



**Marine Area Community School dba River Grove
Annual Report 2021-22**

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Introduction

Marine Area Community School dba River Grove is a public charter school serving 225 students in grades K through 6. River Grove offers an innovative place-based curriculum that emphasizes project-based and community-centered learning. The 2021-22 school year was our fifth in operation and we are proud to continue to build a unique educational experience for students in the St. Croix Valley area.

Mission

River Grove's mission is to utilize the natural resources, history, arts, and civic stewardship of the community as a foundation for the study of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, physical education, art and other curriculum subjects. The place-based learning environment will be student-centered, designed by teachers, and reinforced and supported by the local community.

School Description

Marine Area Community School dba River Grove

District #4254

First Year of Operation: 2017-2018

Grades Served: Kindergarten through 6th

Authorizer: The Minnesota Guild
James Zacchini, Executive Director
jim.zacchini@guildschools.org

School Calendar and Hours of Operation

First Day of School: September 1, 2021

Last Day of School: June 2, 2022

River Grove is open for student instruction Monday-Friday from 8:30-3:15pm

This report outlines and details River Grove's governance, structures, academic program, accountability data and innovative practices.

School Enrollment and Demographics

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Enrollment Total	Average Daily Membership
2017-18	22	25	22	41	20	20	12	162	160.02
2018-19	30	24	25	24	46	17	18	184	183.43
2019-2020	27	32	28	24	26	43	12	192	191.84
2020-2021	29	33	31	36	27	25	21	202	202.44
2021-22	39	38	32	36	36	22	10	213	211.08

School Year	Free and/or Reduced	Special Education %	District 834 Residents %
2017-18	9.2%	26%	84.5%
2018-19	7.1%	28%	87.5%
2019-2020	7%	31%	88%
2020-2021	5.4%*	31%	86%
2021-22	N/A*	31%	81%

*School participated in MDE's Seamless Food program that provided free lunch for all students as part of COVID Pandemic relief.

Student Attendance, Attrition & Mobility

2021-22 Student Attendance Data

Grade	Attendance Rate (17-18)	Attendance Rate (18-19)	Attendance (19-20)	Attendance (20-21)	Attendance (21-22)
K	93.3%	96%	95.79%	97.89%	93.67%
1	97.5%	95.2%	93.74%	99.15%	89.73%
2	94.8%	96.3%	95.01%	98.26%	96.40%
3	96.7%	95.2%	93.38%	97.69%	93.51%
4	95.1%	96.7%	93.86%	97.53%	91.87%
5	96.5%	95.3%	94.57%	96.79%	94.45%
6	96.7%	96.5%	93.54%	98.71%	88.99%
Total	95.9%	96%	94.36%	98.03%	92.65%*

**The COVID-19 pandemic had great effect on attendance numbers*

Student Attrition:

Grade	Students	Re-enrolled for	Rate
K	38	33	13.2%
1	38	37	2.7%
2	33	33	0%
3	36	33	8.3%
4	35	35	0%
5	22	12	45.5%
OVERALL	202	183	21-22 9.5% 20-21:18% 19-20: 20.6%* (18-19: 9.7%)

*Increased rate attributed to COVID-Related homeschool choices and alternative 6th grade options

Innovative Practices

Despite the challenges of the COVID 19 the school continued to move forward with initiatives in key areas:

Place-Based Learning: At River Grove, we believe that “our community is our curriculum”. For the 2021-22 school year we enhanced this initiative through various efforts.

Some highlights:

- The school continued a partnership with Edvisions to develop student centered learning initiatives
- Classrooms partnered community organizations such as the Wild Rivers Conservancy and National Park Service to hold campus experiences and field trips
- The school made deliberate efforts to expand outdoor classroom spaces and restore trails to enhance the student experience
- 6th grade students were able to re-establish the “Widjiwagan Trip” a 4 night overnight trip to Northern Minnesota with significant time spent on immersive environmental studies.

Project-Based Learning: The school worked with Edvisions over the summer of 2021 to create the “Experience Fridays” concept that was implemented during the 21-22 school year. Each grade partnered with a peer grade to create deliberate multi grade community/place-based experiences and projects on campus. This concept was extremely successful, and will be further developed in the future.

Academic Performance:

2021-22 Mathematics Goals:

Goal 1:

“River Grove will show positive student growth measured by state accountability measures; the School will show a Growth Z Score of ‘0’ at the end of the first year and post a positive Z Score in all subsequent years during the contract period.”

Progress to Date: *A Z score is no longer available by the MDE in this area*

Goal 2:

“In cross-cohort performance, River Grove students who are continuously enrolled (1 October) will exceed MCA proficiency rates in reference to comparable schools. Year 1: same%; Year 2: 5%; Year 3: 7%; Year 4: 10%; Year 5: 12%”

Progress to Date:

River Grove MCA Scores (Grades 3-6): Math :47.9% Math: 42% (20-21)

State of Minnesota Average MCA (Grades 3-6): 41.7%

Summary: The school continues to use “Everyday Math” and “Go Math” as its primary Math curriculums. Additionally, students are assessed multiple times per year on progress using NWEA MAP Growth. Students are placed into small group and individual interventions based on assessment results. The school also partners with MN Math Corp for interventions. Finally, for the 21-22 school year, River Grove continued to implement the BARR (Building Assets, Reducing Risks) program which implements strategic behavioral and academic interventions.

The school plans to partner with the Minnesota Math Corp for the 22-23 school year to assist in strategic interventions.

2021-22 Reading Goals:

Goal 1: Reading Growth

“River Grove will show positive student growth measured by state accountability measures; the School will show a Growth Z Score of ‘0’ at the end of the first year and post a positive Z Score in all subsequent years during the contract period.”

Progress to Date: *A Z score is no longer available by the MDE in this area.*

Goal 2: Academic and Achievement-Proficiency, Reading

“In cross-cohort performance, River Grove students who are continuously enrolled (1 October) will exceed MCA proficiency rates in reference to comparable schools. Year 1: same%; Year 2: 5%; Year 3: 7%; Year 4: 10%; Year 5: 12%. “

Progress to Date:

River Grove MCA Scores (Grades 3-6): Reading 55.2% Reading: 58% (20-21)

State of Minnesota Average MCA (Grades 3-6): 48.6%

Summary: River Grove students are assessed multiple times per year on progress using NWEA MAP Growth. Students are placed into small group and individual interventions based on assessment results. The school also partners with MN Reading Corp for interventions. Finally, for the 21-22 school year, River Grove continued to implement the BARR (Building Assets, Reducing Risks) program which implements strategic behavioral and academic interventions

2021-22 Science Goal

Goal 1: Academic Achievement-Proficiency, Science

“In cross-cohort performance, River Grove students who are continuously enrolled (1 October) will exceed MCA proficiency rates in reference to comparable schools. Year 1: same%; Year 2: 5%; Year 3: 7%; Year 4: 10%; Year 5: 12%.”

River Grove MCA Scores: Science 50%

State of Minnesota Average MCA: Science 42%

Summary: River Grove continues to use McGraw Hill Science curriculum supplemented through place-based experiences. The school continues to partner with the Wild Rivers Conserency to offer place-based science exploration and experiences. Additionally, Mystery Science curriculum was purchased and implemented to assist during periods of distance/hybrid learning. Next year the school plans to purchase a Reading/Science curriculum through National Geographic.

2020-21 Teacher Satisfaction and Confidence Goal

“Annually, 90 percent of teachers will post that they agree or strongly agree that the School fosters a professional environment that encourages innovation and creativity through professional autonomy and collaboration for the benefit of improved student achievement.”

Progress to Date: In a survey distributed to teaching staff members in the summer of 2019, 100 percent of teachers strongly agree that the School fosters a professional environment that encourages innovation and creativity through professional autonomy and collaboration for the benefit of improved student achievement. The school did not complete a survey for the 2021-22 school year.

Summary: River Grove continues to give teachers autonomy in classroom practices and curriculum. Our partnership formed with Edvisions to create new opportunities in place-based learning was teacher designed and implemented.

Staffing 2021-22 School Year

Student to Teacher Ratio

In the 2021-22 school year, River Grove employed 17 FTE licensed teachers to serve 212 students in grades K-6. This included 4 special education teachers. Excluding special education teachers, the 2021-22 student to classroom teacher ratio was 12.47:1 (12.47 students to 1 classroom teacher).

Teacher Retention:

River Grove retained 88% of teachers for the 22-23 school year. This is an improvement over the previous year (73%).

Name	Assignment	File Folder Number	Returning for 22-23 School Year	Not Returning 2021-22 School Year
Jessica Hansen	Kindergarten	412108	X	
Sydney Fuerest	Kindergarten	1003490		X
Elly Johnson	1st Grade	352637	X	
Jaime Souza	1st Grade	1008693	X	
Emily Talbott	2nd Grade	491559	X	
Madison Boesel	2nd Grade	1000852	x	
Emily McDonald	3rd Grade	489292	x	
Annie Beck	3rd Grade	484105	x	
Jody Dick	4th Grade	473141	x	
Jo Heide	4th Grade	506174		
Adam Johnson	5th Grade	475055	x	
Dawn Kroohn	6th Grade	368439		x
Molly Kaliher	Special Ed	352637		x
Michelle Vrambout	Special Ed	513289	x	
Katie Owen	Special Ed	512011	x	
Tanya Ferguson	Special Ed	345213	X	
Katie Bruns	Physical Ed	1001006	X	

Governance and Management

Election Results

Four candidates ran for three open seats on the River Grove Board of Directors:

Reelected in May 2022 were the following board members:

Katie Bruns

Marcella Ost

Angie Hong

Current Board Roster:

Member's Name*	Effective Start Date*	Current Term Expiration Date*	Officer Role*	Email Address
Angie Hong (Parent)	7/1/2019	6/30/2022	Secretary	ahong@marineareaschool.org
Lisa Dochniak (Community Member)	10/20/2020	6/30/2023	Member	ldochniak@marineareaschool.org
Katie Bruns Licensed Teacher: 1001006	4/1/2021	6/30/2022	Member	kbruns@marineareaschool.org
Annie Beck Licensed Teacher: #484105	10/20/2020	6/30/2023	Member	jhenschen@marineareaschool.org
Jessica Hansen Licensed Teacher: #412108	07/1/2021	6/30/2024	Vice Chair	jhansen@marineareaschool.org
Katherine Hardie (Parent)	07/1/2021	6/30/2024	Treasurer	khardie@marineareaschool.org
Marcella Ost (Parent)	7/1/2019	6/30./2022	Board Chair	most@marineareaschool.org

Board Member Training

Throughout the course of the year board members completed various training on a variety of subjects. Member Hardie completed required new member training. Additionally, The Anton Group provided annual finance training for all board members.

Future Plans:

River Grove hopes to continue to develop partnerships with key regional and state-wide organizations. Edvisions has been a key partner in the development of project and place-based learning at our school. The school will hold joint training and work sessions with Edvisions during the Summer of 2022 to continue to advance initiatives.

Additionally, the school will start a project with Hamline University and The Freshwater Society on outdoor/place based education. Three hands-on weekend workshops have been planned for the 22-23 school year that involve high level regional partners.

Also, the school plans to remodel our Special Education system into a “co-teaching” model. We believe this research driven model will promote equity and inclusion in our classrooms and best serve our growing population of students receiving special education services.

Finally, the school continues to have conversations with the Manitou Fund about a future partnership and long-term security of our school at a forest property. The school will also begin efforts to create a ABC (affiliated Building Company) during the 22-23 school year.

The school was thankful to receive a 5-year contract renewal from the MN Guild during the 21-22 school year.

Statutory Purposes:

River Grove worked towards MN Statutory Purposes in multiple ways:

- 1. Increase learning opportunities for all pupils-** The school continues to utilize a unique place-based student centered approach to learning. Partnerships with local entities, such as the Wild Rivers Conservancy to provide curriculum and interactions with the St Croix River Valley. The school also continues to work with Edvisions on advancement of student centered learning. Multiple workshops were held during the 21-22 school year in this area.
- 2. Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods-** During the 21-22 school the school advanced new teaching methods, most significantly in the area of place-based education. Through the school's innovative "Experience Fridays" received direct- hands-on learning opportunities with community assets in a project-based setting.
- 3. Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site-** River Grove teachers continue to play an integral role in the learning program and leadership of the school. River Grove staff have significant autonomy in the design and implementation of the learning program. This was especially evident at the beginning of the school year, where teachers designed and implemented Experience Fridays. Additionally, teachers play a key role in hiring their colleagues as multiple teachers served on the hiring committee.

Finances

During the 2021-22 School Year the school continued to navigate a difficult financial climate and circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic. To begin the year we had several families make a decision not to attend at the last minute, as a direct result of the schools decisions on COVID-19 preventive measures, affecting our student enrollment.

The school was also faced with additional challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic including a reduction in student recruitment, an increase in safety related costs as well as the inability to meet fundraising targets. Additionally, the school needed to continue to fund staff for additional substitute, distancing and health related needs.

Finally, the school's decision to provide its own transportation services for its families continues to create a burden on the General Fund Budget. This is an approximate expense of \$166,700 to the school. While this expense allows the school flexibility and better overall service it does prevent funds from being allocated in other areas.

As a result of these challenges the school ended the year with a fund balance of \$186,216 or (5.7%).

Appendix A
Non Licensed Administrator Professional Development Plan

Employee:Drew Goodson

School Year-22-23

Goal 1: Improve knowledge of Innovative Project/Place Based Education curriculum

Action steps:

- Extend Partnership with St. Croix Rivers Association
- Attend MAAP Conference
- Research and attend trainings on innovative school practices
- Network with other Place Based focused schools
- Continue and guide Edvisions partnership

Goal 2: Explore new ways to market and tell the story of the school

Action steps:

- Attend trainings on marketing and digital storytelling
- Attend MACS Meetings and Network Events
- Attend community events and meetings in St Croix Valley community