

PRAIRIE CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOL

2013 Annual Report on Curriculum, Instruction and Student Achievement



Minnesota Charter School District #4090

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INTRODUCTION

This report provides the staff and families of Prairie Creek Community School (PCCS), the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), Northfield Public Schools, and the general public with information describing the progress of PCCS and its students during its eleventh year of operation as a charter public school.

MISSION

Prairie Creek Community School (PCCS) is a charter public school, founded in 1983, that offers progressive education for students in kindergarten through fifth grade. PCCS focuses on progressive education for all students. PCCS is a non-profit trust registered with the Minnesota Attorney General's Office (see Appendix A).

Mission Statement

- ***PCCS is a community school.*** *Parents, teachers, staff, and students cooperate with one another and with others outside the school to create a joyful and challenging climate for learning.*
- ***PCCS is a child-centered school.*** *We help children discover the power and excitement of their minds, their feelings and bodies, their relationships, their art. We assure children of their value, encourage their accomplishments, and respect their individual learning styles. We value diversity.*
- ***PCCS is a progressive school.*** *We emphasize co-operation, promote self-reflection, support innovation, and value change. We share our philosophy and practice with others and learn from them.*
- ***PCCS aims to make the world a better place.*** *We value justice, gender-fairness, and conflict resolution. We educate children to live as responsive, responsible members of their own communities, now and in the future.*

SCHOOL PROGRAM, ENROLLMENT, AND STUDENT ATTRITION

Authorizer

Northfield Public Schools
Chris Richardson, Ph.D.
507-663-0600

Relationship with Authorizer

PCCS opened in 2002

Contract was renewed in 2005 (05/06 to 07/08), 2008 (08/09 to 10/11), and in 2011 (11/12 through 15/16)

Each fall, the director sends a formal report to the Northfield Board of Education regarding the previous school year. The authorizer has been pleased with PCCS and the Board has been supportive of its goals. On May 10, 2013, Dr. Richardson spent a day reviewing the program and meeting with students, staff and parents.

School Calendar & Hours of Operation

The first day of school was September 4, 2012 and school ended on June 4, 2013. PCCS was open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 8:15 am to 2:30 pm and Wednesday from 9:15 am to 2:30 pm.

Student / Classroom Teacher Ratio

PCCS employed nine classroom teachers to serve 180 students in grades K-5. The student/classroom teacher ratio in 2012-2013 averaged 20:1.

Enrollment

PCCS has detailed admissions procedures and preferentially admits applicants who have a sibling enrolled at PCCS or applicants who are the children of staff members. If applications exceed the number of openings, admission of additional students is based on a lottery system. The Director publishes the date of the lottery and draws names of applicants until all spaces are filled. At that time the Director also constructs a wait list so that, should a student withdraw from PCCS, openings can be filled from the wait list. A limited amount of information is gathered on the application forms, including student's name, age of kindergarten, whether or not the applicant has a sibling enrolled at PCCS (siblings of current PCCS students are enrolled prior to other applicants), and parent/guardian contact information.

Prairie Creek maintained full enrollment and had a wait list at every grade level except fifth grade in 2012-2013.

Attrition

Two students transferred during the school year: one student to a home school environment (medical reasons), one because the family moved out of state.

At the end of the school year two students transferred out because their families moved out of town or out of state. One child transferred to an elementary school in the neighboring Northfield School district. These places were filled from the wait list with new students.

Characteristics of PCCS Students

Table 1 below outlines gender, ethnicity, and other characteristics of PCCS students.

Table 1: Characteristics of PCCS Students¹

PCCS Students	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Enrollment (K-5) ²	119	177	178	180	180
Average Daily Membership ³	119.50	177.42	179.15	178.39	178.71
Male	58 (49%)	83 (47%)	98 (55%)	84 (47%)	86 (48%)
Female	61 (51%)	94 (53%)	80 (45%)	96 (53%)	94 (52%)
Race/Ethnicity					
American Indian	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Asian/Pac. Islander	6 (5%)	12 (7%)	8 (4%)	8 (4%)	10 (6%)
Black/Non-Hispanic	1 (0.8%)	4 (2%)	4 (2%)	2 (1%)	4 (2%)
Caucasian	111(93%)	158 (89%)	162 (91%)	165 (92%)	165 (92%)
Hispanic	1 (0.8%)	3 (2%)	4 (2%)	5 (3%)	1 (1%)
Students of Color	8 (7%)	19 (11%)	16 (9%)	15 (8%)	15 (8%)
Free and Reduced Lunch	11 (9%)	30 (17%)	41 (23%)	32 (18%)	25 (14%)
English Language Learners	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Special Education Status	14 (12%)	19 (11%)	20 (11%)	18 (10%)	24 (13%)
Mobility Index ⁴	0.06	0.03	0.01	0.05	NA ⁵

¹ Source: Minnesota Department of Education (<http://education.state.mn.us>)

² This number represented the count of students who were enrolled on October 1 of the school year.

³ ADM is computed by taking the number of days the student was reported as enrolled divided by the number of instructional days reported for that school.

⁴ The *Mobility* represents how much activity annually occurs based on student transfers after the school year begins.

⁵ Not yet available.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Membership:

The membership of the Board is composed of parents and/or guardians of currently enrolled PCCS students, staff members and a community member. The nine members of the 2012-2013 board all have completed all three required training modules in the areas of employment law, governance and finance.

Number, Tenure, and Qualifications:

Since the 2010-2011 school year, the permanent Board consists of nine members, six of whom will be chosen from the parent community, two of whom will be chosen from the faculty, and one from the community at large. The director and Chief Financial Officer serve as non-voting members. Terms of the members run from July 1 to June 30. Members serve no more than two consecutive terms and at least one year must separate the second term from the next period of service.

There were nine voting members of the PCCS Board for the 2012-2013 school year. Specific information for each Board member can be found in Table 14 below. Overall, Board members had an average attendance rate of 87%.

Agendas, meeting minutes, policies, budgets and audited statements are posted on the website: www.prairiecreek.org

Table 2: PCCS Board Members

Name	Board Position	Represents	Contact Information	Attendance
Randy Clay	Treasurer	Parent	rbclay@gmail.com	75%
Roz Eaton-Neeb	Secretary	Parent	eatonnee@stolaf.edu	84%
Trish Ferrett	Member	Parent	TFerrett@carleton.edu	75%
Bonnie Jean Flom	Board Vice Chair	Community	bjflom@charter.net	67%
Daniel Hollerung	Member	Parent	daniel.hollerung@gmail.com	84%
Dan Kelley	Board Chair	Parent	tggx012@yahoo.com	92%
Kelsey Fitschen	Member	Faculty	kfitschen@prairiecreek.org	100%
Cathy Oehmke	Member	Faculty	coehmke@prairiecreek.org	100%
Heidi Welsch	Member	Parent	heidi.welsch@gmail.com	75%
Keith Johnson	Ex-officio Member	CFO	keith_johnson@hotmail.com	<u>100%</u>
Simon Tyler	Ex-officio Member	Director	styler@prairiecreek.org	<u>100%</u>

Table 3: Board Training Record

Board Member	Governance	Financial	Employment
Randy Clay	8/16/11	8/9/11	8/24/11
Roz Eaton-Neeb	8/16/11	8/9/11	8/24/11
Trish Ferrett	1/8/11	8/9/11	1/8/11
Bonnie Jean Flom	1/8/11	8/9/11	12/17/10
Kelsey Fitschen	9/15/12	9/15/12	9/15/12
Dan Kelley	11/19/11	3/10/12	8/24/11
Daniel Hollerung	9/15/12	9/15/12	9/15/12
Cathy Oehmke	8/16/11	8/9/11	8/24/11
Heidi Welsch	11/19/11	8/9/11	8/24/11

SCHOOL STAFF

Table 12 below shows the rates of turnover among teaching and non-teaching staff. As can be seen in the table, turnover rates in 2012-2013 were similar to the previous year. The turnover rate for 2012-2013 was 13.3% among teaching staff (n=15), 31.25% among non-teaching staff (n=16), and 22.6% overall.

Note: Because PCCS maintains a small number of staff, a change of one staff member represents nearly a 3% overall turnover rate. As a result, proportions should be interpreted cautiously.

Table 4: Turnover Rates Among Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff at PCCS

	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012 - 2013
Teaching Staff	4/14	3/19	3/20	2/14	2/15
Non-teaching staff	1/6	1/5	1/7	3/12	6/16
Total	5/20 (25%)	4/24 (16.6%)	4/27 (14.8%)	5/26 (19.2%)	8/31 (25.8%)

Table 13 below shows all staff employed at PCCS for the 2012-2013 year, their position, and whether or not they will be returning for the 2013-2014 year. Eight staff will not be returning for the 2013-2014 school year.

Table 5: School Staff by File Folder and Position

Name	File Folder	Position	FTE	12-13 Staff	13-14 Staff	Reason for change
Simon Tyler	933000	Director	1.0	Y	Y	
Ona Sheets		Business Manager	1.0	Y	Y	
Colleen Braucher		Administrative Assistant	1.0	Y	Y	
Teresa Nemec		Office Assistant	Part-time	Y	Y	
Susan Kesselring	249667	Kindergarten & 1st Grade	1.0	Y	Y	
Elise Erickson	453388	Kindergarten & 1st Grade	1.0	Y	N	Personal
Jeanne Avery	435291	Kindergarten & 1st Grade	1.0	Y	Y	
Amy Haslett-Marroquin	374525	2nd & 3rd Grade	1.0	Y	Y	
Nancy Dennis	394260	2nd & 3rd Grade	1.0	Y	Y	

Molly McGovern Wills	427419	2nd & 3rd Grade	1.0	Y	Y	
Amy Brown	398391	4th and 5th Grade	1.0	Y	Y	
Michelle Martin	406690	4th & 5th Grade	1.0	Y	Y	
Cathy Oehmke	421554	4th & 5th Grade	1.0	Y	Y	
John Witt	60219	Spanish	0.4	Y	Y	
Rachel Geffers	432580	Music Teacher & Classroom Assistant	0.5 0.5	Y	N	Personal
Angie Ekern	397283	Visual Arts Teacher	0.375	Y	Y	
Laura Medwetz	369425	Special Education Teacher	1.0	Y	Y	Position will be 0.8 in 13/14
Kelsey Fitschen	450336	Special Education Teacher	1.0	Y	Y	
Michelle Bigalke	180100	Special Education Teacher	1.0	Y	Y	
Amy Narveson		Special Education PARA	1.0	Y	Y	
Natalie Ojala		Special Education PARA	1.0	Y	Y	
Lisa Molitor		Special Education PARA	1.0	Y	Y	
Nikki Teske		Special Education PARA	1.0	Y	Y	
Kate Sartoris		Special Education PARA	1.0	Y	N	Moving out of state
Kelsey Riha		Special Education PARA	1.0	Y	N	Seeking licensed teaching position
Margaret Johnson		Teaching Assistant	1.0	Y	N	Accepted licensed teaching position in another school
Anna Racer		Teaching Assistant	Part-time	Y	Y	
Hannah Feltzer		Teaching Assistant	Full-time	Y	Y	
Kate Buckmeier		Teaching Assistant	Part-time	Y	N	Personal
Ann Myers		Teaching Assistant/Title One Paraprofessional	Full-time	Y	N	Personal
Dorinda Grandbois		Librarian	Part-time	Y	N	Moving out of state

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Prairie Creek faculty works collaboratively to determine professional development foci. Professional development at Prairie Creek is very robust. Typically, two hours a week is devoted to professional development activities led by Prairie Creek faculty and outside experts. In addition, the teaching staff participates in two days of professional development at the end of the year for reflection on the year's work and goal setting focused on the mission and purpose of the school. The staff also participates in four days of workshops prior to the start of the school year. The faculty functions as an authentic learning community with teacher leadership utilized to develop workshops related to academic and non-academic goals.

Work in 2012-2013 primarily focused on reading assessment and instruction, math assessment and instruction, and cultural awareness and PE/health.

As can be seen in the table below, weekly professional development meetings included all teaching staff. Some teachers also participated in specialized professional development outside of the regular weekly session. Activities ranged in time from a few hours to full one or two credit classes of professional development.

Table 6: PCCS Professional Development Implementation

Description	Hours	Participants
Sharing and discussion of literacy plan assessments	2	All teaching staff
Teachers who attended the Hamline Literacy conference share with staff	1	All teaching staff
Discussion of, and entering data into, the theme curriculum database	Apr.6	All teaching staff
Reading instruction and ways to support Title I readers	2	All teaching staff
Review of bullying policy	1	All teaching staff
Teacher workshop day: Cultural awareness	3	All teaching staff
Teacher workshop day: PE/Health	3	All teaching staff
Instructional technology: Smartboard, iPad, apps	2	All teaching staff
Math: discussion of our new Title I math	1	All teaching staff; Ann Myers, Title I teacher
Math: discussion of and researching PD curricula: DMI, Lesson study, Think Math curriculum	5	All teaching staff
Cultural awareness: review of spaces, reading and discussion, self-assessment, and school-wide cultural competence observation checklist	2	All teaching staff
Book club discussion: Each teacher read a different book about reading instruction, summarized and shared	2	All teaching staff

Writing instruction: writing circles	1	All teaching staff
View video on literacy instruction and discuss	2	All teaching staff
PE: Sharing our practice; breaking down the games we use to analyze the skills and habits they teach	2	All teaching staff
Cultural Awareness: Presentation and discussion with author Julie Landsman	2	All teaching staff
Cultural Awareness Book club: <u>Other People's Children</u> by Lisa Delpit	2	All teaching staff
Staff wellness: trip to Carleton to play tennis	2	All teaching staff
DMI workshops (Developing Mathematical Ideas)	12	Cathy Oehmke Michelle Martin Laura Medwetz Kelsey Fitschen Gabe Meertz Nancy Dennis Amy Haslett-Marroquin Molly McGovern Wills
It's About Time Conference (St.Olaf / MDE)	7	Simon Tyler Jeanne Avery
Cognitive Coaching	16	Simon Tyler Michelle Martin
Hamline Literacy Institute	40	Susan Kesselring
St. Croix Watersheds Institute	24	Jennifer Nelson Amy Brown
ISES Back to School Workshop	8	Laura Medwetz
MDE Special Education File Review	24	Laura Medwetz

DIRECTOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

In addition to participating in many of the above activities, PCCS's director, Simon Tyler, also completed his administrative licensure in December 2012 through the University of Saint Thomas.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Goals and Accountability Plan

PCCS developed two academic and two non-academic goals for the 2012-2013 school year as part of their commitment to accountability. All of the academic and non-academic goals were developed with specific measurement tools and indicators of success (see Table 1 below).

Table 7: PCCS’s 2012-2013 Accountability Plan

Academic Goals	Indicators of Success	Measurements
<p><u>Math</u> Growth goals for students who are in grades 4 and 5.</p> <p>Fall to Spring growth goals for students in grades K – 5.</p>	<p><u>Growth:</u> The number of PCCS students in grades 4 and 5 attaining “medium” or “high” levels of growth in math will increase from 79.6% to 83% as measured by MCA III.</p> <p>PCCS students in each grade will, on average, show a significant increase in math scores from fall to spring.</p>	<p>MCA III Mathematics Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades: 4 and 5 • Students making “medium” or “high” growth <p>Work Sampling Assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domain: Mathematical Thinking • Administration: Fall and Spring • Students are measured on a three point scales: “not yet”, “in process”, “proficient” • Mean average in each grade will show an increase from fall to spring of 0.6
<p><u>Reading</u> Growth goals for students who are in grades 4 and 5.</p> <p>Fall to Spring growth goal for students who are in K – 5.</p>	<p><u>Growth:</u> The number of PCCS students in grades 4 and 5 attaining “medium” or “high” levels of growth in reading will increase from 69.5% to 74.6% as measured by MCA III.</p> <p>PCCS students in each grade will, on average, show a significant increase in language and literacy scores from fall to spring.</p>	<p>MCA III Reading Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades: 4, 5 • Students making “medium” or “high” growth <p>Work Sampling Assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domain: Language and Literacy • Administration: Fall and Spring • Students are measured on a

		<p>three point scales: “not yet”, “in process”, “proficient”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mean average in each grade will show an increase from fall to spring of 0.6
Non-Academic Goals	Indicators of Success	Measurements
<p><u>Diversity and Cultural Awareness</u> Increase PCCS faculty’s awareness of issues connected to diversity and cultural awareness.</p>	<p><u>Standard:</u> 100% of classroom teachers will participate in diversity and cultural awareness focused professional development for a minimum of 5 hours</p> <p>A committee consisting of teachers and parents will be formed to study the issue and will meet 6 times during the year. Minutes will be distributed to members as well as all PCCS faculty.</p>	<p>Attendance logs of professional development</p> <p>Committee Meeting Minutes</p>
<p><u>Health and Wellness</u> Increase staff, student and community awareness of health and wellness practices and policies.</p>	<p><u>Standard;</u> 100% of classroom teachers will participate in professional development to review PE standards, curriculum and instructional practices for at least five hours.</p> <p>Under the leadership of the policy committee, the wellness policy will be reviewed and revised.</p> <p>A sub-committee will be established to review staff health and wellness issues.</p>	<p>Attendance logs of professional development.</p> <p>Board minutes that indicate revised policy was reviewed and approved.</p> <p>Surveys of staff to identify staff health/wellness needs. Minutes from sub-committee meetings.</p>

Summary of Academic Performance

- **Academic Goals:** PCCS used a number of instruments to assess student progress towards academic goals including the Work Sampling System (WSS) and the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment, Series II/III (MCA-II/III).

Changes in academic performance of PCCS students are noted as follows:

- PCCS students showed large percentage gains from fall-to-spring on WSS in the mathematical thinking domain (58.6%). This is 13 percentage points higher than last year.
- PCCS had two goals relating to progress on the WSS, one for Mathematical Thinking and one for Reading:
 - Students met the growth goal on the WSS in math. The average student made a .97 gain in math. Every grade level was above the .6 goal.
 - Students met the growth goal on the WSS in literacy and language. The average student made a .86 gain in this domain. Every grade level was at or above the .6 goal.
- On the MCA-III Reading, 65.50% of PCCS students met or exceeded proficiency; the proficiency rate exceeded statewide levels. On the MCA – III Mathematics, 63.60% of PCCS students met or exceeded proficiency, which was higher than statewide proportions. On the MCA – III Science test, 5th graders at PCCS had a proficiency rating of 71.40%, which was higher than the statewide proficiency rate (59.70%).
- PCCS met its MCA growth data goal for reading (83% of students in grades 4 and 5 made medium or high growth). PCCS did not meet the growth goal for math (71.70% of students in grades 4 and 5 made medium or high growth).

Work Sampling System

The Work Sampling System (WSS) was adopted by the Minnesota Department of Education from November 1999 to May 2003 in response to a Title I legislative requirement for evaluating student progress. The WSS is used to record a student’s knowledge and skills across an array of curricular areas at different time periods (fall, winter, and spring) in order to inform teaching staff. The WSS Guidelines provide a set of criteria for performance based on standards from curriculum organizations, national and state standards, and child development research. The Guidelines also provide teachers with a set of shared expectations for children’s learning.

Curricular areas assessed by the WSS include personal and social development, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, social studies, arts, and physical development. PCCS staff used two sections of the WSS to measure student academic progress towards accountability goals in 2012-2013: mathematical thinking and the literacy and language domain. Each domain consists of six to ten indicators. Students are scored on a three-point scale on each indicator: “Not Yet” (student cannot demonstrate indicator), “In Process” (student demonstrates indicator intermittently), and “Proficient” (student can

reliably demonstrate indicator). The Prairie Creek staff uses the electronic version of the Work Sampling System.

Whether or not a child is proficient within an entire domain depends on the average score on each indicator within the domain. A child who is proficient scores a “3” on an indicator, if the child is “In Process” he or she receives a “2”, and a child who is not yet demonstrating that indicator receives a “1”. Overall proficiency is determined by the total number of points possible in a domain (number of indicators multiplied by 3). A child who has a total score of more than 2/3 of the points possible is considered “proficient” in that domain.

Gains in an area are determined in two ways. The gain score is of a possible 2 points. For example, if a child moved from “not yet” to “proficient” in an indicator, he or she would have made a gain of two. To determine the average gain in a domain, a child’s gains for each indicator within the domain are added and divided by the number of indicators. While it may be tempting to equate a point gain to a year’s growth, they are not analogous. This instrument cannot measure growth accurately for students who are already at grade level in a particular indicator in the fall.

The percent gain is the proportion of the “2” possible levels of gain that the child scored. For example, if a child moves an entire level (from “not yet” to “in process”), their percentage gain would be 50% because they had grown half of the possible 2 levels. Of course, for children who begin the year “in process” (which is, in the case of 5th grade language and literacy, 57.1% of students) their *maximum gain* would be 50%. For children who begin the year proficient (21.4% of the same sample), no gains are possible according to this assessment.

PCCS students were observed by staff in fall 2012 and again in spring 2013. Table 2 below shows the proportions of students scoring as “In Process” or “Proficient” in the spring of 2013. In the mathematical thinking domain, all grade levels exceeded the .6 gain set forward as an indicator of success in the annual goals.

Table 8: Number of Students Scoring Proficient on the WSS Math Domain by Spring 2013

Math Domain - Spring 2013			
Grade	Not Yet	In Process	Proficient
K		3	27
1		2	28
2		13	16
3		7	25
4		15	13
5		9	19
Percent of all Students	0%	28%	72%

PCCS also measured average progress from fall 2012 to spring 2013 on the Mathematical Thinking domain.

Table 9: Growth from Fall to Spring in Math Domain

Gains Fall to Spring - Math Domain		
Grade	Gain	Percent Gain
K	.95	50.80%
1	.93	47.18%
2	1.13	81.88%
3	1.18	76.62%
4	.82	51.90%
5	.8	43.24%
Average Gain	.97	58.60%

The second academic goal focused on reading and was measured by students who made a .6 gain from fall to spring. All grade levels met or exceed that goal as seen in Table 5.

Table 10: Number of Students Scoring Proficient on the WSS Language and Literacy Domain by Spring 2013

Language and Literacy Domain - Spring 2013			
Grade	Not Yet	In Process	Proficient
K		4	26
1		2	28
2		14	15
3		8	24
4	1	11	16
5		7	21
Percent of all Students	.6%	26%	73.4%

Table 11: Growth from fall to spring in Language and Literacy

Gains Fall to Spring – Language and Literacy Domain		
Grade	Gains	Percent Gain
K	.9	47.12%
1	.9	46.39%
2	1.06	69.74%
3	1.0	59.88%
4	.7	39.55%
5	.6	28.99%
Average Gain	.86	48.61%

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments, Series II and III

The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) is a mandatory, statewide assessment of reading (Series III of the MCA) and mathematics (Series III of the MCA) performance in grades 3-8, writing in grade 9, reading in grade 10, and mathematics in grade 11. The MCA-II/III is used to measure students’ progress toward mastery of Minnesota’s academic standards and was first administered in spring 2006. Performance on the MCA-III is reported in scaled scores and achievement levels (does not meet expectations, partially meets expectations, meets expectations, exceeds expectations). Those students who achieve ‘meets expectations’ and ‘exceeds expectations’ are identified as having proficiency with Minnesota’s academic standards by the Minnesota Department of Education.

Table 6 shows the proportion of students meeting or exceeding proficiency for the last five administrations of the MCA-II/III for PCCS, schools in the Northfield Public School district, and

all schools in Minnesota. On the Reading test, PCCS students aligned with the average of Northfield schools, and exceeded the Minnesota average. On the Mathematics MCA-II/III, a smaller proportion of PCCS students met proficiency than Northfield schools and statewide proportions.

Recent years have seen multiple changes to the MCA assessments. Several factors need to be considered during the comparison of standardized test score data. Prairie Creek Community School continues to be mindful of the fact that its small cell size will likely result in significant swings in proficiency ratings from year to year. Consequently, the school is developing growth model goals for students in fourth and fifth grades that measure proficiency ratings for continuously enrolled students.

Table 12: Proportion of PCCS, Northfield Schools, and Greater Minnesota School Students Scoring At or Above Proficiency over the Last Five Administrations of the MCA

Year	Reading			Mathematics		
	PCCS	Northfield Schools	Minnesota Schools	PCCS	Northfield Schools	Minnesota Schools
2013 (Grade 3-5)	65.50%	66.40%	57.80%	63.60%	70.10%	62.60%
2012 (Grade 3-5)	82.00%	82.10%	76.00%	49.45%	74.40%	65.40%
2011 (Grade 3-5)	86.60%	83.70%	77.90%	54.90%	66.10%	63.70%
2010 (Grade 3-5)	81.40%	79.90%	72.30%	68.80%	76.60%	65.90%
2009 (Grade 3-5)	83.60%	84.20%	75.00%	59.00%	80.60%	74.10%

Please note: because the enrolled students differ for each school (e.g. 3rd grade students in 2012 were not tested as 2nd graders in 2011), it is inappropriate and inadvisable to make a direct comparison between performance in 2011 and 2012. Also, the MCA-III was used for mathematics for the first time in 2011 and in reading in 2013, also making comparisons to previous years inadvisable.

The MCA also measures progress in science education starting in grade 5. Table 7 below shows the proficiency rates in science from 2009 through 2013 at PCCS, Northfield Schools, and Minnesota Schools. As can be seen in the table, in 2013, 5th graders at PCCS had a proficiency rating of 71.4% which exceeded the rates of Northfield and the state average.

Table 13: Proportion of PCCS, Northfield Schools, and Greater Minnesota School Students Scoring At or Above Proficiency over the Last Five Administrations of the MCA.

Science			
Year	PCCS	Northfield Schools	Minnesota Schools
2013 (Grade 5)	71.4%	53.7%	59.7%
2012 (Grade 5)	86.7%	62.5%	57.7%
2011 (Grade 5)	66.7%	47.1%	46.0%
2010 (Grade 5)	32.0%	50.6%	66.7%
2009 (Grade 5)	68.5%	47.4%	45.0%

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

PCCS was above target in eleven categories that counted for AYP (participation, proficiency and attendance – math and reading sub-groups), and below target in one category (special education math sub-group for proficiency).

Multiple Measurement Rating (MMR)

PCCS Multiple Measurement Rating (MMR) for 2012-13 was 43.82%.

Table 14: Percent of students demonstrating medium or high growth on the MCA for past five years.

This growth chart indicates Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) measurement of student growth from spring to spring according to MCA math and reading scores.

	MCA Medium or High Growth				
	2008 - 2009	2009 -2010	2010 - 2011	2011 -2012	2012-2013
PCCS					
<i>Reading</i>	80.00%	80.00%	93.00%	69.50%	83.00%
<i>Math</i>	81.00%	76.00%	62.00%	79.60%	71.70%
Northfield					
<i>Reading</i>	82.00%	84.00%	84.00%	83.20%	75.85%
<i>Math</i>	82.00%	87.00%	72.00%	86.90%	74.40%
State of Minnesota					
<i>Reading</i>	75.00%	76.10%	81.73%	77.52%	72.10%
<i>Math</i>	72.80%	75.40%	73.16%	77.62%	72.60%

Note: The MCA-III was used for mathematics for the first time in 2011 and for reading in 2013 making comparisons to previous years inadvisable.

OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

In the 2012-2013 academic year, PCCS measured progress towards two non-academic goals. The first goal that PCCS reviewed was Diversity and Cultural Awareness and a focus on increasing PCCS faculty's awareness of issues connected to diversity and cultural awareness. The second goal was centered on Health and Wellness with a focus on increasing staff, student and community awareness of health and wellness practices and policies.

PCCS met their non-academic goals. Specifically:

Diversity and Cultural Awareness

This goal was measured by the standard that 100% of classroom teachers will participate in diversity and cultural awareness focused professional development for a minimum of 5 hours. Additionally, a committee consisting of teachers and parents was formed to study the issue and set a goal to meet 6 times during the year. Minutes were distributed to members as well as all PCCS faculty.

Table 15 – Diversity and Cultural Awareness Professional Development at Prairie Creek Community School 2012-2013

Diversity and Cultural Awareness Focused Professional Development	Number of hours
Teacher workshop day: Cultural awareness	3
Cultural awareness: review of spaces, reading and discussion, self-assessment, and school-wide cultural competence observation checklist	2
Cultural Awareness: Presentation and discussion with author Julie Landsman	2
Cultural Awareness Book club: <u>Other People's Children</u> by Lisa Delpit	2

Health/Wellness

This goal was measured by 100% of classroom teachers participating in professional development to review PE standards, curriculum and instructional practices for at least five hours. Under the leadership of the policy committee, the wellness policy was reviewed, revised and approved at the August board meeting. A sub-committee was established to review staff health and wellness issues and a survey conducted to assess staff needs.

Table 16: Physical Education Professional Development at Prairie Creek Community School 2012 -2013

Physical Education Focused Professional Development	Number of hours
Teacher workshop day: PE/Health	3
PE: Sharing our practice; breaking down the games we use to analyze the skills and habits they teach	2

Parent Satisfaction Survey

Each spring, PCCS distributes a parent engagement and satisfaction survey to parents/guardians of PCCS students. The survey was designed to measure four domains of parent satisfaction: (a) Community and Climate (8 questions); (b) Curriculum and Learning (8 questions); (c) Faculty and Staff (4 questions); and (d) Governance and Administration (5 questions). Questions in the four domains were close-ended with four response options (4 = Strongly Agree; 3 = Agree; 2 = Disagree; 1 = Strongly Disagree). A fifth domain (Progressive Education) was an open-ended question and parents were asked to identify ways that “PCCS is staying true to its mission as a progressive school.” The last section of the survey consisted of demographic questions (e.g., city of residence, volunteering) and was a mix of close-ended (yes/no, multiple choice) and open-ended questions. Of the 133 total families at PCCS, 106 completed the survey for a response rate of 80%.

The results of the survey were very positive.

- There was an overall positive response in all four domains: Faculty and Staff (99%), Community and Climate (99%), Curriculum and Learning (95%), and Governance and Administration (94%).
- Average ratings across the four survey domains of the Parent Satisfaction Survey were also very positive. On average, parent ratings were between 3 (“Agree”) and 4 (“Strongly Agree”) for Faculty and Staff (3.69), Community and Climate (3.66), Curriculum and Learning (3.47), and Governance and Administration (3.52). Averages were very similar to previous survey administrations.
- Parents overwhelmingly agreed that PCCS effectively implements a progressive education approach with students.
- Parents were asked if they have more than one child enrolled at Prairie Creek. The majority of parents (68.6%) stated they do not have more than one child enrolled. Parents were also asked to identify the city of their mailing address. A majority of parents listed Northfield (82.7%) as their mailing address.

- The largest proportions of parents indicated they volunteered at PCCS between 1-5 hours (39%), less than an hour (27.8%), or 6-10 hours (16.5%) per month and the most commonly reported ways they volunteered included: in the classroom, serving lunch, assisting with events, and assisting/chaperoning field trips. The number of parents who reported volunteering less than 1 hour a month increased by 12% from last year. A new parent/teacher group has formed to enhance opportunities for parent engagement.
- Of the respondents, 96.2% indicated they attend parent events at PCCS and the most commonly reported events attended were concerts, classroom events, May Day, and curriculum night. 100% of parents attended all of their child’s conferences, held three times throughout the year.

Table 17 displays the proportion of parents averaging positive responses across the four domains. Nearly all parents (99%) averaged positive responses when asked their opinions about faculty and staff an community and curriculum, while the large majority averaged positive responses, curriculum and learning (95%) and governance and administration (94%).

Table 17: Proportion of Parents Averaging Positive Responses across Domains

Domain	Proportion of Parents with an Average Positive Response (3.0 or higher)
Faculty and Staff	99%
Community and Climate	99%
Curriculum and Learning	95%
Governance and Administration	94%

Table 18 shows the average score for the four survey domains. As can be seen in the table, the average rating for all four domains fell between the “Agree” (a rating of 3) and “Strongly Agree” (a rating of 4) response options.

Table 18: Average Response on Parental Engagement and Satisfaction Survey over Time

Domain	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Faculty and Staff	3.68	3.72	3.70	3.69	3.69
Community and Climate	3.63	3.55	3.62	3.67	3.66
Curriculum and Learning	3.55	3.45	3.51	3.44	3.47
Governance and Administration	3.38	3.38	3.38	3.52	3.52

Statements with the highest proportion of “**Strongly Agree**” and “**Agree**” responses on the Parent Satisfaction Survey were:

- *“At PCCS, my child has many opportunities to make connections with children in other grades.” (100%)*
- *“PCCS teachers use their knowledge of individual learning styles to optimize learning.” (100%)*
- *“The School encourages my child to pursue areas of personal interest in daily learning.” (100%)*
- *“PCCS leadership promotes the mission of the school effectively.” (100%)*
- *“The Director is responsive to parent concerns.” (100%)*

Statements with the largest proportion of “**Disagree**” and “**Strongly Disagree**” responses were:

- *“I am satisfied with the foreign language experiences my child has at PCCS.” (17% weren’t satisfied) (28.4% in 2011-2012) (32.2% in 2010-2011)*
- *“I am satisfied with my child’s progress in becoming a competent and confident mathematician.” (10.5% weren’t satisfied) (12.6% in 2011-2013) (14.5% in 2010-2011)*
- *“I feel informed about the work of the Board.” (21.6% didn’t feel informed)(18% in 2011-2012)*

In all other areas, well over 90% of parents were satisfied. In two of the three areas, growth has been continuous for three years. Communication from the board continues to be a need felt by the community. Please note that for the statements that had the largest proportions of Disagree and Strongly Disagree, the majority of parents still responded positively to the items.

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES AND IMPLEMENTATION

In addition to the feedback from parents, PCCS staff reflected on the successes and challenges encountered by their program this year. The following list represents staff perceptions of successes, innovative and best practices used at PCCS, challenges, and future plans for the upcoming school year.

- **Environmental Education**
 - The school continues to be innovative in taking the student learning opportunities beyond the classroom walls. Fifth grade students, for example, continue to spend a week each winter at the Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center.
 - A butterfly garden project was completed with parent volunteer support.
 - The school landlords were not able to fund a proposed “outdoor classroom” pavilion space to support environmental education on our school grounds. However, the school has created an outdoor classroom space with a circle of sturdy benches. Additionally, a shed has been constructed to store and manage equipment for outdoor learning needs.
- **Math**
 - PCCS developed a school-wide math plan that revised, articulated and mapped the school’s math curriculum from team to team. It was approved by the school board and published on the school website.
 - Faculty continues to engage in math professional development that supports the excellence our math program in a progressive education setting. Six teachers participated in a 24-hour series of DMI (Developing Mathematical Ideas) training.
- **Diversity and Cultural Awareness**
 - PCCS faculty engaged in a major study of diversity and cultural awareness. Respected speakers, including author Julie Landsman, provided professional development to staff. Faculty also engaged in cultural awareness training and reviewed curriculum and resources from a diversity perspective.
- **Curriculum Mapping**
 - Prairie Creek stays true to its mission by providing students with opportunities to learn through interdisciplinary themes. For both accountability and planning purposes, the school created a template by which to track themes and projects with alignment to standards. This new mapping system was implemented and reviewed in 2012-2013 and will be updated throughout the 2013 – 2014 school year.
- **The Arts**
 - PCCS continued to embrace arts education. Under the leadership of the visual arts and music teachers, the school explored new ways to share the process of arts education with families.

- An event called “Woven Voiced” celebrating the visual arts, music and Spanish was hosted for the community. Woven Voices was a collaboration of the specialist teachers.
- PCCS collaborated with the Flying Foot Forum and Carleton College in a dance residency that culminated with a performance of Alice In Wonderland at the Weitz Creativity Center on Carleton’s campus.
- **Employee Manual**
 - A comprehensive employee manual was created by the policy committee and reviewed and approved by the school board. It will be used by staff beginning the 2013-2014 school year.

FUTURE PLANS

- **Community Connections**
 - The school continues to be innovative in providing opportunities for parent engagement and involvement. A staff/faculty sub-committee will organize and schedule a series of events for parents and families to build deeper community connections throughout the year.
- **Arts Initiatives**
 - Prairie Creek will collaborate with St. Olaf College in 2013 – 2014 to create and perform an opera. This month-long residency will see Prairie Creek students and staff working alongside St. Olaf faculty and students.
 - The 2013-2014 school year will see the launch of the Prairie Creek orchestra. The orchestra will be open to all students in fourth and fifth grades.
- **Service Learning**
 - Prairie Creek will host a Family Service event in the winter of 2013-2014.
- **Health Services**
 - A part-time nurse has been added to the Prairie Creek faculty for the 2013 – 2014 school year.
 - Under the leadership of the Health/Wellness committee, a Puberty Education curriculum was developed and reviewed. It will be implemented in the fourth and fifth grade team in the 2013 -2014 school year.
- **Extra-Curricular Activities**
 - Prairie Creek will host a Lego club. Staff, with parent volunteer support, will lead the activities. Students will study robotics and engage in a Lego league and competition.
- **Facility Management**
- With the support of the school landlord, PCCS will work with a facility management company this year to manage building systems and strategically plan.
- **Title 1 Services**
 - PCCS continues to program for the academic needs of all student. In 2013 – 2014 a Title 1 teacher will be hired to extend the Title 1 program to serve students in both the areas of math and literacy.
- **Professional Development**

PCCS will incorporate an innovative professional development committee structure. Faculty will lead and develop activities in the areas of academics, social and emotional intelligence, and progressive education.

SCHOOL FINANCIAL INFORMATION

As a charter school, we are responsible for the education of children and for having a clear knowledge of business and fiscal responsibilities. Ona Sheets is the Business Manager and oversees HR, payroll and the business office. Keith Johnson is the Chief Financial Officer and attends all monthly Finance Committee and Board meetings, drafting detailed monthly financial statements including year-to-date budget versus actual statement, disbursement listing, cash flow projection, and a summary of fiscal highlights since the last Board meeting. The Prairie Creek Board and Finance Committee carefully review these documents each month.

Prairie Creek has slowly built a fund balance reserve, finishing the 2012-2013 school year with a fund balance of \$579,844.93. This figure is 34.9% of Prairie Creek's operating budget, which has kept the school fiscally sound and helped it to weather the holdback requirements of recent years.

The audited Financial Statements for the year ending June 30, 2013, show General Fund total revenue at \$1,734,385 and General Fund total expenses in the amount of \$1,661,396 resulting in a Net Income of \$72,989.

Larson Allen, an independent auditor, has conducted PCCS's financial analysis. PCCS will submit audited financial statements to Northfield Public Schools and the Minnesota Department of Education on or before December 31, 2013.

Appendix A

Registration with Minnesota Attorney General's Office

THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE OFFICE OF THE MINNESOTA ATTORNEY GENERAL



The Office of Attorney General Lori Swanson

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More about Attorney General [Lori Swanson](#)

Charities

Search Results

Organization Name: **PRAIRIE CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOL**
Federal ID#: **421530416**
For Fiscal Year Ending: **6/30/2011**

Income

Direct Public Support	\$32,950
Government Grants	\$1,514,546
Other Revenue	\$183,061
Total Revenue	\$1,730,557

Expenses

Amount Spent for Program or Charitable Purposes	\$1,382,448
Management/General Expense	\$229,686
Fundraising Expense	\$0
Total Expenses	\$1,612,134

Excess/Deficit: \$118,423
Total Assets: \$1,065,612
Total Liabilities: \$108,953
End of Year Fund Bal/Net Worth: \$956,659

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