



**EVIDENT
CHANGE**
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**2020–21
PROGRAMMATIC
PROFILE AND
EDUCATIONAL
PERFORMANCE**

**MILWAUKEE ACADEMY
OF SCIENCE**

September 2021

Evident Change was previously NCCD Children's Research Center.



ABOUT EVIDENT CHANGE

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FOR MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE 2020–21

This is the 13th annual report about the operation of Milwaukee Academy of Science (MAS), one of seven schools chartered by the City of Milwaukee during the 2020–21 school year. It is a result of intensive work undertaken by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC), school staff, and Evident Change (formerly NCCD Children’s Research Center).

In 2020–21, the COVID-19 pandemic affected every aspect of our lives, including education systems. The findings discussed in this report should be interpreted with this in mind. On the basis of the information gathered and discussed in the attached report, Evident Change has determined the following.

I. CONTRACT COMPLIANCE SUMMARY¹

For this school year, MAS met all contract provisions that were applicable except for one (teacher licensure).

¹ See Appendix A for a list of each education-related contract provision, page references, and a description of whether each provision was met.

II. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

A. LOCAL MEASURES OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

1. Primary Measures of Educational Progress²

The CSRC requires each school to track student progress in reading, writing, math, and individualized education program (IEP) goals throughout the year to identify students who need additional help and to help teachers develop strategies to improve the academic performance of all students.

This year, local measures for MAS resulted in the following outcomes.

- *Elementary Academy (K4 Through Fifth Grade)*
 - » Of 60 K4 students who completed the spring Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening PreK assessments, 38.3% were at or above the developmental range for five or more of seven completed tasks. The school's goal was 90.0%.
 - » Of 143 K5 and first-grade students who were enrolled all year and completed the English/language arts skills assessment, 54 (37.8%) acquired the minimum percentage of competencies for their grade level this year. The school's goal was 90.0%.
 - » Of 351 second through fifth graders who completed the fall and spring Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) reading tests, 84 (23.9%) showed progress on the spring test. The school's goal was 73.0%.
 - » Of 68 K4 students enrolled all year who had spring math scores, 45 (66.2%) acquired at least 80.0% of the math competencies designated as benchmarks. The school's goal was 90.0%.
 - » Of 141 K5 and first graders who were enrolled all year and completed the math skills assessment, 87 (61.7%) acquired the minimum percentage of competencies for their grade level this year. The school's goal was 90.0%.
 - » Of 350 second- through fifth-grade students who completed the fall and spring MAP math tests, 67 (19.1%) showed progress on the spring test. The school's goal was 73.0%.

² MAS staff indicated that for both standardized and local measure assessment administrations, every effort was made to collect data for all students, including offering multiple opportunities for in-person assessment administration, collecting data remotely when allowable, and contacting parents for support. Despite these efforts, the assessment datasets collected and submitted for the 2020–21 school year do not reflect full assessment participation and data collection in the way they would have in years past, due to the circumstances surrounding the pandemic and the school's corresponding virtual and hybrid instructional program designs.

- » Of 233 third- through fifth-grade students assessed in writing, 76 (32.6%) achieved a score of 18 or higher. The school's goal was 80.0%.
- » Of the 36 elementary academy students with IEP goals reviewed during the year, 33 (91.7%) met one or more of their goals this year. The school's goal was 100.0%.
- *Junior Academy (Sixth Through Eighth Grade)*
 - » Of 210 students who completed the fall and spring MAP reading tests, 134 (63.8%) showed progress on the spring test. The school's goal was 83.0%.
 - » Of 227 students who completed the fall and spring MAP math tests, 143 (63.0%) showed progress on the spring test. The school's goal was 83.0%.
 - » A total of 143 students were assessed in writing. Over four fifths (123, or 86.0%) received a score of 18 or higher; the school's goal was 82.0%.
 - » Of 21 junior academy students with IEP goals reviewed during the year, 20 (95.2%) met one or more of their goals; the school's goal was 100.0%.
- *High School (Ninth Through Twelfth Grade)*
 - » Of 265 high school students who completed the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Reading Inventory in the fall and spring, 221 (83.4%) showed improvement from fall to spring; the school's goal was 80.0%.
 - » Of 244 high school students who completed comprehensive math assessments for the math course in which they were enrolled for the entire year, 194 (79.5%) scored 70.0% or higher on the end-of-year assessment. The school's goal was 60.0%.
 - » Of 275 high school students who completed the spring writing assessments, 264 (96.0%) received a score of 18 or higher in the spring; the school's goal was 85.0%.
 - » Of the 22 students with IEP goals reviewed during the year, 21 (95.5%) met one or more of their IEP goals; the school's goal was 100.0%.
 - » Graduation plans were developed for all 283 high school students enrolled at the end of the school year.
 - » Of 276 students enrolled for the entire school year, 237 (85.9%) were promoted to the next grade or graduated from high school this year.

2. Secondary Measures of Educational Outcomes

To meet City of Milwaukee requirements, MAS identified measurable outcomes in the following secondary areas of academic progress.

- Attendance
- Parent participation
- Special education student records
- High school graduation plans
- Grade promotion and graduation

The elementary and junior academies met two of their three internal goals (parent participation and special education student records), and the high school met three (parent participation, special education student records, and high school graduation plans) and partially met one (grade promotion and graduation) of five internal goals.

B. YEAR-TO-YEAR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT ON STANDARDIZED TESTS

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction withdrew the requirement for schools to administer any standardized tests for 2019–20; therefore, year-to-year progress could not be measured from 2019–20 to 2020–21.

C. CSRC SCHOOL SCORECARD

Because data to examine year-to-year student progress were not available, the CSRC scorecard contains partial outcome data this year. The school's score should not be compared with the score for any previous or subsequent year. The school scored 65.1% of the 59 possible points for K4 through eighth grade and 83.1% of the 85 possible points for the high school. The weighted overall score was 69.3%.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The school addressed all recommendations in its 2019–20 programmatic profile and educational performance report. To continue a focused school improvement plan, Evident Change reviewed MAS's academic achievement data for the past school year and solicited input from school staff to develop this recommendation for the 2021–22 school year.

The MAS leadership team decided to engage all staff and students in a continuous improvement instructional framework to enhance the school's overall academic performance. Small groups will work to improve instructional planning and assessments in order to strengthen the rigor of the curriculum and ensure that all learning is standard-aligned. Specific and achievable goals will be set for students, teachers, and administrators. Data will consistently be used to monitor progress and ensure that standard-aligned instruction is being implemented with fidelity. This process is designed to concretely engage all school participants, students, teachers, and administrators in the school's mission and the advancement of its academic achievements.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

After reviewing past and current contract compliance status and available data, Evident Change recommends that MAS continue regular, annual academic monitoring and reporting. Special attention should be given to improvements at the elementary level.

I. INTRODUCTION

This report was prepared as a result of a contract between the City of Milwaukee and Evident Change. It is one component of the program that the Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) uses to monitor performance of all city-chartered schools.

To produce this report, Evident Change:

- Conducted an initial (virtual) school session to collect information related to contract requirements and to draft a learning memo for the new school year as well as an in-person year-end interview to review progress about recommendations and changes that occurred during the year;
- Visited the school to conduct a random review of special education files;
- Attended (virtually) a school board of directors meeting, along with CSRC representatives, to provide an update regarding compliance with the City of Milwaukee’s academic expectations and contract requirements; and
- Collected and analyzed data submitted by the school to complete an annual report.

II. PROGRAMMATIC PROFILE

Milwaukee Academy of Science
2000 W. Kilbourn Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53233

Telephone: (414) 933-0302

Website: www.milwaukeeacademyofscience.org

President and Chief Executive Officer	Anthony McHenry
Chief Academic Officer	Christopher Schwab
Principal, Kindergarten Through Fifth Grade	Michael Beaudoin
Principal, Sixth Through Eighth Grade	Patrick Rooney
Principal, Ninth Through Twelfth Grade	Tom Schalmo

A. DESCRIPTION AND PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATIONAL METHODOLOGY

1. MISSION

“The mission of the Milwaukee Academy of Science, an exemplary leader in STEM education, is to graduate urban students prepared to compete successfully at the postsecondary level.”

The Milwaukee Academy of Science (MAS) opened in August 2000 and was chartered by the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. The school began a five-year charter agreement with the City of Milwaukee in July 2008 and started its third five-year charter agreement during the 2018–19 school year. The school serves students in K4 through twelfth grades with a challenging curriculum emphasizing science. MAS staff embrace the 5E instructional model (engage, explore, explain, evaluate, and extend). Also, MAS enhances its curriculum with science-related community partnerships.

2. INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, MAS started the school year with all students engaged in virtual learning. The school submitted its virtual schedule/plan to Evident Change. On April 6, 2021, with a reopening plan approved Milwaukee Health Department, the school offered families the option to continue with a fully virtual program or hybrid program. The hybrid schedule for first through twelfth grades was two days per week in person and three days virtual. Kindergarten students attended in person four days a week and attended one day virtually.

The school’s leadership noted the primary disadvantages of virtual learning, including the following.

- Difficulty getting students to consistently log in and use the video option.
- Inconsistent access to internet and diverse learning curves in gaining technological skills required to use various virtual learning programs and resources.
- Work schedules and childcare needs sometimes limited parents’ ability to monitor student engagement consistently.

Leadership noted the following strong advantages.

- More individual attention was given to students’ specialized needs.
- Frequent communication with parents strengthened their engagement with their child’s learning and the school staff.
- Increased collaboration among staff enhanced their working relations.

MAS emphasizes integrating science into the general curriculum and provides its students with unique science opportunities at all levels. MAS teachers are trained in differentiated instruction and in the curricular areas they teach. Teachers use a variety of instructional groupings, including one-on-one, small group, cooperative learning, whole group, and independent study. MAS used paraprofessionals in K4 through fifth grade, Reading Corps members, and Marquette University volunteers to assist K4 through fifth-grade classroom teachers. Under the supervision of classroom teachers, these assistants provided supplementary instructional support to small groups in reading and math. Teachers also team teach, which commonly occurs in inclusion classrooms with the regular education teacher and the special education teacher. Student needs and lesson objectives determine the most appropriate instructional techniques.³ First through eighth grades are departmentalized, and classes are taught by content-area specialists.

The elementary and junior academies used the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) to assess student progress in reading and math. The elementary academy uses Headsprout, Raz-Kids, and Zearn, and the junior academy uses Aleks to assess and monitor students' acquisition of higher-level reading and math skills.⁴

MAS uses the Eureka Math curriculum for all three academies. The high school math program allows students to progress through algebra I, geometry, algebra II/trigonometry, precalculus, statistics, and potentially calculus. More advanced courses are provided based on student needs.

Students' science learning starts young, with themes aligned with their reading series. The science curriculum draws on the McGraw-Hill series *Science: A Closer Look* for K4 through fifth grade. Junior academy students use Science Dimensions. The older students' math and science curriculum focuses on concepts emphasized in the Common Core State Standards, the Next Generation Science Standards, and the competencies embedded in the ACT Aspire and ACT. Finally, MAS recognizes the importance of "specials" in a student's academic program, so each student receives instruction in physical education, technology, and STEM labs on a regular basis.

B. SCHOOL STRUCTURE

1. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MAS is an unincorporated association governed by the Milwaukee Science Education Consortium, a 501(c)(3) organization. The consortium is governed by a board of directors. It has ultimate responsibility for the school's success and is accountable directly to the City of Milwaukee and the Wisconsin Department of

³ This information comes from the school's city charter application and annual interview sessions.

⁴ Compass Learning is a computer-based program that matches learning activities to students' MAP scores.

Public Instruction (DPI) to ensure that all terms of the school's charter are met. The board sets policy for the school and hires the school president/CEO, who, in turn, hires school staff. The board meets regularly to discuss issues, set policy, and conduct school business.⁵

This year, the board had 21 members: a chair, a vice chair, a secretary, a treasurer, and 17 other members. Board members represent the institutions of higher education that contributed to the creation of the consortium (Medical College of Wisconsin, Cardinal Stritch University, Marquette University, and Milwaukee School of Engineering).

Other board members represent major local businesses and contribute their expertise in administrative and fiscal management. There are also two parent representatives. Board members reflect a variety of experience and expertise, including educational administration, accounting, nonprofit leadership and management, law, medicine, development/construction, marketing/fundraising, and teaching.

2. AREAS OF INSTRUCTION

The MAS administration is structured to support ongoing improvement of the learning environment and academic achievement of all MAS students. The school has a president/CEO, a chief academic officer, a chief financial officer, a director of development, and 10 other administrative staff, all of whom are responsible for the school's academic and financial outcomes. Three principals oversee MAS's three academies. The academies are assisted with their core instructional activities by a special education team, intervention staff, other instructional specialists, a technology team, and a student support team.

The elementary academy serves students in K4 through fifth grades; the junior academy serves students in sixth through eighth grades; and the high school serves students in ninth through twelfth grades.

A major part of the school's overall strategic plan is to identify 21st-century skills, integrate them into the entire curriculum, and develop appropriate means to assess and improve students' academic performance. In the earliest grades (K4 through third), instruction focuses primarily on acquiring literacy and math skills. At these early ages, students are also introduced to science, social studies, and technology. As students move into the next two grades in the elementary academy, the curriculum expands its focus, with more instructional time on scientific constructs and social studies material.

Students in the junior academy and high school receive instruction in language arts, writing, reading, literature, math, technology, social studies, science, and physical education. High school students also have foreign language instruction. Grade level standards and benchmarks have been established for each

⁵ This information comes from the school's website and its original application to the City of Milwaukee.

curricular area, and progress is measured against these standards. Most recently, high school students were given expanded opportunities to participate in AP classes and other more advanced courses.

To graduate from MAS, students must earn 24 credits. The credit requirements are: English (4.0), math (4.0), social studies (3.0), science (6.0), foreign language (2.0), physical education/health (2.0), and electives (3.0).

Requirements may vary for students with special education needs, depending upon their individualized education program (IEP) goals and their transition plan.

To participate in the graduation ceremony, students must take the ACT during their junior year. As seniors, they must maintain a 90.0% attendance rate and have no outstanding disciplinary assignments or fees.⁶

3. TEACHER INFORMATION

At the end of the 2019–20 school year, 74 instructional staff were eligible to return for the 2020–21 school year; of those, 65 returned for an overall return rate of 87.8%. In addition, 16 new staff members were hired.⁷

All but one of the instructional staff employed during the year held a DPI license or permit. During the year, one teacher’s employment was terminated, and no one left the profession, resulting in an annual instructional staff retention rate of 100.0%

Professional staff members are accountable for their growth and development, collectively and individually. Expectations include: Teachers will create Educator Effectiveness Plans, Student Learning Objectives, and Professional Practice Goals. Staff attendance is mandatory on professional development days.

The school supports professional development through pre-service training and ongoing professional development opportunities. Staff members are provided with in-house support and multiple opportunities to grow professionally. The school maintains an in-depth new-educator induction program, which includes:

- An orientation program before the school year starts;
- Strong, cohesive teams; and

⁶ This requirement is articulated in the *Student and Parent High School Handbook*.

⁷ The return rate excludes teachers who were at MAS at the end of the 2019–20 school year but were not offered contracts for the 2020–21 school year because of either unacceptable performance or the elimination of their instructional position. It also excludes teachers who moved out of the city for family reasons.

- Professional development plan reviews, administrator observation, and academy meetings—all focused on new-teacher needs.

All staff members are required to participate in professional development programs and are provided with time for collaborative planning and departmental meetings. In addition, teachers are encouraged to attend relevant conferences and workshops.

Formal evaluations occur twice a year and are used to guide decisions about contract renewals and salaries for the next school year. Evaluations of MAS professional staff are based on an employee's commitment to professional development and evidence of progress.

4. SCHOOL HOURS AND CALENDAR⁸

During virtual instruction, elementary instruction took place between 8:00 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. Junior academy students were engaged between 10:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. High school students took five classes a day between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. From April 6, 2021, through the end of the school year, instruction was both hybrid or fully virtual and occurred between 8:00 a.m. and 3:20 p.m.

The first day of student attendance was August 31, 2020. The last day of school was June 4, 2021. The school met the contract requirement for instructional and attendance hours/days.

MAS offered summer school between June 21 and July 23. The K4, first, and second grades had in-person and virtual options; third through eighth grades were in-person only. Instruction was provided 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee provided recreational experiences from 1:30 to 5:00 p.m. High school students were provided with credit recovery opportunities between June 7 and July 15.

5. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

MAS recognizes family involvement is a critical component of student success and encourages parent/family engagement and involvement in the following ways.

⁸ All information in this section is available in the school calendar. MAS provided Evident Change with a copy of the calendar at the beginning of the school year.

- All parents are encouraged to attend a registration meeting at the beginning of the school year. At this session, staff review the appropriate student/parent handbook. Subsequent to this review, parents and older students sign an agreement to follow the school’s policies and procedures.
- Administrative and teaching staff are expected to work with families to ensure students attend school regularly. It is also their responsibility to provide parents with diverse opportunities to participate in school learning experiences.
- Each grade level seeks regular communication with its families by having staff send out newsletters highlighting upcoming school activities and describing recent student achievements and school awards. Teachers are also encouraged to communicate with parents regularly via written notes, telephone, and/or email and be prepared to meet virtually with parents during parent–teacher conferences.⁹

The school’s parent committee meets monthly. All parents are encouraged to participate so the team can achieve its vision, which is to make MAS the preferred school in Milwaukee. The team provides parents with an additional link to teachers; bridges communication between parents, school, and teachers; provides leadership for the school community; and raises money for school programs and projects. Additional parent engagement strategies were employed during the virtual learning period to enhance families’ ability to help their children with online/home instruction.

6. DISCIPLINE POLICY

MAS places a strong emphasis on a safe, orderly learning environment and has adopted this code of conduct.

*At the Milwaukee Academy of Science,
I will respect myself,
respect my school staff,
respect my fellow students,
and respect my school.*

In the parent handbooks, the school emphasizes its use of Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) as a proactive approach to maximize student achievement. It requires a commitment to maintaining a positive learning environment that promotes cooperation, fosters creativity, and encourages students to take risks involved in learning. MAS believes parents play a critical role in supporting this learning environment through the use of common, respectful language that inspires students while setting clear limits.

⁹ This information comes from MAS’s charter school application and the student and parent handbooks for the current school year.

The parent handbooks contain detailed information about MAS's discipline code and what MAS considers Level 1, 2, and 3 violations. The handbooks provide clear and concrete descriptions of the range of disciplinary consequences to be used by MAS staff. The handbooks identify each type of consequence, describe consequences in detail, indicate who can assign consequences, and associate each consequence with a set of violations. For example, a warning might be issued to a student with a Level 1 violation, and expulsion is possible for a Level 3 violation.

MAS also uses strategies consistent with strong Response to Intervention (RTI) practices. RTI is a framework for implementing high-quality instruction, balanced assessment, and collaboration. It uses a multitiered system to provide the support needed to increase success for all students. MAS's RTI has three tiers for both academics and behaviors. Each tier contains detailed information about the school's expectations and the consequences for deviation from the expectations. Details about MAS's RTI can be found in parent handbooks.

7. GRADUATION INFORMATION

MAS's counseling department assists the school's eighth graders. In addition, the junior academy staff work with these students and their parents throughout the year and strongly encourage them to continue their MAS education through high school graduation. The MAS leadership team indicated that most eighth graders continue at MAS for high school. At the end of this school year, 97.9% (92 of 94) of the eighth graders who were promoted to ninth grade were enrolled in MAS for the next school year. The remaining students were either enrolled in another school or had not informed the school of their chosen high school.¹⁰ The primary reasons for students not returning to MAS for high school were the desire to participate in school athletics or pursue interests other than science or engineering.

MAS employs a full-time school counselor whose primary responsibility is to work with high school students as they prepare for postsecondary careers and educational experiences. The counselor and staff completed the following activities with students.

- In the fall, seniors took virtual tours of numerous college campuses. MAS also had a virtual assembly with Howard University in lieu of the traditional Black Colleges/University tour. Seniors attended College Goal Wisconsin's virtual college fairs. These students also registered for independent Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) sessions with their parents and experts in the field.

¹⁰ MAS eighth-grade graduates not returning to MAS enrolled in the following schools: one in Rufus King High School, and another student is still weighing the available options.

- Juniors participated in a seminar course introducing them to Naviance to assist with college search processes and career interest exploration.¹¹ This spring, in collaboration with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee, these students participated in a virtual career day hosted by 65 professionals.
- The school continued its partnership with Lead2Change, Secure Futures, WRTP-Big Step, and Milwaukee Tool to help students explore career fields, internships, and apprenticeships.
- Counselors and advisors discussed graduation plans with each student and monitored their course completion toward graduation. Students also were able to follow up, one on one, with many of the 50-plus representatives of postsecondary institutions and career fields that visited the school's virtual classrooms.
- Virtual connections were used to link students to community resources such as College Possible, Public Allies, Talent Search Milwaukee, and Upward Bound Programs. The school's partnership with All-In Milwaukee and Wisconsin Educational Opportunities Programs enabled students to meet as large groups virtually with representatives from these organizations and then to schedule individual appointments with them for support with inquiries related to scholarships.

All 36 (100.0%) twelfth-grade students enrolled at the end of the school year were accepted into one or more postsecondary schools (in and out of state). These students were offered \$3,959,867 in scholarships.

C. STUDENT POPULATION

As of September 18, 2020, 1,266 students were enrolled in K4 through twelfth grade.^{12, 13} During the year, 23 students enrolled in the school, and 83 withdrew.¹⁴

Students withdrew for a variety of reasons. Of the elementary academy students who withdrew, 16 withdrew due to chronic absences, 13 withdrew due to parent dissatisfaction with the school (i.e., overall or with school policies), seven transferred to other schools out of state, three transferred to other schools in Wisconsin, and five transferred to other schools in Milwaukee.

Only eight junior academy students withdrew this year. MAS tracked withdrawal reasons for all students, but to protect student identity, specific reasons cannot be reported this year.

¹¹ Detailed information about Naviance can be found at www.naviance.com

¹² The third Friday of September is considered the beginning of the school year for student tracking purposes.

¹³ There were 666 students in the elementary academy, 295 in the junior academy, and 305 in the high school.

¹⁴ A total of 12 students enrolled and 44 withdrew from the elementary academy; two enrolled and eight withdrew from the junior academy; and nine enrolled and 31 withdrew from the high school.

Of the high school students, 23 withdrew due to chronic absences, five withdrew due to academic failure, one transferred out of state, one withdrew due to dissatisfaction with MAS, and a withdrawal reason was not available for one student.

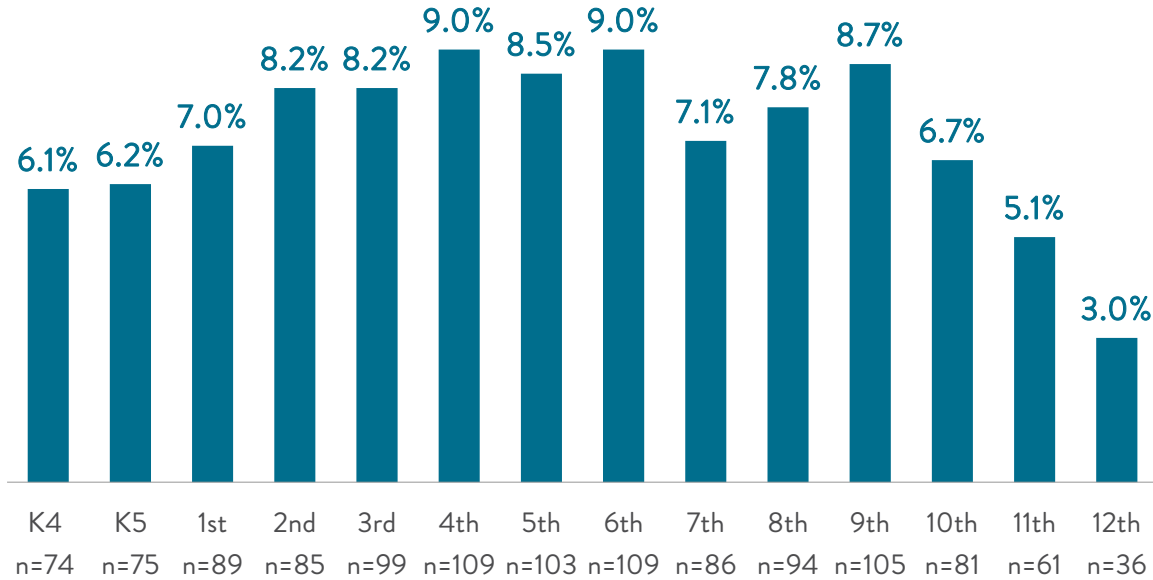
A total of 1,206 students were enrolled at the end of the school year.

- Most students (n=426) were enrolled in the fourth, fifth, sixth, and ninth grades (Figure 1).
- Of all the students, 650 (53.9%) were female, and 556 (46.1%) were male.
- There were 1,191 (98.8%) Black or African American students, five (0.4%) Hispanic or Latinx students, four (0.3%) Black (Non-Hispanic) students, two (0.2%) Caucasian students, and one (0.1%) American Indian or Alaska Native student. Race/ethnicity information was not available for three students.
- There were 99 (8.2%) students who received special education services.¹⁵ Thirty-nine had other health impairments (OHI), 21 had speech and language impairments (SPL), 12 had specific learning disabilities, seven had emotional behavioral disabilities, six had learning disabilities, four had significant developmental delays (SDD), three had SDD and SPL, three had SPL and OHI, two were autistic, one had a traumatic brain injury, and one had an intellectual disability.
- All students received free lunch.¹⁶

¹⁵ Includes students with identified special education needs who qualified or continued and were not dismissed at evaluation.

¹⁶ MAS is a Community Eligibility Provision school; therefore, household income application forms are not required. The percentage of students eligible for free lunch is determined by a direct certification list. For more information, visit dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/community-eligibility-provision

Figure 1
Milwaukee Academy of Science Grade Levels 2020–21
N = 1,206



Of 1,266 students enrolled on the third Friday of September 2020, 1,187 were still enrolled at the end of the school year. This represents an overall retention rate of 93.8%. Of the 666 elementary academy students who were enrolled at the beginning of the year, 624 (93.7%) remained enrolled at the end of the school year; in the junior academy, 287 (97.3%) of 295 enrolled at the beginning stayed through the end of the school year; and 276 (90.5%) of 305 high school students were retained for the year.¹⁷

Of 1,097 students enrolled at the end of the 2019–20 school year who were eligible to return to the school (i.e., they did not graduate from high school), 1,012 were enrolled on the third Friday in September 2020. This represents a student return rate of 92.3%.¹⁸

¹⁷ The combined retention rate for the elementary and junior academies was 94.8%.

¹⁸ Of the 897 students in K4 through eighth grade who were enrolled at the end of the 2019–20 school year, 825 (92.0%) were enrolled on the third Friday of September 2020. Of the 200 students who were enrolled as ninth, tenth, or eleventh graders at the end of the 2019–20 school year, 187 (93.5%) returned for the 2020–21 school year.

D. ACTIVITIES FOR CONTINUOUS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

During the year, MAS responded to all of the activities recommended in the 2019–20 programmatic profile and educational performance report. Below is a description of each recommendation and the school’s corresponding response.

The elementary academy focused on the following.

- **Recommendation:** Staff will work collaboratively to improve and more effectively target their small group instructional practices. More classroom time will be given to personalized and individualized instruction and interventions. These practices will be tailored to the needs of individual students.

Response: Staff worked on the development of a stronger individualized intervention practice model. Then, throughout the year, staff used these practices to identify learners who required more individual attention. Once identified, these learners were given regular one-on-one assistance with learning tasks in all content areas.

- **Recommendation:** Additional time and resources will be dedicated to professional development activities and opportunities for paraprofessional staff. The goal of this training will be to increase their instructional competencies. For some aides, these development opportunities might be designed to result in teacher licensure status.

Response: The school developed and implemented a program for support staff. Aides were trained on small-group instruction. Over time, professional development activities focused on diverse content areas and how to recognize, intervene, and monitor student performance. Finally, a decision was made to involve paraprofessionals in all development sessions provided to teaching staff.

- **Recommendation:** Staff will work to incorporate social emotional learning into daily instruction through the use of Success for All Foundation’s Getting Along Together curriculum. This effort’s goal is to build students’ social and emotional skills and help them apply their new skills in and out of the classroom. Additional training will be provided for staff to assist with the implementation and enable them to create additional practices that work best for MAS students.

Response: MAS hired a student culture coordinator to work with all staff regularly to incorporate social emotional learning into their interactions with all students. The coordinator provided several trainings for staff on the most pertinent practices. She also rewrote the scope and sequence of the curriculum of this model for virtual learning. To ensure fidelity with implementation of the model, the coordinator conducted weekly observations of teachers during an instructional period.

The junior academy centered on improving student competencies through the following.

- **Recommendation:** Junior academy teachers and leadership will roll out a new English/language arts curriculum. This curriculum will focus their practices on instruction that emphasizes rigor and fidelity to state standards. Special attention will be given to improving reading skills and competencies of eighth graders.

Response: The junior academy team adopted Study Sync¹⁹ as the English/language arts (ELA) curriculum. It will be used by sixth- through tenth-grade staff. This curriculum shifts the focus from book/novel content to standard base thinking. All of the assessments in the curriculum are standard-aligned and enable teachers to make better use of data to identify student needs and competencies. The most proficient teachers were used to coach the eighth-grade staff to assist them with improving their students' ELA competencies.

- **Recommendation:** Special attention will be given to ensure that science standards are being implemented throughout the junior academy curriculum. Regular monitoring of the inclusion of rigor in science courses will focus on instructional practices implemented for eighth graders.

Response: One of the science teachers was identified as the science team department lead. She worked over the summer to redesign assessments for all science standards. Teachers were supported by the lead to consistently focus the curriculum on the grade level standards. Attention also was given to the assessment process and the use of data to ensure the implementation of a more rigorous curriculum and acquisition of stronger skill competencies for all students.

For the high school, the focus was on the following.

- **Recommendation:** The high school team will strengthen its focus on skills and competencies emphasized in ACT Aspire and ACT standards. The team will use data to ensure rigorous standards align with the curriculum.

Response: The high school created content departments for all subject areas. These teams met weekly and reviewed student data to ensure that standards and curriculum content were aligned consistently. The content teams worked with each other to model and mentor newer teachers or to assist teachers experiencing greater difficulties with the more rigorous curriculum approach.

¹⁹ Detailed information about Study Sync can be found at www.mheducation.com/prek-12/program/MKTSP-ROA01M0.html

- **Recommendation:** The team will use PBIS as incentives for positive behaviors. Rule violations will continue to be tracked and used to create the most appropriate responses. More afterschool activities will be offered to increase students' positive engagement in the school's culture.

Response: Even though most student learning was done in a virtual setting, staff continued to use incentives to encourage student engagement with virtual learning and timely completion of all class assignments. Some of the most successful rewards were the delivery of meals by DoorDash, gift cards, and raffle tickets for popular items. The reality of the pandemic did not allow the staff to increase its afterschool activities for the current school year.

III. EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

To monitor performance relating to the CSRC contract, MAS collected a variety of qualitative and quantitative information at specified intervals during the academic year. This year, the school established goals for attendance, parent–teacher conferences, and special education student records. In addition, MAS identified local and standardized measures of academic performance to monitor student progress.

This year, local assessment measures included student progress in literacy, math, writing, and IEP goals for special education students. The standardized assessment measures were the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) assessment, the Wisconsin Forward Exam, the ACT Aspire, and the ACT.

A. ATTENDANCE

The 2020–21 attendance goals for MAS's three academies were 92.0% for elementary, 95.0% for junior, and 93.0% for high school.

Elementary and junior academy students receiving online instruction were considered present with any participation in synchronous instruction, completing or submitting asynchronous assignments, logging in to asynchronous learning platforms, or receiving and responding to communication from a teacher, such as in the form of a one-on-one check-in. For days when a student received face-to-face instruction, they were marked partial day (excused or unexcused) if they arrived after 10:44 a.m. or left before 12:46 p.m. High school students receiving online instruction were considered in attendance if they participated in synchronous class instruction or demonstrated (through asynchronous assignment completion) participation in 67% of their five daily classes. When a high school student received face-to-face instruction, attendance was recorded in compliance with DPI's attendance standard.

- **Elementary academy:** Students attended school an average of 82.8% of the time. When excused absences were included, the attendance rate rose to 87.8%. No elementary academy students were suspended (out of school) this year.
- **Junior academy:** Students attended school an average of 83.3% of the time. When excused absences were included, the attendance rate rose to 84.1%. Two students were suspended from school at least once during the year.
- **High school:** Students attended school an average of 86.1% of the time. When excused absences were included, the attendance rate rose to 87.7%. No high school students were suspended from school this year.

The school fell short of its attendance goals for all academies.²⁰

B. PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

The parent participation goals for 2020–21 were that parents of at least 98% of elementary, 95% of junior academy, and 90% of high school students enrolled for the entire school year would attend two of three scheduled parent–teacher conferences.²¹ Conferences were scheduled for the fall, winter, and spring.

- Parents of all (100.0%) 624 elementary academy students enrolled all year attended at least two conferences.
- Parents of 280 (97.6%) of 287 junior academy students enrolled all year attended at least two conferences.
- Parents of 271 (98.2%) of 276 high school students enrolled all year attended at least two conferences.

MAS met its parent participation goal for all three academies.

C. SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENT RECORDS

This year, the school established a goal to develop and maintain records for all special education students, including students who were evaluated but not eligible for services. During the year, 108 students received special education services. A total of 37 students received an evaluation this year (nine initial and 28

²⁰ The combined attendance rate for students in K4 through eighth grade was 82.9%.

²¹ Conferences with any teacher—at the school, via phone, Zoom, or at the student’s home—were counted in the participation rate.

reevaluations). Five of the students who were evaluated during the current year did not qualify or were dismissed from special education services. The remaining 71 students received an initial or reevaluation during a previous year. An IEP was developed for all 100 new or returning special education students who required one. (Three students transferred before the IEP date.)

In addition, Evident Change conducted a random review of special education files. This review indicated that IEPs are routinely being completed and that parents are being invited to help develop IEPs for their students. Reevaluations are also conducted or waived by parents in accordance with special education laws and rules. Therefore, the school has met its goal of maintaining accurate records and implementing the required practices for all students with special needs.

D. LOCAL MEASURES OF EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Charter schools, by their definition and nature, are autonomous schools with curricula reflecting each school's individual philosophy, mission, and goals. In addition to administering standardized tests, each charter school must describe goals and expectations for its students in the context of that school's unique approach to education. Each City of Milwaukee charter school establishes these goals and expectations at the academic year's start to measure students' educational performance. These local measures are used to monitor and report progress, guide and improve instruction, clearly express the expected quality of student work, and provide evidence that students are meeting local benchmarks.

At the beginning of the year, MAS designated literacy, math, and writing as core areas to measure students' competencies. The school also set a goal related to IEP goal progress.

1. LITERACY

a. PALS-PreK for K4 Students

MAS elected to use the PALS-PreK as its local measure for K4 students. The school's goal was that at least 90.0% of students enrolled for the entire year would be at or above the developmental range for at least five of the seven tasks at the time of the spring assessment. (The PALS assessment is described in Section F.)

A total of 60 K4 students who were enrolled all year completed all five required tasks on the spring PALS-PreK. Of those students, 23 (38.3%) were at or above the developmental range for five of the seven tasks at the time of the spring assessment, below the school's goal.²²

b. English/Language Arts Skills Assessments for K5 and First Graders

In the spring of 2021, K5 and first-grade students completed ELA skills assessments designed by MAS staff using adopted curricula that are aligned with Common Core State Standards. The school set a minimum percentage of ELA competencies that students needed to acquire in order to meet the benchmark for their grade level by the end of the school year. K5 students needed to acquire 75% of their grade level competencies, and first graders needed to acquire 72% of their grade level competencies to meet the goal. Overall, the school's goal was that 90% of students enrolled for the entire year would acquire the minimum percentage of ELA competencies this year.

Spring scores were available for 68 K5 students and 75 first graders who were enrolled all year. Of those, 34 (50.0%) K5 students and 20 (26.7%) first graders met the reading goal this year.

c. MAP Reading Test for Second Through Fifth Graders

Second- through fifth-grade literacy skills were assessed using the NWEA MAP reading test. MAP assessments result in a Rasch unit (RIT) score, which can be used in a variety of ways to identify student understanding and progress throughout the year.²³ MAP tests are given multiple times during the year. Each student receives a spring target RIT score, based on performance in the fall. Additionally, NWEA developed normative mean scores, or average RIT scores for each grade level at the time of each MAP administration.²⁴ MAP progress goals were set based on whether the student was above the normative mean or at or below the normative mean for their grade level at the time of the fall test.

- Progress for students above the normative mean for their grade level at the time of the fall test was measured by examining the change in RIT scores from fall to spring. At the time of the spring test, second graders were expected to increase scores by six or more points; third and fourth graders, by four or more points; and fifth graders, by two or more points.

²² Count includes spring lowercase alphabet recognition and sound tasks for all students who completed those tasks.

²³ For more information about MAP assessments, visit www.nwea.org

²⁴ Based on results of a 2015 NWEA normative study: www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2015/11/Normative-Data-2015.pdf

- Progress for students at or below the normative grade-level average in the fall was determined by examining whether the student met the MAP growth target based on their fall test score and current grade level; students who met their growth target were considered to have made adequate progress.

The school’s overall goal was that at least 73.0% of elementary academy students would show progress as described earlier.

A total of 351 second- through fifth-grade students completed both fall and spring MAP reading tests. Overall, 84 (23.9%) progressed from fall to spring, below the elementary academy’s reading goal (Table 1).

TABLE 1			
MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE			
LOCAL MEASURES OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS: MAP READING ASSESSMENT			
FALL-TO-SPRING PROGRESS FOR 2ND – 5TH GRADERS			
GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS	MET GOAL	% MET GOAL
2nd	77	15	19.5%
3rd	86	15	17.4%
4th	98	32	32.7%
5th	90	22	24.4%
Overall Progress	351	84	23.9%

d. MAP Reading Assessment for Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Graders

Like the elementary academy, the junior academy MAP progress goals were set based on whether the student was above the normative mean or at or below the normative mean for their grade level at the time of the fall test.

- Students above the normative mean for their grade level at the time of the fall test were expected to increase their scores by at least one RIT point on the spring test.
- Students at or below the normative mean for their grade in the fall were expected to meet the MAP growth target.

The school’s overall goal was that 83.0% of students enrolled for the entire school year would progress as described earlier.

A total of 210 sixth- through eighth-grade students completed both fall and spring MAP reading tests. Overall, 134 (63.8%) progressed from fall to spring, falling below the junior academy’s reading goal (Table 2).

TABLE 2			
MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE			
LOCAL MEASURES OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS: MAP READING ASSESSMENT			
FALL-TO-SPRING PROGRESS FOR 6TH – 8TH GRADERS			
GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS	MET GOAL	% MET GOAL
6th	74	50	67.6%
7th	62	37	59.7%
8th	74	47	63.5%
Overall Progress	210	134	63.8%

e. Literacy Progress Based on the Scholastic Reading Inventory

The school administers the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Reading Inventory (HMHRI) to high school students in fall and again in spring. The goal was that at least 80.0% of students enrolled for the entire school year would improve their scores, called Lexile measures, by at least 13 points at the time of the spring test.

Of 277 students enrolled all year, 265 had comparable Lexile scores. Of those, 221 (83.4%) improved their scores by 13 points, meeting the high school reading goal (Table 3).

TABLE 3			
MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE			
HIGH SCHOOL LITERACY PROGRESS: HMHRI			
2020–21			
GRADE	STUDENTS	MET GOAL	% MET GOAL
9th	100	86	86.0%
10th	76	69	90.8%
11th	59	42	71.2%
12th	30	24	80.0%
Total	265	221	83.4%

2. MATH

a. Math Skills Assessment for K4 Students

To assess student progress in math, the school set the goal that at least 90.0% of K4 students enrolled for the entire year who complete the spring math skill assessments would acquire at least 80.0% of the math competencies designated as benchmarks for their grade level at the time of the spring assessment. These assessments were designed by MAS staff based on alignment with the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards and Common Core standards. Of 68 K4 students enrolled all year who had spring math scores, 45 (66.2%) met the math goal this year.

b. Math Skills Assessment for K5 and First Graders

In the spring of 2021, K5 and first-grade students completed math skills assessments designed by MAS staff using adopted curricula that were aligned with Common Core standards. The school set a minimum percentage of math competencies that the student needed to acquire in order to meet the benchmark for their grade level by the end of the school year. K5 students needed to acquire 73% of their grade level competencies, and first graders needed to acquire 75% of their grade level competencies to meet the goal. Overall, the school's goal was that 90% of students enrolled for the entire year would acquire the minimum percentage of math competencies this year.

Spring scores were available for 67 K5 students and 74 first graders. Of those, 31 (46.3%) K5 and 56 (75.7%) first graders met the math goal this year.

c. MAP Math Assessment for Second Through Fifth Graders

The elementary academy math goal was identical to the reading goal described earlier; progress goals were set depending on how students' fall scores compared with the normative mean for their current grade level. The school expected at least 73.0% of students would show progress from fall to spring.

A total of 350 second- through fifth-grade students completed both fall and spring MAP math tests. Overall, 67 (19.1%) progressed from fall to spring, below the elementary academy's goal (Table 4).

TABLE 4

**MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE
LOCAL MEASURES OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS: MAP MATH ASSESSMENT
FALL-TO-SPRING PROGRESS FOR 2ND – 5TH GRADERS**

GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS	MET GOAL	% MET GOAL
2nd	76	10	13.2%
3rd	86	21	24.4%
4th	98	22	22.4%
5th	90	14	15.6%
Overall Progress	350	67	19.1%

d. MAP Math Assessment for Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Graders

The junior academy math goal was identical to the reading goal described earlier. Progress goals were set depending on how students' scores in fall compared with the normative mean for their current grade level. The school expected at least 83.0% of junior academy students would show progress from fall to spring.

A total of 227 sixth- through eighth-grade students completed both fall and spring MAP math tests. Overall, 143 (63.0%) progressed from fall to spring, below the junior academy's MAP math goal (Table 5).

TABLE 5

**MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE
LOCAL MEASURES OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS: MAP MATH ASSESSMENT
FALL-TO-SPRING PROGRESS FOR 6TH – 8TH GRADERS**

GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS	MET GOAL	% MET GOAL
6th	83	52	62.7%
7th	58	40	69.0%
8th	86	51	59.3%
Overall Progress	227	143	63.0%

e. Math Progress Based on the Comprehensive Math Assessment

To assess math progress for these students, the school set a goal that at least 60.0% of high school students enrolled in the same math class for the entire year would attain a score of 70.0% or higher on their comprehensive course examinations at the end of the school year.

Of the 244 students enrolled for the entire year who were enrolled in the same math class for two semesters with scores available, 194 (79.5%) scored 70.0% or higher, exceeding of the school's goal (Table 7).

TABLE 6			
MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE			
HIGH SCHOOL: END-OF-YEAR MATH ASSESSMENT			
2020–21			
GRADE	STUDENTS	MET GOAL	% MET GOAL
9th	91	78	85.7%
10th	73	62	84.9%
11th	53	30	56.6%
12th	27	24	88.9%
Total	244	194	79.5%

3. WRITING

To assess writing skills in all three academies, teachers judged student writing samples at the end of the school year and assigned a score in each of six domains: purpose and focus, organization and coherence, development of content, sentence fluency, word choice, and grammar. Teachers assigned 0 to 5 points in each domain and combined them for an overall writing score. Across all three academies, an overall score of 18 or higher indicated the student had adequate control.

The following goals were set.

- The school's goal was for 80.0% of students in third through fifth grades enrolled for the entire year to achieve a score of 18 or higher.
- For the junior academy, the goal was that at least 82.0% of students in sixth through eighth grades would achieve a score of 18 or higher.
- The high school's goal was that 85.0% of students in each grade level enrolled for the entire year would achieve a score of 18 or higher.

Of 233 third through fifth graders enrolled for the entire year with a writing score recorded, 76 (32.6%) students received a score of 18 or higher (Table 7A).

TABLE 7A			
MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE			
TEACHER-ASSESSED 3RD – 5TH GRADE WRITING SKILLS			
2020–21			
GRADE	STUDENTS	MET GOAL	% MET GOAL
3rd	66	8	12.1%
4th	85	26	30.6%
5th	82	42	51.2%
Total	233	76	32.6%

Of 143 sixth through eighth graders enrolled for the entire year with a writing score recorded, 143 (86.0%) students received a score of 18 or higher (Table 7B).

TABLE 7B			
MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE			
TEACHER-ASSESSED 6TH – 8TH GRADE WRITING SKILLS			
2020–21			
GRADE	STUDENTS	MET GOAL	% MET GOAL
6th	42	36	85.7%
7th	43	35	81.4%
8th	58	52	89.7%
Total	143	123	86.0%

Of 275 high school students enrolled for the entire year with a writing score recorded, 264 (96.0%) students received a score of 18 or higher (Table 7C).

TABLE 7C			
MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE			
TEACHER-ASSESSED HIGH SCHOOL WRITING SKILLS			
2020–21			
GRADE	STUDENTS	MET GOAL	% MET GOAL
9th	104	100	96.2%
10th	79	77	97.5%
11th	60	56	93.3%
12th	32	31	96.9%
Total	275	264	96.0%

4. SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENT PROGRESS

This year, the goal for all three academies was that all (100.0%) special education students would meet one or more goals on their IEPs, as assessed by participants’ most recent annual IEP review. Results are presented by academy.²⁵

- **Elementary academy:** At year’s end, an IEP was reviewed for 36 students who were enrolled in special education services at MAS for an entire year; 33 (91.7%) met one or more of the goals in their IEP.
- **Junior academy:** At year’s end, an IEP was reviewed for 21 special education students who were enrolled in special education services at MAS for an entire year; 20 (95.2%) met one or more of the goals in their IEP.
- **High school:** At year’s end, an IEP was reviewed for 22 special education students who were enrolled in special education at MAS for an entire year; 21 (95.5%) met one or more of their IEP goals.

The school fell just short of their IEP goals for all three academies this year.

²⁵ Of 57 elementary and junior academy students enrolled at the end of the year who had been enrolled in special education services for a full year at MAS, 53 (93.0%) met at least one of their IEP goals.

E. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

In addition to local and externalized measures, the high school must also measure completion of student graduation plans and track students' progress toward graduation.

1. GRADUATION PLANS

All 283 high school students enrolled at the end of the year developed a graduation plan; outcomes are shown in Table 8. All eleventh and twelfth graders were required to meet with a counselor during the school year to discuss graduation plans; all did so.

TABLE 8	
MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION PLANS 2020–21 N = 283	
MEASURE	% PLANS INCLUDING MEASURE
Included postsecondary plans	100.0%
Shared with parents	100.0%
Included schedule reflecting credits to graduate	100.0%
Reviewed by counselor	100.0%
On track toward graduation	79.9%
Need to enroll in credit recovery activities	20.1%

2. HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND GRADE-LEVEL PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

The school's goal for grade level promotion and graduation was that among students enrolled for the entire school year, at least 85% of ninth graders would complete 6.0 or more credits; 90% of tenth graders would complete 12.0 or more credits; 95% of eleventh graders would complete 17.5 or more credits; and 100% of twelfth graders would earn 24.0 or more of the required credits and graduate. MAS's minimum credit requirements follow.

- Ninth graders who earned six credits moved to tenth grade.
- Tenth graders who earned 12 credits moved to eleventh grade.
- Eleventh graders who earned 17.5 credits moved to twelfth grade.
- Twelfth graders who earned 24 credits in the required courses graduated.

The school provided credit and grade promotion information for all 276 high school students enrolled at MAS for the entire school year. Of those, 237 (85.9%) earned the minimum number of credits to be promoted to the next grade or, in the case of twelfth graders, to graduate from high school by the end of summer school (Table 9).

TABLE 9 MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS 2020–21			
GRADE	STUDENTS	PROMOTED/ GRADUATED	% PROMOTED/ GRADUATED
9th	104	82	78.8%
10th	79	69	87.3%
11th	60	53	88.3%
12th ²⁶	33	33	100.0%
Total	276	237	85.9%

F. EXTERNAL STANDARDIZED MEASURES OF EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

DPI requires all schools to administer a DPI-approved reading achievement test to K4 through second-grade students. In 2016, the CSRC selected the PALS assessment for students in first and second grade at all city-chartered schools; MAS also chose PALS to meet the DPI requirement for students in K4 and K5.

For students in third through eighth grade, DPI requires the Forward Exam. Schools are required to assess ninth and tenth graders using the ACT Aspire, and eleventh graders must complete the ACT Plus Writing in spring of the school year. For the 2020–21 school year, DPI was granted a federal waiver suspending the accountability requirement that achievement results be based on 95 percent of students. Because standardized tests could not be administered remotely, families were allowed to “opt out” of the testing requirement this year.²⁷ As a result, these results include only students who completed the test and should not be compared with results from previous or subsequent years.

²⁶ The table reflects promotion/graduation status for students enrolled at MAS all year. Of 36 twelfth graders who were enrolled at the end of the school year, 35 graduated.

²⁷ More detailed information about testing requirements and families right to opt out of testing can be found at dpi.wi.gov/assessment/COVID-19/FAQ#parent%20opt-out

In addition to the testing requirements described earlier, the CSRC encourages twelfth-grade students to take the ACT again in the fall semester, but it is no longer required. These tests and results are described in the following sections.

1. PALS-PREK²⁸

The PALS-PreK includes five required tasks: name writing, uppercase alphabet recognition, beginning sound awareness, print and word awareness, and rhyme awareness. Two additional tasks (lowercase alphabet recognition and letter sounds) are completed only by students who score high enough on earlier tasks. There is no summed score benchmark for the PALS-PreK.

A total of 70 K4 students completed portions of the PALS-PreK in spring; 62 students completed the five required tasks. Of the 62 who completed the five required tasks, the number of students above the spring developmental range for each is shown in Table 10.

TABLE 10 MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE PALS-PREK FOR K4 STUDENTS STUDENTS AT OR ABOVE THE SPRING DEVELOPMENTAL RANGE: 2020–21 N = 62		
TASK	n	%
Name writing	50	80.6%
Uppercase alphabet recognition	31	50.0%
Lowercase alphabet recognition*	22	95.7%
Letter sounds*	20	90.9%
Beginning sound awareness	29	46.8%
Print and word awareness	31	50.0%
Rhyme awareness	26	41.9%

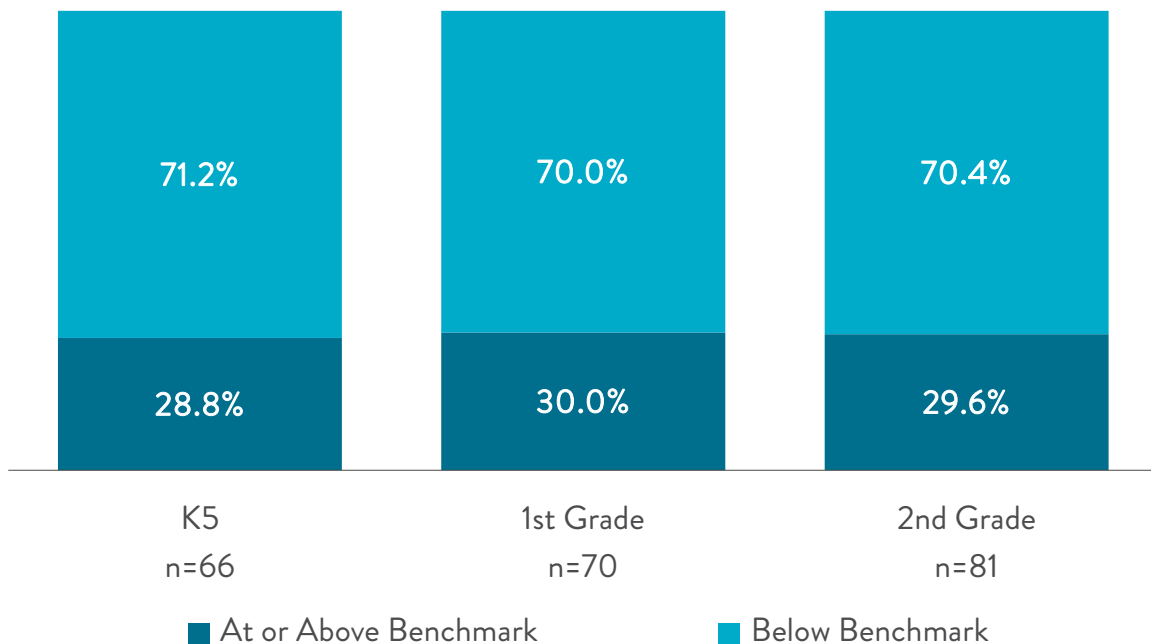
*Percentages for these tasks are based on the number of students who qualified to complete them. Percentages are based on 23 students for lowercase alphabet recognition and 22 students for letter sounds; spring percentages are based on an *n* size of 48 for both lowercase alphabet and letter sounds.

²⁸ Information about the PALS assessments is taken from palsresource.info/wisconsin and pals.virginia.edu

2. PALS-K AND PALS PLUS

The PALS-K and PALS Plus are administered in the fall and spring. Both tests result in a summed score that can be compared with a reading readiness benchmark set for each of the test administrations. Evident Change examined spring reading readiness for students who were enrolled for the entire school year and completed the spring test. Just under one third (29.5%) of students were at or above the spring summed score benchmark for their grade level (Figure 2).

Figure 2
Milwaukee Academy of Science
Spring 2021 PALS-K and PALS Plus Reading Readiness
N = 217



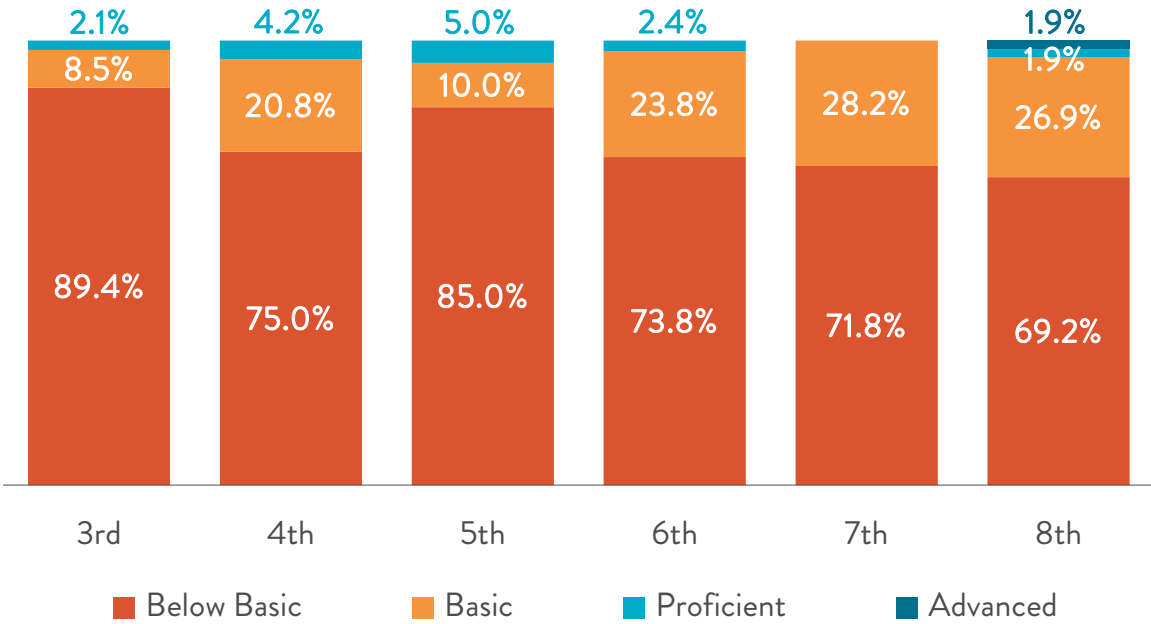
3. WISCONSIN FORWARD EXAM²⁹

The Forward Exam was implemented as the state’s standardized test for ELA and math for third through eighth graders; science for fourth and eighth graders; and social studies for fourth, eighth, and tenth graders. Scores for each test are translated into one of four levels: advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic. The Forward Exam is administered in the spring of each school year.

²⁹ Information taken from the DPI website. For more information, visit dpi.wi.gov/assessment/forward

In spring of 2021, 268 third- through eighth-grade students enrolled since the third Friday of September completed the ELA and/or math assessments.^{30,31} Of those students, 3.0% were proficient or advanced in ELA, and 4.1% were proficient or advanced in math. Results by grade level are presented in Figures 3 and 4.

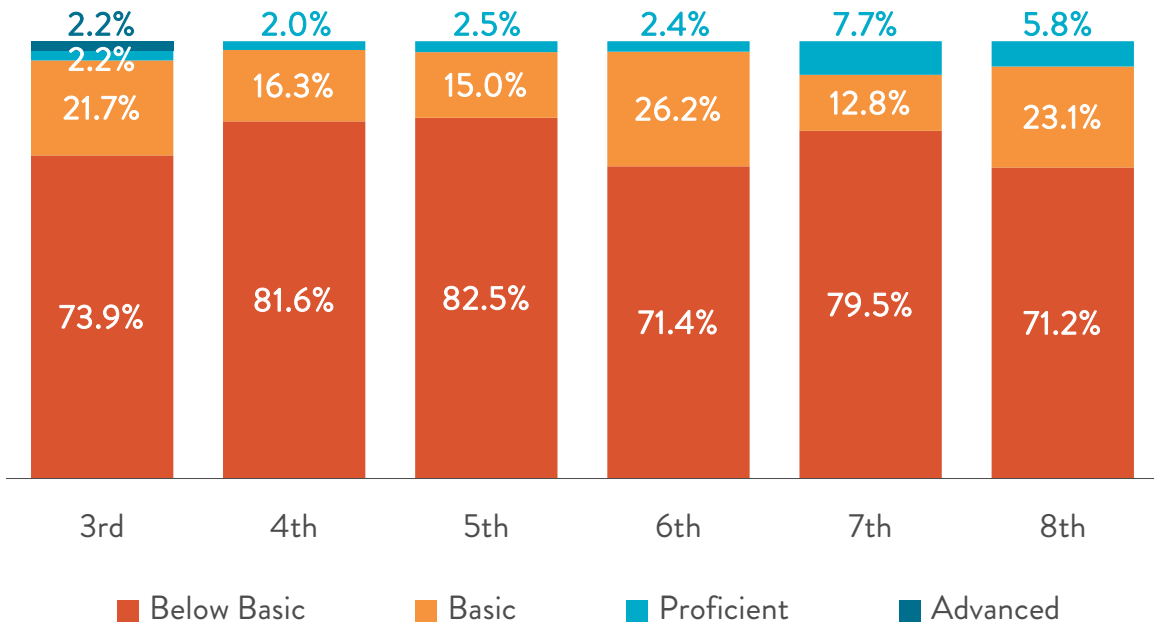
Figure 3
Milwaukee Academy of Science
Forward Exam ELA Assessment 2020–21
N=268



³⁰ Of the 268 students who completed the ELA assessment, 47 were third graders, 48 were fourth graders, 40 were fifth graders, 42 were sixth graders, 39 were seventh graders, and 52 were eighth graders.

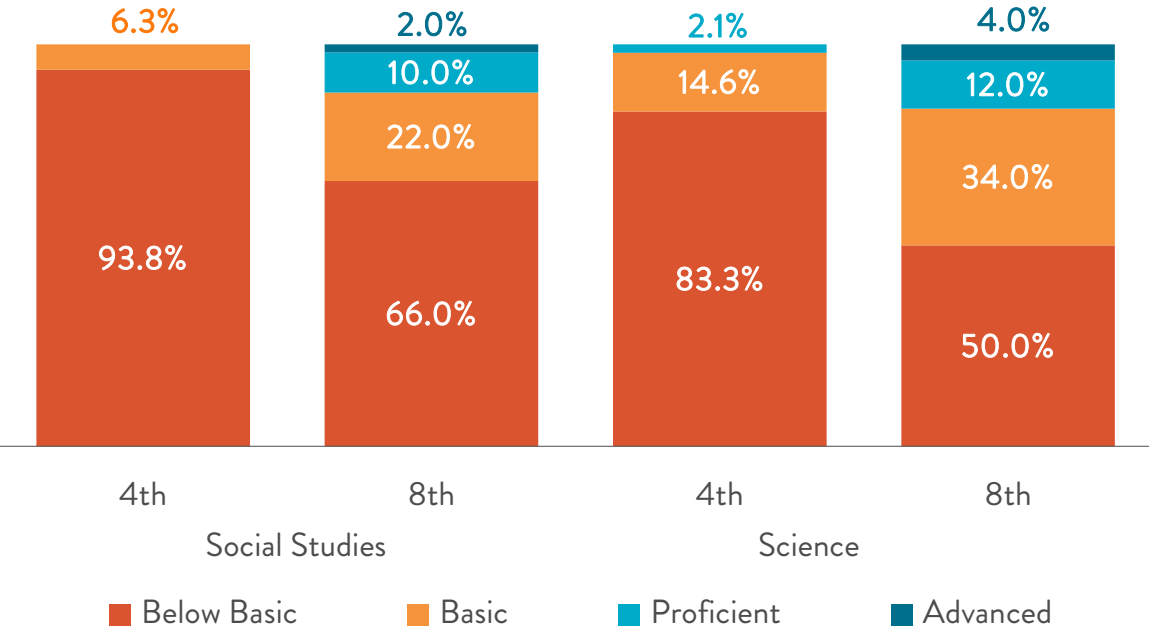
³¹ Of the 268 students who completed the math assessment, 46 were third graders, 49 were fourth graders, 40 were fifth graders, 42 were sixth graders, 39 were seventh graders, and 52 were eighth graders.

Figure 4
Milwaukee Academy of Science
Forward Exam Math Assessment: 2020–21
N = 268



Of the 48 fourth and 50 eighth graders who completed the social studies science tests, 6.1% were proficient or advanced in social studies, and 9.2% were proficient or advanced in science (not shown). Results by grade level are presented in Figure 5.

Figure 5
Milwaukee Academy of Science
Forward Exam Social Studies and Science Assessments 2020–21
N = 98



In spring of 2021, 31 tenth graders enrolled from the beginning of the school year to the time of the Forward Exam took the exam’s social studies test (not shown). Two (6.5%) of those students were proficient or advanced (not shown).

4. ACT ASPIRE AND ACT PLUS WRITING

ACT has set college readiness benchmarks for the subject-specific subtests of both the Aspire and the ACT. The most recent benchmarks (published in 2013) for each grade level and test are shown in Table 11.³²

³² More information about ACT Aspire and ACT Plus Writing benchmarks can be found at www.discoveractaspire.org and www.act.org

TABLE 11			
ACT COLLEGE READINESS BENCHMARK SCORES FOR THE ASPIRE AND ACT			
SUBTEST	9TH-GRADE ASPIRE	10TH-GRADE ASPIRE	11TH-GRADE ACT
English	426	428	18
Math	428	432	22
Reading	425	428	22
Science	430	432	23
Composite*	427	430	21

*ACT does not publish composite benchmark scores for the Aspire or the ACT. Evident Change created composite benchmark scores by averaging each grade level’s benchmark scores from the four subtests, as published by ACT.

Student progress on these tests is based on year-to-year results, which are included in a separate section of this report. The results presented in the tables that follow reflect student achievement on the Aspire and ACT during the current school year.

a. Aspire for Ninth and Tenth Graders

The Aspire was administered in spring of 2021. Ninth- and tenth-grade students enrolled during that time period who “opted in” to testing completed the tests, meeting the CSRC expectation that students be tested. A total of 59 ninth and 50 tenth graders completed the Aspire (Table 12).

TABLE 12				
MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE				
STUDENTS AT OR ABOVE BENCHMARK FOR ACT ASPIRE SUBTESTS AND COMPOSITE SCORE				
9TH AND 10TH GRADERS 2020–21				
SUBTEST	9TH GRADE (N = 59)		10TH GRADE (N = 50)	
	n	%	n	%
English	14	23.7%	9	18.0%
Math	2	3.4%	0	0.0%
Reading	3	5.1%	2	4.0%
Science	5	8.5%	3	6.0%
Composite*	3	5.1%	2	4.0%

*ACT does not publish a benchmark for the Aspire composite score; Evident Change calculated an Aspire composite benchmark—427 for ninth graders and 430 for tenth graders—by averaging the benchmark scores from the four subtests.

b. ACT for Eleventh and Twelfth Graders

The final CSRC expectation was that all eleventh graders take the ACT Plus Writing in the timeframe required by DPI (spring semester). Twelfth graders are encouraged to, but not required, to take the ACT. ACT results from the current school year were available for 56 (93.3%) of 60 eleventh graders enrolled at the end of the year who opted to complete the test. Composite ACT scores for eleventh graders ranged from 10 to 24, with an average of 15.0 (not shown). No twelfth grade students completed the ACT this year. Benchmark status for each subtest is shown in Table 13.

SUBTEST	n	%
English	11	19.6%
Math	2	3.6%
Reading	3	5.4%
Science	2	3.6%
Composite	3	5.4%

G. 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 expectations apply to all students with scores in consecutive years. Students in K4 through second grade take the PALS reading assessment. The PALS summed score benchmark indicates when a student requires additional reading assistance, not that the student is reading at grade level. Additionally, there are three versions of the test, with different formats, sections, and scoring. Because only students who are in first and second grade during two consecutive years complete the same version of the test, Evident Change examined only year-to-year results for students who were in first grade in the spring of 2020 and second grade in the spring of 2021. The CSRC’s performance expectation is that at least 75.0% of students who were at or above the summed score benchmark in first grade would remain at or above the summed score benchmark as second graders in the subsequent school year.

The Forward Exam results from two consecutive school years are typically used to assess student progress. Expectations for year-to-year progress on the Forward Exam were adopted by the CSRC for the 2019–20 school year. The CSRC’s performance expectations are that at least 60% of fourth through eighth graders who were proficient or advanced in ELA the prior year would maintain proficiency, and at least 50% of

fourth through eighth graders who were proficient or advanced in math the prior year would maintain proficiency.

Progress toward college readiness from ninth to tenth grade is assessed using benchmarks from the ACT Aspire.^{33, 34} In 2019, the CSRC adopted a year-to-year academic expectation that 50% of tenth graders would maintain composite scale score benchmarks or improve their composite scale score by at least one point from ninth to tenth grade. This expectation is based on data from the last three school years.

DPI withdrew the requirement for schools to administer any standardized tests for 2019–20. Therefore, year-to-year progress could not be measured from 2019–20 to 2020–21.

H. CSRC SCHOOL SCORECARD

In the fall of 2012, after a three-year pilot, the CSRC adopted its first school scorecard. The scorecard included multiple measures of student academic progress, including performance on standardized tests and local measures and point-in-time academic achievement and engagement elements, such as attendance and student and teacher retention and return rates. Due to significant testing changes, the scorecard was revised, and a second pilot was initiated in 2014–15.

In February 2020, when three years of comparable data on all elements in the second pilot scorecard were available, the CSRC reviewed data trends and made minor modifications to the scoring rubric. The changes place more emphasis on year-to-year student progress and less on point-in-time measures in order to capture a more realistic picture of the school's impact on student growth over time. Like the previous versions, the updated scorecard was designed to monitor school improvement from year to year and will be used to guide decisions about a school's status as a city-chartered school for subsequent school years. See Appendix D for detailed information on the revised scorecard.

Because data to examine year-to-year student progress were not available, the CSRC scorecard contains partial outcome data this year. The school's score should not be compared with the score for any previous or subsequent year. The school scored 65.1% of 59 possible points for K4 through eighth grade and 83.1% of 85 possible points for the high school. See Appendix D for school scorecard information.

³³ For more information on Aspire benchmarks, visit www.discoveractaspire.org

³⁴ Progress from tenth to eleventh grade cannot be validly measured, using available data, in the same way that progress was measured from the PLAN to the ACT in previous years. As a result, year-to-year progress from tenth to eleventh grade is not reported.

Additionally, for schools with students in both kindergarten through eighth grade and in high school, Evident Change calculated a weighted average score for the entire school (kindergarten through twelfth grade). The weighted average is simply a measure that considers the number of students to which it was applied. Evident Change assigned the weight of each individual report card's score based on the number of students enrolled in each academy at the end of the school year. When combined, MAS had an overall weighted average score of 69.3% for the current school year.³⁵

IV. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After reviewing past and current contract compliance status and school data, Evident Change recommends that MAS continue regular, annual academic monitoring and reporting with an expectation of improvement on scorecard measures. Special attention should be given to improvements at the elementary level.

³⁵ Of the 1,207 students enrolled at the end of the school year, 76.5% were in K4 through eighth grades, and 23.5% were in high school. Those percentages were used to calculate the weighted scorecard percentages.

APPENDICES

- A. CONTRACT COMPLIANCE CHART**
- B. STUDENT LEARNING MEMORANDUMS**
- C. TREND INFORMATION**
- D. CSRC 2020–21 SCHOOL SCORECARDS**

APPENDIX A: CONTRACT COMPLIANCE CHART

TABLE A			
MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE			
OVERVIEW OF COMPLIANCE WITH EDUCATION-RELATED CONTRACT PROVISIONS 2020–21			
CONTRACT SECTION	EDUCATION-RELATED CONTRACT PROVISION	REPORT REFERENCE PAGE(S)	PROVISION MET OR NOT
Section I, B	Description of educational program.	pp. 2–3 and 9–11	Met
Section I, V	Annual school calendar provided.	p. 6	Met
Section I, C	Educational methods.	pp. 2–3	Met
Section I, D	Administration of required standardized tests:		
	a. K4 – 8th grade and	a. pp. 27–31	a. Met
	b. 9th – 12th grade.	b. pp. 31–33	b. Met
Section I, D	Written annual plan for graduation.	p. 25	Met
Section I, D	<i>Academic criterion #1:</i> Maintain local measures, showing pupil growth in demonstrating curricular goals in reading, math, writing, and special education.	pp. 16–24	Met
Section I, D	<i>Academic criterion #2:</i> Year-to-year achievement measures for students at or above proficient the previous year.		
	a. 4th – 8th grade students at or above proficient on the Forward Exam in ELA the prior year: 60% will maintain proficiency.	a. N/A	a. N/A
	b. 4th – 8th grade students at or above proficient on the Forward Exam in Math the prior year: 50% will maintain proficiency.	b. N/A	b. N/A
	c. Second-grade students at or above summed score benchmark in reading (PALS): At least 75.0% will remain at or above.	c. N/A	c. N/A
	d. 9th – 10th grade students: At least 50% of 10th graders will maintain composite scale score benchmarks or improve their composite score by at least one point from ninth to tenth grade. ³⁶	d. N/A	d. N/A

³⁶ This requirement meets academic criteria 2 and 3 for ninth- and tenth-grade students.

TABLE A

**MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE
OVERVIEW OF COMPLIANCE WITH EDUCATION-RELATED CONTRACT PROVISIONS 2020–21**

CONTRACT SECTION	EDUCATION-RELATED CONTRACT PROVISION	REPORT REFERENCE PAGE(S)	PROVISION MET OR NOT
Section I, D	<p><i>Academic criterion #3: Year-to-year achievement measures for students below proficient.</i></p> <p>a. 4th – 8th grade students below proficiency on the Forward Exam in ELA the prior year: 35% will demonstrate progress.</p> <p>b. 4th – 8th grade students below proficiency on the Forward Exam in Math the prior year: 35% will demonstrate progress.</p>	<p>a. N/A</p> <p>b. N/A</p>	<p>a. N/A</p> <p>b. N/A</p>
Section I, E	Parental involvement.	pp. 6–7	Met
Section I, F	Instructional staff hold a DPI license or permit to teach.	pp. 5–6	Substantially Met
Section I, I	Pupil database information, including information on students with special education needs.	pp. 9–11, 15–16	Met
Section I, K	Discipline procedures.	pp. 7–8	Met

APPENDIX B: STUDENT LEARNING MEMORANDUMS

Student Learning Memorandum for Milwaukee Academy of Science Elementary Academy

To: NCCD Children’s Research Center and Charter School Review Committee
From: Milwaukee Academy of Science Elementary Academy
Re: Learning Memo for the 2020-2021 Academic Year
Date: September 8, 2020 (updated November 18, 2020)

This memorandum of understanding includes 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 leadership and/or staff at the school in consultation with staff from the NCCD Children’s Research Center (CRC) and the CSRC. The school will record student data in PowerSchool and/or MS Excel spreadsheets and provide them to CRC, the educational monitoring agent contracted by the CSRC. Additionally, paper test printouts or data directly from a test publisher or DPI will be provided to CRC for all standardized tests. All required elements related to outcomes below are described in “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section. CRC requests electronic submission of year-end data on the fifth day following last day of student attendance for academic year, or June 11, 2021.

Enrollment

Milwaukee Academy of Science (MAS) will record enrollment dates for every student. Upon admission, individual student information and actual enrollment dates will be added to PowerSchool. 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 PowerSchool. A specific reason for each expulsion is 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. During online learning, a student is considered present with any participation in synchronous instruction, completing or submitting asynchronous assignments, logging into asynchronous learning platforms, or receiving and responding

to communication from a teacher such as in the form of a one-on-one check in. When face-to-face learning resumes, a student is marked partial day (excused or unexcused) if he/she arrives after 10:44 a.m. or leaves before 12:46 p.m. MAS will achieve an attendance rate of at least 92% for all students enrolled at any time during the school year. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

Parent Participation

Parents of at least 98% of students enrolled for the entire school year will participate in two of three scheduled parent-teacher conferences. If a parent does not attend a scheduled conference at the school, MAS will conduct the conference with the parent via phone, virtual meeting, or home visit; all methods will count as participation. 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 this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

Academic Achievement: Local Measures

Literacy and Math

At least 90% of K4 students who are enrolled for the entire year and complete the spring Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)-PreK will be at or above the developmental range for at least five of seven tasks at the time of the assessment.

At least 90% of K4 students who are enrolled for the entire year and complete the spring math skill assessments will demonstrate that they have acquired at least 80% of the math competencies designated as benchmarks for their grade level by the end of the school year. These assessments were designed by the MAS staff based on their alignment with the DPI Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards and the Common Core State Standards.

At least 90% of K5 and first grade students who are enrolled for the entire year and complete the spring math and/or English Language Arts (ELA) skill assessments will demonstrate that they have acquired at a minimum the percentage of the math and ELA competencies designated as benchmarks for their grade level (see table below) by the end of the school year. These assessments were designed by MAS staff using adopted curricula that ensure alignment with the Common Core State Standards.

Subject Area	% of Competencies to Meet Goal by Grade Level	
	K5	First Grade
English Language Arts	75%	72%
Math	73%	75%

Second through fifth-grade students will complete Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) reading and math tests in the fall and spring of the school year. At the time of the fall test, each student's reading and math scores will be compared to national grade-level averages based on the 2020 Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) normative study. For the cohort of students who were enrolled for the entire year and complete both the fall and spring tests, CRC will report progress for students above the normative mean for their grade level and students at or below the normative mean for their grade level. Based on fall test scores and the student's current grade level, the student receives a target growth Rasch unit (RIT) score for the spring test.

- Progress for students above the normative mean for their current grade at the time of the fall test will be measured by examining the change in RIT scores from fall to spring. For second graders, an increase of six or more RIT points will indicate progress; for third and fourth graders, an increase of at least four RIT points will indicate progress; and for fifth graders, an increase of at least two RIT points will indicate progress.
- For students at or below the normative grade-level average, progress will be determined by examining whether the student met the MAP growth target based on her/his fall test score and current grade level; students who met their growth target for the year will be judged to have made adequate progress for the year.

At least 73% of students in the cohort described above will show progress this year. Required data elements for all literacy and math measures are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

Writing

By the end of the final marking period, students in third through fifth grades will have a writing sample assessed. Writing skills appropriate for each grade level will be assessed in the following six domains: purpose and focus, organization and coherence, development of content, sentence fluency, word choice, and grammar. Each domain will be assessed on the following scale: 1 = minimal control; 2 = basic control; 3 = adequate control; 4 = proficient control; and 5 = advanced control. Each grade cohort will be judged to have at least "adequate control," as indicated by a total score of 18. At least 80% of students enrolled for the entire year will achieve a total score of 18 or above. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

Individualized Education Program Goals

All (100%) special education students who have been enrolled in special education services for a full year at MAS and were still receiving special education services at the end of the school year will meet one or more of the goals defined in their individualized education program (IEP). Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

Academic Achievement: Standardized Measures

The following standardized test measures will assess academic achievement in reading and/or math.

PALS for K4- Through Second-Grade Students³⁷

The PALS will be administered to all K4- through second-grade students in the spring. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Wisconsin Forward Exam for Third- Through Fifth-Grade Students

The Wisconsin Forward Exam will be administered on an annual basis within timeframes specified by DPI. This standardized assessment will produce an English/language arts and a math score for all third, fourth, and fifth graders. Additionally, fourth-grade students will complete the science and social studies tests. Results will be reported for students enrolled on the third Friday of September who remained at the school until the spring Forward Exam. Data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Year-to-Year Achievement³⁸

1. CRC will also report progress for students who completed the assessment in consecutive school years at the same school.^{39,40} When sufficient year-to-year data are available, the CSRC will set its expectations for student progress, and these expectations will be effective for all subsequent years.
2. The CSRC’s PALS expectation for students maintaining reading readiness is that at least 75% of students who were in first grade in the previous school year, and who met the summed score benchmark in the previous spring, will remain at or above the second-grade summed score benchmark in the spring of the current school year.

³⁷ 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 palsresource.info

³⁸ The CSRC will not have year-to-year achievement measurements for students in K4 and K5.

³⁹ Includes only students who advanced a grade level from last year to this year.

⁴⁰ Students did not take Forward Exam during the 2019-20 school year so it will not be possible to complete year-to-year progress for the 2020-21 school year.

Student Learning Memorandum for Milwaukee Academy of Science Junior Academy

To: NCCD Children’s Research Center and Charter School Review Committee
From: Milwaukee Academy of Science Junior Academy
Re: Learning Memo for the 2020-21 Academic Year
Date: September 8, 2020

This memorandum of understanding includes *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 leadership and/or staff at school in consultation with staff from the NCCD Children’s Research Center (CRC) and CSRC. The school will record student data in PowerSchool and/or MS Excel spreadsheets and provide data to CRC, educational monitoring agent contracted by CSRC. Additionally, paper test printouts or data directly from the test publisher or Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) will be provided to CRC for all standardized tests. All required elements related to outcomes below are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section. CRC requests electronic submission of year-end data on fifth day following last day of student attendance for academic year, or June 11, 2021.

Enrollment

Milwaukee Academy of Science (MAS) will record enrollment dates for all students. Upon each student’s admission, individual student information and the actual enrollment date will be added to PowerSchool. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Termination/Withdrawal

The exit date and reason for withdrawal will be determined for every student leaving the school and recorded in PowerSchool. 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

MAS will maintain appropriate attendance records. During online learning, a student is considered present with any participation in synchronous instruction, completing or submitting asynchronous assignments, logging into asynchronous learning platforms, or receiving and responding to communication from a teacher such as in the form of a one-on-one check in. When face-to-face for instruction, students who arrive at school prior to 10:44⁴¹ a.m. will be marked present for the entire day.

⁴¹ Students who arrive before 10:44 a.m. are in attendance at least 67% of the entire school day.

Late arrivals will be considered in attendance for part of the day. Students will also be considered present for the full day if they attend until 12:46 p.m. MAS will achieve an attendance rate of at least 95%. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

Parent Participation

Parents of at least 95% of students enrolled for the entire school year will participate in two of three scheduled parent-teacher conferences. Participation will count if the parent meets with any teacher virtually, in person at the school, via phone, or at the student's home during each of the three conference periods. 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 receive 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 Measures

Literacy

Junior academy students will complete Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) reading tests in the fall and spring of the school year. At the time of the fall test, each student's reading score will be compared to national grade-level averages (i.e., normative means) based on the 2020 Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) normative study. For the cohort of students who complete the fall and spring tests, CRC will report progress for students above the normative mean for their grade level and students at or below the normative mean for their current grade level. Based on fall test scores and the student's current grade level, the student receives a target growth Rasch unit (RIT) score for the spring test.

- Progress for students above the normative mean for their current grade at the time of the fall test will be measured by examining the change in RIT scores from fall to spring; an increase of one RIT point will indicate progress for the current school year.
- For students at or below the normative grade-level average for their current grade, progress will be determined by examining whether students met the MAP growth target based on their fall test score and current grade level; students who met their growth target for the year will be considered to have made adequate progress for the school year.

At least 83% of all students who complete both the fall and spring assessments and are enrolled for the entire school year will show progress this year. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

Math

Junior academy students will complete MAP math tests in the fall and spring of the school year. At the time of the fall test, each student's math score will be compared to national grade-level averages based on the 2020 NWEA normative study. For the cohort of students who complete the fall and spring tests, CRC will report progress for students above the normative mean for their grade level and students at or below the normative mean for their current grade level.

Based on fall test scores and the student's current grade level, the student receives a target growth RIT score for the spring test.

- Progress for students above normative mean for their current grade at time of the fall test will be measured by examining the change in RIT scores from fall to spring; an increase of one RIT point will indicate progress for the current school year.
- For students at or below the normative grade-level average for their current grade, progress will be determined by examining whether the student met the MAP growth target based on their fall test score and current grade level; students who met their growth target for the year will be considered to have made adequate progress for the school year.

At least 83% of all students who complete both the fall and spring assessments and are enrolled for the entire school year will show progress this year. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

Writing

Writing samples from students in sixth through eighth grades will be assessed by the end of the final grading period in the following six domains based on grade level or individualized education program (IEP) expectations: purpose and focus, organization and coherence, development of content, sentence fluency, word choice, and grammar. Each domain will be assessed on the following scale: 1 = minimal control; 2 = basic control; 3 = adequate control; 4 = proficient control; and 5 = advanced control. At least 82% of students enrolled for the entire school year will have at least "adequate control," as indicated by a total score of 18 or higher. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

IEP Goals

All (100%) of the special education students will meet one or more of the goals defined in their IEPs. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

Additional Information for Eighth Grade Students

For each eighth grade student, the school will track and report graduation and high school enrollment information. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

Academic Achievement: Standardized Measures

The following standardized test measures will assess academic achievement in reading and/or math.

Wisconsin Forward Exam for Sixth-, Seventh-, and Eighth-Grade Students

The Wisconsin Forward Exam will be administered on an annual basis within timeframes specified by DPI. This standardized assessment will produce an English/language arts and a math score for all sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. Additionally, eighth-grade students will complete the science and social studies tests. Results will be reported for students enrolled on the third Friday of September and remained at the school until the spring Forward Exam. Data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Year-to-Year Achievement

CRC will report year-to-year progress for students who completed the Forward assessment in two consecutive school years at the same school.^{42,43}

⁴² Includes only students who advanced a grade level from last year to this year.

⁴³ Students did not take Forward Exam during the 2019-20 school year so it will not be possible to complete year-to-year progress for the 2020-21 school year.

Student Learning Memorandum for Milwaukee Academy of Science High School

To: NCCD Children’s Research Center and Charter School Review Committee
From: Milwaukee Academy of Science High School
Re: Learning Memo for the 2020-21 Academic Year
Date: October 2020

This memorandum of understanding describes *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 school leadership and/or staff in consultation with staff from the NCCD Children’s Research Center (CRC) and the CSRC. The school will record student data in PowerSchool and/or MS Excel spreadsheets and provide that data to CRC, the educational monitoring agent contracted by the CSRC. Additionally, paper test printouts or data directly from the test publisher or Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) will be provided to CRC for all standardized tests. All required elements related to the outcomes below are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section of this memo. 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 11, 2021.

Enrollment

Milwaukee Academy of Science (MAS) High School 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

An 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

MAS will maintain appropriate attendance records. During online instruction, students will be considered in attendance if they participate in synchronous class instruction or demonstrate through asynchronous assignment completion participation in 67% each of their five daily classes. When face-to-face instruction resumes, high school students attendance will be recorded in compliance with DPI’s attendance standard used for recording in WISEdata. MAS will achieve an attendance rate of at least 93%. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Parent/Guardian Participation

Parents of at least 90% of students enrolled for the entire school year will participate in two of three scheduled parent-teacher conferences. Note that a parent conference with any teacher during each conference periods will be counted as participation. 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 during the year, 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.

High School Graduation Plan

All ninth- through eleventh-grade students will develop a high school graduation plan by the end of the school year and all twelfth-grade students will complete graduation plans by the end of the first trimester. Each student will incorporate the following into his/her plan.

- Information regarding the student’s post-secondary plans.
- A schedule reflecting plans for completing 4.0 credits in English; 4.0 credits in math; 6.0 credits in science; 3.0 credits in social studies; 2.0 credits in foreign language; 1.5 credits in physical education; 0.5 credits in health; and 3.0 credits in other electives.⁴⁴
- Evidence of parent/guardian/family involvement. Involvement means that school counselor will review each student’s graduation plan with his/her parent(s) by the end of the school year via either a face-to-face or phone conference. If a parent does not participate in one of these sessions, MAS will have a conference with the student and submit a written report to the parent via regular mail.

The school counselor will meet with each twelfth-grade student by the end of first trimester to discuss the student’s graduation plan.

For ninth through twelfth grades, student schedules will be reviewed by the school counselor by the end of the school year to determine whether each student is on track toward earning credits and whether he/she will need to enroll in credit recovery or summer school.

Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

⁴⁴ Some special education students will have alternate credit requirements as noted in their IEP based on a disability related need or a schedule modification.

High School Graduation Requirements⁴⁵

Among students enrolled for the entire school year, at least 85% of ninth graders will complete 6.0 or more credits; 90% of tenth graders will complete 12.0 or more credits; 95% of eleventh graders will complete 17.5 or more credits, and 100% of twelfth graders will earn 24.0 or more of the required credits and graduate.

Post-Secondary Plans for Twelfth Graders

The school will monitor and document post-secondary acceptance, enrollment plans, and scholarship awards for twelfth-grade graduates.

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

Academic Achievement: Local Measures

Literacy

Reading progress for ninth through twelfth graders will be demonstrated by changes in their Lexile level scores as measured by the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Reading Inventory (HMHRI) administered by the end of September and again at the end of the school year. At least 80% of students enrolled for the entire school year will increase their Lexile level scores by at least 13 points from fall to spring.⁴⁶

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

Math

Math progress for ninth through twelfth graders enrolled in a math course during the school year will be measured by the comprehensive tests for the math course in which they are enrolled.⁴⁷ The end-of-year test results will be reported to CRC. At least 60% of students enrolled in the same math class for at least two trimesters will attain scores of at least 70% on their comprehensive course exams

⁴⁵ This item depends on the school's high school graduation requirements and the timing of the student's coursework. Outcomes reflect what would be needed at each grade level to meet graduation requirements by the end of the fourth year. Some special education students' individualized education programs indicate that they will need more than four years of study to graduate. However, these students are promoted for this school year from ninth to tenth grade with 4.5 credits, tenth to eleventh grade with 9.0 credits, and eleventh to twelfth grade with 13.5 credits. All special education students are required to accumulate 22.0 credits to graduate from MAS.

⁴⁶ These Lexile score increases would indicate that students in these respective grade levels made one year of progress in the acquisition of comprehension and vocabulary skills.

⁴⁷ The math courses offered to high school students include algebra, geometry, advanced algebra, advanced algebra/trigonometry, pre-calculus, and statistics. Not all eleventh- and twelfth-grade students are enrolled in a math class. Some students have already completed the requirement to earn four credits in math prior to graduation; students not enrolled in a math class during the school year will not be tested.

at the end of the school year.⁴⁸ Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Writing

By the end of the final marking period, students in ninth through twelfth grades will have had writing samples assessed. Student writing skills will be assessed in the following six domains based on grade level or individualized education program (IEP) expectations: purpose and focus, organization and coherence, development of content, sentence fluency, word choice, and grammar. Each domain will be assessed on the following scale: 1 = minimal control; 2 = basic control; 3 = adequate control; 4 = proficient control; and 5 = advanced control. At least 85% of students in each grade enrolled for the entire year will be judged to have at least “adequate control,” as indicated by a total score of 18 or higher. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

IEP Goals

All (100%) of the special education students will meet one or more of the goals defined in their IEPs. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Academic Achievement: Standardized Measures

Ninth- and Tenth-Grade Students

All ninth- and tenth-grade students are required to take all subtests of the ACT Aspire (the pre-ACT test that will identify student readiness for the ACT and college courses)⁴⁹ in the timeframe required by DPI. Results will be reported for students enrolled on the third Friday of September and remained at the school until the spring Aspire. Specific data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Wisconsin Forward Exam Social Studies Assessment for Tenth-Grade Students

All tenth graders are required to complete the Wisconsin Forward Exam social studies assessments in the timeframe(s) specified by DPI. Results will be reported for students enrolled on the third Friday of September and remained at the school until the spring Forward Exam. Specific data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

⁴⁸ The school will provide scores for students enrolled in the same math course for the entire school year.

⁴⁹ Subtests include English, math, reading, science, and writing.

Eleventh-Grade Students

All eleventh-grade students are required to take all subtests of the ACT Plus Writing and the ACT WorkKeys in the timeframe required by DPI. Results will be reported for students enrolled at the end of the school year. Specific data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Twelfth-Grade Students

MAS will encourage all seniors to take the ACT or ACT Plus Writing in the fall of the school year. The ACT for twelfth graders is not required but encouraged by the CSRC. Results will be reported for students enrolled at the end of the school year. Specific data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Year-to-Year Progress

CRC will report year-to-year progress from the ninth- to tenth-grade ACT Aspire for students who complete the test in two consecutive years.⁵⁰ Progress will be reported for students at or above benchmark on any of the subtests or the composite score and for students below benchmark. The CSRC will set its expectations for student progress, and these expectations will be effective for all subsequent years.

⁵⁰ Students did not take ACT Aspire during the 2019-20 school year so it will not be possible to complete year-to-year progress for the 2020-21 school year.

APPENDIX C: TREND INFORMATION

The following tables present five-year trends for enrollment and measure of academic progress. In 2019–20 and 2020–21, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted every aspect of student education including attendance, enrollment, and academic assessment. Therefore, while data from these two years is included in the trend tables, results should not be compared with results from prior years.

TABLE C1					
MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE STUDENT ENROLLMENT					
YEAR	NUMBER ENROLLED AT START OF SCHOOL YEAR	ENROLLED DURING YEAR	WITHDREW	NUMBER AT END OF SCHOOL YEAR	ENROLLED FOR ENTIRE SCHOOL YEAR (RETENTION)
2016–17	1,056	29	98	987	966 (91.5%)
2017–18	1,057	32	108	981	953 (90.2%)
2018–19	1,127	33	131	1,028	1,002 (89.0%)
2019–20	1,216	20	99	1,137	1,121 (92.2%)
2020–21	1,266	23	82	1,206	1,187 (93.8%)

TABLE C2			
MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE STUDENT RETURN RATE			
YEAR	ENROLLED AT END OF PREVIOUS YEAR*	ENROLLED AT START OF THIS SCHOOL YEAR	RETURN RATE
2016–17*	859	733	85.3%
2017–18*	891	752	84.4%
2018–19*	874	751	85.9%
2019–20**	1,001	870	86.9%
2020–21**	1,097	1,012	92.3%

*Excludes students in eighth and twelfth grades during previous school year.

**Excludes students in twelfth grade during the previous school year.

TABLE C3			
MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATES			
YEAR	ELEMENTARY ACADEMY	JUNIOR ACADEMY	HIGH SCHOOL
2016–17	91.8%	94.3%	91.7%
2017–18	91.6%	92.4%	90.5%
2018–19	90.2%	92.3%	88.3%
2019–20	90.5%	91.9%	89.6%
2020–21	82.8%	83.3%	86.1%

TABLE C4			
MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION			
YEAR	ELEMENTARY ACADEMY	JUNIOR ACADEMY	HIGH SCHOOL
2016–17	100.0%	100.0%	88.5%
2017–18	99.4%	99.5%	87.3%
2018–19	100.0%	99.6%	94.4%
2019–20	100.0%	98.8%	96.1%
2020–21	100.0%	97.6%	98.2%

TABLE C5	
MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE TEACHER RETENTION RATE	
YEAR	RETENTION RATE: EMPLOYED ENTIRE SCHOOL YEAR
2016–17	98.5%
2017–18	100.0%
2018–19	98.6%
2019–20	93.9%
2020–21	100.0%

TABLE C6**MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE
TEACHER RETURN RATE**

YEAR	RATE
2016-17	87.5%
2017-18	84.5%
2018-19	83.8%
2019-20	95.7%
2020-21	87.8%

APPENDIX D: CSRC SCHOOL SCORECARD

CITY OF MILWAUKEE CHARTER SCHOOL REVIEW COMMITTEE SCHOOL SCORECARD

r: 06/20

K-8TH GRADE

STUDENT READING READINESS: GRADES 1-2

• PALS—% 1st graders at or above spring summed score benchmark this year	4.0
• PALS—% 2nd graders who maintained spring summed score benchmark two consecutive years	6.0



STUDENT ACADEMIC PROGRESS: GRADES 3-8

• Forward Exam reading—% maintained proficient	5.0
• Forward Exam math—% maintained proficient	5.0
• Forward Exam reading—% below proficient who progressed	12.5
• Forward Exam math—% below proficient who progressed	12.5



LOCAL MEASURES

• % met reading	6.25
• % met math	6.25
• % met writing	6.25
• % met special education	6.25



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: GRADES 3-8

• Forward Exam reading—% proficient or advanced	2.5
• Forward Exam math—% proficient or advanced	2.5



ENGAGEMENT

• Student attendance	5.0
• Student reenrollment	5.0
• Student retention	5.0
• Teacher retention	5.0
• Teacher return*	5.0



HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENT ACADEMIC PROGRESS: GRADES 9, 10, AND 12

• ACT Aspire—% 10th graders who maintained benchmark on composite score or progressed at least one point	15.0
• Adequate credits to move from 9th to 10th grade	7.5
• Adequate credits to move from 10th to 11th grade	7.5
• 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
• % of graduates with ACT composite score of 19.6 or higher	2.5



LOCAL MEASURES

• % met reading	5.0
• % met math	5.0
• % met writing	5.0
• % met special education	5.0



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: GRADES 9 AND 10

• ACT Aspire English—% students at or above spring benchmark	2.5
• ACT Aspire math—% students at or above spring benchmark	2.5



ENGAGEMENT

• Student attendance	5.0
• Student reenrollment	5.0
• Student retention	5.0
• Teacher retention	5.0
• Teacher return*	5.0



*Teachers not offered continuing contracts or who moved farther than 25 miles from any Milwaukee County border due to a transfer of a family member are excluded when calculating this rate.

Note: To protect student identity, Evident Change does not report data on scorecard items with fewer than 10 students. These cells will be reported as not available (N/A) on the scorecard, and the total score will be calculated to reflect each school's denominator.

TABLE D1

**MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE
CSRC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (K THROUGH 8TH GRADE) SCORECARD 2020–21**

AREA	MEASURE	MAXIMUM POINTS	% TOTAL SCORE	PERFORMANCE	POINTS EARNED
Student Reading Readiness: PALS, 1st – 2nd Grades	% 1st graders at or above spring summed score benchmark this year	4.0	10.0%	30.0%	1.2
	% 2nd graders who maintained spring summed score benchmark two consecutive years	6.0		Not available	
Student Academic Progress: 3rd – 8th Grades	<i>Forward Exam reading:</i> % maintained proficient/advanced	5.0	35.0%	Not available	
	<i>Forward Exam math:</i> % maintained proficient/advanced	5.0			
	<i>Forward Exam reading:</i> % below proficient who progressed	12.5			
	<i>Forward Exam math:</i> % below proficient who progressed	12.5			
Local Measures*	% met reading	6.25	25.0%	38.6%	2.4
	% met math	6.25		43.4%	2.7
	% met writing	6.25		52.9%	3.3
	% met special education	6.25		93.0%	5.8
Student Academic Achievement: 3rd – 8th Grades	<i>Forward Exam English/language arts:</i> % at/above proficient	2.5	5.0%	3.0%	0.1
	<i>Forward Exam math:</i> % at/above proficient	2.5		4.1%	0.1
Engagement	Student attendance rate	5.0	25.0%	82.9%	4.1
	Student reenrollment	5.0		92.0%	4.6
	Student retention	5.0		94.8%	4.7
	Teacher retention rate	5.0		100.0%	5.0
	Teacher return rate	5.0		87.8%	4.4
TOTAL		59.0			38.4
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCORECARD PERCENTAGE					65.1%

*Elementary local measure scorecard percentages were calculated by combining outcomes for reading, math, writing, and special education measures across students in K4 through eighth grade. These percentages do not correspond directly to numbers shown in the report, which uses different grade-level groupings.

†Combined rate for all academies.

TABLE D2

**MILWAUKEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE
CSRC HIGH SCHOOL (9TH – 12TH GRADE) SCORECARD 2020–21**

AREA	MEASURE	MAXIMUM POINTS	% TOTAL SCORE	PERFORMANCE	POINTS EARNED
Student Academic Progress:	ACT Aspire—% 10th graders who maintained benchmark on composite score or progressed at least one point	15.0	35.0%	Not available	
9th to 10th Grade	Adequate credits to move from 9th to 10th grade	7.5		78.8%	5.9
10th to 11th Grade	Adequate credits to move from 10th to 11th grade	7.5		87.3%	6.5
12th Grade	Graduation rate (DPI)*	5.0		93.0%	4.7
Postsecondary Readiness: 11th and 12th Grades	Postsecondary acceptance for graduates (college, university, technical school, military)	10.0	15.0%	100.0%	10.0
	% of 11th graders tested on ACT	2.5		93.3%	2.3
	% of graduates with ACT composite score of 19.6 or more	2.5		0.0%	0.0
Local Measures	% met reading	5.0	20.0%	83.4%	4.2
	% met math	5.0		79.5%	4.0
	% met writing	5.0		96.0%	4.8
	% met special education	5.0		95.5%	4.8
Student Academic Achievement: 9th and 10th Grades	ACT Aspire English: % of 9th and 10th grade students at or above benchmark	2.5	5.0%	21.1%	0.5
	ACT Aspire math: % of 9th and 10th grade students at or above benchmark	2.5		1.8%	0.05
Engagement	Student attendance	5.0	25.0%	86.1%	4.3
	Student reenrollment	5.0		93.5%	4.7
	Student retention	5.0		90.5%	4.5
	Teacher retention rate	5.0		100.0%	5.0
	Teacher return rate	5.0		87.8%	4.4
TOTAL		85.0			70.7
HIGH SCHOOL SCORECARD PERCENTAGE					83.1%†

*Based on 2019–20 four-year rate, the most recent available at the time of this report. Note that MAS’s graduation rate on the WISEDash graduation dashboard is 87.0%. A data errata letter submitted to and accepted by DPI shows the corrected graduation rate of 93.0%, which is reflected in Table D2 above. A copy of the letter is linked to the MAS graduation rate page on the WISEDash portal: <https://wisedash.dpi.wi.gov/Dashboard/dashboard/17880>

†This percentage was calculated using the unrounded point total (70.65) divided by 85.