

**District #4137-07**  
**School Year 2014-2015**  
**World's Best Workforce (WBWF) & Annual Report**

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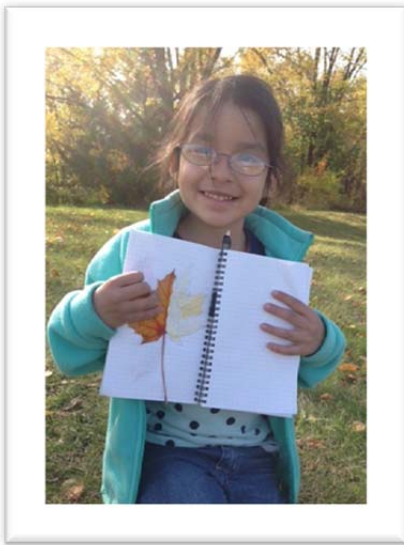
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# School Information

## Contact Information

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Website: [www.swanrivermontessori.org](http://www.swanrivermontessori.org)



## Grades/Ages Served

Charter School: Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade  
Private Children's House Program: Ages 3-6

## Year Opened

Swan River Montessori Charter School opened in 2005.

## Mission

The mission of SRMCS is to provide a child-centered environment for self-directed and personalized learning in a small community based public school with an emphasis on the natural environment.

## Vision

Swan River Montessori Charter School's vision is to employ an inter-disciplinary approach to education by teaching the whole child (heart, mind, and soul). The Montessori learning environment is designed to foster this whole child approach by meeting the child's inherent needs of self-discovery, creativity, independence, and competence.

Swan River Montessori Charter School will create a kind, respectful environment where each child has a sense of belonging. Learning at Swan River Montessori Charter School involves the student, the student's family, the teachers, and the larger community. Swan River supports family and community participation in each child's education by utilizing and appreciating community resources and the natural world as a learning environment.

## Authorizer Information

The authorizing mission of the Audubon Center of the North Woods (ACNW) Charter School Division is to provide superior oversight, evaluation, feedback and strategic support to its authorized schools resulting in increased academic, financial, operational, and environmental education performance of each school.

The authorizing vision of ACNW is to authorize a portfolio of high performing charter schools that instill a connection and commitment to the environment in their school communities, while working towards a healthy planet where all people live in balance with the Earth.

Director: Mr. David Greenberg, Director of Charter School Authorizing

Address: Audubon Center of the North Woods  
Charter School Division  
43 Main Street SE Suite #507  
Minneapolis, MN 55414

Main Phone: (612) 331-4181

Website: [www.auduboncharterschools.org](http://www.auduboncharterschools.org)



## SRMCS and ACNW: A Brief History

The relationship between Swan River Montessori and Audubon Center of the North Woods began in 2004 when the school's sponsorship was made official by the State of Minnesota. We are currently in our second contract with Audubon and will be due for renewal in May 2016.

ACNW has been an integral part of our school since we opened our doors in 2005. They have provided guidance in many areas including school environmental stewardship, board governance, financial oversight, and academic accountability. Our relationship with Audubon is strong and we look forward to many more years partnering with their organization as our authorizer.

## Purpose of the Annual Report

This report is prepared annually by the SRMCS administration and approved by its Board of Directors. Its purpose is to tell our story to the Minnesota Department of Education; our Authorizer, Audubon Center of the North Woods; the SRMCS community; and the community at large.

# Implementation of Primary & Additional Statutory Purposes

## Minnesota Statute 124E.01, sub. 1 (formerly known as 124D.10, sub. 1)

As written in the statute:

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



**Ava, Addison, Breckyn & Anthony enjoy some fresh air outside on the playground.**

As Montessorians, we believe that pupil learning is a natural, internally motivated process that is inherent in every child. Simply stated, every child wants to learn. Our job as a Montessori charter school is to provide an appropriate and prepared environment that is conducive to how a child desires to learn and the pace in which it is done. If we follow the child and respect how each absorbs information, student learning becomes enjoyable and inevitable. When student learning is enjoyable and inevitable, student achievement increases as a natural response. Therefore, our teachers spend a large portion of their time ensuring each classroom has a variety of learning materials in each subject area, that these materials are well-maintained, organized, and sequenced correctly, and that each student

understands how to use these materials to gain the knowledge s/he is seeking. We also provide the freedom for students to make choices about what materials to use and how long and how often they wish to use them. By giving this type of respect to each child, no matter what his/her learning style and pace is, anyone would see how each rises to the occasion.

The five additional purposes listed in statute are listed below and include our methods of implementation underneath each point.

- (1) Increase learning opportunities for all pupils;
  - a. Being a Montessori school, SRMCS offers a variety of materials in each academic subject as well as a variety of materials for each category within said subject. For example, within the subject area of mathematics, there are four operations – addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Not only may a child choose which operation to work with, they also choose from a variety of materials within each operation. Addition alone has anywhere from 5-10 different types of materials to support learning how to add both concretely and abstractly.
  - b. Outside of the general education classrooms, Swan River also provides additional learning opportunities that perhaps other schools would not or could not provide due to sheer size. Because Swan River can cap its enrollment numbers, we have control over



keeping our class sizes smaller. This allows us to provide more 1:1 teaching time, we can easily use the outdoors as a classroom because supervision is more manageable, we have assistants in each classroom for additional support (and keeps our student to teacher ratios low), and we are able to provide additional instruction in areas like environmental education consistently and without time/scheduling issues.

(2) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;



a. Our students have three primary freedoms as part of our educational method. First, they have the freedom of movement – students may move throughout the classroom and work in any area of the room as they choose without needing the permission of an adult so long as it is purposeful. Second, they have the ability to choose. This includes what material they wish to use, where to use it, and how long. Finally, they are given the freedom to repeat. People often underestimate this freedom because we tend to think that if we have done some once and done it well, then we do not need to do it anymore. We believe the opposite is true. Encouraging students to repeat solidifies knowledge and solidified knowledge leads to mastery and mastery is our ultimate goal.

(3) Measure learning outcomes and create different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes;

a. There are two primary means of measuring progress in a Montessori setting outside of standardized assessments.

- i. Observation – It is very common for a Montessori teacher to spend a portion of his/her day sitting quietly in the classroom to observe and take notes on students. Specifically, they look for purposeful movement, level of student engagement, potentially struggling students who may need additional support of some kind, and students who are showing mastery of a particular material/topic.
- ii. Peer Teaching – When a child has mastered a particular topic, it is very common that the teacher may ask that child to teach or support another child who hasn't yet. The idea behind this is simply that if a child has the knowledge to teach another, it not only proves mastery, but builds the self-esteem and level of independence of the child being given that special responsibility.

(4) Establish new forms of accountability for schools;

- a. Being a small charter school, we have the ability to establish and hold higher accountability standards more closely than perhaps a large district with numerous schools could. Rather than relying primarily on quantitative assessment data, we are able to incorporate a deeper level of accountability. Examples include
  - i. collecting thorough, specific data on student and parent satisfaction;
  - ii. teachers are able to provide detailed, quality evaluations of the school director and vice versa;

- iii. The school board and its members are more easily accessible to families, teachers, and the community. They know our teaching staff well, including individual strengths and weaknesses; and
- iv. The relationship between SRMCS and its authorizer, Audubon Center of the North Woods, is a positive, supportive partnership rather than hierarchical system. This type of relationship encourages increased dedication to our school and its educational method. Our authorizer is yet one more means of holding Swan River accountable for pupil learning.

(5) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.

- a. One of the foundational differences between traditional districts and charter schools is that a charter is its own district and, therefore, has its own school board. Additionally, the members of the school board include licensed teachers who work for the school. This allows decisions to be made with the direct input and voting rights of the teachers themselves.



Anika, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, works on the Hierarchy of Numbers in Ms. Sharon's classroom



## Student Enrollment & Demographics

### Number of Students Enrolled

Since SRMCS opened its doors in 2005, we have been fully enrolled at every grade level with waiting lists. We have had to do little advertising in the community to promote enrollment as most of our families find us via word-of-mouth. Any time a slot becomes available during the course of the year, we have always been able to fill that slot from the waiting list. In addition, calls continually come in throughout the school year inquiring about enrollment availability. We are very confident this trend will continue.

Below is a chart which provides trending enrollment data by grade level.

	2012-13	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016 (est.)
Kindergarten	24	24	19	24
1st Grade	24	23	21	22
2nd Grade	29	29	24	25
3rd Grade	20	20	28	28
4th Grade	22	22	19	27
5th Grade	21	21	20	19
6th Grade	7	5	15	4
<b>Total &amp; Average Daily Membership (ADM)</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>149</b>

### Key Demographic Trends

Looking at the data provided below, trends regarding demographics have remained consistent. The City of Monticello is composed largely of Caucasian and Latino families. While there is little we can do about the surrounding racial demographics, it is part of Swan River’s mission to provide a Montessori education free of charge to all families who seek it. Therefore, we make providing any sort of financial assistance a priority. This includes scholarships for field trips, snack programs, and any other school related events. We also promote the Free and Reduced Lunch Program and keep any usage of this program strictly confidential.

<b>Demographic Trends</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-2016 (est.)</b>
Total Enrollment	147	144	146	149
Male	68	66	67	69
Female	79	78	80	80
Special Education	33	35	37	24
LEP	0	0	0	0
African American	0	0	0	0
Latino	8	7	8	5
Asian/PI	6	2	4	2
American Indian	2	1	3	2
White	131	134	131	140
F/R Lunch	10	19	14	11

# Student Attendance, Attrition & Mobility

## Attendance

Overall, student attendance at SRMCS is very positive. Since we opened in 2005, we have had very little issue with excessive student tardiness or absenteeism. Our families recognize the importance of being in school consistently, which is reflected by our 95%+ yearly attendance rates.

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-2015
<b>Attendance Rate: Overall</b>	96.41%	96.26%	96.37%	95.69%

The SRMCS Board of Directors believes that regular attendance is necessary to obtain the maximum benefits of our instructional program and is correlated to successful academic achievement. Consistent attendance is one means by which a student develops responsibility and self-discipline. For this reason, student absence from school should be limited to genuinely unavoidable circumstances. Daily attendance records are filed by the administration.

## Attrition

There are three primary reasons that a student may dis-enroll from our program.

1. 5<sup>th</sup> grade students often choose to attend their local middle school for 6<sup>th</sup> grade.
2. The family relocates to a residence too far away to commute to Swan River.
3. A student chooses to enroll in his/her home or other school district.

The following table offers statistical insight into student attrition/retention trends at SRMCS.

Reason for Dis-enrollment	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Transferred to Local Middle School for 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10/153 = 6.5%	13/147 = 8.8%	5/144 = 3.4%	5/146 = 3.4%
Relocation of Primary Residence	3/153 = 1.9%	4/147 = 2.7%	1/144 = 0.6%	0
Transfer to Student's Home District	6/153 = 3.9%	3/147 = 2.0%	1/144 = 0.6%	1/146 = 0.6%
<b>Total % of Students to Dis-Enroll</b>	19/153 = 8.4%	20/147 = 13.5%	7/144 = 4.9%	6/146 = 4.1%
<b>Total % of Student Retention</b>	<b>124/143 = 86.7%</b>	<b>130/150 = 86.7%</b>	<b>137/144 = 95.1%</b>	<b>140/146 = 95.8%</b>



Students admire the hard work of their friend Jacob. Great work, Jacob!

As detailed, the retention rate of students averages approximately 95.8%. We are very proud as this is an all-time high! It is our goal each year to educate our families on the benefits of staying at Swan River for 6<sup>th</sup> grade. However, administration also understands the desire to begin at the local middle school for 6<sup>th</sup> grade with the child's peers from the Monticello School District that SRMCS resides in. We also expect a small percentage of families to relocate each year. Families who have moved away have often expressed their love and appreciation for our school and their heartbreak for having to leave.

Students who have chosen to transfer to their home school district do so for a variety of reasons. Some include the inability to transport their child/ren to our location, the desire to go to school with the children from their local neighborhoods, or the family simply prefers a traditional-style education over the Montessori approach, which we certainly respect.

### Student Mobility

	Number of students on Oct. 1	Mid-year Transfers In	Mid-year Transfers Out	Total Mid-year Transfers	Mobility Index
2012-13	147	5	2	7	4.7%
2013-14	145	1	1	2	1.3%
2014-15	149	1	4	5	3.3%

	Percentage of Students Enrolled for 95% or More of the School Year
2012-13	95.3%
2013-14	98.7%
2014-15	96.7%

# Educational Approach and Curriculum

## Our Approach to Education

The Montessori Method is a proven alternative to conventional education and has a philosophy unparalleled by other traditional teaching methods. It is primarily based on child development and the understanding that children have an innate desire to learn. We believe that the child is a motivated doer, not simply an empty vessel to be filled with information. Children in our classrooms are active, highly independent learners.

SRMCS is an authentic Montessori School. Our lead teachers are not only licensed by the State of Minnesota, but also hold Montessori certification at the level they teach. We pride ourselves by having a full range of Montessori materials in every classroom to meet the needs of the mixed age groupings.

The classroom communities are enhanced by our mixed-age classrooms. Children are in one classroom for three years. During those three years, they will play different roles. One of the most important roles is the leadership responsibilities given to the third year students. These students become role models and are looked upon to assist the teacher by setting a good example and being helpful to younger students. Student contributions to the classroom community are only one element of Montessori education that builds self-esteem and self-reliance.

In addition to these basic elements of a Montessori school, we do not use extrinsic motivators. Our students are motivated by their desire to learn and their freedom to make choices. This ability to make choices invests the children in their education. It gives them responsibility for their education.

Just as the role of the child in a Montessori classroom is different, so is the role of the teacher. Their role is more that of a director or mentor. The teachers do not teach from textbooks. They present Montessori lessons and prepare their classrooms with hands-on materials and resources that students use to build an understanding of the concepts presented.



Without textbooks, Montessori students rely on multiple sources to research the topics they are studying. The classrooms have their own libraries of nonfiction books about science and social studies topics. Our students also use the local library and the internet for research. Students are shown how to research and find answers to a wide variety of questions. In other words, teachers are not used as a source for answers, but as a source to find information so the student may find the answer to his/her own questions independently.

## School Goals & Benchmarks for Instruction and Student Achievement: SMART Goals

Per our contract with Audubon Center of the North Woods, the SRMCS lead teaching staff worked together to create reasonable, yet challenging goals to be met on a yearly basis otherwise known as SMART goals. The majority of these goals are based on targeted growth for both MCA and NWEA student test results. Other components include science and environmental education goals. Some specific examples include:

By Spring 2015, 69% of all students in grades 3-6 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in reading as measured by annual MCA tests.
By Spring 2015, 60% of students will meet expected growth targets established by NWEA for fall to spring administration of the NWEA MAP assessment in math.
By Spring 2015, 67% of all students in grade 5 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in science as measured by annual MCA tests.
By Spring of 2015, 100% of students in grades K-6 will participate in Environmental Education classes as offered by Swan River Montessori Charter School staff.



To review these goals in their entirety, please see Attachment 3.

### Alignment to State Standards

The Montessori Method does a very good job providing thorough instruction in all subject areas. However, we recognize that our approach may not transparently reflect Minnesota State Standards. To address this issue, the lead teachers meet regularly throughout each year to align the Montessori curriculum/materials to said standards. Administration is responsible for staying updated on any state standard changes and relaying these updates to all relevant staff members so continued curriculum alignment can take place.

### Remediation & Acceleration Practices

**Students Needing Additional Support:** If a student is flagged for needing additional support beyond what is offered in the general education classroom, their name is brought to the monthly Child Find Team. This team is comprised of the lead classroom teacher, the Special Education staff, the School Director, and the Special Education Director. The purpose of this team is to brainstorm interventions for students who teachers have concerns about. These interventions are done for a minimum of 6-8 weeks. Once complete, the team receives an update on student progress. If progress is made, the teacher is encouraged to continue with the successful interventions being used. If progress is low or absent, the team discusses if additional interventions should be used or if the student should be referred for a special education evaluation.

SRMCS also employs an on-site student specialist to work with students who have been flagged by teachers as needing additional help with reading or math, but do not qualify for special education services. This specialist is fully trained on the Sue Barton Reading System.

Students Requiring Acceleration: In the event that grade acceleration would be appropriate for a student, SRMCS does have a policy in place outlining the steps that must be taken. To view this policy in its entirety, please visit our web site at [www.swanrivermontessori.org](http://www.swanrivermontessori.org).

## **Special Education**

SRMCS is fortunate to have excellent staff in the Special Education Department. All students with I.E.P.s (Individualized Education Plans) have their needs met as they would in any other traditional school. However, due to the size and scope of our program, specialized services such as speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy, etc. are contracted externally. Overall, we have been very pleased with the contracted staff who we consider to be part of the SRMCS team.

## **English Learner Program**

Every student enrolling at SRMCS receives an Enrollment Data Form prior to his/her first day of school. On this form, the parent(s) of the incoming student must identify the primary language spoken in the home environment. Should any other language other than English be indicated, the school director, the general education teacher, and the parents would be called to a meeting to discuss any potential language-learner needs the child may have, including the need for a translator should it be necessary.

If a parent indicates that the primary language spoken at home is English, but school staff believe there are language-learner needs, a meeting would be called to discuss concerns and procedures that may need to be put in place to support the student.

SRMCS does not currently have any students who are ELL (English Language Learners) and, therefore, does not have an English Learner Program at this time.

## **School Staff & Our Educational Mission**

“The mission of SRMCS is to provide a child-centered environment for self-directed and personalized learning in a small community based public school with an emphasis on the natural environment.”

Every staff member of SRMCS has been meticulously chosen based on the perceived ability to understand and adhere to the Montessori Method of Education. All members are trained (to varying degrees depending on the position) to understand and support the following:

- Allowing and encouraging self-directed decisions, especially regarding work choices.
- Understanding and supporting the idea that learning occurs in numerous ways and in varying styles, both in a classroom and other environments (the home, the outdoors, out in the community).



- Building independence within the child is a priority at all times even if that means witnessing “mistakes.”
- The environment, whatever it may be, belongs to the child, not the adult.
- Our job is not to force, but to guide.
- Respect from the child is earned, not demanded.
- With some minor exceptions, we teach to the individual child, not the group as a whole.

The School Board and the administration understand that the Montessori philosophy is not for everyone. If a staff member finds that this style of education is not conducive to his/her own style, we certainly respect that and understand if the working relationship is severed.

### School Calendar & Daily Schedule

School Calendar: SRMCS mirrors its annual school calendar from Monticello School District #882 because our students utilize their bussing services. Therefore, we are closed the same days, hold the same holiday/vacation schedules, and hold all early dismissal days as they do. Our Board of Directors must wait to approve our school calendar until #882’s Board approves theirs. During 2014-2015, there were 173 scheduled instructional days with school starting at 9:10 a.m. and ending at 3:20 p.m. This equals approximately 370 minutes per day and 64,010 minutes per year.

To view the board approved 2014-15 school calendar, please see Attachment 1. The 2015-16 board approved calendar is also included. Please see Attachment 2.

General Daily Schedule: While there are numerous changes that may take place during any school day due to specials classes (physical education, technology, art, environmental education, etc.), the following is a general student schedule:

- 7:00 A.M. Extended Care (contracted families only)
- 9:10 School begins  
Work/lessons in the classroom
- 12:00 Lunch
- 12:30 Recess
- 1:00 Work/lessons in the classroom  
Specials classes
- 3:20 Dismissal
- 3:30 P.M. Extended Care (contracted families only)



## Dunk the Gym Teacher!

# Innovative Practices and Implementation

The Montessori Method in and of itself is continuously innovative just in its standard practice. Lessons are tailored to meet the needs of each individual student. There are also numerous materials to teach certain concepts to students. We understand that every student learns differently both in style and in time. Therefore, when giving a student a lesson in addition, for example, the teacher may choose a specific type of addition material based on that student's learning style and ability. Another student may use an entirely different type of addition material. A third student might use both materials. In an authentic Montessori classroom, there may be upwards of 5-10 different types of materials to teach the same concept. If a student's needs are not met within those options, the teacher would look to other classrooms for additional material or will often make material by hand.

Another key component of Montessori and SRMCS is the way in which we follow the child. If a child shows particular interest in a subject, the Solar System being an example, that student may study that topic in an array of different ways. The student could choose to write a research report, create a diorama, create a scale model, put together a poster board, and/or orally present to his/her classmates. The options are endless. We find this means of educating students to be innovative and very effective.

Other key components of Swan River and the Montessori Method which we believe set us apart from other schools include:

- Classrooms featuring mentoring relationships that are developed and nurtured over several years versus a traditional school where students are with a teacher for a single year and move on.
- There is an emphasis on the social/emotional component as part of our holistic approach (along with cognitive and motor) to child development.
- Montessori provides an “amoeba-like” curriculum that can change its shape to meet the needs of the child, not a system of education that seeks to mold individuals into one unit.
- We utilize a curriculum that features the interrelatedness of subject areas, not just stacks of unrelated facts.
- We use a pace of learning that is individualized, encouraging and accepting, not critical, grading, or a-motivational.

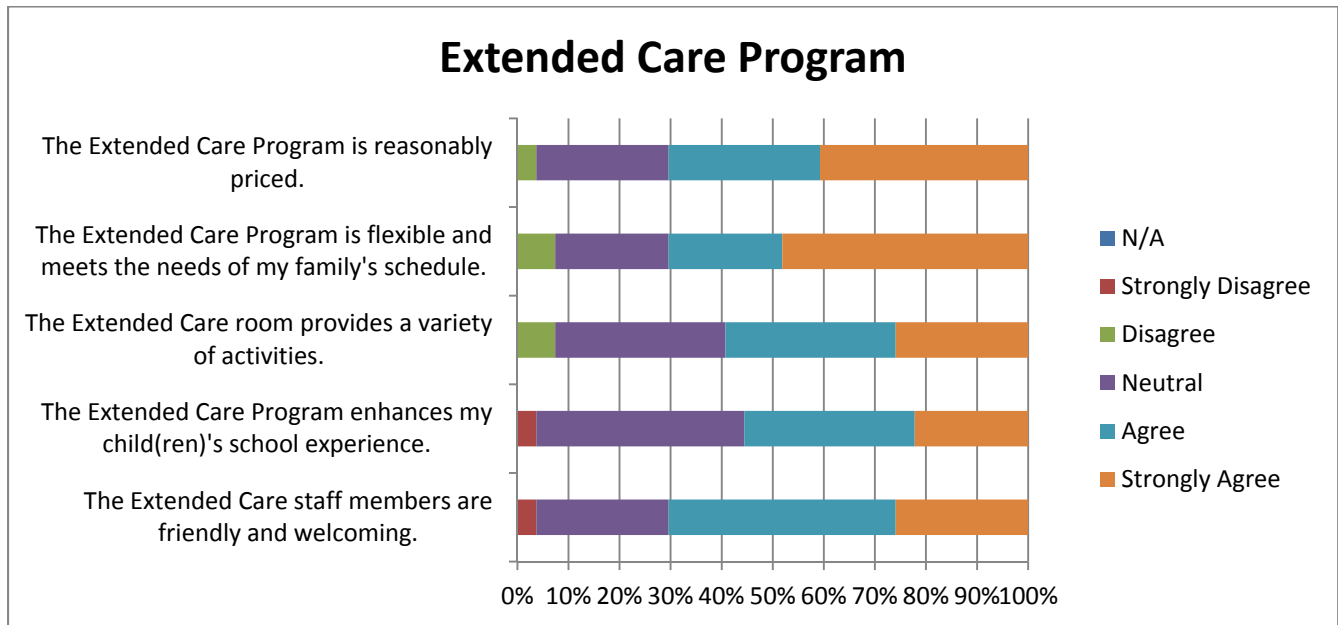


## Extended Care Program & Summer Camp

Extended Care Program: Since our doors opened in 2005, SRMCS has operated a Fund 4 Extended Care Program for all enrolled families if needed. This program is open each school day beginning at 7:00 am and closes at 5:30 pm. All service is contracted with individual families based on the needs of that family. We offer very flexible scheduling and have often provided emergency care when those situations arise. This program is staffed by many of our hourly staff members based on the number of

children enrolled daily. Our goal in operating this program is not make a profit (we have only raised the cost one time in ten years), but to be a convenient, safe place for children to attend while their parents work. Monticello has a large commuting population driving into the Twin Cities every day which is why this program has sustained high enrollment over the years.

In an ongoing effort to improve our programs at Swan River, families were asked for feedback regarding Extended Care on the family survey in 2015. The responses were as follows:



Summer Camp: Due to the ongoing construction of our second building, SRMCS did not run a summer program in 2015. There is every intention of bringing it back in 2016.

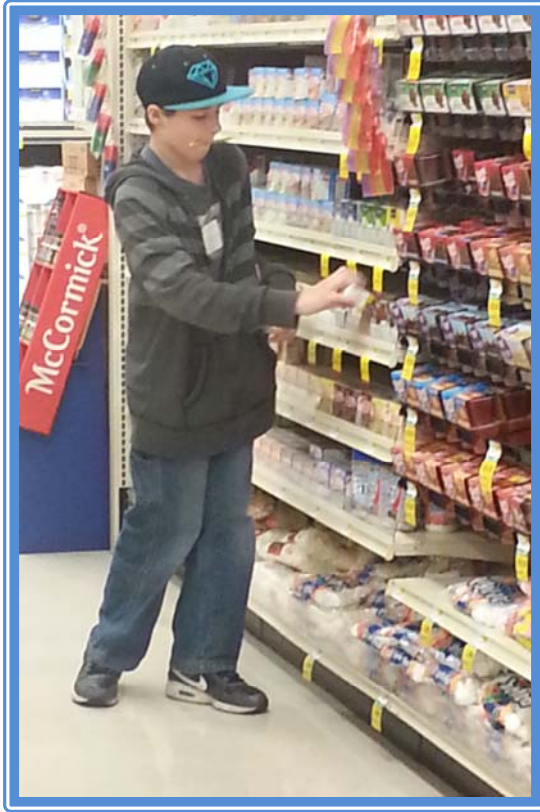
### Early Childhood Program

Swan River Montessori Charter School is a school based on the Montessori philosophy of education developed by Dr. Maria Montessori. Early education is a foundational component to any Montessori school, and as such, the preschool program is an integral part of the school’s overall approach to education. In the Montessori model, the preschool children (ages 3 to 5) are combined with the kindergarten students in what is known as the Children’s House. Montessorians believe that children at this stage of development are in a “sponge-like” phase of learning. The Montessori environment takes advantage of this unique timeframe by introducing children to what many people believe are concepts far too difficult for this age group to understand. Examples include introduction to phonograms, the Scientific Method, all four math operations, and even highly abstract concepts such as fractions, if the child is ready.

Montessori schools use a spiral curriculum, meaning concepts learned and materials used in the Children’s House are expanded upon and revisited as the child continues through his/her academic career. The sooner a child is exposed to the Montessori curriculum, the sooner s/he can absorb key concepts and skills, solidifying a vast base of knowledge for the child to draw upon. Simply stated, our

Children’s House program is the beginning of the Montessori educational journey, creating an academic foundation which is built on in the years that follow.

### **Snack Program: An Innovative Approach**



Liam, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, chooses from a variety of pudding choices for a snack for his classroom. Which one tastes good yet is the best deal? Hmmmmm...

After a very successful first year, our upper grades continued a fantastic snack program in 2014-15. In years prior, snack was typically provided by the teachers or by students bringing something from home to eat. Now the entire program changed. Rather than simply bringing something from home, families were asked to give \$40 (\$1 per week) to a classroom snack fund for the year. Each week, a small group of students is given the task of using a portion of that fund to purchase snacks for the whole class. With the supervision of a staff member, the designated group walks to Cub Foods located only a few blocks from the school. Students must buy enough snack to feed the class each day within the amount of money they were given. They are shown the benefits of coupons and how to purchase sale items to save money. Finally, at the end of the year, any leftover snack money from that fund is used toward a classroom party – a great motivation for any child!

Again, this ongoing lesson includes money management, uses a variety of math skills, plus provides students with choices – particularly on what foods they wanted to buy while keeping in mind food allergies, cost, and healthy nutrition standards. Of course, at the end of the year, the classroom was successful with their budgeting and was able to have a big party with pizza, drinks, and a whole lot of fun. Due to the success of this program, staff has decided to continue it in the years to come.

### **Enrichment/Extra-Curricular Programs**

During the 2014-15 school year, SRMCS had the privilege to offer five amazing after school programs in addition to our Extended Care Program.

**La Futura Language Professionals:** SRMCS partnered with La Futura to provide Spanish language instruction after school for any student early childhood through 6<sup>th</sup> grade who wished to register. Classes were held after school each week for one hour. La Futura staff came on site utilizing our classroom space to provide this great opportunity to our students.



**Lego Club:** Ms. Amy Jensen, a Swan River E-1 teacher, organized a Lego Club based on her personal passion for engineering. This club met after school most Thursdays for one hour. All SRMCS students were given the option of registering for one or both sessions offered during the year. Students were given the option to bring Legos from home and also had access to large tubs of Legos that Ms. Amy provided. Like the Spanish classes, Lego Club was so successful that parents requested its return in 2014-15.

**Sewing Club:** Ms. Rebecca Brown, a Swan River early childhood teacher, formed an after school sewing club open to students kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Students learned a variety vocabulary and skills to get them well on their way to becoming a sewer. Examples include measuring, rotary cutting, ironing, pinning fabric, hand sewing, and even specific skills such as using a straight stitch and zigzag stitch on a sewing machine independently. By the end of this six week class, all students finished the grand project – sewing their very own pillow! We are proud of the success of this class and Ms. Rebecca already has plans for offering two classes in 2014-15 – both introductory and intermediate.

**Woodshop:** Ms. Barb, a Swan River E-1 classroom assistant, who is very skilled in woodworking, began an after school woodshop club for students grades 1-6. Their first project was to building their very own personal toolbox for their woodshop tools. They then built lazy-susans and small treasure boxes. Students used real tools, real terminology, and carpentry instructions throughout these projects.

**Book Club:** Ms. Julie, our Literacy Special, and Ms. Amy, a Swan River kindergarten teacher worked together to form a book club for students age 3 through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. There were two primary purposes for this club. The first was to provide our students with additional opportunities to strengthen their love of reading. The second was to use this club as a means to work toward our state's Reading Well by Third Grade goal.

## Key Successes

There have been countless successes in 2014-15 ~ more than could ever be written in an annual report. This list provides some highlights as provided by multiple members of the SRMCS staff.

- Retention of our 6<sup>th</sup> graders. Over 76% stayed enrolled at SRMCS!
- Strong attendance. The highest, most consistent we've ever had!
- Using the school's designated funds to support 3 of our elementary lead teachers to become STEM certified via the College of St. Catherine.
- Completing the final stages of our new, secondary building which will provide additional classroom space and furthers our academic and environmental education goals.
- Every kindergarten student assessed in the spring of 2015 tested at grade reading level or higher via use of the Fountas & Pinnell Reading Program.

- Retention of staff. All members who were extended a contract returned in the fall of 2015.
- Healthy financial standing. Strong cash flow and solid fund balance.
- SRMCS received the greatest amount of monetary donations ever at over \$16,000.00.
- Continued employment of our Literacy Specialist to support identified students requiring additional academic help.
- Continued employment of an Environmental Ed. teacher to work weekly with all K-6 students.
- Strong child/parent satisfaction as reported on the Family and Student Satisfaction Surveys.
- Installation of security cameras both inside and outside the school building to increase the level of safety of our students and staff.
- Increase in the number of after school clubs offered as well as an increase in the number of students participating in those clubs.



**Maisie, preschool, shows her off her work with pride.**

### **Key Challenges & Addressing Those Challenges**

Along with all the key successes, every school faces key challenges. The greatest of our challenges are listed below:

- Perhaps our biggest challenge is reporting specific, mandatory data while trying to remain as authentic of a Montessori school as we can. Montessori is not a strong advocate of standardized testing, yet we are required to use them. Our teachers continually struggle with balancing our teaching methods with state requirements.
- Each year we have a handful of students who are enrolled in the Children’s House Program (preschool), but do not receive any type of preference for enrollment into the charter school. This leads to many disappointed families who wish to continue with Montessori education but cannot because their child’s name did not get pulled in the annual lottery. It is very unfortunate how many wonderful families we lose due to the lottery.
- The third program challenge we face is that many of the skills we teach are difficult to measure. A Montessori education builds independence and self-reliance in children. Our students also develop time management and leadership skills. They are given numerous opportunities to work cooperatively in groups. All of these skills are necessary for success, but may not be reflected in test scores. In an effort to measure these skills, we annually distribute the Student Satisfaction Survey which gives every student the opportunity to provide feedback to teachers and administrators on their school experience. The staff uses the results of this survey to help build a safe, inclusive learning community.

## Highlights of Our Strategic Plan

Please see “Academic Performance: Goals & Benchmarks” below. To review the plan in its entirety, please see Attachment 3.

# THE STUDY OF SOIL



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Mr. Aaron’s 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students spend many hours on the study of soil. Soil science is the study of soil as a natural resource on the surface of the Earth including soil formation, classification and mapping; physical, chemical, biological, and fertility properties of soils.

As part of this study, students discussed global concerns about how to preserve soil and arable land in a world with a growing population, possible future water crisis, increasing per capita food consumption, and land degradation.

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# Academic Performance: Goals & Benchmarks

## Progress on ACNW Contractual, Academic & WBWF Alignment

### Indicator 1: Mission-Related

By Spring of 2015, 95% of students in grades K-6 will participate in the school-developed Student Satisfaction Survey. The purpose of this survey is to allow each child to reflect on his/her attitude toward school, personal investment and involvement in learning, and feelings about his/her relationship with staff and peers.	<b>100% = MET</b>	Every student K-6 <sup>th</sup> grade participated in this survey. Data on this survey is provided on page ___.
By Spring of 2015, 100% of students in grades K-6 will participate in Environmental Education classes as offered by Swan River Montessori Charter School staff.	<b>100% = MET</b>	Every student K-6 participated in EE classes weekly throughout the school year. Participation was tracked via attendance sheets.
Each year (2013-2016), 95% of students in grades K-6 will participate in the planning, creation, and/or use of the new environmental education land (purchased in Summer 2013 by the SRMCS Building Company) adjacent to the SRMCS school building.	<b>100% = MET</b>	<u>Grade &amp; Primary Topic(s):</u> Kindergarten – Life cycles of plants/insects/animals 1 <sup>st</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade – Animal biomes and native/natural vegetation around the world 4 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> Grade – Water and rock cycles, birds and migration patterns, climatic zones
During the 2014-15 school year, 90% of students in grades K-6 will participate in the School Gardens Project. Students will be given ample opportunities to plant, maintain, and harvest various plants.	<b>100% = MET</b>	Every classroom was assigned a raised garden bed to plant and harvest vegetables of their choosing. Once ready, these veggies are prepared (washed, peeled, cut) by students in class and offered as a healthy classroom snack.

### Indicator 2: English Language Learners

SRMCS does not have ELL students enrolled at this time. For more information on the process of identifying students with potential language barriers, please see page 16.



**Indicator 3: Reading Growth ~ NWEA MAP Assessment**

SRMCS utilizes NWEA to track yearly growth for all students 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Testing is done right away in the fall and again in the spring each academic year. Every family receives a progress report showing growth over the course of the year highlighting their child’s strengths and weaknesses. Teachers also utilize this tool to better understand where a student might need additional help. Areas of student mastery are also noted so peer partnerships can be better made in the classroom.

By Spring 2015, 60% of students testing in grades 3-6 will meet expected growth targets established by NWEA for fall to spring administration of the NWEA MAP assessment in reading.	<b>70.4% = MET</b>
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GRADE	READING		
	FALL MEAN RIT	SPRING MEAN RIT	AVERAGED GROWTH
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	191.2	202.2	+11.0
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	204.2	216	+11.8
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	203.1	211.1	+8.0
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	218.1	224.9	+6.8

GRADE	READING		
	Did Not Meet	Met	Exceeded
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	3	2	9
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	6	3	11
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	3	1	16
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	12	1	14
<b>TOTAL # OF STUDENTS</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>TOTAL % COMBINED</b>	<b>29.6%</b>	<b>8.6%</b>	<b>61.8%</b>
<b>MET OR EXCEEDED</b>	<b>70.4%</b>		

\*\*It should be strongly noted that of the 26 students who did not meet their growth targets, 12 students (50%) scored above the mean RIT for their grade level.

**This can be interpreted as a growth success rate of 85.2%!**

**Indicator 4: Math Growth ~ NWEA MAP Assessment**

By Spring 2015, 60% of students will meet expected growth targets established by NWEA for fall to spring administration of the NWEA MAP assessment in math.	<b>67.5% = MET</b>
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GRADE	MATH		
	FALL MEAN RIT	SPRING MEAN RIT	GROWTH
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	188.7	204.7	+16.0
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	208.0	221.3	+13.3
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	208.1	221.9	+13.8
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	221.7	231.5	+9.8

GRADE	MATH		
	Did Not Meet	Met	Exceeded
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	3	1	9
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8	0	12
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	9	1	10
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	6	4	17
<b>TOTAL # OF STUDENTS</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>TOTAL % COMBINED</b>	<b>32.5%</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>MET OR EXCEEDED</b>	<b>67.5%</b>		

\*\*It should be strongly noted that of the 26 students who did not meet their growth targets, 16 or 61.5% scored above the mean RIT for their grade level.

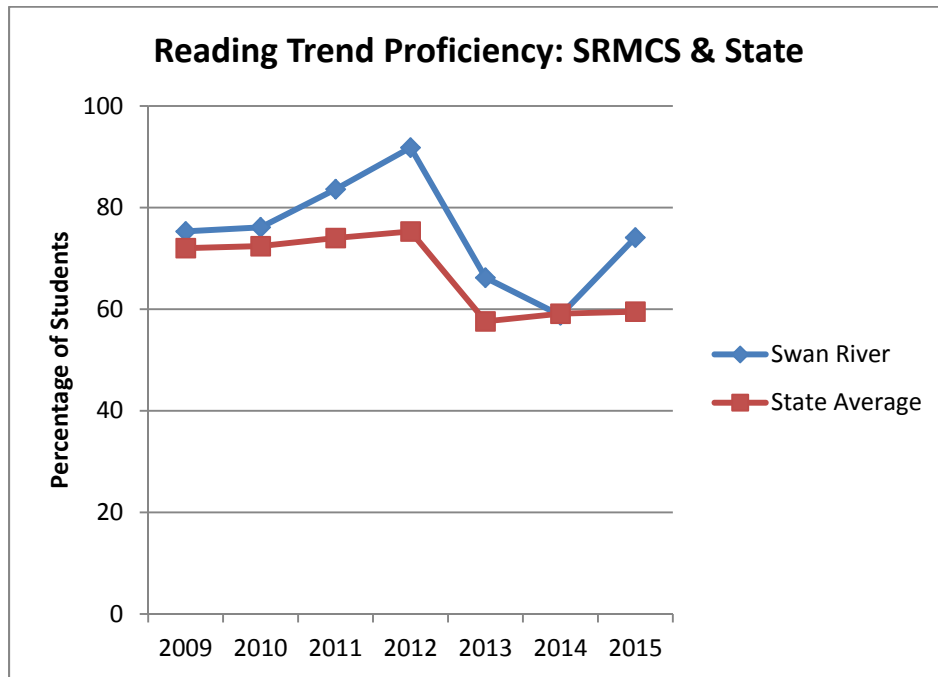
**This can be interpreted as a growth success rate of 87.5%!**

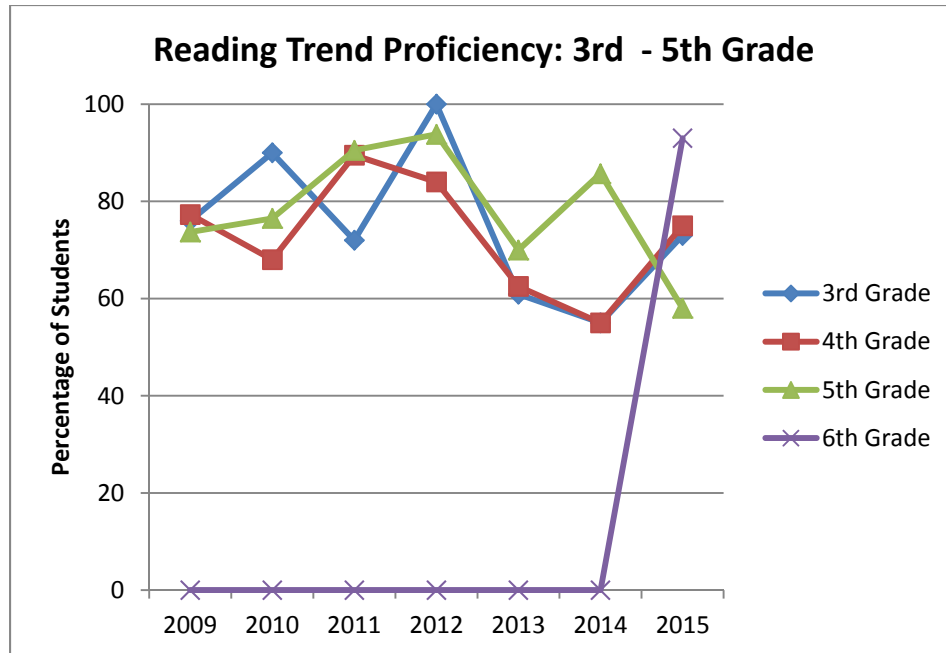
### Indicator 5: Reading Proficiency ~ MCA III

Like all other public schools, Swan River students in grades 3-6 participate in the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment each spring.

The data below shows the percent of tested students who meet or exceed achievement standards set by State of Minnesota educators. The proficiency trends show results over time for reading. The goal for Minnesota, and specifically SRMCS students, is 100% proficiency in each subject area.

By Spring 2015, 69% of all students in grades 3-6 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in reading as measured by annual MCA tests.	<b>74.1% = MET</b>
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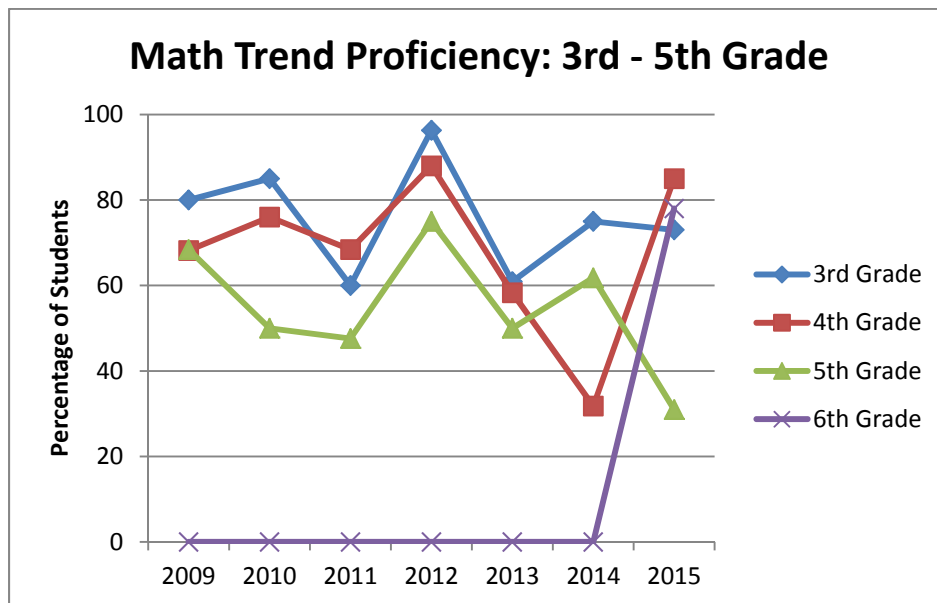
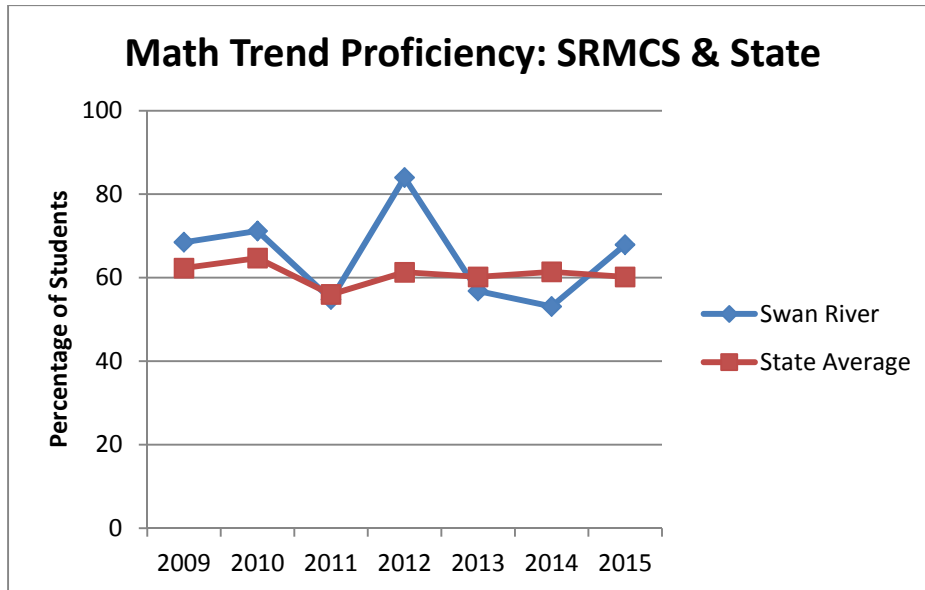
**MCA III:** Overall, Swan River test scores for reading came in strong especially in comparison with the Minnesota state average. We are particularly proud of our 6<sup>th</sup> grade students who tested extremely well. However, our 5<sup>th</sup> graders did significantly struggle. To assist our 5<sup>th</sup> graders and continue this upward trend, teaching teams decided to continue implementing the following strategies in 2015-16:

1. Daily additional paragraph editing work will be completed by every student on top of all other classroom work.
2. Additional reading homework will be sent home every Monday-Thursday.
3. Additional practice time will be required using Pearson Access both at home and during technology classes at school.
4. Increased help offered to students during the day via the Classroom Assistant. Typical duties during the day have been slightly shifted to allow for more 1:1 time with students who need it.
5. Increase the use of adult volunteers to read with students both individually and in small groups.
6. Continue to employ a full-time Literacy Specialist, who is trained in the Sue Barton Reading Program, to work with our “at risk” students individually.

**Indicator 6: Math Proficiency ~ MCA III**

By Spring 2015, 60% of all students in grades 3-6 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in math as measured by annual MCA tests.	<b>67.9% = MET</b>
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The data below shows the percent of tested students who meet or exceed achievement standards set by State of Minnesota educators. The proficiency trends show results over time for mathematics. The goal for Minnesota, and specifically SRMCS students, is 100% proficiency in each subject area.



Based on the data above, the MCA results of our 5<sup>th</sup> graders are showing signs of significant struggle as they did when they were in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Conversely, our 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> graders did quite well compared to the previous year. The staff met about this trying to dissect possible reasons for this slide in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. While there is no way to know for sure, we have flagged a number of our 5<sup>th</sup> grade students as having difficulty in math over the course of last year. We knew this going into MCA testing last spring and were not surprised about the results. There was a large percentage of students who do not qualify for

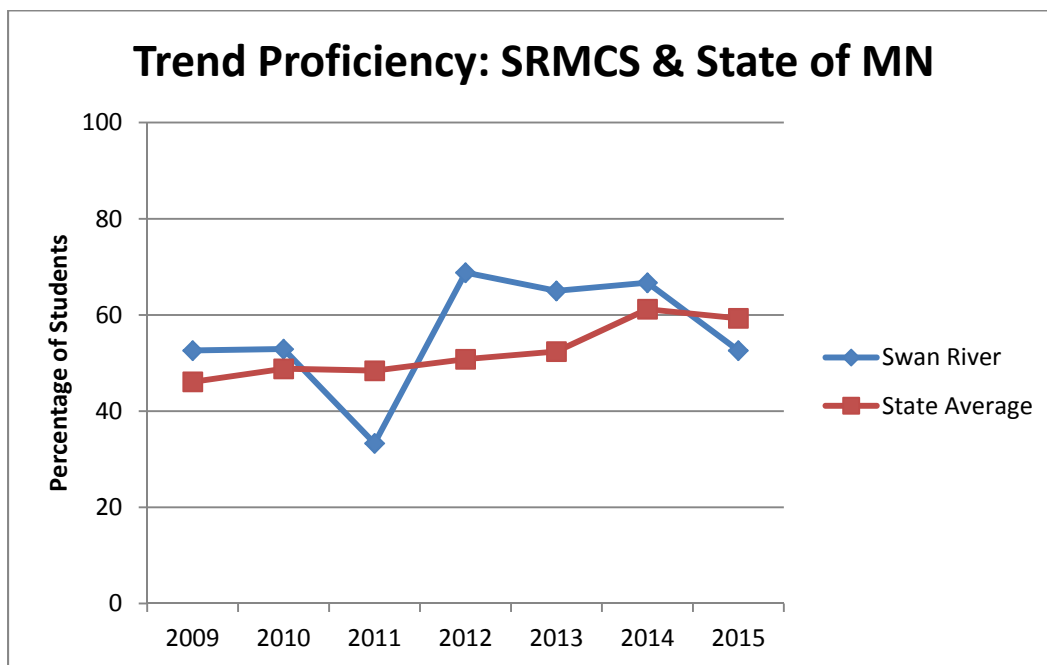
Special Education, but struggle comprehending mathematical concepts and the application of those concepts. The team decided to implement the following strategies for 2015-16:

1. Daily additional math problems, particularly word problems, are to be completed by every student on top of all other classroom work.
2. Additional math homework will be sent home every Monday-Thursday.
3. Additional practice time will be required using Pearson Access both at home and during technology classes at school.
4. Increased use of AIMSweb assessments. In 2013-14 we only used the Mathematical Concepts and Applications assessment. In 2014-15 the Math Computation assessment was added to better monitor student progress.
5. Increased help offered to students during the day via the Classroom Assistant. Typical duties during the day have been slightly shifted to allow for more 1:1 time with students who need it.

**Indicator 7: Science Proficiency ~ MCA III**

By Spring 2015, 67% of all students in grade 5 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in science as measured by annual MCA tests.	<b>52.6% = APPROACHING</b>
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The data below shows the percent of tested students who meet or exceed achievement standards set by State of Minnesota educators. The proficiency trends show results over time for reading. The goal for Minnesota, and specifically SRMCS students, is 100% proficiency in each subject area.



With the exception of 2011, SRMCS has historically scored above Minnesota state averages in science. Unfortunately, like in the other subject areas, our 5<sup>th</sup> graders struggled as a whole bringing our proficiency percentage down in 2015. It is a group of students that coincidentally have various increased needs. Many are on IEPs and 504 Plans while others are dealing with difficult parent/home situations. Given the specific make up of this group, Swan River really is proud of their scores despite not meeting our goal of 67% proficiency for the year.

Generally, Montessori is very strong in its science curriculum, specifically in physical and earth science, biology, and botany. Many of our teachers are trained in the S.T.E.M. Program (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). Our students have greatly benefited from this additional training in the classroom not just regarding test scores, but, more importantly, for hands-on experiences not typically associated with the Montessori Method. The benefits have been so profound that we have sent three lead teachers to receive the same STEM training at the College of Saint Catherine. Completion of this 18 month program will occur in winter of 2015.

## And the award goes to...

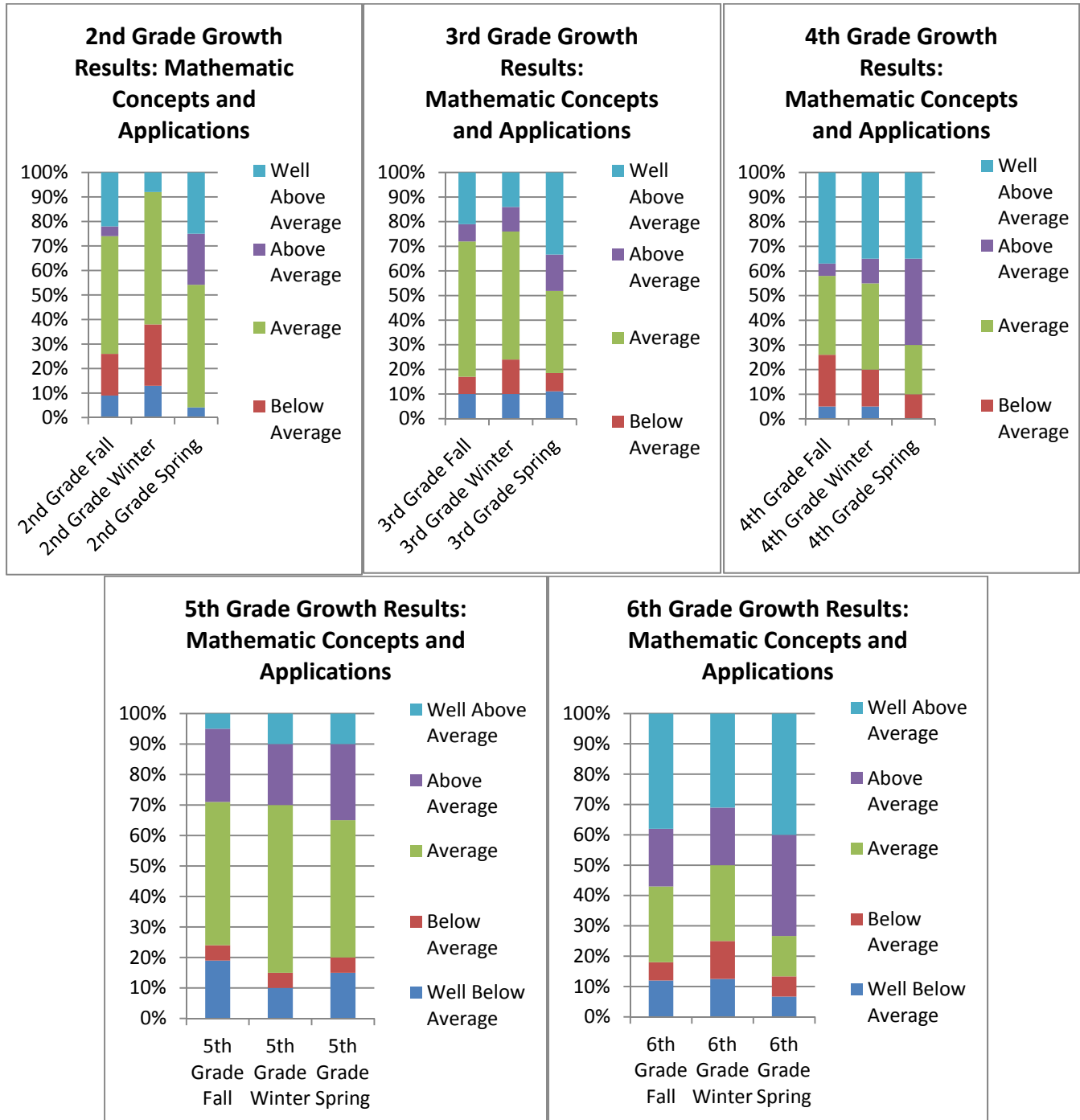


Swan River Montessori was presented an award “for ensuring individual student due process records meet or exceed requirements and are reflective if the dedication of the administration, school, staff, and community” by Dr. Brenda Cassellius, MN Commissioner of Education. This success was largely due to Ms. Jessica Frederiksen, our lead special education teacher, who worked tirelessly on Swan River’s self-monitoring in FY15.

## Indicator 8: Proficiency in Other Curricular Areas

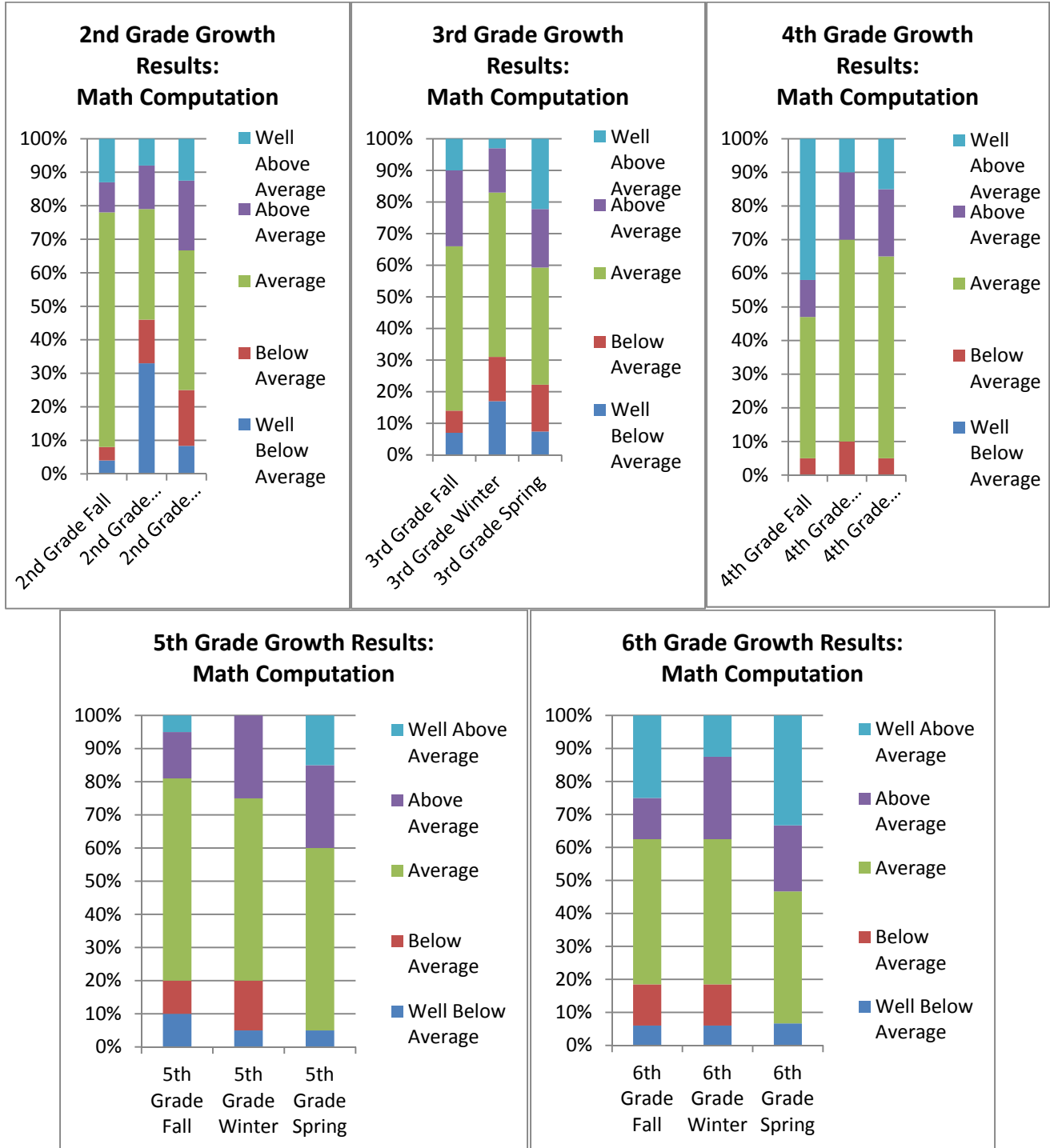
### AIMSweb: Mathematic Concepts and Applications

The data provided below provides additional math assessment data in two categories: mathematic concepts and applications as well as mathematical computation. The data is as follows:



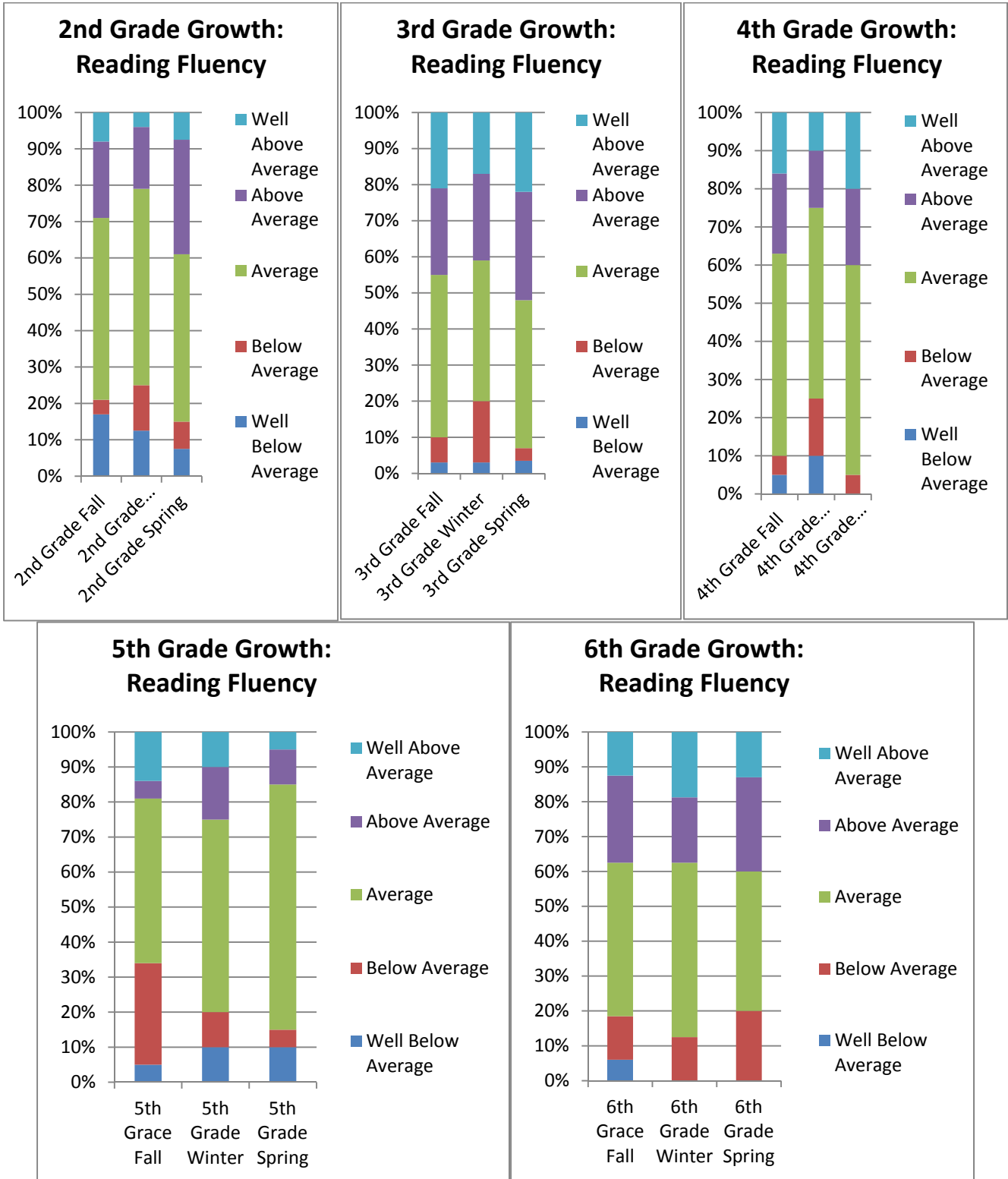


## AIMSWeb: Math Computation

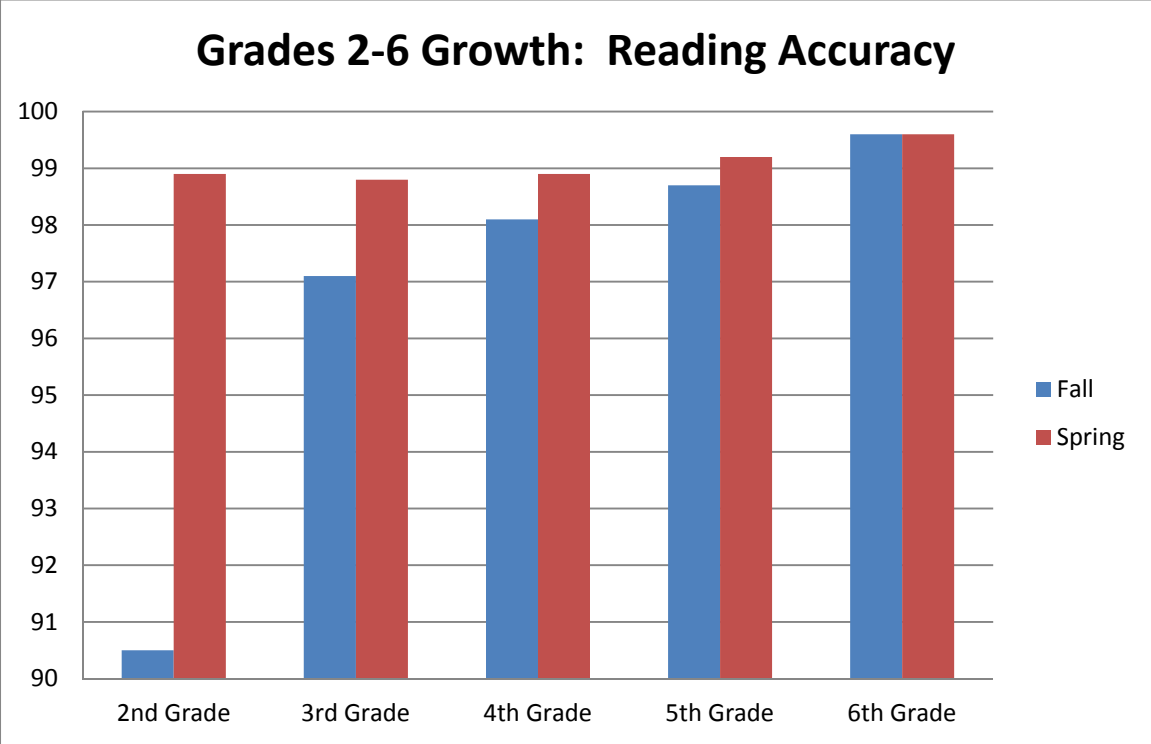


Overall, the AIMSWeb math results are very positive. There were some dips in scores during the winter assessment, but the staff felt that this was because it was given prior to winter break. In the future, the winter round will be done in January after winter break has concluded.

## AIMSweb: Reading Fluency

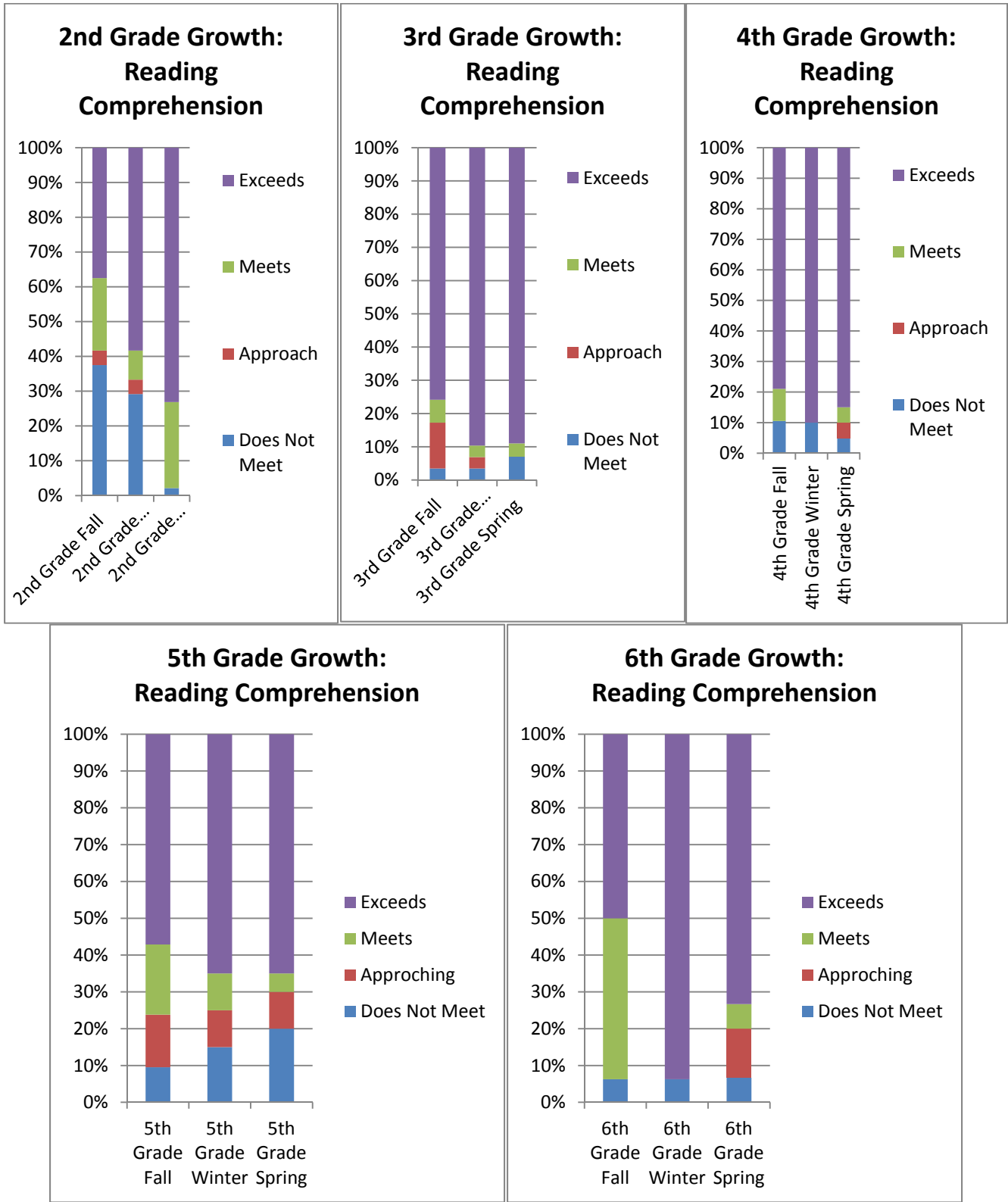


The results of these assessments were close to what we expected. While we know that our students are, overall, very good at comprehending what they read, there are a number of students who need support with fluency. To become more fluent in reading, one must simply practice, especially out loud. This sparked the idea of increasing the number of volunteers coming into the classroom to just sit and listen to students read a book of choice. We find that fluency comes much easier when the child is interested in the book s/he is reading hence the choice. It's been a priceless addition to our classrooms!



Wow! These results are fantastic! Please note that the vertical axis range is 90%-100%. This means all of our 2<sup>nd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students are reading with a minimum of 98%+ accuracy on average.

## Fountas and Pinnell: Reading Comprehension

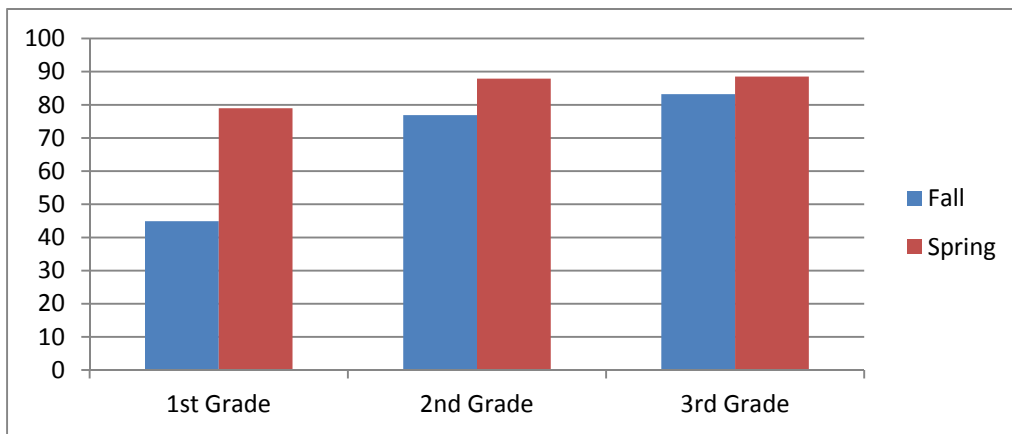


Another WOW! As Montessorians, we often see strength in reading skills due to the foundation built at a young age. Our goal is to encourage a love for reading for life. Despite some of the reading fluency results, we know that our students comprehend what they are reading very well and that is what matters in the end.

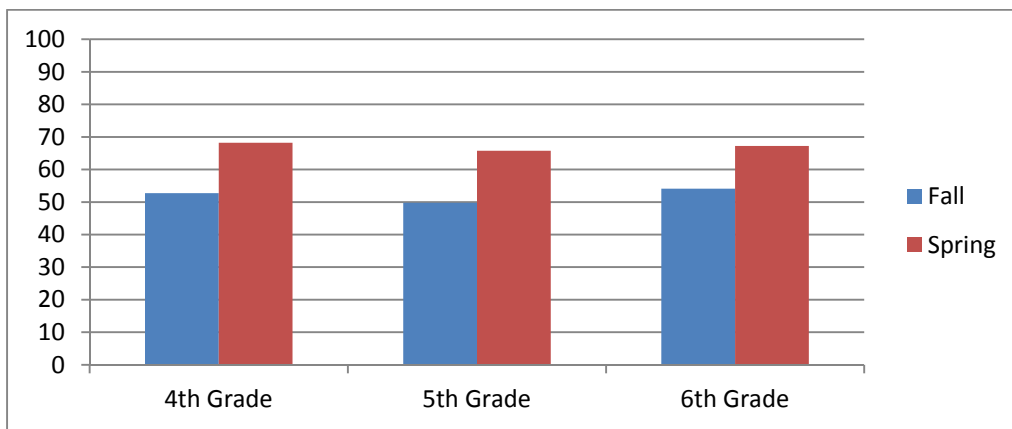
### Teacher-Developed Assessment: Writing

Writing is an essential component of any educational philosophy. Montessori is no different. However, in the past, our teachers typically have assessed writing growth through students' completed work and observation in the classroom. As a staff, we decided one area that we could strengthen as a school is monitoring writing skills more closely. In 2013-14, the lead teachers for each level (E1 & E2) worked together to formulate a writing rubric to better assess skill growth. Some areas include use of ideas, voice, organization, sentence fluency, grammar, punctuation, spelling and overall legibility of handwriting. After use for one year, the teachers fine-tuned the rubric which was then used in 2014-15. All students in grades 1-6 were assessed both in the fall and spring. The results are as follows in percentages:

➤ **Elementary 1 (1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade):**



➤ **Elementary 2 (4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade):**



**Indicator 9: Post-Secondary Readiness**

Being an elementary school, post-secondary education is years away for our students. However, any educator would agree that the foundation for all learning and, therefore, post-secondary readiness begins in the home from birth and continues later with preschool programs and elementary schools. Swan River readies its students by creating a love for learning, by focusing on critical-thinking skills versus just the memorization of facts, and supporting the WHOLE child in his/her educational experience, including social, emotional, and physical growth.

**Indicator 10: Federal & State Accountability**

<b>MULTIPLE MEASUREMENTS RATING</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2013-14</b>
<b>Proficiency</b>	20.33	12.54
Weighted Percentage of Subgroups Reaching Targets	81.3%	50.1%
<b>Growth</b>	16.55	7.55
Average Growth Z-Score	0.1863	-0.1906
<b>Achievement Gap Reduction</b>	22.17	7.41
Achievement Gap Reduction Score	-0.3147	0.3289
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	59.06	63.13
Possible Points	75	75
<b>Multiple Measurements Rating (MMR) is 78.74%</b>		42.09%

<b>FOCUS RATING</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2013-14</b>
<b>Achievement Gap Reduction</b>	22.17	7.41
Achievement Gap Reduction Score	-0.3147	0.3289
<b>Focused Proficiency</b>	25.00	12.50
Weighted Percentage of Subgroups Reaching Targets	100%	50.0%
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	47.17	54.19
Possible Points	50	100
<b>Focus Rating (FR) is 94.34%</b>		39.82

Based on the data above, SRMCS made great strides increasing both our Multiple Measurements Rating and Focus Rating from the previous school year. Our MMR increased by 36.65% while our FR increased by a whopping 54.52%! This is largely due to our increase in MCA test scores, closing our achievement gap by 14.76 points, and increasing our number of students considered “On Track for Success” in both reading and math (data provided below). Our staff will continue to work on building on this upward trend.

<b>“On Track for Success” MATH</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
OVERALL	84.2%	54.2%	48.9%	<b>58.8%</b>
High Growth	38.7%	43.8%	25.6%	<b>41.2%</b>
Medium Growth	52.3%	33.4%	39.5%	<b>37.3%</b>
Low Growth	9.1%	22.9%	34.9%	<b>21.6%</b>
<b>“On Track for Success” READING</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
OVERALL	82.2%	63.2%	46.8%	<b>65.5%</b>
High Growth	60%	18.3%	28.8%	<b>42.3%</b>
Medium Growth	28.9%	51.0%	25.5%	<b>34.6%</b>
Low Growth	11.1%	30.6%	44.7%	<b>23.1%</b>

<b>Proficiency Rates in Percentages: MATH</b>						
	Swan River Montessori	State of MN	Local District	World Learners Montessori	New Discoveries Montessori	Bluffview Montessori
2012	84.0	61.3	69.8	58.5	24.5	59.6
2013	56.8	60.2	72.5	62.9	29.5	59.4
2014	53.1	61.4	74.4	54.1	42.2	63.3
<b>2015</b>	<b>67.9</b>	60.2	73.6	50.0	48.3	47.9

<b>Proficiency Rates in Percentages: READING</b>						
	Swan River Montessori	State of MN	Local District	World Learners Montessori	New Discoveries Montessori	Bluffview Montessori
2012	91.8	75.3	82.8	85.9	52.6	86.0
2013	66.2	57.6	66.1	68.4	43.2	69.2
2014	58.8	59.1	64.2	66.5	56.6	65.6
<b>2015</b>	<b>74.1</b>	59.5	68.1	66.4	65.9	60.5

<b>Proficiency Rates in Percentages: SCIENCE (5<sup>th</sup> Grade Only)</b>						
	Swan River Montessori	State of MN	Local District	World Learners Montessori	New Discoveries Montessori	Bluffview Montessori
2012	68.8	50.8	62.7	58.7	21.7	61.9
2013	65.0	52.4	65.9	63.0	40.9	45.5
2014	66.7	61.2	63.0	59.2	50.0	61.1
<b>2015</b>	<b>52.6</b>	59.3	64.2	58.9	43.5	59.5

## Indicator 11: Attendance

By Spring 2015, 50% of all fifth grade students will continue their enrollment for sixth grade at Swan River versus attending the local middle school.	<b>30% = APPROACHING</b>
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While we were very sad losing a number of our potential 6<sup>th</sup> grade students for this year, we certainly understand the desire to start a child the first year of middle school versus entering in 7<sup>th</sup> grade – the primary reason for the decrease in enrollment. In 2014-15, only four of the twenty stayed for 6<sup>th</sup> grade in 2015-16, but we continue to respect the choices of our families.

## Montessori & Formalized Assessments

To conclude these sections on academic performance, our teaching staff and administration are well aware of the disadvantage of not being hyper focused on testing. Over the years, we have increased the amount of test taking practice. However, we struggle with the need to be able to take a test while remaining as authentic to the Montessori Method, which places little emphasis on testing as it only represents a small piece of what a child truly knows. We recognize that testing has its place in education and in the world and we, of course, want our students to be prepared for those situations. SRMCS will continue to do its best balancing the expectations of the State of Minnesota and the Department of Education with our philosophy of education and our beliefs on assessment, including its relevance to the development of the whole child.

## Additional World's Best Workforce Data

### Progress toward Closing the Gap

Response to Intervention: In an continued effort to help all of our students become proficient, a large majority of our staff members (teachers, classroom assistants, and program paraprofessionals) have received training in RTI aka Response to Intervention. RTI is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning needs. Every fall, all SRMCS students 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade are screened using both NWEA and AIMSweb assessments. Struggling learners are provided with various types of interventions to accelerate their rate of learning. These services are provided by a number of school personnel including general education teachers, special education teachers, and specialists.

Our staff knows that effective RTI implementation requires high-quality classroom instruction, ongoing assessment, tiered instruction (which is essentially what Montessori is ~ differentiated instruction), targeted interventions, and positive parent involvement.





Literacy Specialist: As part of our RTI implementation, SRMCS employs a full time Literacy Specialist, Julie Halvorson, to work individually with students who have been “flagged” or deemed “at risk” in a specific academic area, particularly reading though not exclusively. This is determined primarily by teacher observations as well as AIMSweb and NWEA assessment scores.

At any given time Ms. Halvorson has 10-15 students on her case load depending on the individual level of need. Specifically, in 2014-2015, Ms. Halvorson worked with 15 total students who met with her 3-4 times per week for approximately 20 minutes. Last spring, of her 15 students, 8 students tested “at grade level” and were able to graduate from the program. Two others moved out of our district. The remaining 5 children are still working with her and are making steady improvement.

We believe that this is excellent progress toward closing the gap. Not only did 15 students receive additional help, they made incredible gains and are now many are back on track with same-grade peers without any additional referrals.

MMR & FR: In addition, as the data showed above, SRMCS closed its achievement gap by 14.76 points from the previous school year. Both our MMR and FR ratings increased by 36.65% and 54.52% respectively. Swan River is very proud of this and views it as another huge success of the year.

### **Progress toward Ensuring Kindergarten Readiness**

Since SRMCS opened its doors in 2005, we have operated a private, fee-based Children’s House program. This program serves preschool students ages 3-6 and has been an integral part of SRMCS. It not only assists in “feeding” charter school enrollment, but it, more importantly, lays a critical foundation for learning with our Montessori students. Simply stated, Children’s House is the beginning of the Montessori journey providing all the initial lessons, which are built on in the years that follow.

According to Montessori child development, children ages 3-6 are in a “sponge-like” phase for learning; children simply absorb information around them unconsciously. Montessorians take advantage of this unique timeframe by introducing children to, what many people believe, are concepts far too difficult for this age group. Examples include introduction to phonograms, the Scientific Method, all four math operations, and even more abstract concepts such as fractions, if the child is ready. With introductions like these, it is obvious why this is beneficial as the child enters Montessori elementary or any other school of the family’s choosing.

Unfortunately, despite a child being enrolled with us for preschool, current charter law enforces a lottery system for enrollment into the charter kindergarten classrooms. There is no guaranteed entrance. This then leads to losing a number of our families after preschool because their child’s name/number was not pulled on lottery day. As sad as it is losing any family who wishes to continue with Montessori and Swan River, our staff can say with confidence that the child has received high-quality instruction that will prepare him/her for kindergarten no matter where that may be.

More specifically, when asked to align the Montessori curriculum with the MN Early Childhood Learning Standards (ECLS) it quickly became clear that our program meets or exceeds every progress indicator cited in each of the developmental areas listed. Below is a table offering a glimpse into ECLS standards versus what SRMCS Children’s House program uses for assessment. The full version is provided as Attachment 4.

MN EARLY LEARNING STANDARD CATEGORIES	MONTESSORI CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT ALIGNMENT EXAMPLES
Social and Emotional Development	Displays self confidence
	Accepts and follows routines
	Shows helpful behavior
	Is able to compromise
	Is a positive role model for peers
	Demonstrates a caring and/or concerned attitude towards others
	Emotional reactions are appropriate to the situation and age of the child
Approaches to Learning	Challenges oneself, Does not give up when challenged
	Stays attentive and respectful during lessons and circle times
	Will seek help when needed
	Takes pride in and completes work carefully
	Concentrates for age appropriate lengths of time
Language and Literacy Development	Is able to follow multi-step directions
	Speech is clear for child’s age
	Capable of retelling a story
	Knows letter sounds, Blends sounds
	Can write own name
Creativity and the Arts	Participates in musical activities
	Adds detail to product or activity
	Experiments with various forms of artistic media
	Shows curiosity about different people, places, and animals in our world
	Recognizes/matches/writes numbers 1-10
	Recognizes/matches/writes numbers 11-19
	Recognizes/matches/writes numbers 20-100
	Recognizes/matches/writes numbers beyond 100
	Can count out loud to 100 correctly
	Understands place value
Works with operations (+, -, x, /)	
Physical and Motor Development	Has energy to perform physical activities for varying amounts of time
	Can sit still and control body movements for an age appropriate amount of time
	Has age appropriate strength
	Has coordinated movements in walking, running, jumping, etc.

In addition, each fall prior to school starting, student transition meetings are held between the former and current teachers. A dialogue is held about the child's strengths and areas for development, academic abilities, social/emotional growth, relationships with parents, any special needs or accommodations, and anything else deemed important for the new teacher to know. These meetings have proven themselves to be very helpful in the transition of our students into their new classroom environments.

### **Progress toward “Reading Well by 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade”**

As with all schools, one of our top priorities is to ensure that all children have a strong foundation in reading, particularly by the time they reach upper elementary. As stated throughout this report, SRMCS implements a wide variety of differentiated instruction and support for each child enrolled. The staff is well trained, especially in Response to Intervention (RTI), in identifying areas of strengths and weaknesses as a student ages and develops. We understand that early intervention is key to the long term success for every child. According to Susan Hall, Learning Disability Specialist:

- 90% of children with reading difficulties will achieve grade level in reading if they receive help by the 1<sup>st</sup> grade.
- 75% of children whose help is delayed to age 9 or later continue to struggle throughout their school careers.
- If help is given in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, rather than in late kindergarten, it takes 4 times as long to improve the same skills by the same amount.

How do we support our students so they are reading well by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade?

1. Employment of a Literacy Specialist to work individually with students deemed at risk
2. Providing a classroom assistant in each general education classroom to provide more 1:1 and small group attention.
3. Modifying classroom curriculum and instruction as necessary
4. Regular teacher meetings focusing on instructional improvement
5. Encouraging parent involvement in each child's progress
6. Consistent use of assessments (NWEA, AIMSweb, and Fountas & Pinnell) to monitor growth
7. Increasing professional knowledge via continuing education opportunities. Examples include:

- Work Sample Assessment Training
- Tier 2 Intervention Strategies with Chris Hagedorn
- Late, Lost and Unprepared with Laurie Dietzel
- Writing with Excellence Implementation Training

### **National Association of Education**

SRMCS is not an active participant.



*The Quist Sisters*

# Educational Effectiveness: Assessment and Evaluation of Students, Teachers, School Leaders, Curriculum & Instruction

## Assessment and Evaluation of Students

Montessori education recognizes that tests represent only a small portion of what a child truly knows. Instead, teachers rely largely on student work and in-class observations to assess his/her students. It is very common (and encouraged) for a Montessori teacher to take time out of his/her day to sit quietly and observe the classroom community. The purpose of this is to monitor students while they use the materials, taking note if the child is showing mastery and is ready to move forward, needs more time with a particular material, or needs a refresher/repeat lesson.

Observations also allow the teacher to see if movement in the room is purposeful, if partnered students are working well together, if students are making appropriate work choices, and to ensure work time is being used effectively.

As mandated by the State of Minnesota, all students 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade participate in MCA testing as well as NWEA testing each fall and spring. This was also the second year that we utilized AIMSweb and Fountas & Pinnell to assess for reading comprehension, fluency, computation, and mathematical concepts. This is done three times per year in fall, winter, and spring. Some teachers also utilize the Read Naturally Reading Program to complete more informal progress monitoring.

## SRMCS 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduates of 2015!



## **The School Process to Review & Evaluate the Effectiveness of Instruction & Curriculum**

Beyond formal assessments, the staff of SRMCS is very diligent about creating, progressing, and reporting on the growth of the WHOLE child – cognitive, social/emotional, and physical. While we do not use a standard grading system as most traditional schools use, we do complete progress reports multiple times per year. We also meet on an ongoing basis regarding school-wide goals, assessment outcomes, and the strengths/weaknesses of the curriculum and instruction we provide.

The general process to review and evaluate instructional and curriculum effectiveness is as follows:

1. Meeting is called with all lead teaching staff members and administration.
2. An area or skill is isolated for discussion and review.
3. If the curriculum receives positive feedback, we continue its usage.
4. If the curriculum receives poor feedback:
  - a. Discussion is held as to why it was ineffective.
  - b. Curriculum/instructional gaps are identified.
  - c. The group brainstorms alternative options.
  - d. Specific individuals are charged with continued research of selected alternatives.
  - e. Individuals then report their findings to the lead teacher group.
  - f. A decision is made to either begin the new curriculum or if further research must be conducted.
5. A minimum of one follow up meeting is held to determine progress.

## **Strategies for Improving Instruction, Curriculum & Student Achievement**

The Montessori Method: The beauty of a Montessori education is that modification and individualization is a natural occurrence in every child’s learning journey. If a child is struggling with a certain concept or skill, there are a number of ways the teacher can modify the material to better suit that child’s style of learning. Sometimes just changing the material used in class leads to it “clicking” with the student. In addition, with the child and teacher being together for three full years, the adults understand what a particular child may or may not need to succeed. There is an incredible amount of freedom to alter the curriculum and instruction as necessary to support student achievement in all areas of development.

Professional Development: Ongoing professional development is of utmost importance to Swan River Montessori. We continually encourage staff to seek out continued education and, when deemed appropriate, the school may pay the full or a partial amount to cover attendance costs. For example, in FY14, the School Board voted to pay tuition costs for three lead teachers to attend STEM training at the College of St. Catherine. They continue to support making these payments into FY15. The special education teachers are sent to multiple workshops/conferences each year in an effort to stay abreast of all current practices, laws, and curriculum.



**Mr. Aaron and Ms. Nicole spend time in their Montessori STEM mathematics course at the College of St. Catherine**

The SRMCS administration guarantees a minimum of 16 continuing education hours/credits are offered on site throughout the school year. All professional development offered focuses increasing our knowledge and improving our practices. Some of these CEU sessions include:

- 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Pacer Symposium: Children & Young Adults with Mental & Learning Disabilities
- Social Work in the School Setting with Katie Laird, Licensed School Social Worker
- Investigating Sensory Processing with Karmyn Larson, OTR/L Pediatric Therapist
- 10 Brain-Based Strategies to Help Children Handle Their Emotions with Tina Bryson, Ph.D.

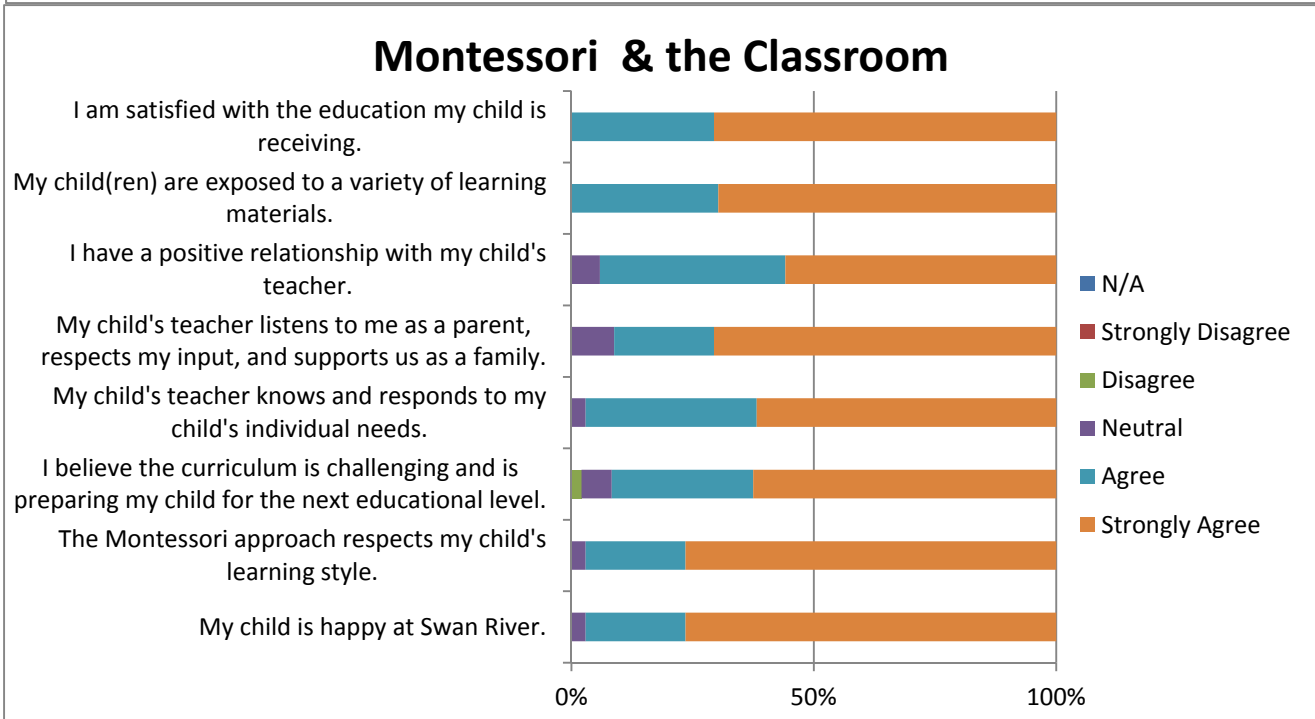
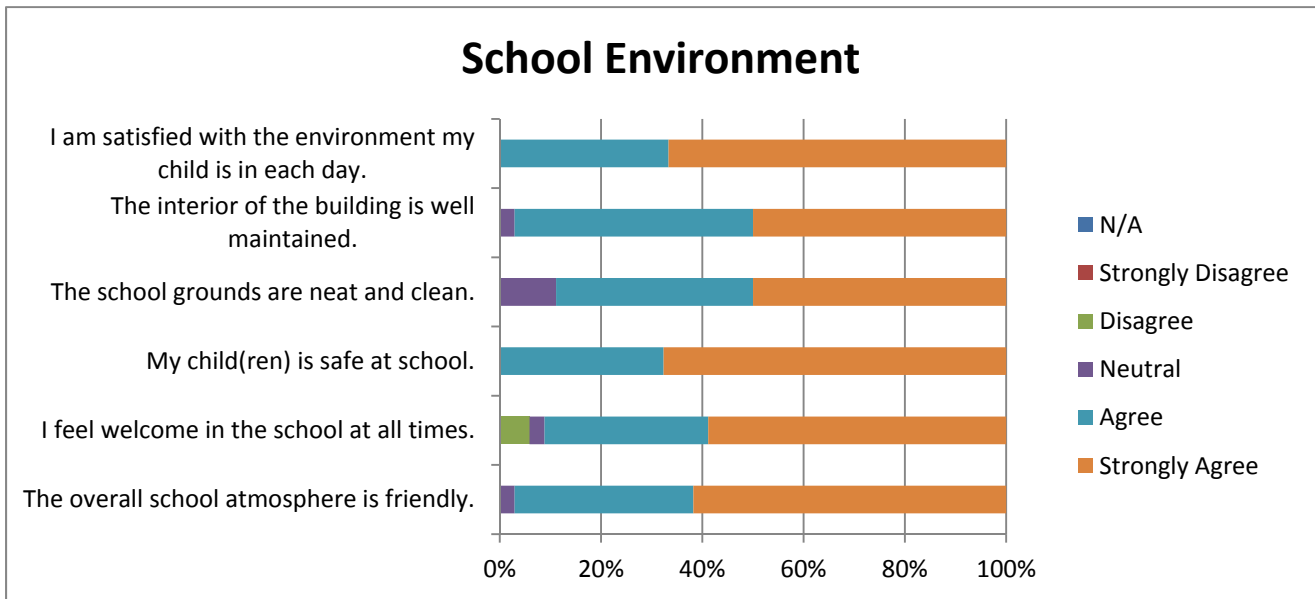
### **Education Effectiveness Practices**

As stated previously, the staff of SRMCS is dedicated to providing a high-quality Montessori education to every student every day. We are always looking to improve our means of instruction while staying as authentic to the Montessori philosophy as we can. There are a number of ways we measure the educational effectiveness on an ongoing basis:

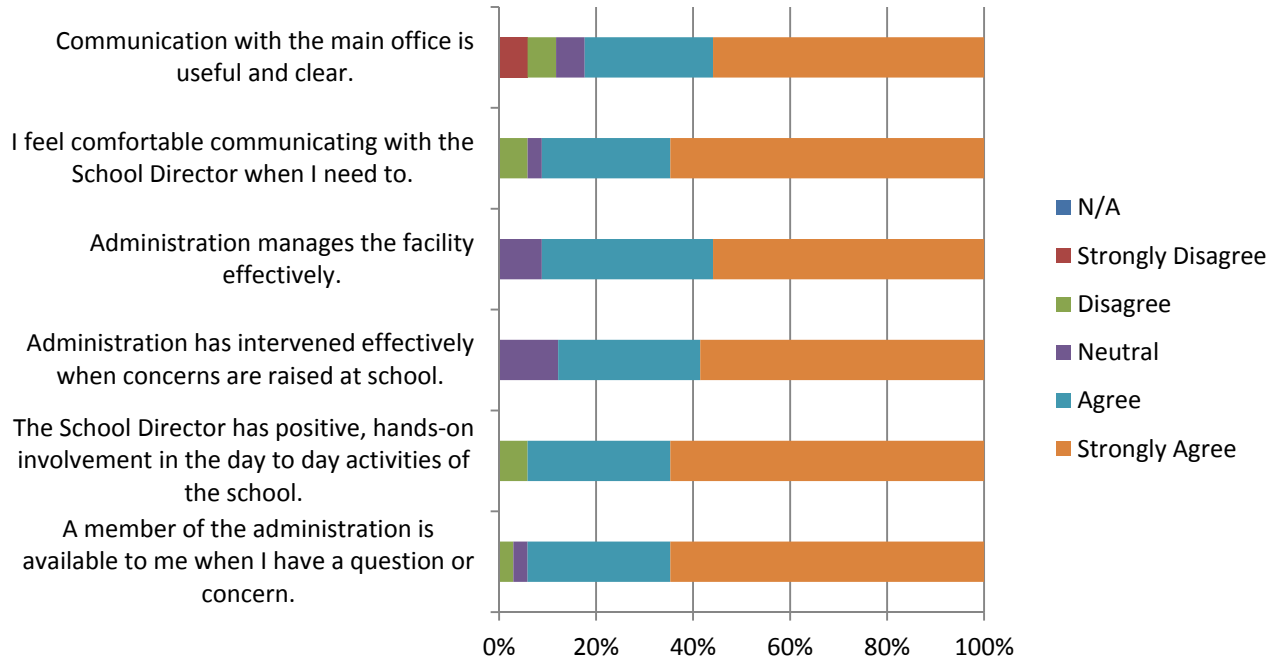
- Regularly held teacher meetings reviewing current curriculum.
- Ongoing research by teachers on potential new types of curriculum to implement.
- Provision of a minimum of 16 continuing education hours for all staff annually.
- Potential monetary support for staff to attend external workshops/conferences/seminars.
- Staying updated on school law, academic standards, and aligning the Montessori sequence of curriculum to those standards.
- Integration of educational technology, when appropriate.
- Annual performance evaluation of all staff members.
- Annual peer observation of all lead teachers.
- Weekly student observations by lead classroom teacher.
- Regular grade level team meetings.
- Expecting high standards of conduct for all students and employees as stated in the Student/Parent Handbook and Employee Handbook.

# Parent Satisfaction

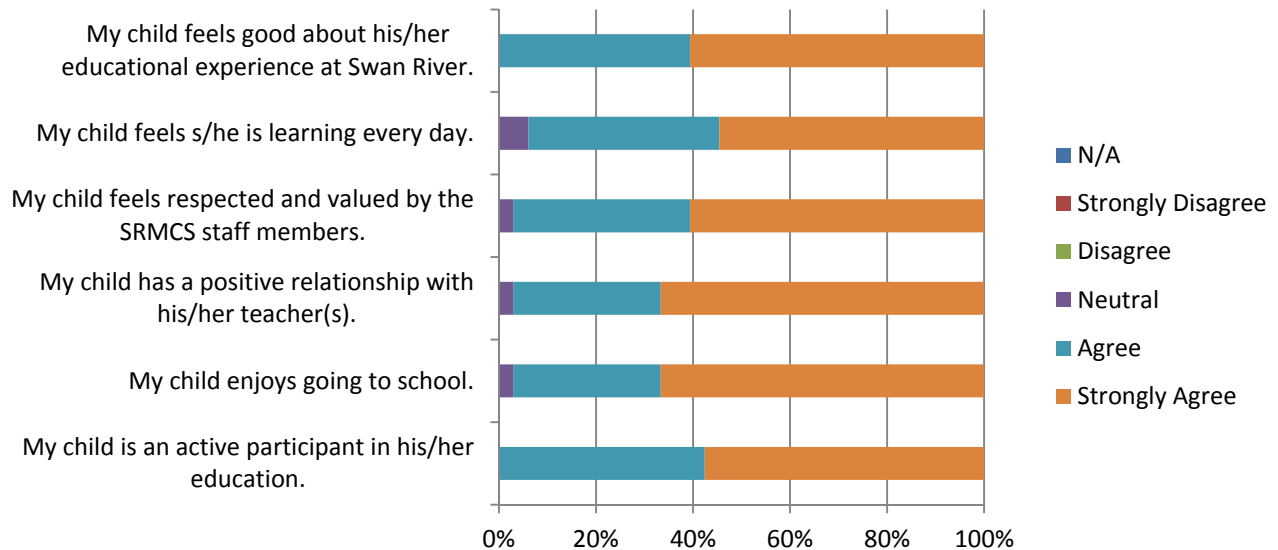
The charts below represent key data points that best represent the level of satisfaction felt by SRMCS families. As you will see, from the number of parents who completed the Family Survey in spring of 2015, high percentages prove a strong sense of overall satisfaction. This can be said not only about Swan River in general, but also specifically relating to such areas as child safety and happiness, administrative effectiveness, and the Montessori approach to education.



## Administration & the School Board



## Student Involvement





# Student Satisfaction



# Environmental Education

The mission of Swan River Montessori Charter School's authorizer, the Audubon Center of the North Woods, is to "instill a connection and commitment to the environment in people of all communities through experiential learning."

As part of our contract with our authorizer, we have agreed to the following environmental education goal:

"Staff, students and parents at Swan River Montessori Charter School will increase their environmental literacy, and develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to support a sustainable, healthy environment."



**These E-2 students are super excited for their annual trip to Audubon Center of the North Woods!**

The Audubon Center of the North Woods defines environmental education as the implementation of values and strategies that foster learning and create environmentally literate citizens who engage in creating healthy outcomes for individuals, communities, and the earth. Environmental literacy is the knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivation, and commitment to work individually and collectively toward sustaining a healthy, natural, and social environment. To meet the above goal, Swan River Montessori Charter School has agreed to provide opportunities to instill a connection and commitment to the environment through experiential learning.

The following are specific indicator areas which outline various activities, events, goals, and accomplishments of SRMCS in FY15:

## Indicator Area 1: EE-based Curriculum Components

➤ **In what ways does the school integrate environmental education into its academic program?**

1. **Environmental Education Teacher** - Beginning in 2013-14, SRMCS hired an Environmental Education Teacher, Mr. Bill Anderson. He meets with each classroom (K-6<sup>th</sup> grade) one time per week for 30 minutes. He teaches to all things related to care of the environment, but particularly the need for this care.

2. **Community Clean Up** - Environmental education is naturally integrated in Montessori education beyond just the teaching of science. One of our greatest focuses throughout all grade levels, including Children's House (Pre-K), is care of the environment, both indoor and outdoor. Some examples include our annual Community Clean Up where students clean up the SRMCS outdoor grounds as well as neighboring areas throughout the school year as needed. We reside along old railroad tracks which is unfortunately an ongoing "dumping ground" by others in the community. Our students work every year to clean up this litter.
3. **Composting** - For many years, our school has run a compost for leftover food from lunch and snacks. This year, Swan River received a generous donation from ACNW to purchase second extra-large tumbling compost as having only one was not allowing timely composting. This is used by all classrooms and is cared for by our older E2 students.
4. **School Gardens Project** - Each year, every classroom takes on a part of the school gardens project. Students are given ample opportunities to plant, maintain, and harvest various plants, particularly vegetables, which are then used for cooking projects and eaten as daily snacks.
5. **Recycling** - SRMCS are avid recyclers. We have bins in every room in the building which are used daily. E2 students are responsible for emptying these bins at the end of every day.

➤ **Are EE values and strategies present in disciplines other than science? If so, in what ways?**



Beyond everything listed above, our teachers continually assist our students with conservation - saving electricity, diminishing water and food waste, using less paper, etc. With regard to academics, Montessori education does a beautiful job intertwining subject areas. One perfect example is the Study of Biomes. Students learn about the various biomes on earth then solidify what they have learned by creating a biome book. This involves art (illustrating), language (vocabulary), writing, and, of course, environmental education/science. Other specific examples that are conducted annually are listed below.

➤ **A list of specific examples that demonstrate EE integration in science and other discipline areas.**

- E-1 (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade) students found letters of the alphabet around the school grounds (letter recognition, grammar)
- Lesson on Ojibway names for full moons and meaning behind those names (culture)

- Lessons on average temps/percipation/sunrises/sunsets and used that information to find mean/mode/medium (math)
- Journaling (writing)
- Created posters about recycling (art)
- Water conservation (math – particularly volume)
- School Gardens Project (biology)
- School-wide Composting (science)
- “Protect the Earth” book written and illustrated by all Swan River kindergarten students

**Indicator Area 2: Field Trips to Natural Areas**

- **Description of how the school engages in nature-related outdoor experiences at least twice per school year.**

**Field Trip 1:** In September of 2014, all pre-k and kindergarten students attended Apple Jack Orchards in Delano, MN.

- **In what way(s) did the field trip provide a learning experience about the environment in which the trip took place?** While on this trip, all students learned about the pollination process, parts of apples and pumpkins, and took a wagon ride through the large orchard where they learned about various kinds of apple trees.
- **In what way(s) did the field trip supplement in-classroom learning activities?** Each fall, pre-k and kindergarten students learn about the outdoor environment and how the changes that occur from summer to fall. They also learn about parts of various plants, what is needed for plants to grow, and what part people play in the growth (or non-growth) of plants.
- **Was this field trip related to classroom learning or standards? If so, how?**
  - Kindergarten standards covered: 0.1.2.1.1 & 0.4.1.1.1-3 & 0.4.2.1.1



YET ANOTHER FIELD TRIP OPPORTUNITY OUR CHILDREN'S HOUSE STUDENTS HAD WAS TRIP TO A LOCALLY OWNED & OPERATED GARDEN CENTER IN MONTICELLO. STUDENTS LEARNED ALL THE BEHIND-THE-SCENES WORK IT TAKES TO GROW A VAST AMOUNT OF FLOWERS AND PLANTS TO HELP BEAUTIFY OUR EARTH.

**Field Trip 2:** In February of 2015, all students in grades 4-6 visited the Audubon Center on an overnight trip. Students participated in such activities as rock climbing, quill sewing, cross country skiing, native birds and bird tagging, and various team challenges.

- **In what way(s) did the field trip provide a learning experience about the environment in which the trip took place?** Students had the opportunity to cross country ski as well as rock climbing. These are activities, particularly cross country skiing (especially in a forest), that any of our students would not have the opportunity of participating in if not for this trip. Of particular interest, was their study of birds. Groups learned about various types of birds in the Sandstone area, their migration patterns, and tagging.
- **In what way(s) did the field trip supplement in-classroom learning activities?** The team building activities really helped solidify relationships that have now been sustained over the school year. In Montessori, we refer to this as "normalization" and the use of grace and courtesy. We emphasize these things every single day at school.
- **Was this field trip related to classroom learning or standards? If so, how?** After learning about migration at Audubon, Mr. Bill, our EE teacher, introduced further activities back at school. He took it a bit further engaging students about the difference between migration and hibernation, discussed a variety of other animals that do one or the other, and the differences in the biomes these animals are part of at various times of the year.

**Field Trip 3:** In May of 2015, all students in grades 1-3 participated in a bird watching walk in the community.



Swan River 3<sup>rd</sup> graders sit alongside the Mississippi River to observe all they can about the environment, particularly our bird friends in the sky.

- **In what way(s) did the field trip provide a learning experience about the environment in which the trip took place?** Students began this bird study in their classrooms, including lessons on the parts and life cycle of a bird, animal classification, natural habitats, and so forth.

- **In what way(s) did the field trip supplement in-classroom learning activities?** Students took their acquired knowledge and put it to use it outdoors where it is most relevant. It was great to see the connection between the classroom and the surrounding outdoors.

- **Was this field trip related to classroom learning or standards? If so, how?**

- 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade standards covered:  
1.1.1.1.1 & 1.1.1.1.2 & 1.1.3.1.1 & 1.4.2.1.2 & 1.4.3.1.1 & 1.4.3.1.2 & 3.1.1.1.1 & 3.1.1.2.1 & 3.4.1.1.2

### Indicator Area 3: Promote Environmental Stewardship

- **Examples of how the students and faculty engaged in activities that promote environmental stewardship at home and in their community during 2014-15.**

**Activity 1: Earth Day Tree Plantings** - In April 2015, the City of Monticello donated 150 saplings to all of our students who take them home and are encouraged to plant them at home, at their cabins or somewhere else that is appropriate

**Activity 2: S.E.A.S.T.A.R. Virtual Field Trip Program** – In the spring of 2015, all E2 students participated in a live presentation sponsored by the Florida Oceanographic Society (FOS). The S.E.A.S.T.A.R. Virtual Field Trip Program presented “Turtle Tracks,” a live interactive experience focusing on sea turtle biology and conservation. This was a one hour program that included extensive back and forth interaction between Swan River students and the highly educated, trained Florida Oceanographic staff.



The turtles within the FOS environment are non-releasable turtles, many there due to injury from boating accidents or even garbage dumped into the turtle’s habitat. We were also introduced to Lily, a Loggerhead turtle injured from a boat. Like the Audubon, the FOS cares for and enriches the lives of these non-releasable turtles, adopting them and making them ‘one of the family.’

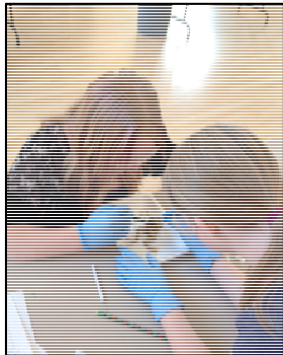
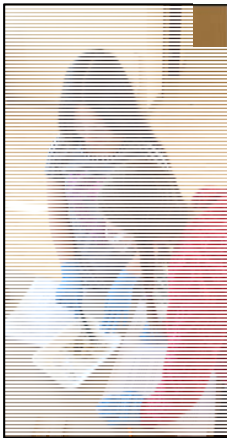
- **How do these stewardship activities increase the environmental literacy of the targeted audience?** Hosted via Skype, our students were able to learn about sea turtle nesting patterns, diet, and life cycle and even view real behavior. Students were made aware of the dwindling numbers of some sea turtles, causes of these falling numbers and what needs to be done to turn around current trends.

### Indicator Areas 4 & 5: EE Elective Trend Areas

- **Elective trend area(s) and specific activities within those areas in which SRMCS participates:**
  - **Operations and Finance:** Over the course of FY15, SRMCS has moved forward with a secondary building expansion. Across the street of our main school building, this new building will be home to a brand new environmental education classroom! It includes multiple lab areas and overlooks the back yard where there are native grasses and other plant life.

- **EE-Trained Teachers/Experts:** SRMCS hired an EE teacher who meets with each classroom once per week for 30 minutes.
- **Waste Reduction:**
  - **Composting** - Any allowable food that is not eaten is composted. E2 students visit each classroom in the fall to present how and why we choose to compost. They learn what foods can be composted and which can't. Students also learn about portion size so they are not taking too much food which leads to waste.
  - **Paper Consumption** – In an effort to reduce paper usage, Swan River makes every attempt to send out information via email and/or place information on our website.
  - **Recycling** – As mentioned above, all students and staff are dedicated to recycling each and every day. This includes, paper, aluminum, plastic, and cardboard.

## E-2 Frog Dissection



### Indicator Area 6: Commitment

- **Examples of our commitment to EE in its financial and operational decision-making.**
  - School budgeted to hire a part time EE teacher.
  - Almost all documents/letters/memos/etc. from the main office are sent out electronically. No hard copies are distributed unless absolutely necessary and/or the family requests it.
  - SRMCS is in a year-long fundraising drive to furnish our new building going up across the street. To date, we have raised just over \$16,000.
  - The school purchases all materials needed to maintain the outdoor gardens.
  - We purchase energy efficient equipment/technology whenever it is possible.

- The school has paid for our EE teacher to attend various webinars, workshops, etc. about environmental education. He also went with the 4-6<sup>th</sup> graders to ACNW as the EE teacher with the goal to learn more about Audubon and get ideas for lessons/activities.
- School purchased the cold food buffet to offer a greater variety of fruits and vegetables in an effort to reduce food waste.
- School budgets for the students to attend ACNW annually. It also budgets for at least three board members to attend the Leader's Retreat each November.
- The school created an EE Committee. These staff members meet monthly to discuss areas where we can improve our commitment to EE. This is paid time for those staff which the school budgets for.



- **How does Swan River use its resources to carry out EE mission match activities?** In FY15, we applied and were awarded \$400+ from ACNW to purchase a second compost tumbler for the whole school to use. SRMCS had used its EE mission match grant for a purchase of one tumbler in FY14, but over the course of the year we quickly discovered that to keep up the timing that composting requires, a second tumbler would be needed so we could be a rotation process.

### **Indicator Area 7: Environmental Literacy**

- **Are students knowledgeable about the environment, and have the capacity and commitment to engage in inquiry, problem solving, decision-making, and action to foster environmental sustainability?**
  - **Description of Swan River's approach to environmental education.** EE is a core component to Montessori education. SRMCS takes this very seriously. We do our best to teach and model what Montessori calls "care of the environment" as well as "care of self." Our priorities are:
    - 1) the safety of the students and staff,
    - 2) providing authentic Montessori education, and
    - 3) doing our part in caring for ourselves, others, and our environment.
  - **Successes and challenges related to environmental education.**
    - **Successes:**
      - A school board that continues to support the hiring of an EE teacher.
      - Staff who believe in EE and model daily for our students.



- Finding ways to educate our staff to further our EE efforts (e.g. Mr. Bill Anderson attends all EE-related retreats at ACNW).
- Involving our parents as volunteers to further our EE efforts (e.g. a family brought their Bob Cat in to assist the school with landscaping).
- **Challenges:**
  - Finding continuing education opportunities for our staff. They are becoming increasingly hard to find and many that we have found are costly.
  - Keeping EE content fresh, particularly for our older students. Much of the topics discussed in EE do become somewhat repetitive and, at times, mundane. Mr. Bill does his very best to bring in new ideas for presenting topics year to year.
- **How EE activities have impacted students' environmental literacy.** Due to our extensive focus on educating our students about the environment, we have observed a higher level of understanding about the footprints we are leaving on the earth. One specific example was teaching our children about the causes of global warming and ways people can lower their carbon output. Our students are also much more conscientious of food waste because of our changes in the lunch program as well as our efforts to compost properly. Studying the fundamental needs of animals, plants, and human begins with our youngest of students in Children's House and continues through 6<sup>th</sup> grade.



- **Future plans to increase environmental literacy.** Swan River is continually looking for ways to increase our understanding of the environment and to decrease the footprint we leave behind for future generations. Our plan is to continue to employ a part-time EE teacher, we will seek additional professional development opportunities from outside sources, and we will continue to plan enriching experiences for our students in the form of field trips and classroom projects. We also plan on partnering the school's Environmental Education Committee with our Parent/Teacher Organization to take on larger-scale activities such as all-school clean-up days, landscaping, gardening projects, and so forth.

# Governance and Management

## Current SRMCS Board of Directors

Name	Term(s) on Board	Board Position	Email	Phone #	Affiliation
Stacie Woods	03/06-06/14	Board Chair	<a href="mailto:woods.monticello@yahoo.com">woods.monticello@yahoo.com</a>	763.2958565	Community Member
Josetta Zetah	07/09-06/15	Treasurer	<a href="mailto:z2money@yahoo.com">z2money@yahoo.com</a>	763.295.8500	Parent
Alison Krueger	07/10-06/16	Secretary	<a href="mailto:ladylibertas@charter.net">ladylibertas@charter.net</a>	763.263.9027	Community Member
Alisha Brandon	12/13-06/17	Member	<a href="mailto:Alishab.swanriver@tds.net">Alishab.swanriver@tds.net</a>	612.636.1288	Licensed Teacher
William Anderson	08/14-06/15 Bd. Apt.	Member	<a href="mailto:Billa.swanriver@tds.net">Billa.swanriver@tds.net</a>	763.355.7807	Licensed Teacher
Nicole Perez	07/11-06/14	Member	<a href="mailto:nicole.p@tds.net">nicole.p@tds.net</a>	763.503.3896	Licensed Teacher
Beth Metzger	07/13-06/16	Member	<a href="mailto:bgyllenberg@yahoo.com">bgyllenberg@yahoo.com</a>	612.710.6297	Parent

\*\*NOTE: All members listed are unrelated to each other.

## Ex-Officios

Name	Term(s) on Board	Board Position at End of Term	Email	Phone #	Affiliation
Jean McGorry	07/10-06/16	Member	<a href="mailto:themcgorrys@charter.net">themcgorrys@charter.net</a>	763.263.5015	Licensed Teacher
Jena Ketchum	07/12-06/15	Member	<a href="mailto:marcusandjena@gmail.com">marcusandjena@gmail.com</a>	763.439.3964	Parent
Katie Curtis	02/09-06/13	Secretary	<a href="mailto:katiec.swanriver@tds.net">katiec.swanriver@tds.net</a>	763.443.6212	Licensed Teacher
Barb May	07/10-06/13	Member	<a href="mailto:bmay@csbsju.edu">bmay@csbsju.edu</a>	763.258.0798	Parent

Nancy Erb	07/11-06/12	Member	<a href="mailto:minnesotakiddos@gmail.com">minnesotakiddos@gmail.com</a>	763.263.8106	Parent
Jen Schroeder	07/08-06/12	Member	<a href="mailto:kidletsrus@charter.net">kidletsrus@charter.net</a>	763.670.0639	Parent
Gene Eckstein	05/07-06/10	Member	Not available	Not available	Parent
Elizabeth Kyvig	12/05-06/11	Secretary	Not available	Not available	Licensed Teacher
Dorrie Koenig	03/06-06/09	Treasurer	Not available	Not available	Parent
Julie Kassulke	09/04-02/09	Member	Not available	Not available	Licensed Teacher
Kris Kuper	09/04-06/08	Secretary	Not available	Not available	Community Member
Michelle Twardy	09/04-05/07	Board Chair	Not available	Not available	Parent
Sandy Morrow	09/04-12/05	Member	Not available	Not available	Licensed Teacher
Isabelle Olson	09/04-02/06	Board Chair	Not available	Not available	Parent

\*\*NOTE: All members listed are unrelated to each other.

### **The Board of Directors: Governance**

The SRMCS Board of Directors strives to not only meet, but to exceed standards and expectations of typical school boards. Historically, attendance by members is very high each month and there is an absolute sense of commitment to SRMCS, its goals, and its overall performance. Each board member has maintained the required training each year and is always focused on how they can better serve the Swan River community.

The Board of Directors meets the third Thursday of each month, with the exception of July. Board packets are always distributed by the School Director approximately one week prior to the meeting so members have significant time to look over the material. This packet includes the monthly financial statements as provided by School Business Solutions, student enrollment data, donations given, and any new and old business that is up for discussion or review. Meeting agendas are posted on the doors of the school and placed on the school web site for public viewing. Meeting minutes are also put on the web site once approved by the Board. Approved policies, reports, and other related materials are also placed on the web site for the public to view at any time. All meetings are conducted according to Robert's Rules and are compliant with MN Open Meeting Law.

Our current Board of Directors consists of two community members, three SRMCS lead teachers, and two parents. The School Director is always present at the meeting each month as well. Stacie Woods has been President of the Board for seven years. She has offered consistency and stability to the Board for many years.

To help ensure effectiveness, the Board created the SRMCS Board Planning and Operations Calendar. This is essentially a “to do” list for each month of the year. Some examples of its contents include: policy review, budget revisions/approval, operational oversight, and contact for services renewal. It is updated as needed. To view this calendar in its entirety, please see Attachment 5.

### **Board of Directors Training Information**

SRMCS is very committed to continuing professional development, including those who are on the Board of Directors. Beginning in 2014, board training has been added as an agenda item 2-3 times per year to ensure all members are up to date with annual training and in compliance with charter school governance law.

<b>Board Member Name</b>	<b>Training Content Area</b>	<b>Training Date</b>	<b>Trainer/Presenter</b>
Stacie Woods	Governance and Personnel Matters	4-23-2015	Shane Weinand, Rocketship Strategies
Alisha Brandon	Governance and Personnel Matters	4-23-2015	Shane Weinand, Rocketship Strategies
William Anderson	School Finances	10-20-2015	Minnesota Association of Charter Schools
	Governance and Personnel Matters	4-23-2015	Shane Weinand, Rocketship Strategies
Nicole Perez	Governance and Personnel Matters	4-23-2015	Shane Weinand, Rocketship Strategies
Josetta Zetah	Governance and Personnel Matters	4-23-2015	Shane Weinand, Rocketship Strategies
Beth Metzger	Governance and Personnel Matters	4-23-2015	Shane Weinand, Rocketship Strategies
Alison Krueger	Governance and Personnel Matters	4-23-2015	Shane Weinand, Rocketship Strategies
Katie Curtis	Governance and Personnel Matters	4-23-2015	Shane Weinand, Rocketship Strategies

### **Management, Staffing Changes & Transitions**

In May 2013, a new school director was hired, Katie Curtis. Ms. Curtis has worked for SRMCS since 2005, serving as the Early Childhood Coordinator for seven years, lead Children’s House teacher for eight years, and a member of the Board of Directors for four years. Her position as school director was made official on July 1, 2013.

With this change in leadership, structure in administration also changed. Ms. Curtis is now actively the school director and Ms. Beth Brockman, formerly the Hot Lunch (Fund 2) Coordinator, became the Operations Coordinator. A part-time staff member was added, Ms. Barb Zimney, formerly the Hot Lunch Server. She has now taken on management of the Fund 2 Food Service Program. Ms. Brockman, now no longer working with the lunch program, oversees such areas as payroll submission, medical insurance in relation to payroll, supply ordering, and all other general office management. Ms. Curtis has absorbed the Early Childhood Coordinator position in addition to being the school director. She oversees all aspects of school management and operations including staffing, students, parents, curriculum, financial management, and fulfills all requirements given by the school's authorizer, Audubon Center of the North Woods, and the State of Minnesota.

There were no administrating staffing changes in 2014-15.

### List of Administrators & Qualifications

Name	Title/Position	Primary Responsibilities	Education & Qualifications
Katie Curtis	School Director	Full school oversight of students, parents, staff, financials, reporting, special education, enrollment, curriculum, and overall success of the school. For a more detailed list of duties, please see Attachment 6: School Director Job Description.	B.A. in Secondary Education  M.A. in Organizational Leadership  Early Childhood Montessori Certification (Graduate Level)
Beth Brockman	Operations Coordinator	Attendance, payroll, insurance, reporting, building maintenance, IT support, supply/materials ordering, inventory.	B.A. in Psychology  B.A. in Sociology  Certification in Microsoft Windows & Lotus
Barb Zimney	Hot Lunch & Milk Program Coordinator	Food ordering, menu distribution and data entry, free/reduced lunch program oversight, money collection.	High School Diploma



**Preschoolers begin preparing their outdoor garden for potato planting!**

## **Professional Development Plan and Implementation: School Director**

The Board of Directors feels it vital to ensure anyone holding this administrative position is receiving ongoing education in relevant fields. Therefore, the Board of Directors requires the school director to receive a minimum of 125 Continuing Education Credits (CEUs) every five years. S/he is required to provide an annual update to the Board as to what credits have been earned and in what fields. As stated on the SRMCS Board Planning and Operations Calendar this review is done annually in June. Please see Attachment 5. To review a complete list of the director's professional development in 2014-2015, please see Attachment 11.

## **Annual Job Performance Evaluation: School Director**

In addition to this development plan, the school director is also evaluated by each member of the Board of Directors annually. To assist them with this task, all employees are given the opportunity to submit a survey on the school director's performance to the board. Some areas that are evaluated include:

- Students and Their Families
- Staff Members
- Interpersonal Relations, Professional Knowledge, and Work Ethic
- Supervisory Duties
- Administrative Responsibilities
- Other Responsibilities

As part of this thorough evaluation, each member of the board is asked to site at least three areas of strength and three areas for improvement/development. Should something need to be directly addressed, the evaluation does include an area to detail an action plan.

Once evaluations are completed by each member, the data is compiled. The president of the board then holds a private evaluation meeting with the school director to review the data and discuss any further action, if necessary.

To view the School Director Job Description and Job Performance Evaluation, please see Attachments 6 and 7

To view the Staff Survey of the School Director, please see attachment 8.

# Staffing

The tables below contain information for all staff employed by the school or who provided services contractually. All of SRMCS lead teachers have a Minnesota teaching license and are Montessori certified for the grade levels they are teaching. Swan River is very proud that the majority of the non-lead teaching staff holds a Bachelor's Degree.

<b>2014-2015 Licensed Teaching Staff</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>File #</b>	<b>License / Assignment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Anderson, William	319342	Art (K-6), Tech (2-6), Environmental Ed (K-6)	Also holds a license in Parent Education
Bergquist-Savage, Amy	420388	Kindergarten & EC	
Brandon, Alisha	414937	Grades 4-6	STEM Certified
Curtis, Kate	388236	School Director	
Frederiksen, Jessica	468160	Special Education	
Fuller, Amy	434096	PE for K-6, SpEd Para	
Jensen, Amy	390666	Grades 1-3	STEM Certified
Matchinsky, Kristin	321815	Kindergarten & EC	
McGorry, Jean	352642	Music/Band (EC-6)	
Perez, Nicole	398893	Grades 1-3	STEM training in progress
Schneider, Sharon	283179	Grades 1-3	STEM training in progress
Stolp, Aaron	399025	Grades 4-6	STEM training in progress
Weiser, Janelle	411161	Grades 4-6	

<b>2015-2016 Licensed Teaching Staff - NEW</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>File #</b>	<b>License / Assignment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Figenshau, Heidi	408124	Special Education	Special Education Variance
Halvorson, Julie	489613	Special Education	Community Expert
Holder, Daniel	475036	Grades 4-6	4 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher

## Licensed Teacher Percentage Turnover Rate:

2014-15 to 2015-16:  $[\text{non-returning teachers} / \text{total teachers} \times 100] = 1 \text{ teacher} = 7.6\%$

SRMCS has been fortunate over the years of having a very low teacher turnover rate. This year, Ms. Allie Brandon, an E-2 teacher who has been employed by Swan River since 2005, decided to resign for personal family reasons. She is still on our employee roster as she will be a licensed substitute teacher. Mr. Daniel Holder, a licensed Montessorian with years of experience, was hired in her place.

<b>2014-15 Other Licensed (non-teaching) Staff</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Jaeger, Sue	Speech Pathologist	File #442110
Graf, Shelly	School Counselor	File #443071
Schipper, Debra	ASD Consultant	File #299257
Tschetter, Jody	Special Ed. Director	File #344871

<b>2015-16 Other Licensed (non-teaching) Staff - NEW</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Evans, Ashley	Special Ed. Director	File #422503

<b>2014-15 Non-Licensed Staff</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Returning or Not Returning</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Anderson, Cindy	Classroom Assistant	R	Holds A.A. Degree, B.A. in progress
Blaha, Ashley	Classroom Assistant	R	Holds B.A. Degree
Brockman, Beth	Operations Coordinator	R	Holds B.A. Degree
Brown, Rebecca	EC & Paraprofessional	R	Holds B.A. Degree
Dehmer, Jean	Program Paraprofessional	R	Holds Paraprofessional Certificate
Halvorson, Julie	Literacy Specialist	R	Holds B.A. Degree
Keene, Katie	Program Paraprofessional	R	Holds B.A. Degree
Klug, Amy	Program Paraprofessional	R	Holds B.A. Degree
Oslund, Colleen	Custodian, School Nurse	R	Holds B.A. Degree
Paul, Barb	Classroom Assistant	R	
Quiring, Heidi	Program Paraprofessional	R	
Scherber, Deanna	Classroom Assistant	N	Holds A.A. Degree
Schroeder, Jen	Classroom Assistant	R	Holds B.A. Degree
Uecker, Michele	Early Childhood	R	Holds A.A. Degree
Voight, Deb	Custodian	R	
Voight, Steve	Custodian	R	
Zachman, Cindy	Program Paraprofessional	R	
Zimney, Barb	Hot Lunch Coordinator	R	

<b>2015-16 Non-Licensed Staff - NEW</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
George, Lori	Program Paraprofessional	B.A. in progress
Spry, Amanda	Program Paraprofessional	B.A. in progress

**Non-Licensed Staff Members Percentage Turnover Rate:**

2014-15 to 2015-16:  $[\text{non-returning staff members} / \text{total staff members} \times 100] = 1/18 = 5.5\%$



# Operational Performance

## Health and Safety

The health and safety of Swan River's students and staff is its number one priority. Below is a list of actions SRMCS takes each year to ensure the health and safety of its tenants.

- Each door at SRMCS has a coded security panel. Upon enrollment, each family is given a private code to gain access to the school building any time Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Families are asked not to share these codes with anyone not affiliated with Swan River. Any person who does not have a school-issued code must buzz in manually. A member of the office staff will inquire who the person is via the intercom and will meet that person at the door once access is granted. All family codes are disabled over the summer months and any other days that school is not in session.
- Fire inspections are completed by the Fire Marshall as required.
- Students participate in five fire drills, five lock down drills, and two tornado drills annually.
- The sprinkler system and fire extinguishers are inspected annually.
- Appropriate space is given where required – entryways, exits, 18” of open space from the ceiling, maintenance rooms are orderly and locked at all times when students are present.
- Updated immunization forms are required from all students, including preschoolers.
- SRMCS does not employ a full-time school nurse. Therefore, there is a strict medication policy in place. All medication is kept locked in the main office and is distributed only by office personnel. Records are kept of all medication administered during the school day.
- SRMCS is licensed and inspected by the MN Department of Health twice a year. We do have a Certified Food Manager on site during the school day.
- Swan River is located within 15 miles of a nuclear power plant. Therefore, all staff has been trained in evacuation procedures and Potassium Iodide (KI) administration.
- Background checks are required of all staff, board members, and any adult volunteers 18 years of age or older who would have any contact with any student during the school day on or off site. These forms are kept on file in the main office.
- An Emergency Management Plan was developed in cooperation with the Wright County Sheriff's Office and the Department of Homeland Security. A copy of this plan is located in each classroom, the office, and multipurpose space. Staff reviews it annually. Plan procedures include:
  - Fire Emergency and On-Site Building Evacuations
  - Demonstrations/Disturbances
  - Serious Injury/Death/Suicide
  - Hazardous Materials
  - Assaults/Fights

- Terrorism
- Severe Weather
- Building Lockdowns
- Shooting/Weapons
- Intruder/Hostage
- Bomb Threat
- Nuclear Emergency



**Swan River kindergarten students receive a visit from Dr. Krista Thelen on the importance of dental health.**

## **Transportation**

To ensure the greatest level of safety, all students receive bus safety training within the first few weeks of school. Students in kindergarten through third grade also receive a second training before the end of the school year.

Administration keeps in close contact with Hoglund Transportation throughout each year. Any issues that arise regarding our students and provided transportation are dealt with immediately. Swan River does require that all families complete a Bus Registration Form regardless if bussing is used to and from school regularly. This is so we have information on every student on file with the bus company in case there are changes in transportation and for bussing usage for field trips.

## **Data Compliance and Reporting**

SRMCS prides itself in the prompt submission of any mandated data to the MN Department of Education, the State of MN, our authorizer, and any other external entity we work with. There are staff who are designated for various types of data submissions. Ms. Brockman, Operational Manager, reports MARSS, CliCs, TRA, PERA and ADP Payroll Services. Ms. Curtis, School Director, completes and submits all STAR reports, DAC information, lease aid, the Annual Report, World's Best Workforce Plan and Summaries, and all other data required by external entities.

All web posting requirements from the MDE and ACNW are met.

SRMCS holds all necessary insurance coverage and is in compliance with all applicable laws.

## **Facilities**

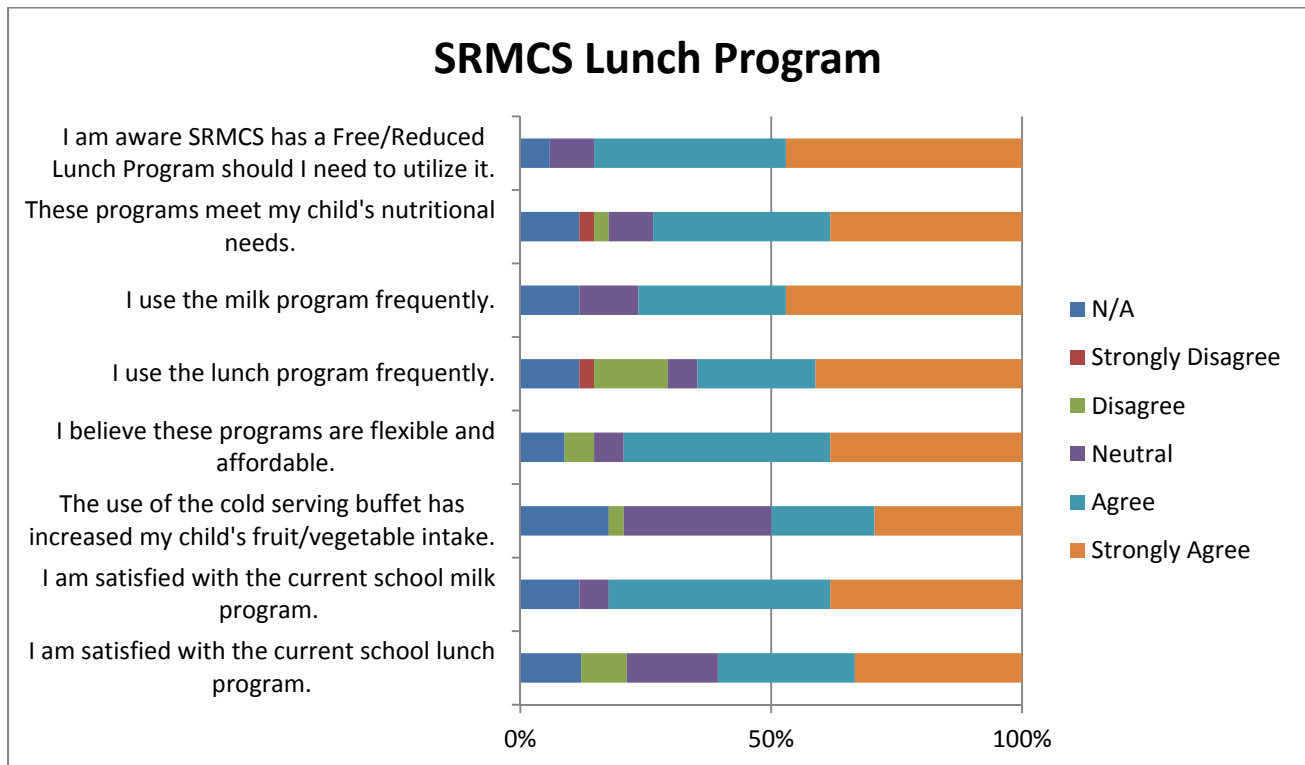
Based on the feedback from students, parents, and faculty, SRMCS provides a very clean and safe environment for students. We hold a viable Certificate of Occupancy and all other building use authorization.

SRMCS employs two, part-time custodians to care for the building and grounds. Staff are welcome to ask the custodial staff to help with small building and cleaning projects. Together, all areas are kept clean, orderly, and up to code.

## Food Service Programs

SRMCS contracts with Premier Kitchens, Inc. for our hot lunch program as well as Kurt's Home Delivery for milk. All food and nutrition guidelines are followed, including policies and procedures mandated by the MN Department of Health who completes on-site inspections two times per school year.

Historically, our Fund 2 Lunch Program has always financially sustained itself and is used frequently by most of our families. When surveyed, the following are the responses received from parents and students:



## Student Admissions and Enrollment

As a charter school, SRMCS has limited capacity to enroll students and follows enrollment procedures very closely. At this time, we have two kindergarten classrooms that are home to 24 students, three E-1 classrooms (first through third grade) which house approximately 72 students, and two E-2 classrooms (fourth through sixth grade) which have approximately 48 students each year. The goal is to have 24 students per class.

Each year, the 24 kindergarten positions are filled beginning with students who have sibling preference as well as children of lead teachers. All remaining positions are filled via public lottery. Once enrolled, a student is guaranteed an enrollment slot each subsequent year unless that family chooses to dis-enroll.

Openings that occur during the school year are filled from the waiting list that is created during each lottery. Because enrollment applications are only valid for one year, any openings that occur outside of the school year are filled via sibling/teacher child preference and then the lottery. Since we have three age groups in each of our classrooms, the grade level make-up of the class is considered when filling empty spots.

To view the Charter School Enrollment Application, please see Attachment 9. To view the SRMCS Application and Enrollment Procedures which details our enrollment process, please see Attachment 10. This information may also be found on our web site at [www.swanrivermontessori.org](http://www.swanrivermontessori.org).

## **Due Process and Privacy Rights of Students**

To ensure that all due process and data privacy rights of students are met, the SRMCS Board of Directors has approved the following policies:

- Equal Education Opportunity Policy – SRMCS provides equal educational opportunity to all students and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, parental status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation or age. The school district also makes reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities.
- Religion and Religious Expression Policies – This policy states that SRMCS shall neither promote nor disparage any religious belief or non-belief. Inclusion of religious music, art, drama, and literature are allowed provided it is intrinsic to the learning experience and is presented in an objective manner without sectarian indoctrination. To the extent possible, special school events shall be conducted at times which are not likely to conflict with observance of religious holidays.
- Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records – SRMCS recognizes its responsibility in regard to the collection, maintenance, and dissemination of pupil records and the protection of the privacy rights of students as provided in federal law and state statutes.



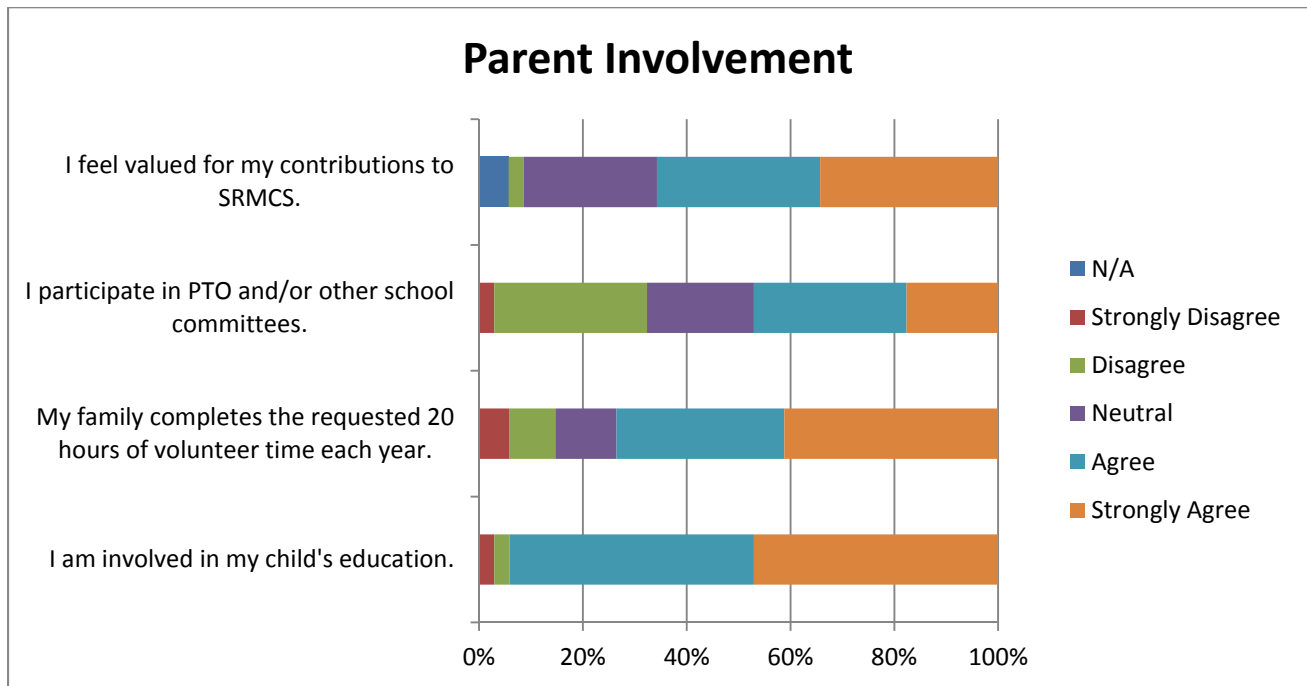
**Who is the ultimate volunteer? The parent in the bunny costume at the Annual Community-Wide Breakfast with the Bunny! This huge event is hosted by Swan River parent and student volunteers. It is the largest fundraiser for Swan River Montessori bringing in up to \$9,000 for our PTO.**

To view these policies in their entirety, please visit our web site at [www.swanrivermontessori.org](http://www.swanrivermontessori.org). All policies are reviewed annually by the SRMCS Board of Directors.

## **Parent & Community Engagement**

As part of student enrollment at Swan River, we strongly encourage every family to contribute a minimum of 20 hours of volunteer time each school year. We find that being a small charter school, our resources are a bit more limited at times especially when compared to large school districts. This means that parent and community engagement is crucial to our ongoing success. We are very fortunate to have the support that we do.

Our PTO has excellent monthly attendance, we receive quick responses when a donation is requested, and we never have to ask twice for classroom and field trip volunteers. When surveyed about their own involvement, parents responded with the following:



### Student Discipline

Respect for others and respect for self are two areas that, as Montessorians, we take very seriously. As part of the Montessori curriculum, our classrooms spend a lot of time on Peace Education. This includes providing lessons on conflict resolution, peer mediation, problem solving as well as others. We do not assume children immediately understand how to work in a group setting nor do we assume children have the ability to “work things out” with others without initial guidance from a role modeling adult. Our primary focus is to build a strong sense of community within our classrooms and in the school as a whole. The first weeks of school are largely dedicated to these grace and courtesy lessons.

However, we also understand that sometimes conflict resolution or peer mediation may not be enough and greater lengths need to be taken to help our students understand appropriate behavior. Therefore, SRMCS implements the Discipline Rubric when there are violations that exceed typical in-class reprimands. This rubric was created by the Discipline Committee which included numerous teachers, support staff, parents, and a Professor of Education from St. Cloud State University. The rubric has been included as it is printed in the SRMCS Parent Handbook.

# SWAN RIVER MONTESSORI CHARTER SCHOOL DISCIPLINE RUBRIC

The charts on the following page list a number of typical school behaviors and describe the ways we have agreed upon to respond to these behaviors at school. In many ways the major categories listed on the next page happen every day in classrooms. It is a fairly common occurrence for some children to not follow directions, to jostle or push one another, to use inappropriate language or to bring something inappropriate (but not necessarily dangerous) to school. Our teachers use a wide range of approaches to respond to such occurrences depending on the needs of the individual child and the specific behavior(s).

For example, a teacher might respond to a student not following directions by making eye contact, standing closer to the student, moving the student to a different seat, talking with the student (immediately or at a later time), restricting some privileges, etc. Using his/her professional judgment about what might work best for the individual child, the classroom teacher will try to help the child learn to behave in ways which will help promote the student's own learning and will enhance the learning environment for everyone in the classroom.

The consequences listed on the next page happen only after the classroom teacher has exhausted all internal classroom remedies, has determined that the behavior represents a serious concern, and the behavior rises to the level of offense as described in the "Behavior Infractions" column of the chart. As you can see, for each level of offense we have listed a number of possible consequences. The flexibility of having a number of possible responses to student behaviors will allow us to choose the response that, in our best judgment, will help each individual child learn appropriate behavior.

## Possible Consequences When a Behavior Infraction Occurs:

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note home</li> <li>• Phone call home</li> <li>• Office notification</li> <li>• Temporary move to office</li> <li>• Temporary move to another classroom</li> <li>• Loss of 1 recess</li> <li>• Stop/Think form</li> <li>• 1 Lunch detention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Office notification</li> <li>○ Home contact</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Parent Conference</li> <li>• Office visit</li> <li>• Observation by another teacher</li> <li>• Loss of 1+ recesses</li> <li>• 1+ Lunch detentions</li> <li>• Restitution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Office Visit</li> <li>○ Home contact</li> <li>○ Parent Conference</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Behavior Contract</li> <li>• Referral to Student Assistance Team</li> <li>• Restitution</li> <li>• In-School Suspension</li> <li>• Out-School Suspension</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Office Visit</li> <li>○ Home contact</li> <li>○ Parent Conference</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Restitution</li> <li>• Student sent home immediately</li> <li>• In-School Suspension</li> <li>• Out-School Suspension</li> <li>• Police notification</li> </ul>	When necessary, expulsion deemed may be pursued within the guidelines of the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act of 1974, as amended.

# DISCIPLINE RUBRIC

<b>BEHAVIOR INFRACTION</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Offense</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Offense</b>
<b>FOLLOW DIRECTIONS</b> Refusal to comply with adult request or school rules, defiance or rude behavior toward staff.	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<b>BE READY TO LISTEN AND LEARN</b> Significantly disrupts teaching and learning.	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<b>USE SCHOOL APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE</b> Vulgarity, profanity, name calling, disrespectful comments and/or gestures.	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<b>KEEP HANDS, FEET AND OBJECTS TO YOURSELF</b> Pushing, poking, slapping, shoving, grabbing, spitting, throwing objects and/or any other unwelcome contact.	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<b>RESPECT PROPERTY</b> Misuse/abuse of personal or school property.	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<b>INAPPROPRIATE OBJECTS</b>	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<b>SEVERE BEHAVIOR INFRACTIONS</b> (Incident Reports filed for all offenses)	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Offense</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Offense</b>
<b>FIGHTING/ASSAULT</b> Physical aggression with intent to harm.	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<b>SEVERE DEFIANCE</b> Refusal to comply with adult request resulting in unsafe circumstances.	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<b>HARASSMENT/THREATS</b> Any act of harassment, including sexual, racial, religious harassment, repeated unwelcome teasing, bullying or threats.	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<b>DESTRUCTION/THEFT/VANDALISM</b>	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<b>WEAPONS</b>	Level 4 or 5	Level 5	

## Background Checks of Employees, Board Members & Volunteers



Michelle, a parent volunteer with a completed background check, works with a student on reading phonetic word cards in the classroom.

All adults 18 years of age and older must complete a background check in order to interact with students for any reason during the school day. This includes field trips, classroom celebrations, and general volunteering on school grounds. Employment is always contingent on background check results as is being a member of the Board of Directors. Employees and board members are re-checked every other year while all volunteers are every three years. This is the same cycle that the surrounding school districts use as well. This check is very thorough as it includes local, state, and national registries.

## Hiring Practices

Any time there is an employment position to be filled at SRMCS, hiring procedures are as follows:

1. Vacant position is identified.
2. Advertisements are placed to the public. Historically, we have utilized the Minnesota Work Force Center and EdPost via St. Cloud State University. A closing date for applications is given.
3. Application acceptance window closes.
4. Resumes and cover letters are reviewed by relevant personnel.
5. Office staff member notifies candidates and schedules interviews.
6. The standardized interview questions are distributed to all members of the Hiring Committee prior to the interview.
7. Interviews are conducted.
8. Secondary interviews are conducted, if necessary.
9. Committee decides on the best candidate to fill the position.
10. The School Director extends the offer to the candidate.
11. Assuming the candidate accepts the position, the School Director then notifies the Board of Directors at the upcoming board meeting. Members vote to approve the hire.

## Dismissal of an Employee

Swan River Montessori Charter School is an At-Will Employer. This means that any employee of SRMCS can be terminated at any time for any reason, with or without cause or notice, by the employee or by the school. However, the Board of Directors and the School Director wish for



every employee to be happy and successful. Therefore, prior to any formal dismissal of an employee, the following steps would typically be taken:

1. The School Director would hold a private meeting with the employee to discuss the issue/concern at hand that is jeopardizing employment.
2. During this meeting, an action plan would be created stating what specific steps must be taken to rectify the issue. A specific timeline would accompany this action plan.
3. After the timeline has passed, the School Director and the employee would have a follow up meeting to discuss progress. If the Director is satisfied with the changes the employee has made, employment will continue and documentation will remain in the employee's file. If the Director is not satisfied and the expectations of the action plan have not been met, the Director will either 1) modify the plan and give a new timeline or 2) move forward with dismissal.
4. If dismissal occurs, the Board of Directors is notified.

SRMCS does have an Employee Grievance Policy for any employee who feels they need to pursue such action. This policy can be found on our web site at [www.swanrivermontessori.org](http://www.swanrivermontessori.org).

### **Employee Job Performance Evaluations**

Every SRMCS employee is given a formal job performance evaluation annually. Paraprofessionals are evaluated by the lead Special Education teachers, classroom assistants are evaluated by their lead classroom teacher, and lead classroom teachers are evaluated by the school director. Evaluations include, but are not limited to, the following areas:

- Job/Professional Knowledge
- Work Ethic
- Interpersonal Relations
- Children
- Classroom Environment
- Parents/Guardians
- Other Responsibilities



Each evaluation is accompanied by a sit down meeting where the evaluation is reviewed and any questions, concerns, strengths, and areas of improvement are discussed. All evaluations are kept in the employee's file.

Beyond this annual evaluation process, the School Director also observes frequently in each classroom, including art, music, gym and technology classes. All observation notes are shared with the staff member(s) being observed. These observations are not just a tool to monitor the staff, but, more importantly, to strengthen relationships, make sure the classroom environments are properly prepared, and to ensure everything is running smoothly.

# Finances

The information presented below is derived from preliminary audit figures. The full financial audit will be completed and presented to Minnesota Department of Education and Audubon Center of the North Woods no later than December 31, 2015.

For questions regarding school finances and for complete financials for 2014-15 and/or an organizational budget for 2015-16, please contact:

Katie Curtis, School Director, Swan River Montessori Charter School

Address: 500 Maple Street  
 Monticello MN 55362  
 Phone: 763-271-7926  
 Email: katiec.swanriver@tds.net

Sandy Schmidt of Sandmark LLC provides accounting services for Swan River Montessori Charter School, including monthly financials, bank reconciliations, annual budgets and budget revisions, use of SERVS via the Minnesota Department of Education, completion of the school's 990 tax form, and assistance with the auditing process.

## FY15 Financial Overview by Fund

FY15 Finances	Fund 1	Fund 2	Fund 4
Total Revenues	\$1,551,078	\$62,351	\$197,217
Total Expenditures	\$1,543,065	\$61,162	\$192,472
Net Income	\$8,013	\$1,859	\$4,744

**NET INCOME TOTAL ALL FUNDS FOR 2014-2015 = \$13,947**

## Revenues

The original FY15 budget was based on 149 ADM. The breakdown by grade grouping is as follows:

	<u>BUDGET</u>
Kindergarten:	19
1-3:	74
4-6:	56

Fund 1: Swan River's key sources of revenue include general education aid, charter school lease aid, and special education aid. Other secondary sources include federal special education aid, interest earned, literacy incentive aid, and donations.

In 2014-15, SRMCS earned a Literacy Aid Grant totaling \$14,133. This money was used to continue paying for an on-site tutor, Julie Halvorson, to help our at-risk students in reading

and/or math. These are students who have been flagged by a teacher as needing additional help, but who do not qualify for special education services.

Fund 2: It should be noted that the Food Services fund was self-sustaining, i.e. it did not have to receive supplemental funding from General Fund 1. According to our auditor from Clifton Larson Allen, Dennis Hoogeveen, the vast majority of schools must supplement their food service fund. However, due to responsible fiscal management no loss was experienced in FY15.

Fund 4: Community Education Fund 4 had a very successful year bringing in net revenues of \$197,217. The primary reason for this gain was the success of the Extended Care Program which runs before and after school each day. Our preschool program also received a literacy grant for \$2,000 from Target Corporation. This money was used to purchase a variety of books for the classrooms. The remainder of this money will be used in FY16 for additional language materials.

### **Expenses**

Expenses during FY15 continued to be standard with money being spent on staff salaries/benefits, supplies/materials (instructional and non-instructional), general operations, purchased services, and equipment/furniture. There were no abnormal or unexpected costs of any significance.

### **World’s Best Workforce Annual Budget**

While there is no specific line item in our annual budget referring to the World’s Best Workforce, there are significant funds being used to promote WBWF initiatives e.g. Reading Well by Third Grade, closing the achievement gap, and kindergarten readiness. The primary expenditures are as follows:

<b>Person/Programs for WBWF</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Budget Amount</b>
Julie Halvorson	Literacy Specialist – Assisting children by ensuring students are reading well by the end of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade year.	Salary in FY15 = \$38,505
AIMS Web & Fountas and Pinnell Assessments	Allows teachers to better track progress over the course of the school year.	\$3,200 in FY15
Professional Development of Teachers & Non-Licensed Staff Member	To increase knowledge and understanding regarding students of various ability levels, particularly those students with increased needs.	\$6,000 in FY15

## Designated Funds & Long Range Planning

Due to the sizable fund balance, the Board of Directors voted on spending a portion of SRMCS' designated funds. Items purchased included additional laptops for student use, CPR/First Aid training for all employees, professional development for staff, STEM training for three lead teachers at the College of St. Catherine, 150 new chairs and storage carts for our Gathering Space (church area), Board of Director's training, as well as additional classroom materials and supplies. The total of these purchases was \$47,587. Additional funds will be spent moving into FY16 to outfit our new, secondary building on items such as tables, chairs, shelving, cleaning supplies, etc.

Finally, knowing that items such as furniture, materials, carpet, books, etc. will need to be replaced over time, the Board of Directors has been working with Sandy Schmidt to create a long range plan for future expenses. As of June 30, 2015 the following amounts are designated:

<b>DESIGNATED FUNDS</b>	
<b>Fund 1</b>	<b>Fund 4</b>
\$257,143	\$128,287
<b>TOTAL DESIGNATED FUNDS = \$385,430</b>	

## Net Income and Fund Balance

As listed above, after all revenues and expenses are taken into consideration, the SRMCS fund balance continues to remain positive at \$920,878. Historically, Swan River has always held a very healthy fund balance. Cash flow continues to be strong. Our Board of Directors is very fiscally responsible and reviews the monthly budget reports provided by Sandy Schmidt of Sandmark Services, LLC at every meeting. The Treasurer on the Board, Ms. Joretta Zetah, is a Certified Public Accountant and is very knowledgeable in financial matters.

**TOTAL BALANCE ALL FUNDS = \$920,878**

## Overview

As of the end of FY15:

- Revenues are at 100% of the board approved original budget.
- Expenses are at 100% of the board approved original budget.
- The total net fund balance equaled +\$920,878.
- The designated funds total equaled +\$385,430.
- Total current and fixed assets equaled \$1,054,063.
- The state holdback of 10% had little impact on the overall budget as the school's cash flow is very healthy.
- Enrollment targets across all grade levels were met.

- Historically, our annual audit results have been clean. No compliance issues were noted nor have any control deficiencies been found. The FY15 audit is in process now and we have every reason to believe we will be issued another clean audit.

## Future Plans

### Expansion Plans

While Swan River Montessori is at full capacity and there have been requests from various families, there are no plans to expand our site with regard to adding more general education classrooms for current or upper grade levels. We feel our small size is a large part of our success as a school. We have a wonderful sense of community and we feel growing too big would adversely affect that feeling.

However, during the 2012-13 school year, the SRMCS Building Company purchased two plots of land across the street from our location. This land will be used in two ways. One portion, directly across the street, will be used to build new special education, music, band, and environmental education classrooms. Construction was in process all of FY15. The second plot, adjacent to our location, is being utilized as a natural outdoor environment learning/play area. This land will always be left untouched – no buildings or other permanent land structures will be placed there. The idea is that students will use this land in its natural state for study and play.

## SWAN RIVER’S LATEST ADDITION: 503 MAPLE ST.



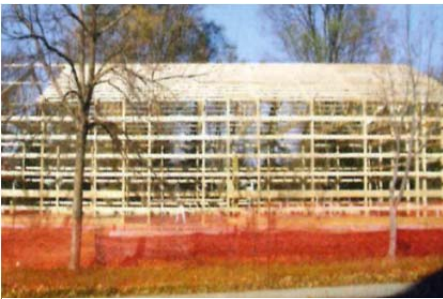
**Controlled Burn of Existing House**



**Bulldozing of Existing Garage**



**Excavating of Land**



**Framing**



**Window Installation & Insulation**



**Pre-Siding Installation**



**Front View of Final Stages!**



**Back View of Final Stages (pre-landscaping)!**

## **Facility Changes**

Over the course of the 2014-15 school year, the following changes/additions/updates occurred:

- The SRMCS Building Company continued the construction of our school expansion of a secondary education building.
- A new, more reliable door coded-entry system was installed at all doors, including the new building.
- Additional security cameras were added in places that were previously out of view.
- A gazebo was built in the back portion of our new lot. This will be perfect for another outdoor learning area.
- The front door to the church area was replaced.

## **Program Changes**

- While there were no specific program changes during the 2014-15 school year, many are in progress to begin in FY16. This includes:
  - usage of the new secondary building
  - designing and operating a Level 2/3 setting for our students with exceptionally high needs
  - Addition of person to assist with AIMS Web and Fountas & Pinnell assessments in an effort to save classroom time and teacher energy

## **Technology Updates**

Over the course of the 2014-15 school year, the following changes/additions/updates occurred:

- All student and staff computers were upgraded to Microsoft Office 2010
- Students used pedometers throughout the school year to support health awareness
- A new sonic fire wall was installed to increase internet safety

- A mini projector was purchased for use by our music/band teacher
- Students and staff were each issued personal flash drives versus putting documents on a shared server
- A technology fundraiser was held by our PTO which raised over \$4,000.00. This money is earmarked for computers, lab equipment, and other related supplies/materials for our new building.

Attachment 1: SRMCS Board Approved Calendar for 2014-2015

SRMCS 2014-2015																				
August '14							September '14							October '14						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	4
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30					26	27	28	29	30	31	
31																				
November '14							December '14							January '15						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1		1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	31
30																				
February '15							March '15							April '15						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
							29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30		
May '15							June '15							July '15						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	4
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30					26	27	28	29	30	31	
31																				

Teacher Workshop
  No School
  Comp Day/no school
  Early Dismissal



Attachment 2: SRMCS Board Approved Calendar for 2015-2016

# SRMCS 2015-2016

August '15							September '15							October '15						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1			1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31
30	31																			

November '15							December '15							January '16						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5						1	2
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
29	30						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
														31						

February '16							March '16							April '16						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6			1	2	3	4	5						1	2
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
28	29						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30

May '16							June '16							July '16						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4						1	2
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
														31						

  Teacher Workshop    
   No School    
   Comp Day/no school    
   Early Dis. (12:20)

## **SMART Goals 2013-2016**

**Swan River Montessori Charter School**

**Monticello, Minnesota**

**Authorizer: Audubon of the North Woods**

### **1. Academic Proficiency as Measured by Minnesota Statewide Assessments**

- MCA/GRAD Reading
- MCA/GRAD Math

#### **a. MCA Reading Proficiency Goal**

By 2016, 71% of all students in grades 3-6 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency as measured by annual MCA tests in Reading. This represents an increase of 1-2% annually from the school's 2013 baseline proficiency rate of 66.2%.

##### **Year By Year Breakdown**

By 2014, 67% of all students in grades 3-6 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in reading as measured by annual MCA tests.

By 2015, 69% of all students in grades 3-6 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in reading as measured by annual MCA tests.

By 2016, 71% of all students in grades 3-6 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in reading as measured by annual MCA tests.

#### **b. MCA Math Proficiency Goal**

By 2016, 65% of all students in grades 3-6 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in math as measured by annual MCA tests. This represents an increase of 1-2% annually from the school's baseline proficiency rate of 56.8%.

##### **Year By Year Breakdown**

By 2014, 58% of all students in grades 3-6 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in math as measured by annual MCA tests.

By 2015, 60% of all students in grades 3-6 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in math as measured by annual MCA tests.

By 2016, 62% of all students in grades 3-6 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in math as measured by annual MCA tests.

### **c. MCA Science Proficiency Goal**

By 2016, 68% of all students grades 3-6 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in science as measured by annual MCA tests. This represents an increase of 1% annually from the school's 2013 baseline proficiency of 65%.

### **Year By Year Breakdown**

By 2014, 66% of all students in grade 5 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in science as measured by annual MCA tests.

By 2015, 67% of all students in grade 5 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in science as measured by annual MCA tests.

By 2016, 68% of all students in grade 5 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in science as measured by annual MCA tests.

## **2. Academic Growth**

### **a. Reading Growth**

55% of students testing in grades 3-6 will meet expected growth targets established by NWEA for fall to spring administration of the NWEA MAP assessment in reading for the school year 2013-2014.

60% of students testing in grades 3-6 will meet expected growth targets established by NWEA for fall to spring administration of the NWEA MAP assessment in reading for the school year 2014-2015.

65% of students testing in grades 3-6 will meet expected growth targets established by NWEA for fall to spring administration of the NWEA MAP assessment in reading for the school year 2015-2016.

### **b. Math Growth**

55% of students testing in grades 3-6 will meet expected growth targets established by NWEA for fall to spring administration of the NWEA MAP assessment in math for the school year 2013-2014.

60% of students testing in grades 3-6 will meet expected growth targets established by NWEA for fall to spring administration of the NWEA MAP assessment in math for the school year 2014-2015.

65% of students testing in grades 3-6 will meet expected growth targets established by NWEA for fall to spring administration of the NWEA MAP assessment in math for the school year 2015-2016.

### **3. Mission Related: Student Satisfaction Survey**

By spring of 2014, 2015, and 2016, 95% of students in grades K-6 will participate in the school-developed Student Satisfaction Survey. The purpose of this survey is to allow each child to reflect on his/her attitude toward school, personal investment and involvement in learning, and feelings about his/her relationship with staff and peers.

### **4. Academic-Related: Student Attendance**

By spring of 2014, 2015, and 2016, 50% of all fifth grade students will continue their enrollment for sixth grade at Swan River versus attending the local middle school.

## **Environmental SMART Goals 2013-2016**

**Swan River Montessori Charter School**

**Monticello, Minnesota**

**Authorizer: Audubon of the North Woods**

### **Indicator Area 1: EE-Based Curriculum Components**

1. By spring of 2014, 2015, and 2016, 100% of students in grades K-6 will participate in Environmental Education classes as offered by Swan River Montessori Charter School staff.
2. Each year (2013-16), 95% of students in grades K-6 will participate in the planning, creation, and/or use of the new environmental education land (purchased in Summer 2013 by the SRMCS Building Company) adjacent to the SRMCS school building. This includes, but is not limited to, such activities as:
  - a. studying native vegetation
  - b. birds/migration patterns
  - c. animal habitats
  - d. life cycles of plants and animals
  - e. effects of temperature on various landscapes
  - f. playing in a natural outdoor environment

### **Indicator Area 2: Field Trips to Natural Areas**

1. All students who participate in Environmental Education at SRMCS will take part in the process of making our new land purchase a state park. We will work with all government officials necessary to complete this process.

### **Indicator Area 3: Promote Environmental Stewardship**

1. Students will participate annually in cleaning up the SRMCS outdoor environment including, but not limited to, the school grounds, the Environmental Education area, and other neighboring areas throughout the school year as needed.

### **Indicator Area 4: Elective EE Trend Areas**

#### EE-Trained Teachers or Experts

1. SRMCS has added an Environmental Education teacher to our staff roster who will meet with all students grades K-5 on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.
2. All lead teachers and classroom assistants will receive training from the Jeffers Foundation entitled, “The Outdoor Classroom.” The goal of this workshop is to provide “opportunities for students to gain knowledge and obtain skills in a natural environment. Instructors will allow students to learn by taking a hands-on approach to learning in an outdoor setting.”

#### Food Program

1. All of the SRMCS classrooms participate in composting leftover foods from lunch and/or snacks. Younger students learn appropriate composting etiquette from the older E-2 students annually. The compost is located just north of the school building.
2. During the fall and spring of 2013-2016, 90% of students in grades K-6 will participate in the School Gardens Project. Students will be given ample opportunities to plant, maintain, and harvest various plants. In addition, students will study plant life cycles, weather impact, and other factors relating to the needs of the natural environment.

#### Waste Reduction

1. SRMCS prides itself in its efforts to reduce, reuse, and especially recycle. Every room in our building is equipped with recycling bins for easy use. E-2 students are responsible for properly disposing all recyclable materials.

### **Indicator Area 7: Science Proficiency**

By 2016, 68% of all students in grade 5 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in science as measured by annual MCA tests. This represents an increase of 1% annually from the school’s 2013 baseline proficiency rate of 65%

### **Year By Year Breakdown**

By 2014, 66% of all students in grade 5 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in science as measured by annual MCA tests.

By 2015, 67% of all students in grade 5 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in science as measured by annual MCA tests.

By 2016, 68% of all students in grade 5 enrolled by October 1 will achieve proficiency in science as measured by annual MCA tests.

### **Indicator Area 8: Environmental Literacy**

1. Staff, students and parents at Swan River Montessori Charter School will increase their environmental literacy and develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to support a sustainable, healthy environment.

**Attachment 4: Children's House Progress Report**

*Swan River Montessori  
Children's House  
Program:  
Conference Report*

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School Year: 2014-2015

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**A Guide to Understand Your Child's Progress**

"The child possesses within himself the man he someday will become."

~ Maria Montessori

The Montessori Method, which has been aptly described as "learning to learn," has many goals for your child. Primarily, our goal is to assist your child in the acquisition of positive attitudes toward him/herself and others as well as the school while acquiring the basic ability to "learn." Please understand that what a child acquires in a Montessori environment is not immediately reflected in his or her behavior, thus this report must necessarily be incomplete.

This report is a means of sharing with you how far your child is on the road to achieving some of these goals.

No child can be expected to achieve and reflect all at once, all the goals of the Montessori Method. Our program is designed to develop a sequence of learning outcomes including the following:

- Adjustment to school and independent learning
- Practical life skills
- Sensory-motor activities
- Fundamentals of reading, writing and number readiness
- Response to his/her physical and social environment

Children learn as individuals, at different rates and with different styles. It is good to bear in mind that rigid expectations and arbitrary standards do not provide the best motivation for learning.


Your comments on your child, with reference to his/her adjustment, initiative, and reactions in general to pre-school/Kindergarten, are always welcome and will be of great help to your child's teacher.

Thank you,

Swan River Montessori Children's House Teachers

Key to reading your child's progress:

- Not yet/Not Observed = Child is not yet able or ready to perform task and/or child has not yet been observed performing the stated task.
- Positive Progress = Child has been observed performing the task, but has not yet reached mastery.
- Able = Child has been observed performing the task and has reached mastery.

Fall = **X**                  Spring =  $\sqrt{\quad}$                   End of Year 

NY/NO                                  PP                                  A

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Has adjusted to school \_\_\_\_\_

Practices good manners \_\_\_\_\_

Accepts suggestions or corrections by teacher(s) positively \_\_\_\_\_

Displays self-confidence \_\_\_\_\_

Uses daily living self-help skills ex: buttoning, getting coat on \_\_\_\_\_

Accepts and follows routines \_\_\_\_\_

Shows helpful behavior \_\_\_\_\_

Is a positive role model for peers \_\_\_\_\_

Emotional reactions are appropriate to the situation & age of the child \_\_\_\_\_

Forms friendships \_\_\_\_\_

Respects set limits and classroom rules \_\_\_\_\_

Responds to directives/requests the first time they are given \_\_\_\_\_

Demonstrates age appropriate maturity \_\_\_\_\_

Is able to compromise \_\_\_\_\_

Demonstrates a caring or concerned attitude toward others \_\_\_\_\_

Is able to listen to and follow directions \_\_\_\_\_

Does not engage in the problems of others \_\_\_\_\_



Is able to transition between activities	_____
Accepts responsibility for one's own actions	_____
Demonstrates self-control i.e. thinks through decisions before acting, controls silly behavior when necessary, refrains from interrupting	_____
Shows respect for property	_____
Shows respect for authority (i.e. avoids arguing with adults)	_____
Shows respect for peers/utilizes appropriate conflict resolution skills	_____

	NY/NO	PP	A
--	-------	----	---

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Has energy to perform physical activities for varying amounts of time	_____
Can sit still & control body movements for an age-appropriate amount of time.	_____
Has age-appropriate strength	_____
Has coordinated movements in walking, running, jumping, etc.	_____

	NY/NO	PP	A
--	-------	----	---

**LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT**

Speech is clear for child's age	_____
Capable of retelling a story	_____
Capable of describing pictures using complete sentences	_____
Recognizes own name	_____
Speaks in complete sentences	_____
Responds to others when spoken to	_____
Knows letter sounds (see attachment)	_____
Blends sounds	_____
Reads phonetic words with fluency	_____

Reads introductory sight words \_\_\_\_\_

Reads words that contain blends,  
phonograms, or long vowel rules \_\_\_\_\_

Comprehends what they are reading \_\_\_\_\_

NY/NO

PP

A

#### HANDWRITING DEVELOPMENT

Fine motor skills are age appropriate \_\_\_\_\_

Holds pencil using age-appropriate grip \_\_\_\_\_

Can write own name \_\_\_\_\_

Learning to write lower case letters  
with correct formation \_\_\_\_\_

Learning to write upper case letters  
with correct formation \_\_\_\_\_

Is learning to write in cursive \_\_\_\_\_

NY/NO

PP

A

#### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Recognizes numerals 1-10 \_\_\_\_\_

Matches numerals & quantities 1-10 \_\_\_\_\_

Writes numerals 1-10 \_\_\_\_\_

Recognizes numerals 11-19 \_\_\_\_\_

Matches numerals & quantities 11-19 \_\_\_\_\_

Writes numerals 11-19 \_\_\_\_\_

Recognizes numerals 20-100 \_\_\_\_\_

Matches numerals & quantities 20-100 \_\_\_\_\_

Writes numerals 20-100 \_\_\_\_\_

Recognizes numerals beyond 100 \_\_\_\_\_

Matches numerals & quantities  
beyond 100 \_\_\_\_\_

Writes numerals beyond 100 \_\_\_\_\_

Can count out loud to 100 correctly \_\_\_\_\_

Understands place value \_\_\_\_\_

Explores fraction concepts \_\_\_\_\_

Tells time to the hour, half hour,  
quarter hour \_\_\_\_\_

Identifies pennies, dimes, nickels  
and quarters \_\_\_\_\_

Can count the value of pennies,  
nickels, dimes and quarters \_\_\_\_\_

NY/NO

PP

A

WORKS WITH OPERATIONS (USING MONTESSORI MATERIALS)

“+” without regrouping / with regrouping \_\_\_\_\_

“-” without regrouping / with regrouping \_\_\_\_\_

“x” without regrouping / with regrouping \_\_\_\_\_

“÷” without regrouping / with regrouping \_\_\_\_\_

NY/NO

PP

A

FACT MEMORIZATION

Addition facts are memorized (to 20) \_\_\_\_\_

Subtraction facts are memorized (to 20) \_\_\_\_\_

Multiplication facts are memorized (to 100) \_\_\_\_\_

Division facts are memorized (to 100) \_\_\_\_\_

NY/NO

PP

A

ARTISTIC/CULTURAL INTERESTS

Participates in musical activities \_\_\_\_\_

Discriminates between details, colors,  
designs, textures, and sizes \_\_\_\_\_

Adds detail to product or activity \_\_\_\_\_

Experiments with various forms  
of artistic media \_\_\_\_\_

Shows interest in science \_\_\_\_\_

Shows curiosity about different people,  
places, and animals in our world \_\_\_\_\_

WORK HABITS	NY/NO	PP	A
Challenges oneself			
Controls voice level			
Can work independently			
Stays attentive and respectful during lessons and circle times			
Can work productively in a small group			
Will seek help if needed			
Completes work in a timely manner			
Takes pride in and completes work carefully			
Works purposefully and without disturbing others			
Puts work away appropriately and in the correct location			
Chooses work independently			
Concentrates for age appropriate lengths of time			
Respects others' personal space and boundaries			
Stays on topic during discussions and lessons			
Stays focused around distractions			
Repeats work to achieve mastery			
Does not give up when challenged			
Is able to follow multi-step directions			
Work choices are balanced within the classroom subject areas			

# Conference Comments

Fall Conference Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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Goals for your child: \_\_\_\_\_

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Spring Conference Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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Goals for your child: \_\_\_\_\_

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End of the year comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Color Recognition: Fall

\_\_\_\_ Red  
\_\_\_\_ Orange  
\_\_\_\_ Yellow  
\_\_\_\_ Green  
\_\_\_\_ Blue  
\_\_\_\_ Purple

\_\_\_\_ Pink  
\_\_\_\_ Brown  
\_\_\_\_ Black  
\_\_\_\_ White  
\_\_\_\_ Gray

### Color Recognition: Spring

\_\_\_\_ Red  
\_\_\_\_ Orange  
\_\_\_\_ Yellow  
\_\_\_\_ Green  
\_\_\_\_ Blue  
\_\_\_\_ Purple

\_\_\_\_ Pink  
\_\_\_\_ Brown  
\_\_\_\_ Black  
\_\_\_\_ White  
\_\_\_\_ Gray

### Color Recognition: End of Year

\_\_\_\_ Red  
\_\_\_\_ Orange  
\_\_\_\_ Yellow  
\_\_\_\_ Green  
\_\_\_\_ Blue  
\_\_\_\_ Purple

\_\_\_\_ Pink  
\_\_\_\_ Brown  
\_\_\_\_ Black  
\_\_\_\_ White  
\_\_\_\_ Gray

### Shape Recognition: Fall

1) Circle \_\_\_\_

2) Square \_\_\_\_

3) Triangle \_\_\_\_

4) Rectangle \_\_\_\_

### Shape Recognition: Spring

1) Circle \_\_\_\_

2) Square \_\_\_\_

3) Triangle \_\_\_\_

4) Rectangle \_\_\_\_

### Shape Recognition: End of Year

1) Circle \_\_\_\_

2) Square \_\_\_\_

3) Triangle \_\_\_\_

4) Rectangle \_\_\_\_

## Sound Recognition: Fall

/ = presented    x = mastered

Set one:

a \_\_\_ o \_\_\_ c \_\_\_ m \_\_\_ p \_\_\_ s \_\_\_ t \_\_\_ h \_\_\_ g \_\_\_

Set two:

e \_\_\_ u \_\_\_ j \_\_\_ l \_\_\_ n \_\_\_ r \_\_\_ z \_\_\_ b \_\_\_ f \_\_\_

Set three:

i \_\_\_ d \_\_\_ k \_\_\_ q \_\_\_ v \_\_\_ w \_\_\_ x \_\_\_ y \_\_\_

## Sound Recognition: Spring

/ = presented    x = mastered

Set one:

a \_\_\_ o \_\_\_ c \_\_\_ m \_\_\_ p \_\_\_ s \_\_\_ t \_\_\_ h \_\_\_ g \_\_\_

Set two:

e \_\_\_ u \_\_\_ j \_\_\_ l \_\_\_ n \_\_\_ r \_\_\_ z \_\_\_ b \_\_\_ f \_\_\_

Set three:

i \_\_\_ d \_\_\_ k \_\_\_ q \_\_\_ v \_\_\_ w \_\_\_ x \_\_\_ y \_\_\_

## Sound Recognition: End of Year

/ = presented    x = mastered

Set one:

a \_\_\_ o \_\_\_ c \_\_\_ m \_\_\_ p \_\_\_ s \_\_\_ t \_\_\_ h \_\_\_ g \_\_\_

Set two:

e \_\_\_ u \_\_\_ j \_\_\_ l \_\_\_ n \_\_\_ r \_\_\_ z \_\_\_ b \_\_\_ f \_\_\_

Set three:

i \_\_\_ d \_\_\_ k \_\_\_ q \_\_\_ v \_\_\_ w \_\_\_ x \_\_\_ y \_\_\_

## Attachment 5: SRMCS Board Planning and Operations Calendar

# SRMCS Board Planning and Operations Calendar

### August

Organizational meeting

Elect Officers

Set date and time of meetings

Annual Designations: Depository, Electronic Funds Transfers, Communication

Pledge of Allegiance policy review

### September

Approve and submit Annual Report to ACNW

Director's evaluation

Receive draft of audit

Meal policy review

Equal Educational Opp. Policy review

Purchasing policy review

### October

Approve final audit

Statement of assurances

Whistleblowers policy review

Religious Expressions policy review

### November

Confirm final UFARS updates

Submit evaluation for School Finance Award

Publish current and prior year budget on web site

Use and Rental of School Facilities policy review

Caseload for Special Education policy review

### December

Budget revisions (December or January)

Approve final audit

License staff discrepancy report

Monticello Chamber of Commerce membership

Approve the Request for Proposals for school auditor

Religion policy review

Acceleration policy review

Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records policy review



**January**

Budget revisions (if not completed in January)  
Financial policies review  
Equal Employment policy review  
Disability Non Discrimination policy review

**February**

Approve school calendar for next year  
Approve student transportation  
Confirm auditor contract

**March**

Review all assumptions and preliminary numbers for upcoming budget year  
Review all staffing and supply needs  
Review all bid procedures  
Review all corrective action plans from past audit, if any

**April**

Summer program  
Review building needs including lease  
Review employee, student/parent handbooks  
Parent survey results  
Hiring of Special Ed. Director  
Bullying Prohibition policy review  
Harassment and Violence policy review

**May**

Confirm personnel needs and hiring procedures  
Confirm enrollment projections  
Submit lease aid application to State  
Submit title grants as required or needed  
Submit food and nutrition grant as needed

**June**

Approve preliminary budget for coming fiscal year  
Final review of all corrective action plans, if any  
Submit Special Education materials as required  
Building Board appointments  
Approve insurance coverage  
Director's development plan review

## Attachment 6: School Director Job Description

### Swan River Montessori Charter School Job Description: School Director

**Job Title:** School Director

**Reports To:** Board of Directors

**FLSA Status:** Exempt

**Department:** Operational

**Summary:** Coordinates educational activities and day-to-day operations while promoting the mission and philosophy of the school by performing the following duties:

**Duties and Responsibilities** include the following: (Other duties may be assigned.)

1. Represents the organization at formal presentations in a professional manner.
2. Supervises Operational Manager, Office Assistant, teaching staff, classroom assistants, paraprofessionals, custodial staff, operational/administrative staff, lunch personnel, and all special education staff.
3. Performs annual teacher evaluations.
4. Manages all human resources activities, including TRA, PERA and payroll as well as maintaining employee files in an orderly manner.
5. Reviews employee insurance coverage and ensures proper monthly payroll deductions.
6. Maintains financial oversight of all operations, including Fund 2 and Fund 4 collections.
7. Reviews state approved deposits via MDE website.
8. Ensures that approved deposits align with reported MARSS numbers and advises the Board of Directors of any budget shortfalls so that mid-year adjustments in budgetary allocations can be facilitated.
9. Reviews budget preparation.
10. Prepares projected budget given enrollment data and actual vs. projected income/expenses.
11. Provides justification for costs and staff salaries.
12. Maintains all grant-related activities, including financial record keeping and interim/final grant reports.
13. Reviews Minnesota statutes related to charter school law and charter school general guidelines.

14. Receives estimates for school insurance, reviews for coverage and terms, particularly inclusions and exclusions requiring additional coverage.
15. Meets with insurance agents to discuss coverage issues.
16. Remains proactive in implementing policies.
17. Prepares the Annual Report, including academic goals, for State of Minnesota and the school's Authorizer.
18. Reviews and edits, as appropriate, all school communications prepared for the general public and school community.
19. Addresses parent/constituent concerns when said concerns cannot be addressed by the Lead Teachers or EC Coordinator at the request of the parent/constituent or teacher.
20. Oversees the Special Education Department including, but not limited to, due process, IEP meetings, and fiscal compliance.
21. Oversees the school's educational programs, staff development, and curriculum development.
22. Informs and advises the Board of Directors, prepares the agenda, and attends School Board meetings.

**Qualifications:**

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

**Education/Experience:**

Bachelor's degree (B.A.) from four-year college or university; and four to six years related experience and/or training; or equivalent combination of education and experience.

**Language Ability:**

Ability to read, analyze, and interpret common scientific and technical journals, financial reports, and legal documents. Ability to respond to common inquiries or complaints from customers, regulatory agencies, or members of the business community. Ability to write speeches and articles for publication that conform to prescribed style and format.

**Math Ability:**

Ability to work with mathematical concepts such as probability and statistical inference, and fundamentals of plane and solid geometry and trigonometry. Ability to apply concepts such as fractions, percentages, ratios, and proportions to practical situations.

**Reasoning Ability:**

Ability to define problems, collect data, establish facts, and draw valid conclusions. Ability to interpret an extensive variety of technical instructions in mathematical or diagram form and deal with several abstract and concrete variables.

**Computer Skills:**

To perform this job successfully, an individual should have knowledge of word processing software, spreadsheet software, internet software, and database software.

**Certificates and Licenses:**

Montessori Training - AMS or AMI certificate

**Supervisory Responsibilities:**

The School Director supervises all SRMCS employees, including the teaching staff, classroom assistants, paraprofessionals, custodial staff, operational/administrative staff, lunch personnel, and all special education staff. These supervisory responsibilities must be in accordance with the organization's policies and applicable laws. Responsibilities include: interviewing, hiring, and training employees; planning, assigning, and directing work; appraising performance; rewarding and disciplining employees; addressing complaints and resolving problems.

**Work Environment:**

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is occasionally exposed to outdoor weather conditions.

The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.

**Physical Demands:**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 25 pounds. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to use hands and talk or hear. The employee is frequently required to stand; walk and sit. The employee is occasionally required to reach with hands and arms; climb or balance and stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl.

**Attachment 7: Job Performance Evaluation for School Director**

**Swan River Montessori Charter School & Children’s House Program  
Job Performance Evaluation: School Director**

Employee Name \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Evaluation Meeting \_\_\_\_\_

**Evaluation Standards:** Please rate performance using the following codes.

- 1 – Needs significant improvement; far below standard
- 2 – Needs improvement to meet standard
- 3 – Meets standard
- 4 – Highly effective; consistently exceeds standard
- 5 – Not applicable

**The Evaluation Process:**

- Part One:** The employee completes his/her portion of this form, including the self-rating and comments sections for each category. The form must be returned to the evaluator by the specified date. Please note that all comments are welcome, but are only required on any score below 3.
- Part Two:** The evaluator completes his/her portion of this form, including comments and Strengths and Development Needs sections.
- Part Three:** The employee and evaluator meet to discuss the outcome of the evaluation. Strengths and areas for improvement will be highlighted along with an action plan for improvement, if necessary.
- Part Four:** A copy of this form will be given to the employee. The original will be placed in the employee’s file.
- Part Five:** Any required follow up meetings will be scheduled and completed.

Employee						Evaluator				
1	2	3	4	5	<b>STUDENTS &amp; THEIR FAMILIES</b>	1	2	3	4	5
					Establishes a clear understanding of the school’s mission & vision.					
					Provides a clear understanding of the programs and services offered by Swan River Montessori Charter School.					
					Provides students & families with information on student academic, social & emotional development as necessary.					
					Provides students & their families with appropriate intervention options for academic, social & emotional development.					
					Supports & adheres to the school’s discipline plan.					
					Provides opportunities for comprehensive parent/family involvement.					
					Makes significant system-wide or programmatic decisions with an intentional process that gathers & considers input from students & their families.					

Employee Comments:

Evaluator Comments:

Employee						Evaluator				
1	2	3	4	5	<b>STAFF MEMBERS</b>	1	2	3	4	5
					Provides all staff members with a written copy of employee rules, rights & expectations.					
					Provides information & opportunities for staff to become prepared for various emergency situations.					
					Establishes the performance expectations & criteria for employee evaluation.					
					Makes significant system-wide or programmatic decisions with an intentional process that gathers & considers input from staff members.					
					Is responsive to staff with regard to professional questions/concerns/requests.					
					Is responsive to staff with regard to personal questions/concerns/requests.					
					Is responsive to staff with regard to student/parent concerns.					
					Provides staff with opportunities for staff development & training.					

Employee Comments:

Evaluator Comments:

Employee						Evaluator				
1	2	3	4	5	<b>INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS, PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE &amp; WORK ETHIC</b>	1	2	3	4	5
					Works cooperatively with others.					
					Is willing to share ideas & concerns with others.					
					Practices confidentiality whenever it applies.					
					Approaches criticism with a learning attitude.					
					Models professionalism to students, staff, and parents.					
					Maintains a positive, encouraging attitude towards others.					
					Collaborates with others to best meet the needs of the school, its students & its staff.					
					Educates parents about Montessori Method when appropriate.					
					Responds promptly to parents via phone, email, etc.					

Employee Comments:

Evaluator Comments:

Employee						Evaluator				
1	2	3	4	5	<b>SUPERVISORY DUTIES</b>	1	2	3	4	5
					Performs annual teacher evaluations in a timely manner.					
					Provides staff adequate job performance evaluation input & feedback.					
					Establishes the performance expectations & criteria for evaluation.					
					Provides clear directives to staff members.					

					Is consistent with staff with regard to expectations, action plans for improvement & consequences for inadequate job performance.					
					Supervises Operational Manager, Office Assistant, Early Childhood Coordinator & Lead Teachers.					

Employee Comments:

Evaluator Comments:

Employee					Evaluator										
1	2	3	4	5	<b>ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES</b>					1	2	3	4	5	
					Maintains financial oversight of all operations, including Fund 2 & Fund 4 collections.										
					Manages all human resources activities including TRA, PERA & payroll, including the organization & maintenance of employee files.										
					Reviews employee insurance coverage & ensures proper monthly payroll deductions.										
					Ensures that approved deposits align with reported MARSS numbers & advises Board of Directors of any budget shortfall so that mid-year adjustments in budgetary allocations can be facilitated.										
					Reviews state approved deposits via MDE website.										
					Reviews budget preparations.										
					Prepares projected budget given enrollment data, actual versus projected income/expenses.										
					Provides information, including estimated expenses, based on change of prices.										
					Provides justification for costs, including staff salaries.										
					Maintains all grant related activities, including financial record keeping & interim/final grant reports.										
					Reviews Minnesota statutes related to charter school law & general guidelines.										
					Prepares & submits the annual report to the sponsor & the State of MN.										

Employee Comments:

Evaluator Comments:

Employee					Evaluator										
1	2	3	4	5	<b>OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES</b>					1	2	3	4	5	
					Develops & implements parent education programs.										
					Attends & participates in school board meetings.										
					Attends & participates in staff meetings & workshops.										
					Attends & participates in assigned committees.										
					Attends & participates in family/school events.										
					Assists in maintaining/cleaning/organizing the shared space in the school (hallway, kitchen, playground, work room etc.).										
					Retains CPR & first aid certification.										

Employee Comments:

Evaluator Comments:

**STRENGTHS AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS**

**STRENGTHS:** Cite at least three employee strengths and/or accomplishments since the previous employee evaluation.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**DEVELOPMENT NEEDS:** Describe any areas where further job/professional development is recommended or required.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**ACTION PLAN:** List any recommended or required actions the employee must take to improve the development needs cited above. Include a mutually agreed upon target date.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER COMMENTS:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Swan River Montessori thanks you for your participation in this evaluation process.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Evaluator Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Attachment** \_\_\_\_



**Attachment 8: Staff Survey of School Director**

**Swan River Montessori Charter School & Children’s House Program**

**Staff Survey: School Director**

Name of Director:

**Evaluation Standards:** Please rate performance using the following system.

N/A – Not applicable

1 – Needs significant improvement; far below standard

2 – Needs improvement to meet standard

3 – Meets standard

4 – Highly effective; consistently exceeds standard

**The Evaluation Process:**

As stated in MN charter school law (124D.10), it is the responsibility of the Board of Directors to evaluate the School Director’s job performance. As part of this evaluation process, the Board would like to provide all school employees the opportunity to offer input/feedback regarding the Director’s ongoing performance. Please complete the following survey, which can be done either by hand or electronically by computer. Upon completion, please place your survey in a sealed envelope for the purpose of anonymity. A large envelope will be placed in the main office for survey submissions. After the submission deadline, all completed surveys will be compiled and given to the Board of Directors for review. The School Director will be provided with a copy of the compiled staff survey.

**\*\*NOTE:** There will be items that may not pertain to you as a staff member or that you may not have enough information or experience to rate. If that occurs, please check N/A.

<b>STUDENTS &amp; THEIR FAMILIES</b>	<b>N A</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Establishes a clear understanding of the school’s mission & vision.					
Provides a clear understanding of the programs and services offered by Swan River Montessori Charter School.					
Provides students & families with information on student academic, social & emotional development as necessary.					
Provides students & their families with appropriate intervention options for academic, social & emotional development.					
Consistently and fairly enforces school rules, policies, and procedures.					
Provides opportunities for comprehensive parent/family involvement.					
Makes significant system-wide or programmatic decisions with an intentional process that gathers & considers input from students & their families.					

<b>STAFF/FAMILY INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS, PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE &amp; WORK ETHIC</b>	<b>N A</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Expects, promotes, and supports a quality instructional program.					
Assists with providing the leadership for the overall morale of the staff and clientele.					
Assists in developing a school team relationship.					
Is reliable, pays attention to detail, follows through on assigned tasks and responsibilities.					
Demonstrates flexibility and a collaborative attitude in supporting colleagues/work teams.					
Displays skill and sensitivity in the decision-making process.					
Is willing to accept advice and suggestions from others.					
Is accessible to the staff. Members of the staff feel free to approach him/her on any matters of concern.					
Respects and maintains confidentiality and assumes responsibility for personal actions.					
Communicates expectations of professionalism and performance.					
Uses effective oral and written communication with colleagues and the community.					
Meets with instructional teams and teachers regularly to assess ongoing school education improvement efforts.					
Provides support and resources for staff to improve job performance, and recognizes and supports the achievements of highly effective staff members.					
Manages the school in an effective manner.					
Encourages professional growth.					
Involves teachers in the development and management of the instructional program.					
Communicates effectively with teachers.					
Deals effectively with staff concerns.					
Deals effectively with student issues.					
Communicates effectively with students.					
Resolves problems in an equitable and timely manner.					
Demonstrates understanding of and respect for diversity within the school and community.					
Promotes constructive relationships and encourages proper communication between SRMCS and the community (i.e. the local library, the community center, the Monticello School District).					

<b>SUPERVISORY DUTIES</b>	<b>N A</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Performs annual teacher evaluations in a timely manner.					
Provides staff adequate job performance evaluation input & feedback.					
Establishes the performance expectations & criteria for evaluation.					
Is consistent with staff with regard to expectations, action plans for improvement & consequences for inadequate job performance.					
Supervises Operational Manager, Office Assistant, Early Childhood Coordinator & Lead Teachers.					

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	<b>N A</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Maintains financial oversight of all operations, including Fund 2 & Fund 4 collections.					
Manages all human resources activities including TRA, PERA & payroll, including the organization & maintenance of employee files.					
Reviews employee insurance coverage & ensures proper monthly payroll deductions.					
Ensures that approved deposits align with reported MARSS numbers & advises Board of Directors of any budget shortfall so that mid-year adjustments in budgetary allocations can be facilitated.					
Reviews budget preparations.					
Prepares projected budget given enrollment data, actual versus projected income/expenses.					
Provides information, including estimated expenses, based on change of prices.					
Provides justification for costs, including staff salaries.					
Maintains all grant related activities, including financial record keeping & interim/final grant reports.					
Reviews Minnesota statutes related to charter school law & general guidelines.					
Prepares & submits the annual report to the sponsor & the State of MN.					

Evaluator

<b>OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	<b>N A</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Attends & participates in school board meetings.					
Attends & participates in staff meetings & workshops.					
Attends & participates in family/school events.					
Assists in maintaining/cleaning/organizing the shared space in the school (hallway, kitchen, playground, work room etc.).					

What do you see as the director's strengths?

Where do you see the director can improve?

Other comments:

**Attachment 9: SRMCS Application for Enrollment**

**SWAN RIVER MONTESSORI CHARTER SCHOOL  
ENROLLMENT APPLICATION 2014/2015**

Student Information

Grade Fall 2014: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Office Use Only</b>	Date Received _____
Lottery # _____	Sibling/s Y N
Wait List # _____	

**Kindergarten - 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Applicants Only**

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Parent or Guardian Name/s \_\_\_\_\_

List siblings of student who are also applying for Swan River Montessori Charter School:  
(Please indicate name and grade for Fall 2014; include Early Childhood children, if applicable)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that I am the legal parent/guardian of the child listed in this application and that I have legal authority to give permission for my child to enroll at Swan River Montessori Charter School.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like your child to attend Swan River Montessori Charter School for the 2015-2016 school year, you must complete an application and submit it between January 12 and January 16, 2015, to the school's front office. We do not accept non-sibling preference applications before January 12, 2015.

If there are more applicants than positions available, a lottery number will be sent to you between January 25, 2015 and January 30, 2015. The lottery will be held at 1:00 PM on Thursday, February 5, 2015 in the Gathering Space at Swan River Montessori Charter School, 500 Maple Street, Monticello, MN 55362. The results of the lottery determine who receives the available spots and the wait list. The lottery is open to the public.

The results of the lottery will be posted on our web site [www.swanrivermontessori.org](http://www.swanrivermontessori.org) and on the school's doors immediately following the lottery.

**SRMCS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age of disability.**

## **Attachment 10: Application and Enrollment Procedures**

### **Swan River Montessori Charter School Application and Enrollment Procedures**

January – Send re-enrollment forms to charter only families. Send Early Childhood and Kindergarten Enrollment Information YEAR and EC re-enrollment forms. Mid-January enrollment information and applications are posted on our web site [www.swanrivermontessori.org](http://www.swanrivermontessori.org) and in our office each January. New families interested in enrolling for the next school year must complete an application and submit it to the school, 500 Maple St., Monticello, MN.

Families interested in enrollment for the lottery must fill out and return an application form by the deadline during the designated week. We do not accept forms before the designated date.

The Operations Manager will populate the spreadsheet (Lottery Labels) with the names, addresses, sibling, and grade level of applicants.

The office Assistant will mail merge the data with the Lottery Letter and will assign numbers to each applicant. The letters will be mailed two school days after the lottery deadline.

The lottery will be held within two weeks of the deadline at Swan River Charter School, 500 Maple Street, Monticello, and MN 55362. The lottery is open to the public.

The results of the lottery will be posted on our website at [www.swanrivermontessori.org](http://www.swanrivermontessori.org) and on the school's doors immediately following the lottery.

The office assistant will send acceptance letter and enrollment forms to families who received spots in lottery.

Any openings will be filled through sibling preference, teacher's child preference, and public lottery. In the E1 and E2 classrooms (which each have three age groups/grade levels), the grade level make-up of the classroom is considered when filling empty spots with the students from the waiting list. Once it is determined that SRMCS has a space for the student, her/his parent/guardian will be contacted by phone. If he/she still wants to enroll, the enrollment form will be sent. We ask that the enrollment form be returned within seven days.

After the lottery we accept applications on an ongoing basis. If the waiting lists created by the lottery are exhausted and SRMCS has openings, they will be filled by applicants who have submitted their applications after the lottery. These applications are dated with the date they arrive in the school's office. These positions are filled by the applicants in the order applications are received.

**Attachment 11: List of Professional Development in FY15 for Katie Curtis, School Director**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Professional Development Title/Topic</b>	<b>Continuing Education Credits Received</b>
August 7, 2014	9 <sup>th</sup> Annual National PACER Symposium about Children and Youth with Mental Health and Learning Disabilities	6
August 18, 2014	Writing with Excellence: Implementation Training	3
August 26, 2014	Social Work in the School Setting with Katie Laird, LSW	1
August 27, 2014	Functional Behavior: An Introduction with Holly Peterson, Behavior Analyst, Brih Design	1
August 28, 2014	Investigating Sensory Processing with Karmyn Larson, OTR/L	1
November 14, 2014	ACNW Charter School Leader's Retreat	6.5
January 6-7, 2015	MDE Statewide Testing: January Pretest Editing Training for New DACs	2
January 19, 2015	10 Brain-Based Strategies to Help Children Handle Their Emotions with Tina Payne Bryson, Ph.D.	1.5
February 18-19, 2015	MDE Statewide Testing: February Test Administration Trainings for New DACs	3.5
April 23, 2015	Certificate of Board Training: Governance and Personnel Matters with Shane Weinand	3
June 29, 2015	American Heart Association: HeartSaver Pediatric First Aid with Dennis Hamlet, AHA BLS Instructor	6

**Total CEUs Earned in FY15: 34.5 Hours**