

Higher Ground Academy

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL DISTRICT #4027-07

SCHOOL YEAR 2022-2023

WORLD'S BEST WORKFORCE and ANNUAL REPORT

Approved by the board October 17, 2023



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1. School Information:

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Website: hgacademy.org

GRADES SERVED: K - 12

YEAR OPENED: 1999

MISSION

The mission of Higher Ground Academy (HGA) is to prepare students to become successful, ethical, and responsible citizens who are ready for all the challenges of the twenty-first century. To that end, students graduating from the HGA will be college ready, stewards of the environment, and ethical citizens who value hard work, honesty, integrity, equity, and diversity.

VISION

The tenets of HGA are that all children can learn; that children learn all of the time; that experience teaches immediately; and that expectations are built upon experience. Therefore, the vision is to encourage students' maximum intellectual and leadership development to meet 21st century standards of education through concerted preparation to pursue post-secondary and post baccalaureate studies. It is intended that HGA students will be adequately prepared to assume leadership roles in their communities and fields of endeavor.

AUTHORIZER INFORMATION

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

The authorizing vision of Osprey Wilds 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 Earth.

Erin Anderson, Director of Charter School Authorizing

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ospreywilds.org/charter-school-division/

HIGHER GROUND ACADEMY'S MARSHALL CAMPUS RECEIVES A FACELIFT!

Higher Ground Academy (HGA) acquired its Marshall Avenue building in the spring of 1999. Prior to becoming the home of HGA, the building was occupied by a small check printing company. Soon after acquiring the building, HGA renovated it in order to meet its needs. That was the last time major refurbishing was done to the building since it was acquired. After years of use and wear and tear, the building's condition was shoddy and in need of repair. Some areas within the building were not meeting the school's needs.

As a result, the HGA school district launched a project aimed at three goals. The first goal was to improve security. Thus, the entrance of the building was transformed so as visitors can be screened before entering the school. In addition, the front door is made of highly secured materials.

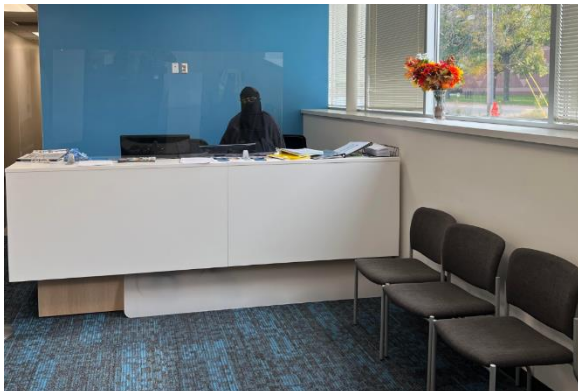
The second goal allowed for more space to be allotted for small group work. There has been an increase in the number of students needing one-on-one or small group support. Unfortunately, the available space for such work was not meeting the demand. As a solution, the district divided the main office area into cubicles instead of the previous traditional office space that was being used. By doing so, enough office space was created to accommodate all administrators in the building. It is worth noting that this particular space, once occupied by four, is now accommodating nine.

A space that was once the school's cafeteria was converted into a gymnasium. For the last 24 years, HGA rented space from the City of St. Paul, i.e., at the Oxford Community and Recreation Center. In addition to pollution caused by buses and the high expense, transporting students to public places raised a question of safety among HGA students and staff. As an alternative measure, HGA staff suggested transforming the school's cafeteria into a gym space as well as utilizing a wide gallery in the building as a feeding space for children. As observed in the pictures below, those suggestions were changed into actions. Students and staff are no longer at risk at a public space, the school has diminished the costs of rent, and fuel and the environment is all the better, because of the building improvements. The HGA community also has an aesthetically appealing cafeteria space.

HGA also added more space to the existing library by removing a wall between it and a neighboring room. This space, too was renovated and made aesthetically appealing by adding glass windows, replacing the carpet, and changing the color of the paint on the walls.

Please see pictures below:

Front Office





Gym



Cafeteria



Library



Higher Ground Academy Accolades

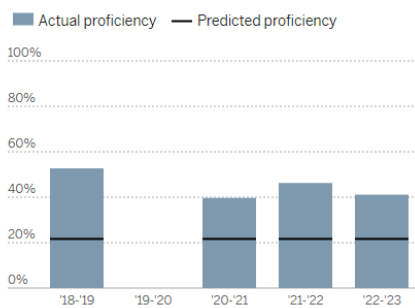
Minneapolis Star Tribune

Each year, the Minneapolis Star Tribune identifies schools that “beat the odds.” Beat the odds school, according to the Star Tribune, are schools that “showed better-than-expected test results” despite enrolling “higher numbers of lower-income families.” According to the News Letter, concentration of low income students is used as a metric because research on student achievement shows that “a direct correlation between academic achievement and family income.” In FY23, as in the years before, HGA’s two schools are identified as beat the odds schools. See tables below.

Reading

2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

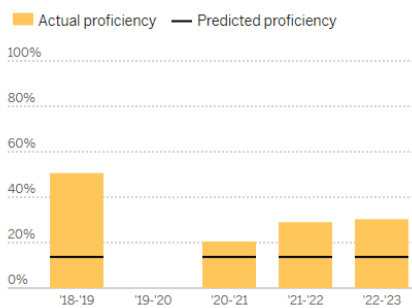
Overall, student proficiency at this school beat the odds for the year; our model predicted a proficiency rate of 22% but the actual proficiency rate was 41%.



Math

2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

Overall, student proficiency at this school beat the odds for the year; our model predicted a proficiency rate of 14% but the actual proficiency rate was 30%.

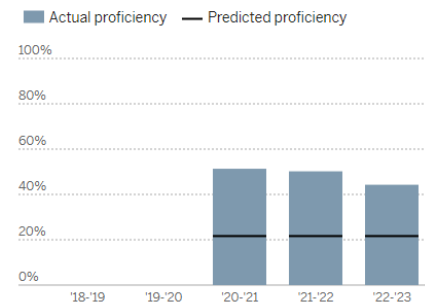


Higher Ground Secondary Academy

Reading

2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

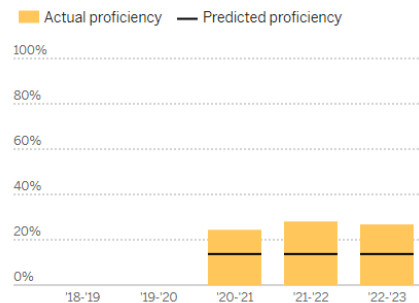
Overall, student proficiency at this school beat the odds for the year; our model predicted a proficiency rate of 22% but the actual proficiency rate was 44%.



Math

2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

Overall, student proficiency at this school beat the odds for the year; our model predicted a proficiency rate of 14% but the actual proficiency rate was 27%.



US News and World Report

In its most recent ranking of the 25,000 public high schools in the nation the US News and World Report ranked Higher Ground Secondary Academy (HGSA) 6,359th. That means HGSA is among the top 25% of high schools in the nation. Compared to the 927 high schools in the state of Minnesota, HGSA is ranked 108th. Accordingly, HGSA is among the top 12% of high schools in the state. It should be noted that HGSA had received favorable ratings from US News and World report consistently.



High Ground Secondary Academy

1471 Brewster Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota | (651) 369-7555

All Rankings

- #6,359 in National Rankings
- #108 in Minnesota High Schools
- #83 in Minneapolis, MN Metro Area High Schools
- #652 in Charter High Schools

SCORECARD		64.03
Mathematics Proficiency		64%
Reading Proficiency		69%
Science Proficiency		47%
Graduation Rate		91%

2. Implementation of Primary and Additional Statutory Purpose (s):

The primary purpose of Higher Ground Academy (HGA) is to improve learning and achievement. Although more work remains to be done, the HGA's record exhibits improved learning for many of its students. Among other attributes,

HGA's high graduation rate, college acceptance rate, and the large percentage of its students who stay enrolled in college two years or more after joining college (<https://rc.education.mn.gov/#mySchool/p--3>) testify to this fact.

HGA implements three key strategies to improve the learning and achievement of all pupils. See the following:

1. Adoption and implementation of curriculum that is aligned with Minnesota's academic standards.
2. Establishing high expectations and a system of accountability for students and staff.
3. Identifying and providing precise and personalized support to at risk students.

HGA expects that all teachers will teach the curriculum that is adopted by the district. This curriculum is aligned with the education standards of the state of Minnesota. However, teachers have flexibility to supplement the school mandated curriculum with sound educational ideas and resources that they believe will improve student learning. HGA does periodic revision of its curriculum. For example, the school completed revision of its kindergarten through grade six mathematics curriculum this summer, this revision was prompted by the under performance of the district's students on state mandated mathematics assessment.

HGA students and staff are held to high standards and that all learners can achieve educational goals. Furthermore, there is a belief that all students can meet Minnesota state academic standards provided their social and cultural needs and preferences for learning modality are met. School staff members make a concerted effort to support and meet the needs of students. This effort is coupled with a system of accountability for students and staff. Students are given multiple opportunities by teachers to complete work. Student performance on assessments is one criteria used to evaluate teachers.

HGA identifies and supports students at risk of failing. A data-based system is implemented to identify such students. These particular students are supported by the school's support programs both during and after school. Many of those who are at risk have social-emotional and behavioral needs in addition to their academic struggles. Therefore, HGA has adopted a multi-tiered support system to support all those students who have issues that could prevent them from benefiting from their educational experience at HGA.

3. Student Enrollment and Demographics:

Table I below presents enrollment levels from fiscal year (FY) 21 to FY 23. Typically, HGA enrollment fluctuates during a school year when families move from one part of the metro area to another. Often students transfer from one school to another. With the exception of FY 23, data reported in this and subsequent sections are from one specific time i.e., the end of the school year from the previous two school years. The FY 23 data is from the end of the third week of the current school year which was September 21, 2023.

Unlike the previous two fiscal years, HGA reached its enrollment target in FY 23. Some families who transferred their children out of the district due to family relocation to the suburbs, decided to return their children to HGA. Furthermore, the district decided to expand its transportation routes to include some of the Twin Cities suburbs, particularly to those where our families are moving. Enrollment for the current fiscal year has increased a slightly above projection. The projection was 1083. At the beginning of the fourth week of the school year, enrollment was at 1118.

Table 1: Student Enrollment

Number of Students Enrolled	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Preschool or Pre K	0	0	0
Kindergarten	98	86	99
1st Grade	96	87	92
2nd Grade	85	92	83
3rd Grade	88	77	87
4th Grade	76	87	81
5th Grade	79	79	88
6th Grade	89	82	91
7th Grade	91	84	86
8th Grade	84	93	92
9th Grade	85	84	89
10th Grade	71	79	82
11th Grade	52	72	76
12th Grade	44	61	66
Total	1038	1063	1118
Total ADM (Average Daily Membership) for year	1038	1063	1118

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS:

Analysis of Higher Ground Academy's (HGA) demographic characteristics reflects stability in the composition of the student population. Female students continue to outnumber male counterparts by a small margin (543 males: 574 females). Ethnically, the student population continues to be predominantly African American/African descent. Special education students (SPED) showed only a slight change in population from year to year. It grew from 32 in FY 22 to 35 in FY 23. The only area that shows significant change is the number of English Language Learners (ELL), however that population seems to have stabilized during the last three school years. That number has increased from 127 in FY 19 to 257 in FY 20 and to almost 400 in FY 21. The number of ELL students decreased to 315 in FY 22. Towards the middle of the FY 23 school year, HGA experienced an influx of new immigrant students from Ethiopia, Syria, and Afghanistan. As a result, the district's ELL population increased by 65 from the previous fiscal year.

Table II: Demography

Demographic Trends	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (est.)
Total Enrollment	1038	1063	1118
Male	509	521	543
Female	529	642	575
Special Education	38	32	35
English Learners	393	315	380
Free/Reduced Priced Lunch	1004	991	1042
Black, not of Hispanic Origin	1036	1051	1096
Hispanic/Latino	0	0	0
Asian/Pacific Islander	0	0	0
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0	0	0
White, not of Hispanic Origin	0	0	21
Two or more races	0	0	0

4. Student Attendance, Attrition and Mobility:

STUDENT ATTENDANCE:

Since FY 22, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) has been using what it refers to “consistent attendance percentage” as the criteria to gauge student attendance. The MDE defines consistent attendance as percentage of students who have attended 90% or more of the school days during a school year. Based on this criteria, HGA’s consistency attendance rate in FY 23 was 84.4%. That is a slight improvement from the 82% during the previous school year.

The exact reasons for the lower consistent attendance rate at HGA both in FY 22 and FY 23 are unknown. However, the district believes that the lingering effects of COVID-19 that is, its impact both on the students’ health as well as their social-emotional well-being is related.

Table III: Consistent Attendance

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Consistent Attendance Percentage	95.8%	82%	84.4%

STUDENT ATTRITION:

Student attrition continues to be a concern at HGA. Exit surveys continue to show that the most significant reason for student attrition is family mobility. As families establish residence in locations far away from the service area of the school, students transfer from HGA to other school districts. In recent years, residential rentals have increased in the Twin Cities. As a result, many low income families, including those whose children attend HGA, have been forced to move to areas that are a considerable distance from the school. Thus, HGA has lost many students. In response to this

phenomena, the district's service area has been expanded. However, that has impacted HGA's transportation cost significantly.

Table IV: Continuous Enrollment

Percentage of students* who were continuously enrolled between October 1 of the 2020-2021 school year and October 1 of the 2021-22 school year.	<u>94%</u>
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Ninety-four percent (94%) of HGA students were continuously enrolled between October 1, 2022 and the end of the FY 23 school year. This shows that transfers to other schools occur either during the summer season of June, July, and August or the first few weeks of the school year.

Table V: Continuous Enrollment

Percentage of students* who continued enrollment in the school from spring 2021 to October 1, 2022.	<u>97%</u>
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STUDENT MOBILITY

HGA's mobility rate showed a sizable decline in FY 21 (from 19.0% in FY 20 to 15.2% in FY 21).

Unfortunately, it increased by point eight percent (.8%) in FY 22 (from 15.2% in FY 21 to 16% in FY 22), considering the change in percentage. The actual number of students that transferred from the school during the summer of FY 22 was less by 12 compared to that of the previous FY (18 in FY 21 and 136 in FY 22). In FY23, student mobility rate went up to an all-time high, 22.3%. Perhaps the number one reason behind this increase is the continued relocation of families to locations that are far from our two schools.

Table VI: Student Mobility

	Summer Transfers 1st In	Number of students on Oct. 1	Mid-year Transfers In	Mid-year Transfers Out	Total Mid-year Transfers	Mobility Index* (as a percent)
2019-20	78	977	112	72	184	19.0
2020-21	148	1033	90	85	157	15.2
2021-22	136	1025	87	77	164	16.0
2022-23	201	1054	69	167	236	22.3

*Total mid-year transfers (in and out) divided by number of students on October 1.

Table VII: Enrolled 95% and More of the HGA School Year.

Percentage of students who were enrolled for 95% or more of the 2022-23 school year.	<u>78%</u>
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Seventy-eight percent (78%) of HGA FY 22 students were enrolled 95% or more during the school year. Which means close to twenty percent (30%) of the students either joined after school started or left sometime during the school year.

5. Educational Approach and Curriculum

5.1 Program Philosophy:

The educational philosophy of HGA is that all children can learn. That philosophy translates into a belief that the purpose of education is to help learners succeed within their own community as well as the greater society. The term “succeed” represents three definitions: Succeed: 1) actualized one potential 2) being equipped with knowledge and skills that include but are not limited to academic content knowledge, problem solving skills, inquisitiveness, citizenship, team work, interpersonal skills; these skills are required to be admitted to a college of choice, do well in post academic studies, find and maintain employment, and become a good citizen 3) having developed multicultural skills that allow one to function positively within and outside their own culture including diverse cultures. To achieve these objectives, HGA has adopted curricula and pedagogical practices that are described below:

5.2 Standard Based Curriculum:

HGA utilizes curricula and instructional techniques that are standards based. Standards serve a number of purposes in education. Educators know that if implemented effectively, a standard based curriculum guarantees every child gets not just comparable but also quality education. Before states mandated educational standards, the quality of education differed significantly from school to school and from classroom to classroom. Many students were at a disadvantage and received lesser quality education. It is well documented that students that received lesser quality education were and continue to be children from low income families. Standards guarantee a coherent curriculum, one that has interrelated elements and is appropriately scaffold, a standard based curriculum makes sense as a whole. Without standards, teachers often teach unrelated skills and information, content that doesn't make sense as a whole. In simple terms, what students learn one week has no relationship with what they will learn in the following week. Learning from such a curriculum is superficial at best. Standards are written with a vision of the future. One objective of educational standards is to ensure that every student will meet upcoming challenges of post-secondary education. Minnesota standards are understood and accepted by HGA teaching staff who plan their curricula to meet the state's education standards. Typical educators do not teach textbooks or other curriculum resources available in the market. Rather, they use these resources to teach to standards and beyond. (They make a deliberate effort to match content from the various resources with specific grade level standards. They began this process of matching by first studying the grade level and subject specific standards. Once they intimately understand the standards, they review available resources including textbooks. Then, they match topics, lessons, units, activities and projects with standards. Rigor is applied to increase the challenge level of students. Using the product of this matching process, they write syllabi for each grade level subject).

5.3 Rigorous Curriculum Offered in a Standard Based Environment:

Schools in Minnesota are charged with preparing and educating students for the 21st century i.e., per World's Best Workforce requirements. HGA revamped its curriculum in order to comply with this requirement. The most important part of this was adding rigor to its curriculum and making critical thinking the focal point of all lessons. Understanding that children in the same class are typically at different levels of readiness, lesson objectives are written at four different levels of rigor. Levels one and two are prerequisite and have basic level objectives that seek to prepare students for the more rigorous tasks at the next two levels. Levels three and four are more challenging and rigorous. During a class session, it is customary to witness a vast range of differentiation. Lessons are student centered, while some students may be working on a level one objective, others may be working on other levels based on individual readiness. Another aspect of this rigorous and student centered curriculum is “growth mind-set”, students are encouraged to develop an attitude of self-improvement, while learning from past experiences. Students are continuously encouraged to strive for excellence and refine their work. To achieve these objectives, HGA has partnered for four years with Learning Sciences International, a professional development association that trains educators to implement these ideas in schools and classrooms.

5.4 Culturally Responsive:

Consistently, HGA adopts and implements a culturally responsive curriculum. HGA's curriculum values and is sensitive to the cultural mores that students bring from their home culture to the school. This provides students with learning experiences that display contributions of the ethnic groups of the larger society. Furthermore, it allows learners to use

their home culture as a reference point. In education, it is understood that a very important and an initial step in the learning process is what is called the "regressive" stage i.e., referring to one's lived experience in order to make sense of new information. In most situations, the lived experience is a student's home culture. Informed by this understanding, HGA's approach towards a culturally responsive curriculum includes the following:

1. Make the curriculum relevant to the learners by drawing from various cultures and those represented in the student body.
2. Educators are not only encouraged to withhold decisions regarding student knowledge and background, but to rely on actual data of students' skills and abilities.
3. More importantly, focus on skills that prepare students to function effectively both in their home culture and the culture of what is regarded as mainstream society. One example of this is teaching the conventions of the English language that are regarded as appropriate by institutions of higher learning as well as the world of work.

One impact of globalization is the uncertainty as to where HGA students may be employed in future years. Therefore, students must be prepared and work ready, regardless of environmental or cultural setting. This matter calls for a universal system of education that enables learners to adapt to various cultures. Multiculturalism is a skill set that allows learners of HGA cultural nuances, providing individuals the ability to make personal and social adjustments accordingly.

5.5 Teaching Students How to Learn:

HGA educators base teaching/learning on two theories: Constructivism and Vygotsky's theory of "Zone of Proximal Development." In an age of information explosion, knowledge is constructed at a much faster rate than at any time in history. Suffice it to say, the shelf life of knowledge has become shortened and obsolete. The implication of this to K-12 education is that the best education is one that teaches students how to learn. In other words, education that will best serve students in the 21st century is one that teaches them how to sort, organize, process, construct, share and identify valuable information so as to enlighten. Such a pedagogy is called constructivism.

Vygotsky's theory identifies three zones that play a role in the process of learning.

Zone 1: Learners learn without aid because they already possess enough knowledge that allows them to make sense of new information.

Zone 2: Learners learn with "expert" assistance, they have limited awareness of new information, when limited awareness is aided, learners gain clarity and make sense of new information.

Zone 3: Learners have no preconceived knowledge of information and are unable to make sense of the material. Learning cannot happen at Zone 3, prior to the completion of learning at Zone 2.

It is believed both constructivism and Vygotsky's theory are embedded in Robert Marzano's (2009) guide for designing and teaching learning goals. For example, the zones where learning can take place with aid in Vygotsky's model are learning target 1.0 and learning target 2.0 in Robert Marzano's model. Marzano's target 3.0 and target 4.0 are Vygotsky's Zone 3 where learning cannot take place at the moment until 1.0 and 2.0 are mastered, learning at the level of Target 3.0 and 4.0 can take place. Marzano's model is immersed in constructivism. With or without guidance from an expert, learners construct their own knowledge rather than being instructed by a teacher.

5.6 Technology:

Studies are showing that today's students are different from the generations of students before them in many ways. One of those ways is technology. Today's students are very astute with technology and their engagement with learning improves when technology is involved. HGA students are not exceptions to this. Therefore, the school continues to invest in classroom technology. At present, all classrooms have access to wireless networks, smart boards, and projectors. The school has iPads and desktop computers. Various instructional software are also utilized to enhance teaching and learning. Some include MathX, IXL, Lexia, and Read Naturally. Furthermore, the school has enough online licenses for all curricula used by the school.

5.7 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics):

HGA has three state of the art STEM labs, one each for grades 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. HGA also utilizes the EIE (Engineering is Elementary) curriculum in its K-2 program. The STEM labs are built at a cost of more than \$700,000. This huge investment is in line with the school's commitment to educate and prepare students for the 21st century. Both local and national studies have indicated that most jobs that will be created in future years are going to be in the STEM fields. It also shows the school's responsiveness to the needs and interests of its students. Surveys completed among HGA students consistently showed that the majority are interested in pursuing employment in the STEM fields after high school. HGA also utilizes the EIE (Engineering is Elementary) curriculum in its K-2 program.

5.8 Acceleration Practices and Remediation Programming:

HGA fully understands the ugliness of the "achievement gap." The school is also fully cognizant of the fact that some children of color are mistakenly placed in special education programs where they sometimes receive substandard education. To deal with these two facts, HGA has designed a careful process that guarantees support for those who need it and protects those others from being labeled incorrectly as needing special assistance. The process includes the following steps:

1. Data collection through formal and informal methods (the process and instruments used will be described in an upcoming section, Titled Accelerated Learning in Reading and Mathematics (ALRM));
2. Teacher input through student progress meeting;
3. Identify students who need assistance by analyzing data from 1 and 2 and referring those identified to the ALRM Explain "ALRM" when first written, after that, the acronym may be used or the ELL program (depending on the need);
4. Place deserving students in the ALRM or ELL program. This entails further assessment with instruments that provide content specific data, developing Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), securing parent permission and providing service;
5. Gather on-going benchmark data to assess progress. If progress is not made within a reasonable amount of time, student is referred to a reading specialist; and
6. The reading specialist will follow the same process: assessment, plan development, service delivery and assessment. If progress is not made after working with the reading specialist, the student will be referred to special education services.

5.9 Special Education Programming:

HGA has a progressive special education program that emphasizes mainstreaming children. Studies have shown that with meaningful assistance, special needs students can overcome their disability. Therefore, HGA's goal is transitioning students from the special education program in the shortest possible time.

Child find: Students transferring with an IEP from other schools will continue receiving special services. For those who never had an IEP yet exhibit signs of disability, a step-by-step process is applied in order to minimize the chance of improper identification as a disabled child. HGA has a fortified Title I program i.e., the ALRM program that provides "focused" and "precise" instruction to underperforming students. These are students who are struggling in reading and mathematics according to pretest measures and teachers' observations. Students participating in the Title I program will have a learning plan which shows their performance level i.e., overall and in specific skill areas. The plan also shows end goals to be achieved as a result of the Title I intervention and benchmarks that serve as indicators of progress towards the end goals. The pretest, which is the Fastbridge Test, will be administered at the beginning of the year. Toward the end of the year, usually December, students retake the Fastbridge Test. If the result from the December test, coupled with feedback from mainstream teachers do not show progress towards benchmark goals, the student is referred to more intensive i.e., one-on-one instruction with a reading specialist. The reading specialist, the student's classroom teacher and the principal closely monitor if the student is making progress towards end goals. If the student working with the reading specialist for an approximate month fails to make progress, a referral for special needs services is made. This approach has been implemented at HGA and has proved to be effective in reducing unnecessary referrals to special education. Reducing unnecessary referrals to special education is a requirement of the "All Students Succeed Act." HGA offers service to students with disabilities in the following areas:

- Specific Learning Disabilities;
- Speech and language;
- Emotional Behavioral Disorder;

- Attention Deficit Hyper-Active Disorder;
- Delayed Cognitive Development;

HGA contracts with third party vendors for:

- Occupational Therapy;
- Psychological Services;
- Special Ed. Directorship; and
- Transition Services

The services of Indigo Education, a third party vendor is acquired for the directorship of HGA's special education program. HGA also works with third party vendors for any service that involves less than full time employment such as occupational therapy and speech pathology.

State and federal guidelines are followed in all processes involved in the development of IEPs, revising and keeping the IEPs current, due process, and implementing the IEP. There is a regular Child Study Team meeting involving special education teachers, the special education director, parent representative, representative of mainstream teachers, and the principal. At the child study meetings, IEPs are reviewed, IEP implementation is monitored and progress discussed.

Children with disabilities receive service according to their IEP goals and objectives. As much as possible, service to students with IEPs is offered in the "least restrictive" environment. A very small portion of the students i.e., those with severe cognitive disabilities and those with severe emotional and behavioral disorder receive pull out service. The duration of such service is determined by the student's IEP. HGA does everything possible to educate such children in the least restrictive environment. Additionally, special education staff attend regular mainstream teacher meetings. In those meetings, they inform mainstream teachers about IEPs of students and give mainstream teachers ideas as to how to best accommodate special needs students in their classrooms. Mainstream teachers are required to accommodate special needs students. The plan to accommodate special needs students is reflected in their weekly lesson plans. All teachers, including special education teachers, are expected to turn in weekly lesson plans.

5.10 English Language Learning Program:

It is the mission of the HGA English Language Learner Program to provide its students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to be both communicatively and academically successful in the use of the English language. This is accomplished by providing a program that values the native language and culture of the ELL student, provides students with the content knowledge and necessary background information to meaningfully participate in the curricula, and equips students with academic language skills that are the necessary tools for full participation in the K-12 educational setting and future participation in the greater community. English language learners (ELLs) are identified through a multi-stepped process:

Step 1: The first step is to administer the Home Language Survey which is a mandated survey that identifies students who may not be proficient in English. If necessary, the Home Language Survey will be translated into languages spoken by HGA district students. The primary purpose of the Home Language Survey is to determine if a student speaks another language other than English at home and may need assessment for English language proficiency.

The Home Language Survey also helps the school personnel collect other useful information about a student that will assist in understanding the student's personal and educational history so as to plan appropriate educational programs for the student. HGA designates trained professionals to administer the survey. Higher Ground Academy then establishes a record to document the administration of the Home Language Survey and any language assessment tests that are administered to the student.

Step 2: The school will assess the English proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening for students whose home language is multi-lingual or who are not speakers of the English language. A student's degree of previous exposure

to English and school history may also indicate a student's need for language instruction. In this case, HGA will administer a test mandated by the state to determine eligibility. HGA follows the MDE procedure for screening language proficiency using the W-Apt or WIDA-Model.

NOTE: A state may mandate specific assessments, but research suggests that data from various sources combined better predict language proficiency of a student than a single test. This data may include oral language proficiency data including the Home Language Surveys, oral language proficiency tests, for example, the FastBridge Test, oral language interviews, and observations; social data such as school experiences, observation of student's interaction with others; or academic data such as achievement scores, and classroom grades.

Step 3: Determination of ELL students is based on the results of the WIDA Model or W-APT and other assessments made in steps 1 and 2. The school uses this data to determine whether a student is eligible for English language support. The decision is made by trained professionals who use the results of the language assessments as well as other relevant information about a student to develop a plan of academic support to help each student reach English language proficiency.

Step 4: Placement is the final step. If students are determined eligible to receive English language programming, the school will place them in an instructional program that will provide subject matter instruction in English and academic English language skill development. Both areas are leveled to meet and develop a student's English language proficiency. Both are delivered by "highly qualified" teachers. **Step 4.1.:** Students who test at level 1 ("Entering") on the WIDA Model screener remain in their general education classroom and receive additional help depending on their everyday needs in English Language instruction by a highly qualified ELL teacher. Additional help and frequency are adjusted to the needs of the student and conducted in 1:1 tutoring or small group sessions.

Step 4.2.: Students who test between level 2 ("Beginning") and level 4 ("Expanding") on the WIDA Model screener are also placed in the general education classroom. Targeted assistance in content is provided by "highly qualified ELL teachers in the mainstream setting. The frequency of ELL service for these students will depend on their individual needs in 1:1 or small group sessions.

Step 5: Code student's ELL status: The school will code all students qualifying as ELL in the database (MARSS) to indicate the student's ELL status. This includes the student's home language, LEP status and the start date for ELL services. See attachment for a more detailed description of HGA's English Language Learner program.

5.12 After School and Summer Programs:

According to internal and statewide assessment, HGA has a considerable number of students who are at risk of failing. Those are students who are identified as "high risk" by Fastbridge Test and "not meeting standards" by the MCA. High school students who are not passing core courses in high school are also included with this group. HGA has determined that without afterschool academic support the school's high risk students will fail. Thus, the school offers an after school program for all high risk students grades kindergarten through 11. The after- school program was scheduled Monday through Thursday from 2:45 P.M. to 4:00 PM. Unlike in previous school years, after school tutorials were facilitated and monitored by HGA teachers. In previous years, HGA contracted with GradePower Learning to support students in grades kindergarten through three.

Summer Program:

A total of 280 students from kindergarten through grade 11 participated in the summer program of FY 23. This is a decline of 70 students compared to that of the previous school year. The district had anticipated that FY participation would show an increase from the previous year. However, many parents refused to register their children for the program for various reasons.

5.13 Graduation Requirements:

In pursuance of graduating from HGA, a student must earn forty credits. Thirty-six of those credits are earned by completing required courses. Students must take additional elective courses to earn the remaining four credits. HGA requires students to be admitted into a post-secondary education institution in order to receive their high school diplomas.

5.14 School Calendar:

The FY 23 calendar was approved by the school board on April 19, 2022. The calendar has 174 school days for students in grades 1-12 and 167 days for kindergartners. The school day is from 7:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M., Monday through Thursday. Friday is shortened, operating from 7:00 A.M. to noon. Kindergartners are in school for a total of 1089 hours. Students in other grades are in school for a total of 1138 hours.

6: Innovative Practices and Implementation:

6.1: Technology Integration:

HGA aspires to be a school that incorporates technology adequately and effectively. The school built significant technology capabilities throughout the years. All classrooms are equipped with smart boards and projectors. Many classrooms have desk-top computers. Also, available for student and staff use are 1600 iPads and approximately 50 laptops. The school has also acquired instructional software for all subjects, including remedial programs. The learning management system HGA currently uses is Schoology.

The school purchased online licenses for many of the curricula that are currently being used.

Furthermore, the school hired a full time instructional technology leader who has extensive experience in the field.

6.2 Health Sciences and Medical Careers Program (HSMCP):

In the fall of 2020, HGA restarted the Health Sciences and Medical Careers Program (HSMCP). The program is designed to academically and socially prepare HGA students to successfully pursue higher education in health sciences, locally at accredited universities, such as, the University of Minnesota and Metropolitan State University, eventually leading to career placement to serve future needs of Minnesota. HGA will assure students participating in this program will graduate and become adequately prepared for college. As planned, the program started with 25 students in the fall of 2020. The program will have the capacity to enroll as many as 200 students aspiring or interested in health sciences and medical disciplines in a few years. HGA will offer this program in partnership with two potential higher education stakeholders, the Boy/Girl Scouts of America and cohort healthcare providers in St. Paul, MN, to ensure that participating students are prepared to make the decision to pursue a career in the health sciences. This program will be fundamental in developing academically and socially ready students to pursue coursework, consequently, entering careers in the health sciences. HSMCP will emphasize and promote student development in core components of:

1. academic and student mentoring; preparing students to succeed in pursuing post-secondary coursework in health sciences and student life, and by,
2. exploration through hands-on experience and exposure within healthcare settings; volunteerism, mentoring, and coaching, from current professionals and support staff—ultimately, supplementing with potential opportunity for internship at clinics and hospitals. Positions include, but are not limited to, dialysis volunteer, blood donation center volunteer, bone marrow volunteer, etc.

The academic and student based mentoring component of the program, HGA, will work in partnership with the University of Minnesota Medical School's Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity and the Twin Cities Chapter of the Student National Medical Association. Hands-on, career investigation and exploration of HSMCP. HGA will work in partnership with the Boy Scouts of America through its highly successful exploration program, aimed at helping young adults make informed decisions about future careers. Acting as an exploring post under the auspices of the Boy Scouts, HGA will work with established local health care providers to offer its students first-hand experience in healthcare

settings, initially as volunteers, later as mentees, eventually with the opportunity for internship with partnered healthcare clinics and hospitals and future mentors.

The HSMCP is an innovative program, based on awareness of job and employment opportunity trends in Minnesota and throughout the nation. The healthcare industry is one of the nation's largest and fastest growing industries. According to the United States Bureau of Labor, more than half of the projected twenty fastest-growing occupations, from 2014 through 2024, are in healthcare. This trend will continue for some time driven by a continuously aging population, increasing population and the Coronavirus pandemic. Additionally, advancements in medical technologies will allow for more specialization and complexity, creating the need for higher levels of training for healthcare professionals and support staff. Such projections and developments will accrue the need of postsecondary education and training in highly specialized fields of healthcare, health sciences, and medicine for all post-secondary programs and institutional bodies.

HGA's HSMPC addresses the Minnesota Legislative Commission's need for an increasingly diverse healthcare workforce and for support of programs that recruit Minnesota students into healthcare careers. Several years ago, the Minnesota Legislature created The Legislative Health Care Workforce Commission (LHCWC) to study and recommend to the legislature as to how to achieve the goal of strengthening the workforce in healthcare. LHCWC was inspired by the growing concern of rapid growth and increasing demands in the healthcare sector, while shortages have been developing in a variety of healthcare sectors – shortages projected to continue to grow within the near future. LHCWC explored issues of workforce supply and demand, possible workforce development plans, and strategies for improving workforce diversity in the healthcare industry. Among the commission's recommendations, there are two that may possibly resonate with the Minnesotan youth, who represent a recruitment conduit for the state's healthcare industry. The LHCWC recommended investment in strategies that will lead to a substantially diverse workforce in healthcare, and it specifically recommended support programs that expose K-12 students to health careers, recruiting and preparing students to enter sectors lacking workforce.

Minnesota and the nation have made great progress in the health sciences. According to a commonwealth fund ranking release in May of 2014, Minnesota has the nation's best performing healthcare system in the United States. Yet racial and ethnic minorities seem to be forgotten, with many not realizing the benefits and services delivered through the excellence of the healthcare system. It is of utmost importance to address and understand such barriers causing separate and unequal access to the healthcare system. One barrier is the lack of racial and ethnic minority representation in the health sciences. Research has shown that there is an impediment to service when racial and ethnic minorities rarely are serviced by healthcare professionals who share their culture, language, or physical appearance. The Institute of Medicine (IOM) recognized this and has recommended an increase in the number of minority health professionals as a strategic initiative towards elimination of health disparities (Missing Persons:

Minorities in the Health Professions, (2003). Last year, the Minnesota Legislative Health Care Workforce Commission offered the same recommendation. This suggests an unequivocal need for improvement on forming a trusting partnership between the underserved and their medical team. The HSMCP will be well positioned to act as a center for creating multi-racial, multicultural, college-bound applicants for study and obtaining certification in healthcare and potential medical careers. Most participants in the program are likely to be racial and ethnic minorities who may be multilingual and originate from diverse cultural backgrounds.

The former HGA Executive Director envisioned this program and contributed significant work to develop it. The program was pilot tested during school year 2016-17. Lessons were learned from the pilot test and improvements were made when the program was implemented a second time during school year 2017-18. Unfortunately, the program was interrupted the following school year due to the health of the former director. HGA restarted the program in school year 2020-21. Currently, in FY 24, 28 HGA high school students are enrolled in the program.

6.3 Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS):

Student behavior has a direct and strong impact on student learning. Therefore, any plan to improve learning for students must include a robust plan for handling behavior. For many years HGA's approach for managing discipline was based

on a “be tough on discipline infringements” policy. The policy adopted identified a list of undesired behaviors and matching consequences. Implementation of the policy varied and was inconsistent.

In FY 20, a staff consensus revealed a need to improve the discipline management plan because it was ineffective. After a series of discussions, staff agreed to eliminate the existing policy and chose to adopt one that emphasizes rehabilitation and building positive behavior.

The following year, based on the recommendation of the staff, the administration created a plan to adopt Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS). PBIS is a three tiered, behavior management system. Initially, the staff and other stakeholders determine their values. Then they translate the values into a form of student behavior/s. For example, if one of the values is respect, they determine what respect looks like in various places at the school such as in the cafeteria, classroom, and hallways. These will be intentionally taught to students on a daily basis. This particular action is what is called Tier I intervention. Tier I intervention is ongoing. All students go through a deliberate instruction of values and their manifestations. Additionally, every time a student displays inappropriate behavior the student receives a written referral, he/she goes through a training.

A PBIS implementation committee meets weekly to review written referrals. Students having four (4) referrals within a month are assigned a Tier II mentor. HGA has partnered with the Sanneh Foundation. The foundation provides six mentors, three per campus. Each mentor may be assigned as many to twenty-five (25) mentees. The task of the mentors is to teach their mentees school values and expectations in small group sessions. They also teach their mentees anger management and other prosocial skills. Mentors work with teachers and the citizenship staff to monitor progress and adjust service based needs of each student.

Students qualifying for Tier I receive service for three months. If referrals decrease within three months, yet the student continues to get some referrals, the Tier II service will continue. If no referrals are acquired in a month, service will be discontinued. Although, if referrals increase to more than four per month at the end of the third month, the student will be assigned a Tier III mentor, a HGA social worker. Tier III service is intensive and one-on-one. At the onset of this service, a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) is completed by a social worker. Then a student support team is formed that will be chaired by the Executive Director. The student’s teacher/s, the social worker, a citizenship staff member, and his/her parents are also part of the support team. The team develops a support plan in which every member of the team has a role. The goal is by the end of a six-week period of implementation, the student’s behavior has improved and referrals have decreased to less than four per month. If that happens, the student’s placement will be deescalated to Tier II. If not, the process for referral to the Child Study Team begins.

PBIS was implemented for the first time in FY 22. It was more successful at the elementary school. Classroom referrals were decreased significantly by the middle of the school year. More specifically, teachers expressed their satisfaction with the amount of improvement they noticed of their students. The secondary school was late to start implementation of PBIS. The biggest problem was that teacher buy-in was very low. Surprisingly, the Tier III level support was more successful at the secondary school than the support of levels Tiers I and II.

At the beginning of the 2022 - 23 school year, HGA staff received a refresher/training of effective implementation of PBIS. The focus of the training was lessons learned from the experience of the previous school year. Of particular emphasis was the need to affirm students positively.

7. Academic Performance: Goals and Benchmarks:

PROGRESS ON OSPREY WILDS CONTRACTUAL ACADEMIC GOALS AND WBWF ALIGNMENT:

It is without doubt that the effects of COVID-19 are still lingering. In FY23, as in the previous school year, HGA continued to struggle with staff shortage, poor attendance of students and staff, lack of student motivation, etc. More than 10% of the teaching positions at HGA had to be filled by “not highly qualified teachers i.e., teacher who taught with one or another type of provisional teaching license.

Regrettably, the effect of all those factors impacted student learning. Assessment results, especially those from statewide assessments showed that, particularly in reading. According to data from the Minnesota Department of Education, HGA’s reading proficiency rate dropped from 48.5% in FY 22 to 43.2% in FY 23. That is a 5.3% drop. In Mathematics, HGA’s proficiency rate remained almost the same from FY22 to FY23. FY 22 HGA’s mathematics proficiency rate was 28.8%. In FY 23, it went up by just .01% to 28.9%.

Data from statewide assessments together with data gathered internally from Fastbridge assessment will be analyzed and presented in this section. For the sake of analysis, the data is divided by student groups such as English learners (ELs), special education students, free and reduced price meal receiving students, and all other student groups. It is also analyzed by academic targets in the school’s contractual goals with its authorizer.

World’s Best Workforce (WBWF) Goal Areas:

- **Ready for Kindergarten [R4K]:** All students are ready for kindergarten.
- **Reading Well by 3rd Grade [RG3]:** All students in third grade achieve grade level literacy.
- **Achievement Gap Closure [AGC]:** All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.
- **Career and College Ready [CCR]:** All students are career and college ready before graduating from high school.
- **High School Graduation [GRAD]:** All students graduate from high school.

Note: The source of the data presented in this section, except those under “Indicator 1” is MDE.org

Indicator 1: Mission Related

Goal: Throughout the period of the contract, students of Higher Ground Academy (HGA) will demonstrate commitment and connection to their community through service.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed: All students will participate in a community related project.

Measure 1.1 From FY20 to FY25, the aggregate percentage of students that successfully participate in a community related project in each year will be at least 80.0%.

- Exceeds Standard: The aggregate percentage is at least 90.0%.
- Meets Standard: The aggregate percentage is at least 80.0%.
- Approaches Standard: The aggregate percentage is at least 70.0%.
- Does Not Meet Standard: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

100% of the students who attended HGA during FY 22 participated in community related projects. The students raised \$3,126.12 for the Leukemia Lymphoma Foundation. In addition, all HGA students participated in environmental education (EE) projects to varying degrees. HGA exceeded this target.

Higher Ground Academy	Number of Students with Successful Participation in Community Project	Number of Students	Percentage of Students with Successful Participation in Community Project
FY21	1036	1036	100.0%
FY22	1022	1022	100.0%
FY23	1070	1070	100.0%

FY24			
Aggregate	3,128	3,128	100.0%

Indicator 2: English Language Learners

Goal: Throughout the period of the contract, English learners of HGA will demonstrate adequate progress towards English language proficiency.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed: Achievement Gap Closure [AGC]: All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.

Measure 2.1 [AGC]: From FY21 to FY24, the aggregate percentage of English learners meeting target on the ACCESS test grades K-12 will be equal to or greater than that of the state's percentage of English learners.

- Exceeds target- The aggregate percentage is at least 10.0 percentage points greater than the state's percentage of English learners meeting target.
- Meets target- The aggregate percentage is equal to or greater than the state's percentage of English learners meeting target.
- Approaches target- The aggregate percentage is within 5.0 percentage points of the state's percentage of English learners meeting target.
- Does not meet target- The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

HGA did not meet this target. HGA's aggregate FY22 to FY23 rate on this measure is 24.8% whereas that of the state's is 34.9%. However, worth noting is that while HGA's FY23 rate increased by 1.4 percentage points, the state's rate decreased by 13.7 percentage points.

Year	Number of English Learners	Number of English Learners Meeting Target	School Percent Meeting Target	State Percent Meeting Target
FY21*				
FY22	332	80	24.1%	27.9%
FY23	365	93		
FY24				
Aggregate	697	173	24.1%	27.9%

Measure and key indicators 2.2: From FY21 to FY2: The average progress toward target for English learner's grades K-12 on the ACCESS test will be equal to or greater than the state's average progress toward target.

- Exceeds target- The aggregate percentage is at least 10.0 percentage points more than the state's average progress toward target.
- Meets target- The aggregate percentage equal to or greater than the state's average progress toward target.
- Approaches target- The aggregate percentage is within 5.0 percentage points of the state's average progress toward target.
- Does not meet target- The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

The aggregate rates from FY22 – FY23 are forty-eight point three percent (48.3%) and fifty point two percent (50.2%) for the state and HGA respectively. In that HGA students scored slightly lower than the state's rate, HGA partially met this target.

Table X: English Language Learners: ACCESS, Average Progress towards Target – All students, Grade K - 12

Year	Number of English Learners	School Average Progress Toward Target	State Average Progress Toward Target
FY21*			
FY22	332	53.5%	53.1%
FY23	365	43%	
FY24			
Aggregate	697	48.3%	53.1%

Indicator 3: Reading Growth

Goal: Throughout the period of the contract, students attending HGA will demonstrate growth in reading as measured by state accountability tests and nationally normed assessments.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: All students are career and college ready before graduating from high school.

Measure 3.1 [CCR] – 2 Points: In aggregate, from FY21- FY24, the overall percentage of students whose achievement level on the statewide reading assessments (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) improved on statewide assessments is equal to or greater than the state percentage.

- Exceeds target- The school achieves an overall percentage greater than 10 percentage points over that of the state.
- Meets target- The school achieves an overall percentage equal to or greater than that of the state.
- Approaches target- The school achieves an overall percentage that is within 10 percentage points of the state.
- Did not meet target- The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

HGA's overall percentage of students whose achievement level improves is three point five percent (3.5%) greater than the state (see tables below). As a result, HGA meets this target.

Higher Ground Academy	Count whose reading achievement level improved	Count tested	Percent of Students whose achievement level improved
FY21*			
FY22	88	325	27.1%
FY23	75	370	20.3%
FY24			

Aggregate	163	695	23.7%
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State of Minnesota	Count whose reading achievement level improved	Count tested	Percent of Students whose achievement level improved
FY21*			
FY22	49599	245117	20.2%
FY23			
FY24			
Aggregate	49599	245117	20.2%

Measure 3.2: In aggregate, from FY21-FY24, the overall percent of students whose achievement level decreased or stayed "does not meet standards" on statewide assessments for reading (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) is equal to or less than the state.

- Exceeds target: The school achieves an overall percentage at least 10 percentage points higher than that of the state.
- Meets target: The school achieves an overall percentage equal to that of the state.
- Approaches target: The school achieves an overall percentage that is no more than 10 percentage points less than that of the state.
- Did not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

The tables below present the percentage of students whose achievement level did not meet standard. Thirty-nine point four percent (38.4%) of state students did not meet standards according to the first table. That is greater by point seven percentage points (.7%) of HGA's thirty-seven point six percent (37.6%), according to the two tables. Therefore, by scoring two percentage points less than the state, HGA meets this standard.

Higher Ground Academy	Count whose reading achievement level decreased or stayed "does not meet standards"	Count tested	Percent of Students whose achievement level stayed "does not meet" or decreased
FY21*			
FY22	113	325	34.8%
FY23	146	370	39.5%
FY24			
Aggregate	259	695	37.1%
State of Minnesota	Count whose reading achievement level stayed "does not meet" or decreased	Count tested	Percent of Students whose achievement level stayed "does not meet" or decreased
FY21*			
FY22	90144	245117	36.8%
FY23			
FY24			

Aggregate	90144	245117	36.8%
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Measure 3.3: From F21 to FY24, the aggregate percentage of students who increase their scale score on the Fastbridge assessment from fall to spring by at least 50% of the points needed to qualify as college pathway will be at least 75%.

- The aggregate percentage is at least 85%.
- The aggregate percentage is at least 75%. (School Goal)
- The aggregate percentage is at least 65%.
- The school did not meet the criteria.

Result:

HGA did not meet this standard because only sixty point five percent (60.5%) of the students reached the progress target. However, the district believes that 0.5% is a significant achievement in the current teaching and learning environment.

Indicator 4: Math Growth

Goal: Throughout the period of the contract, students of HGA will demonstrate growth in math as measured by state accountability tests and nationally normed assessments.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: All students are career and college ready before graduating from high school.

Key Measures and Results for this Goal:

Measure 4.1 [CCR] In aggregate, from FY21-FY23, the overall percentage of students whose achievement level on the statewide assessments for math (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) improved on statewide assessments is equal to or greater than the state percentage.

- The school achieves an overall percentage greater than 10 percentage points over that of the state.
- The school achieves an overall percentage equal to or greater than that of the state.
- The school achieves an overall percentage that is within 10 percentage points of the state.
- The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

On the aggregate, twenty-two point nine percent (22.9%) of HGA students improved their achievement level in math in from FY 21 to FY 23. That is six point five percent (6.5%) more than that of the state (see tables below). As a result, HGA is meeting this standard.

Higher Ground Academy	Count whose math achievement level improved	Count tested	Percent of Students whose achievement level improved
FY21*			
FY22	77	312	24.7%
FY23	78	366	21.3%
FY24			
Aggregate	155	678	22.9%

State of Minnesota	Count whose math achievement level improved	Count tested	Percent of Students whose achievement level improved
FY21*			
FY22	44136	241968	18.2%
FY23			14.8%
FY24			
Aggregate	44136	241968	16.4%

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

- The school achieves an overall percentage at least 10 percentage points less than that of the state.
- The school achieves an overall percentage less than or equal to that of the state.
- The school achieves an overall percentage that is within 10 percentage points of the state.
- The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

HGA did not meet this target from FY21 to FY 24. As the table below show, the percentage gap between state students and HGA students is moderately less than ten, point one percent (10.1%) to be exact.

Higher Ground Academy	Count whose achievement level decreased or stayed "does not meet standards"	Count tested	Percent of Students whose achievement level stayed "does not meet" or decreased
FY21*			
FY22	155	312	49.7%
FY23	196	366	53.6%
FY24			
Aggregate	351	678	51.6%
State of Minnesota	Count whose achievement level stayed "does not meet" or decreased	Count tested	Percent of Students whose achievement level stayed "does not meet" or decreased
FY21*			
FY22	96749	241968	40.0%
FY23			
FY24			
Aggregate	96749	241968	41.5%

Measure 4.3: From F21 to FY24, the aggregate percentage of students who increase their scale score on the Fastbridge assessment from fall to spring by at least 50% of the points needed to qualify for college pathway will be at least 75%.

- The aggregate percentage is at least 85.0%.
- The aggregate percentage is at least 75.0%.
- The aggregate percentage is at least 65.0%.
- The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

HGA did not meet this target in FY 22. Only fifty point five percent (50.5%) of HGA students met this criteria.

Higher Ground Academy	Number of students who increase their scale score from fall to spring by at least 50% of the points needed for college pathway	Total Number of Students	Percentage of students who increase their scale score from fall to spring by at least 50% of the points needed for college pathway
FY21			
FY22	584	966	60.5%
FY23	417	587	71.0%
FY24			
Aggregate	1001	1553	64.5%

Higher Ground Academy	Number of students who increase their scale score from fall to spring by at least 50% of the points needed for college pathway	Total Number of Students	Percentage of students who increase their scale score from fall to spring by at least 50% of the points needed for college pathway
FY21			
FY22	510	1002	50.9%
FY23	437	723	60.4%
FY24			
Aggregate	947	1725	54.9%

Indicator 5: Reading Proficiency

Goal: Throughout the period of the contract, students of HGA will demonstrate proficiency in reading as measured by state accountability tests.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: All students are career and college ready before graduating from high school.

Key Measures and Results for this Goal:

Measure 5.1A: From FY21 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for third grade students is equal to or greater than the state.

- Exceeds target: The aggregate proficiency index score is at least 10.0 points above the state.

- Meets target: The aggregate proficiency index score is equal to or greater than the state.
- Approaches target: The aggregate proficiency index score is within 5.0 points of the state score.
- Does not meet target: The aggregate proficiency index score is more than 5.0 points below the state score.

Result:

The measures for this indicator as well as all remaining indicators of academic success rely on aggregate data i.e., the average of FY 21 and FY 22.

HGA did meet this target. The district's third aggregate proficiency index score is fifty point five percent (50.5%) whereas that of the state is fifty-six point four percent (56.4%). The gap between the two is five point nine percent (5.9%). The table below provides performance data for the state and HGA students from FY21 to FY23.

Higher Ground Academy	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	4	27	11	39	81	45.1
FY22	4	23	14	25	66	51.5
FY23	2	25	16	34	77	45.5
FY24					0	
Aggregate	10	75	41	98	224	47.1

State of Minnesota	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total	Proficiency Index
FY21*	5,613	20,085	8,522	18,789	53,009	56.5
FY22	6,790	21,935	9,403	20,756	58,884	56.8
FY23					0	56.5
FY24					0	
Aggregate	12,403	42,020	17,925	39,545	111,893	56.9%

Measure 5.1b: From FY21 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score is equal to or greater than that of the state for the same grades (3-8, 10).

- Exceeds target: The aggregate proficiency index score is at least 10.0 points above the state's score.
- Meets target: The aggregate proficiency index score is equal to or greater than the state's score.
- Approaches target: The aggregate proficiency index score is within 5.0 points of the state's score.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

In this area of achievement, the gap between the state and HGA aggregate score from FY 21 to FY24 is four point two percent (4.2%) in favor of the state. Since this is within five percentage points of the state, HGA partially met this standard in FY 22.

Higher Ground Academy	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	39	178	128	147	492	57.1
FY22	38	219	108	165	530	58.7
FY23	44	190	125	178	537	55.2
F24					0	
Aggregate	121	587	361	490	1,559	57.0

State of Minnesota	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	53,408	132,169	72,184	95,698	353,459	62.7
FY22	62,191	151,324	85,002	114,287	412,804	62.0
FY23					0	60.3
FY24					0	
Aggregate	115,599	283,493	157,186	209,985	766,263	61.6

St. Paul Public School District (ISD 625)	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	863	2,157	1,649	4,410	9,079	42.3
FY22	1,375	3,484	2,681	6,254	13,794	44.9
FY23					0	44.6
FY24					0	
Aggregate	2,238	5,641	4,330	10,664	22,873	43.9

Measure 5.2: From FY21 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score is greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – St. Paul Public Schools) for the same grades (3-8, 10).

- Exceeds target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score at least 10.0 points above the district's score.
- Meets target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score greater than the district's score.
- Approaches target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score within 5.0 points of the district's score.
- Does not meet target: the school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

From FY 21 and FY 23, the aggregate reading proficiency index score for HGA is fifty-seven point six percent (57.6%). That is thirteen point six percent (13.6%) more than Saint Paul Public Schools, which is forty-four percent (44%) points. Therefore, HGA is exceeding this target.

Measure 5.3: From FY21 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for the FRP subgroup is equal to or greater than that of the state for the same subgroup and the same grades (3-8, 10).

- Exceeds target: The aggregate proficiency index score is at least 10.0 points above the state's score.
- Meets target: The aggregate proficiency index score is equal to or greater than the state's score.
- Approaches target: The aggregate proficiency index score is within 5.0 points of the state's score.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

HGA exceeds this target. With a fifty-six point nine (56.9%) index point score, HGA is twelve point nine (12.9%) index points more than the state for the "Free and Reduced Price" (FRP) meal groups.

Higher Ground Academy	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	39	173	125	144	481	57.1
FY22	38	218	111	166	533	58.4
FY23	44	187	125	176	532	55.2
FY24					0	
Aggregate	121	578	361	486	1,546	56.9

State of Minnesota	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	6,642	29,844	25,278	50,830	112,594	43.6
FY22	7,569	34,802	29,810	60,212	132,393	43.3
FY23					0	45.2
FY24					0	
Aggregate	14,211	64,646	55,088	111,042	244,987	44

St. Paul Public School District (ISD 625)	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	180	1,054	1,159	3,683	6,076	29.8
FY22	291	1,729	1,796	4,956	8,772	33.2
FY23					0	33.3
FY24					0	
Aggregate	471	2,783	2,955	8,639	14,848	32.1

Measure 5.4: From FY21 to FY24, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for the FRP subgroup is greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – St. Paul Public Schools) for the same subgroup and the same grades (3-8, 10).

- Exceeds target: The school’s aggregate proficiency index score is at least 10.0 points above the district’s score.
- Meets target: The school’s aggregate proficiency index score is greater than the district’s score.
- Approaches target: The school’s aggregate proficiency index score is within 5.0 points of the district’s score.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

HGA exceeds this target. HGA scored twelve point eight (12.8%) index points (see table on the previous page) higher than SPPS on this measure.

Higher Ground Academy	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	0	42	62	108	212	34.4
FY22	1	72	57	139	269	37.7
FY23	3	44	66	182	295	27.1
FY24					0	
Aggregate	4	158	185	429	776	32.8

St. Paul Public School District (ISD 625)	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	14	163	399	1899	2,475	15.2
FY22	36	369	760	2,795	3,960	19.8
FY23					0	25.2
FY24					0	
Aggregate	50	532	1159	4694	6,435	20.1

Measure 5.5: From FY21 to FY24, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for the ELL subgroup will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – St. Paul Public Schools) for the same subgroup and the same grades (3-8, 10).

- Exceeds target: The school’s aggregate proficiency index score is at least 10.0 points above the district’s score.
- Meets target: The school’s aggregate proficiency index score is equal to or greater than the district’s score.
- Approaches target: The school’s aggregate proficiency index score is within 5.0 points of the district’s score.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

Despite the underperformance of HGA's ELL population on state assessment, the district meets this target by scoring significantly higher than the St. Paul Public Schools district. As the table below shows, HGA's aggregate proficiency index score is seven point four (7.4%) index points more than the SPPS district for the same group.

Higher Ground Academy	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	0	0	2	15	17	5.9
FY22	0	3	1	16	20	37.8
FY23	0	3	7	11	21	31.0
FY24					0	
Aggregate	0	6	10	42	58	27.4

St. Paul Public School District	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	50	125	119	840	1,134	20.7
FY22	95	252	225	1,337	1,909	19.8
FY23					0	19.4
FY24					0	
Aggregate	145	377	344	2,177	3,043	20

Measure 5.6: From FY21 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for the special education subgroup is greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – St. Paul Public Schools) for the same subgroup and the same grades (3-8, 10).

- Exceeds target: The school's aggregate proficiency index score is at least 10.0 points more than the district's score.
- Meets target: The school's aggregate proficiency index score is equal to or greater than the district's score.
- Approaches target: The school's aggregate proficiency index score is within 5.0 points of the district's score.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

HGA partially met this target. On the aggregate, from FY21 to FY23, HGA scored nineteen percent (19%) index points. That is three point seven percent (3.7%) index points lower than that of the state.

Higher Ground Academy	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	0	0	2	15	17	5.9
FY22	0	3	1	16	20	17.5
FY23	0	3	7	11	21	31.0
FY24					0	
Aggregate	0	6	10	42	58	19.0

St. Paul Public School District	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	50	125	119	840	1,134	20.7
FY22	95	252	225	1,337	1,909	24.1
FY23					0	23.4
FY24					0	
Aggregate	145	377	344	2,177	3,043	22.7

Indicator 6: Math Proficiency

Goal: Throughout the period of the contract, students of HGA will demonstrate proficiency in math as measured by state accountability tests.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: All students are career and college ready before graduating from high school.

Key Measures and Results for this Goal:

Measure 6.1: From FY21 to FY24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score will increase by at least 5.0 points from the baseline proficiency index score (baseline score – 71.1)

OR be equal to or greater than that of the state for the same grades (3-8, 11).

- Exceeds target: The aggregate proficiency index score is at least 10.0 points above the baseline score OR at least 10.0 points above the state's score.
- Meets target: The aggregate proficiency index score is at least 5.0 points above the baseline score OR equal to or greater than the state's score.
- Approaches target: The aggregate proficiency index score is greater than the baseline score OR within 10.0 points of the state's score.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

HGA did not meet this target. The district's FY21 to FY23 aggregate is forty point six percent (40.6%) index points. This is significantly lower than the baseline score.

Higher Ground Academy	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
Baseline						71.1
FY21*	18	85	139	228	470	36.7
FY22	44	103	131	232	510	41.7
FY23	33	125	145	230	533	43.2
FY24					0	
Aggregate	95	313	415	690	1,513	40.7

State of Minnesota	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	52,678	98,906	82,468	108,707	342,759	56.3
FY22	65,387	116,202	91,615	126,469	399,673	56.9
FY23					0	57.5
FY24					0	
Aggregate	118,065	215,108	174,083	235,176	742,432	56.9

Measure 6.2: From FY21 to F24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – St. Paul Public Schools) for the same grades (3-8, 11).

- Exceeds target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score at least 10.0 points above the district's score.
- Meets target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score equal to or greater than the district's score.
- Approaches target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score within 5.0 points of the district's score.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

HGA met this target. With an aggregate index score of forty point eight (40.8%) percent index points, the district registered a stronger performance compared to SPPS. The total proficiency index score of SPPS for the reporting period is thirty-five point eight percent (35.8%) index points.

Higher Ground Academy	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
Baseline						71.1
FY21*	18	85	139	228	470	36.7
FY22	44	103	131	232	510	41.7
FY23	33	125	145	230	533	43.2
FY24					0	
Aggregate	95	313	415	690	1,513	40.7

St. Paul Public Schools	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
Baseline						
FY21*						
FY22						35.3
FY23						36.2
FY24						
Aggregate						35.8

Measure 6.3: From FY 21 to FY 24, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for the FRP subgroup will increase by at least 5.0 points from the baseline proficiency index score (baseline score – 70.9) OR be equal to or greater than that of the state for the same subgroup and the same grades (3-8, 11).

- Exceeds target: The aggregate proficiency index score is at least 10.0 points above the baseline score OR at least 10.0 points above the state’s score.
- Meets target: The aggregate proficiency index score is at least 5.0 points above the baseline score OR equal to or greater than the state’s score.
- Approaches target: Is within 5.0 points below the target.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

HGA’s aggregate two years, FY 21 and FY 22, proficiency index score for the FRP group was four point four (4.4) points higher than the state (see table XXII on the next page). Therefore, HGA meets this target.

Higher Ground Academy	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	18	84	133	224	459	
FY22	44	104	131	236	515	41.6
FY23					0	43.3
FY24					0	
Aggregate	11,964	43,089	54,275	127,484	236,812	42.5

State of Minnesota	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	5,255	19,458	25,245	58,982	108,940	34.3
FY22	6,709	23,631	29,030	68,502	127,872	35.1
FY23					0	
FY24					0	
Aggregate	11,964	43,089	54,275	127,484	236,812	34.7

St. Paul Public School District (ISD 625)	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	90	476	929	4,364	5,859	17.6
FY22	225	967	1,520	5,556	8,268	23.6
FY23					0	
FY24					0	
Aggregate	315	1,443	2,449	9,920	14,127	21.1

Measure 6.4: From FY 21 to FY 24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for the FRP subgroup will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – St. Paul Public Schools) for the same subgroup and the same grades (3-8, 11).

- Exceeds target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score at least 10.0 points above the district's score.
- Meets target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score equal to or greater than the district's score.
- Approaches target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score within 5.0 points of the district's score.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

HGA's aggregate mathematics proficiency index score for the FRP group, from FY 22 to FY 23, is forty-two point five percent (42.5%) index points. That is more than ten (10) index points higher compared to that of the SPPS for the same group which was nineteen percent (25%) index points. Therefore, HGA exceeds this target.

Higher Ground Academy	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	18	84	133	224	459	
FY22	44	104	131	236	515	41.6
FY23					0	43.3
FY24					0	
Aggregate	11,964	43,089	54,275	127,484	236,812	42.5

St. Paul Public Schools	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	18	84	133	224	459	
FY22	44	104	131	236	515	23.7
FY23					0	26.2
FY24					0	
Aggregate	11,964	43,089	54,275	127,484	236,812	25

Measure 6.5: From FY 21 to FY 24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for the ELL subgroup will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – SPPS) for the same subgroup and the same grades (3-8, 11).

- Exceeds target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score at least 10.0 points above the district's score.
- Meets target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score equal to or greater than the district's score.
- Approaches target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score within 5.0 points of the district's score.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

Compared to other demographic groups within HGA, the ELL population typically underperforms. However, when compared to students in the same group from other districts, more specifically the SPPS, HGA's ELL population performs relatively better. The aggregate proficiency index score for HGA's ELL population from FY 21 to FY 23 is twenty-nine point three (29.3) points whereas that of the SPPS i.e., for the same group is sixteen point one (16.1) points). There is a difference of thirteen point two percent (13.2%) index points between the two districts. Therefore, HGA Exceeds this target.

Higher Ground Academy	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	1	20	53	138	212	22.4
FY22	5	36	59	151	251	28.1

FY23	3	33	54	142	232	37.5
FY24					0	
Aggregate	9	89	166	431	695	29.3

St. Paul Public School District	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	13	129	262	1,993	2,397	11.4
FY22	63	341	553	2,815	3,772	18.0
FY23					0	18.8
FY24					0	
Aggregate	76	470	815	4,808	6,169	16.1

Measure 6.6: From FY 21 to FY 24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for the special education subgroup will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – SPPS) for the same subgroup and the same grades (3-8, 11).

- Exceeds target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score at least 10.0 points above the district's score.
- Meets target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score equal to or greater than the district's score.
- Approaches target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score within 5.0 points of the district's score.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Less than twenty (20) HGA special education students participated in the MCA in both FY22 and FY 23. Therefore, the available data is not adequate.

Higher Ground Academy	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*						
FY22	0	4	1	14	19	23.7
FY23	0	1	2	16	19	10.5
FY24					0	
Aggregate	1	25	56	168	250	18.9

St. Paul Public School District	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	39	92	91	873	1,095	16.1
FY22	77	193	256	1,282	1,808	22.0
FY23					0	22.4

FY24					0	20.1
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Indicator 7: Science Proficiency (and Growth)

Goal: Throughout the period of the contract, students of HGA will demonstrate proficiency in science as measured by state accountability tests.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready [CCR]: All HGA students are career and college ready before graduating from high school.

Key Measures and Results for this Goal:

Measure 7.1: From FY 21 to FY 24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score will increase by at least 5.0 points from the baseline proficiency index score (baseline score – 58.7) OR be equal to or greater than that of the state for the same grades (5, 8, HS).

- Exceeds target: The aggregate proficiency index score is at least 10.0 points above the baseline score OR at least 10.0 points above the state's score.
- Meets target: The aggregate proficiency index score is at least 5.0 points above the baseline score OR equal to or greater than the state's score.
- Approaches target: The aggregate proficiency index score is greater than the baseline score OR within 10.0 points of the state's score.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

HGA did not meet this target. There is a sixteen point eight percent (16.8%) index points difference between the district's baseline score and HGA's aggregate for the period between FY 21 and FY 23.

Higher Ground Academy	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
Baseline						58.7
FY21*	1	25	56	55	137	39.4
FY22	8	41	47	67	163	44.5
FY23	9	58	71	108	246	41.7
FY24					0	
Aggregate	18	124	174	230	546	41.9

State of Minnesota	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	10,546	48,270	38,723	38,812	136,351	57.3
FY22	13,953	58,044	47,160	55,045	174,202	54.9
FY23					0	

FY24					0	
Aggregate	24,499	106,314	85,883	93,857	310,553	56.0

St. Paul Public School District	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	109	567	604	1,572	2,852	34.3
FY22	217	1,079	1,201	2,672	5,169	36.7
FY23					0	21.5
FY24					0	
Aggregate	326	1,646	1,805	4,244	8,021	30.8

Measure 7.2: From FY 21 to FY 24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – St. Paul Public Schools) for the same grades (5, 8, HS).

- Exceeds target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score at least 10.0 points above the district's score.
- Meets target: The school's aggregate proficiency index score is greater than the district's score.
- Approaches target: The school's aggregate proficiency index score is within 5.0 points of the district's score.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

With a difference of eleven point one (11.1%) index points more, HGA exceeds this target.

Measure 7.3: From FY 21 to FY 24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for the FRP subgroup is equal to or greater than that of the state for the same subgroup and the same grades (5, 8, HS).

- Exceeds target: The aggregate proficiency index score is at least 10.0 points above the state's score.
- Meets target: The aggregate proficiency index score is equal to or greater than the state's score.
- Approaches target: The aggregate proficiency index score is within 10.0 points of the state's score.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Higher Ground Academy	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	1	25	55	53	134	39.9
FY22	8	54	44	66	172	48.8
FY23	9	54	68	104	235	41.3
FY24					0	
Aggregate	18	133	167	223	541	43.3

State of Minnesota	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
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FY21*	1,155	8,231	11,021	19,683	40,090	37.2
FY22	1,477	9,996	13,498	27,376	52,347	34.8
FY23					0	36
FY24					0	35.8
Aggregate	2,632	18,227	24,519	47,059	92,437	35.5

St. Paul Public School District	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	17	162	351	1,299	1,829	19.4
FY22	39	417	707	2,033	3,196	25.3
FY23					0	23.9
FY24					0	
Aggregate	56	579	1,058	3,332	5,025	22.9

Result

HGA met this target. The district's science aggregate proficiency index score for the FRP group from FY 21 to FY 23 was forty-three point three (42.3) whereas that of the state for the same group was 35.5.

Measure 7.4: From FY 21 to FY 24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for the FRP subgroup is greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – St. Paul Public Schools) for the same subgroup and the same grades (5, 8, HS).

- Exceeds target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score at least 10.0 points above the district's score
- Meets target: The school's aggregate proficiency index score is greater than the district's score.
- Approaches target: The school's aggregate proficiency index score is within 5.0 points of the district's score.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result

The aggregate science proficiency index score of SPPS for the FRP group from FY 21 to FY 23 is twenty two point nine (22.9) index points. That is ten point four (10.4%) index points lower than HGA's forty three point three (43.3%) index points. Therefore, HGA exceeds this target.

Measure 7.5: From FY 21 to FY 24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for the ELL subgroup will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – St. Paul Public Schools) for both subgroups and the grades (5, 8, HS).

- Exceeds target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score at least 10.0 points above the district's score.
- Meets target: The school's aggregate proficiency index score is greater than the district's score.
- Approaches target: The school's aggregate proficiency index score is within 5.0 points of the district's score.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

HGA exceeds this target. There is a twelve point two percent (12.2%) index score points difference between the science proficiency rate of HGA's ELL students and the same group of students from SPPS.

Higher Ground Academy	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	0	3	13	26	42	22.6
FY22	1	8	22	50	81	24.7
FY23	1	16	27	74	118	25.8
FY24					0	
Aggregate	2	27	62	150	241	24.9

St. Paul Public School District (ISD 625)	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21*	2	20	54	575	651	7.5
FY22	8	73	204	1,110	1,395	13.1
FY23					0	11.9
FY24					0	
Aggregate	10	93	258	1,685	2,046	12.2

Measure 7.6: From FY 21 to FY 24, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for the special education subgroup will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – St. Paul Public Schools) for the same subgroup and the same grades (5, 8, HS).

- Exceeds target: The school achieves an aggregate proficiency index score at least 10.0 points above the district's score.
- Meets target: The school's aggregate proficiency index score is greater than the district's score.
- Approaches target: The school's aggregate proficiency index score is within 5.0 points of the district's score.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Science proficiency data for FY 21 for the special education group is not available. This is due to the small cell size.

Higher Ground Academy	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21					0	
FY22					0	
FY23	0	2	4	6	12	33.3
FY24					0	
Aggregate	0	2	4	6	12	

St. Paul Public School District (ISD 625)	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Total Students	Proficiency Index
FY21	9	41	31	256	337	19.4
FY22	25	86	85	428	624	24.6
FY23					0	
FY24					0	
Aggregate	34	127	116	684	961	22.8

Indicator 8: Proficiency or Growth in Other Curricular Areas or Educational Programs

Goal: *Higher Ground Academy does not have a contractual goal in this optional indicator area.*

Indicator 9: Post-Secondary Readiness

Goal: Throughout the period of the contract, students of HGA will demonstrate readiness for post-secondary success.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Graduate from High School [GRAD]: All HGA students graduate from high school.

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

Measure 9.1 [GRAD]: From FY 20 to FY 24, the school's aggregate six-year graduation rate will be equal to or greater than the state rate.

- Exceeds Standard: The school's aggregate graduation rate is at least 5.0 percentage points above the state rate.
- Meets Standard: The school's aggregate graduation rate is equal to or greater than the state rate.
- Approaches Standard: The school's aggregate graduation rate is within 5.0 percentage points of the state rate.
- Does Not Meet Standard: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

HGA exceeds this target. The district's six-year aggregate graduation rate is 10.8 percentage points higher than the state (see graph on the next page).

Higher Ground Academy

Year: 2022 Cohort: 6-Year Rate Demographics: All Students

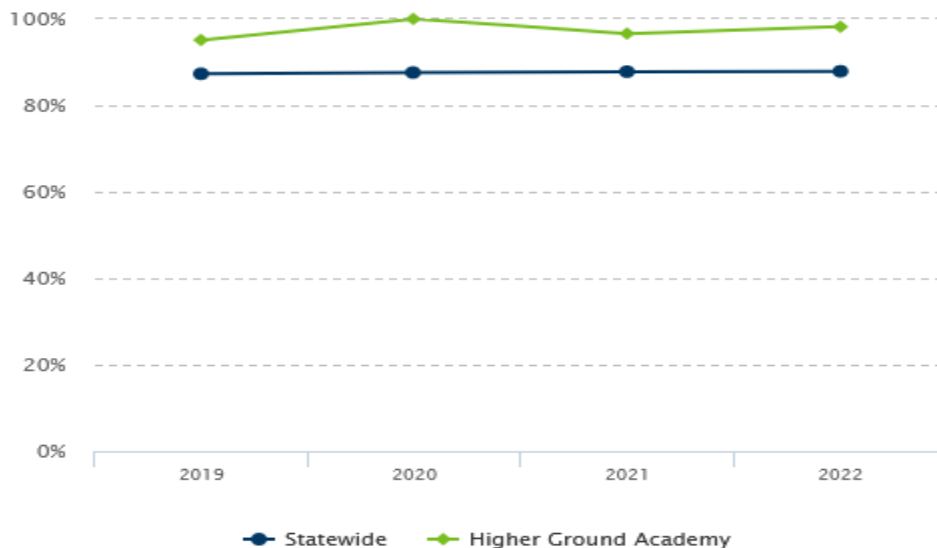
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6-Year Graduation Rate

-

Graduation Rate Trend

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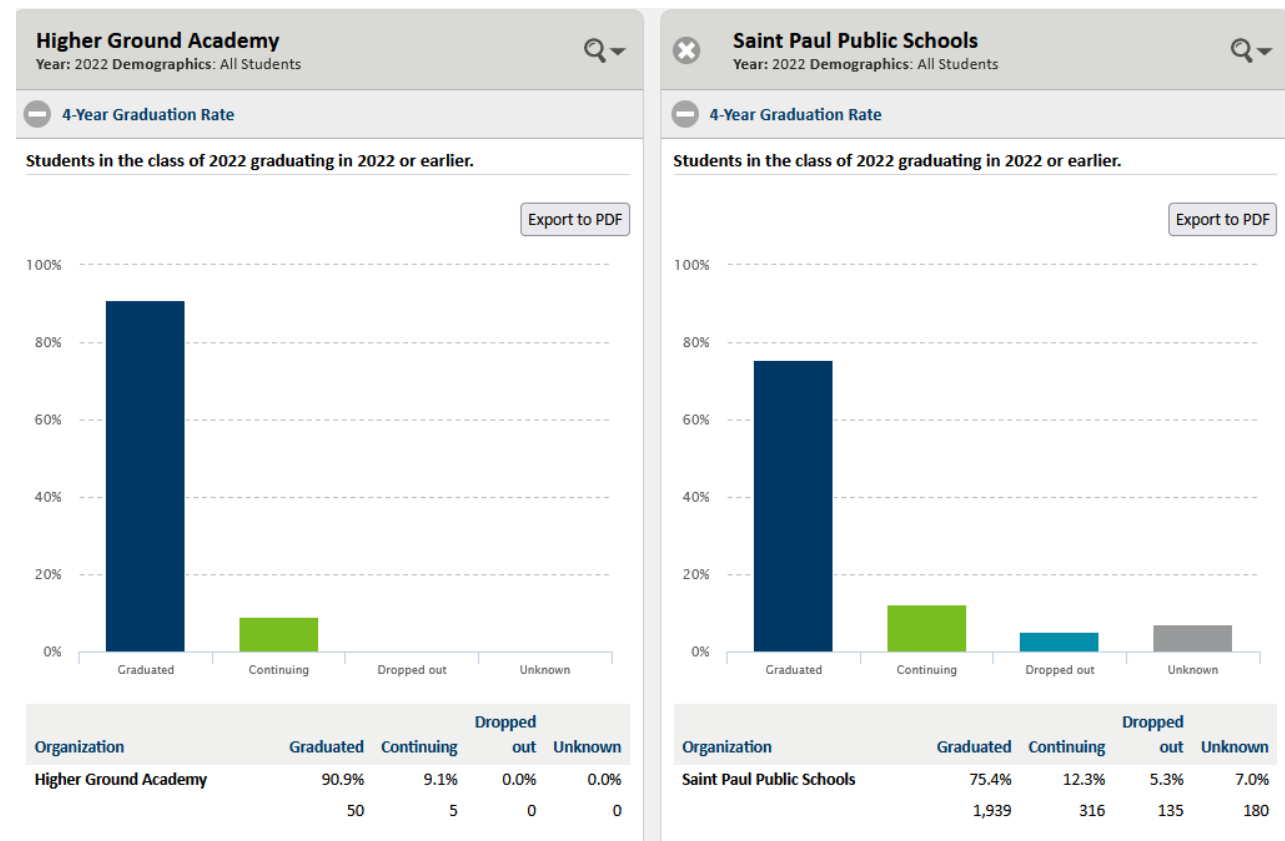
Organization	Year	Graduated count	Graduated %
Statewide	2019	57,791	87.3%
	2020	58,772	87.6%
	2021	59,918	87.8%
	2022	59,356	87.9%
Higher Ground Academy	2019	39	95.1%
	2020	42	100.0%
	2021	28	96.6%
	2022	56	98.2%

Measure 9.2 [GRAD]: From FY 16 to FY 20, the school’s aggregate four year graduation rate will be greater than the rate of the resident district (ISD 625 – St. Paul Public Schools).

- Exceeds Standard: The school’s aggregate graduation rate is at least 10.0 percentage points above the district rate.
- Meets Standard: The school’s aggregate graduation rate is greater than the district rate.
- Approaches Standard: The school’s aggregate graduation rate is within 5.0 percentage points of the district rate.
- Does Not Meet Standard: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

HGA exceeds this target. FY21 SPPS’ four year graduation rate was seventy five point four percent (75.4%). That was fifteen point five percent (15.5%) less than that of HGA (see graph on the next page).



Measure 9.3: From FY 21 to FY 24, the aggregate percentage of graduating students achieving an assessment score on a college entrance or placement exam (ACT, SAT, Accuplacer, or ASVAB) that would place them at college ready or needing no more than one semester of remediation will be at least 70.0%.

- Exceeds Standard: The aggregate percentage is at least 80.0%.
- Meets Standard: The aggregate percentage is at least 70.0%.
- Approaches Standard: The aggregate percentage is at least 60.0%.
- Does Not Meet Standard: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Data on this target is not available.

Measure 9.5: From FY16 to FY19, the aggregate percentage of graduates that are accepted into at least one college prior to graduation will be at least

- Exceeds Standard: The aggregate percentage is at least 100.0%.
- Meets Standard: The aggregate percentage is at least 80.0%.
- Approaches Standard: The aggregate percentage is at least 60.0%.
- Does Not Meet Standard: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

Result:

HGA exceeds this target with a 100% college acceptance rate. However, it is important to note that this figure does not include the few students who did not graduate at the time of designated graduation.

Indicator 10: Attendance

Goal: Throughout the period of the contract, students at HGA will attend the school at high rates.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: All students graduate from high school.

Measure 10.1: From FY 20-24, the average of the school's annual consistent attendance rates is equal to or greater than that of the state.

- Exceeds target: The average of the school's consistent attendance rates is 5 percentage points greater than that of the state.
- Meets target: The average of the school's consistent attendance rates is equal to or greater than that of the state.
- Approaches target: The average of the school's consistent attendance rates is within 5 percentage points of the state.
- Does not meet target: The school did not meet the criteria for any of the ratings above.

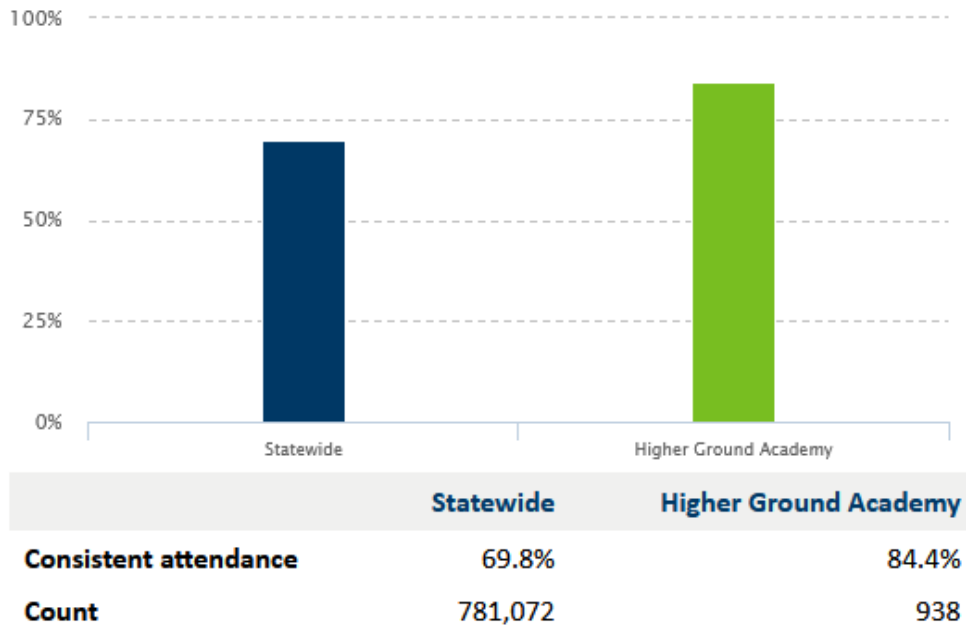
Result:

HGA exceeds this target. Eighty-four point four percent (84.4%) of HGA students attended school regularly in FY 23, according to MDE. However, sixty-nine point eight percent (69.8%) of Minnesota students regularly attended school. With a difference of fourteen point six percent (14.6%) in regular attendance rate, HGA exceeded this target.

The number of students attending school regularly

This is a measure of students who attend school on a regular basis and are not frequently absent. A student is considered consistently attending if they attend more than 90 percent of the time the student is enrolled during the year.

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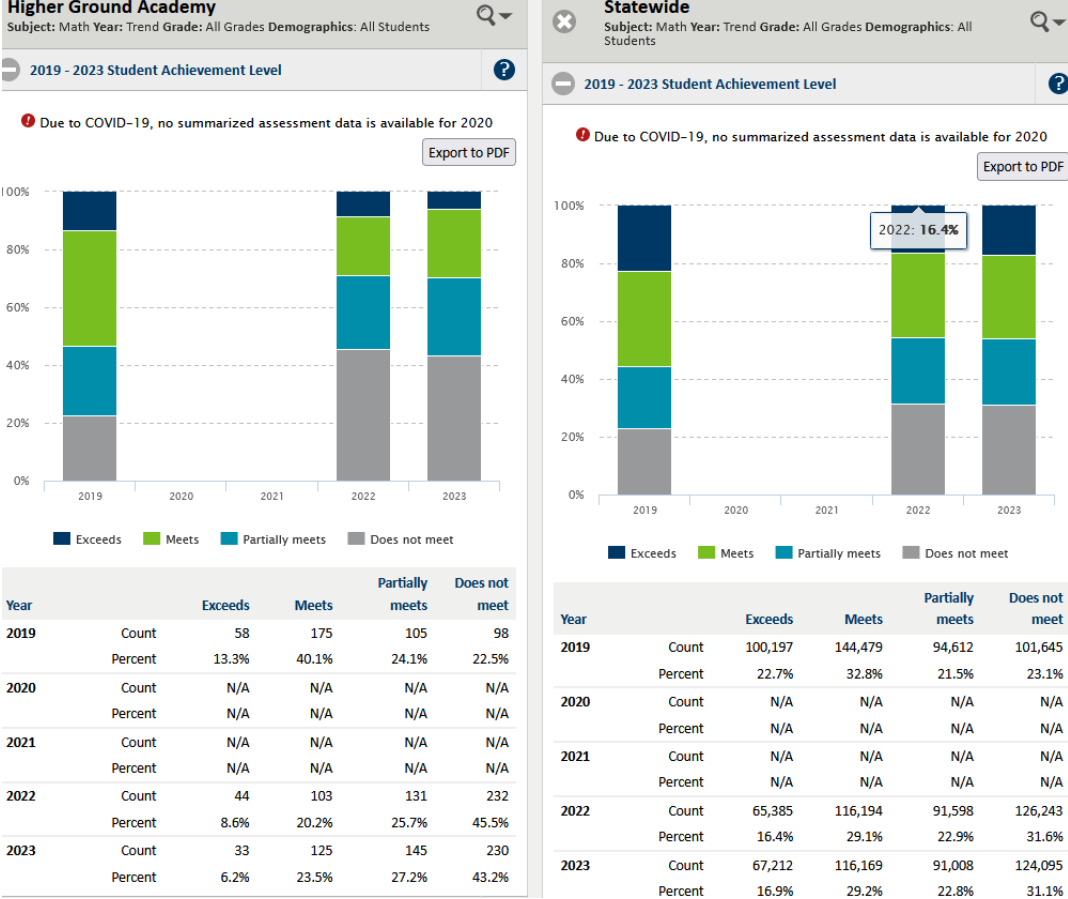
Summary:

Considering all aspects, FY 23 was another challenging year. From staff shortages to student turnover, the year proved to be a bit difficult. The larger and wealthier school districts continued to recruit HGA's more experienced teachers. As a result, the district found itself in an undesirable situation, having to recruit individuals with less experience and limited training. In addition, families continued their departure from the metro area, settling in places outside of the HGA attendance area. Students from the waiting list replaced those that departed and were mostly recent immigrants, a large number of whom have had limited prior education experience.

Despite those factors, priority to improve performance on the MCA in FY 23 from FY 22 remained. Unfortunately, that did not happen. The reading proficiency rate decreased slightly more than five percent (5%). In mathematics, where significant improvement was expected, the overall school wide proficiency rate improved by only one tenth of a percentage point (.1%). As heartbreaking as that was, there is little comfort in knowing that learning loss is part of a national trend.

FY 23 was the third year of HGA's second five-year contract with Osprey Wilds. During this period, in addition to going through a process of administrative and structural transitions, the district had to manage COVID-19 Pandemic issues and related challenges. Hence, it appears that the achievement gap has widened between the district's predominantly immigrant student population, who also exhibit other characteristics of a disadvantaged group, and the majority mainstream student population, particularly in mathematics. For example, prior to the pandemic i.e., in FY 19, the gap

between the percent of students in the state who met or exceeded standards in mathematics and that of their HGA counterparts was only three point two percent (3.2%). The gap increased sixteen point seven percent (16.7%) in FY 22. The gap declined by two point three percentage (2.3%) from FY 22 to FY 23 (see graph below).

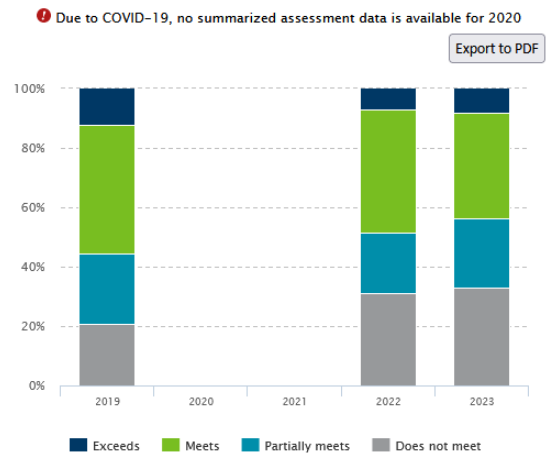


Data is worth noting in reference to reading proficiency. While there remains a gap between the state average proficiency rate and that of HGA in FY 22, it is even narrower compared to the recent past, in FY 19. In FY 19, the gap between the two groups was six percent (6%). The gap decreased three point three percent (3.3%) in FY 22. Regrettably, the gap widened to four point eight percent (4.8%) in FY23. (see graph on the next page.

Higher Ground Academy

Subject: Reading Year: Trend Grade: All Grades Demographics: All Students

2019 - 2023 Student Achievement Level

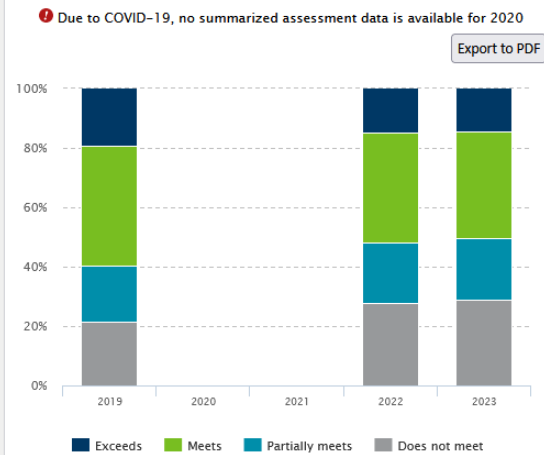


Year		Exceeds	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
2019	Count	53	184	101	89
	Percent	12.4%	43.1%	23.7%	20.8%
2020	Count	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Percent	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2021	Count	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Percent	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2022	Count	38	219	108	165
	Percent	7.2%	41.3%	20.4%	31.1%
2023	Count	44	190	125	178
	Percent	8.2%	35.4%	23.3%	33.1%

Statewide

Subject: Reading Year: Trend Grade: All Grades Demographics: All Students

2019 - 2023 Student Achievement Level



Year		Exceeds	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
2019	Count	86,996	180,402	84,816	95,786
	Percent	19.4%	40.3%	18.9%	21.4%
2020	Count	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Percent	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2021	Count	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Percent	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2022	Count	62,189	151,296	84,950	114,107
	Percent	15.1%	36.7%	20.6%	27.7%
2023	Count	58,615	147,562	84,289	118,105
	Percent	14.3%	36.1%	20.6%	28.9%

Overall, HGA needs improvement, with all the academic targets that compare its “minority” students with the state’s predominantly mainstream student population. However, as data in this section of the report previously displayed, HGA students registered greater academic proficiency rates, as well as graduation and attendance rates compared to their counterparts in the neighboring, traditional school district (SPPS) as well as charter schools serving similar demographic groups.

Federal and State Accountability:

This section of the FY 22 annual reports HGA’s progress towards meeting the district's World’s Best Workforce targets in FY 22.

Third grade reading scores:

Smart goal: The average proficiency level of HGA third grade students will increase by 5% from the previous school year.

Result: Goal not met. 2019 proficiency level of HGA was 51.5%. HGA FY 2023 proficiency rate is 35.1%

Closing achievement gap:

Smart goal: HGA’s aggregate proficiency index score will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – St. Paul Public Schools) for the same grades (3-8, 10).

Result: Target met. Between FY 19 and FY 24 the aggregate proficiency index in reading rate for HGA is 60.4%. SPPS’ reading aggregate proficiency index rate for the same period is 36.1%.

● Graduation rates:

Smart Goal: The aggregate percentage of graduates that are accepted into at least one college prior to graduation will be at least 60.0%.

Result: 100% accepted. Goal met.

High Quality Charter School Status:

In FY 23 HGA was not identified as a high quality charter school.

ESSA Identification:

In FY 23, HGA was not identified as needing comprehensive support or additional targeted support.

High Quality Charter School Status:

HGA was not identified as a high performing charter school in FY 23.

ESSA Identification:

In FY 23, HGA was not identified to receive comprehensive support or additional targeted support.

8. Educational Effectiveness: Assessment and Evaluation:

The effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic, despite being subdued, continue to linger. The proficiency level of HGA students decreased by ten percentage points (10%) and thirty percentage points (30%) for reading and mathematics respectively from FY 19 to FY 21. In FY 22 HGA recovered some of those losses from FY 21. Apparently, intervention put forth by the district and its staff to mitigate the problem was successful.

Unfortunately, HGA had a setback in FY23. The district’s reading proficiency level decreased by five point five percentage points (5.5%) from the previous year. Therefore, there still remains a strong need for a more concerted effort to return to the school’s pre COVID-19 performance level. Nonetheless, relatively speaking HGA is in a much better position in comparison to schools serving students with similar characteristics (see table below) even though the district continues to struggle to return to its pre-pandemic level of performance.

MCA reading, FY 23: Comparative data HGA vs districts and schools serving similar population District % Proficient

District	% Proficient
Higher Ground Academy	42.5%
St. Paul Public (SPPS)	33.9%
MPLS Public	41.4 %
STEP Academy	34.4%
Urban Academy	36.8%

Friendship Academy	7.9%
Twin Cities International	28.1%

Source: MDE.org

MCA Math FY 22: Comparative data HGA vs districts and schools serving similar population

District	% Proficient
Higher Ground Academy	28.8%
St. Paul Public (SPPS)	25.6%
MPLS Public	35.1%
STEP Academy	15.9%
Urban Academy	13.7%
Friendship Academy	7.1%
Twin Cities International	19.0%
Osprey Wilds Authorized	22.7

Source: MDE.org

English Language Learning (ELL) students:

The district's ELL population has grown significantly in recent years. It has increased from 315 in FY 21 to 350 in FY 22 and 430 in FY 23. Accordingly, the ELL staff of the district also grew from two in FY 18 to eight in FY 21 and nine in FY 22 and to 10 in FY 23. Unfortunately, despite such a significant increase, the teacher to student ratio still remains high, 1:40.

It is to be recalled that HGA's ELL students outperformed their ELL counterparts in the state both in FY 19 and FY 21, according to data from the MCA. In FY 19, HGA scored 9.25 index score points more than the state in the reading proficiency test. In FY 21, the gap widened to 16.55 index score points. Despite the narrowing of the gap to 10.8 index score points in FY 22, HGA students continue to outperform their state counterparts.

The data in the line graph on the next page is compiled from ACCESS test results, FY 19 to FY 23. It shows mean composite scores for students by grade level and by fiscal year. A student's composite score is the average of his/her scores for all the domains (speaking, reading, writing, and listening) assessed.

The line graph displays distinct patterns. One pattern shows is that most ELL students show significant growth in their proficiency by the time they reach grades four and five. That is followed by a period of decline, in grades six and seven. By grade nine, the scores start rising again followed by a pattern of growth and decline throughout the high school years. When analyzing the mean composite scores by grade level, it is noticeable that the lowest scores are registered in kindergarten and first grade.

K-12 ACCESS AVERAGE COMPOSITE COMPARISON 2019 - 2023

	k	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2019		2.7	2.8	3.1	3.8	4.0	2.7	3.1	3.0	3.6	2.8	3.6	3.4
2020	1.6	2.6	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.9	3.3	2.9	3.4	3.9	3.3	2.9	3.1
2021	1.3	2.6	2.7	3.7	3.6	4.0	3.4	3.0	2.8	3.4	3.0	3.1	2.7
2022	2.0	2.5	2.9	3.2	3.6	3.7	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.0	3.0	3.5	3.2
2023	2.2	2.4	3	3.5	3.7	4	3.1	3.3	3	3.6	3.1	3.3	3.2

Looking specifically at the FY 23 data, mean composite scores improved in kindergarten, two, three, four, five, nine, and ten. The mean scores for grade twelve remained unchanged. They showed a decline for grades one, six, seven, eight, and eleven. All grade levels, with the exception of kindergarten and first grade, registered a mean score that is above 3.0. Grade five registered the highest mean score, 4.0. Additional data is available on the map.

Teacher Equity Data:

In the reporting year, sixty-three teachers taught at HGA. Out of those, twenty-eight (44.4%) had three or more years of teaching experience. That is significantly lower than FY 22's 56 % but slightly higher than FY21's 40%. Nineteen of the sixty-three teachers (30%) hold advanced degrees. Out of the seventeen teachers holding advanced degrees, one has a Ph.D. All the rest hold Masters of Arts/Science degree. Ninety point five percent (90.5%) of the teachers were appropriately licensed to teach the subject and the grade level they taught. That is six point five percent (6.5%) lower than the previous FY. Given the shortage of teachers currently, that can still be regarded as a reasonable percentage. Furthermore, forty three percent of the sixty three i.e., 27 teachers, were members of racial or ethnic minority groups. This too is an increase from the previous FY by nearly four percent (4%).

The table on the next page summarizes this data.

	Licensed Educators (% of total)	3+ Years' Experience (% of total)	Working in Area of Licensure (% of total)	Advanced Degrees (% of total)	Racially / Ethnically Diverse (% of total)
Teachers	100% licensed, 12% had only a provisional license	44.4%	90.5%	30%	43%
Admin Staff	55.5%	100%	55.5%	100%	66.6%

Even though more effort is needed in terms of recruiting additional teachers from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds, the progress achieved thus far is remarkable. Particularly, worth mentioning is the composition of the

teaching staff in the school’s special education program. All four special education teachers of the school in FY 23 were members of the racial and/or ethnic minority groups. In part, this success is due to the school’s effort to work with alumni who are interested in becoming educators. Such individuals are hired by the school to work as paraprofessionals while working towards postsecondary degrees and a teaching license. HGA will intensify this effort in the coming years.

9. Teacher Satisfaction Survey:

An online survey aiming to gain insight into teachers’ opinion regarding the operation of the school was conducted between the 10th of May, 2023 and the last day of the school year which was May 26, 2023. Twenty-nine teachers, forty point eight percent (40.8%) of the total teaching staff participated in the survey. The breakdown of the participants by grade level of teaching assignment was as follows:

K - 2	Teachers	27.6%
Grades 3 - 6	Teachers	41.4%
Grades 7 - 8	Teacher	6.9%
Grades 9 - 12	Teachers	24.1%

Of the twenty-nine (29) participating teachers, the majority, eighty-three point three percent (83.3%), were mainstream teachers. Thirteen point three percent (13.3) were Title I teachers. The remaining three point three percent (3.3%) were English Language Learner teachers. Special Education teachers did not participate in the survey.

Additionally, one third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of the participating teachers had ten (10) or more years of teaching experience. The bulk of the participants, 60%, acquired between three (3) and ten (10) years of experience. New teachers who participated in the survey were only six point seven percent (6.7%) of the total.

The survey consisted of thirteen (13) close ended and three open ended items. Most of the items were to be rated on a Likert scale where respondents chose among options in response to a handful of the questions.

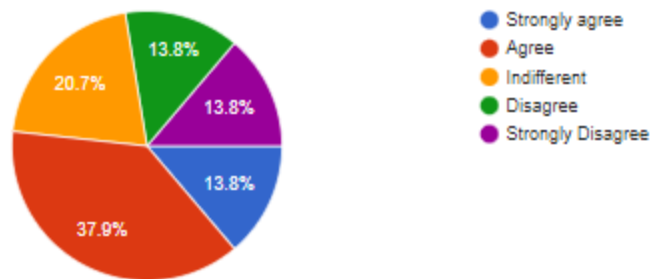
Samples of survey items and participants’ responses are presented below:

HGA implemented a multi-tiered system of intervention as one of the procedures designed to deal with behavior as well as social emotional issues that some students experience. The reporting year was the second year of implementation for the program. Having a belief that a key ingredient for the success of such a program is that the goals of the program must be known to all participants as well as shared by them, an item was added to assess the staff’s level of awareness of the goals of HGA’s intervention system. As the graph below shows, nearly half of the district’s staff are either vaguely or totally unaware of the goals.

The goal/s of our tiered system of behavior intervention (PBIS) is/are very clear to me.

Note, PBIS is not Citizenship Development. It is Tiers I (teacher intervention), II (Dreamline), and III (social worker).

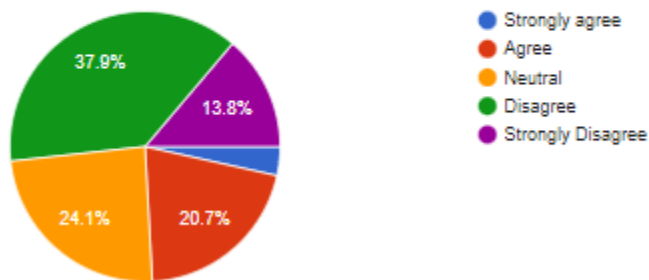
29 responses



“I believe the tiered system of behavior intervention has reduced behavioral incidents at our school.” was another item on the survey. Fifty-one point seven percent (51.7%) of the respondents disagreed with this statement. This is obviously a big proportion of the respondents. However, given that the school year that ended was the second year of implementation of the program, the response was not totally discouraging. It is important to know that on one of the open-ended items, a few respondents remarked that the program was stronger during year one of implementation rather than year two. One responder suggested that the system is good in theory only. Here is a quote from that responder: “...is not working as intended *in practice*. In that context, we are struggling (and often failing) to uphold expectations.”

I believe, the tiered system of behavior interventions has reduced behavior incidents at our school.

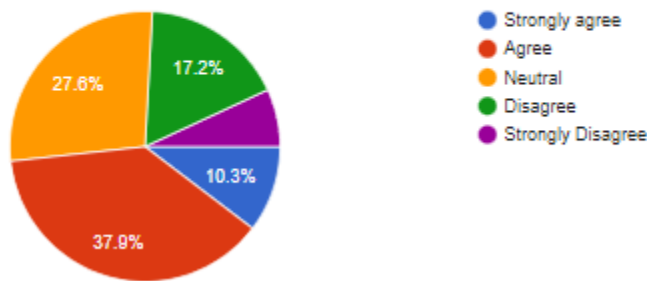
29 responses



Another element of HGA’s comprehensive system for dealing with behavior as well as social-emotional issues is the Citizenship Development Program. In many other settings, this program is referred to as “discipline management or “behavior management”. At HGA, it is known as the Citizenship Development Program because the priority is one of reformation. Striving to build good character and responsibility in students, attributes the hallmarks of good citizens. One of the items on the survey was related to this program. The item was, “[T]he Citizenship Development Program is reliable.” Less than half, forty-eight point two percent (48.2%) of the respondents rated this item favorably. The remaining participants were either indifferent or totally disagreed with the statement.

The Citizenship development program is very reliable.

29 responses

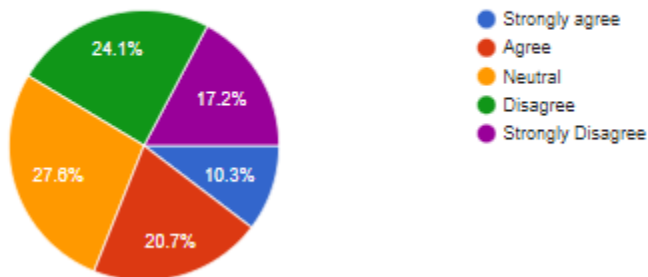


Another item that directly related to the Citizenship Development Program asked the respondents to express their feelings about the effectiveness of disciplinary actions taken by program staff. With the exception of nearly one third of the respondents, the majority either disagreed or were indifferent.

See the graph below for more details:

Overall, disciplinary actions taken this year have been effective with my students.

29 responses

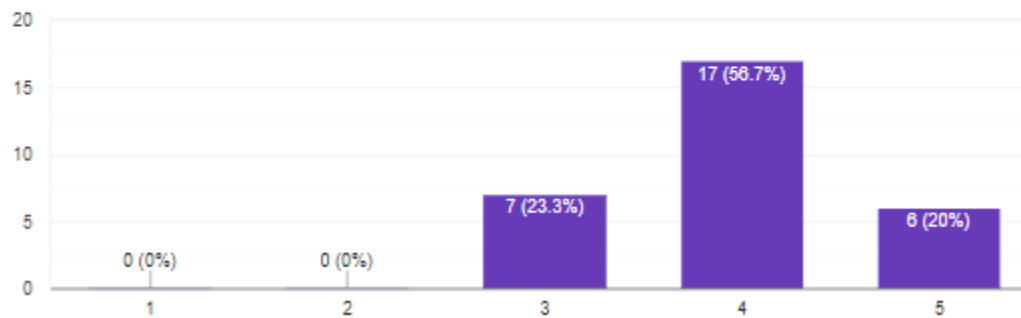


In reference to their own performance, most teachers gave themselves high ranks. On a scale of one to five (1-5), one being the lowest and five being the highest, fifty-six percent (56%) of the teachers rated themselves “4.” Twenty-three point three percent (23.3%) rated themselves as performing at a level of 3 out of 5. The remaining teachers gave themselves a perfect score (5 out of 5).

On a scale of one to five, one being poor and five being highly effective, how would you rate your effectiveness this school year?

 Copy

30 responses



10. Environmental Education (EE)

HGA Student Experiencing Nature





The mission of Higher Ground Academy’s authorizer, the Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center, is to instill a connection and commitment to the environment in people of all communities through experiential learning. Osprey Wilds 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 Earth. The overarching goal of environmental education is an environmentally literate citizenry. The test of environmental literacy is the capacity of an individual to work individually and collectively toward sustaining a healthy, natural environment. This requires sufficient awareness, knowledge, skills, and attitudes in order to create a healthy planet where all people live in balance with Earth.

Relatively speaking FY 23 was the best year for EE at HGA. The program at both HGA campuses was transformed through school wide projects, by the virtue of a grant received from Ramsey County. Through collaboration, a group of elementary and secondary teachers and administrators submitted a grant proposal to Ramsey County. Approved by Ramsey County, the proposal included a plan to create a “Food to Farm” program, composting, and revamping the existing recycling efforts. As a result, HGA received a two year \$54,000 grant to cover the costs associated with the activities included in the plan.

To prepare for the implementation of the new projects, staff and students received training both from internal staff as well as staff from Ramsey County. All equipment required for the projects (recycling, composting, and food to farm) were purchased. The composting, and food to farm projects were successfully implemented to both schools. Despite much progress compared to the previous fiscal year, the recycling program was nowhere near where it needed to be. Whereas all students participated in the composting and food to farm projects, student and to a certain extent staff, participation in the recycling program was less than optimal.

In the classrooms, students worked on various activities aimed at building their awareness, knowledge, and skills as it relates to environmental stewardship. They also participated in activities aimed at improving their attitude about the environment. Students used their awareness, knowledge, skills, and improved attitude about the environment to take actions that may lead to its preservation. For instance, some high school students wrote and mailed letters to their senators encouraging them to take interest in issues about the environment.

The section below provides progress data that students at each grade level made towards meeting their EE goals. The data in this section is organized by school and “indicator areas.”

HGA Elementary:

Overall goal: All HGA students in grades kindergarten to six will participate in the interdisciplinary units. Each interdisciplinary unit will incorporate each indicator area: awareness, knowledge, attitudes, skills and action.

Indicator area 1: Awareness:

Goal: Students and staff at Higher Ground Academy have the awareness, or are increasing their awareness of the relationship between the environment and human life.

Strategies: To achieve the awareness goal, students will be journaling (writing, drawing or inserting pictures) during each interdisciplinary unit topic (reduce, reuse, recycle or substitution).

Evaluation: The journal will be evaluated with a checklist. 70% of the students will complete their journal entries accurately about their topic.

Result:

Eighty-six percent of the students in grade four scored 60% or greater on the checklist. The fourth graders met their target. Ninety-three percent of the students in grade five scored 60% or greater on the checklist. The fifth graders met their target.

Indicator area 2: Knowledge:

Goal: Students and staff will increase knowledge of recycling, reducing, reusing and substitution and how these processes can help to improve the interactions between human and natural systems.

Strategies: To achieve this goal of knowledge, students will read related literature (articles, stories, etc), attend field trips, do research, etc. as a part of their interdisciplinary units.

Evaluation: To assess this goal, seventy percent of the students will get 60% or greater on tests in each interdisciplinary unit focusing on recycling, reducing, reusing or substitute

Results:

- 93% of the students in grade three scored 60 or better on a test designed to assess mastery of targeted knowledge. The third graders met their target.
- 91% of the students in grade six scored 60 or greater on a test designed to assess mastery of targeted knowledge. The sixth graders met their target.

Indicator area 3: Attitudes:

Goal: Students and Higher Ground Academy staff will demonstrate an increasing or positive attitude towards appreciation and concern for the environment.

Strategies: To achieve this goal, students will respond to questions about the environment and discuss how they feel about it twice during the school year. Attitudes will change through the teaching of the interdisciplinary units.

Evaluation: To show achievement of this goal, seventy percent of students will respond to survey questions about appreciation and concern for the environment favorably by year's end.

Result:

- According to pre and post surveys, 44% of the first graders showed increased attitude of, appreciation and concern for the environment. The first graders did not meet their target.
- According to pre and post surveys, 68% of the second graders showed increased attitude of, appreciation and concern for the environment. The second graders met their target.

Indicator area 4: Skills:

Goals: Students and Higher Ground Academy staff have or are increasing their problem-solving and critical thinking skills as it relates to the environment and human life.

Strategies: To achieve this goal, students will analyze environmental problems in the world and determine how they can improve the environment by recycling, reusing, reducing or substituting. This will be done in each interdisciplinary unit.

Evaluation: Seventy percent of the students will be able to identify an environmental problem and determine how it can be resolved through recycling, reusing, reducing or substituting.

Result:

- 86% of the kindergartners scored 60% or better on the checklist. Kindergartners met their target.
- 77% of the second graders scored 60% or better on the checklist. Second graders met their target.

Indicator area 5: Action:

Goals: Students and Higher Ground Academy staff demonstrate the capacity, or are increasing their capacity, to work individually and collectively toward sustaining a healthy, natural environment.

Strategy: To achieve this goal, students will complete a project (write letters, share ideas with others, present what they learned, or complete a project, etc.) as a part of an interdisciplinary unit.

Evaluation: To show achievement of this goal, students will be evaluated using a checklist. Items on the checklist will identify critical elements required for the completion of the project. Seventy percent of students will score 60% or greater on the checklist. Checklists will differ by grade level and quarter according to topic.

Goals:

- 92% of the third graders scored 60% or greater on the checklist. Third graders met their target.
- 87% of the fourth graders scored 60% or greater on the checklist. Fourth graders met their target.
- 94% of the fifth graders scored 60% or greater on the checklist. Fifth graders met their target.
- 96% of the sixth graders scored 60% or greater on the checklist. Sixth graders met their target.

HGA Secondary Academy

Indicator Area 1: Awareness:

Students demonstrate an awareness of the relationship between environments and human life and the shared diversity of life amongst Earth with humans.

Goal: Students and Higher Ground Academy staff have the awareness, or are increasing their awareness of the relationship between the environment and human life.

Targets:

Grade 7 - 70% of student journals will show evidence of being able to identify ways humans impact the environment and impact endangered species. Graded on a four-point rubric, 70% or more of the students will score 3 or greater.

Grade 8 - 60% of the students who completed their assignments will demonstrate by identifying objects that can be reused or recycled with at least 90% accuracy.

Grade 9 - 90% of students will participate in a Nearpod exercise where they will identify those responsible for misuse of natural gasoline with an average score of 4/5 on the exit ticket.

Grade 10 – Students will complete an assignment containing four questions based on recycling, reusing. Students will explain how those concepts can be incorporated in history. 70% or more of the students will score 60% or more on their assignment.

Grade 11 - 70% or more of the students will get a score of 70% or greater on environmental vocabulary quiz.

Grade 12 - 70% or more of the students will get a score of 70% or greater on environmental vocabulary quiz.

Result:

Grade 7 - 79 out of 91 grade seven students completed their journal assignment. Those who completed the assignment 77 (97%) scored 3 or greater on the rubric.

Grade 8 – 53 out of the 72 students who completed the assignment demonstrated mastery by identifying recyclable objects with 90% accuracy.

Grade 9 - 83/87 (95%) of students participated in identifying those responsible for misuse of natural gasoline with 83/83 (100%) scoring 60% or more.

Grade 10 - 64 students participated with 98% of those students reaching the goal of 60% or greater on an assignment that differentiates recycling or reusing (to show awareness of the effects of both on the environment).

Grade 11 – 47 out of 50 (94%) juniors took a vocabulary quiz related to sustainability. Of those who took the test, 37 (75%) scored 70% or higher on the vocabulary quiz.

Grade 12 – 29 out of 32 (90%) twelfth graders took the environmental quiz. 23 of the 29 students (78%) scored 70% or higher on the vocabulary quiz.

Indicator Area 2: Knowledge:

Students have knowledge of how natural systems function and how human systems interact with and depend upon them.

Goal: Students and Higher Ground Academy staff have the knowledge, or are increasing their knowledge, of human and natural systems and processes.

Targets:

Grade 7 - Students will demonstrate that they have increased their knowledge of the negative impacts of humans on the environment through their performance on a test. 70% or more of the students will score 60% or higher on a ten item test.

Grade 8 - Students will take a ten questions lesson quiz assessing knowledge of how lakes change over time through the process of eutrophication and how human activity can accelerate the process. 60% or more of the students will score 70% or more on the quiz.

Grade 9 - In a bill to a law simulation, students will research gasoline, and alternatives to gasoline. This includes identifying gasoline uses, attitudes regarding if alternatives are good or bad. Students will use this research to write a bill designed to reduce gasoline use. 70% or more of the students will submit their written bill. 70% of the students will score 60% or more on this assignment (written bill).

Grade 10: Students will display knowledge of the environment through a project on how people improve their environment through recycling and reusing. 80% of the students will complete the project and of those, 70% or more will score 60% or greater on their assignment.

Result:

Grade 7 – 86/96 (90%) of the students participated on the ten item test. Of those, 65 students (68%) scored 60% or higher.

Grade 8 -57/92 (62%) took the quiz. 88% of those who took the quiz scored 70% or higher on the test.

Grade 9 - 86/86 began the research to look at how gasoline is used, and alternatives to gasoline, however 64/ 86 (73%) turned in their research. 51/64 (79%) scored 60% or higher.

Grade 10 -64 out of 75 (85%) of the students participated with 96% of those students reaching the goal of 60% or higher on their assignment that evaluates knowledge of recycling or. reusing.

Indicator Area 3: Attitudes:

Students demonstrate respect and concern for the Earth's health and the motivation to participate in environmental stewardship.

Goal: Students and Higher Ground Academy staff have an attitude, or are increasing their attitude of, appreciation and concern for the environment.

Targets:

Grade 7 – 70% or more of the 91 students will complete an opinion survey. Of those who completed the survey, 70% or more of the students will answer all the questions correctly/appropriately.

Grade 9 – Students will complete two readings, watch a video about ethanol and complete a written activity that has students graph intended and unintended consequences of ethanol use using supply and demand graphs. Students will synthesize all of this information and use it to create a pro-con list, which will then be used to write an opinion letter determining if the use of ethanol is worth the unintended consequences. 80% or more of the students will write and submit their opinion letters. 70% of the students will score 60% or better on their opinion letter.

Grade 10 - 69 of 80 of students will receive a grade of 60% or more on their reflective assignment, aimed at expressing shifting attitudes to how they recycle and reuse in their own lives.

Result:

Grade 7 - 33/91 (36%) participated in the survey. Of those 28 students (86%) answered all the questions accurately/appropriately.

Grade 9 - 86/91 (94%) students submitted their opinion letters. 55/86 scored 60% or greater.

Grade 10 - 69 students participated with 66% of those students reaching the goal of 60% or higher on their assignment that reveals shifting attitudes relating to how they recycle and reuse in their own lives.

Indicator Area 4: Skills:

Students possess the skills needed to identify and critically analyze environmental issues, and to contribute to resolving environmental challenges.

Goal: Students and Higher Ground Academy staff have or are increasing their problem solving and critical thinking skills as it relates to the environment and human life.

Indicators:

Grade 7 - 80% of students will be able to clearly demonstrate analysis and critical problem solving resulting in a solution about the environmental issues of endangered species and population control.

Grade 8 - 80% of the students will analyze with the help of a Venn diagram water crisis in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Los Angeles, California, and Flint, Michigan. 60% of those who completed this assignment will demonstrate mastery of their critical thinking skill by correctly identifying three similarities and three differences in the situation of water crisis between the three cities.

Result:

Grade 7 - 43/91 Students completed the assignment successfully and 100% of the 43 reached all of the objectives - created solutions to the problems facing an endangered animal.

Grade 8 - 86/94 (92%) of students completed a Venn diagram identifying similarities and differences in the water shortage situation in Los Angeles, California and Minneapolis, Minnesota. Of the 86, 71 students (82%) correctly identified 3 similarities and 3 differences between water crisis in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Los Angeles, California and Flint, Michigan.

Indicator Area 5: Action:

Students have the capacity, or are increasing their capacity to perceive and interpret the health of environmental and social systems and take appropriate action to maintain, restore, or improve the health of those systems.

Goal: Students and Higher Ground Academy staff demonstrate the capacity, or are increasing their capacity, to work individually and collectively toward sustaining a healthy natural environment.

Indicator:

Grade 7 - 70% of the 7th graders will create animal rights activist posters and present it to their class. Posters and presentations will be graded with a 4 points rubric. 70% of the students will score a 3 on a 4 the rubric to demonstrate mastery.

Grade 9 - 90% (82/91) students will write a letter to their state representative. 80% of the letters written to representatives will be mailed.

Grade 11 - Students will write a letter to HGA administrators, St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter, or Minnesota Governor Tim Walz about the survey results which estimates that the 17 buses HGA (secondary) uses create more than 3,910,000 of GHG emissions each year. Students will decide what action to recommend to reduce HGA's (secondary) share of GHGs, including electric buses which would cost \$5 million for 17.

Grade 12: 17 out of 21 (80%) of 12 grade students will complete research to determine how much GHG emission is created by the 17 buses HGA uses to transport students. Based on their findings, they will write a letter to HGA administrators, St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter, or Minnesota Governor Tim Walz regarding the survey results. Students will recommend alternatives that will help reduce HGA's (secondary) share of GHGs. All 17 (100%) of the letters will be mailed to the identified officials.

Result:

Grade 7 - 43/91 (47.3%) students completed posters- all 43 students (100%) successfully demonstrated their skills by scoring 3 or greater on the rubric.

Grade 9 - 86/91 (94%) students wrote letters to their representative. 60/86 (69%) of the letters were mailed.

Grade 12 - Of the 21 12th grade students present, 19 (90%) completed their research, wrote at least two paragraphs discussing the environmental impact of the diesel bus the school uses to transport students and mailed it to the identified officials.

Summary:

Environmental Education was considerably successful in FY 23 . One major success the district had in FY 23 was receiving a \$57,000 grant from Ramsey County. The grant is funding programs that allow students to transfer their classroom learned knowledge and skills into action. Moreover, data reported by teachers shows that students at all grade levels are meeting Environmental Education targets. However, it is worth acknowledging that the EE program at the secondary school continues to need more attention.

11. Governance & Management:

Board of Directors:

Higher Ground Academy's board of directors consists of seven members. Members serve a three-year term. HGA's bylaws have no limitation as to the number of years/terms a member serves. As a result, all members have served on the board for more than three years. Such a sustained membership of board members has been beneficial to the district. It has strengthened board members' ties with the district and their commitment. Additionally, board members have a keen understanding of the population they serve and the needs of the district.

HGA's board successfully adopted three new policies in FY 23. The policies were, Lease Accounting Policy, School Meal Policy, and Policy banning (products containing THC and CBD). Additionally, the board revised the district's Student Fee Policy, Wellness Policy, and Pledge of Allegiance Policy. Another area of success for the board in FY 23

was member attendance. Attendance was perfect for seven out of the twelve meetings during the fiscal year. It is to be recalled that during the previous fiscal year the board had perfect attendance for eight out of eleven meetings.

In terms of board training, members participated in more training opportunities than any other fiscal year. The agenda of the training consisted of, charter school financial management, human resources management, understanding authorizer - charter school relationship, and special education law.

A complete list of the training offered to board members including names of trainers and date of training are identified in the tables below:

Initial Training:

Initial Training				
Board Member Name	Original Date Seated	Board's Role & Responsibilities	Employment Policies & Practices	Financial Management
Samuel Yigzaw		Ex Officio Member	01/24/2017 John Cairns	03/21/2017 Brenda Kes
Dan McGrath	06/21/2016	Chair	01/24/2017 John Cairns	03/21/2017 Brenda Kes
Denise Toussaint	09/01/2015	Treasurer	01/24/2017 John Cairns	03/21/2017 Brenda Kes
Mary Tate	06/21/2016	Secretary	01/24/2017 John Cairns	03/21/2017 Brenda Kes
Neliya Tkachenko	09/01/2015	Teacher	01/24/2017 John Cairns	03/21/2017 Brenda Kes
Brian Swerine	10/18/2016	Community Member	01/24/2017 John Cairns	03/21/2017 Brenda Kes
Shannon Tanghe	01/23/2018	Community Member	01/23/2019 John Cairns	03/21/2017 Brenda Kes
Abdirashid Muse	10/19/2021	Parent	01/18/2022 Eugene Piccolo	03/21/2017 Brenda Kes

Annual Training:

Annual Training – FY19

Board Member Name	Date of Training	Finance Training	Brenda Kes
Samuel Yigzaw	12/17/2019	Yes	Brenda Kes
Dan McGrath	12/17/2019	Yes	Brenda Kes
Denise Toussaint	12/17/2019	Yes	Brenda Kes
Mary Tate	12/17/2019	Yes	Brenda Kes
Neliya Tkachenko	12/17/2019	Yes	Brenda Kes
Brian Swerine	12/17/2019	Yes	Brenda Kes
Shannon Tanghe	12/17/2019	Yes	Brenda Kes

Annual Training – FY21-22			
Board Member Name	Training #1: Charter School Governance Eugene Piccolo, 04/20/2021	Training #2: Budget Revision & Audit Report, Brenda Kes 12/21/2021	Training #3: Human Resource, Eugene Piccolo 01/18/2022
Samuel Yigzaw	Attended? YES	Attended? YES	Attended? YES
Dan McGrath	Attended? YES	Attended? YES	Attended? YES
Denise Toussaint	Attended? YES	Attended? YES	Attended? YES
Mary Tate	Attended? YES	Attended? YES	Attended? YES

Mohamed Abdille	Attended? YES	Attended? YES	Attended? YES
Neliya Tkachenko	Attended? YES	Attended? YES	Attended? YES
Shannon Tanghe	Attended? YES	Attended? YES	Attended? YES
Abdirahshid Muse	Attended? No	Attended? YES	Attended? No

Annual Training – FY21-22			
Board Member Name	Training #4: Special Education Law Kelly Dietrich 03/15/2022		
Samuel Yigzaw	Attended? YES		
Dan McGrath	Attended? YES		
Denise Toussaint	Attended? YES		
Mary Tate	Attended? YES		
Mohamed Abdille	Attended? YES		
Neliya Tkachenko	Attended? YES		
Brian Swerine	Attended? YES		

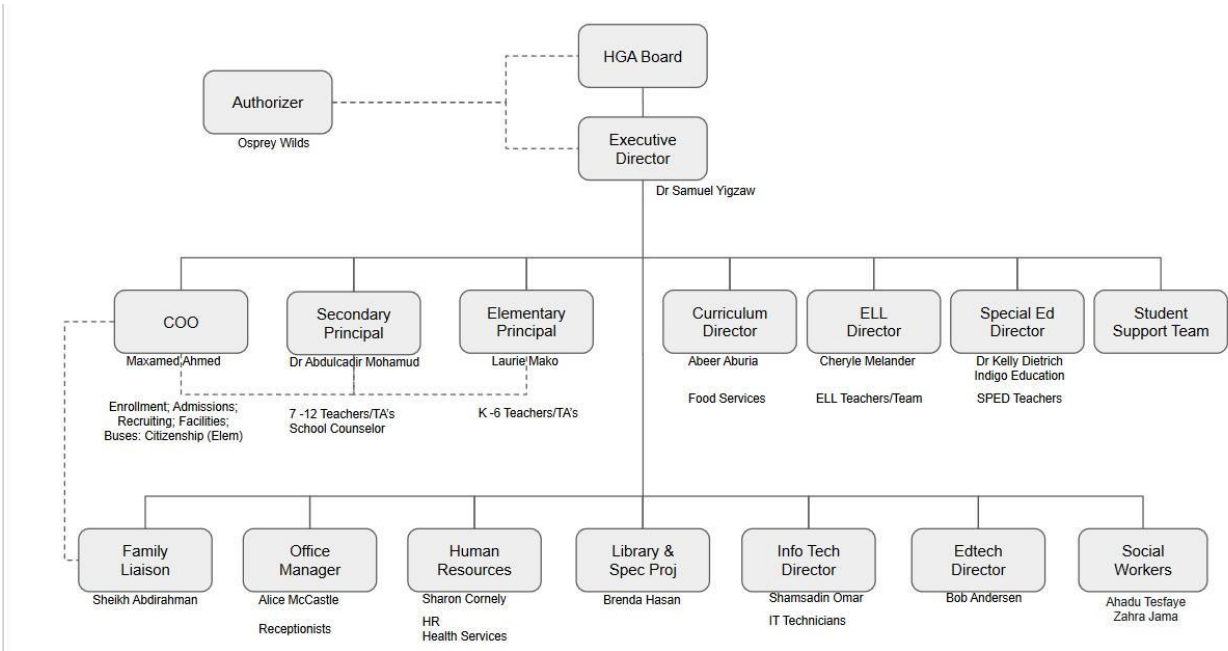
Shannon Tanghe	Attended? YES		
Abdirahshid Muse	Attended? YES		

Annual Training – FY22			
Board Member Name	Date of Training	Training Title or Topic	Presenter or Trainer
Shannon Tanghe Denise Toussaint	02/08/2022	So You're a Member of an OW Authorized Charter School Board: Understanding the Authorizer-School Relationship	Erin Anderson
Shannon Tanghe Denise Toussaint	02/08/2022	Charter School Board Roles & Responsibilities	Erin Anderson
Shannon Tanghe	02/08/2022	Charter School Employment Policies & Practice	Nalani McCutcheon
Shannon Tanghe Denise Toussaint	02/08/2022	Open Meeting Law & You	Erin Anderson

Annual Training – FY23			
Board Member Name	Date of Training	Finance Training	Brenda Kes
Samuel Yigzaw	03/21/2023	Yes	Brenda Kes/Bill Lauer
Dan McGrath	03/21/2023	Yes	Brenda Kes/Bill Lauer
Denise Toussaint	03/21/2023	Yes	Brenda Kes/Bill Lauer
Mary Tate	03/21/2023	Yes	Brenda Kes/Bill Lauer
Neliya Tkachenko	03/21/2023	Yes	Brenda Kes/Bill Lauer
Brian Swerine	03/21/2023	Yes	Brenda Kes/Bill Lauer
Shannon Tanghe	03/21/2023	Yes	Brenda Kes/Bill Lauer
Abdirahshid Muse	03/21/2023	Yes	Brenda Kes/Bill Lauer

IROP Training – FY23			
Board Member Name	Training #5: Homerun Leadership Dr. Dave Webb 07/18/2023		
Samuel Yigzaw	Attended? YES		
Dan McGrath	Attended? YES		
Denise Toussaint	Attended? YES		
Mary Tate	Attended? YES		
Mohamed Abdille	Attended? YES		
Neliya Tkachenko	Attended? YES		
Brian Swerine	Attended? YES		
Shannon Tanghe	Attended? YES		
Abdirahshid Muse	Attended? YES		

Organizational Chart:



The Executive Director of Higher Ground Academy is Samuel Yigzaw. Samuel has been with HGA since the academy’s first year of operation, 1999. Since then, he has served HGA, as a teacher, Director of Curriculum and Assessment, and principal. In the fall of 2018, the Board of Directors of HGA appointed Samuel as Executive Director, following the inability of the former Director Mr. Wilson to continue his duties because of poor health. His first appointment was for two years. Two years later, Samuel’s contract was renewed for another five years.

To help him manage the day to day operation of the HGA, Samuel appointed administrators, a chief of operations, two principals, a director of curriculum, a director of personnel affairs, and an assistant director for data and student progress. In the spring of 2020, following the advent of “distance learning”, a director of instructional technology position was created. In FY 20, HGA became two schools, HGA Elementary and HGA Secondary. Thus, HGA has two principals. All other administrators serve both schools.

Names, educational background, and work experience of all administrators are listed below:

List of Administrators and Qualifications:

Samuel Yigzaw

Job title: Executive Director

Education: Ph.D. in Education

Licensure: MN K – 12 Admin, MN Social Studies All, Grades: 5 – 12. MN Superintendent license, June 2024.

Professional Experience: Educator since 1982. Experience as a classroom teacher, curriculum director, principal, school board member.

Teaching experience include middle school, high school, and post-secondary (Adjunct faculty at the University of MN. 1998 – 2002 and Associate Professor of Education at St. Mary’s University of Minnesota, 2006 – 2018).

Maxamed Ahmed

Job Title: Chief of Operations

Education: MBA in Organizational Management

Professional Experience: Facilitator of STEAM Lab, assistant to the Executive Director in school year 2018 – 19, HGA COO fall 2020 -

Abdulcadir Mohamud

Job Title: Principal, HGA (Secondary)

Education: M.A. in Electrical Engineering, Ph.D. in Education

Licensure: MN 5 – 12 mathematics, MN K – 12 administrative

Professional experience (only those that are relevant to current job): Taught high school mathematics, lead teacher since 2008.

Laurie Mako

Job Title: Principal, HGA (Elementary)

Education: M.A. in Education

Licensure: MN K – 6 (elementary) teaching license, MN K – 12 administrative

Professional Experience: Taught various grade levels, mostly grade 3, served as a lead of teachers of grades 3 – 5.

Abeer Aburia

Job Title: Curriculum Director

Education: Education Specialist

Licensure: MN K – 6 (elementary) teaching license, MN K – 12 administrative

Professional Experience: Taught various grade levels, mostly grade 6, served as a lead of teachers in grades K – 2,

Cheryl Melander

Job title: Assistant Principal, in charge of the ELL program

Education: doctorate degree,

Licensure: MN K – 6 (elementary) teaching, MN K – 12 administrative professional experience: elementary teacher

Robert Andersen

Job: Director of Instructional Technology

Education: MA in Electrical Engineering

Professional Experience: 27 years of experience as an adjunct faculty and instructional technology leader.

Sharon Cornely

Job title: Director of Personnel Affairs

Education: M.A. in Education

Professional experience: elementary teacher, Title I coordinator, assistant principal for Citizenship Development, Director of Personnel Affairs

Professional Development Plan for Not Licensed Administrators:

1. Maxamed Ahmed, Chief Operations Officer (COO)
2. Professional Development Goals/Areas of Focus for FY 22: Improve managerial skills in the area of “people management.”
 - Professional Development Goals/Areas of Focus for FY 23
 - Maxamed will be more effective with business management skills
 - Activities: Will attend professional development workshop “Accounting for Decision Making”

Professional Development Goals/Areas of Focus for FY 23. *Improving internal control and organizational risk management.*

Maxamed will be more effective with organizational management skills.

Activities: Maxamed will self-study *organizational governance in September 2023 through* FTC Global, one of the leading professional accountancy trainers in the world. Topics **include: internal control framework, and organizational risk management framework.**

2. Robert Anderson, Director of Instructional Technology

Professional Development Goal for FY 23 : Learn Clever Portal in order to ensure the portal supports teachers' and administrators' operational needs. Training: Attended Clever certification training.

Professional Development goal for FY 24 : Learn grant writing so that he will be able to write technology grants

3. Sharon Cornely, Director of Personnel Affairs

- Professional Development Goal for FY 23 . Understanding legal issues of personnel management

- Activities completed, Read a book entitled, "Teachers and the Law" by Schmell D., Stellman. L.R., Conlon C.K., & Fischer L. (2015).

- Professional Development Goal for FY 24 : Continue to learn legal issues personnel management.

- Activities: will attend more professional development workshops.

1. Staffing:

Prior to the pandemic HGA has been successful in recruiting and retaining teachers. As a result, a large number of the teachers have been with the district for more than ten years. However, following the national trend, the district is experiencing staffing problems. In FY 22, there were three positions that were not filled until the beginning of October 2021. As a matter of fact, one of the three was filled in mid-December. All three positions were filled with teachers holding a provisional license.

Competition for teachers coupled with the shortage of highly qualified teachers has made teacher recruitment difficult. HGA advertises vacancies in well-known teacher recruitment websites. In addition, the district collaborates with teacher training institutes in Minneapolis and St. Paul. In FY 22, the district offered a one-time \$2,000 signing bonus to candidates who signed a contract with the district. Despite that, HGA experienced a teacher shortage as described earlier. What also worsened the district's position is teacher resignation. In an unprecedented manner, six teachers submitted letters of resignation at the beginning of FY 22. Almost all the six teachers resigned because they were offered salaries that were extremely larger than HGA offers. Sadly, the situation in FY 23 was similar to the previous ones.

FY 22 Teacher Professional Development Activities:

HGA teachers completed 21 hours of professional development in FY 23. New teachers completed an additional 24 hours of professional development at the start of the school year. The workshop agenda is listed below. Internal staff, professional developers from other organizations, and an employee of Ramsey County in Saint Paul conducted the workshops.

Professional Development Agenda, FY21

- Creating a Culturally Aware School Culture
- Environmental Education
- Bullying Prevention
- PBIS and Classroom Management
- Technology Integration
- E-Learning/teaching

- Mandated Reporter
- Health and Safety
- Teaching and Learning at HGA

Teacher Retention:

Relatively speaking, FY 23 was better than FY22 for HGA in regards to teacher retention. Of the district's 63 licensed staff, seven (16.7%) decided not to return to HGA in FY 23. Despite being high, this rate is slightly better than what it had been the previous fiscal year by a few points. According to exit interviews, the departing teachers cited reasons such as relocation, better salary, changing profession, and desire to work for the larger districts.

Percentage of Licensed Teachers from 2021-22 not returning in 2022-23 (non-returning teachers/total teachers from 2021-22 x 100)	<u>11.11%</u>
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Licensed staff, name, file folder number, License status, Status in FY 23

Name	File Folder #	Assignment	License Status & type	Status in FY 23
Ahmed Abdirahman	997964	Arabic	Current/Tier II	R
Riad Abdullahi	476320	MS Mathematics	Current	R
Abeer Aburia	418975	Assistant Principal	Current	R
Tracy Chapman	410411	Building Sub	Current	R
Jennifer Bangoura	248883	HS ELA	Current	R
Endale Beyene	433578	HS Chemistry	Current	R
Trina Murray	489643	Kindergarten	Current	R
Jenna Spitzak	1004348	Kindergarten	Current	R
Vitocria-Carley Smith	1004390	Kindergarten	Current	R
Thomas Carney	484396	Kindergarten	Current	R
Jeanette Corn	444063	MS ELA	Current	R
Dereje Daba	396910	2nd Grade	Current	R
Kyle Dahlen	481121	3rd Grade	Current	R
Anderw Urevig	1007210	5th Grade	Current	R
Shukri Elmi	1002281	2nd Grade	Current	R
Joseph Denker	462239	HS Social Studies	Current	R

Catherine Eisele	445546	HS Social Studies	Current	R
Erika Degnan	486018	2nd Grade	Current	R
Karl Erickson	996262	Physical Education	Current/Tier III	R
Theresa Ronnei	355188	1st Grade	Current	R
Spencer Richards	518676	Physical Education	Current	R
Abdurezak Kadir	443793	HS Chemistry	Current	R

Emmy Bloomquist	1004751	3rd Grade	Current	R
Sarah Kinnard	503904	4th Grade	Current	R
Alexia Ramirez	1012330	ELL	Current	R
Destiny Stampley	1001913	5th Grade	Current	R
Pamela LaManna	418545	4th Grade	Current	R
Fathiya Dubad	1016478	1st Grade	Current	R
Laurie Mako	410554	Elem. Principal	Current	R
Mohamud Mohamud	1006717	Arabic	Current	R
Cheryle Melander	472766	Assistant Principal	Current	R
Samuel Yigzaw	336710	Executive Director	Current	R
Abdulcadir Mohamud	405305	Principal, Secondary	Current	R
Heidi Heideman	1000382	ELL	Current/Tier II	R
Young Waters	518071	ELL	Current	R
Cassandra Saye	486466	1st Grade	Current	R
Broc Gross	506749	ELL	Current	R
Johanna Thomas	244058	Title I	Current	R
Neliya Tkachenko	381773	ELL	Current	R
Faisal Wako	414899	MS Mathematics	Current	R
Liban Ahmed	1002989	Special Education	Current	R
Anna Sepeda	502342	HS Mathematics	Current	R

Kelcey Carlson	1000169	HS ELA	Current	R
Omar Ali	515059	ELL	Current	R
Esther Pranke	1004433	MS Social Studies	Current	R
Mohamed Jama	1008226	HS Mathematics	Current/Tier I	R
Mubaarak Mohamed	1001167	Special Education	Current	R
Hassan Hassan		Special Education	Current	NR
Kyle Morishita	514970	Art	Current/Tier I	NR
Justine Nelson	433425	6th Grade	Current	NR
Catherine Orfield	1003949	ELL	Current	R
Fosi Hassan	504110	Counselor	Current	R
Bashir Collad	466183	HS Mathematics	Current	R
Jacquelyn Oliver	497603	MS Social Studies	Current	R
Anna Lund	510646	HS Social Studies	Current	NR
Steven Rohrich	517497	MS ELA	Current	R
Dominic Cafaro	1006257	MS Science	Current/Tier II	R
Xia Nelson	100868	Kindergarten	Current	NR
Amelia Gronfer	1004536	3rd Grade	Current	NR
Johnson Erin	491980	4th Grade	Current	R
Anta Diop	1018430	3rd Grade	Current	NR
Yusuf Omar	508508	Special Education	Current	R

Non-Licensed Staff

Name	Assignment	FY 23 Status	Building
Marian Abdulle	Cafeteria	R	Marshall
Fousia Abdulkadir	Receptionist	R	Marshall
Abdirahman Ahmed	Parent Liaison	R	District
Ubah Abdi	TA	R	Marshall

Khalid Abdisalan	TA	NR	Marshall
Nasteho Abdisalan	TA	R	Marshall
Ahmed Ahmed	STEM Lab Tech.	R	Marshall
Naimo Ahmed	TA	NR	Marshall
Amina Ali	TA	R	Marshall
Suad Ateyah	TA	R	Marshall
Haroon Al-Hajibye	TA	R	Marshall
Faduma Ali	Food Service	NR	Marshall
Nasteha Ali	Parent Liaison	R	Marshall
Sabrina Ali	Student Support	R	Brewster
Idil Abdi	TA	R	Marshall
Sahara Abdi	Food Service	NR	Marshall
Bernadine Anderson	Data Manager	R	District

Abdirahman Abdikarin	TA	R	Brewster
An-her Ankhu-ra	Citizenship Development	R	Brewster
Huda Abdullahi	Student Support	R	Brewster
Najma Abdullahi	TA	NR	Marshall
Aisha Aden	TA	R	Marshall
Maxamed Ahmed	COO	R	District
Fartun Ali	TA	R	Marshall
Husssein Ali	TA	R	Marshall
Robert Andert	Instructional Tech. Lead	R	District
Sharon Cornely	Personnel Dir.	R	District
Ifrah Dirie	TA	R	Marshall
Hattie Davis	Library Assistant	R	Marshall
Ali Farah	TA	NR	Marshall

Garad Zamzam	TA	R	Marshall
Hunter Inez	TA	NR	Marshall
Hinda Gure	Custodial	R	Marshall
Amina Hussein	TA	R	Marshall
Zakariya Yusuf	TA	NR	Marshall
Muuna Hasan	Student Support	NR	Marshall
Aasia Hassan	TA	R	Brewster
Abdimalik Mohamed	TA	NR	Marshall
Maryan Hassan	Food Service	R	Marshall
Awil Hussein	TA	R	Marshall
Asia Ishaq	TA	R	Brewster
Khadija Ismail	Food Service	NR	Brewster
Muna Ismail	Food Service	R	Marshall
Aden Isse	TA	R	Brewster
Kim Phillips	Health Aide	R	Marshall
Zahra Jama	Student Support	R	Brewster
Mohamed Jimale	Tech. Support	R	Marshall
Zakariya Kedir	Tech Support	R	Brewster
Leedena Griffin	TA	R	Marshall

Ernestine Kemp	Title I	R	Marshall
Brenda Hasan-Jackson	Library	R	Marshall
Johnnie McCalister	Health Aide	R	Brewster
Alice McCastle	Office Manager	R	Marshall
Molly McGuire	TA	R	Marshall
Thomas Meeson	ELL I Para	R	Brewster
Fadumo Mohamed	Food Service	NR	Marshall

Kafia Mohamed	Citizenship Development	R	Marshall
Kamal Mohamed	Substitute Teacher	NR	Brewster
Sahra Mohamed	Custodial	R	Marshall
Sakariya Mohamed	Transportation	R	District
Asha Mohamed	TA	R	Marshall
SamSam Mohamed	TA	R	Marshall
Foosia Mohmuud	Receptionist	R	Brewster
Fartun Mohamed	TA	R	Marshall
Hussein Mohamed	TA	R	Brewster
Musab Mohamed	TA	NR	Marshall
Hawo Munye	Food Service	NR	Brewster
Abdullahi Najma	TA	NR	Marshall
Faisa Muse	TA	R	Marshall
Shamsudin Omar	Technology Director	R	District
Muna Omar	TA	R	Brewster
Fartun Osman	Citizenship Development	NR	Marshall
Hibaq Osman	TA	R	Brewster
Amanda Ronnei	TA	R	Marshall
Saleh Saleh	Citizenship Development	R	Marshall
Hawi Tahiro	Citizenship Development	R	Marshall
Ahadu Tesfaye	Student Support	R	Brewster
Kassim Tilmo	Dean of Students	R	Brewster
Yvette Vinson	Food Service	R	Brewster

13. Finances:

For questions regarding school finances and for complete financials for 2022 -23 and/or an organizational budget for 2022 -23 , contact: Brenda Kes,
 Outsourced CFO, School Services
 Contact info:
 Phone (651) 280 - 5582

Email: brenda.kes@bergankdv.com

Bergan KDV provides accounting services for Higher Ground Academy.

FY23 Finances	Fund 1	Fund 2	Fund 4
Total Revenues	18,386,324	973,021	0
Total Expenditures	16,382,416	973,021	0
Net Income	2,003,908	0	0
Total Fund Balance	11,842,316	0	0

Overview:

Higher Ground Academy was successful in its enrollment targets, ending the year at 1,047 ADM compared to a revised budget amount of 1,050 ADM. The school had budgeted repairs and maintenance plans during FY 23, however these lines came in under budget due to work performed during the of summer 2023. These expenditures will appear in the FY 24 budget. The school also used a portion of the Federal CARES Funds to allocate salaries from the general fund and shifted these to the Federal CARES Funds.

Revenues:

Total revenues for FY 23 across all funds totaled \$19,359,345. Most of this funding was in the form of state aids, including general education. Federal revenues (including CARES funding) were also a major source of revenue for the general fund. General fund revenues totaled \$18,386,324, whereas food service fund revenues totaled \$973,021.

Expenses:

Total expenditures across all funds for FY 23 were \$17,355,437. General fund accounted for \$16,382,416, whereas the food service fund accounted for \$973,021 of expenditures. Salaries, benefits, building lease, and contracted transportation were among the highest categories in terms of total expenditures during the fiscal year. Additional expenditures were incurred in FY 23 due to the closing cost on bonds for the School and Affiliated Building Company.

Net Surplus or Deficit and Fund Balance:

The projected ending fund balance as of June 30, 2023 is anticipated to be \$11,842,316, or 68.23% of total expenditures. This is an increase of \$2,003,908 to the overall fund balance for Higher Ground Academy, which further strengthens the academy's financial health. The academy is budgeting for additional fund balance increases over the next five fiscal years. HGA is on track to be on target or even higher than projected fund balance goal

Information presented below is derived from preliminary audit figures. The full financial audit will be completed and presented to the Minnesota Department of Education and Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center no later than December 31, 2021.

FY21 Finances	Fund 1	Fund 2	Total
Total Revenues	16,828,793	1,193,296	118,002,089
Total Expenditures	15,876,731	1,193,296	17,070,027
Net Income	952,062	—	952,062
Total Fund Balance	9,589,628	—	9,589,628

Overview:

The school's audit is still preliminary however, HGA ended the 2021-22 fiscal year better than budgeted.

14. Future Plans:

HGA did a major expansion three years ago with the addition of a new campus and enrollment of close to three hundred students. At this point, the school has no plan to add another site or enroll significantly large numbers of students at one time during the new contract cycle. However, if opportunities present themselves, the school may reconsider the current plan. The main goal in the new contract cycle is to improve the quality of all existing programs of the district. There is a premature discussion among staff about restarting the process of adding a pre-kindergarten program in FY 24.