



## Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Authorizer Annual Report



Name of Authorizing Organization: **Volunteers of America - Minnesota**

Mailing Address: 9220 Bass Lake Rd Ste 255, New Hope, MN 55428

Name and Title of Primary Authorizer Contact: Stephanie Olsen, Authorizing Senior Program Manager

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**Authorizing Program Mission:** Volunteers of America-Minnesota (VOA-MN) Charter School Authorizing Program will improve all pupil learning and all student achievement with service to others as its core.

**Authorizing Program Vision:** Volunteers of America-Minnesota (VOA-MN) Charter School Authorizing Program will authorize high quality charter schools that improve all pupil learning, all student achievement, and promote service to others.

### **Authorizer Summary:**

In 2000, the Minnesota state legislature made it possible for a non-profit organization in Minnesota to authorize charter schools. Volunteers of America-Minnesota (VOA-MN) became the first non-profit charter school authorizer in the nation. In the years that we have been authorizing, VOA-MN has developed and practices a model of charter school authorizing that goes beyond the compliance-based role vaguely outlined in state statute. We engage in proactive relationships and add value to the schools with which we work. During the startup phase, VOA-MN works closely with founding groups to ensure that tasks necessary to a successful opening (facility, finance, human resources, marketing/recruitment, curriculum development) are accomplished promptly. Once operational, VOA-MN continues to vigilantly monitor the academic, board governance, operations, and financial performance of its schools through frequent communication, school site visits, board meeting observations, and regularly reviewing of school documents. When signs of trouble arise, we work closely with the school's board and management team to problem-solve and identify resources that may be helpful. This is a departure from the traditional reactive relationship between charter school authorizers and schools.

VOA-MN has much to offer charter schools in the way of expertise in non-profit management, board governance, public school finance, and school performance. Our track record of responding to emerging community needs with effective social service programs and highly experienced authorizing team makes our organization particularly qualified to authorize charter schools. We recognize the great challenges and difficulties charter school development and operation and can help schools to navigate this complex process while respecting the autonomy and uniqueness of each school.

The VOA-MN Charter School Authorizing Program is proud of our history of quality oversight, the quality of the schools in our portfolio, and the School Network Collaboration initiatives we continue to foster. Our school collaboration

initiatives are ongoing and intended to help charter schools live up to the promise of increased autonomy in exchange for quality performance. Working together (collaborating) our 19 schools are stronger than a single school would be navigating challenges on its own.

As a VOA-MN authorized charter school, you are not just a charter school, but a part of the bigger VOA-MN Charter School Network of 19 schools, which promote peer leader relationships between schools by facilitating school network informal discussion times and creating professional development opportunities for participants—whether as a board member, school leader, or community member.

The network of charter schools meets informally weekly via Zoom and gathers annually during our two-day Annual Minnesota Charter School Leadership Conference promoted by Volunteers of America-Minnesota. In 2023, the conference was opened to all charter school leaders and board members who wished to attend regardless of their authorizer and other authorizers also participated. VOA-MN decided to open the conference to the leadership of all Minnesota charter schools to further share best practices between school leaders. The National Charter School Institute partnered with VOA-MN on the expanded conference.

Each June during the conference, the VOA-MN leaders also vote on a School Leadership Team (SLT) who help develop and guide collaboration initiatives and help develop the agenda for the Annual Minnesota Charter School Leadership Conference. Each collaboration initiative provides leaders with the opportunity to regularly share ideas on effective educational and operational strategies/ proven practices, offers peer mentoring to new leaders, and together broaden individuals’ understanding of the charter school community throughout Minnesota.

Innovative Authorizer Initiatives Continued by VOA-MN in 2024:

- o Annual Charter School Leadership Conference held in Bemidji, Minnesota
- o School Leadership Team
- o Weekly informal, voluntary school leader meetings (virtual format)
- o VOA-MN Collaboration Website and Listserv which is a web-based platform for sharing best practices.
- o VOA-MN Special Education Collaboration meetings for sharing best practices (virtual format) Authorizer Processes

## **New Charter School Applications in FY 2024 (B.1)**

Did your organization review any new charter school applications?   X   **No**

Explanation: VOA-MN did not receive any new school applications to review.

## **New Charter School Openings in FY 2024 (B.2)**

Did your organization engage in ready-to-open activities?   X   **No**

Explanation: VOA-MN did not have any schools scheduled to open fall 2023.

## **Charter School Expansion Applications (to add primary enrollment sites or grades, including instructional prekindergarten or preschool programs) in FY 2024 (B.2)**

Did your organization review any site and/or grade expansion applications (including instructional prekindergarten or preschool programs)?   X   **Yes**

If yes, complete the table below for each application.

Name of Charter School	Proposed Additional Grades to be Served (including prekindergarten and/or preschool) and/or Location of New Site	Authorizer Approval or Disapproval	MDE Approval or Disapproval	If Disapproved, Reason(s) for Disapproval	Application Withdrawn by Applicant
Twin Lakes STEM Academy	Grade 7-8	Approved	Approved	N/A	N/A

### Early Childhood Health and Developmental Screening Requests in FY 2024 (B.2)

Did your organization review any requests for official early childhood health and developmental screening program recognition?   X   No

Explanation: VOA-MN did not receive any school requests to add Early Childhood Health and Development Screening.

### Charter School Change in Authorizer Requests in FY 2024 (B.2)

Did your organization review any change in authorizer requests?   X   No

Explanation: VOA-MN did not receive any change of authorizer applications to review.

### Charter Contract Renewals in FY 2024 (B.9)

Did your organization engage in charter renewal activities in FY 2024?   X   Yes

If yes, complete the table below for each school.

Name of Charter School	Was Contract Renewed?	If Yes, Term of Contract Renewal	If No, Reason(s) for Nonrenewal
Spectrum High School	Yes	7/1/2024-6/30/2029	NA
TrekNorth High School	Yes	7/1/2024-6/30/2029	NA

### Additional Authorizer Activities

#### Authorizer Organizational Goals (A.2)

Describe the progress your organization made on its organizational goals related to authorizing in FY 2024.

Progress and associated activities included in blue text below for each goal and strategy/activity.

**GOAL 1: High Quality School Choice: Build a portfolio of charter schools committed to excellence in education, financial management, and governance.**

- **Improve currently authorized schools:**  
Provide oversight of school progress meeting VOA-MN performance standards, including that:
  - Schools have adopted a formal teacher evaluation process and adhere to the requirements set forth in state statute (Minn. Stat. 122A.40). VOA-MN Academic Standard 4: The school has adopted a formal teacher evaluation process and adheres to the requirements set forth in Minnesota Statute 122A.40. Most VOA-MN schools meet this standard.
  - All teachers are supported through a school-wide professional development plan based on analysis of assessment data and linked to improving pupil learning and student achievement. VOA-MN Academic Standard 5: All teachers are supported through a school-wide professional development plan based on analysis of assessment data and directly linked to improving pupil learning and student achievement. Most of our schools are meeting this standard.
  - Schools are compliant with financial and governance laws and VOA-MN standards. Monthly oversight tracks the extent to which schools are meeting our VOA-MN governance and finance standards. During FY24, VOA-MN continued to be proactive in our oversight, especially regarding reviewing board packets before the board meeting to ask questions and provide technical assistance as needed to avoid violations of law.
  - Schools implement Intervention/School Improvement Plans when needed to facilitate improvement. When necessary, VOA-MN has discussions with school leadership regarding the potential need for the school to close. If/when the board is unable to reach a determination on closure, authorizer VOA-MN will fulfill our responsibility and close the school if the school is not making necessary progress meeting contract performance standards &/or financial obligations. During FY24 VOA-MN had three schools in Intervention – Green Isle Community School, KIPP Northstar Academy and Athlos Academy St. Cloud. Due to a steady decline in enrollment over the years, Green Isle Community School was unable to meet financial obligations, and the school board voted to close at the end of the 2023-2024 school year.
- **Within CSAP capacity, increase the number of charter schools in the VOA-MN network by 1-2 schools per year if applicant meets the VOA-MN performance standards.** VOA-MN did not receive any New School Applications in FY24. VOA-MN did have one preoperational school – Heartland Lakes Community School, that successfully opened in fall 2024.

**GOAL 2: Quality School Performance: Create and maintain systems of charter school performance review that support analysis, reflection and planning, and implementation of continuous improvement measures for the charter schools we authorize.**

**Related Strategies and Activities Utilize the charter school network to create a culture of continuous improvement among charter school leaders:**

- The VOA-MN Charter School Authorizing Program (CSAP) will continue to use the Charter School Network approach to build organizational and operational capacity among charter schools in our portfolio. CSAP will continue to encourage collaboration and mentoring between leaders of VOA-MN Authorized charter schools.
- The Annual Charter School Leadership Conference promoted by VOA-MN will continue to include opportunities for school leaders and board members to access training and network with other schools. The annual conference will also include an opportunity for discussion and strategies for dissemination of “best practices.”
- During FY24, VOA-MN continued to offer Friday leadership meetings (virtually) and the elected School Leadership Team (SLT) members checked in regularly with new school leaders. The VOA-MN also continued our

School Collaboration Website and Leadership Listserv, two initiatives that promote sharing of best practices and support between our school leaders.

**Revise systems to support the balance of accountability and autonomy:**

- Consistently communicate expectations to school leaders.

VOA-MN continues to publish three Network Performance Reports annually – School Academic Performance, School Governance, and School Finance. Authorizer VOA-MN also publishes school-specific “Scorecards” which contain an analysis of the extent to which each school has met all performance standards contained in their charter contract and are on-track for charter renewal.

- Increase oversight and support for struggling schools.

During FY24 VOA-MN had three schools in Intervention – Athlos Academy St. Cloud (AASC), Green Isle Community School (GICS) and KIPP North Star Academy (KNSA). Authorizer VOA-MN increased our oversight presence at all three schools and the Financial Analyst increased technical assistance, oversight, and training since all three experienced declining enrollment and related financial challenges.

**Provide public transparency and acknowledge high performance.**

- Maintain the VOA-MN Network Performance Reports on the CSAP website.

VOA-MN continues to publish three Network Performance Reports annually – School Academic Performance, School Governance, and School Finance which are published on our VOA-MN website. We also maintain our Authorizer Annual Report and Income and Expenditure Reports on our VOA-MN website.

- Encourage schools to achieve the VOA-MN Awards of Excellence in the three pillars: academic program, financial management, and school board governance.

**AWARDS ACHIEVED BY GROUP**

ACADEMIC: The VOA Academic Excellence Award is based on the North Star Academic Progress Report as figured by the Minnesota Department of Education. Schools that reached a combined average state-determined minimum achievement level of (Increased + Maintained) of 58.7% or higher qualify for the award. (In 2024, the combined statewide average (math + reading) was 58.7%. This score was calculated by adding the statewide math and reading results and then dividing them by two.)

- Bluff View Montessori School
- Lakes International Language Academy
- PACT Charter School
- Schoolcraft Learning Community
- Woodbury Leadership Academy

The following schools either did not have a testing cell size large enough to generate a score on the North Star Academic Progress Report or did not enroll students in grades 3-8. These schools outperformed their comparison schools in all reportable subjects. These schools qualify for the Academic Excellence award.

- Birch Grove Community School
- Harbor City International School

FINANCE: The following list of VOA-MN schools were determined to have met all the VOA-MN Finance standards from July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

- Bluffview Montessori School
- Kaleidoscope Charter School
- KIPP Northstar Academy
- Schoolcraft Learning Community
- Spectrum High School
- Naytahwaush Community Charter School
- Woodbury Leadership Academy

**GOVERNANCE:** The following list of VOA-MN schools were determined to have met all the VOA-MN Board Governance standards from July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024. The VOA-MN Governance Award for FY24 goes to schools that met ALL standards. These schools demonstrate that they are attentive to meeting all VOA- MN Governance Standards and provide evidence of accomplishing the important work of the board that these Standards represent.

- Bluffview Montessori School
- Birch Grove Community School
- FIT Academy
- Lakes International Language Academy
- PACT Charter School
- Schoolcraft Learning Community
- TrekNorth High School

**GOAL 3: Service-Learning: Build a portfolio of charter schools committed to service learning and “uplifting all lives.”**  
**Related Strategies and Activities**

- All VOA-MN authorized charter schools are contractually required to have a schoolwide plan for service learning tied to outcomes and include student/school outcomes in their Annual Reports. 100 percent of VOA-MN schools had schoolwide service-learning plans tied to outcomes and included outcomes in their Annual Reports.

**GOAL 4: Voice in state public policymaking: Maintain a strong public presence in state education policymaking.**  
**Related Strategies and Activities VOA-MN team members will:**

- Participate in state and national charter school organization meetings at least six times annually to influence public policy and to advocate for the charter schools.

During FY24, VOA-MN participated in A-GAME meetings convened approximately quarterly by the National Charter School Institute. VOA-MN was unable to be a member of the Minnesota Association of Charter School Authorizers in FY24 due to budget constraints.

- Continue to collaborate with local charter school stakeholders to build a community of authorizers.

During FY24, VOA-MN invited other charter schools and authorizing organizations to participate in the Annual MN Charter School Leadership Conference promoted by VOA-MN. It is anticipated that school and authorizer participation in the statewide conference promoted by VOA-MN will continue to grow.

- Share VOA-MN oversight tools and assistance to other authorizers, locally and nationally.

VOA-MN continues to publish three Network Performance Reports annually – School Academic Performance, School Board Governance, and School Finance housed on our website. Our authorizing program manual is also housed on our website for the public, including other authorizers, to view.

- Help educate the legislature and public about the role of the authorizer and its benefits to improving quality public education.
- During the 2024 Legislative Session, VOA-MN promoted legislation to amend the authorizer fee to account for schools that operate additional school sites. Though that legislation did not gain momentum in 2024, it is our hope that it will in the future. We continue to coach our school leaders on the importance of inviting legislators to their schools and contact their legislators proactively on legislation that would benefit charter schools.
- Maintain relationships among charter school authorizers.

VOA-MN has close relationships with many authorizers. We do not hesitate to contact any authorizer for feedback on challenges, suggestions on how to improve our affidavits, or to share our best practices when asked. In addition, in June 2024 VOA-MN promoted the addition of an authorizer workshop day as part of the Annual Charter School Leadership Conference.

**GOAL 5: National presence and collaboration: Build excellence in authorizing in Minnesota and nationally through participation in the National Association of Charter School Authorizers and collaboration with colleagues in our field.**

**Related Strategies and Activities Actively develop and utilize national best practices and resources:**

- A VOA-MN representative will annually attend a national meeting and/or conference.

During FY24, the VOA-MN Authorizing Team was unable to attend a state or national conference.

- Seek opportunities to share quality practices with colleagues, locally and nationally.

VOA-MN continues to house on our website our Authorizing Manual and Network Performance Reports. We also continue to welcome questions from other authorizers and opportunities to provide feedback. To the extent we are able, VOA-MN participates in the A-GAME national initiative headed by the National Charter School Institute. In addition, in June 2024 VOA-MN promoted the addition of an authorizer workshop day as part of the Annual Charter School Leadership Conference and incorporated well-respected national speakers into the conference.

- Adapt applicable best practices to fit the Minnesota authorizing environment and the VOA-MN CSAP.

Authorizer VOA-MN publishes school-specific “Scorecards” which contain an analysis of the extent to which each school has met all VOA-MN performance standards contained in their charter contract and are on-track for charter renewal.

## **Authorizer Structure of Operations (A.3)**

Describe changes, if any, to your organization’s structure of operations related to authorizing in FY 2024 (for example, organizational changes, new positions, updated full-time equivalencies of authorizing positions, etc.).

The VOA-MN Authorizing Program did not make any changes to our CSAP capacity in FY 24, but we added Shirley Volk as Special Education Analyst in place of the departing individual who accepted another position.

## **Authorizing Staff Expertise (A.4)**

Briefly describe the background and experience, in the areas of charter school academics, finance, operations, and law, of any authorizing staff, committee members, board members, consultants, etc. new to your organization in FY 2024.



The VOA-MN Authorizing Program did not make any changes to our CSAP capacity in FY 24, but we added Shirley Volk as Special Education Analyst in place of the departing individual who accepted another position. We are proud of our retention rate.

### **MEET THE VOA-MN AUTHORIZING PROGRAM TEAM**

**Katie Perzel**, VOA-MN Senior Director of Behavioral Health and Education (been with VOA-MN since 2005)

- **EDUCATION:** Master of Social Work -St. Catherine University and University of St. Thomas and Bachelor of Science in Psychology and in Carlson School of Business and Management – University of MN
- **LICENSE:** Independent Clinical Social Worker
- Division Director of Education Programs and Clinical Services -VOAMN
- Unit Director of Senior Mental Health -VOAMN
- Mental Health Therapist -VOAMN

**Stephanie Olsen**, VOA-MN Authorizing Program Manager (been with VOA-MN since 2011)

- **EDUCATION:** Bachelor of Science in Social Studies Secondary Education - St. Cloud State University
- **LICENSE:** MN Teacher - Social Studies Secondary Education (has lapsed)
- Charter School Specialist / Authorizer Liaison - Minnesota Department of Education
- State Representative - Minnesota House of Representatives (committees: Education Policy, K-12 Finance, Government Operations, Rules)
- Education Research Consultant - Minnesota House of Representatives Majority Caucus
- Legislative Assistant - Minnesota Senate
- Teacher - Forest Lake High School

**Roderick Haenke**, VOA-MN Authorizing Program Governance Analyst and Constituent Services (been with the VOA-MN Authorizing Program since July 2017)

- **EDUCATION:** Ed. S in School Administration and Masters of Curriculum and Instruction, St. Thomas University, St. Paul, MN; B.S. Degree in Elementary Education, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN.
- **LICENSE:** MN Teacher and Professional Administration – Principal and Superintendent (has lapsed)
- President, Instructional Designs, Inc. (consultant to many Minnesota charter schools and authorizers)
- Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment for the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools
- Vice President, Broad Education/Learning Outfitters (educational software company)
- Elementary Principal, North Hills Elementary School (York, Pa.)
- 8 Years Classroom Teacher (four Minnesota schools)

**Rochel Perna**, VOA-MN Authorizing Program Financial Analyst and SLT Coordinator (been with the VOA-MN Authorizing Program since July 2017)

- **EDUCATION:** Bachelor of Science in Business – University of Minnesota, Twin Cities; Carlson School of Management
- **LICENSE:** Certified Public Accountant
- Business Manager – Mahtomedi Public Schools
- Director of Finance – Fridley Public Schools
- House Nezerka and Froelich CPAs

**Phillip Morris**, VOA-MN Authorizing Program Academic Analyst (been with the VOA-MN Authorizing Program since fall 2017)



- **EDUCATION:** Bachelor of Arts in History – Vancouver Island University; Master of Arts in Teaching – Hamline University
- **LICENSE:** State of Minnesota Educator License K-6 Elementary Education, 5-8 Social Studies
- Assessment Coordinator – Yinghua Academy
- Teacher – Yinghua Academy

**Terri Anderson, VOA-MN Authorizing Program Field Representative** (been with the VOA-MN Authorizing Program since July 2022 and former VOA-MN Charter School Leader)

- **EDUCATION:** K-12 Superintendent and Principal - Bethel University; Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction - College of St. Scholastica; Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education - College of St. Benedict.
- **LICENSE:** Minnesota superintendent, principal, teacher and coach licensure
- Superintendent and Principal, ISD 4155 Naytahwaush Community Charter School, 2009-2022
- Executive Director, Naytahwaush Community Foundation
- Startup Coordinator, Naytahwaush Community Charter School
- Waubun-Ogema-White Earth School Board Member and Chair
- Faculty and Field Team, Rural School and Community Trust
- Outreach Coordinator, Center for School Change, Humphrey Institute, University of Minnesota
- Adjunct Instructor, Minnesota and Community Technical College, Bemidji State University, Hamline University, White Earth Tribal and Community College
- Best Practices Graduation Standards Trainer, Department of Education
- Third Grade Teacher, St. Labre Indian School

**Dawn Maslowski, VOA-MN Authorizing Program Administrative Assistant** (been with the VOA-MN Authorizing Program since August 2019)

- Executive Assistant to the Executive Director – TIES
- Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent – Mahtomedi Public Schools

**Shirley Volk, VOA-MN Special Education Program Analyst** (been with VOA-MN Authorizing Program since July 2023)

- **EDUCATION:** Ed S. in School Administration, Hamline University; Master of Special Education, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN; B.S. Degree in Special Education, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN;
- **LICENSE:** MN Professional Administration and Teacher -Principal, Director of Special Education, Superintendent, Developmental Disabilities, Other Health & Physical Impairments
- Education Policy Fellowship Program Participant, U of MN (2019-2020)
- Founder of Encompassing Education
- Policy Representative for Special Education Teacher Reciprocity Task Force for Minnesota Association of Charter Schools
- 12 Years Special Education Teacher (multiple Minnesota schools)
- 8 Years Director of Special Education (multiple Minnesota schools)
- 1 Year Superintendent

## **Knowledge and Skill Development of Authorizing Leadership and Staff (A.5)**

Describe how your organization built the knowledge and skill base of its authorizing leadership and staff through professional development over the past year.

Frequency and attendance at training varies depending on the training opportunities offered and whether, or not, an authorizing team member needs professional development in any given topic.

All our authorizing team members had the opportunity to participate in professional development during our two-day Annual Minnesota Charter School Leadership Conference held in Bemidji, Minnesota June 10-12, 2024. VOA-MN authorizing team members also participate in all MDE meetings applicable to their areas of oversight. The authorizing program team members were also required by the VOA-MN Corporation to participate in both the annual Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and the HIPPA / data practices training.

If not provided above, please document the annual successful completion of training of your organization's staff members during the previous year relative to chartering and an authorizer's role and responsibilities. [Minn. Stat. 124E.05, subd. 2](#) (2023) as amended by the [Laws of Minnesota 2024, chapter 109, article 6, section 5](#).

NA

## **Authorizer Self-Evaluation (A.9)**

Describe how your organization self-evaluated its internal ability (capacity, infrastructure, and practices) to oversee the portfolio of charter schools over the past year.

In June, each Performance Analyst and the Program Assistant participate in an Annual Performance Review process facilitated by the Program Manager before their contract is renewed. This process incorporates self-reflection and a discussion on how much the Analyst is meeting their expected performance and oversight responsibilities. The process also includes a discussion on areas for improvement in their roles and responsibilities, the setting of personal goals for the following fiscal year and plans for professional development aligned to those goals and continuous improvement. Goals are based on both Analyst performance and ongoing authorized school needs assessment.

We have full-day team retreats twice annually. Retreats foster meaningful discussions of our authorizing practices and school performance. More specifically, team members bring forth any concerns with our schools or authorizing practices and we devise a plan of action for resolving the concern if possible.

Additionally, Authorizer VOA-MN includes an addendum to each Network Performance Report that contains the extent to which all our schools are meeting our performance standards. Through analysis of that addendum, we form a plan to help our schools on any standards with weak performance.

The VOA-MN Authorizing Program also conducts a survey of our schools annually to determine the extent to which our schools feel satisfied with our authorizing program, including level of autonomy, authorizer response time, quality of oversight, authorizer representative professionalism, etc.

VOA-MN Employee Management Meetings: Monthly standing meetings occur between Senior Program Manager and Division Director. The agenda for these informal meetings includes discussion of how much our program is meeting performance and budget expectations and a plan for implementing any identified areas for improvement.

Corporate Management Meetings: The Program Directors and Managers meet quarterly. These meetings are to discuss program progress, the extent to which the corporation is meeting performance and budget expectations, and plan for implementing any identified areas for improvement. The Management Meetings also included professional development on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). The Division Director and Program Manager participate in a more formal goal-based performance evaluation process, set by the corporate leadership of VOA-MN, semi-annually (mid-year progress check-in and end of year full evaluation). Corporate VOA-MN also requires all employees and contractors that have VOA-MN emails to participate in Data Practices / Privacy training and pass an exam at the end of the training.

## **Authorizer High-Quality Authorizing Dissemination (A.10)**

Describe how your organization disseminated best authorizing practices and/or assisted other authorizers in high-quality authorizing over the past year.

VOA-MN disseminates authorizing tools, documents, and information through its website and upon request. The Annual Minnesota Charter School Leadership Conference promoted by VOA-MN is open to ALL charter schools and authorizers to participate. The conference was opened/expanded based on the belief that sharing of best practices between charter schools and authorizers and providing opportunity to further build relationships and collaborate, are important to the continued growth of quality chartering in Minnesota.

## **Charter School Support, Development and Technical Assistance (B.7)**

Describe how your organization supported its portfolio of charter schools through intentional assistance and development offerings over the past year.

All our initiatives from FY23 continued in FY24.

- **Individualized Technical Assistance - VOA-MN employees and contractors provide support and technical assistance for school leaders/board members frequently.** Board training on various topics is provided upon school request and free of charge (ex. topics: Board vs. Management, Open Meeting Law). VOA-MN representatives provide information and services to member schools that help them succeed while allowing them to use their own resources and infrastructure for continued success. Our School Performance Analysts provide all new school leaders and board chairs with one-on-one review of the VOA-MN performance standards and respond to any questions.
- **Annual VOA-MN School Network Conference** – The VOA-MN Authorizing Program sponsors a two-day annual conference for its schools which offers professional development on a variety of topics. Conference participation is free of charge to our schools. The annual three-day conference is packed with information for both school leaders and board members. In FY23, VOA-MN continued the MSBA statutory board training for VOA-MN newly elected board members.
- **Charter School Collaboration (CSC) Website** – The website is a location where VOA-MN school leaders can share best practices policies, procedures, and samples of school publications/ communications. Incorporated into the CSC is a tool whereby VOA-MN school leaders can communicate directly with other VOA-MN school leaders – questions, concerns, needs for assistance. The authorizing team members are purposefully not on that listserv so communications between the schools can be confidential. It is a collaboration tool, not an oversight tool.
- **Weekly School Leadership Meetings** – The VOA-MN Charter School Authorizing Program continues to help our schools collaboratively manage the fluidity of changes and challenges facing schools through our Friday VOA-MN virtual School Leadership Meetings. Participation in these meetings is voluntary but highly encouraged. This initiative has exponentially advanced collaboration and brought the heads of VOA-MN schools closer in many ways. The weekly meetings are attended by the VOA-MN Authorizing Program Manager, but in an administrative role – scheduling, helping with technology, reminders, assisting with coordinating guest speakers on timely topics, etc. The School Leadership Team Chair leads the Friday meetings.
- **Special Education Collaboration Meetings** - The VOA-MN Special Education Analyst convenes a meeting of the special education faculty from VOA-MN charter schools monthly in a virtual format. The meetings are designed to discuss timely special education topics, share best practices, and boost collaboration between schools.
- **NEW! Instructional Videos** - We produced three videos which we house on the School Resources section of our VOA-MN website for schools to access at their convenience – How to Meet the VOA-MN Academic Performance Standards, How to Meet the VOA-MN Governance Standards, and How to Meet the VOA-MN School Finance Standards. These videos have been especially helpful to school board members.

## High-Quality Charter School Replication and Dissemination of Best School Practices (B.8)

Describe how your organization promoted model replication and dissemination of best practices of high-quality charters schools over the past year.

- **Annual Minnesota Charter School Leadership Conference Promoted by VOA-MN** – The VOA-MN Authorizing Program promotes a two-day annual conference which offers professional development on a variety of topics. Conference participation is free of charge to our schools. The annual two-day conference is packed with information for both school leaders and board members. In FY24, VOA-MN continued the MSBA statutory board training for VOA-MN newly elected board members. We also added a pre-conference authorizer workshop day in FY24 facilitated by MACSA and David Greenberg from NACSA. The expansion of the Charter School Leadership Conference was a deliberate decision to further promote the dissemination of information, school collaboration, and promoting best practices.
- **Charter School Collaboration (CSC) Website** – The website is a location where VOA-MN school leaders can share best practices policies, procedures, and samples of school publications/ communications. Incorporated into the CSC is a tool whereby VOA-MN school leaders can communicate directly with other VOA-MN school leaders – questions, concerns, needs for assistance. The authorizing team members are purposefully not on that listserv so communications between the schools can be confidential. It is a collaboration tool, not an oversight tool.
- **Weekly School Leadership Meetings** – The VOA-MN Charter School Authorizing Program continues to help our schools collaboratively manage the fluidity of changes and challenges facing schools through our Friday VOA-MN virtual School Leadership Meetings. Participation in these meetings is voluntary but highly encouraged. This initiative has exponentially advanced collaboration and brought the heads of VOA-MN schools closer in many ways. The weekly meetings are attended by a member of the VOA-MN Authorizing Program, but in an administrative role – scheduling, helping with technology, reminders, assisting with coordinating guest speakers on timely topics, etc. The School Leadership Team Chair leads the Friday meetings and facilitates the dissemination of timely information.
- **Special Education Collaboration Meetings** - The VOA-MN Special Education Analyst convenes a meeting of the special education faculty from VOA-MN charter schools monthly in a virtual format. The meetings are designed to discuss timely special education topics, share best practices, and boost collaboration between schools.

## General Charter School Portfolio Data (as of June 30, 2024)

### *Preoperational Charter Schools in Authorizer's Portfolio*

Name of Charter School	Charter School Local Educational Agency (LEA) Number (if assigned)	Charter Schools Program (CSP) Grant Recipient	Grade Levels Approved to Serve	Projected Enrollment when Fully Enrolled	Proposed Location	Proposed Opening Date
Heartland Lakes Community School	4302	Yes	K-12	260	Park Rapids	09/01/2024

***Operational Charter Schools in Authorizer's Portfolio***

<b>Name of Charter School</b>	<b>Charter School LEA Number</b>	<b>CSP Grant Recipient</b>	<b>Grade Levels Served in FY 2024</b>	<b>Location</b>
Athlos Academy of St. Cloud	4250	No	K-8 Approved K-12	St. Cloud
Athlos Leadership Academy	4011	No	PK-8	Brooklyn Park
Birch Grove Community School	4145	No	K-5	Tofte
Buffview Montessori School	4001	No	Preschool--8	Winona
Fit Academy	4244	No	K-12	Apple Valley
Green Isle Community School	4144	No	K-5	Green Isle
Harbor City International School	4085	No	9-12 Approved 6-12	Duluth
Kaleidoscope Charter School	4118	No	K-12	Otsego
Kipp: North Star Academy	4191	No	K-8 Approved K-12	Minneapolis
Lakes International Language Academy	4116	No	Preschool-12	Forest Lake

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	CSP Grant Recipient	Grade Levels Served in FY 2024	Location
Naytahwaush Community Charter School	4155	No	K-6	Naytahwaush
New Century School	4240	No	Preschool – 11 Approved P-12	St. Paul
PACT Charter School	4008	No	K-12	Ramsey
Schoolcraft Learning Community	4058	No	K-8	Bemidji
Southside Family Charter School	4162	No	K-8	St. Paul
Spectrum High School	4160	No	6-12	Elk River
Tesfa International School	4239	No	K-6	Brooklyn Park
TrekNorth High School	4106	No	6-12 Approved K-12	Bemidji
Woodbury Leadership Academy	4228	No	K-8 Approved PK-12	Woodbury

***MDE Officially Recognized Early Learning Programs at Charter Schools in Authorizer's Portfolio***

Name of Charter School	Officially Recognized Early Childhood Health and Developmental Screening Program	Officially Recognized Instructional Preschool Program to provide early childhood education and preparation for transition to kindergarten for children ages three through five	Officially Recognized Instructional Prekindergarten Program for four-year-olds to prepare children for entry into kindergarten the following year
Athlos Leadership Academy	No	No	Yes
Bluffview Montessori School	No	Yes	No
Lakes International Language Academy	No	Yes	No
New Century School	Yes	Yes	No

**Charter School Portfolio Activity in FY 2024**

Did any charter schools leave your organization's portfolio and transfer to another authorizer during or at the end of the year?   X   No

Did your organization terminate or revoke the charter contract for any charter school before the end of the contract term?   X   No

Did any charter schools voluntarily close (i.e., closure was initiated by the school) during or at the end of the year?

  X   Yes

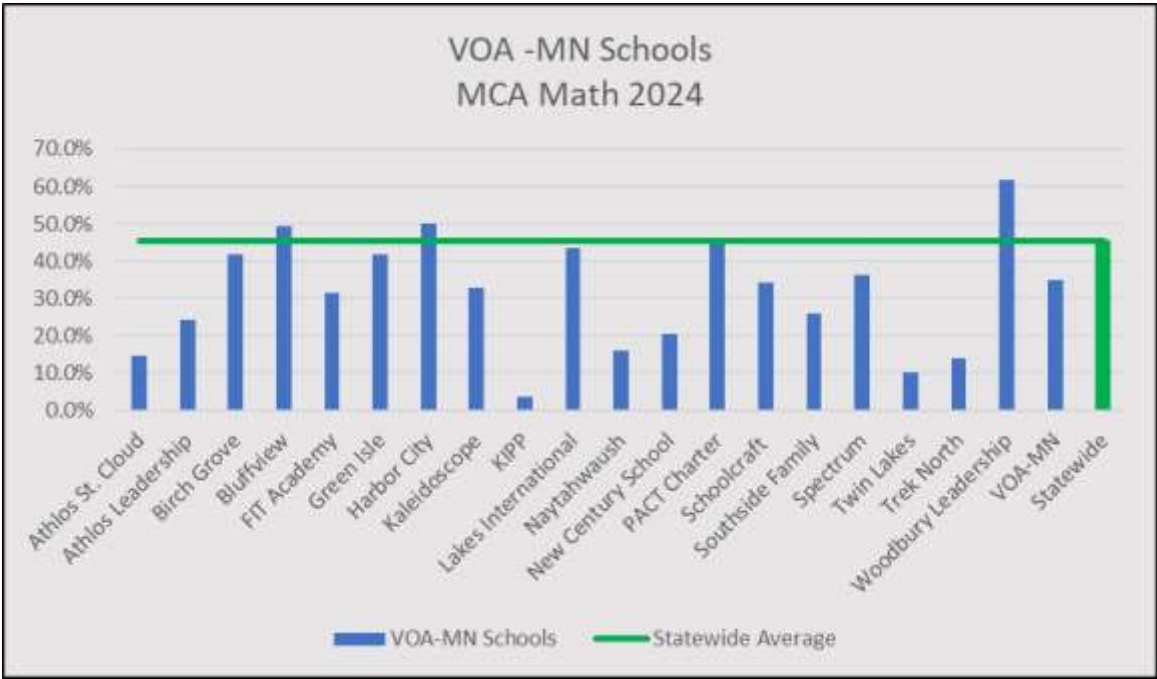
Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	Reason(s) for Closure	Effective Date of Closure
Green Isle Community School	4144	Declining enrollment and inability to meet financial obligations.	May 30, 2024



# Charter School Portfolio Performance

## Academic Performance

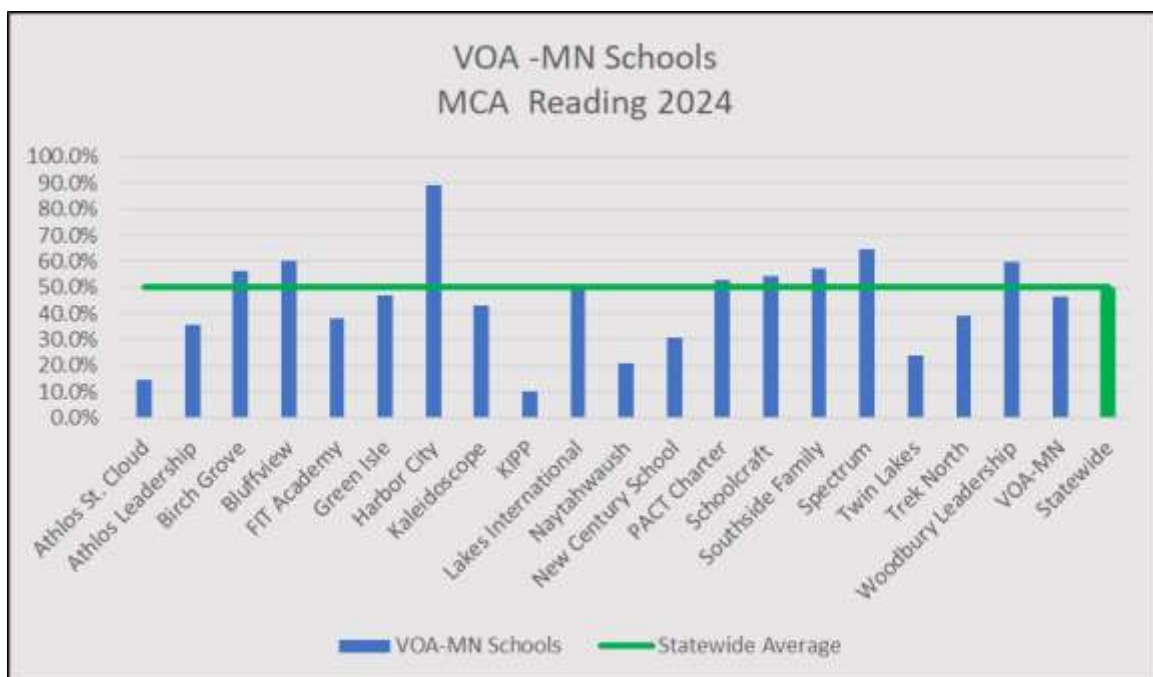
Present outcome data regarding key academic performance indicators your organization used when evaluating your organization’s portfolio of charter schools. Provide a narrative analysis of this data, indicating strengths and areas for growth.



VOA-MN Charter Schools’ Math Proficiency						
SCHOOL NAME	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
State Wide Average	55.5%		44.2%	44.8%	45.5%	45.5%
Athlos Academy of St. Cloud	31.1%		14.7%	14.3%	12.1%	14.5%
Athlos Leadership Academy	39.9%		22.8%	20.8%	22.5%	24.3%
Birch Grove Community School	66.7%		68.4%	66.7%	57.1%	41.7%
Bluffview Montessori School	54.1%		49.2%	49.6%	47.4%	49.3%
FIT Academy	20.5%		24.0%	25.2%	32.4%	31.4%
Green Isle Community School	57.7%		42.3%	50.0%	34.6%	41.7%
Harbor City International School	40.5%		N/A	43.6%	52.5%	50.0%
Kaleidoscope Charter School	54.0%		39.9%	36.0%	35.4%	33.0%
KIPP North Star Academy	19.2%		4.8%	4.3%	4.2%	3.7%
Lakes International Language Academy	58.8%		41.7%	47.5%	44.6%	43.4%
Naytahwaush Community Charter School	26.8%		15.7%	12.9%	6.9%	16.0%
New Century School	44.8%		44.0%	21.2%	14.7%	20.3%
PACT Charter School	61.8%		43.7%	55.2%	50.5%	45.0%

<b>Schoolcraft Learning Community</b>	50.0%	40.0%	43.7%	39.7%	34.1%
<b>Southside Family Charter School</b>	52.2%	56.5%	48.6%	40.0%	26.1%
<b>Spectrum High School</b>	61.0%	49.2%	47.1%	41.8%	36.3%
<b>Twin Lakes STEM Academy</b>	31.6%	6.9%	12.2%	19.1%	10.2%
<b>TrekNorth High School</b>	40.3%	13.5%	14.9%	7.0%	14.1%
<b>Woodbury Leadership Academy</b>	54.2%	36.7%	49.7%	45.5%	61.6%
<b>VOA-MN</b>	44.8%	31.6%	32.1%	33.0%	34.8%

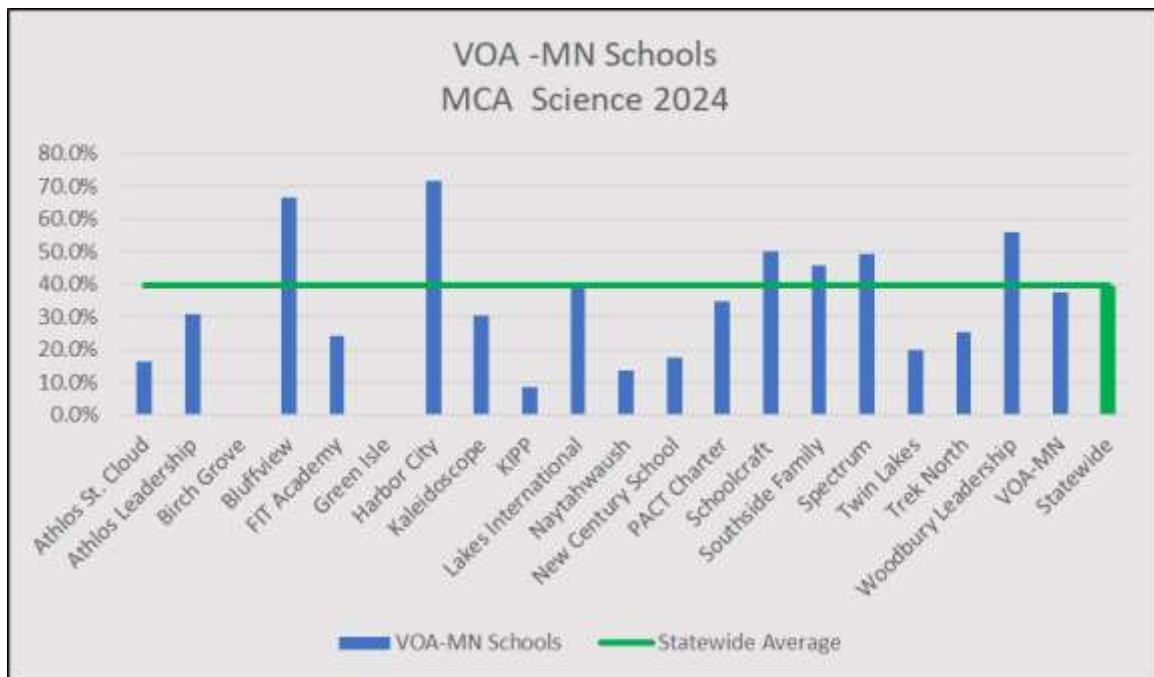
Both the chart and the table above illustrate the 2024 math proficiency for the VOA-MN network of charter schools. The green line indicates the state average 45.5%. Three schools in the VOA-MN network, Bluffview Montessori School, Harbor City International School and Woodbury Leadership Academy met or exceeded the statewide average on the 2024 math MCA. In addition, five schools in the VOA-MN network, Birch Grove Community School, Green Isle Community School, Lakes International Language Academy, PACT Charter School, Schoolcraft Learning Community and Spectrum High School scored within ten percentage points of the statewide average. The remaining eleven schools scored below 35.5% on the 2024 math MCA. This is an area for continued improvement for all the schools in the VOA-MN network of charter schools. As an authorizer, VOA-MN will continue to emphasize the importance of data-driven decision making at the school level as well as academic goal-based professional development.



<b>VOA-MN Charter Schools' Reading Proficiency</b>						
<b>SCHOOL NAME</b>	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>State Wide Average</b>	59.2%		52.5%	51.1%	49.9%	49.9%
<b>Athlos Academy of St. Cloud</b>	40.2%		26.7%	23.6%	20.3%	14.5%
<b>Athlos Leadership Academy</b>	51.6%		41.6%	35.1%	32.8%	35.7%
<b>Birch Grove Community School</b>	CTSTR		57.9%	83.3%	57.1%	56.3%
<b>Bluffview Montessori</b>	69.6%		64.6%	68.1%	71.9%	60.3%

<b>FIT Academy</b>	43.2%	36.6%	36.7%	38.3%	38.3%
<b>Green Isle Community School</b>	50.0%	30.8%	46.2%	30.8%	47.1%
<b>Harbor City International School</b>	81.3%	N/A	71.4%	84.3%	89.1%
<b>Kaleidoscope Charter School</b>	62.9%	49.5%	50.7%	51.5%	43.1%
<b>KIPP North Star Academy</b>	26.8%	12.1%	13.4%	13.1%	10.1%
<b>Lakes International Language Academy</b>	65.7%	49.3%	53.0%	55.0%	51.0%
<b>Naytahwaush Community Charter School</b>	25.5%	27.5%	21.4%	24.7%	21.1%
<b>New Century School</b>	32.1%	42.6%	31.0%	29.4%	30.8%
<b>PACT Charter School</b>	66.1%	52.6%	59.6%	55.3%	53.0%
<b>Schoolcraft Learning Community</b>	53.9%	55.7%	59.3%	52.9%	54.3%
<b>Southside Family Charter School</b>	68.2%	67.9%	62.2%	58.2%	57.1%
<b>Spectrum High School</b>	69.7%	72.0%	71.7%	64.6%	64.6%
<b>Twin Lakes STEM Academy</b>	28.9%	19.7%	18.6%	26.1%	23.9%
<b>TrekNorth High School</b>	62.4%	43.5%	40.3%	38.9%	39.0%
<b>Woodbury Leadership Academy</b>	48.9%	50.7%	57.0%	57.7%	59.5%
<b>VOA-MN</b>	53.8%	44.3%	44.8%	46.2%	46.2%

Both the chart and the table above illustrate the 2024 reading proficiency for the VOA-MN network of charter schools. The green line indicates the state average 49.9%. Nine schools in the VOA-MN network, Birch Grove Community School, Bluffview Montessori School, Harbor City International School, Lakes International Language Academy, PACT Charter School, Schoolcraft Learning Community, Southside Family Charter School, Spectrum High School and Woodbury Leadership Academy met or exceeded the state average on the 2024 reading MCA. In addition, Two schools in the VOA-MN network of charter schools, Green Isle Community School and Kaleidoscope Charter School scored within ten percentage points of the statewide average. The remaining eight schools scored below 39.9% on the 2024 reading MCA. Reading proficiency is another area for continued improvement for all schools in the VOA-MN network of charter schools. As an authorizer, VOA-MN will continue to emphasize the importance of data-driven decision making at the school level as well as academic goal-based professional development.



#### VOA-MN Charter Schools' Science Proficiency

SCHOOL NAME	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
State Wide Average	50.7%		43.1%	41.3%	39.2%	39.6%
Athlos Academy of St. Cloud	31.8%		17.4%	21.6%	9.2%	16.2%
Athlos Leadership Academy	28.1%		31.5%	16.2%	11.0%	31.0%
Birch Grove Community School	CTSTR		CTSTR	CTSTR	CTSTR	CTSTR
Bluffview Montessori	58.1%		48.9%	61.0%	51.2%	66.7%
FIT Academy	25.0%		30.4%	22.6%	34.4%	24.1%
Green Isle Community School	CTSTR		CTSTR	41.7%	CTSTR	CTSTR
Harbor City International School	76.6%		N/A	75.0%	68.8%	71.8%
Kaleidoscope Charter School	51.3%		42.9%	41.8%	40.2%	30.4%
KIPP North Star Academy	32.4%		7.8%	7.5%	5.7%	8.5%
Lakes International Language Academy	55.9%		49.7%	41.6%	37.6%	40.6%
Naytahwaush Community Charter School	CTSTR		5.3%	35.0%	13.3%	13.6%
New Century School	59.3%		45.9%	7.0%	9.7%	17.6%
PACT Charter School	53.1%		34.5%	38.1%	48.5%	34.9%
Schoolcraft Learning Community	45.9%		53.8%	48.6%	46.5%	50.0%
Southside Family Charter School	60.0%		CTSTR	50.0%	51.9%	45.8%
Spectrum High School	63.9%		63.9%	53.0%	49.4%	49.2%
Twin Lakes STEM Academy	CTSTR		7.7%	0.0%	24.1%	20.0%
TrekNorth High School	51.3%		42.3%	24.0%	27.0%	25.4%
Woodbury Leadership Academy	50.0%		45.0%	51.6%	47.2%	55.9%
VOA-MN	49.6%		40.4%	35.3%	34.9%	37.4%

Both the chart and the table above illustrate the 2024 science proficiency for the VOA-MN network of charter schools. The green line indicates the state average 39.6%. Seven schools in the VOA-MN network, Bluffview Montessori School, Harbor City International School, Lakes International Language Academy, Schoolcraft Learning Community, Southside Family Charter School, Spectrum High School and Woodbury Leadership Academy, met or exceeded the state average on the 2024 science MCA. In addition, three schools in the VOA-MN network, Athlos Leadership Academy, Kaleidoscope Charter School and PACT Charter School FIT Academy, scored within ten percentage points of the statewide average. The remaining nine schools either scored below 29.6% on the 2024 science MCA or did not have enough a testing cell large enough to record a score.

## **Operational Performance (VOA-MN two parts: governance, management and operations)**

Present outcome data regarding key operational performance indicators your organization used when evaluating your organization's portfolio of charter schools. Provide a narrative analysis of this data, indicating strengths and areas for growth.

### **Governance Performance**

#### **Performance of VOA-MN Schools on Governance Standards for FY 24**

The authorizer regularly monitors the performance quality of the school board based on authorizer observations; interviews with the director, board, and faculty; and the review of school policies, reports, and board meeting minutes. A school must have a governance model that provides quality oversight by ensuring that there are checks and balances between the board and the school administrators.

The VOA-MN Charter School Authorizing Program publishes annually a School Board Governance Report on their network of authorized charter schools. The report gives a single annual source on the board operations and compliance of the fifteen VOA-MN- authorized charter schools. Authorizer VOA-MN also observes a minimum of one school board meeting annually.

The VOA-MN determined school board governance standards contained below are uniform for all VOA-MN charter schools. The standards are contained in VOA-MN Charter Contract Addendum B (School Accountability and Authorizer Oversight System) and serve as the basis for both annual monitoring of school board performance and contract renewal determinations. The authorizer will monitor school performance meeting these standards on an ongoing basis and the standards shall be evaluated in the annual VOA-MN Network Governance Report. The standards also serve as the criteria for contract renewal determinations. The authorizer reserves the right to have flexibility to amend these standards /expectations as needed.

VOA-MN's school board governance standards / expectations include the following:

Governance Standard 1. The Board of Directors met its governance model requirements laid out in its bylaws and membership requirements as required by Minnesota Statute\*.

Governance Standard 2. The Board of Directors has the necessary knowledge to carry out the responsibilities contained in Minn Stat 124E.07, Subd. 6. (Duties), including knowledge in finance/budget, policy/legal, personnel/employment, and education.

Governance Standard 3. The board adheres to an orientation process for bringing on new members.

Governance Standard 4. The Board of Directors complies with initial and ongoing training requirements set forth in Minn. Stat 124E.07, Subd 7 (Training): governance, financial, and employment policies and practices.

Governance Standard 5. The Board of Directors completes a self-evaluation each year.

Governance Standard 6. The Board of Directors will comply with MN Open Meeting Law, Chapter 13D, and maintains a quorum for all board meetings.

Governance Standard 7. The board regularly reviews, updates, and approves its bylaws. The bylaws are consistent with state law.

Governance Standard 8. The Board of Directors adheres to board member election requirements set forth by state statute\*.

Governance Standard 9. The Board conducts an annual evaluation (including all aspects of the position description) of the performance of the school leader through a defined annual evaluation process.

Governance Standard 10. The Board has a board-approved professional development plan for the school director (if applicable as required by Minn. Stat. 124E.12, Subd. 2\*).

Governance Standard 11. The Board of Directors monitors the organization's adherence to school board policies.

Governance Standard 12. The Board of Directors complies with Federal data practices law and the Minnesota Data Practices Act (Minn. Stat. Chapter 13) \*.

Governance Standard 13. The Board of Directors provides ongoing oversight of school academic performance.

Governance Standard 14. The school maintains a high level of parent, teacher and student satisfaction rates based on school surveys conducted and student/faculty retention rates.

Governance Standard 15. Board documents are distributed to all board members at least 3 days prior to a board meeting.

Governance Standard 16. The Board of Directors maintains a Board Documents Binder which includes meeting minutes, bylaws and articles of incorporation and financial statements; and statutory requirements for posting board related information on the school's website\*.

Governance Standard 17. The board has a policy review calendar and reviews and updates its policies as needed or required by state law.

SCHOOL NAME	VOAMN PERCENT of GOVERNANCE		
	STANDARDS MET		
Athlos Academy of St. Cloud	28	34	91.2%
Athlos Leadership Academy	31	34	82.4%
Bluffview Montessori	34	34	100.0%
Birch Grove Community School	34	34	100.0%
FIT Academy	34	34	100.0%
Green Isle Community School	31	34	91.2%
Harbor City International School	32	34	94.1%
Kaleidoscope Charter School	33	34	97.1%
KIPP: North Star Academy	33	34	97.1%
Lakes International Language Academy	34	34	100.0%

Naytahwaush Community Charter School	32	34	94.1%
New Century School	33	34	97.1%
PACT	34	34	100.0%
Schoolcraft Learning Community	34	34	100.0%
Southside Family Charter School	28	34	82.4%
Spectrum High School	29	34	85.3%
Twin Lakes Stem Academy	32	34	94.1%
TrekNorth High School	34	34	100.0%
Woodbury Leadership Academy	30	34	88.2%
<b>Cumulative</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>646</b>	<b>94.4%</b>
<b>Did each school meet the majority of [INSERT] standards?</b>	Yes		
<b>Did each school achieve at least a “Satisfactory” rating in [INSERT]? (at least 70% of points possible)</b>	Yes		

**ANALYSIS:** Overall, VOA-MN Schools use highly effective governance practices as demonstrated by meeting most or all of the 17 standards. 7 schools met all the standards. An additional 8 met over 90% of the standards. So, 14 or 73% met over 90% of the standards. All schools met over 80% of the standards. Cumulatively, VOA-MN Schools met 94.4% of all standards. When boards meet most or all these standards, it means that they:

- pay attention to the development and training of their board members,
- are attentive to the important work required of charter boards,
- provide oversight of the academics and employees,
- are following statutory responsibilities, and
- are committed to continuous improvement.

**STRATEGY FOR IMPROVEMENT MEETING / MAINTAINING GOAL:** The main strategies for increasing the number of schools demonstrate full compliance with the VOA-MN Governance Standards and win the Governance Award involve education, training, and communications. VOA-MN will review the FY24 evaluations with school boards and leaders to make sure they know exactly what they need to do and document to win the award and meet all the standards. The

VOA-MN Governance Analyst provides training on the VOA-MN standards during the year as requested and provides a training video on how to meet the 17 standards. VOA-MN provides an annual report template to schools to help them know what standards can be addressed in their annual report in the fall of the year. VOA-MN Governance Analyst also keeps a running record of compliance regularly throughout the year and provides friendly reminders through regular contact with school leaders/board chairs throughout the year. VOA-MN uses a board observation rubric aligned to the Governance Standards as another opportunity to provide feedback on meeting standards. They are also provided a midyear Dashboard that is an opportunity for them to self-evaluate what standards are met midyear and what standards still need to be met for FY25.



## Management and Operations Performance

Effective daily operations of a charter school support the Learning Program. A well-run school provides an environment in which staff and students can perform at the highest possible level and more effectively reach the school's goals. Management and operations of the school will be monitored and reported by the authorizer using the Formal Site Visit Rubric. The standards also serve as the criteria for contract renewal determinations.

### VOA-MN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS STANDARDS FY 2024

*Authorizer school management and operations standards / expectations include:*

**M/O Standard 1:** Mission and vision are central to the school's identity and inform all decision-making processes. The school's learning program exemplifies the mission and vision of the school. (Data source: annual school site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership)

Schools meeting standard in FY24 = 19:19

**M/O Standard 2:** The school has a plan for Service Learning that connects classroom learning with real life lessons that come through service. (Data source: annual school site visits, annual submission calendar, document review, discussions with school leadership)

Schools meeting standard in FY24 = 19:19

**M/O Standard 3:** The school maintains a safe and healthy environment per state and federal guides and board policy. (e.g., facility /ADA, building inspections, school liability insurance, student medical / health matters, school drills). (Data source: annual school site visits, annual submission calendar, document review, discussions with school leadership)

Schools meeting standard in FY23 = 17:19

**M/O Standard 4:** Evidence suggests that the school engages parents and students in ways that build positive relationships and engages them as partners in their child's learning (Data source: annual school site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership)

Schools meeting standard in FY23 = 19:19

**M/O Standard 5:** Evidence suggests that the schoolteachers are covering the scope and sequence of the state academic standards and engaging in data-driven decision-making. (Data source: annual school site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership)

Schools meeting standard in FY23 = 19:19

**M/O Standard 6:** The school employs highly qualified, appropriately licensed teachers. (Data source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership). Schools meeting standard in FY23 = 19:19

**M/O Standard 7:** Criminal background checks are conducted on all persons per the board policy and Minn. Stat. 123B.03, Subd.1. (Data source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership)

Schools meeting standard in FY23 = 18:19

**M/O Standard 8:** The school meets / maintains its enrollment goals. (Data source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership)

Schools meeting standard in FY23 = 14:19. *Declining enrollment continues to be a challenge in several of our schools since the pandemic.*

**M/O Standard 9:** The school institutes a student admission process that complies with Minnesota law. (Data source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership)

Schools meeting standard in FY23 = 19:19

**M/O Standard 10:** The school's employment process complies with state and federal law. (Data source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership)

Schools meeting standard in FY23 = 19:19

**M/O Standard 11:** The school has defined job descriptions and defined evaluation process for all personnel. (Data source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership)

Schools meeting standard in FY23 = 18:19, AASC no

**M/O Standard 12:** The school complies with IDEA, special education laws and school's TSES plan, including "Child Find." Applicable training is provided to faculty annually. (Data source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership, MDE communications)

Schools meeting standard in FY23 = 19:19

**M/O Standard 13:** The school provides professional development annually to faculty on special education to ensure school compliance with Child Find and other special education laws. (Data source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership)

Schools meeting standard in FY23 = 19:19

**M/O Standard 14:** The school is not subject to special education investigations by MDE and is not in Corrective Action. (Data source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership, MDE communications)

Schools meeting standard in FY23 = 19:19

**M/O Standard 15:** The school is compliant with laws pertaining to special education directors and Advisor Council (SEAC). (Data source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership)

Schools meeting standard in FY23 = 19:19

*Legal and Contractual Compliance* - VOA-MN expects compliance with legal and contractual obligations. Each VOA-MN authorized charter school shall maintain a Compliance Binder on site that includes VOA-MN defined evidence of compliance with state and federal statutes organized in the manner prescribed by VOA-MN. Additionally, VOA-MN authorized charter schools shall submit information to the authorizer in accordance with the VOA-MN prescribed Annual Submission Calendar. The management and operations of the school will be monitored by the authorizer and reported in the Formal Site Visit Report and Annual School Scorecard and additionally as needed. *This section is not scored*

*individually. The compliance binder and submission calendar are systems for ongoing monitoring of school performance and compliance and compliance requirements are imbedded in previous sections.*

**Financial Performance**

Present outcome data regarding key financial performance indicators your organization used when evaluating your organization’s portfolio of charter schools. Provide a narrative analysis of this data, indicating strengths and areas for growth.

**VOA-MN SCHOOL FINANCIAL STANDARDS**

The VOA-MN Charter School Authorizing Program provides high quality financial oversight of its network of schools. These schools' pride themselves on being part of a cooperative venture where ideas are shared and input from school leaders is valued and used to strengthen all members.

The VOA-MN determined school financial standards serve as the basis to monitor member school’s financial health and compliance with state and federal laws, including proper use of public funds. In addition, the standards are used to evaluate school financial performance and to determine the VOA-MN Finance Award recipients.

There were 19 operational schools during FY24 and one school was closed at the end of the year. Ten key performance indicators used to evaluate VOA-MN authorized charter schools include:

- The school maintains a balanced budget.
- The school is compliant with state and federal financial reporting deadlines and laws, including the proper use of public funds.
- The school’s financial audit will be submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education, Office of the State Auditor and the authorizer by December 31.
- Schools are expected to have audits that are free of all findings.
- The school is current on all financial obligations, including pension payments, payroll taxes, insurance coverage, loan payments and terms.
- The school provides VOA-MN and school board members with monthly financials. June financial reports may be delayed until year-end journal entries are completed. Packets include at least the following: 1) detailed income/expense report, 2) cash flow projection, 3) check register, and 4) current enrollment (Average Daily Membership). The board should review and approve the financials at each board meeting.
- The school develops and maintains a targeted General Fund balance determined by the school board. For the finance report, VOA-MN also determines a standard for fund balance annually based on items such as school funding trends and funding holdbacks.
- The school board has a finance committee that meets regularly to review financials.
- All finance committee members exhibit working knowledge of financial oversight.
- The school is not in Statutory Operating Debt (SOD).

One school (in red font) did not submit financial audit reports to the authorizer for FY24 due to the school’s closure, therefore certain performance indicators could not be scored. This will be indicated with XX’s in the following table.

VOA-MN Finance Performance Indicator Results (2=met, 1=partially met, 0=did not meet, X=could not score)  
**FB**

School	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	%	8	9	10
Athlos Academy St Cloud	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	(3)	2	2	0
Athlos Leadership Academy	0	2	2	2	2	2	2	27	2	2	2
Birch Grove Comm School	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	33	2	2	2
Bluffview Montessori School	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	35	2	2	2
FIT Academy	2	2	2	0	2	2	0	15	2	2	2
Green Isle Charter School	0	0	X	X	0	0	X	X	0	0	0
Harbor City Int'l School	0	2	2	2	2	2	1	18	2	2	2
Kaleidoscope Charter School	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	56	2	2	2
Kipp: Northstar Academy	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	58	2	2	2
Lakes Int'l Language Academy	2	2	2	0	2	2	2	30	2	2	2
Naytahwaush Comm Charter Sch	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	71	2	0	2
New Century School	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	31	2	2	2
PACT Charter School	0	2	2	2	2	2	1	17	2	2	2
Schoolcraft Learning Community	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	53	2	2	2
Southside Family Charter School	0	2	2	0	2	0	0	2	2	2	2
Spectrum High School	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	27	2	2	2
Twin Lakes Stem Academy	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	4	1	2	2
TrekNorth Jr. and Sr. High School	2	2	2	0	2	2	2	83	2	2	2
Woodbury Leadership Academy	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	26	2	2	2

Here are some financial highlights for 18 out of the 19 VOA-MN authorized charter schools for FY24. One school did not submit financial audit reports to the authorizer for FY24, therefore could not be included in this data.

61% (11 of 18) schools maintained a balanced budget.

Fund balances:

- 61% of the schools met or exceeded the 20% fund balance target.
- 17% of the schools had a fund balance between 10% and 19.99%.
- 22% of the schools had a fund balance between 0 and 9.99%.

56% (10 of 18) schools were free of all audit findings.

## Other Performance (if applicable)

Present outcome data regarding other key performance indicators your organization used when evaluating your organization's portfolio of charter schools. Provide a narrative analysis of this data, indicating strengths and areas for growth.

Three essential questions guide VOA-MN authorizer oversight:

- Academic Program Performance - Is the school's Learning Program a Success?
- Financial Sustainability – Does the School Exhibit Strong Financial Health?
- Is the organization effective and well run? (Board governance / management and operations)

A narrative and analysis of all those three areas has been provided in the prior sections.