



**EVIDENT
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**2022–23
PROGRAMMATIC
PROFILE AND
EDUCATIONAL
PERFORMANCE**

**MILWAUKEE MATH AND
SCIENCE ACADEMY**

August 2023



ABOUT EVIDENT CHANGE

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This report includes text from Milwaukee Math and Science Academy’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 MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY 2022–23

This is the 12th annual report on the operation of Milwaukee Math and Science Academy (MMSA), one of seven schools chartered by the City of Milwaukee during the 2022–23 school year. It is the result of intensive work by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC), MMSA staff, and Evident Change.

Evident Change has determined the following, based on the information gathered and discussed in the attached report.

I. CONTRACT COMPLIANCE SUMMARY

MMSA met or partially met all but one of the educational provisions in its contract with the City of Milwaukee and the measurable subsequent requirements of the CSRC.

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

II. EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

A. LOCAL MEASURES OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

1. Primary Measures of Academic Progress

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

This year, MMSA's local measures had the following results.

- **Reading.** Overall, 101 (58.0%) of 174 students with fall and spring NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) reading assessments met the local reading measure.
- **Math.** Overall, 107 (61.5%) of 174 students with fall and spring MAP math assessments met the local math measure.

- **Writing.** Overall, 131 (75.7%) of 173 students with fall and spring assessments met the local writing measure.
- **Special education.** All (100.0%) 15 students met at least one of their goals at the time of their annual individualized education program (IEP) review.

2. Secondary Measures of Academic Progress

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

- Attendance
- Parent participation
- Special education student records

MMSA met two of its three internal goals. Average student attendance was 88.0%, falling short of the school's goal of 92.0%. Parents of 180 (93.8%) of 192 students enrolled all year attended at least two conferences (one per semester), exceeding the school's goal of 80.0%. MMSA developed and maintained essential records for all special education students.

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

MMSA administered all required standardized tests noted in its contract with the City of Milwaukee.

Evident Change examined year-to-year results of the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) exam for second graders. Of the 11 students at or above the summed score benchmark as first graders, 10 (90.9%) remained at or above the summed score benchmark as second graders. The goal was at least 75.0%.

A total of eight third- through seventh-grade students who were proficient or advanced in English/language arts (ELA) and who were proficient or advanced in math in 2022 took the Wisconsin Forward Exam again in 2023. Due to the small number of students who were at or above proficient in the spring of 2022, progress cannot be reported.

Of the 61 students who were below proficient in ELA at the time of the spring 2022 Forward Exam, 17 (27.9%) showed progress in 2023. Of the 65 students who were below proficient in math in the spring of 2022, 29 (44.6%) showed progress in 2023.

C. SCHOOL SCORECARD

MMSA scored 65.8% of 90 possible scorecard points.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

MMSA addressed all recommendations for school improvement in its programmatic profile and educational performance report for the previous school year. On the basis of the results in this report and in consultation with school staff, Evident Change recommends the school continue a focused school improvement plan with the following activities for 2023–24.

- Continue to develop the understanding of cultural differences of students, families, and staff by using community resources to increase intercultural awareness of staff, address the challenges of multicultural education, and further understand the culture of the local community and the nation.
- Establish professional learning communities to increase student learning and consistency in implementing best practices with both the Success for All reading and the Eureka Math curriculum.
- Improve school culture with activities and school norms that increase student and teacher accountability.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

After reviewing past and current contract compliance status and available data, Evident Change recommends that MMSA continue regular, annual academic monitoring and reporting. It is important that the school continues to make improvements next year in the academic competencies of its students in reading, math, and writing.

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 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.
- Visited the school to observe classroom instruction and school culture.
- Attended 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.
- Collected and analyzed data submitted by the school to complete an annual report.

II. PROGRAMMATIC PROFILE

Milwaukee Math and Science Academy
2703 N. Sherman Blvd., Milwaukee, WI 53210

Phone: (414) 263-6400

Website: www.mmsacademy.org

Principal: Crystal Bielmeier

Milwaukee Math and Science Academy (MMSA) is in the Sherman Park neighborhood on Milwaukee's northwest side. The school was initially affiliated with Concept Schools, a nonprofit educational management organization based in Chicago. However, in early 2020, the school separated from Concept Schools and currently is partnered with MAESTRO Education, an educational management organization in Mount Prospect, Illinois. According to its website (maestroed.com), MAESTRO has over 50 years of combined experience in managing and providing services to successful schools. Its educational team consists of former school principals, district administrators, school board members, and teachers. MAESTRO helps schools with all aspects of school operation while guaranteeing that the school board and administration have complete control over the school's personnel and academic programs.

A. DESCRIPTION AND PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATIONAL METHODOLOGY

1. MISSION¹

MMSA's mission is to prepare students for college by creating an effective learning community of high standards and expectations with a rigorous curriculum focusing on math, science, and technology.

2. INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Education is student-centered, and each student is recognized as a unique individual with unique interests, needs, and abilities. MMSA aims to develop responsive, productive, and civic-minded youth by inspiring them to follow their dreams while making the world a better place for themselves and others. MMSA focuses on core knowledge and essential skills so that students may achieve the mastery upon which further learning will be built.

All students are exposed to a rigorous curriculum in subjects such as language arts, physical education, and social studies. MMSA provides an emphasis on math, science, and technology to prepare students to be globally competitive. Graduation requirements, discipline, promotion policies, and homework policies all reflect high standards. The curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards, which are essential to future success in school and at work; these standards are reinforced and reviewed to prepare students for standardized tests. In-class preparation and afterschool instruction are provided to ensure a higher level of achievement for each student.

All students receive four report cards every year. At the end of each quarter, report cards are mailed home. Students in K4 through second grade are assessed by their classroom teachers and by the teachers of special classes. Third- through eighth-grade students are assigned a letter grade following a standard numerical scale associated with each letter. Student progress for kindergarten through second grade is monitored with report cards that rate a student's skills from "below basic" to "advanced" in the following subjects.

- Independent learning and social behavior
- Math
- Reading
- Science
- Social studies

¹ From the school's website: <https://www.mmsacademy.org/mission-vission/>

- Writing

These students also are assessed on the level of effort put forth in each subject on a scale ranging from “no evidence of effort” to “consistently focuses on learning.” The school has a stated grade promotion policy as well as attendance and dress code policies. MMSA provides transportation for students who live one to 10 miles from the school.²

B. SCHOOL STRUCTURE

1. SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MMSA is governed locally by a volunteer board of directors. The board—along with professionals from MAESTRO Education—has ultimate responsibility for the school’s success and is accountable directly to the City of Milwaukee and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to ensure that all terms of the school’s charter are met. The board meets on a regular basis. This year, the board consisted of four members: a president, a vice president, secretary, and a treasurer.

The school’s management team consists of the principal and assistant principal.

2. AREAS OF INSTRUCTION

MMSA’s curriculum included instruction in English, reading, and literacy (English/language arts, or ELA); math; social studies; and science. All parts of the curriculum are aligned with Common Core standards. Special education programming was provided to students identified as needing an individualized education program (IEP). Students who met the criteria for special education services were monitored and reviewed so that appropriate adjustments could be made to their plans.

3. CLASSROOMS

The school began the year with 10 classrooms, one each for K4 through eighth grades; plus rooms for special education, art, and music; a library; a gym; and a computer learning lab. School hours were from 9:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

² From the *Student/Parent Handbook*.

4. TEACHER INFORMATION

At the end of the 2021–22 school year, 16 instructional staff were eligible to return in the fall of 2022. All 16 returned, for a return rate of 100%.

At the beginning of the school year, five new staff were hired, for a total of 21 instructional staff. There was one teacher per grade level from K4 through second grade. Third through eighth grades had six subject-area teachers: two for math, two for ELA, and two for social studies/science. In addition to the principal and assistant principal, the instructional staff consisted of a social worker, two special education teachers, a music teacher, a student support reading paraprofessional, a physical education teacher, an English as a second language (ESL) teacher, and a school psychologist.

Of the 21 instructional staff who began the year, two resigned. Of the remaining staff members, 19 remained for the entire year, for an overall retention rate of 90.5%. License information on the DPI website indicated that all instructional staff employed throughout the year had current and valid DPI licenses or permits for the subject areas being taught except four teachers.³

Regarding professional development activities, teachers received training in the following areas.

- Curriculum training
 - » Success for All (SFA) reading curriculum
 - » Eureka Math
- School data management review (Infinite Campus)
- Classroom management strategies

5. SCHOOL HOURS AND CALENDAR

The regular school day for all students was 9:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. The first day of school was August 22, 2022, and the last day of school was June 9, 2023. The school published the calendar on its website and provided a copy to Evident Change staff. MMSA met the City of Milwaukee’s requirement to publish an annual calendar.

³ One teacher did not have a license, one short-term substitute teacher taught math, one teacher had a special education aide license and taught science/social studies, and one teacher had a license in social studies yet taught reading/writing.

6. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

MMSA's *Student/Parent Handbook* states that parental involvement in a child's educational life is critical to a child's success. The school values the development of a strong, positive partnership between parents and MMSA. This handbook covers policies regarding attendance, behavior expectations, and grading and promotion. The handbook was sent home on the first day of school and required a signature from every student in the family.

According to the *Student/Parent Handbook*, parents are expected to attend at least two parent-teacher conferences per year (one each semester) and conferences as requested by the classroom teacher, principal, or assistant principal. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to volunteer in (or, with an appointment, observe) daily activities in their child's classroom.

7. DISCIPLINE POLICY

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

This year, the school continued to implement a program based on Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports. The school's behavioral expectations are to be safe, respectful, and responsible. The *Student/Parent Handbook* explains the policy and procedures regarding student conduct and discipline.

8. GRADUATION AND HIGH SCHOOL INFORMATION

School staff presented high school information to eighth graders during homeroom and other parts of the school day. MMSA students plan to attend one of the following high schools: Martin Luther, Rufus King, Bay View, Milwaukee Lutheran, Carmen, Golda Meir, Milwaukee Academy of Science, Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy, Marquette, Pulaski, South Division, and Messmer.

C. STUDENT POPULATION

At the beginning of the year (September 16, 2022), 230 students were enrolled at MMSA.⁴ Twenty-one additional students enrolled after the school year started, and 41 students withdrew prior to the end of the year. Of those 41, 19 transferred to another school in the city, 15 were withdrawn by their parents for behavioral reasons, four withdrew due to lack of transportation, and three moved out of state.

At the end of the year, 210 students were enrolled at MMSA.

- Most (201, or 95.7%) of the students were Black or African American, four (1.9%) were Hispanic, and five (2.4%) had two or more races/ethnicities recorded.⁵
- There were 105 (50.0%) girls and 105 (50.0%) boys.⁶
- A total of 30 (14.3%) students had special education needs. Of those students, 11 had other health impairments, 13 had a speech/language impairment, five had emotional/behavioral disabilities, four had an intellectual disability, four had specific learning disabilities, two had significant developmental delays, and two had autism.⁷
- All students enrolled at the end of the year were eligible for free or reduced lunch.
- Grade sizes ranged from 16 to 26 students (Figure 1).

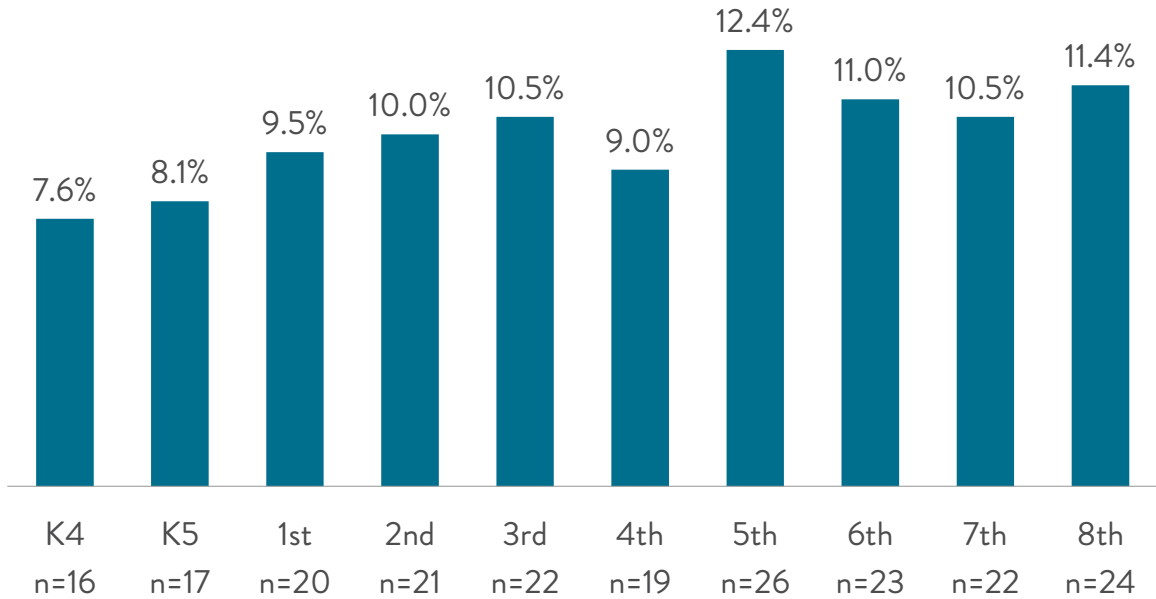
⁴ Evident Change uses the third Friday of September as a cutoff for including students in the analysis. Students who withdrew before that date were excluded from all analyses.

⁵ Race/ethnicity categories reflect those reported by the school.

⁶ Gender categories reflect those reported by the school.

⁷ Because some students have multiple special education needs reported, the total number may exceed the total students enrolled with special education needs.

Figure 1
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Student Grade Levels 2022–23*
N = 210



*At the end of the school year.

Of the 230 students who started the school year at MMSA, 192 remained enrolled through the end of the school year, resulting in a retention rate of 83.5%.

On the last day of the 2021–22 academic year, 154 students were eligible for continued enrollment in the following year (i.e., they were not in eighth grade). Of those, 135 were enrolled on the third Friday in September 2022, representing a return rate of 87.7%.

D. ACTIVITIES FOR CONTINUOUS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The following describes MMSA’s responses to the recommendations in the school’s 2021–22 programmatic profile and education performance report.

- **Recommendation:** Continue to develop the understanding of the cultural differences of students, families, and staff by using community resources such as Martha Berry (racial justice director at YWCA Southeast Wisconsin), the Ron Clark Academy, or the House System of Urban Living to increase:
 - » The understanding of student cultures, their challenges, and the culture of the local community and the nation; and

» The use of appropriate language and approaches to students and their families.

Response: The school partnered with Sara Daniels, a senior coach and consultant for the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Trauma Sensitive School Initiative. This partnership included school visits to assess school culture and in-service workshops on topics such as de-escalation strategies, understanding bias, and improving school culture.

- **Recommendation:** Continue to focus on implementing the Success for All (SFA) reading program with fidelity, in order to move from “mechanical” to “routine” in all schoolwide and instructional areas.

Response: The school worked with reading coaches from SFA. The coaches made two visits during the school year and provided mentorship and feedback for teachers. SFA mentors also provided in-service training.

- **Recommendation:** Implement a new structured K–8 math program based on non-negotiable student skills, instructional strategies, and hands-on learning.

Response: The school adopted a new math curriculum, Eureka Math. The process included teacher training in the new curriculum. Math meetings were also held to further teacher training and answer questions on implementation.

- **Recommendation:** Enhance school culture by using proactive versus reactive approaches to student discipline.

Response: Leadership established a Cooperative Culture Team to support schoolwide positive school culture. The school also began fully implementing the Getting Along Together SFA curriculum schoolwide during homeroom. On the basis of the results in this report and in consultation with school staff, Evident Change recommends that the school continue a focused school improvement through the following.

- » Continue to develop the understanding of cultural differences of students, families, and staff by using community resources to increase intercultural awareness of staff, address the challenges of multicultural education, and further understand the culture of the local community and the nation.
- » Establish professional learning communities to increase consistency in implementing best practices with both the SFA reading and the Eureka Math curriculum.
- » Improve school culture with activities and school norms that increase student and teacher accountability.

III. EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

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

This year, the local assessment measures covered student progress in reading, math, writing skills, and IEP progress. The standardized assessment measures used were the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) assessment and the Wisconsin Forward Exam.

A. ATTENDANCE

MMSA established a goal to maintain an average daily attendance rate of 92.0%.

A student was considered present for the day if they arrived at school no later than 10:30 a.m. and stayed the majority of the day or arrived on time in the morning (9:30 a.m.) and stayed at least until 2:00 p.m.

Attendance data were available for 251 students enrolled during the year. On average, students attended 88.0% of the time, below the school’s goal. When excused absences were included attended, the attendance rate rose to 90.4%.

Evident Change also examined the time students spent, on average, in out-of-school suspension. During the school year, 72 (28.7%) of 251 students were suspended at least once. Those students spent, on average, 3.0 days in out-of-school suspension.

B. PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

At the beginning of the academic year, the school set a goal that parents of 80.0% of students enrolled all year would attend at least two of the four parent-teacher conferences, one per semester. Virtual visits, ClassDojo, emails, home visits, phone calls, and alternative face-to-face visits at school were acceptable alternatives for parents who were unable to attend conferences. Parents of 180 (93.8%) of 192 students enrolled all year attended at least two conferences (one per semester), exceeding the school’s goal. There were five additional students whose parents attended two conferences in the same semester.

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, 33 students received special education services. Sixteen students received an evaluation this year (12 initial evaluations and four reevaluations). The remaining 17 students received an initial evaluation or reevaluation during a previous year. As a result of those evaluations, three students did not qualify or were dismissed from special education services. An IEP was developed for all 30 new or returning special education students who required one.

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. Reevaluations are also conducted or waived by parents in accordance with special education laws and rules. The school has, therefore, 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 that reflect each school's individual philosophy, mission, and goals. In addition to administering standardized tests, each charter school is responsible for describing goals and expectations for its students in the context of that school's unique approach to education. These goals and expectations are established by each City of Milwaukee-chartered school at the beginning of the academic year to measure the educational performance of its students. These local measures are useful for monitoring and reporting progress, guiding and improving instruction, clearly expressing the expected quality of student work, and providing evidence that students are meeting local benchmarks. The CSRC expectation is that schools establish local measures in reading, writing, math, and special education.

1. READING AND MATH

MMSA used the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments as a local measure of reading and math progress.⁸ Student progress was measured by comparing their spring assessment score with their target Rasch unit (RIT) score.

⁸ More information about these assessments can be found at <https://www.nwea.org/>

The school’s reading goal was that at least 65% of students who completed a fall and spring MAP reading assessment would meet or exceed their target RIT score in the spring. Overall, 58.0% (101) of 174 kindergarten through eighth-grade students met the reading local measure, below the school’s goal (Table 1).

TABLE 1			
MILWAUKEE MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY			
MAP READING ASSESSMENT FOR K5 – 8TH GRADE STUDENTS			
GRADE	STUDENTS	MET GOAL	% MET GOAL
K5	16	7	43.8%
1st	19	9	47.4%
2nd	19	7	36.8%
3rd	20	12	60.0%
4th	18	13	72.2%
5th	24	14	58.3%
6th	19	10	52.6%
7th	19	14	73.7%
8th	20	15	75.0%
Total	174	101	58.0%

For math, MMSA’s goal was that 65% of students who completed the MAP math assessment in the fall and spring would meet or exceed their target RIT score in the spring. Overall, 61.5% (107 of 174) of K5 through eighth-grade students did, below the school’s goal for this year (Table 2).

TABLE 2			
MILWAUKEE MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY			
MAP MATH ASSESSMENT FOR K5 – 8TH GRADE STUDENTS			
GRADE	STUDENTS	MET GOAL	% MET GOAL
K5	16	8	50.0%
1st	19	8	42.1%
2nd	19	9	47.4%
3rd	20	11	55.0%
4th	18	11	61.1%
5th	24	20	83.3%
6th	19	12	63.2%
7th	19	12	63.2%
8th	20	16	80.0%
Total	174	107	61.5%

2. WRITING

To assess student writing skills, MMSA used the 6+1 Traits of Writing rubric. Students completed writing samples in fall and spring. Writing prompts were the same for both samples and were based on grade level topics. K5 through second graders focused on the narrative genre, third through fifth graders focused on expository writing, and sixth through eighth graders focused on persuasive writing. The rubric is graded on a six-point scale for each of the six traits, for a maximum score of 36 points.

MMSA measured student progress in writing by examining the point growth between assessments. Students had the following goals.

- Of K5 to fifth grade students who scored less than 30 points on the fall writing sample, at least 65% of students will increase their overall score by at least four points in the spring.
- Of sixth to eighth-grade students who scored less than 35 points on the fall writing sample, at least 65% will increase their total score by at least four points in the spring.
- All K5 to fifth-grade students who scored 30 or higher and all sixth- to eighth-grade students who scored 35 or higher in the fall will maintain or increase their overall score in the spring.

A total of 173 students had fall and spring writing scores. Three of those students were in the “30 or 35 and above” cohort at the time of the fall test, and 170 were in the “less than 30 or 35” cohort. Because only three were in the former cohort, further analysis was performed for both cohorts combined. Overall, 75.7% (131 of 173) of K5 through eighth-grade students met their goal regardless of cohort (Table 3).

GRADE	STUDENTS	MET GOAL	% MET GOAL
K5	16	14	87.5%
1st	19	19	100.0%
2nd	19	17	89.5%
3rd	20	11	55.0%
4th	18	8	44.4%
5th	24	17	70.8%
6th	18	14	77.8%
7th	19	12	63.2%
8th	20	19	95.0%
Total	173	131	75.7%

3. SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENT PROGRESS

The CSRC expects students in special education services to make routine progress yearly. This year, MMSA set the goal that at least 90% of special education students who had a calendar year of IEP implementation at MMSA would meet at least one of their goals by the time of their annual review. All 15 (100.0%) students who were enrolled in special education services for the full school year met at least one of their goals this year.

E. 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; MMSA also chose PALS to meet the DPI requirement for K4 and K5 students.

For students in third through eighth grades, DPI requires the Forward Exam. These tests and results are described in the following sections.

1. PALS-PREK⁹

PALS-PreK includes five required tasks (name writing, uppercase alphabet recognition, beginning sound awareness, print and word awareness, and nursery rhyme awareness). Two additional tasks (lowercase alphabet recognition and letter sounds) are completed only by students who reach an adequate score on the uppercase alphabet task.

PALS-PreK does not have a summed score benchmark because the purpose is to learn students' abilities as they enter K4 in the fall. In the spring, developmental ranges for each PALS task indicate whether the student is at the expected developmental stage for a 4-year-old.

A total of 16 K4 students enrolled since the start of the school year completed the PALS-PreK in the spring; the number of students above the spring developmental range for each is shown in Table 4.

⁹ For more information about the PALS assessments, visit <https://dpi.wi.gov/assessment/historical/pals>

TABLE 4

**MILWAUKEE MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY PALS-PREK FOR K4 STUDENTS:
STUDENTS AT OR ABOVE THE SPRING DEVELOPMENTAL RANGE 2022–23**

N = 16

TASK	n	%
Name writing	14	87.5%
Uppercase alphabet recognition	14	87.5%
<i>Lowercase alphabet recognition*</i>	13	100.0%
<i>Letter sounds*</i>	13	100.0%
Beginning sound awareness [†]	15	100.0%
Print and word awareness	15	93.8%
Rhyme awareness [†]	14	87.5%

*Percentages for these tasks are based on the number of students who qualified to complete them. Percentages are based on 13 students for lowercase alphabet recognition and letter sounds.¹⁰

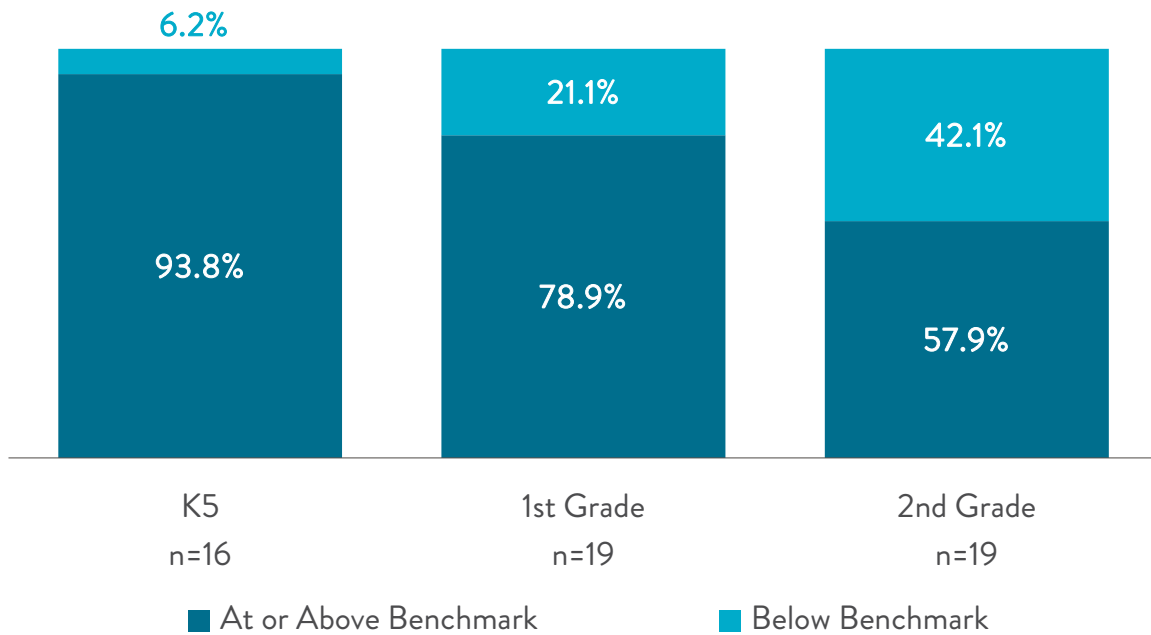
[†]Note that one student was missing a score for rhyme awareness. The percentage is based on 15 students who had a score recorded.

2. PALS-K AND PALS 1-3

The PALS-K and PALS 1-3 are administered in the spring semester. Both tests result in a summed score that can be compared to a reading readiness benchmark set for each test administration. Evident Change examined spring reading readiness for students who were enrolled since the start of the year and completed the spring test. At the time of the spring assessment, 15 (93.8%) of 16 K5 students, 15 (78.9%) of 19 first graders, and 11 (57.9%) of 19 second graders were at or above the spring summed score benchmark for their grade level (Figure 2).

¹⁰ Students who score 16 or higher on the uppercase alphabet recognition task complete the lowercase alphabet recognition task; students who score 9 or higher on the lowercase alphabet recognition task complete the letter sounds task.

Figure 2
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Spring 2023 PALS Results



3. WISCONSIN FORWARD EXAM FOR THIRD THROUGH EIGHTH GRADERS¹¹

The Forward Exam was implemented as the state’s standardized test for ELA and math for third through eighth graders; for science for fourth and eighth graders; and for 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.

In the spring of 2023, 120 of 143 third through eighth graders who were enrolled since the start of the academic year (third Friday in September) completed the ELA and math assessments. Of these students, 19 (15.8%) were proficient or advanced in ELA, and 11 (9.2%) were proficient or advanced in math. Results by grade level are presented in Figures 3 and 4.

¹¹ Information from the DPI website (dpi.wi.gov/assessment/forward) and Wisconsin Forward Exam family brochure (https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/assessment/pdf/Forward_Brochure_for_Families.pdf).

Figure 3
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Forward Exam ELA Assessment 2022–23
N = 120

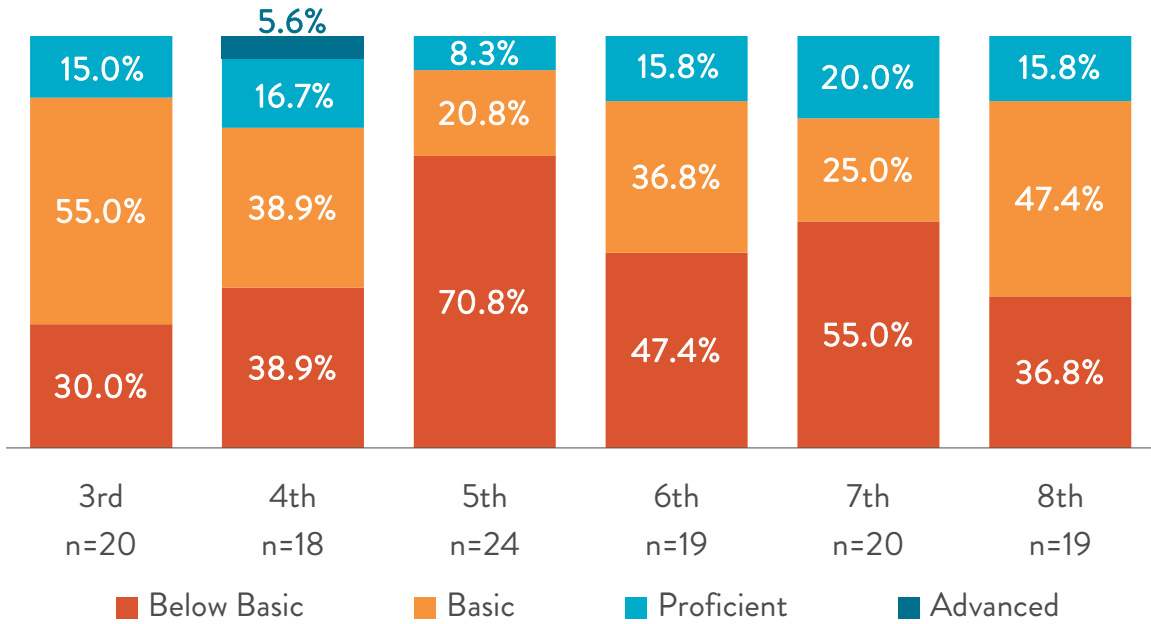
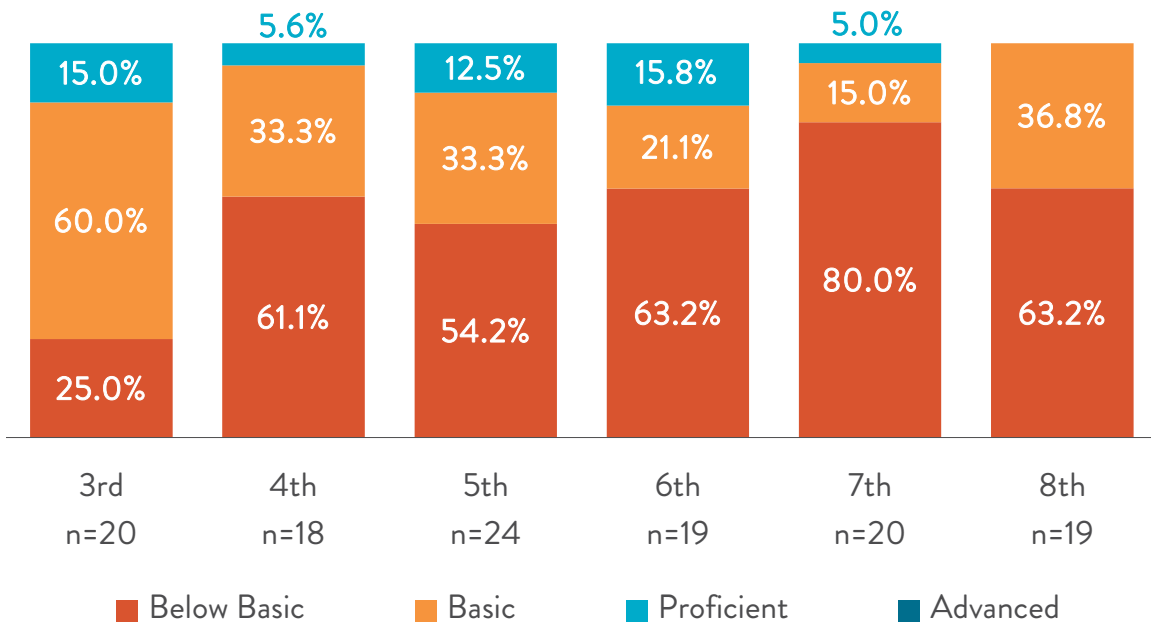
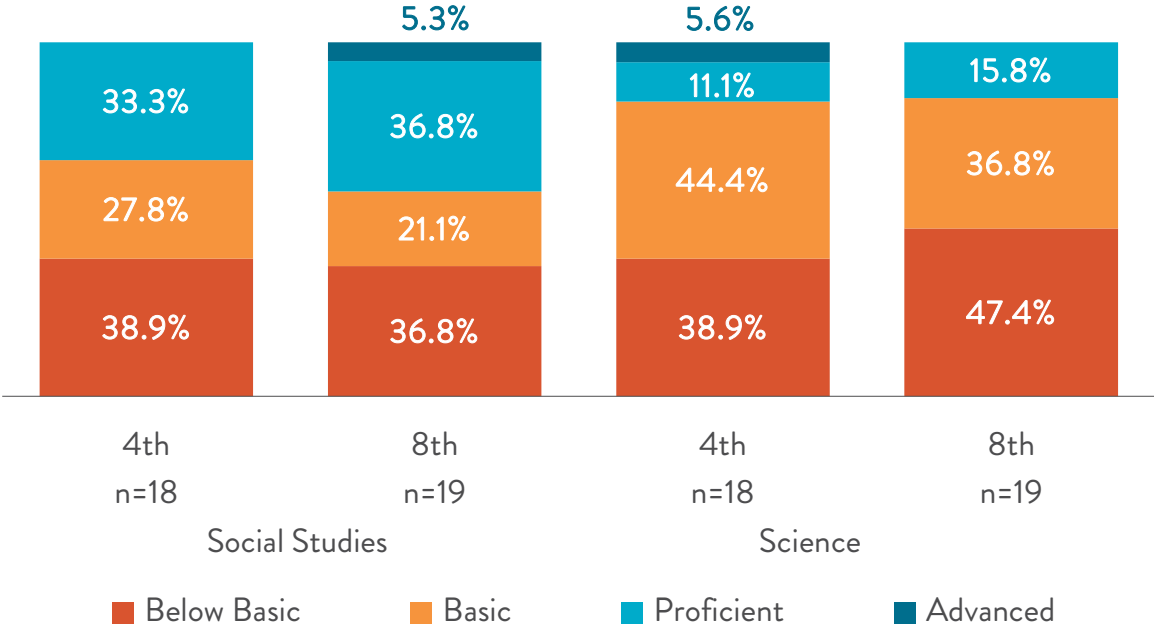


Figure 4
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Forward Exam Math Assessment 2022–23
N = 120



A total of 37 fourth and eighth graders completed both the science and social studies assessments. Among them, 14 (37.8%) were proficient or advanced in social studies, and six (16.2%) were proficient or advanced in science (not shown). Results by grade level appear in Figure 5.

Figure 5
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy
Forward Exam Social Studies and Science Assessments 2022–23



F. MULTIPLE-YEAR STUDENT PROGRESS

Year-to-year progress is measured by comparing scores on standardized tests from one year to the next. Year-to-year progress 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. In addition, 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 examines only year-to-year results for a cohort of students who were in first grade in the spring of one year and second grade in the spring of the following year. 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 will 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 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. Additionally, the CSRC expects at least 35% of fourth through eighth graders who were below proficiency in ELA the prior year will demonstrate progress. At least 35% of fourth through eighth graders who were below proficiency in math will demonstrate progress.

1. SECOND-GRADE PROGRESS BASED ON PALS

A total of 14 students completed the PALS spring assessment in 2021–22 as first graders and 2022–23 as second graders. Of those, 11 were at or above the spring summed score benchmark as first graders, and 10 (90.9%) the 11 remained at or above the summed score benchmark in the spring of 2023 as second graders (not shown).

2. FOURTH- THROUGH EIGHTH-GRADE PROGRESS BASED ON FORWARD EXAM

A total of 69 students completed the Forward Exam in spring 2022 and spring 2023. Year-to-year progress was measured for students at or above proficient and for students below proficient in ELA and/or math in spring 2022.

a. Students at or Above Proficient

In spring 2022, eight students were proficient or advanced in ELA and four students were proficient in math in spring 2022. Due to the small number of students who were at or above proficient in the spring of 2022, progress cannot be reported.

b. Students Below Proficient

To determine if students who were not proficient or advanced the previous year were making progress, Evident Change examined whether these students improved scores by moving up one or more categories (e.g., below basic to basic, basic to proficient, or below basic to proficient). If students did not improve by a level, Evident Change examined student progress within the student’s skill level by equally dividing the below-basic and basic levels into quartiles. The lower threshold for below basic was the lowest scale score

possible on the examination. The lower threshold for the basic level and the upper threshold for both levels reflected the scale scores used by DPI to establish proficiency levels.¹²

In spring of 2022, 61 students were below proficient in ELA, and 17 (27.9%) of those students showed progress in 2023 (13 students improved one proficiency level, and four improved at least one quartile. For math, 65 students were below proficient in spring 2022, and 29 (44.6%) demonstrated progress in 2023. Evident Change does not report results for fewer than 10 students. Due to the small number of students in the sixth-grade cohort, results are not presented by grade level.

G. 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 test and local measures and point-in-time academic achievement and engagement elements, such as attendance, 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 C for detailed information on the revised scorecard.

Due to a small sample size in year-to-year progress data, the scorecard includes partial information, therefore, the school’s current score should not be compared with the scores from the past couple school years. The school scored 65.8% of 90 possible points.

IV. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report covers the 12th year of MMSA’s operation as a City of Milwaukee charter school. The school adopted strategies to address the improvement recommendations in the 2022–23 report. MMSA has met or partially met all but one of the requirements of its contract with the City of Milwaukee.

¹² This method is used by Evident Change to examine student progress in the schools chartered by the city.

After reviewing past and current contract compliance status and available data, Evident Change recommends that MMSA continue regular, annual academic monitoring and reporting. It is important that the school continues to make improvements next year in the academic competencies of its students in reading, writing, and math.

On the basis of the results in this report and in consultation with school staff, Evident Change recommends the school continue a focused school improvement plan with the following activities for 2023–24.

- Continue to develop the understanding of cultural differences of students, families, and staff by using community resources to increase intercultural awareness of staff, address the challenges of multicultural education, and further understand the culture of the local community and the nation.
- Establish professional learning communities to increase student learning and consistency in implementing best practices with both the Success for All reading and the Eureka Math curriculum.
- Improve school culture with activities and school norms that increase student and teacher accountability.

APPENDICES

- A. CONTRACT COMPLIANCE CHART**
- B. TREND INFORMATION**
- C. CSRC 2022–23 SCHOOL SCORECARD**
- D. STUDENT LEARNING MEMORANDUM**

APPENDIX A: CONTRACT COMPLIANCE CHART

TABLE A			
MILWAUKEE MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY			
COMPLIANCE OVERVIEW FOR EDUCATION-RELATED CONTRACT PROVISIONS 2022–23			
CONTRACT SECTION	CONTRACT PROVISION	REPORT REFERENCE PAGES	PROVISION MET
Section B	Description of educational program.	pp. 2–3	Met
Section B	Annual school calendar provided.	p. 4	Met
Section C	Educational methods.	pp. 2–3	Met
Section D	Administration of required standardized tests.	pp. 13–17	Met
Section D	<i>Academic criterion #1:</i> Maintain local measures in reading, math, writing, and IEP goals, showing pupil growth in demonstrating curricular goals.	pp. 10–13	Met
Section D and subsequent CSRC memos	<p><i>Academic criterion #2:</i> Year-to-year achievement measures.</p> <p>a. 4th – 8th grade students at or above proficient on the Forward Exam in ELA the prior year: 60% will maintain proficiency.</p> <p>b. 4th – 8th grade students at or above proficient on the Forward Exam in math the prior year: 50% will maintain proficiency.</p> <p>c. 2nd grade students at or above summed score benchmark in reading (PALS): At least 75.0% will remain at or above.</p>	<p>a. p. 18</p> <p>b. pp. 18</p> <p>c. p. 18</p>	<p>a. Cannot report due to sample size</p> <p>b. Cannot report due to sample size</p> <p>c. Met</p>
Section D and subsequent CSRC memos	<p><i>Academic criterion #3:</i> Year-to-year achievement measures. Progress for students below proficient on the Forward Exam.</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. p. 18–19</p> <p>b. pp. 18–19</p>	<p>a. Not met</p> <p>b. Met</p>
Section E	Parental involvement.	p. 5	Met
Section F	Instructional staff hold a DPI license or permit to teach.	p. 4	Partially Met
Section I	Maintain pupil database information for each pupil.	pp. 6–7, 10	Met
Section K	Disciplinary procedures.	p. 5	Met

APPENDIX B: 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 are included in the trend tables, results should not be compared with those from prior or subsequent years.

TABLE B1					
MILWAUKEE MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION					
SCHOOL YEAR	ENROLLED AT START OF SCHOOL YEAR	ENROLLED DURING YEAR	WITHDREW	NUMBER AT END OF SCHOOL YEAR	NUMBER AND RATE ENROLLED FOR ENTIRE SCHOOL YEAR (RETENTION)
2018–19	298	16	48	266	251 (84.2%)
2019–20	221	14	16	219	209 (94.6%)
2020–21	206	0	10	196	196 (95.1%)
2021–22	201	8	30	179	171 (85.1%)
2022–23	230	21	41	210	192 (83.5%)

TABLE B2	
MILWAUKEE MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY STUDENT RETURN RATE	
SCHOOL YEAR	RETURN RATE
2018–19	71.8%
2019–20	71.3%
2020–21	83.3%
2021–22	87.7%
2022–23	87.7%

TABLE B3	
MILWAUKEE MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY STUDENT ATTENDANCE	
SCHOOL YEAR	ATTENDANCE RATE
2018–19	90.1%
2019–20	90.8%
2020–21	81.6%
2021–22	84.8%
2022–23	88.0%

TABLE B4		
MILWAUKEE MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS		
SCHOOL YEAR	% OF STUDENTS SUSPENDED	AVG. DAYS SUSPENDED
2018–19	32.4%	3.1
2019–20	21.2%	1.7
2020–21 ¹³	N/A	N/A
2021–22	28.2%	1.6
2022–23	28.7%	3.0

TABLE B5	
MILWAUKEE MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY TEACHER/INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF RETENTION*	
SCHOOL YEAR	RETENTION RATE: EMPLOYED ENTIRE SCHOOL YEAR
2018–19	86.2%
2019–20	95.7%
2020–21	100.0%
2021–22	95.0%
2022–23	90.5%

*Includes only teachers who were eligible to stay the entire year.

¹³ This year was a partially virtual year. Suspension data not applicable.

TABLE B6**MILWAUKEE MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY
INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF RETURN RATE***

SCHOOL YEAR	NUMBER AT END OF PRIOR SCHOOL YEAR	RETURNED FIRST DAY OF CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR	RETURN RATE
2018-19	22	19	86.4%
2019-20	19	18	94.7%
2020-21	17	16	94.1%
2021-22	19	15	78.9%
2022-23	16	16	100.0%

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

APPENDIX C: CSRC 2022–23 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 C

**MILWAUKEE MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY
CSRC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (K THROUGH 8TH GRADE) SCORECARD
2022–23**

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%	78.9%	3.2
	% 2nd graders who maintained spring summed score benchmark two consecutive years	6.0		90.9	5.5
Student Academic Progress: 3rd – 8th Grades	<i>Forward Exam English/language arts:</i> % maintained proficient/advanced	5.0	35.0%	Cannot report due to sample size	
	<i>Forward Exam math:</i> % maintained proficient/advanced	5.0			
	<i>Forward Exam English/language arts:</i> % below proficient who progressed	12.5		27.9%	3.5
	<i>Forward Exam math:</i> % below proficient who progressed	12.5		44.6%	5.6
Local Measures	% met reading	6.25	25.0%	58.0%	3.6
	% met math	6.25		61.5%	3.8
	% met writing	6.25		75.7%	4.7
	% met special education	6.25		100.0%	6.25
Student Academic Achievement: 3rd – 8th Grades	<i>Forward Exam English/language arts:</i> % at/above proficient	2.5	5.0%	15.8%	0.4
	<i>Forward Exam math:</i> % at/above proficient	2.5		9.2%	0.2
Engagement	Student attendance rate	5.0	25.0%	88.0%	4.4
	Student return rate	5.0		87.7%	4.4
	Student retention	5.0		83.5%	4.2
	Teacher retention rate	5.0		90.5%	4.5
	Teacher return rate	5.0		100.0%	5.0
TOTAL		90.0			59.25
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCORECARD PERCENTAGE					65.8%

APPENDIX D: STUDENT LEARNING MEMORANDUM

TO: Evident Change, the CSRC
FROM: MMSA
SUBJECT: Learning Memo Draft for the 2022–23 Academic Year
DATE: October 13, 2022

This memorandum of understanding includes the minimum measurable outcomes required by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) to monitor and report students' academic progress. These outcomes have been defined by the leadership and/or staff at Milwaukee Math and Science Academy (MMSA) in consultation with staff from Evident Change and the CSRC.

The school will record student data in the Infinite Campus database and/or Microsoft Excel spreadsheets and provide the data to Evident Change, the educational monitoring agent contracted by the CSRC. The school also will provide, for all standardized tests, results downloaded directly from the test publisher. If such data files are not available, the school will provide paper printouts (scanned or via mail) that include standardized test results from the test publisher.

Evident Change requests electronic submission of year-end data by the fifth workday after the last day of student attendance for the academic year, or June 16, 2023.

All required elements related to the outcomes below are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

ENROLLMENT

MMSA will record enrollment dates for every student. Each student's information and actual enrollment date will be added to the school's database upon admission.

TERMINATION/WITHDRAWAL

For every student who leaves the school, the exit date and reason will be determined and recorded in the school's database. A specific reason is required for each student.

ATTENDANCE

The school will maintain appropriate attendance records and maintain an average daily attendance rate of 92%.

A student is considered present for the day if the student arrives at school no later than 10:30 a.m. and stays the majority of the day or arrives on time (9:30 a.m.) and stays at least until 2:00 p.m.

If a student stays home due to COVID-19 quarantine, the student must log in to IXL and complete activities for the required amount of time, based on the student's grade level.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents of at least 80% of the students who attend all year will participate in at least two of the four parent-teacher conferences, one per semester. Virtual visits, home visits, phone calls, alternative face-to-face visits at school, and contact through ClassDojo or email are acceptable alternatives for parents who are unable to attend scheduled in-person conferences.

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.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT: LOCAL MEASURES¹⁴

READING FOR K5 THROUGH EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS

Students will complete the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) reading assessment in the fall and spring. At least 65% of the students who completed the fall MAP reading assessment will meet or exceed their target Rasch unit (RIT) score in the spring.

MATH FOR K5 THROUGH EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS

Students will complete the MAP math assessment in the fall and spring. At least 65% of the students who completed the fall MAP math assessment will meet or exceed their target RIT score in the spring.

WRITING FOR K5 THROUGH EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS

Writing progress will be measured using the 6+1 Traits of Writing.¹⁵ The rubric for K5 through fifth grade will have a six-point scale for each of the six traits. The rubric for sixth through eighth grade will have a six-point scale for the 6+1 traits. All students will complete one writing sample in the fall and another in the spring. The grade-level prompt for both writing samples will be the same, with a focus on a narrative genre for K5 through second grade, expository writing for third through fifth grades, and persuasive writing for sixth through eighth grades.

- Of the K5 to fifth-grade students who scored less than 30 points on the fall writing sample, 65% will increase their total score by at least four points in the spring.
- Of the sixth- to eighth-grade students who scored less than 35 points on the fall writing sample, 65% will increase their total score by at least four points in the spring.
- All (100%) K5 to fifth-grade students who scored 30 or higher on the fall writing sample and all (100%) sixth- to eighth-grade students who scored 35 or higher on the fall writing sample will maintain or increase their overall score in the spring.

¹⁴ Local measures of academic achievement are classroom- or school-level measures that monitor student progress throughout the year (formative assessment) and can be summarized at the end of the year (summative assessment) to demonstrate academic growth. They reflect each school's unique philosophy and curriculum. The CSRC requires local measures of academic achievement in the areas of literacy, math, writing, and individualized education program goals.

¹⁵ The 6+1 traits are ideas, organization, voice, sentence fluency, word choice, and conventions, plus presentation.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

At least 90% of students with individualized education programs (IEPs) who have been enrolled at MMSA for the full year of IEP implementation will meet at least one of their goals. Progress on IEPs will be monitored through special education progress reports attached to the regular education progress reports.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT: STANDARDIZED MEASURES

DPI requires that schools assess reading readiness for all students in K4 through second grade.

PALS FOR K4 THROUGH SECOND-GRADE STUDENTS

The CSRC requires the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) for first- and second-grade students. MMSA has chosen the PALS for K4 and K5 students as well. PALS will be administered to all K4 through second-grade students in the fall and spring of each school year.

WISCONSIN FORWARD EXAM FOR THIRD- THROUGH EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS

DPI requires the Wisconsin Forward Exam to be administered annually in the timeframe identified by DPI (spring of 2023). This standardized assessment will produce an English/language arts (ELA) score and a math score for all third through eighth graders. Fourth- and eighth-grade students also will complete the science and social studies tests.

YEAR-TO-YEAR ACHIEVEMENT¹⁶

Evident Change will report the results of the DPI-required assessments in each school's annual report. Evident Change will report year-to-year progress for students who completed the assessments in consecutive school years at the same school.

¹⁶ The CSRC will not have year-to-year achievement measurements for students in K4 and K5.

- The CSRC expects at least 75% of first graders who met the PALS summed score benchmark for reading readiness in the spring will remain at or above the second-grade summed score benchmark in the spring of the subsequent year.
 - » For fourth- through eighth-grade students who complete the Forward Exam, the CSRC has the following expectations.
 - » At least 60% of fourth through eighth graders who were proficient or advanced in ELA the prior year will maintain proficiency. At least 50% of fourth through eighth graders who were proficient or advanced in math the prior year will maintain proficiency.
 - » At least 35% of fourth through eighth graders who were below proficiency in ELA and math the prior year will demonstrate progress.