	8.5%	4	3.4%	0	0.0%
The school offers a variety of courses and afterschool activities to keep my child interested	69	59.0%	27	23.1%	15	12.8%	3	2.6%	1	0.9%	2	1.7%

The second measure examined the extent to which parents engaged in educational activities while at home. During a typical week, most or many of the 83 parents of younger children (K4 through fifth grades) took part in the following activities with their children: worked on homework (95.2%); worked on arithmetic or math (86.7%); read to or with (84.3%); encouraged the use of phones, tablets, or computers for learning (84.3%); and/or participated in sports, library visits, or museum visits (67.5%).

Table G2								
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy								
Parent Participation in Activities								
K4–5th Grades								
2015–16								
(N = 83)								
Activity	Response							
	Never		Monthly		Weekly		No Response	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Read with or to your child(ren)	2	2.4%	11	13.3%	70	84.3%	0	0.0%
Encourage the use of phones, tablets, or computers for learning	4	4.8%	8	9.6%	70	84.3%	1	1.2%
Work on arithmetic or math	4	4.8%	7	8.4%	72	86.7%	0	0.0%
Work on homework	2	2.4%	2	2.4%	79	95.2%	0	0.0%
Participate together in activities outside of school	6	7.2%	21	25.3%	56	67.5%	0	0.0%

Parents of older children (grades sixth through eighth) weekly engaged in similar activities. For example, 91.1% of 45 parents monitored homework completion; 77.8% discussed their child’s progress toward graduation; 77.8% encouraged the use of phones, tablets, or computers to do research; 66.7% discussed plans for education after graduation; and 60.0% participated in activities outside of school with their child.

Table G3								
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy								
Parent Participation in Activities								
6th – 8th Grades								
2015–16								
(N = 45)								
Activity	Response							
	Never		Monthly		Weekly		No Response	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Monitor homework completion	3	6.7%	1	2.2%	41	91.1%	0	0.0%
Encourage the use of phones, tablets, or computers to do research	3	6.7%	7	15.6%	35	77.8%	0	0.0%
Participate together in activities outside of school	1	2.2%	17	37.8%	27	60.0%	0	0.0%
Discuss with your child his/her progress toward graduation	2	4.4%	7	15.6%	35	77.8%	1	2.2%
Discuss plans for education after graduation	4	8.9%	11	24.4%	30	66.7%	0	0.0%

Parental satisfaction was evident in the following results.

- Almost all (92.3%) parents would recommend this school to other parents.
- Nearly three quarters (69.2%) of parents will send their child to the school next year, 12 (10.2%) parents said they will not send their child to the school next year, and 24 (20.5%) were not sure.
- When asked to rate the school’s overall contribution to their child’s learning, a majority (86.3%) of parents rated it as excellent or good. Some (11.1%) parents rated the school’s contribution as fair. Three parents did not respond to the question.

When asked what they liked most about the school, responses included:

- Staff teaching style and school curriculum;
- Communication with parents; and
- Caring and understanding teachers.

When asked what they like least about the school, responses included:

- Methods of discipline; and
- Lack of communication between staff and parents, specifically communication about discipline or bullying.

Appendix H

Student Survey Results

At the end of the school year, 44 seventh- and eighth-grade students completed an online survey about their school.

Responses from the student surveys were generally positive.

- About half (52.3%) of the students indicated that they use computers at school.
- The majority (65.9%) of students agreed that their teachers help them succeed in school.
- Nearly all (41, or 93.2%) the students indicated that their reading abilities had improved, and 86.3% agreed that their math abilities had improved.
- Most (79.5%) students agreed that their teachers talk with them about high school plans (Table H).

Table H					
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Student Survey 2015–16 (N = 44)					
Question	Answer				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I like my school.	6	16	10	2	10
My reading/writing skills have improved.	24	17	1	2	0
My math skills have improved.	17	21	3	2	1
I regularly use computers/tablets in my school work.	6	17	9	11	1
The school rules are fair.	1	15	5	13	9
The teachers at my school help me to succeed in school.	11	18	6	3	5
I like being in school.	6	19	10	3	4
I feel safe in school.	5	18	10	6	4
The marks I get on classwork, homework, and report cards are fair.	10	19	5	7	1
My school has afterschool activities.	25	15	2	2	0
My teachers talk with me about high school plans.	18	17	1	5	2
Students at my school respect each other and their different points of view.	2	8	13	11	9

<p align="center">Table H</p> <p align="center">Milwaukee Math and Science Academy</p> <p align="center">Student Survey</p> <p align="center">2015–16</p> <p align="center">(N = 44)</p>					
Question	Answer				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Teachers at my school respect students.	1	24	9	2	7
The students at my school respect each other and their different points of view.	4	20	7	4	7

When asked what they liked best about the school, students responded with:

- Afterschool activities; and
- Teachers and their teaching styles.

When asked what they liked least, students said:

- Some of the rules (and the discipline policies);
- Favoritism shown by some of the teachers, who are not fair and equal in how they treat students; and
- Lunch.

Appendix I

Board Interview Results

Board member opinions are qualitative in nature and provide valuable, although subjective, insight regarding school performance and organizational competency. At the time of the board interviews, Milwaukee Math and Science Academy’s board of directors consisted of four members—the board president, the vice president/treasurer, and two other board members. Three of the five board members participated in the interviews conducted by CRC over the phone using a prepared interview guide.

The board members have served on the board for an average of just over three years. The backgrounds of the board members included education, computer science and IT, journalism, and chemical engineering.

One of the board members said he/she participates in strategic planning for the school. All three received a presentation on the school’s annual academic performance report, received and approved the school’s annual budget, and reviewed the school’s annual financial audit.

All three of the members reported that the board uses data to make decisions regarding the school. On a scale of poor to excellent, all three of the board members rated the school as good overall.

Table I					
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Board Member Interview Results 2015–16 (N = 3)					
Performance Measure	Response				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Teacher-student ratio/class size at this school is appropriate.	1	2	0	0	0
Program of instruction (includes curriculum, equipment, and building) is consistent with the school’s mission.	2	1	0	0	0
Students make significant academic progress at this school.	1	1	1	0	0
The administrator’s financial management is transparent and efficient.	3	0	0	0	0
This school is making progress toward becoming a high-performing school.	2	1	0	0	0
This school has strong linkages to the community, including businesses.	1	1	1	0	0
The administrative staff’s performance meets the board’s expectations.	2	1	0	0	0
The majority of the board of directors take their varied responsibilities seriously.	1	2	0	0	0
This school has the financial resources to fulfill its mission.	1	1	0	1	0
The environment of this school ensures the safety of its students and staff.	1	1	0	1	0

When asked what they liked most about the school, the board members mentioned:

- Providing a good education to students from low-income families;
- The emphasis on math and science;
- Relationships between teachers, staff, and parents; and
- Cultural competency.

Regarding things they liked least, the board members mentioned:

- Lack of parental involvement;
- School location in a high-crime area; and
- Poor teacher retention rates and low teacher salaries.

When asked for one suggestion for improving the school, board members said:

- Increase financial resources; and
- Move school to a new building.

Additional comments:

- Overall, the school has been progressing.