

World's Best Workforce Report Summary

In accordance with 2013 Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11, a school board, at a public meeting, shall adopt a comprehensive, long-term strategic plan to support and improve teaching and learning that is aligned with creating the world's best workforce. The school board must transmit an electronic *summary* of its annual report to the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education each fall.

The report summary must include:

A summary of progress toward improving teaching and learning and striving for the world's best workforce (specifically, progress toward closing the achievement gap); all students ready for kindergarten; all students in third grade achieving grade-level literacy; all students attaining career and college readiness before graduating from high school; and all students graduating from high school.

Information about best practice strategies that were implemented and that are showing evidence of impacting closing the achievement gaps and working toward creating the world's best workforce in Minnesota.

Identified Needs Based on Data

Voyageurs Expeditionary School recognizes that our students are coming to us with significant needs in most academic areas. Many of our students have a history of attending multiple schools and poor attendance, resulting in achievement gaps in reading; math and science. Our MCA's and NWEA scores are showing that on average our students are 1.5 to 2 grade levels behind their peers. In addition, we serve a large percentage of Native American Youth who perform at even lower levels than our white population.

Review of MCA data shows that 57% of our students were not growing in Math at a satisfactory rate. In reading, 65% of students who had a Growth Code in 2014 either had high or Medium growth; while 35% had low growth.

Graduation Rate: Our most recent graduation rate was 60%. We are working with our student body to ensure that students understand the importance of completing their courses in a satisfactory manner. We started an after school credit recovery program for our students this year in an effort to make every attempt to allow our students to get on track for graduation in a timely manner.

Attendance: On average for the past few years we have held to slightly more than 90% daily attendance. In 2014 we fell below the goal with an attendance rate of 89.03

Achievement Gap: As a school that serves a lot of Native American Youth, we need to work harder to close the achievement gap as measured by performance on the MCA's. In 2013 our MCA results showed that we were working on closing the achievement gap between our Native American Youth and our Caucasian; but in 2014, the results were not favorable and we actually went backwards with this concern. Up until this fall, Voyageurs had a partnership with the Bi-County Cap YouthBuild program. YouthBuild serves the most at-risk youth in our community and a large percent of Native American students (90%) and a very high percentage of their students qualified for Economics Benefits. It was a mutual decision that YouthBuild would return to their previous school partner (Cass Lake ALC) at the start of the 2015 school year.

College Readiness: In 2014, one student in our student body took the ACT. The student scored a composite of 13; in the past, we have generally had one student per year take the ACT with an average composite score of 19.8 for the past few years. We have had two students take the ACT thus far in 2014-2015, with an average composite score of 19 from those two students.

ACT Explore and ACT Plan: In 2014, students in grade 8, 9 and 10 took the ACT Explore (8 & 9) and ACT Plan (10). Results from the Grade 8 Explore show Voyageurs students achieving at near national norms, and exceeding national norms in Reading and Science. Results from the Grade 9 Explore show Voyageurs students performing 1.9 standard deviation below national norms on their composite score. The results of the Plan test for grade 10 show our students performing 3.0 standard deviations below the national norms. Four of the 12 students who took the Plan were 2nd year Voyageurs students and their composite scores were in the 30th percentile on average with an average composite score of 14.25.

Students

Career and College Awareness:

In 2011, we recognized the need to more fully prepare our student body for more than just a high school diploma. We implemented Grade level seminars that specifically focused on post-high school knowledge. We also have stepped up our intervention program with offerings of after school programming for credit recovery (HS) and academic support for students in Middle School.

This year we are part of the Ramp Up to Readiness program and College Knowledge Month. For the month of October, we are making special efforts to get our high school students learning about college options and other opportunities in our community for meaningful, well-paying work after high school. They went to the BSU College Fair and we have had speakers in from two local schools, Leech Lake Tribal College and Northwest Technical College. Through our Chamber of Commerce we were able to take students on tours of local Manufacturers and visit with employers in our community. We will continue to expose students to the many options available and to learn from members of the community about the importance of doing their best in school and the choices they will have available to them once they obtain their high school diploma.

Teachers and Principals

All teachers are fully licensed by the MN Board of Teaching. We have two teachers working under personal variances as they move through college coursework to obtain full licensure in their teaching assignment areas. All general education teachers at Voyageurs receive permission through the Innovative Waiver process to provide instruction in areas outside of their regular license. As a small school, this is one way we can offer a fuller array of courses to students without having a lot of part time teachers hired to provide these opportunities. The Director is fully licensed as a K-12 Principal and has many years of experience as a teacher; program coordinator and school administrator.

Teachers and staff participated in several professional learning opportunities throughout the year to learn how to bring a high quality, teacher directed, rigorous Project Based Learning program to our school. Ten staff members participated in a two day training in the summer of 2014 at the Audubon Center of the North Woods led by a teacher from High Tech High. We have also participated in MDE trainings in the use of MCIS (MN Careers Information System) and other career and college related trainings.

Systemic, Building or District

Voyageurs has had a consistent school administration since 2008. The district is staffed by a fully licensed Director/Principal; a long time experienced administrative assistant and a long time experienced Business Manager. In 2012-2013, we went through the approval process with our authorizer and MDE to add grades 6-8 to our school. We firmly believe that when we have students with us for the long-term, starting in grade 6, we will see stronger results and more engagement from our student body.

We started our MS program with a small class in 2013-2014 of 17 students; we doubled in size during 2014-2015 and anticipate adding another 12-14 students in 2015-2016 to a maximum of 46-48 in our middle school program and 64 in our high school program (grades 9-12). We do not plan to exceed 16-17 students per grade level on average because we know that once we get too large, we lose the personalization and strong relationships that we are able to build with students and families because we are so small. We have a very nice 12,100 square foot facility that provides us with outdoor space and appropriate space for hands on activities.

In 2013-2014, we started offering credit recovery classes for students who needed to make up credits from classes they had not passed. We budget and plan to continue this practice as long as it is needed.

After several years of not taking Title I funds, in 2014-15 it was decided to accept these funds. We use the funds to help with the cost of an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow to provide extra support to identified students in grades 6-10 and to provide remediation through an after school program that meets for four hours a week. We are also using the funds to purchase remediation software that student's access in order to assist with skill development, MCA prep and ACT prep as necessary.

Best Practice Strategies and Action Steps

Staff Development:

Staff participate in data workshops to review student data. We have instituted a teacher PLC that meets weekly to discuss items such as teacher evaluation; career and college readiness; restorative practices, technology, project based learning strategies, etc.

Action steps: Continue to require teacher PLC's to improve practice and support instruction.

Action steps: Access more specific resources for working with Native American Youth to train staff on strategies that work better with students from other cultures and poverty.

Action steps: Continue studying and developing interdisciplinary projects and provide staff time through PLC's to study and refine developed projects.

Action steps: Explore PBIS and Restorative Practices as a way to increase school climate and reduce student disciplinary concerns.

Teacher Evaluation:

Teachers are evaluated by the director as required by law and a lead teacher has been identified and is currently being trained on the newly required teacher observation/peer reviewer model. We have adopted the Charlotte Danielson framework for our teacher evaluation model as we feel it offers greater flexibility with our non-traditional instructional model.

Action Steps: Continue to develop and implement the teacher evaluation process with fidelity.

Action Steps: Choose and access training for a 2nd teacher to be a teacher observer/peer reviewer.

After school program:

Implement an after school program for students identified as needing remediation in math and reading in grades 6-10.

Action Steps: Explore and receive training on effective after school programming options

Action Steps: Increase volunteer mentors who come in and work with students in the after school program

Career and College Readiness:

Ramp up to Readiness implementation; College Knowledge Month implementation

Action Steps: Continue to implement Ramp up to Readiness with fidelity

Action Steps: Offer multiple opportunities each year for students to explore post-secondary career and college opportunities.

Action Steps: Develop and offer internships to juniors and seniors in career areas of interest to them.

Action Steps: Increase student awareness and opportunities to participate in post-secondary enrollment options programs.

Current Student Achievement Plans

We have implemented several programming changes to assist us with this goal. We moved from a student develop/directed Project Based Learning model to a teacher developed/directed model. We know that this model of instruction will increase our rigor and thus we believe student achievement.

We also are part of the Ramp Up To Readiness program this year and are helping students understand the importance of doing their best in order to achieve success in post-high school endeavors, whether it be a 4 year university; 2 year community college, technical school or entering the workforce.

After school programming is now in place for students in grades 6-10 who are in need of remediation in math; reading and other courses.

Key Indicators of Implementation Progress (implementation and/or outcome data)

[Note: Indicators may be implementation or process oriented and/or quantitative in nature.]

Improvement in average NWEA RIT Scores in Reading and Math

Improvement on average ACT Explore and Plan composite scores

Improvement on average MCA scores in Reading and Math

Improvement in attendance rates

Improvement in credits earned; GPA's, etc.

Broad Outcomes Impacted**All Students Ready for Kindergarten**

➤ N/A

All Students in Third Grade Achieving Grade-Level Literacy

➤ N/A

Closing Achievement Gap(s)**Reading Proficiency - MCA**

By SY 2019-2020, 75% of students in grade 10 will achieve a proficient or partially proficient score on the MCA in Reading from a baseline score of 33.3% in SY 2014.

By SY 2019-2020, 70% of students in grades 6-8 will achieve a proficient or partially proficient score on the MCA in Reading from a baseline score of 30.8% in SY 2014

Reading Growth – ACT Aspire/NWEA

During the school years, 2016-2020, 69% of students in grades 6-11 who take a selected (NWEA or ACT Aspire) Normative Assessment in Reading will meet their expected growth targets as established by NWEA or ACT norms and measured from spring to spring administration of the selected assessment.

Math Proficiency – MCA

By SY 2019-2020, 45% of students in grade 11 will achieve a proficient or partially proficient score on the MCA in Math from a baseline score of 10.5% in SY 2014.

By SY 2019-2020, 45% of students in grades 6-8 will achieve a proficient or partially proficient score on the MCA in Math from a baseline score of 7.7% in SY 2014

Math Growth – ACT Aspire/NWEA

During the school years 2016-2020, 60% of students in grades 6-11 who take a selected (NWEA or ACT Aspire) Normative Assessment in Math will meet their expected growth targets as established by NWEA or ACT norms as measured from spring to spring administration of the selected assessment.

All Students Career- and College-Ready by Graduation**College and Career Readiness Assessment Goals:**

By SY 2019-2020, Voyageurs students in grade 11 will increase their score an average of 1.1 composite points per year from a baseline five year average score of 14.8. (Baseline year's 2010-2014)

By SY 2019-2020, Voyageurs students in grade 8 will increase their average ACT Explore composite score by .25 points each year from the baseline score achieved in SY 2014-2015. (Test taken in Nov. 2014)

By SY 2019-2020, Voyageurs students in grade 10 will increase their average ACT Plan composite score by .25 points each year from the baseline score achieved in SY 2014-2015 (test taken in Nov. 2014)

100% of students at Voyageurs will participate annually in the Ramp Up to Readiness Program.

Results: 2014-2015 – 100% of students are participating in Ramp Up to Readiness

90% of seniors will apply to at least one college during College Knowledge Month each October as recorded by senior Ramp up to Readiness advisors.

Results: In October 2014, 92% of seniors applied to at least one college during College Knowledge Month.

All Students Graduate

By 2019-2020, 85% of seniors enrolled at Voyageurs for a minimum of three years, will earn their high school diploma in four years. 15% will graduate after five years.

Baseline:

In SY 2014, 11 students were enrolled at Voyageurs for a minimum of 3 years; 54.5% completed their diploma requirements in 2014; 36.4 continued in SY 2015; 9.1% dropped out