# World's Best Workforce FY23/24 Annual Report





**Three Rivers Montessori** 

**Public Charter School District 4266** 

**School Year 2023-2024** 

**World's Best Workforce and Annual Report** 

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#### **School Information:**

Year Opened - 2020 - Grades Served - Kindergarten through Sixth Grade

<u>Our Mission</u> - Empowering students to reach their full potential through authentic Montessori learning.

#### **Our Vision**

- Academic Excellence
- Community Engagement
- Environmental Stewardship

#### **Governance and Management**

Three Rivers Montessori is authorized by Osprey Wilds. The Authorizing mission of Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center is to ensure quality academic and environmental literacy outcomes for students in Minnesota by conducting effective oversight and evaluation of its authorized schools. Providing strategic support to schools, and making informed and merit-based decisions about its portfolio of charter schools.

#### **Contact Information for Osprey Wilds:**

Erin Anderson, Director of Charter School Authorizing Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center Charter School Division 1730 New Brighton BLVD Suite 104, PMB 196 Minneapolis, MN 55413 (612) 331-4181 ospreywilds.org/charter-school-division/

## **Three Rivers Montessori Board of Directors**

Member Name	Date Seated/ Expired	Affiliation/ Officer Position	Term End Date	Email
Tim Eilrich	07/01/22	Community/ Treasurer	06/30/25	tim.eilrich@ threeriversmontessori. org
Brooke Blomker	07/01/23	Community/ Secretary	06/30/26	brooke.blomker@ threeriversmontessori. org
Lydia Skadberg	07/01/23	Teacher/Member	06/30/26	Lydia.skadberg@ threeriversmontessori. org
Nikki Patterson	09/16/23	Teacher/Member	06/30/26	Nikki.patterson@ threeriversmontessori. org
Jenny Hepokoski	07/1/24	Parent/Chair	06/30/27	jenny.hepokoski@ threeriversmontessori. org
Jan Creed	09/17/24	Teacher/Member	06/30/27	jan.creed@ threeriversmontessori. org
Patrick Locken	09/17/24	Parent/Member	06/30/27	patrick.locken@ threeriversmontessori. org
Paula Henry	N/A	Ex-Officio	N/A	paula.henry@ threeriversmontessori. org

## **Board Member Trainings**

Board Member Name	What Boards Need to Know About Their Roles & Responsibilities	What Boards Needs to Know About Open Meeting Law	What Boards Need to Know About Data Practices Law
Jenny Hepokoski	02/06/2024	02/06/2024	02/06/2024
Brooke Blomker	08/1/2023	08/1/2023	08/1/2023
Tim Eilrich	08/2/2022	08/2/2022	09/10/2024
Nikki Patterson	09/11/2024	09/11/2024	10/13/2023
Lydia Skadberg	02/10/2024	02/10/2024	2/10/2024
Patrick Locken	9/11/2024	9/11/2024	9/11/2024
Jan Creed	09/11/2024	09/11/2024	09/11/2024
Paula Henry	09/11/24	09/11/24	09/11/24

## **Board Member Training (cont.)**

Board Member Name	What Boards Need to Know About Charter School Employment Policies & Practices	What Boards Need to Know About Charter School Financial Oversight	What Boards Need to Know About Student Success, Achievement, and Performance
Jenny Hepokoski	02/6/2024	02/6/2024	09/11/2024
Brooke Blomker	08/1/2023	08/1/2023	08/01/2023
Tim Eilrich	08/2/2022	09/26/2023	09/10/2024
Nikki Patterson	09/10/2024	09/10/2024	09/11/2024
Lydia Skadberg	02/10/2024	02/10/2024	02/10/2024
Patrick Locken	09/11/2024	09/11/2024	09/11/2024
Jan Creed	09/11/2024	09/11/2024	09/11/2024
Paula Henry	09/11/2024	09/11/2024	09/11/24

## **Staffing - Administration/Operations**

Staff Member	Role in District	File Folder#
Antonio Kuklok	Executive Director	461965
Connie Wrightsman	Director of Operations	N/A
Anna Nation	Director of Teaching and Learning	1030787
Emma Olson	Special Education Coordinator	406412
Jessica Hentig	Food Service Aide	N/A
Emily Rossmeisl	Pathfinders Coordinator	N/A
Madalyn Froehlich-Sand	Pathfinders Aide	N/A





## **Staffing - General Education**

Staff Member	Role in District	File Folder#
Jan Creed	K/1 Teacher	364442
Nikki Patterson	E1 Teacher	1025151
Cassie Zezulka	E1 Teacher	1018529
Anna Nation	E2 Teacher	1030787
Katie Horner	E2 Teacher	1024260
Lydia Skadberg	E2 Afternoon Teacher	453151
Paige Lundeen	Children's House Teacher	1024621
Trish Gingas	K/1 Educational Assistant	N/A
Ameryst Schuh	E1 Educational Assistant	N/A
Allison Larson	E1 Educational Assistant	N/A
Elinor Breuer	E1 Educational Assistant	N/A
Pearl Keene	E2 Educational Assistant	N/A
Emily Rossmeisl	E2 Educational Assistant	N/A
Ann Mitchell	Children's House Assistant	N/A

## **Staffing - Special Education**

Staff Member Folder #	Role in District	File
Ali Belford	Special Education Teacher	389112
Cassie Gruber	Special Education Teacher	1029604
Julie Grenier	Special Education Teacher	5160023
Breanna Cox	School Social Worker	1030292
Brittany Stroman	Behavior Interventionist	N/A
Kristen Ennis	Paraprofessional	N/A
Brittany Roehl	Paraprofessional	N/A
Megan Kociscak	Paraprofessional	N/A
Abby Huphreys	Paraprofessional	N/A
Selena Vang	Paraprofessional	N/A
Tamara Stotler	Paraprofessional	N/A
Rachel Wenz	Paraprofessional	N/A
Sarah Roell	Paraprofessional	N/A

**Total Staff =** 33 \*Does not include Consultants or Contractors **Retention Rate =** 2023-2024 staff turnover rate was at 30%, an increase in retention rate from 2023 by 43%

## **Student Enrollment and Demographics**

Number of Students	2022-2023	2023-2024
Kindergarten	20	19
First Grade	27	16
Second Grade	23	20
Third Grade	21	11
Fourth Grade	26	17
Fifth Grade	13	14
Sixth Grade	7	3
Total	137	100

## **Student Enrollment and Demographics**

Demographic Trends	2023-2024
Total Enrollment	100
Male	63
Female	37
Special Education	27
English Learners	4
Free/Reduced Price Lunch	33
Black, not of Hispanic Origin	5
Hispanic/Latino	2

Asian/Pacific Islander	3
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0
White, not of Hispanic Origin	90





## Student Attendance, Attrition, and Mobility

#### **Student Attendance**

TRM had an expected attendance percentage for the 2023-2024 school year. Overall the school did not experience any significant attendance issues.

2023	-2024
Consistent Attendance Percentage	92.32%

#### **Student Attrition**

Percentage of students who were continuously enrolled between October of 2023 - October of 2024	70%
Percentage of students who continued enrollment in the school from Spring 2024 to Fall of 2024	74%

#### **Student Mobility**

TRM experienced a high amount of student mobility during the 2023-2024 school year as indicated by the chart below. Waitlists continue to be used to fill seats throughout the school year as they become available.

Summer Transfers in	Number of students on Oct. 1	1	Mid year transfers out		Mobility index* (as a percent)
11	100	4	5	-1	01%

<sup>\*</sup>Total Mid-year transfers (in and out) divided by number of students as of October 1st

## **World's Best Workforce Report**

In 2013, the state legislature passed a bill called the World's Best Workforce to ensure every school within the state is making strides toward increased student performance. This bill is a strategic plan that is implemented in every school and addresses the fire areas below. In the

following section you will find highlights of the progress Three Rivers Montessori has made in each specific area.

- WBWF Goal 1- All children are ready for school
- WBWF Goal 2- All third graders can ready at grade level
- WBWF Goal 3- All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed
- WBWF Goal 4- All students are ready for career and college
- WBWF Goal 5- All students graduate from highschool

## **World's Best Workforce Goals**

## TRM Goal 1 for 2023-2024:

#### All Children are ready for school

Over the period of the contract, students at Three Rivers Montessori (TRM) will develop a holistic Montessori lens increasing their ability to show compassion, discover their potential in relation to their interests, and reflecting on their individual growth in relation to themselves as citizens of a community outside of the school walls.

To measure this, the percentage of students scoring proficient ("quite often" or "all the time") on 3 or more survey questions will be 80%, or will increase at least 30 percentage points from the Fall survey to the Spring survey annually.

#### TRM Goal 1 for 2023-2024 Results:

Three Rivers Montessori K/1 students increased on all five questions asked from Fall to Spring.

#### **Examples of Strategies to Achieve This Goal:**

Three Rivers Montessori embeds Grace and Courtesy lessons which allow our youngest learners to develop and attain their ability to be self-aware. Intentional work on these lessons will lead to increases in their ability to show compassion,

discover their potential, and reflect on their individual growth.

#### TRM Goal 2 for 2023-2024:

#### All 3rd graders can read at grade level

Over the period of the contract, students at TRM will demonstrate proficiency in reading as measured by state accountability tests.

\*From FY21 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in grade 3 will be greater than that of the state for the same grade.

#### TRM Goal 2 for 2023-2024 Results:

TRM worked with our Authorizer to create an attainable goal to ensure that all students are ready to read by grade three. 26.7% of TRM students in grade three were proficient on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment compared to 48% of the State.

\*The school's aggregate proficiency index score is not within 10.0 points of the state's score and we did not meet the Authorizer's goal

#### **Examples of Strategies to Achieve This Goal:**

Three Rivers Montessori embeds the foundational literacy skills of phonemic awareness and phonics into daily lessons and works to integrate literacy concepts across subject levels. TRM assessed using the Fastbridge test. We will look to embed a full MTSS framework to improve this area in the 2023-2024 school year.

#### TRM Goal 3 for 2023-2024:

#### All racial and economic achievement gaps between children are closed

Over the period of the contract, students at TRM will demonstrate proficiency in reading as measured by state accountability tests.

\*The school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Special Education and Free/Reduced Priced Lunch subgroups will be greater than that of

the state and resident district for the same subgroup and the same grades.

#### TRM Goal 3 for 2023-2024 Results

TRM worked with our Authorizer to create an attainable goal to ensure that all student subgroups are achieving at comparable levels. 6.3% of TRM's Free and Reduced students and 20% of TRM's SPED population were proficient on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment compared to 33.9% of the State's free and reduced population and 25.8% of the State's SPED population.

\*The school's aggregate proficiency index score is not within 10.0 points of the state's score and we did not meet the Authorizer's goal

#### **Examples of Strategies to Achieve This Goal:**

Three Rivers Montessori utilizes individualized education plans and a student assistance team (SAT) to identify students who need additional support to ensure they remain in alignment with their peers. TRM continues to look at available testing and progress monitoring programs to support the student subgroups going into the future.

#### TRM Goal 4 for 2023-2024:

#### All students are ready for career and college

As an elementary school this goal was embedded within the first three goals. By meeting our Authorizer goals we will ensure all students are college and career ready by the time they leave school. TRM also strives to connect all learning to the outside world in authentic ways. It is our hope that this methodology of teaching will prepare our students for the challenges and rigor of college and careers beyond their school experience.

TRM Goal 4 for 2023-2024 Results: See data above

#### TRM Goal 5 for 2023-2024:

#### All students graduate from high school

As an elementary school this goal was not put into place. (no data was collected)

Three Rivers Montessori WBWF and Annual Report 2023-2024 SY

#### **Indicator 1: Mission Related**

**School Goal:** Over the period of the contract students at Three Rivers Montessori (TRM) will develop their executive function skills and behaviors.

WBWF Goals addressed: R4K, AGC, CRR

Key Measures & Results: FY22-FY24, the percentage of students scoring 'meets' or above on the Minnesota Executive Function Scale will improve at least 4% annually from the baseline (FY21 - 67.6%). The school's percentage of students scoring 'meets' or above increased by at least 5% points annually.

#### **Indicator 2: English Language Learners**

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

## **Indicator 3: Reading Growth**

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

WBWF Goal(s) addressed: CCR

#### **Key Measures & Results:**

3.1 In aggregate, from FY21 to FY24, the overall percentage of students whose achievement level on the statewide assessments for reading (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) improved on statewide assessments is equal to or greater than the state.

Result: TRM 28.5%; State 50.4%

3.2 In aggregate, from FY21-FY24, the overall percentage of students whose achievement level decreased or stayed "does not meet standards" on

statewide assessments for reading (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) is equal to or less than state.

Result: TRM increased 17.3%; the State increased 1.2%

3.3 From FY19-FY24, the combined aggregate percentage of students in grades 1-6 that are "Low Risk" on the spring FastBridge assessment OR from fall to spring move from "High Risk" to "Some Risk" will be at least 55%.

**Result: 61.1%** 

#### **Indicator 4: Math Growth**

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

**WBWF Goals addressed: CCR** 

#### **Key Measures & Results:**

4.1 In aggregate, from FY21 to FY24, the overall percentage of students whose achievement level on the statewide assessments for math (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) improved on statewide assessments is equal to or greater than the state.

Result: TRM 17.1%; State 46.1%

4.2 In aggregate, from FY21-FY24, the overall percentage of students whose achievement level decreased or stayed "does not meet standards" on statewide assessments for math (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) is equal to or less than state.

Result: TRM increased 19.4%; the State decreased 0.04%

4.3 From FY19-FY24, the combined aggregate percentage of students in grades 1-8 that are "Low Risk" on the spring FastBridge assessment OR from fall to spring move from "High Risk" to "Some Risk" will be at least 55%.

**Result: 59.9%** 

## **Indicator 5: Reading Proficiency**

**School Goal:** Over the period of the contract, students at TRM will demonstrate proficiency in reading as measured by state accountability tests.

WBWF Goals addressed: RG3, CCR, AGC

#### **Key Measures & Results:**

5.1 From FY19 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in grade 3 will be greater than that of the state for the same grade.

Result: 51.6 (TRM) - 56.6 (state) = -5.0

5.2 From FY19 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in grade 3 will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 728 – Elk River) for the same grade.

Result: (TRM) - 68.1 (district) = -16.5

5.3 From FY19 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for all students (except grade 3) will be greater than that of the state for the same grades.

Result: (TRM) - 65.3 (state) = -8.3

5.4 From FY19 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for all students (except grade 3) will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 728 – Elk River) for the same grades.

Result: (TRM) - 74.2 (district) = -17.2

5.5 From FY19 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch subgroup will be greater than that of the state for the same subgroup and the same grades.

Result: 10.0 (TRM) - 43.6 (state) = -33.6

5.6 From FY19 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch subgroup will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 728 – Elk River) for the same subgroup and the same grades.

Result: 10.0 (TRM) - 58.0 (district) = -48.0

5.7 From FY19 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Special Education subgroup will be greater than that of the state for the same subgroup and the same grades.

Result: 40.6 (TRM) - 36.8 (state) = 3.8

5.8 From FY19 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Special Education subgroup will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 728 – Elk River) for the same subgroup and the same grades.

Result: 40.6 (TRM) - 44.6 (district) = -4.0

#### **Indicator 6: Math Proficiency**

**School Goal:** Over the period of the contract, students at TRM will demonstrate proficiency in math as measured by state accountability tests.

WBWF Goals addressed: RG3, CCR, AGC

**Key Measures & Results:** 

6.1 From FY19 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score will be greater than that of the state for the same grades.

Result: 37.3 (TRM) - 59.5 (state) = -22.2

6.2 From FY19 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 728 – Elk River) for the same grades.

Result: 37.3 (TRM) - 71.0 (district) = -33.7

6.3 From FY19 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch subgroup will be greater than that of the state for the same subgroup and the same grades.

Result: 0.0 (TRM) - 37.0 (state) = -37.0

6.4 From FY19 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch subgroup will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 728 – Elk River) for the same subgroup and the

same grades.

Result: 0.0 (TRM) - 51.4 (district) = -51.4

6.5 From FY19 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Special Education subgroup will be greater than that of the state for the same subgroup and the same grades.

Result: 23.3 (TRM) - 37.3 (state) = -14.0

6.6 From FY19 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Special Education subgroup will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 728 – Elk River) for the same subgroup and the same grades.

Result: 23.3 (TRM) - 46.1 (district) = -22.8

## **Indicator 7: Science Proficiency**

**School Goal:** Over the period of the contract, students at TRM will demonstrate proficiency in science as measured by state accountability tests and growth in science as measured by nationally normed assessments.

**WBWF Goals addressed: CCR** 

7.1 From FY19 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score will be greater than that of the state for the same grades.

Result: 58.8 (TRM) - 60.6 (state) = -1.8

7.2 From FY19 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 728 – Elk River) for the same grades.

Result: 58.8 (TRM) - 69.6 (district) = -10.8

#### **Indicator 10: Attendance**

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

**WBWF Goals addressed: CCR** 

10.1 From FY19 to FY24, the average of the school's annual attendance rates will be at least 92.0%.

Result: 91%

## **Summary Analysis**

Addressing academic challenges in 2024-2025 includes processes in place such as Readers' Workshop, MTSS (Multiple Tiers for Student Support), Title I interventions, ReadingCorp, an online record keeping platform (Montessori Compass), classroom walkthroughs, teacher mentoring, and monthly scheduled teacher collaboration.

Three Rivers Montessori is committed to authentic Montessori, a pedagogy founded on the belief that by creating a child-directed, content-rich environment in which each child's unique identity and interests are encouraged, children's natural curiosity will be unencumbered and more profound learning will occur. This belief has been confirmed by many research studies. The Montessori Curriculum offers students choices to maximize interest in learning. Children are not lectured, but are able to make discoveries about science, mathematics, and the nature of matter. This method creates ways for students to do interest-based research and writing to enhance literacy and science learning in a multi-disciplinary manner. Montessori students cultivate joy and excitement in their work which they share with other students and adults. TRM continues to focus on creating vibrant, beautiful, and authentic Montessori environments and is committed to creating goals around academics and staff development that are both challenging and uniquely suited for the specific context. TRM

uses a blend of Montessori observational tools and assessments to gather data and create goals and benchmarks to support student achievement

We are working towards an attainable goal to ensure that all students are reading at grade level by grade three. 23.8% of TRM students in grade three were proficient on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment compared to 48% of the State scores.

Three Rivers Montessori embeds the foundational literacy skills of phonemic awareness and phonics into daily lessons and works to integrate literacy concepts across subject levels. TRM will continue to use Fastbridge assessments to assist our educators in our continued effort to meet our academic goals. We will embed a strengthened, accountable, and full MTSS framework to improve this area in the 2024-2025 school year. In addition, all academic staff will be trained through CAREIALL in response to the Minnesota Reading Act. We will be partnering with our families this year to make reading at home a priority. Our students will have access to a reading at home library for their enjoyment.

## **MCA Data- Comparison Scores 2024**

	MCA Math	MCA Reading	MCA Science		
State	45.5% (less than 1% increase from 2022)	47.6% (1.2% decrease from 2022)	50% (2.1 decrease from 2022)		
District 728	61.9% (2.8% increase)	59.3% (less than 1% decrease from 2022)	47.8% (5.9% decrease from 2022)		
TRM	16.2% (11 out of 68)	26.5% (18 out of 68)	30.8% (4 out of 13)		

## **TRM Historical Scores**

TRM	2022	2023	Growth	2023	2024	Overall Growth 2023-2024		
MCA Math	28.6%	18.8%	9.8% (decline)	18.8% 16.2%		2.6% (decline)		
MCA Reading	42.9	29.7%	13.2% (decline)	29.7%	26.5%	3.2% (decline)		

## <u>Implementation of Primary and Additional</u> <u>Statutory Purposes</u>

Minnesota statute 124e.01, sub. 1

"The primary purpose of all charter schools is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement."

Montessori is based on the philosophy of education and human development. This scientifically designed and tested educational approach is based on the understanding that humans have a natural curiosity as well as a need for autonomy and connection. The montessori philosophy sees the child as a motivated participant in their education, learning through self-instigated actions on the environment.

The Montessori philosophy of education is scientifically designed to meet the needs of all students and attracts families of unique cultural backgrounds, diverse socio-economic brackets, differently abled students, all genders and races. Its foundation is based on peace, respect, admiration, patience, and understanding. Students are naturally drawn to the opportunities for self expression, and the ability to be accepted as an individual. Students become empowered in their own education, make responsible decisions, are self- motivated, confident, critical thinkers and

are joyful in life. Possessing a strong sense of well being, students can make great strides in their academic development.

Montessori supports a mastery learning model which affords students the opportunity to have experiences and work with materials at a pace that matches their learning. Teachers trained in the Montessori philosophy and curriculum present lessons that appeal to the child's senses and interests and allow the child to practice until the concept has been mastered. This means assessment through direct observation of students is a key component of a Montessori environment.

## <u>Additional Purposes of Three Rivers Montessori</u>

A. Improve learning opportunities for all pupils

The montessori method is focused on education for the whole being. This means that at every level TRM teachers are cultivating curiosity and offering high quality academics, fostering healthy social/emotional interactions, and providing work that is experiential and hands-on. The practice of anchoring academics in meaningful work integrates concept understanding and skill-building with whole body activity.

There is not just one material to introduce a concept. Instead the Montessori teacher carefully observes the student and determines which material might suit the needs of that individual child. Observation becomes a key form of assessment in a Montessori classroom. With observation the teacher can determine additional supports that can help a child experience mastery of a skill as well as if the environment is appropriately prepared.

B. Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods
The Montessori method utilizes scientifically designed, concrete apparatus
for ages three to fourteen. The materials attract the student with their
beauty and give an opportunity to experience very large concepts in a
concrete way, at an early age. Through the manipulation of materials and a
special lesson from the teacher, students can learn multiplication into the
millions or division by decimals, or can research and explore the

fundamental needs of humans on an amazing timeline of life. "Great Lessons" are used to tell stories that inspire the students to think beyond what is concrete.

The young elementary student is ready to delve into the imagination.



Repetition of activities leads to mastery of core skills. More importantly, students make the passage of learning concretely to applying the knowledge learned abstractly.

The Montessori materials are designed at the elementary level to be used independently, or with a few classmates. This helps the students support one another on their quest for the answer, or the information they are searching for. Montessori is collaborative in the purest way. Everyone is searching and researching, no one knows all the answers, and everyone loves to hear about discoveries along the way.

Montessori learning is a way of life that encourages students to ask for help, and provides a safe feeling for doing so. Montessori teachers will also allow students to teach their peers as being able to teach others is a sign of mastery. A montessori community cultivates a feeling of trust, and students know that the teachers and staff are available not only as sources of knowledge but also support.

## **Equitable Access to Excellent and Diverse Educators**

Three Rivers Montessori school's mission is to offer an authentic Montessori education that cultivates the development of the whole person,

providing the strongest possible academic foundation, empowering each student to reach their fullest potential as engaged, empathetic citizens in their communities and beyond. We understand that only with a highly effective staff can this mission be achieved. For this reason, we take care to invest in excellent teachers and support staff. All qualifying candidates go through an intense interviewing process where their attitude and abilities to carry out the montessori method is determined. Key tenets of our philosophy are shared and understood by all TRM employees to ensure that they fully understand the mission and vision of the school. All employees are offered several professional development training sessions to help better understand the montessori method. Support staff are all given training through the trillium program to better understand how to support students using montessori methods.

TRM teachers are held to high standards and each undergo a vigorous evaluation process each year. The teacher evaluation combines the Charlotte Danielson rubric with Montessori tenets. If a teacher is identified as ineffective or not adhering to the school's mission/vision then administration evaluates the potential of that teacher, and may choose to either dismiss the teacher or help them create goals and plans for improvement. As of the 22-23 school year, 33% of our teaching staff held advanced Montessori certifications with the other 67% enrolling in certified Montessori training programs. In the summer of 2023 the TRM board of directors allowed for more flexibility to ensure staff have access to high quality Montessori training in a way that is accessible for all of our teaching staff and to address the gap in Montessori certification in areas outside of the teachers role at TRM (ie. Children's house certification but teaching grades outside of prek/k).

Three Rivers Montessori reported a 10% population of students of color. The staff at Three Rivers Montessori also represented a low number at 10% of our total staff being teachers or support staff of color. Three Rivers Montessori is working towards the addition of more teaching and administrative staff of all backgrounds, experiences, and ethnic makeups.

TRM actively recruited from outside of the local elk river area and in the metro area in hopes to increase the diversity within our staff.

## **Educational Approach and Curriculum**



#### Our approach to education

The Montessori method of education, developed by Dr. Maria Montessori, is a child-centered educational approach based on scientific observations of children from birth to adulthood. Dr. Montessori's method has been successfully used for over 100 years in many parts of the world. Three Rivers Montessori strives to be an authentic

Montessori school. We believe children are naturally eager for knowledge and capable of initiating learning in a supportive, thoughtfully prepared learning environment.

Our goal is to provide an optimal environment that allows our students to demonstrate their true nature as motivated, respectful, and considerate individuals.

#### **Educational Approach and Curriculum(cont.)**

At TRM each classroom will embrace the Montessori philosophies and grant the freedoms of choice, movement, and repetition while allowing for both the human tendencies and the sensitive periods of the student. Our carefully prepared classroom environments allow for exposure to hands-on materials and experiences through which the child is able to develop intelligence as well as physical and psychological abilities.

## TRM's Educational Approach

Three Rivers Montessori values the development of the whole child—physical, social, emotional, and cognitive. Montessori classrooms offer mixed-age classrooms. At Three Rivers Montessori, we provided three different groupings, kindergarten and 1st grade, 2nd through 3rd grade and 4 through 6th grade. This has allowed younger children to learn from their peers and the older children can serve as role models and leaders within the environment. This opportunity fostered self-esteem, confidence, and community engagement in our students. Mixed-age classrooms also allowed our teachers to follow each child at his/her own pace. With a scope and sequence that spans multiple years and materials designed to meet the needs of various age groups, the teacher is able to customize curriculum for each child. If a child is showing mastery in a subject he/she can continue to progress. Alternatively, if a child needs more time to explore a topic there's no stigma as Montessori recognizes the children are all at different stages of development.

In order to best follow the child in their own development, most lessons are given individually or in small groups. Montessori classrooms offer large blocks of uninterrupted work time. At Three Rivers Montessori, we strived to provide a three hour uninterrupted morning and at least a two hour afternoon work period. This allowed our students the opportunity to fully explore a topic, go deeper, and complete a work to their full potential. This also fostered a sense of satisfaction in work and a love of learning. It also helped the students develop independence, time management, and other important executive functioning skills.

Maria Montessori believed that "what the hand does, the mind remembers." For this reason, Montessori classrooms offer hands-on learning. At Three Rivers Montessori each classroom offers a full array of Montessori didactic materials. The purpose of each material is to isolate a certain concept. These materials are designed to give concrete experiences of academic concepts. Concrete materials make concepts real, and therefore easily

internalized. Our teachers served as facilitators, guiding the student towards self discovery and understanding. The teacher gives a lesson on how to use the materials and then allows the child the time to work with and manipulate the materials until mastery. The teacher poses questions, isolates any points of confusion, and offers follow up opportunities for the child. As the child shows mastery the lessons become less concrete until finally the concept is understood in the abstract. The student works abstractly (paper and pencil) only when he or she has internalized the information and no longer needs the Montessori material. Concepts are investigated throughout future school years in increasing depth, breadth, and complexity.

#### TRM's Educational Approach(cont.)

At Three Rivers Montessori, whenever possible, subject areas are integrated throughout the curriculum rather than being presented as separate topics. For example, a child that is studying a country will review and research its physical geography, climate, ecology, cultures, historical timeline, government, family life, etc. His/her reading and writing activities may highlight that country's literature. Music might reflect that country's musical style, and so on. We strive to have our students learn in context. Our curriculum integrates experiences across disciplines to help the child identify the whole-to-part perspective and identify their individual place in the world. The teacher does not teach from textbooks but rather supplies the students with materials and resources to aid in their understanding of the concepts that have been presented. Our teachers use stories, timelines, and other resources to pique interest and enrich the child's learning. Our students are encouraged to analyze, question, and contribute their own thoughts on a topic.

At TRM we consistently bring the outside environment in and bring the classroom and learning philosophy out in order to maximize learning and discovery. We see education as an aid to life. For this reason, our curriculum goes beyond the major subject areas of math, language,

science, and history to include practical life skills and grace & courtesy lessons. Students are encouraged to practice those skills that support their own success along with the success of the community at large. Three Rivers Montessori challenges our students to become compassionate citizens of the world. Our goal is to foster a globally conscious and civically responsible student able to go forth, having met their fullest potential being ready to become an engaged citizen of the world.

Maria Montessori said, "all things are part of the universe, and are connected with each other to form one whole unity." Montessori elementary is often referred to as, "cosmic" curriculum. This approach is used to emphasize the connectedness of all things and environmental stewardship. Our goal is for each student to further develop a sense of respect for our planet and understand the urgency of protecting the precious resources we often take for granted.

## **Remediation and Acceleration Practices**

Students were evaluated throughout the school year to gauge progress through teacher observation, the classroom curriculum, and NWEA Map assessments in reading and mathematics, as well as MCA testing in the spring. Map testing was conducted three times during the 2023-2024 school year. We used this data, along with teacher input, to determine those students who would benefit from intervention or acceleration. If a student was flagged as possibly needing further support his/her name was brought to the student assistance team (SAT).

The process for addressing concerns regarding a student's academic progress or social/emotional/behavior needs is as follows:

- 1. The child is referred to the sat team by a teacher or a family member of the child.
- 2. The child's parents or guardians are contacted to inform them the sat will be evaluating the child's needs.
- 3. The sat coordinator will set a meeting to discuss the specific concerns identified by the general education teacher and Montessori curriculum

coordinator. These individuals will have work samples and/or data as a reference for how the child performs in relation to his or her peers.

- 4. At the meeting the team will discuss possible interventions and choose at least one intervention for implementation and data collection. The special education teacher(s) may assist the general education teacher with data collection options.
- 5. In order to determine the child's baseline data, two data points will be recorded within a one week time frame.
- 6. The 4-8 week intervention process is started with a minimum of 8 data points.
- 7. When the intervention process is complete the MTSS meets again to review.
  - A. If the intervention worked, the general education teacher will use the intervention until no longer needed
  - B. If the intervention did not work, the team chooses a different intervention and repeats steps 4 and 5
- 8. When this intervention period is complete, the team meets again to review results. Either the intervention was successful and the teacher will continue or the intervention was not successful and the child is referred to the child find team who meets to determine whether a special education evaluation is necessary. If a special education evaluation is discussed the special education team will contact the parents and inform them of the additional steps in the evaluation process.

<u>Students requiring acceleration:</u> the Montessori classroom provides ample opportunities for accelerated learning. Students work at their own pace which allows further study in any subject at any time as guided by the teacher.

## **Special Education**

In many ways, the Montessori environment offers an ideal learning environment for children with special needs. The hands-on aspect of our materials allows children to touch, feel, see, and manipulate objects. This concrete learning experience can aid in learning. This often leads to confidence and growth in children with special needs.

At TRM teachers are also able to create individualized lesson plans that meet the needs of every child. Beyond these intrinsic qualities to the pedagogy, three rivers Montessori offers holistic special education programming. We have highly qualified, licensed staff, dedicated to providing services to all students that qualify for special services. All students with an IEP (individualized education program) have their needs met the way they would at any other public school. Students are eligible for special education service until the IEP team determines that services are no longer necessary and termination of the IEP can be made.

Due to the size of current enrollment we utilize external contracts to support specialized services such as speech, occupational therapy, and physical therapy.

## **English Learner Program**

Upon acceptance to TRM each family receives a home language questionnaire in the enrollment packet. Parents or guardians of incoming students note the primary language spoken at home. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) note another language other than English is spoken at home then the school team and parent will meet to determine additional needs the student may have and services are provided accordingly through appropriate sources.

## **Pathfinders Program**

#### **Before and After Care Program**

Three Rivers Montessori offered a paid before and after care program for enrolled students. The goal was to provide families with a safe, convenient and enjoyable place for their children to attend while their parents were at work. The program ran from 6:30am-7:00am and 1:45pm-5:00pm for the 2023-2024 school year. All service was individualized for families based on the hours their child attended the extended care program. This program was popular with many families as TRM is located in a largely commuter based city. Many parents work in the twin cities metro area and need quality care while they commute back and forth to work.

## **School Calendar and Daily Schedule**

#### School calendar

Three rivers Montessori mirrors its annual school calendar from elk river school district #728 as this best serves the families who have children enrolled in multiple districts and for bussing purposes. We also determine school closings and early dismissals based on the call of Elk River school district #728. During the 2023-2024 school year TRM had 168 scheduled instructional days with school starting at 7:30 a.m. And ending at 1:45 p.m. with a 30 minute lunch. This equals 5.75 hours per day and 971.75 hours for the school year for students in kindergarten through 6th grade.

\*see calendar on next page



#### Three Rivers Montessori School 2023-2024 Calendar



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JULY	.Y July		Jan			JANUARY				
TWRF	18	School Board Meeting	1	Winter Break	м	Т	w	R	F	
4 5 8 7			15	MLK Jr. Day	1	2	3	4	5	
11 12 13 14			16	School Board Meeting	8	9	10	11	12	
18 19 20 21			26	Teacher Workshop	15	16	17	18	18	
25 26 27 28			0000-5	1255 APPENDIC SECURITY (1991)	22	23	24	25	21	
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AUGUST	Aug		Feb		E	FB	RL	IΔF	2 Y	
TWRF	15	School Board Meeting	2	Staff Development	M	Т	w	R	F	
1 2 3 4	21 - 25	Teacher Workshop	19	Presidents Day	3.00	•	le di	1	2	
8 9 10 11	28 - 31	Staff Development	20	School Board Meeting	5	6	7	8	9	
15 16 17 18	30	Open House	29	Leap Day	12	13	14	15	1	
22 23 24 25	30	Open riouse	20	Leap Day	19	20	21	22	2	
29 30 31					26	27	28	29	-2	
29   30   31					20	21	20	28	_	
EPTEMBER	Sept		Mar			M	AR	СН		
T W R F	4	Labor Day	6	Lottery Open House	М	T	W	R	F	
1	5	First Day of School	8	Teacher Workshop (Grading)					1	
5 6 7 8	19	School Board Meeting	14	Evening Conferences (2-7)	4	5	6	7	. 8	
12 13 14 15		193	15	Daytime Conferences	11	12	13	14	1	
19 20 21 22			19	School Board Meeting	18	19	20	21	2	
26 27 28 29			25-29	Spring Break	25	26	27	28	2	
COTORER	Oct						-			
OCTOBER			Apr				PR			
T W R F	13	Teacher Workshop (Grading)	5	Staff Development	М	T	W	R	F	
3 4 5 6	17	Evening Conferences (2-7)	16	School Board Meeting	1	2	3	4	1	
10 11 12 13	17	School Board Meeting			8	9	10	11	1	
17 18 19 20	18	Daytime Conferences			15	16	17	18	1	
24 25 26 27	19-20	Teacher Workshop			22	23	24	25	2	
31					29	30				
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Adopted by the Three Rivers Montessori Board of Directors on 04/18/2023

The following is a general school day schedule at TRM: \*please note that this is a general schedule for classes at TRM

6:30 am- AM extended care opens (optional attendance)

7:00 am- 7:25 am car drop off

7:00 am- 7:25 am bus drop off

7:30 am- school begins/ morning work cycle

11:30 am- recess

12:00 pm- lunch

12:30 pm- afternoon work cycle

1:45 pm- 1:50 pm dismissal/bus pick up

1:50 pm- 2:05 pm car pick up

1:45 pm PM extended care (optional attendance)

5:00 pm PM extended care closes

## **INNOVATIVE PRACTICES & IMPLEMENTATION**

The Montessori method is not only innovative in its pedagogical practices but also cultivates innovation in the students. Individualism, freedom of choice, greater problem-solving ability, and creativity are supported by the very method TRM adheres to. The classroom activities promote the development of self-expression, self-awareness and critical thinking. Students are encouraged to think for themselves and become engaged in the learning process. They are taught to ask questions and seek answers.

At TRM children have the opportunity to choose their own work and go at their own pace. When exploring new concepts the students are encouraged to follow their interests or budding ideas and see where it may take them. They are allowed the time to work out problems that may come up during this process. The end result is something sparked by their own imagination, creativity, and completely of their own doing. Within our classrooms innovation flourishes.

## **Follow the Child**

Follow the child: not only does the concept of following the child offer individualized pace and a customizable curriculum, it also inspires innovation in our students. Both the environment and our teachers serve to facilitate innovation. The teacher begins by meeting the needs of the individual child. The teacher will consider the child's interests when lesson planning. If, for example, a child is very interested in ancient civilizations, the student may study this topic in many different ways. The teacher may give a lesson on a certain time in history and encourage the child to ask questions and follow up on particular points of interests. Research papers, models, dioramas, powerpoint presentations can all be used to demonstrate the child's discoveries.

The possibilities are only limited to the child's own imagination. Innovation is often thought of as taking a small idea (often born of interest or love) and working with it until the larger picture or idea is born and brought to fruition. This is the practice TRM encourages within our classrooms.

Furthermore, the materials in our classrooms are designed to appeal to different styles of learning. The teacher may use the material that is best suited to the child. For example, within our environments there are several different materials that are used to teach long division. One child may come to understand the process by using the racks and tubes materials but another may need to be shown the long division with bows. Another child needs to use both in order to come to the same understanding. If a fourth child seems to require another style of teaching material the teacher may look for another material or method to teach the same concept. The teacher has the opportunity to offer options to each child and find the material or style that best meets their needs.

The materials are also designed to be manipulated and often have a built in control of error. This leads to self-discovery. The student is able to discover their own mistakes or misunderstandings. They are able to work to correct it without interference or interruption by another. The student continues to be engaged in the process until they master the materials.

Our materials foster self-discovery and perseverance, qualities that are necessary for true innovation to take place.

## **Multi-age Classrooms**

Our multi-age classrooms offer many advantages. This experience aids in the student's social development and offers students the opportunity to develop deep bonds, develop a sense of community and help them to find their place in it. It can lead to peer mentorship, leadership skills, and confidence. It often helps facilitate more real life dynamics and scenarios. This offers ample opportunity for both grace and courtesy lessons and peace education.

Our students are offered the gift of time. They can go at their own pace with each topic. The teacher knows they have two to three years to get to all of the lessons and materials. So, if a student needs more time on a particular concept or idea they can be granted that time without issue. The teacher can allow more follow up opportunities or try another approach in teaching the concept.

Alternatively students are allowed to stretch themselves. The constraints of age and a single grade classroom have been eliminated. A student that has mastered a topic can continue to progress because materials for many years of learning are available. In this way, there is no teaching to the norm (or middle) instead each child's development is just that, their development.

Multi-age classrooms can also help solidify learning. Younger students always have the opportunity to observe lessons that interest them (even if it is not a lesson being given to them per say). Later that same student will receive a lesson at a time when it is developmentally appropriate. The materials had first been introduced to the child through observation and later a more thorough understanding was gained through their own experience with it.

## **Integrating Subjects**

Our Montessori "cosmic education" seeks to emphasize the connectedness of all things and the value each piece has to the greater picture. One way we do this at TRM is by featuring a curriculum that integrates subjects. As often as possible we seek to use a theme to demonstrate the interconnectedness of the sciences, math, language, music, art, etc. Instead of breaking up lessons into distinct areas and asking for rote learning that pertains to a single topic. Our students are asked to look at the sciences, math, language, music, art, from a certain perspective. Then to draw from this knowledge, an understanding of how each adds to the larger picture.

## A Holistic Approach

At TRM we adhere to the Montessori philosophy of taking a holistic approach to education. We believe that education should be an aid to life. We strive to create opportunities to help children in all aspects of their development. This means we go beyond the traditional educational practice of teaching reading, writing and arithmetic. We take time to purposefully focus on our student's social and emotional development as well. Our curriculum includes things like grace and courtesy. Grace and courtesy are those skills that allow us to live cohesively in a society. It is learning how to conduct oneself in certain situations. These skills include everything from how to be polite, to how to communicate your feelings. At TRM grace and courtesy begins with intentional modeling by all adults in the classroom. Aside from modeling, Montessori guides give lessons to explicitly teach grace and courtesy. They will show the child step by step how a certain behavior or activity is done.

Here are just a few of these types of lessons a child might receive:

- 1. How to welcome a visitor
- 2. How to get a teacher's attention without interrupting
- 3. How to participate in a group discussion without interrupting
- 4. How to listen in a conversation

The elementary classroom community is a culture in microcosm. Montessori defined this plane of development as being the age of social, where the relationships between students, and between students and teachers, holds more importance to the child than the content of a lesson or the answer to a question. For this reason many of our grace and courtesy lessons, during the elementary years, focus on social interactions.

We also use class meetings, facilitated discussions, mediation, and negotiation. All to help the group, and the individual, learn how respect, mutual support, and humor can keep the social fabric of a classroom strong.

## **Operational Performance**

#### Health and safety at the school

The school's emergency plan requires training for all staff and is reviewed with the director prior to the start of each employee's hire date. Emergency maps are located around the building in all common areas and classrooms and state required drills are facilitated and logged throughout each school year and during the summer.

Three Rivers Montessori also created and implemented a health office handbook that is available to all stakeholders in the front office. This handbook is covered with all staff and is followed to ensure consistent health protocols are available for all students each day.

The building's exterior doors remain locked and secured when students are present. A scan card system is used for all employees to gain access to the building. All TRM non-employees were required to sign in and wear visitor stickers even when school ends and the pathfinders aftercare program was running.

Updated immunization records were kept for each student (including exemptions) and were maintained in student files and in the student information system. A medication policy is in place and required for all over the counter and prescribed medications administered at TRM. All staff

administering medication are trained by the contracted nursing consultant we have through navigate care and all medication is kept in a locked cabinet.

All TRM employees went through A.L.I.C.E. Safety training with the Elk River police department in the fall of 2023 and the A.L.I.C.E. Protocol was implemented and discussed with students throughout the school year.

## **Parent Engagement**

TRM parents are encouraged and welcomed to be active members of our school family. During the enrollment process each family fills out a volunteer interest form. This form goes over the different volunteer opportunities and polls for interest in joining our school board. In a recent survey 76.9% of the parents/guardians who participated in our survey indicated that they are interested in joining a parent committee.

## **Hiring Practices**

Three Rivers Montessori follows fair and equitable hiring practices. When there is an opening for employment at TRM, the director or hiring committee posts the open position on the school's website and indeed job boards. Further, TRM posts all licensed staffing positions on st. Cloud state's site, ed-post, and on the Minnesota Association of Charter School's website. For teaching positions, TRM posts the job to the Montessori training center of Minnesota website.

Once the application window closes, resumes and cover letters are reviewed by the director.

The director and the hiring committee conduct interviews with an appropriate set of questions for each position. These questions were developed and then reviewed by the contracted hr representative at designs for learning. Questions are the same for all applicants applying for

a given position. The hiring committee is composed of stakeholders from all departments.

The hiring committee and the director then determine which candidate will be the best fit for the position and reach out with an offer letter of employment.

Should the candidate accept the position, a background check is done and the onboarding process begins. The director hires based on board approved position creation.

## **FINANCES**

For questions regarding school finances and for complete financials for 2023-20234 and or organizational budget for 2023-2024, contact:

Mindy Wachter at creative solutions (formerly Bergan KDV)

Finance reconciliation and board liaison

Mindy.Wachter@bergankdv.com

FY 2023-2024	All Funds (including Funds 1,2,3 and 4)				
Total Revenue	\$1,686,759				
Total Expenditures	\$1,858,733				
Total Fund Balance	\$11,277				

## **FINANCES**(cont.)

#### Revenues

TRM received the majority of revenue from state sources as related to our ADM. There was some additional grant money still related to covid. TRM also received a significant amount of revenue from the erc grant. Revenue from fund 2 is tied to meals served. Most of the revenue was from the national school lunch program. Revenue from fund 4 was generated from our before and after school care program which also saw a decline and thus a deficit due to inability to staff and current staff working overtime to staff the program.

#### **Expenditures**

TRM experienced large costs associated with Montessori materials and materials were supported by the general fund this year in absence of a bulk of the csp grant. Staffing was also a significant expenditure. TRM utilized ISD 728 for transportation and therefore no significant costs were imposed for transportation.

#### Net surplus or deficit and fund balance

Three Rivers Montessori increased their fund balance to 13% at the end of fy23. This was due to the cash infusion by the erc grant. TRM has the goal to meet osprey wilds requirement of a 20% fund balance by the end of year five of operation.

## **Key Successes**

Some of our successes in our program was the shifting of our special education program to include two full time teachers and the new position of due process clerk. These positions allowed our processes, procedures, and communication to grow so we can better serve our diverse student population.

Three Rivers Montessori provides three different classroom groupings: Children's House (preschool), Kindergarten, E1(1st through 3rd grade), and E2 (4th through 6th grade). This allows for younger students to learn from peers and older students are able to be role models and leaders within their environment. This unique opportunity fosters self-esteem, confidence, and community engagement in our students. Mixed age classrooms allow and encourage our teachers to follow each student at his/her pace.

Our school board members passed a plan for our teachers to receive Montessori training through an accredited or approved Montessori training program (although implementing may be financially challenging). As we continue to develop and train our academic staff through mentoring and site visits, on the Montessori Method, our teachers will integrate what they have learned into their classroom environments.

## **Key Challenges**

Some of our key challenges in the 23/24 school year stemmed from staffing changes and making shifts in staffing mid year. Due to these changes our staff was asked to take on more responsibilities which caused some of our original goals for the year to suffer. Our Special Education department saw the biggest changes with the loss of the Sped Coordinator and Sped teacher. Our Special education staff was able to pivot into new roles and support our special education students to the best of their abilities while simultaneously learning and implementing new processes to insure our students continued to meet their individual goals.

Our general education department saw increased absences which lead to staff shortages. TRM meet these challenges head on by utilizing our in house staff to cover any gaps in staffing. Financial challenges also became apparent due to rising costs in several areas of the school. TRM has since addressed the budget shortfalls by making many changes to our budget and refocusing our spending to insure our continued growth.

Finally our enrollment numbers did not recover as quickly as was originally thought leading to smaller class sizes. Thankfully going into the 24/25 school year we have seen our enrollment numbers increase from 100 to 120. We attribute this to changes made in an effort to extend our reach into the community and increased training and adjustments made across the board to our daily operations.

#### **Future Plans**

As we move into the future Three Rivers Montessori looks forward to continued growth in all areas. Our staff continues to adapt and grow to reach our goals and to ensure our students receive an excellent, well rounded education. We believe that we are positioned to grow our student population and become a pillar in our local communities. When looking forward we acknowledge our need for a larger facility that can better serve our growing needs. We are currently researching and looking for a new building for the 25/26 school year. TRM has also made adjustments to our assessments and testing practices to better understand the needs of our students. Our main changes come to our MTSS A/B process and literacy training and implementation. We have introduced new structures and plans to help our students increase their abilities. We believe that with these changes we will see an upward shift in our MCA data. TRM has also launched a new reading program this year to encourage reading at home! This serves as a tool to increase our parent involvement and our students' literacy goals. We have also increased our social media presence and have made changes to reintegrate parents into our school activities and fundraising. Overall we feel that we are positioned to become a long term fixture in our community!