

Annual Report and World's Best Workforce

Naytahwaush Community Charter School

Naytahwaush, Minnesota

2015-2016 School Year



Child-Centered...Community-Based...Ojibwe Culture and Language...Service Learning

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Introduction

Mission

Naytahwaush Community Charter School Mission Statement

The Naytahwaush Community Charter School is a child-centered environment where learning is relevant and respects the traditions and wisdom of community, family and self.

Vision

Naytahwaush Community Charter School Vision Statement

The Naytahwaush Community Charter School is a place where children are respected as individuals, as community members with a rich cultural heritage. NCCS will appreciate the wide resources available by using them to enhance curriculum through experiential and service learning activities. NCCS will promote the whole child through challenging academics, community involvement and fostering healthy life choices.

Introduction

The Naytahwaush Community Charter School, after ten years of operation, maintains steady student enrollment figures, high student attendance rates, increased supplemental support to students and high teacher retention rates. We are thankful for the support of our community.

Many of our five year olds start kindergarten without the necessary preparation for success. In spite of the adverse situations some of our students face in their lives, we are determined to find ways to help them overcome great challenges and experience academic success.

Our community school has grown from serving 78 students to 101 students. Without any efforts in recruiting we have reached, if not exceeded, our building capacity.

In the summer of 2012 we were designated by the Minnesota Department of Education as a Priority school for our low MMR rating. We applied for and were granted a federal School Improvement Grant. As a result we implemented a number of successful strategies that helped us increase our math and reading proficiency scores by more than 10% (a 15.5% increase in math and an 11.9% increase in reading).

Due to our significant academic gains, we became eligible for Celebration School status. We applied for and were awarded the honor in December 2013.

Our staff has tripled in size since we opened our doors in the fall of 2005 and our staff retention rate remains at 97%. This is an important factor where building relationships with students and families requires trust and longevity. It is also important in staff development, team building and investment of resources.

Purpose

The primary purpose of our school is to improve student learning and student achievement. As outlined in Minnesota Statutes 2010, 124D.10, subd. 1, our charter school meets the following six purposes:

- (1) improve pupil learning and student achievement;
- (2) increase learning opportunities for pupils;
- (3) encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
- (4) measure learning outcomes and create different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes;
- (5) establish new forms of accountability for schools; and
- (6) create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.”

NCCS Alignment to VOAMN Authorizing Program Hallmarks

- **Provide high quality educational opportunities**
We use our master schedule to deliver Benchmark Literacy, Math Expressions, daily intervention, Ojibwemowin, health and wellness, Family Fun educational support, Success for the Future technology and service learning.
- **Focus on underserved communities, as measured by continued enrollment.**
Our enrollment history is stable and we anticipate continued support for our families due to our community school culture of support and Ojibwe integration.
- **Demonstrate a commitment to racial, ethnic, and socio-economic diversity, as measured by continued diversity of staff and/or student body.**
With a 86% free and reduced lunch rate, poverty is an issue for some of our families and we provide support to address related areas such as a Student Advocate and Home and School Liaison. Our students are almost 100% Ojibwe and 2/3 of our staff members are Ojibwe.
- **Encourage small school environments.**
We are a single section elementary school with a stable enrollment. We are also a community school that was created by the community and for the community children. Our staff, students and families know each other well and guests describe our environment as warm and caring.
- **Promote community engagement – Service Learning.**
We have an active parent advisory group that meets quarterly and we host monthly Family Fun events that promote parents as educational partners. We also begin every school year with all staff members making home visits. All students are required to do four service-learning projects per year and some of the projects are thematic and school-wide.

Student Attrition/Retention Rate

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
2008-09	25	12	15	8	12	6	8	86
2009-10	19	24	13	15	9	13	8	101
2010-11	17	19	27	15	17	9	14	118
2011-2012	25	15	21	24	13	19	8	125
2012-2013	18	18	14	19	20	12	15	116
2013-2014	18	15	16	14	15	17	10	105
2014-2015	27	14	14	17	11	18	16	117
2015-2016	18	24	14	12	10	6	17	101
2016-2017 est	20	23	18	12	10	10	7	100

Student Enrollment and Attendance

The Naytahwaush Community Charter School is located in a remote village in northwest Minnesota on the White Earth Indian Reservation. We are rural, small and have a high rate of poverty with 86% of our students receiving free and reduced meals. 100% of our students are Native American and 24% of our students receive special education services. Our enrollment for the 2015-2016 school year was 101 and our attendance rate was 92.03%.

Two other schools on the reservation share our demographics: Pine Point (a public school) and Circle of Life (a Bureau of Indian Affairs school). Ogema, Waubun and Mahnomen (other public schools) on the reservation serve both native and non-native students. Mahnomen, the district in which our school is located, serves 83% Native American students, 86% free and reduced meals and 19% special education students.

We are approaching maximum capacity so we are not recruiting students from neighboring communities, although a few of our students do come from the city of Mahnomen. We receive inquiries from families in neighboring towns who would like to send their children if transportation was available.

Admissions Policies and Procedures

All students complete an application and families receive an orientation from our office administrator and a welcome from our director. We also have an open house every fall before school starts and all of our staff makes home visits to meet with families before the school year begins. Building relationships and trust with families is an important goal for us. We comply with all parts of *Minnesota Statutes* 2009, 124D.10, subd. 9.

Governance and Management

2015-2016 School Year Charter Public School Board

2015-16 Election Date: May 2016

Name	Board Position	Group Affiliation (if teacher, file folder #)	Date Elected	Date Seated	Term Expiration	Phone Number	E-Mail Address	Member Meeting Attendance Rate
Elizabeth Sarff	Chair	Teacher 436117	May 2014	July 2014	2018	320.420. 7508	Elizabeth2@ naytahwaush .org	93%
Mackenzie Wark	Vice Chair	Parent	May 2014	July 2014	2017	218.261. 0705	mackenziew @naytahwa ush.org	80%
Peggie Chisholm	Director	Community	May 2014	July 2015	2018	218.849. 5388	peggiec@ naytahwaush .org	73%
Liz Lenoir	Secretary/ Treasurer	Parent	May 2015	July 2015	2018	218.902. 0104	elizabethl@ naytahwaush .org	53%
Crystal Littlewolf	Clerk	Community/ Parent/ Teacher 452659	May 2014	July 2014	2017	218.261. 0532	crystall@ naytahwaush .org	80%

Board Member Expertise

Elizabeth Sarff: Master teacher whose data shows high student growth

Mackenzie Wark: Is from the community, a parent and works in the community for White Earth Head Start

Peggie Chisholm: Works for the White Earth Tribal and Community College and formerly the Boys and Girls Club

Liz Lenoir: Is from the community, a parent and is chair of our Parent Advisory Group

Crystal Littlewolf: Has created an exemplary Ojibwe program, is a parent and is from the community

Board Operations

The Naytahwaush Community Charter School Board of Directors meet the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 4:15 PM. The board consists of five members and uses the following three committees: Human Resources, School Improvement and Finance/Facilities. The board uses an annual self-evaluation review process to improve their effectiveness. Monthly board activities included: budget approval, reorganization and new member orientation (July), acceptance of milk/bread bids (September), annual report review (September), audit review (October), board self-evaluation (November),

board self-evaluation results (December), strategic plan review, set annual goals, Impact Aid hearing, Indian Policies and Procedures approval (January), submit transportation request to resident district (February), director evaluation, establish board election committee (March), special ed director contract renewal, approve school calendar (April), accept election candidates, approve lease aid application, review draft of budget (May), certify board election results, approve budget, approve VOA and EdVisions contract agreements (June).

The board received the Award of Excellence for School Board Governance during the 2015-2016 school year.

Board Training

As mandated by Minnesota Statutes 2009, 124D.10, subd. 4(f), all board members have received the required board training for new members in which they learn about their responsibilities. We also have an orientation for new members in which the original application is shared and highlighted.

BASIC TRAINING COMPLETED BY SEATED BOARD MEMBERS

Annual Training Completed by Board Members in 2014-2015				
Member Name note "full board" where applicable	Type of Activity	Date	Location	
Full Board	Governance Training	Fall 2014	NCCS	
Board Member Name	Governance Basic Training Completed	Finance Basic Training Completed	Employment Basic Training Completed	Dates, locations and trainers for each Basic
Peggie Chisholm	Yes	Yes	Yes	8/10/15 White Earth MSBA staff
Elizabeth Sarff	Yes	Yes	Yes	8/10/15 White Earth MSBA staff
Mackenzie Wark	Yes	Yes	Yes	8/10/15 White Earth MSBA staff
Crystal Littlewolf	Yes	Yes	Yes	8/10/15 White Earth MSBA staff
Elizabeth Lenoir	Yes	Yes	Yes	August 2012 Minneapolis MSBA staff

School Management and Administration

Name	File Folder Number	Assignment	Years Employed by the School
Terri Anderson	328203	Director	7

School Leader Qualifications and Professional Development Plan

Terri Anderson is a licensed principal and superintendent in the state of Minnesota.

School Leader Review

The board evaluates the executive director during March of every year. The evaluation instrument used is based on specific job expectations, responsibilities and goals. The board chair shares the results with the director prior to the board meeting. The entire board then reviews the results with the director. The director creates a plan to address areas that need improvement.

Staffing

Name	File Folder Number	Assignment/ Subject	Left During 15/16	Not Returning 16/17
Jenna Dyr Dahl	468746	First Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lesley Miller	402072	First Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Becky Estey	282430	Fourth Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elizabeth Sarff	436117	Third Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brent Miller	388187	Sixth Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kayla Schimanksi	452929	Kindergarten	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jody Bettin	433388	2 nd Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gayle Gish	270346	Special Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crystal Littlewolf	452659	Ojibwe Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monica Hooker	488621	Special Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scott Lerud	331974	Special Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Veronica Weaver	414332	5th Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ty Nelson	443745	Academic Interventionist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paige Bellfy	489818	Academic Interventionist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alex Jesness	443036	Physical Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Teacher and Staff Performance Review

Teachers receive a formal evaluation each year by the Director and a mini-observation every week by the Director. All staff are evaluated annually by the Director using Team Member Targets for Excellence that indicate if employees Do Not Meet, Partially Meet, Meet or Exceed specific performance targets.

Finances

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NAYTAHWAUSH COMMUNITY SCHOOL
MINNESOTA CHARTER SCHOOL NO. 4155
NAYTAHWAUSH, MINNESOTA
BALANCE SHEET - GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS
JUNE 30, 2016

	General	Other Governmental Fund	Totals
<u>ASSETS</u>			
Cash and Investments	\$ 1,943,000	\$ -	\$ 1,943,000
Due from Other Governmental Units	170,776	-	170,776
Inventories	-	835	835
Prepaid Expenditures	1,376	-	1,376
<u>Total Assets</u>	\$ 2,115,152	\$ 835	\$ 2,115,987
 <u>LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE</u>			
<u>Liabilities</u>			
Salaries Payable	\$ 151,418	\$ -	\$ 151,418
 <u>Fund Balance</u>			
Nonspendable	1,376	835	2,211
Unassigned Fund Balance	1,962,358	-	1,962,358
Total Fund Balance	1,963,734	835	1,964,569
<u>Total Liabilities and Fund Balance</u>	\$ 2,115,152	\$ 835	\$ 2,115,987

NAYTAHWAUSH COMMUNITY SCHOOL
MINNESOTA CHARTER SCHOOL NO. 4155
NAYTAHWAUSH, MINNESOTA
STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND
CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES - GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS
YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2016

	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Other Governmental Fund</u>	<u>Totals</u>
<u>Revenues</u>			
Local Revenues	\$ 22,210	\$ -	\$ 22,210
Revenues from State Sources	1,579,361	2,808	1,582,169
Revenues from Federal Sources	852,961	86,519	939,480
Sales and Other Conversions of Assets	-	3,161	3,161
Investment Earnings	6,013	-	6,013
Total Revenues	<u>2,460,545</u>	<u>92,488</u>	<u>2,553,033</u>
<u>Expenditures</u>			
District and School Administration	150,043	-	150,043
District Support Services	176,724	-	176,724
Regular Instruction	922,093	-	922,093
Special Education Instruction	498,200	-	498,200
Instructional Support Services	32,329	-	32,329
Pupil Support Services	93,569	133,917	227,486
Site, Buildings, and Equipment	312,782	-	312,782
Fiscal and Other Fixed Costs	11,257	-	11,257
Total Expenditures	<u>2,196,997</u>	<u>133,917</u>	<u>2,330,914</u>
<u>Excess of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures</u>	<u>263,548</u>	<u>(41,429)</u>	<u>222,119</u>
<u>Other Financing Sources (Uses)</u>			
Operating Transfers In	-	41,194	41,194
Operating Transfers Out	(41,194)	-	(41,194)
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	<u>(41,194)</u>	<u>41,194</u>	<u>-</u>
<u>Excess of Revenues and Other Financing Sources Over (Under) Expenditures and Other Financing Uses</u>	<u>222,354</u>	<u>(235)</u>	<u>222,119</u>
<u>Fund Balances, Beginning of Year</u>	<u>1,741,380</u>	<u>1,070</u>	<u>1,742,450</u>
<u>Fund Balances, End of Year</u>	<u>\$ 1,963,734</u>	<u>\$ 835</u>	<u>\$ 1,964,569</u>

NAYTAHWAUSH COMMUNITY SCHOOL
MINNESOTA CHARTER SCHOOL NO. 4155
NAYTAHWAUSH, MINNESOTA
REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
GENERAL FUND
BUDGETARY COMPARISON SCHEDULE
YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2016

	<u>Original and Final Budgets</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance with Final Budget - Positive (Negative)</u>
<u>Revenues</u>			
Local Revenues	\$ 62,500	\$ 22,210	\$ (40,290)
Revenues from State Sources	1,450,278	1,579,361	129,083
Revenues from Federal Sources	762,252	852,961	90,709
Investment Earnings	5,000	6,013	1,013
<u>Total Revenues</u>	<u>2,280,030</u>	<u>2,460,545</u>	<u>180,515</u>
<u>Expenditures</u>			
District and School Administration	144,550	150,043	(5,493)
District Support Services	162,838	176,724	(13,886)
Regular Instruction	893,034	922,093	(29,059)
Special Education Instruction	494,812	498,200	(3,388)
Instructional Support Services	32,379	32,329	50
Pupil Support Services	88,156	93,569	(5,413)
Site, Buildings and Equipment	322,500	312,782	9,718
Fiscal and Other Fixed Costs	11,650	11,257	393
<u>Total Expenditures</u>	<u>2,149,919</u>	<u>2,196,997</u>	<u>(47,078)</u>
<u>Excess of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures</u>	<u>130,111</u>	<u>263,548</u>	<u>133,437</u>
<u>Other Financing Use</u>			
Operating Transfers Out	-	(41,194)	(41,194)
<u>Excess of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures and Other Financing Use</u>	<u>130,111</u>	<u>222,354</u>	<u>92,243</u>
<u>Fund Balances, Beginning of Year</u>	<u>1,741,380</u>	<u>1,741,380</u>	<u>-</u>
<u>Fund Balances, End of Year</u>	<u>\$ 1,871,491</u>	<u>\$ 1,963,734</u>	<u>\$ 92,243</u>

FY15 Audit

Finding: Documentation of internal federal guidelines.

control policies to comply with new

Academic Performance and World's Best Workforce Goals

Math Proficiency

The percentage of all students enrolled Oct 1 in grades 3-6 at the Naytahwaush Community Charter School who earn achievement levels of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all math state accountability tests will increase from 29% in 2015 to 37% in 2016 (increase of 8 percentage points each year). **Goal met: 38%**

Reading Proficiency

The percentage of all students enrolled Oct 1 in grades 3-6 at the Naytahwaush Community Charter School who earn achievement levels of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all reading state accountability tests will increase from 29% in 2015 to 37% in 2016 (increase of 8 percentage points each year). **Goal met: 57%**

Science Proficiency

The percentage of all students enrolled Oct 1 in grades 3-6 at the Naytahwaush Community Charter School who earn achievement levels of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all science state accountability tests will increase from 30% in 2014 to 34% in 2015 (increase of 4 percentage points each year). **Goal unable to measure due to small cell size**

Reading Growth

The average growth score on the state reading accountability tests for all students enrolled the full academic year and taking the same test in consecutive testing years in grades 3-6 at NCCS will increase from -0.1237 in 2015 to -0.119 in 2016 (increase of 0.005). **Goal not met (results were +0.001 increase)**

Math Growth

The average growth score on the state reading accountability tests for all students enrolled the full academic year and taking the same test in consecutive testing years in grades 3-6 at NCCS will increase from -0.3545 in 2015 to -0.350 in 2016 (increase of 0.005). **Goal not met (results were -0.093 decrease)**

Kindergarten Readiness

100 percent of all kindergarteners enrolled Oct 1 at the Naytahwaush Community Charter School will be kindergarten ready as measured with the FAST. **Goal not met: 32% of our kindergarteners were ready in reading and math**

Third Grade, Grade-Level Literacy

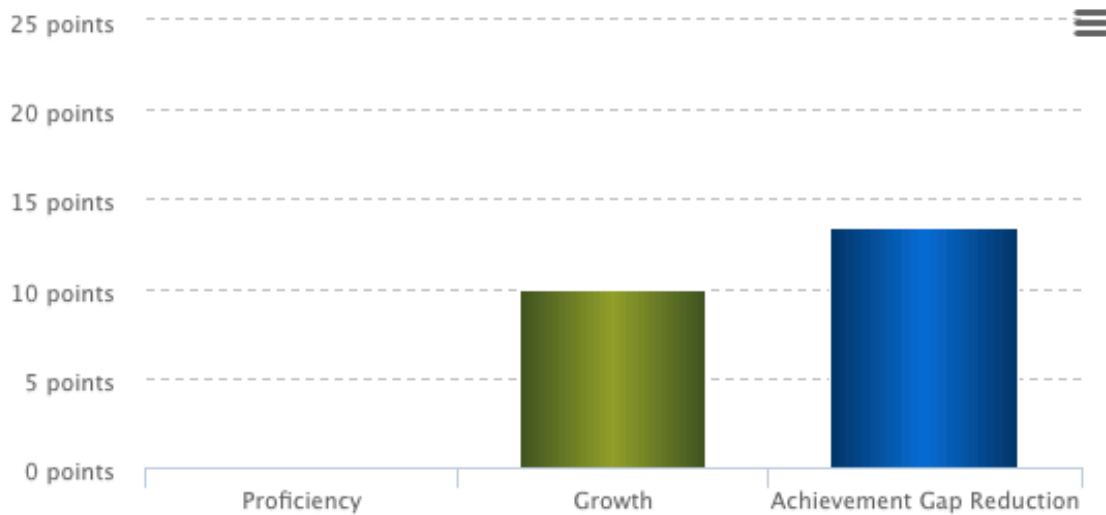
100 percent of all students enrolled Oct 1 in grade 3 at the Naytahwaush Community Charter School will earn achievement levels of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all reading state accountability tests. **Goal not met: 70% of our 3rd graders met or exceeded the standards**

% Meeting or Exceeding on MCA Math 2015-2016			
October 1 Enrollment			
Grade	# Tested	% Meeting	% Exceeding
3	10	50%	20%
4	10	10%	0%
5	6	33%	0%
6	16	50%	0%
% Meeting or Exceeding on MCA Reading 2015-2016			
October 1 Enrollment			
Grade	# Tested	% Meeting	% Exceeding
3	10	60%	10%
4	10	30%	0%
5	6	33%	0%
6	16	63%	0%
% Growth on MCA Math 2015-16: Grades 4-6			
October 1 Enrollment			
	# of Students	% Each Category	
%Not Prof, High Growth	2	6%	
%Not Prof, Med. Growth	9	28%	
%Not Prof, Low Growth	11	32%	
%Prof, Low Growth	3	9%	
%Prof, Med Growth	3	9%	
%Prof, High Growth	5	16%	
% Growth on MCA Reading 2015-16: Grades 4-6			
October 1 Enrollment			
	# of Students	% Each Category	
%Not Prof, High Growth	5	16%	
%Not Prof, Med. Growth	5	16%	
%Not Prof, Low Growth	6	19%	
%Prof, Low Growth	2	6%	
%Prof, Med Growth	6	19%	
%Prof, High Growth	8	25%	



2016 Multiple Measurement Domains

Please note that minor changes were made to the MMR and FR calculations, and the results on this page reflect these improved calculations starting in 2013. Results prior to 2013 used the previous MMR and FR calculations.

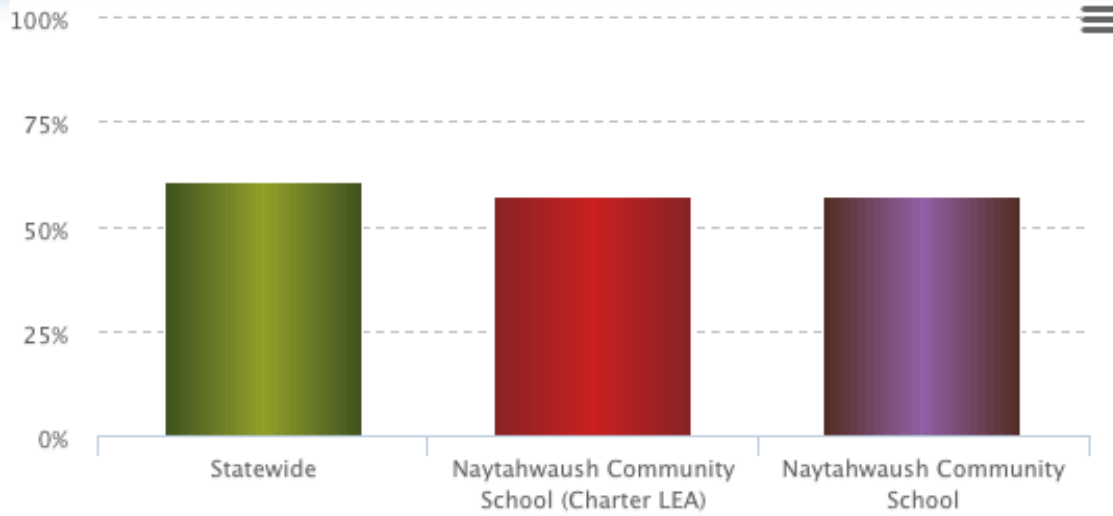


Multiple Measurements Rating (MMR) is 31.11%.

Domain	Score
Proficiency	0 points
Weighted percentage of subgroups reaching targets	0.0%
Growth	9.95 points
Average Growth Z-Score	-0.1459
Achievement Gap Reduction	13.38 points
Achievement Gap Reduction Score	0.0846
TOTAL POINTS	23.33 points
Possible points	75 points



2016 Proficiency



Organization Name	Percent Proficient	Number Proficient	Number Tested
Statewide	60.9%	261,040	428,721
Naytahwaush Community School (Charter LEA)	57.1%	24	42
Naytahwaush Community School	57.1%	24	42

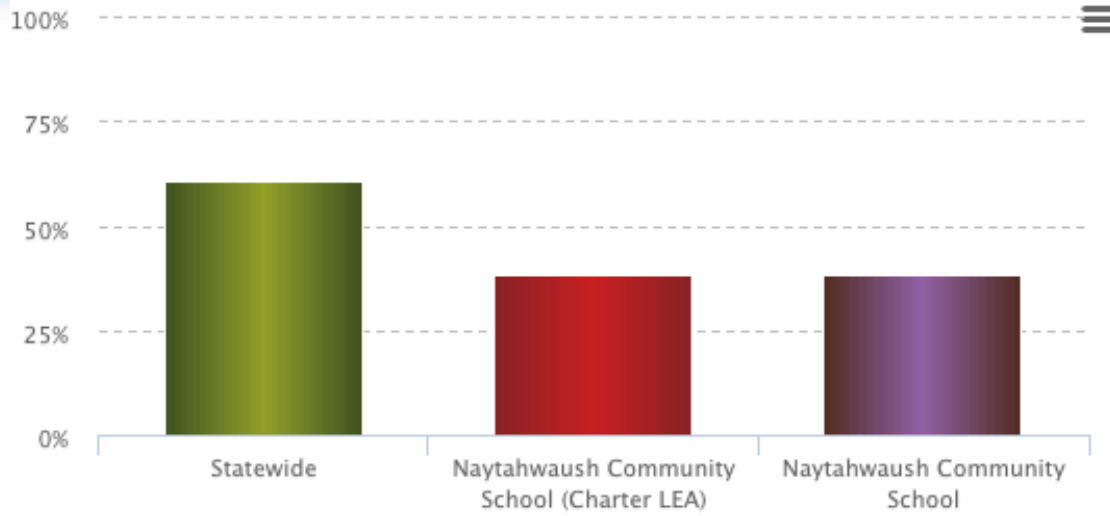
School Contact Information

Naytahwaush Community School

Subject: Math, Year: 2016, Grade: All Grades, Demographics: Enrolled October 1

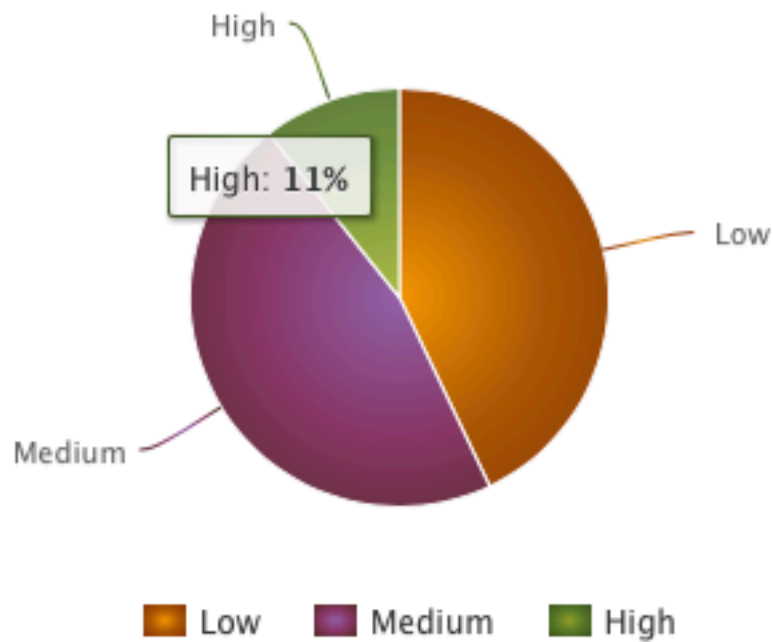


2016 Proficiency



Organization Name	Percent Proficient	Number Proficient	Number Tested
Statewide	60.9%	258,167	423,960
Naytahwaush Community School (Charter LEA)	38.1%	16	42
Naytahwaush Community School	38.1%	16	42

2015 - 2016 Student Growth, all students



Growth Level	Count	Percent
Low	12	42.9%
Medium	13	46.4%
High	3	10.7%

2015 - 2016 Growth by last year's proficiency status, all st...

Growth Level	Proficient Students		Non-Proficient Students	
	Count	Percent of Total	Count	Percent of Total
Low	4	14.3%	8	28.6%
Medium	3	10.7%	10	35.7%
High	1	3.6%	2	7.1%

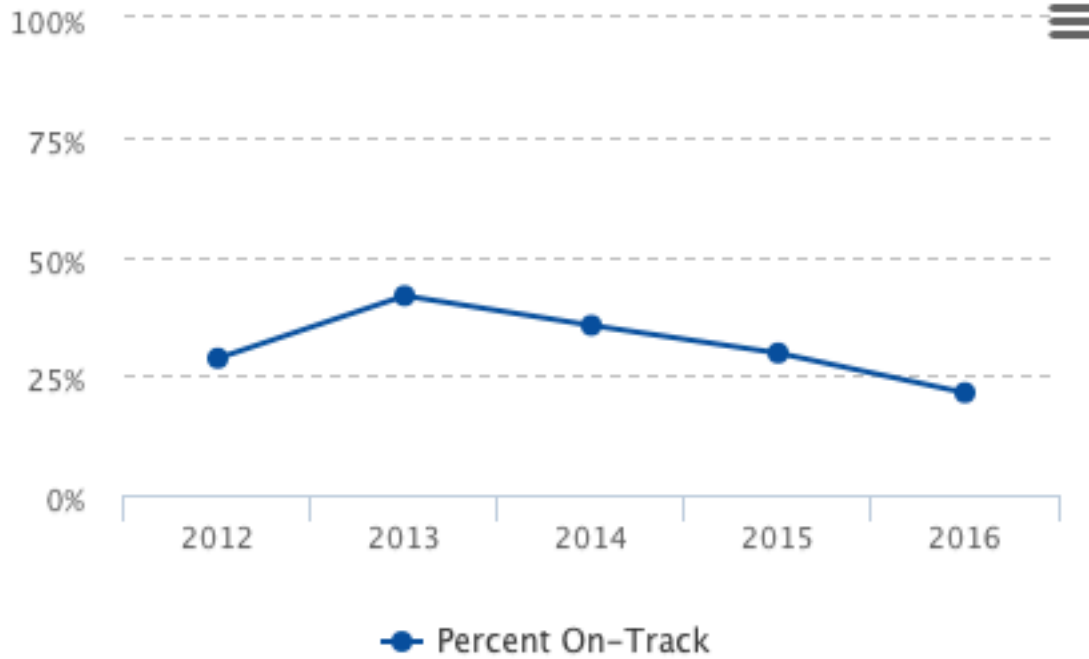
Naytahwaush Community School

Naytahwaush Community School

Subject: Math



Students "on track" for success



Year	Percent On-Track
2012	28.6%
2013	41.7%
2014	35.5%
2015	29.7%
2016	21.4%

Data to Inform Instruction

We no longer make decisions based on opinion. We now make decisions-based on data in order to deliver high quality teaching and learning with a laser like focus.

2016 Multiple Measurement Rating Comparisons

NCCS	31%
Bagley	16%
Ponemah	22%
Mahnomen	26%
Waubun (5 th /6 th)	35%
Pine Point	too small cell size for calculation, was 15% last year

NCCS Data History

Year	Math Proficiency	Reading Proficiency	Science	Growth Points	Multiple Measurement Rating
2011	14%	31%	0%	----	2%
2012	22%	23%	0%	1	4%
2013	37%	35%	17%	17	47%
2014	34%	25%	0%	22	33%
2015	29%	29%	30%	9	26%
2016	38%	57%	cell size too small to report	10	31%

Parent Satisfaction

100% of our families surveyed said that NCCS provides a quality education for their children. 100% of our families said they would recommend NCCS to other families. While we have always had strong support, we continue to build stronger relationships with families as we reach out to them in a variety of ways. Each fall all of our staff members make home visits. We have a Family Fun event once a month where we get excellent family participation. 83% of our families attended conferences in fall 2015 and 74% attended in spring 2016.

NCCS Highlights

1. Ojibwemowin:

- Students attend a daily Ojibwemowin class in which our Ojibwe teacher has created an exemplary curriculum and program
- Success for the Future features student created multi-media projects

2. Healthy Life Choices:

- Full-time interventionist for mental health support to students
- After school football, basketball, cheerleading, lacrosse and track for boys and girls
- An annual 5K for students, families and community
- Snowshoeing and skiing at a local school forest and a sliding hill on school site
- Transition support for our 6th grade graduates during their junior high and high school years

3. Academic Excellence:

- Benchmark Literacy and Math Expressions for core instruction
- Reading and math specialists, coaches and interventionists
- Professional Learning Team meets weekly
- Student support team meets weekly to review intervention and special ed referrals
- Special ed collaborates with Mahnomen special ed staff to help students transition
- Consistent and comprehensive teacher evaluation with weekly observations
- A summer reading program where staff visits homes to work with students

4. Proactive Behavior Management:

- Nurtured Heart and Responsive Classroom philosophy and common practice
- Fewer and less severe behavior problems than previous years
- Full-time interventionist for mental health support to students
- Student Advocate and Student Support positions

5. Service and Experiential Learning:

- Intentional, expected school-wide and theme-based projects and contributions that include:
 - Harvest Festival: students participate in parade, games and pow wow
 - Sturgeon Release: students release Canadian sturgeon in White Earth Lake
 - NCCS Pow Wow: other schools attend and we have a give away
 - Honoring Our Veterans: students make gifts and present a program
 - 5K Walk/Run: students and families participate in annual event

6. Family and Community Connections:

- Monthly Family Fun events
- Weekly newsletter
- Home visits before school starts and during the school year

7. Organizational Effectiveness:

- All staff evaluation and accountability
- Policy development and compliance
- Board Governance Award
- High staff retention rate

Program Challenges

With 86% of our students qualifying for free and reduced breakfasts and lunches, our staff is aware of the ways in which our students are impacted by poverty. Being born into high poverty settings can cause negative physical and environmental hardship on the lives of children. For this reason, we have started working closely with Indian Child Welfare and White Earth Mental Health to file mandatory abuse and neglect reports and referrals for counseling and therapy. We also work closely with families, knowing that our students' basic needs need to be met in order to attain maximum academic success.

Because many of our kindergarteners start school far less prepared than their peers from other parts of the state, we have started to work more closely with Head Start and the Naytahwaush Community Foundation's Learning Center that provides preschool programming for children who are on a waiting list for Head Start.

It is notable that our school serves a social equity purpose as well as an educational one. Many of our families don't feel that the traditional education system has respected, valued or understood the Ojibwe culture. Our families and White Earth Tribal Council members are thankful that we provide daily Ojibwe instruction and cultural integration. Because of our numerous student created multi-media language projects, the Tribal Council has chosen our school to pilot a language revitalization project that empowers our students to share the Ojibwe language with our community and beyond. This initiative ties in well with our other service learning and Success for the Future projects in which students often use various forms of technology to create podcasts, videos and books to share what they are learning. Our Success for the Future project supports reading and math skill development with student created, culturally relevant multi-media projects.

Strategies we use to improve student achievement are: the integration of Ojibwe language, Benchmark Literacy, Math Expressions, Cognitive Guided Instruction, Responsive Classroom, Nurtured Heart and progress monitoring in reading and math with daily intervention. We know that reading is the foundation for success in all other academic areas and that many of our students are at least two years below grade level in reading. We also feel a sense of urgency, understanding that some states determine how many future jail beds they will need based on how many of their third graders are unable to read.

Innovative Practices and Implementation

Ojibwe Language and Culture: Our students receive daily Ojibwe language instruction. Teachers learn the language along with their students and integrate Ojibwe language and culture throughout the curricula. In conjunction with our Success for the Future program students create Ojibwe language multi-media projects including podcasts and newscasts. They write scripts, do the film recording and editing, all of which are published on our website. The integration of Ojibwe culture and language is important because it makes our students proud of who they are and motivates learning in other subjects as well.

Responsive Classroom and Nurtured Heart: Every classroom begins the day with a morning circle time to help build and reinforce a caring school climate. Our teachers implement Responsive Classroom and Nurtured Heart, both of which use a positive approach in managing student behavior. Through support from the Northwest Minnesota Foundation our students are part of the STAR (Students Teaching Attitudes of Respect) program. This positive student leadership program supports our proactive, rather than punitive, behavior management model.

School-Wide Opening Circle: Every Monday morning our entire student body and staff meet in the gym to kick off the week with a positive note. Students take turns helping lead announcements, lunch menu and birthdays. Students also share special events and projects and assist our Ojibwe language teacher with sharing the word/phrase of the week.

Service Learning: Students identify and address real community needs to help make our community a better place. For example, our community doesn't have its own newspaper or other media sources so students publish a weekly newsletter, podcast and news program that are shared with community and families. Such activities make our students proud of their ability to help others. Our projects are school-wide and theme-based. For example, we have a Veteran's Appreciation program that all classes prepare a piece to share at the community celebration.

Family Connections: Every fall, before school begins, all of our staff visits homes to meet with students and families. Building relationships with families is an important part of our school program. Every month we have a Family Fun Day with a schoolwide theme. Our family activities and special events are well attended. Relationships are key in building trust between our staff and families. We work hard to nurture positive communication and a team approach to helping each child become successful.

Summer Academic Program: We had a reading program both onsite and with home visits throughout the summer months and coordinated with our summer foods program.

Extended School Day: We added a half hour more to our school day for additional instruction.

Master Schedule: We created a master schedule that requires 120 minutes of reading instruction, 90 minutes of math instruction and 45 minutes of writing instruction daily.

NCCS's Implementation of the Turnaround Principles

Our Need

Three years ago our staff found out we had the second lowest MMR in the state at a grim 4%. We were devastated and felt an urgent need to look at our data and ask, "What can we do differently, intentionally and immediately to get the results our students need and deserve for success?"

Turnaround Principle 1: Strong Leadership Team

We applied for and received the School Improvement Grant that required us to rapidly execute the Department of Education's School Turnaround Principles. We formed a leadership team who came up with a focused plan and has since guided its implementation. In a year's time we increased our MMR from 4% to 56% and were named a Celebration School. We did this by focusing on both *what* we do and *how* we do it. Our rating was 32% last year and we expect a steady increase over the next few years as we stay the course. Our leadership team has evolved to include our entire staff.

Turnaround Principle 2: Focus on Core Instruction

Our challenge was clearly our immediate need to improve reading and math achievement for our students. We researched curricula and chose Benchmark Literacy and Math Expressions and have received significant coaching in the implementation of both.

Turnaround Principle 3: Increased Learning Time

We created a master schedule that includes 2 hours of balanced literacy, 45 minutes of writing and 75 minutes of math. We added an hour to our school day so we could maintain daily Ojibwe, phy ed, science, social studies, wellness and technology classes for our students. We also boosted our daily intervention support for students in need.

Turnaround Principle 4: Quality Teachers to Deliver Results

Knowing that effective teaching is the key to student learning and success, we focus on quality teaching and learning through coaching, peer review and weekly walkthroughs. We have created Practice Profiles that show what is expected in every reading, writing and math lesson. All of our teachers get observed once a week and are given specific feedback regarding best practices in management and instruction. We have learned as a team that whether it applies to students or staff, what gets measured, gets done. Teachers introduce a learning target "I can" statement for every lesson so students know what their learning responsibility is and can demonstrate it at the end of the lesson.

Turnaround Principle 5: Data to Inform Instruction

We no longer make decisions based on opinion. Rather we look at data to inform our instruction. We are transparent about sharing what students know with students, our staff and parents. At the entrance of our building is a data wall that displays standardized and formative test results for each student and class.

Turnaround Principle 6: Safe and Caring School

We also look at academic progress, attendance, counseling, behavior and referral data at a weekly student support team meeting to meet the individual needs of our students. Every Monday morning our students help lead an all school opening circle in our gym where recognitions and announcements are made, Ojibwe is spoken and sung and students share their learning.

Turnaround Principle 7: Family and Community Engagement

As a community school whose vision was created by parents and community members, engaging families is a priority. An active parent advisory group meets monthly and parents are surveyed annually. All staff make home visits before school starts in the fall. There is a monthly Family Fun day focused on showcasing student learning. And a summer reading program is delivered by staff in students' homes or as part of our summer foods program depending on a family's preference.

Future Plans

Stay the Course: NCCS will continue the good work we've started by staying focused on the ongoing implementation of the Turnaround Principles. We will continue to use data to inform our decisions. We will press for more accountability on all levels, knowing that what gets measured, gets done. We are exploring options for building expansion to accommodate our student enrollment numbers.

Authorizer

Volunteers of America Minnesota (VOAM) is our authorizing agent. Their oversight helps strengthen all areas of accountability for our board and staff. We entered into our first contract with VOAM in 2005. Our second contract was renewed in 2008 and our third in 2011. In 2013 we received our fourth contract for four years, to be renewed in 2017. We receive an annual evaluation from VOA that includes school board meeting observations. In addition to our annual report submission, we submit all other compliance items as requested by VOA.

Our designated liaison is Stephanie Olsen whose contact information is:

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Non-Profit Status

Organization Name **NAYTAHWAUSH COMMUNITY SCHOOL, INC.**
Organization Type **TRUST** Contact Person **ATTN GALE GISH**
Address **242 CHURCH ST** City **NAYTAHWAUSH** State **MN** Zip Code **56566**
IRS Code 501(c) **03** Purpose or Description **Organized for the purpose of operating a results oriented charter school.** Phone Number **(218) 935-5025**
Status **ACTIVE** Extension **None**