

# 2018–2019 Programmatic Profile and Educational Performance

September 2019



Downtown Montessori Academy

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	i
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. PROGRAMMATIC PROFILE.....	1
A. Description and Philosophy of Educational Methodology .....	2
1. Mission .....	2
2. Instructional Design .....	2
B. School Structure .....	2
1. Leadership and Board of Directors.....	2
2. Areas of Instruction .....	3
3. Classrooms .....	4
4. Teacher Information.....	5
5. School Hours and Calendar.....	6
6. Parent Involvement .....	6
7. Waiting List.....	7
8. Discipline Policy .....	8
9. Graduation and High School Information .....	9
C. Student Population.....	10
D. Activities for Continuous School Improvement.....	11
III. EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE.....	13
A. Attendance .....	14
B. Parent-Teacher Conferences.....	14
C. Special Education Student Records.....	15
D. Local Measures of Educational Performance.....	15
1. Progress Reports for K3 Through K5 .....	16
2. Literacy for First Through Third Grades .....	18
3. Literacy for Fourth through Eighth Grades.....	19
4. Writing Skills for First Through Eighth Graders .....	20
5. Math Skills for First Through Eighth Graders.....	21
6. Special Education Student Progress .....	23
E. External Standardized Measures of Educational Performance .....	23
1. PALS .....	24
a. PALS-PreK .....	24
b. PALS-K and PALS Plus .....	26
2. Wisconsin Forward Exam for Third Through Eighth Graders .....	26

F.	Multiple-Year Student Progress .....	29
1.	Second-Grade Progress Based on PALS.....	29
2.	Fourth- Through Eighth-Grade Progress Based on Wisconsin Forward Exam.....	30
a.	Students at or Above Proficient .....	30
b.	Students Below Proficient.....	31
G.	CSRC School Scorecard.....	31
IV.	SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	32

#### APPENDICES

A.	Contract Compliance Chart
B.	Student Learning Memorandum
C.	Trend Information
D.	CSRC 2018–19 School Scorecard

This report includes text from Downtown Montessori Academy’s student/parent handbook and/or staff handbook. NCCD obtained permission from the school to use this text for the purposes of this report.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
FOR DOWNTOWN MONTESSORI ACADEMY  
2018–19**

This is the 21st annual report on the operation of Downtown Montessori Academy, one of seven schools chartered by the City of Milwaukee during the 2018–19 school year. It is a result of intensive work undertaken by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC), school staff, and the NCCD Children’s Research Center (CRC). Based on the information gathered and discussed in the attached report, CRC has determined the following.

**I. CONTRACT COMPLIANCE SUMMARY**

Downtown Montessori met all of the educational provisions in its contract with the City of Milwaukee and subsequent CSRC requirements. While the problems were solved, the school had difficulty with accuracy of database entries, including correct student ID numbers.

See Appendix A for a list of contract provisions and report page references.

**II. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

**A. Local Measures**

1. Primary Measures of Academic Progress

The CSRC requires the school to track elementary student progress in literacy, writing, math, and special education goals throughout the year to identify students in need of additional help and to assist teachers in developing strategies to improve students’ academic performance. Downtown Montessori also reported skill measure goals for K3, K4, and K5. This year, Downtown Montessori’s local measures of academic progress for elementary students resulted in the following outcomes.

*a. Literacy*

This year, Downtown Montessori used two different literacy assessments for first- through eighth-grade students: a Fountas and Pinnell passage for first- through third-grade students, and the Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI) for fourth- through eighth-grade students.

- All 14 (100.0%) first- through third-grade students who scored below grade level and 74 out of 75 (98.7%) students at grade level in the fall gained at least half a grade level on the spring Fountas and Pinnell assessment. All 11 (100.0%) students above grade level in the fall maintained above-grade-level status in the spring. The school's goal was for 75.0% and 80.0% of students below and at grade level, respectively, to gain at least half a grade level by the spring, and for 100.0% of students above grade level to maintain above-grade-level status.
- Of the 92 fourth- through eighth-grade students who took both fall and spring assessments, 91 (98.9%) met their literacy goal based on their functional and grade-level status using the QRI. The school's goal was that 90.0% would make progress depending on their fall assessment.

Overall, 190 (99.0%) of 192 first- through eighth-grade students who were considered in the school's outcomes made progress on their literacy skills during the school year.

*b. Math*

First- through eighth-grade students were assessed on grade-level Montessori sequential math skills. This was supplemented with math skills not in the Montessori sequence: Common Core State Standards for first- through sixth-grade students and MobyMax for seventh- and eighth--grade students.

- By the end of the year, 163 (99.4%) of 164 first- through sixth-grade students reached or maintained proficiency or showed improvement in 60.0% of grade-level- math skills. The school's goal was 100.0%.
- Of the 27 seventh- and eighth-grade students tested in the fall, 24 (88.9%) either improved by half a grade level if they were below grade level or maintained above-grade-level status in the spring. The school's goal was 80.0%.

Overall, 187 (97.9%) of 191 first- through eighth-grade students met the school's local measures in math.

*c. Writing*

Writing skills were assessed using the Six Traits of Writing. Overall, 180 out of 191 (94.2%) first- through eighth-grade students either increased their fall average writing level score by at least a half point (0.5) on the spring writing sample or maintained or improved a score of at least 4.0 from the fall to spring. The school's goal was 100.0%.

d. *Special Education*

The school's local measure goal for special education was that students would meet at least 80% of their IEP goals at the time of their annual review. This year, only 62.5% of the students met this goal, declining from 90% the previous year.

2. Secondary Measures of Academic Progress

To meet City of Milwaukee requirements, Downtown Montessori identified measurable education-related outcomes in attendance, parental involvement, and special education student records.

The school met its goals in all of these outcomes.

**B. Year-to-Year Academic Achievement on Standardized Tests**

Downtown Montessori administered all required standardized tests noted in its contract with the City of Milwaukee.

CRC examined year-to-year results of the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) exam for second graders. Of the 33 students at or above the summed score benchmark as first graders, 32 (97.0%) remained at or above the summed score benchmark as second graders. The goal was at least 75.0%.

A total of 57 third- through seventh-grade students who were proficient or advanced in English/language arts (ELA) and 54 who were proficient or advanced in math in 2018 took the assessments again in 2019. Of these students, 50 (87.7%) were proficient or advanced in ELA and 41 (75.9%) were proficient or advanced in math in 2019.

Of the 30 students who were below proficient in ELA in the spring of 2018, 14 (46.7%) showed progress in 2019. Of the 33 students who were below proficient in math in the spring of 2018, 20 (60.6%) showed progress in 2019.

**C. CSRC School Scorecard**

Downtown Montessori scored 81.2% of the pilot scorecard points, compared with 84.2% on the 2017–18 pilot scorecard. This indicates an overall decrease from last year.

### **III. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

Downtown Montessori addressed the recommendations from its 2017–18 programmatic profile and educational performance report. Based on results in this report and in consultation with school staff, CRC recommends the school continue a focused improvement plan by implementing the following activities during the 2019–20 school year.

- Increase the support for teachers to meet the needs of their diverse learners, especially with new staff.
- Provide more professional development to improve the integration of the Montessori approach with the Common Core State Standards.
- Improve the understanding and implementation of RtI (Response to Intervention).
- Develop and deliver targeted ELA services for the students who scored below proficiency on the Wisconsin Forward Exam.
- Improve targeted services for students with special education needs to improve the local measure results.
- Improve the use of the data addendum and the accuracy of student identification numbers by all staff, including teachers, when completing the spreadsheets that will be sent to the CRC at the end of the year.

### **IV. RECOMMENDATION FOR ONGOING MONITORING AND REPORTING**

The school has consistently complied with contract requirements over the years. Although the school's scorecard percentage decreased this year (81.2%), the general academic results demonstrate that a majority of the students are progressing as expected. Therefore, the CRC recommends Downtown Montessori continue regular, annual academic monitoring and reporting.

## I. INTRODUCTION

This report was prepared as a result of a contract between the City of Milwaukee and the NCCD Children’s Research Center (CRC). It is one component of the program that the Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) uses to monitor performance of all city-chartered schools.

To produce this report, CRC:

- Conducted an initial school visit to collect information related to contract requirements and to draft a learning memo for the new school year as well as a year-end interview to review progress on recommendations and changes that occurred during the year;
- Visited the school throughout the year to observe classrooms and overall school operations and to conduct a random review of special education files;
- Attended a school board of directors meeting, along with CSRC representatives, to provide an update regarding compliance with the City of Milwaukee’s academic expectations and contract requirements; and
- Collected and analyzed data submitted by the school to complete an annual report.

## II. PROGRAMMATIC PROFILE

Downtown Montessori Academy  
2507 S. Graham St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53207

**Telephone:** (414) 744-6005

**Website:** <http://downtownmontessori.com>

**Head of School:** Virginia Flynn

**Executive Director:** Ian Spanic

Downtown Montessori is in the Bay View neighborhood near the Port of Milwaukee on the southeast side of the city.

## **A. Description and Philosophy of Educational Methodology<sup>1</sup>**

### **1. Mission**

Downtown Montessori's mission is to create a Montessori environment where each child's early experiences with learning will help him or her to become a self-confident, competent, cooperative adult. The philosophy is based on the belief that children learn best when they are at ease and comfortable. The key is to see the hidden nature of the child at given stages of development and to design an environment that will fulfill the child's innate potential.

### **2. Instructional Design**

Downtown Montessori delivers a valid Montessori program as interpreted by the Association Montessori Internationale or the American Montessori Society. Montessori education is both a philosophy of child growth and a rationale for guiding such growth. It is based on a child's developmental needs for freedom within limits and a carefully prepared environment that guarantees exposure to materials and experiences through which to develop intelligence as well as physical and psychological abilities.

## **B. School Structure**

### **1. Leadership and Board of Directors<sup>2</sup>**

The school's leadership includes a head of school, an assistant head of school, and an executive director who manage the school's day-to-day activities.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Parent/Student Handbook for 2017–2018 was used again for 2018–19. It will be updated for 2019–20.*

<sup>2</sup> Information comes from the 2015–16 Annual Report and the school's website, <http://downtownmontessori.com>.

Downtown Montessori is governed by a volunteer board of directors, which provides strategic leadership in support of the school's mission, philosophy, and goals. This year, the board of directors had seven members: a president, a vice president, a secretary, a treasurer, and three other directors. The board makes long-term decisions, provides financial management, and communicates regularly with the executive director and the head of school to ensure that the school's program and operation are faithful to the terms of its charter and that the school is a viable organization.

The board met with the CSRC program analyst and the CRC program specialist regarding a general update, including recent information from the City and general roles and responsibilities of board members.

## 2. Areas of Instruction

Downtown Montessori is divided into four levels of programming. The Children's House contains the Montessori primary program, which is open to students ages 3 to 6 and covers grades K3, K4, and K5.<sup>3</sup> The lower elementary program is designed for first through third graders; the upper elementary program is open to fourth through sixth graders; and the adolescent program is for seventh and eighth graders.

The upper elementary program follows a three-year curriculum cycle in all areas of study except math. For this program, learning how to ask, investigate, and resolve questions plays a dominant role. Materials and group activities are designed to develop individual and

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<sup>3</sup> Students who turn five on or before September 1 may attend full-day Montessori sessions. Students who turn 4 on or before September 1 may attend a half- or full-day program for 4-year-olds, which consists of half-day Montessori and half-day child care. The charter school program does not include 4-year-olds.

collaborative skills in biology, math, language, history, geography, music, and visual arts. The school seeks to reinforce upper elementary students' natural curiosity and community.

The adolescent program reflects a more rigorous level of academic challenge and preparation for high school, including study skills, time management, and high work and social standards.

Downtown Montessori has generic personal computers. Fourth- through eighth-grade students are provided with their own Chromebook. The school's Internet use policy requires parent and student signatures on an elementary/adolescent student computer-use contract. The school uses Microsoft Excel spreadsheets and Skyward to collect student data and data related to academic progress.

The school provided enrichment activities through programs at the Urban Ecology Center and Discovery World. In addition, the school provided after-school activities including clubs for running, coding, and Spanish.

### 3. Classrooms

During the 2018–19 academic year, the school consisted of 12 classrooms: four Children's House classrooms for 3- to 6-year-olds (K3 through K5 students), four lower-elementary classrooms (first through third grades), and three upper-elementary classrooms (fourth through sixth grades). The adolescent program classroom—an open-concept space—is located on the second floor of the former convent on the premises, which has been renovated for classroom and meeting space. Each classroom has approximately 25 students.

#### 4. Teacher Information

Throughout the year, the school employed 21 instructional staff and nine teaching assistants. Instructional staff included 14 classroom teachers, one of whom also acted as assistant head of school and a special education teacher; two part-time social workers, a Title I reading teacher, a part-time school psychologist, a part-time literacy teacher, an art teacher and a Response to Intervention math teacher.<sup>4</sup> Four classroom teachers taught at the Children's House, four taught lower elementary, three taught upper elementary, two taught the adolescent program and a full-time classroom substitute teacher covered for others. All 21 instructional staff started and completed the school year, resulting in an instructional staff retention rate of 100.0%.

At the end of the 2017–18 school year, 19 instructional staff (14 classroom teachers and five other instructional staff) were employed by the school and eligible to return in the fall of 2018. All eligible instructional staff returned in the fall of 2018, for a return rate of 100.0%.

All instructional staff held Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) licenses. All classroom teachers also held Montessori certifications.

The Downtown Montessori Academy Employee Handbook for 2017–18, used again in in 2018–19, explains that informal performance evaluation is ongoing. A formal performance evaluation occurs once per year and includes classroom observation and a performance review with the head of school, the executive director, and the teacher.

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<sup>4</sup> The school contracted with MJ Care for the services of a speech pathologist and, if needed, an occupational therapist.

Regarding professional development, Downtown Montessori focused staff development on team building to support the school community. The process, which began in fall, was led by Patricia Clausen, who used the DiSC® personal assessment tool used by more than 1 million people every year to improve work productivity, teamwork and communication.<sup>5</sup>

The school also continued to work with Dr. Sue Terry on literacy, with this year's focus on spelling.

#### 5. School Hours and Calendar

The school posted its 2018–19 calendar on its website. The calendar also was available in hard copy in the school's office. The hours of school operation for this year were 8:40 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. each day for K3 and K4, and 8:40 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. for K5 through eighth grades.

#### 6. Parent Involvement

As described in the *Parent/Student Handbook 2017–2018*, used again in 2018–19, Downtown Montessori seeks and depends upon the energy and spirit of its parents. Parents are urged to contact their child's teacher for volunteer opportunities in and out of the classroom. Downtown Montessori's handbook states that current research, as well as the school's prior experience, shows a direct relationship between parental involvement and how much the child benefits from the school.

Examples of active parental involvement include accompanying students on field trips, reading stories to students, assisting in building improvements such as constructing shelves and

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.discprofile.com/what-is-disc/overview/>

assembling playground equipment, organizing publicity events, preparing snacks, and donating equipment. The school expects all parents to spend at least four hours per year on such service activities. The school posts activity sign-up sheets throughout the year and sends emails and notes home with students to encourage parents to participate. Parents also are encouraged to visit their child's class at least once a year. To aid parent involvement, the school's all-volunteer parent group, Parent Engagement Network, is dedicated to supplementing and enriching student education by providing parent involvement opportunities.<sup>6</sup> All parents of enrolled students are members.

Each student has a folder in which schoolwork, notices, and school forms are sent home. The school endeavors to communicate as much as possible through email to prevent unnecessary paper use in accordance with the principles of being a Green and Healthy School. Teacher email addresses are listed in the Parent/Student Handbook on the school website, where current information and notices also are available. Parent-teacher conferences occur twice each year and upon parental request.

## 7. Waiting List

In May 2019, the school reported that approximately 12 students were on the waiting list for admission to the school in the fall, primarily for openings in the Children's House.

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<sup>6</sup> The Parent Engagement Network is fully described in the Parent/Student Handbook and on the school's website at .

## 8. Discipline Policy

The school's code of conduct and discipline policy from the Parent/Student Handbook, 2017–18, used again in 2018–19, indicates that when dealing with discipline, it is important for all involved adults to deal with the problem the same way. The method of corrective discipline endorsed by Downtown Montessori is to redirect a student to other activities upon the student's engaging in activity contrary to established rules. The Montessori Method encourages students to make choices and be responsible for their own actions. Discipline is used to help students rather than punish them. All staff and parents serve as role models for students through their conduct with students, other staff, and other parents. Each student should be dealt with positively; according to the handbook, parents and staff should avoid showing anger. Quiet time is used only if redirection does not work; students choose when they are ready to rejoin the group.

When a student's behavior is disruptive, disrespectful, cruel, or unsafe to the student or others in the teacher and program director's judgment, it is not tolerated. Interventions are formulated based on the principles of respect for the student, knowledge and understanding of the student's developmental needs and characteristics and the group's needs, and an understanding that appropriate behavior must be taught and modeled.

The discipline policy describes specific consequences for older students when other interventions have not worked. These steps, depending on the nature of the offense, range from a review of the school rules and a warning for a first offense to possible consequences for fourth offenses such as in-school suspension, isolation from the group, or temporary suspension from activities. For chronic behavior problems that are suspected to be beyond the student's control,

a referral is made to support services for evaluation and help. Suspension and expulsion are considered last resorts and are subject to board review.

The school's anti-bullying/peace policy defines bullying specifically with examples and includes procedures for reporting, investigation, prevention, management, nonviolent communication, and student support.

#### 9. Graduation and High School Information

All seven eighth graders graduated. In the fall, school staff informed students and parents of high school options, testing requirements, early admission, and other sign-up dates throughout the year. At parent-teacher conferences, school staff discussed high school options and what the students were interested in pursuing. Staff held individual discussions by request. School staff assisted students with required admission essays. Representatives from Milwaukee St. Thomas More High School came to the school to share information about their program. At this time, three Downtown Montessori graduates plan to attend St. Thomas More High School, and one each to Reagan High School, Dominican High School, Muskego High School, and Arrowhead High School.

At this time, Downtown Montessori does not have a formal method to track its graduates' high school achievement. The head of school gains information informally through contact with families and graduates who come back to visit. The Head of School reported that of students who attended Downtown Montessori in the past she learned that this spring, two graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, one from Waukesha County Technical

College, and two from the Milwaukee School of Engineering. Additionally, one of the Downtown Montessori graduates is a deputy sheriff.

### **C. Student Population**

Downtown Montessori started the school year with 299 students in K3 through eighth grade.<sup>7</sup> By the end of the year, two more students had enrolled, and seven had withdrawn. To protect student identity, CRC does not include results for groups of fewer than 10 students; there were too few withdrawals this year to provide reasons. Of the students who began the year, 292 (97.7%) finished the school year at Downtown Montessori. This retention rate was slightly lower than in the 2017–18 school year.

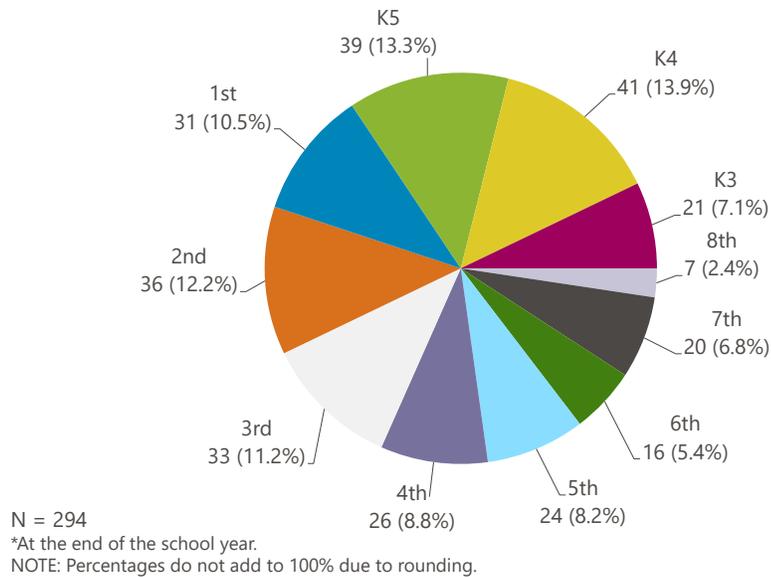
At the end of the year, 294 students were enrolled.

- Of these, 205 (69.7%) students were white, 42 (14.3%) were Latino/a, 25 (8.5%) were black or African American, 17 (5.8%) were Asian, three (1.0%) were American Indian/Alaska Native, and two (0.7%) were Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.
- There were 154 (52.4%) girls and 140 (47.6%) boys.
- A total of 15 (5.1%) students had special education needs: Nine had speech and language needs, two had specific learning disabilities, one had an emotional and behavioral disorder, one had other health impairment, one had other health impairment and speech and language needs, and one had orthopedic impairments, other health impairment, and visual impairment.
- There were 45 (15.3%) students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.
- There were 101 students in the Children’s House, 100 in lower elementary, 66 in upper elementary, and 27 in the adolescent program (Figure 1).

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<sup>7</sup> As of September 21, 2018.

**Figure 1**  
**Downtown Montessori Academy**  
**Enrollment by Student Grade Level\***  
**2018–19**



On the last day of the 2017–18 academic year, 278 students attending Downtown Montessori were eligible for continued enrollment for 2018–19 (i.e., they did not graduate). Of these, 254 were enrolled in the school on the third Friday in September 2018. This represents a return rate of 91.4%, slightly higher than the return rate of 90.5% in the fall of 2017.

**D. Activities for Continuous School Improvement**

Following is Downtown Montessori’s response to the activities recommended in the programmatic profile and educational performance report for the 2017–18 academic year. At that time, the recommendation was that the school continue a focused improvement plan by implementing the following activities during the 2018–19 school year. Each recommendation and response by the school is listed below:

- Recommendation: Continue working with Dr. Terry with a focus on spelling, writing workshops, and in-services in Words Their Way.

Response: Dr. Terry, hired as a part-time employee of Downtown Montessori, worked with all of the teachers four times during the year. The focus for the year was vocabulary and spelling, with some work on writing from a workshop approach. Dr. Terry worked particularly with the seventh- and eighth-grade students, with a special emphasis on spelling. Staff used “Words Their Way,” a program that focuses on vocabulary building and spelling. Dr. Terry was also available throughout the year to meet with and advise individual teachers.

- Recommendation: Improve the use of data from the Wisconsin Forward Exam, Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS), and local measures of academic progress to focus on students who did not meet expectations.

Response: In the fall, teachers were required to examine the data from the Forward Exam and the PALS assessment. The examination of the data led to planning for each child according to the level of achievement and the areas of need. The teachers again used AIMSweb, a progress-monitoring tool that allows benchmarking for each student and more frequent assessment for individual students. This approach was compatible with the Montessori approach as well.

To balance between the Montessori approach and the outcome-driven approach of grade-level testing, the schools used data from the PALS assessment to identify what instruction students needed. When students needed more intensive instruction and extra time, they were referred to the reading specialist.

Eighteen students at the lower elementary level were also given extra help by the Rtl math teacher.

The teachers also worked with students on test-taking skills. Teachers gave as much time as the students needed to master skills. Then when taking an assessment, the student needed the teacher’s “OK” to submit the results. This worked toward the goal of having students refrain from skipping items or marking all of the items the same.

- Recommendation: Improve submission of required data at the end of the school year by using the data addendum to the school’s learning memo as the model for data submission.

Response: School leadership sent the learning memo and the data addendum to all the instructional staff. Staff are encouraged to use the items required on the data addendum as a format for the spreadsheets to submit to NCCD. There is one administrative staff person assigned to collecting the data from individual teachers.

After reviewing the information in this report, and in consultation with the school's leader at the end of the year interview in May 2019, CRC recommends the following activities for the 2019–20 school year:

- Increase the support for teachers to meet the needs of their diverse learners, especially with new staff.
- Provide more professional development to improve the integration of the Montessori approach with the Common Core State Standards.
- Improve the understanding and implementation of Rtl (Response to Intervention).
- Improve targeted services for students with special education needs to improve the local measure results.
- Develop and deliver targeted ELA services for the students who were below proficiency on the Forward Exam.
- Improve targeted services for students with special education needs to improve the local measure results.
- Improve the use of the data addendum and the accuracy of student identification numbers by all staff, including teachers, when completing the spreadsheets that will be sent to the CRC at the end of the year.

### **III. EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

To monitor Downtown Montessori's school performance, a variety of qualitative and quantitative information was collected at specific intervals during the past several academic

years. This year, the school established goals for attendance, parent-teacher conferences, and special education student records. The school used internal and external measures of academic progress. This section of the report describes school success in meeting attendance, conference, parent contract, and special education record-keeping goals. It also describes student progress as measured internally on student report cards and externally by standardized tests such as the PALS assessment and Wisconsin Forward Exam.

#### **A. Attendance**

At the beginning of the academic year, the school established a goal of maintaining an average attendance rate of 95.0%. "Present" was defined as being present for at least half of the day. The school achieved this goal, with students present on average 95.6% of the time this year.<sup>8</sup> When excused absences were included, the attendance rate rose to 100.0%.<sup>9</sup>

#### **B. Parent-Teacher Conferences**

At the beginning of the academic year, the school established a goal for parents of all students to participate in scheduled parent-teacher conferences, which may occur in person or by phone. This year, the school scheduled two conference sessions: one in the fall and one in the spring. Excepting the parents of one student enrolled about two weeks prior to the conference,

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<sup>8</sup> Attendance rate is based on all 301 students enrolled at any time during the year. The rate was calculated for each student by dividing the number of days attended by the number of expected days of attendance and averaging across all students.

<sup>9</sup> The CSRC requires the school to report suspensions. According to the data submitted by the school, there were no student suspensions this year.

parents of all (100.0%) students enrolled at the time of the conferences attended. The school has therefore met its goal related to parent-teacher conferences.

### **C. Special Education Student Records**

This year, the school established a goal to develop and maintain records for all special education students, including students who were evaluated but not eligible for services. During the year, 21 students received special education services. Two received initial evaluations and were found ineligible for services. Three of the students were re-evaluated during the current year and, as a result of those evaluations, were dismissed from special education services.<sup>10</sup> An individualized education program (IEP) was developed for all 15 new or returning special education students who required one (one student transferred before the IEP date).

In addition, CRC reviewed a representative number of files during the year. The files reviewed indicated that IEPs had been completed and reviewed in a timely manner and that parents were invited to and did participate in the IEP team. The school has met its goal related to keeping updated student special education records.

### **D. Local Measures of Educational Performance**

Charter schools, by their definition and nature, are autonomous schools with curricula reflecting each school's individual philosophy, mission, and goals. In addition to administering standardized tests, each charter school is responsible for describing goals and expectations for

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<sup>10</sup> One student who was due for a three-year evaluation did not have the evaluation; the evaluation has been scheduled for the next school year.

its students in the context of that school's unique approach to education. These goals and expectations are established by each city-chartered school at the beginning of the academic year to measure the educational performance of its students. Local measures are useful for monitoring and reporting progress, guiding and improving instruction, clearly expressing the expected quality of student work, and providing evidence that students are meeting local benchmarks. The CSRC expectation is that, at a minimum, schools establish local measures in literacy (i.e., reading), writing, math, and special education. Results for K3 through K5 are not part of the overall local measure score for the scorecard because of the students' young age; these results are combined below. Results in each academic content area for students in first through eighth grades are illustrated subsequently.

1. Progress Reports for K3 Through K5

Downtown Montessori uses the Scholastic progress reports in K3 through K5 to track students' progress on the following skills in these five areas.

- Language (spoken, written, reading, parts of speech, and word study)
- Mathematical development (numbers, counting, addition, subtraction, and multiplication)
- Sensorial discrimination (visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory, and olfactory)
- Cultural areas (globes, maps, and animals of the world)
- Practical life (care of person, grace, courtesy, and control and coordination)

Students are rated as "presented," "practiced," "improving," or "proficient" on each skill in each of the five areas. This year, the school established a goal that K3 through K5 students who

attended all year would be proficient or show improvement (i.e., presented to practiced, practiced to improving, or presented to improving) in grade-level skills in literacy and math. Students who were initially proficient would maintain proficiency.

This year, while the school addressed all areas mentioned above, progress data were provided in the areas of literacy (language) and math (mathematical development). Data were submitted for 100 K3 through K5 students who were enrolled for the entire year.<sup>11</sup> All 100 students maintained proficiency or showed progress for all five math skills, and 98 (98.0%) maintained proficiency or showed progress for all five literacy skills (Table 1).

<b>Table 1</b> <b>Downtown Montessori Academy</b> <b>K3 – K5 Students Proficient or Progressing in Math and Literacy</b> <b>2018–19</b> <b>N = 100</b>		
<b>Skill</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Math</b>		
All five skills	100	100.0%
<b>Literacy</b>		
Skill 1	99	99.0%
Skill 2	100	100.0%
Skill 3	100	100.0%
Skill 4	100	100.0%
Skill 5	99	99.0%
All five skills	98	98.0%

<sup>11</sup> Two students had initial and final scores but were not enrolled for the entire year.

## 2. Literacy for First Through Third Grades

This year, first- through third-grade students were administered a grade-level Fountas and Pinnell passage by the end of September 2018 and again in May 2019. The score consisted of a grade-level score with the whole number as the grade and the decimal as the month (e.g., fourth grade, third month of instruction = 4.3). The school established the following goals. At least 75.0% of students below grade level in the fall would gain at least half a grade level (0.5) on the spring Fountas and Pinnell.

- At least 80.0% of the students who are at their current grade level in the fall (e.g., a fourth-grade student in the fall at or above 4.0) would gain at least half a grade level (0.5) at the time of the spring test.
- Any student scoring at least one grade level above the student's current grade level in the fall would maintain above-grade-level status in the spring (e.g., a fourth-grade student must have a score of 5.0 or above to be above grade level).

A total of 100 first- through third-grade students took the literacy assessment in both the fall and spring. All 14 students (100.0%) below grade level in the fall gained at least a half a grade level by the spring; 74 (98.7%) of the 75 students at grade level in the fall gained at least half a grade level by the spring; and all 11 students above grade level maintained above-grade-level status by the spring (Table 2).

<b>Table 2</b> <b>Downtown Montessori Academy</b> <b>1st – 3rd Grade Students Progressing or Maintaining Above-Grade-Level Literacy</b> <b>2018–19</b>			
<b>Fall Status</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Met Goal</b>	<b>% Met Goal</b>
Below Grade Level	14	14	100.0%
At Grade Level	75	74	98.7%
Above Grade Level	11	11	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>99.0%</b>

3. Literacy for Fourth through Eighth Grades

Literacy skills for students in fourth through eighth grades were measured in fall and spring using the Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI). QRI helps teachers assess student skills in a variety of areas. All students in fourth through eighth grades were administered components of the QRI in the fall of 2018 (no later than November) and again in the spring of 2019. Student scores for all subtests are averaged and result in a QRI-tested grade level and a functional level of learning for that tested grade level (frustration, instructional, or independent) for the fall and spring assessments. Progress was measured by comparing the fall functional level with the spring functional level. Expectations for functional level advancement were based on whether the student was below, at, or above grade level at the time of the fall test. Expectations for each grade-level status/functional level are shown in Table 3. The school’s goal was that at least 90.0% of students will make progress as described in the table.

Table 3			
Spring Goals Based on the Fall Grade Level and Functional Level Status			
Fall Functional Level	Fall Grade Level Status		
	Below Grade Level	At Grade Level	Above Grade Level
Frustration	Frustration at the next grade level	Independent at the same grade level	Maintain above-grade-level status, regardless of functional level
Instructional	Instructional at the next grade level	Independent at the same grade level	
Independent	Independent at the next grade level	Instructional at the next grade level	

A total of 92 students were assessed in both the fall and spring. Of them, 61 tested at the instructional level and 51 tested at the independent level below, at, or above grade level in the fall (none were at the frustration level). Of the 92 students (one below grade level, 78 at grade level, and 13 above grade level) considered in the school’s outcomes, 91 (98.9%) students met or exceeded their literacy goals during the school year (not shown).

Overall, 190 (99.0%) of 192 first- through eighth-grade students met their literacy local measure goal.

4. Writing Skills for First Through Eighth Graders

Students were assessed on two or more of the Six Traits of Writing. First through third graders focused on organization and conventions; fourth through sixth graders focused on sentence fluency, organization, ideas, and conventions; and seventh and eighth graders focused on word choice, organization, ideas, sentence fluency, voice, and conventions. Student skills on each trait were assessed on a five-point rubric (1 = experimenting, 2 = emerging, 3 = developing, 4 = capable, and 5 = experienced), and the total for all traits was averaged and converted into an overall writing level. The school set a goal that all students who received an

average score below 4 in the fall would increase their overall average score by 0.5 on a second writing sample taken in May 2019, and students with an average of 4.0 or above in the fall would score 4.0 or above in the spring.

This year, 191 first- through eighth-grade students were tested in the fall and the spring. Of 36 students who received an average score of 4.0 or higher in the fall, 35 (97.2%) maintained an average score equal to or above 4.0 in the spring. Of 155 students who averaged below a 4.0 in the fall, 145 (93.5%) improved by at least 0.5 in the spring. Overall, 180 (94.2%) of 191 students demonstrated progress, falling short of the school's goal of 100.0%.

#### 5. Math Skills for First Through Eighth Graders

First- through sixth-grade students were rated on a number of Montessori sequential math skills, supplemented by at least three grade-level Common Core math skills not reflected in the Montessori sequence. Each math skill was rated as Minimal: Needs Support; Basic: Progressing; Proficient: Meets Expectation; and Advanced: Mastery. The school's goal was that all students enrolled for the year would maintain proficiency (if proficient or above in the fall) or show improvement in at least three (60.0%) out of five grade-level math skills. Scores were provided for 164 first through sixth graders who attended all year. By the end of the year, 163 (99.4%) students maintained proficiency or showed progress in 60.0% of skills (Table 4).

<b>Table 4</b> <b>Downtown Montessori Academy</b> <b>Math Progress/Proficiency</b> <b>1st – 6th Grades</b> <b>2018–19</b>			
<b>Students</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Met Goal</b>	<b>% Met Goal</b>
1st	31	31	100.0%
2nd	36	36	100.0%
3rd	33	33	100.0%
4th	26	25	96.2%
5th	24	24	100.0%
6th	14	14	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>99.4%</b>

Math progress for seventh and eighth graders was examined using MobyMax, which results in a grade-level equivalency based on Common Core standards. Grade level is established when a student demonstrates proficiency in required grade-level standards using a 75.0% threshold. By the end of spring, 80.0% of the seventh- and eighth-grade students who tested at or below grade level in the fall were expected to improve at least half of a grade level. Students above grade level in the fall were expected to maintain above grade-level status in the spring. Of the 27 students tested, 24 (88.9%) improved by half a grade level or maintained their grade-level status in the spring. Due to the small number, results are not reported out by fall performance group.

Overall, 187 (97.9%) of 191 first- through eighth-grade students met the school’s local measures in math, nearly reaching their 100.0% goal.

## 6. Special Education Student Progress

The school set a goal for special education students to demonstrate progress toward meeting their IEP goals. To measure this goal, the school decided that students with active IEPs who had been at the school for one entire IEP year would demonstrate progress toward meeting at least 80.0% of their total IEP goals at the time of their annual review or reevaluation. (Note that ongoing student progress on IEP goals is monitored and reported throughout the academic year through the special education progress reports that are attached to the regular report cards.) There were 16 students with active IEPs for an entire calendar year at the school, and 10 (62.5%) met or exceeded 80.0% of their IEP goals at the time of the annual review or reevaluation, falling short of their goal.

## **E. External Standardized Measures of Educational Performance**

DPI requires all schools to administer a DPI-approved reading achievement test to K4 through second-grade students. In 2016, the CSRC selected the PALS assessment for students in first and second grade at all city-chartered schools; Downtown Montessori also chose PALS to meet the DPI requirement for students in K4 and K5.

For students in third through eighth grades, DPI requires the Wisconsin Forward Exam. These tests and results are described in the following sections.

1. PALS<sup>12</sup>

The PALS assessment aligns with both the Common Core English standards and the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards. It is available in three versions: PALS-PreK for K4 students, PALS-K for K5 students, and PALS Plus for first and second graders.

a. *PALS-PreK*

The PALS-PreK includes five required tasks (name writing, uppercase alphabet recognition, beginning sound awareness, print and word awareness, and rhyme awareness). Two additional tasks (lowercase alphabet recognition and letter sounds) are completed only by students who reach an adequate score on the uppercase alphabet task. Schools can choose whether to administer the optional nursery rhyme awareness task. Because it is optional, CRC will not report data on nursery rhyme awareness.

The PALS-PreK does not have a summed score benchmark because the purpose is to learn students' abilities as they enter K4 in the fall. In the spring, developmental ranges for each PALS task indicate whether the student is at the expected developmental stage for a 4-year-old.

A total of 38 K4 students completed the PALS-PreK in the fall and spring. Although the spring developmental ranges relate to expected age-level development by the time of the spring semester, CRC applied the ranges to both test administrations to see if more students were at or above the range for each test by the spring administration. The number of students

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<sup>12</sup> Information about the PALS assessments taken from <https://palsresource.info/wisconsin/> and <https://pals.virginia.edu/>; for more information, visit these sites.

at or above the developmental range increased for each task from fall to spring, with the exception of rhyme awareness, which stayed the same (Table 5).

<b>Table 5</b> <b>Downtown Montessori Academy</b> <b>PALS-PreK for K4 Students</b> <b>Students at or Above the Spring Developmental Range</b> <b>2018–19</b> <b>N = 38<sup>13</sup></b>				
Task	Fall		Spring	
	Students	%	Students	%
Name writing	30	78.9%	33	86.8%
Uppercase alphabet recognition	21	55.3%	29	76.3%
Lowercase alphabet recognition <sup>14</sup>	18*	100.0%	24 <sup>†</sup>	100.0%
Letter sounds <sup>15</sup>	17*	94.4%	23 <sup>†</sup>	95.8%
Beginning sound awareness	34	89.5%	37	97.4%
Print and word awareness	29	76.3%	33	86.8%
Rhyme awareness	31	81.6%	31	81.6%

\*Of 18 qualified students who completed this task in the fall .

†Of 24 qualified students who completed this task in the spring.

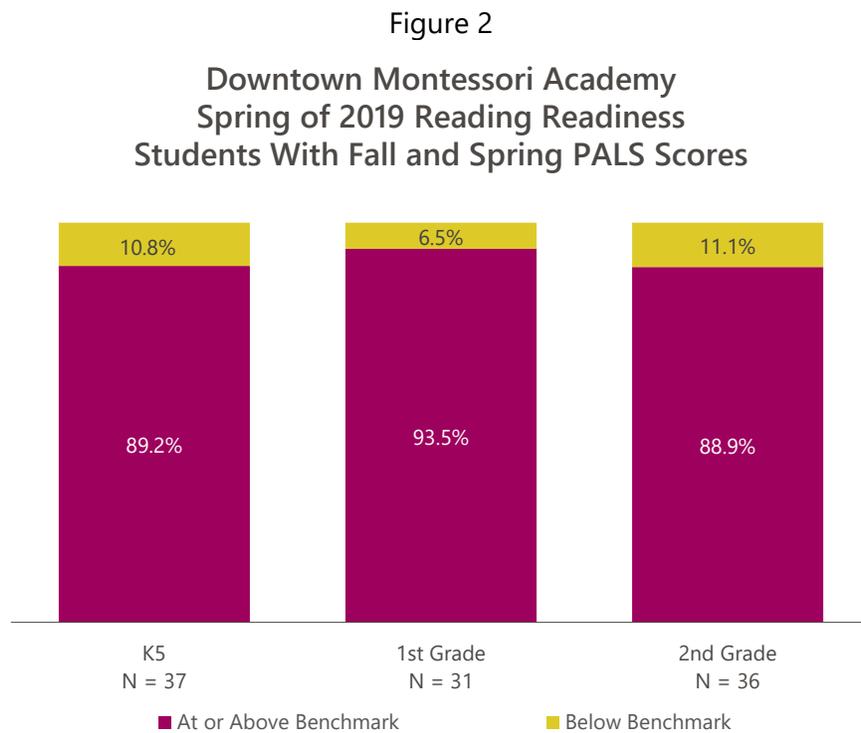
<sup>13</sup> Two students were missing scores for uppercase alphabet recognition in the fall and were excluded from the cohort.

<sup>14</sup> Students who score 16 or higher on the uppercase alphabet recognition task complete the lowercase alphabet recognition task. There were 16 additional students who completed the lowercase task in the fall and seven additional students who completed the lowercase task in the spring despite not achieving a 16 or higher score on the uppercase alphabet recognition task. These students are not included in results.

<sup>15</sup> Students who score nine or higher on the lowercase alphabet recognition task complete the letter sounds task. Fourteen additional students completed the letter sounds task in the fall, and two additional students completed the letter sounds task in the spring, despite not achieving a nine or greater on the lowercase alphabet recognition task and/or the preceding uppercase alphabet task. These students are not included in results.

b. *PALS-K and PALS Plus*

CRC examined spring reading readiness for students who completed both the fall and spring tests. At the time of the spring assessment, 89.2% of 37 K5 students, 93.5% of 31 first graders, and 89.9% of 36 second graders were at or above the spring summed score benchmark for their grade level (Figure 2).



2. Wisconsin Forward Exam for Third Through Eighth Graders<sup>16</sup>

The Wisconsin Forward Exam was implemented as the state’s standardized test for English/language arts (ELA) and math for third through eighth graders; science for fourth and

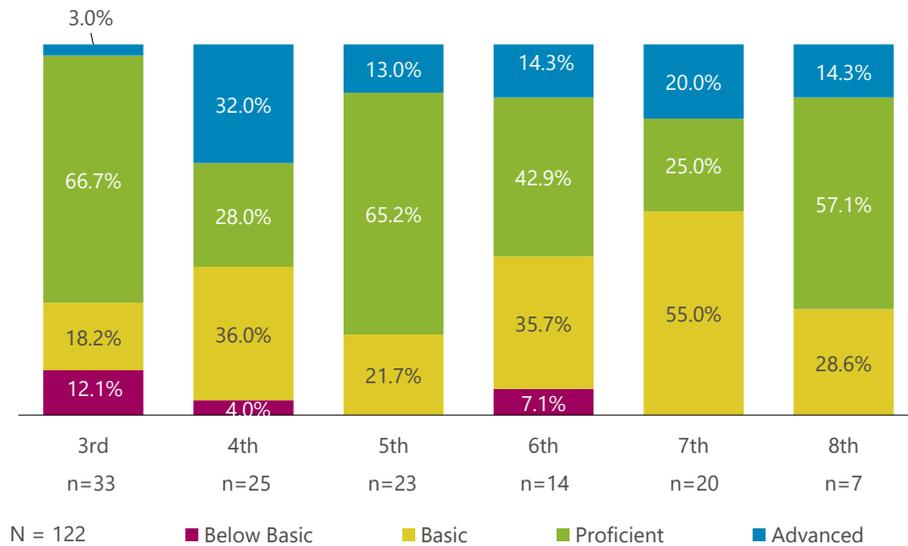
<sup>16</sup> Information taken from the DPI website (<http://dpi.wi.gov/assessment/forward>) and Wisconsin Forward Exam family brochure: [https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/assessment/pdf/Forward\\_brochure\\_for\\_families.pdf](https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/assessment/pdf/Forward_brochure_for_families.pdf)

eighth graders; and social studies for fourth, eighth, and tenth graders. Scores for each test are translated into one of four levels: advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic. The Wisconsin Forward Exam is administered in the spring of each school year.

In the spring of 2019, 122 third through eighth graders who were enrolled since the start of the year (third Friday in September) completed the ELA and math assessments. Of these students, 78 (63.9%) were proficient or advanced in ELA, and 76 (62.3%) were proficient or advanced in math. Results by grade level are presented in Figures 3 and 4.17F

Figure 3<sup>17</sup>

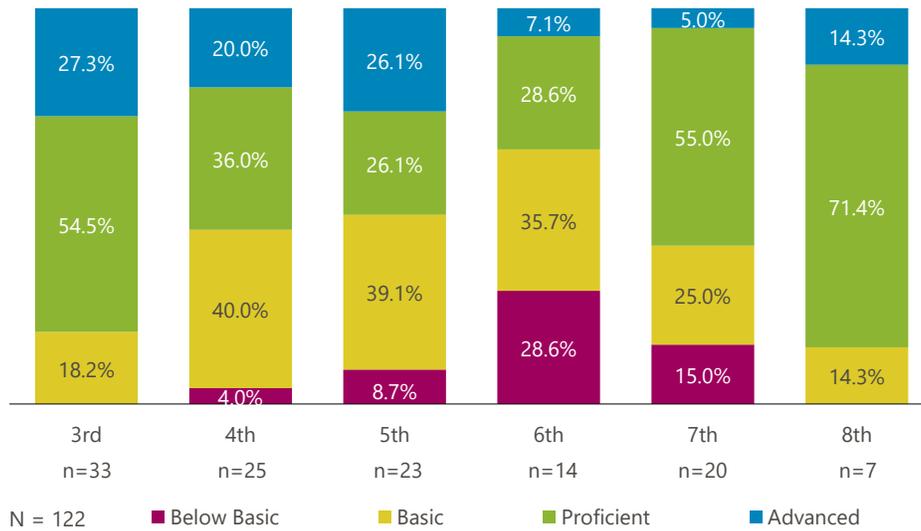
**Downtown Montessori Academy  
Forward Exam English/Language Arts Assessment  
2018–19**



<sup>17</sup> Some numbers may not total 100% because of rounding.

Figure 4

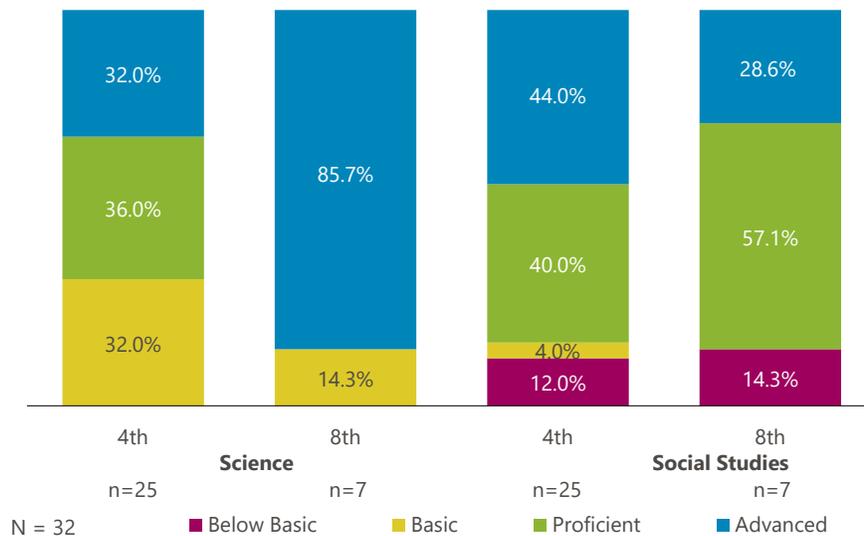
Downtown Montessori Academy  
Forward Exam Math Assessment  
2018–19



Among 32 fourth and eighth graders, 23 (71.9%) were proficient or advanced in science, and 27 (84.4%) were proficient or advanced in social studies. Results by grade level appear in Figure 5.

Figure 5

Downtown Montessori Academy  
Forward Exam Social Studies and Science Assessments  
2018–19



## **F. Multiple-Year Student Progress**

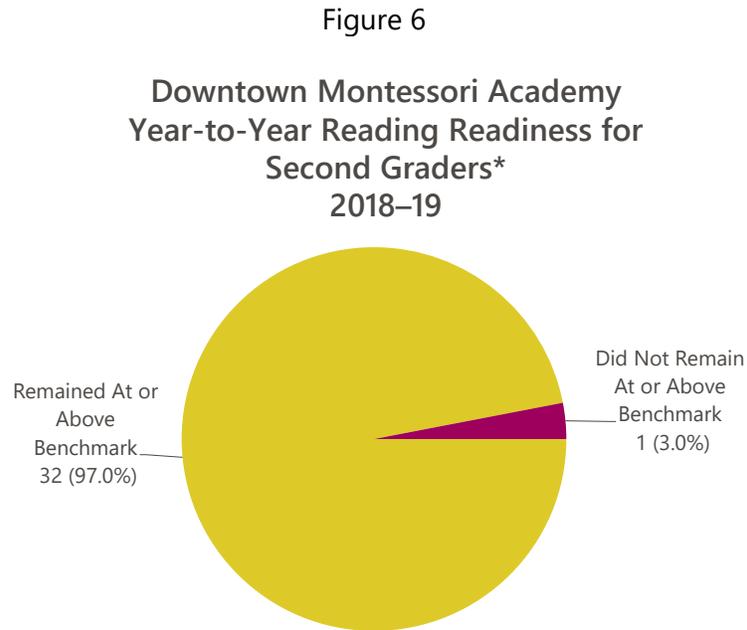
Year-to-year progress is measured by comparing scores on standardized tests from one year to the next. Year-to-year progress expectations apply to all students with scores in consecutive years. Students in K4 through second grade take the PALS reading assessment. The PALS summed score benchmark indicates when a student requires additional reading assistance—not that the student is reading at grade level. Additionally, there are three versions of the test, which include different formats, sections, and scoring. Because only students who are in first and second grade during two consecutive years complete the same version of the test, CRC only examined year-to-year results for students who were in first grade in the spring of 2018 and second grade in the spring of 2019. The CSRC’s performance expectation is that at least 75.0% of students at or above the summed score benchmark in first grade will remain at or above the summed score benchmark as second graders in the subsequent school year.

Students in third through eighth grade take the Wisconsin Forward Exam in the spring. This is only the second year that year-to-year progress can be measured using Wisconsin Forward Exam results from two consecutive school years; results will be used as baseline data to set expectations in subsequent school years.

### **1. Second-Grade Progress Based on PALS**

A total of 36 students completed the PALS spring assessment in 2017–18 as first graders and in 2018–19 as second graders. Based on PALS results from the spring of 2018, 33 students were at or above the spring summed score benchmark as first graders; 32 (97.0%) of those

students remained at or above the summed score benchmark in the spring of 2019 as second graders (Figure 6).



\*Those who completed PALS 1–3 in two consecutive years and were at or above benchmark as first graders.

2. Fourth- Through Eighth-Grade Progress Based on Wisconsin Forward Exam

Year-to-year progress was measured for students at or above proficient and for students below proficient in ELA and/or math in the spring of 2018.

a. *Students at or Above Proficient*

In the spring of 2018, 57 third- through seventh-grade students were proficient or advanced in ELA, and 54 were proficient or advanced in math. Of the 57 students who took the

ELA assessment in the spring of 2019, 50 (87.7%) maintained proficiency. Of the 54 students who took the math assessment in the spring of 2019, 41 (75.9%) maintained proficiency.

*b. Students Below Proficient*

For students below proficient the previous year, progress was measured in two ways: by improving a minimum of one proficiency level or by improving at least one quartile within their proficiency level from 2018 to 2019.

Of the 30 third- through seventh-grade students who were below proficient (i.e., basic or below basic) in ELA in the spring of 2018 and were tested again in the spring of 2019, 14 (46.7%) showed progress in 2019. Of the 33 third- through seventh-grade students who were below proficient (i.e., basic or below basic) in math in the spring of 2018 and were tested again in the spring of 2019, 20 (60.6%) demonstrated progress in 2019.

**G. CSRC School Scorecard**

In the fall of 2012, after a three-year pilot, the CSRC adopted its first school scorecard with related standards and expectations. In 2014–15, due to significant changes required by DPI for new standardized tests, the scorecard was revised. Like the original, the revised scorecard includes multiple measures of student academic progress, including performance on standardized tests and local measures, point-in-time academic achievement, and engagement elements such as attendance and student and teacher retention and return. The revised scorecard was partially piloted for the first two years. In February 2017, after the same standardized tests had been used for two consecutive school years, the revised scorecard was

accepted by the CSRC to replace the original scorecard as an indicator of school performance but will remain a pilot for an additional two to three years. The overall scorecard percentage (percentage of available points earned) is used to monitor school improvement from year to year.

This year, Downtown Montessori scored 81.2% of the pilot scorecard points, compared with 84.2% on the 2017–18 pilot scorecard. This indicates a decrease of 3.0 percentage points. See Appendix D for the 2018–19 pilot scorecard results.

#### **IV. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This report covers the 21st year of Downtown Montessori’s operation as a City of Milwaukee charter school. The school has consistently complied with contract requirements over the years. Although the school’s scorecard percentage decreased this year, the overall scorecard result (81.2%) demonstrates that a majority of the students are progressing as expected. Therefore, the CRC recommends Downtown Montessori continue regular, annual academic monitoring and reporting.

## **Appendix A**

### **Contract Compliance Chart**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Table A</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Downtown Montessori Academy</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Overview of Compliance for Education-Related Contract Provisions</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>2018–19</b></p>			
Section of Contract	Contract Provision	Report Reference Page	Contract Provision Met or Not Met
Section I, B	Description of educational program of the school and curriculum focus.	p. 2	Met
Section I, V	The school will provide a copy of the calendar prior to the end of the previous school year.	p. 6	Met
Section I, C	Educational methods.	p. 2	Met
Section I, D	Administration of required standardized tests.	pp. 23–29	Met
Section I, D	<u>Academic criterion #1</u> : Maintain local measures, showing pupil growth in demonstrating curricular goals in reading, math, writing, and special education.	pp. 15–23	Met
Section I, D	<p><u>Academic criterion #2</u>: Year-to-year achievement measures for students who are proficient.</p> <p>a. Due to recent change in standardized assessments for third- through eighth-grade students, no expectation is in place at this time.</p> <p>b. Second-grade students at or above summed score benchmark in reading: At least 75.0% will remain at or above.</p>	<p>a. Not applicable (N/A)</p> <p>b. p. 29–30</p>	<p>a. N/A</p> <p>b. Met</p>
Section I, D	<p><u>Academic criterion #3</u>: Year-to-year achievement measures: progress for students below proficient.</p> <p>Due to recent changes in standardized assessments for third- through eighth-grade students, no expectation is in place at this time.</p>	N/A	N/A
Section I, E	Parental involvement.	pp. 6–7	Met
Section I, F	Instructional staff hold a DPI license or permit to teach.	pp. 5–6	Met
Section I, I	Pupil database information, including special education needs students.	pp. 10–12, 15	Met
Section I, K	Discipline procedures.	pp. 8–9	Met

## **Appendix B**

### **Student Learning Memorandum**

## Student Learning Memorandum for Downtown Montessori Academy

**To:** NCCD Children’s Research Center and Charter School Review Committee  
**From:** Downtown Montessori Academy  
**Re:** Learning Memo for the 2018–19 Academic Year  
**Date:** October 15, 2018

This memorandum of understanding includes the *minimum* measurable outcomes required by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) to monitor and report students’ academic progress. These outcomes have been defined by the leadership and/or staff at the school in consultation with staff from the NCCD Children’s Research Center (CRC) and the CSRC. The school will record student data in Skyward or MS Excel spreadsheets and provide the data to CRC, the educational monitoring agent contracted by the CSRC. Additionally, paper test printouts or data directly from the test publisher will be provided to CRC for all standardized tests unless CRC is able to access the results directly from the test publisher. All required elements related to the outcomes below are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section of this memo. CRC requests electronic submission of year-end data on the fifth day following the last day of student attendance for the academic year, or June 14, 2019.

### **Enrollment**

The school will record enrollment dates for every student. Individual student information and actual enrollment dates will be added to the school’s database upon admission. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

### **Termination/Withdrawal**

The exit date and reason for every student leaving the school will be determined and recorded in the school’s database. A specific reason is required for each student expulsion. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

### **Attendance**

The school will maintain an average daily attendance rate of 95%. Any student who attends school for at least half of the day will be counted as present. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

### **Parent/Guardian Participation**

A parent or guardian of every student enrolled at the time of each scheduled parent-teacher conference will participate in that conference, which may occur in person or by phone. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

### **Special Education Needs Students**

The school will maintain updated records for all students who received special education services at the school, including students who were evaluated but not eligible for services. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

### **Academic Achievement: Local Measures<sup>18</sup>**

#### Children's House Literacy and Math

Students attending the Children's House (K3, K4, and K5) will demonstrate progress in acquiring skills in the areas of math and literacy. Each student's development will be reported to his/her parents on report cards, and this information will be collected in Skyward. The following scale will be used to track skill levels and changes in skill acquisition.

- 1—Presented
- 2—Practiced
- 3—Improving
- 4—Mastered/Proficient

Students will be assessed on all five math skills and five literacy representative skills in the fall. Students who attend all year will be proficient or show improvement (Presented to Practiced, Practiced to Improving, or Presented to Improving) in grade-level skills in each of the areas by the end of the year. Students with initial proficiency in a skill will maintain proficiency.

Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

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<sup>18</sup> Local measures of academic achievement are classroom- or school-level measures that monitor student progress throughout the year (formative assessment) and can be summarized at the end of the year (summative assessment) to demonstrate academic growth. They are reflective of each school's unique philosophy and curriculum. The CSRC requires local measures of academic achievement in the areas of literacy, math, writing, and IEP goals.

### Elementary and Adolescent Program Literacy

First- through third-grade students will be administered a grade-level Fountas and Pinnell passage by the end of September 2017, and again in May 2018. The score will be reported as a grade-level score with the whole number as the grade and the decimal as the month (e.g., fourth grade, third month of instruction = 4.3). Any student scoring below the first-grade level will have a score of K for kindergarten without a month indicator.

- At least 75% of the students below grade level in the fall will gain at least half a grade level (0.5) on the spring Fountas and Pinnell.
- At least 80% of the students who are at their current grade level in the fall (e.g., a fourth-grade student in the fall at or above 4.1) will gain at least half a grade level (0.5) at the time of the spring test.
- Any student who scores at least one grade level above their current grade level in the fall will maintain above-grade-level status in the spring (e.g., a fourth-grade student must have a score of 5.1 or above to be above grade level).

All students in fourth through eighth grades will be administered components of the Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI) no later than the end of the first quarter (November 2018) and again in the spring. Progress will be measured by comparing the fall functional level with the spring functional level. Expectations for functional level advancement will be set based on whether the student was below, at, or above grade level at the time of the fall test. Expectations for each grade-level status/functional level are shown in the table below. At least 90% of students will make progress as described below.

Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

<b>Fall Functional Level</b>	<b>Fall Grade Level Status</b>		
	<b>Below Grade Level</b>	<b>At Grade Level</b>	<b>Above Grade Level</b>
Frustration	Frustration at the next grade level	Independent at the same grade level	Maintain above-grade-level status, regardless of functional level
Instructional	Instructional at the next grade level	Independent at the same grade level	
Independent	Independent at the next grade level	Instructional at the next grade level	

### Elementary and Adolescent Program Writing

Writing skills will be assessed in the fall and spring of the school year using the Six Traits of Writing.<sup>19</sup> Both writing samples will have grade-level prompts based on grade-level topics with the narrative genre.<sup>20</sup>

There are a total of six traits scored on a five-point rubric (1 = experimenting, 2 = emerging, 3 = developing, 4 = capable, and 5 = experienced). Different grades have a different number of traits. Grade levels and the number of traits chosen for them follow.

- First through third graders will focus on organization and conventions. (Scores of two traits to be averaged)
- Fourth through sixth graders will focus on sentence fluency, organization, ideas, and conventions. (Scores of four traits will be averaged)
- Seventh and eighth graders will focus on word choice, organization, ideas, sentence fluency, voice, and conventions. (Scores of six traits will be averaged)
- The average score of these traits for each sample will be used to measure student progress toward the goal.<sup>21</sup>

All students who receive an average score below four in the fall will increase their overall average score by 0.5 on a second writing sample taken in May 2019. Students with an average of four or above in the fall will score four or above in the spring.

Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

### Elementary and Adolescent Program Math

#### *First Through Sixth Graders*

Students in first through sixth grades will demonstrate progress in acquiring the grade-level Montessori sequential math skills, supplemented by at least three grade-level Common Core State Standards math skills not reflected in the Montessori sequence. The following scale will be used to track the skill level and change in skill acquisition.

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<sup>19</sup> The six traits of writing are organization, fluency, conventions, ideas, voice, and word choice.

<sup>20</sup> Writing genres include expository, descriptive, persuasive, and narrative.

<sup>21</sup> NOTE: The highest possible average score is 5.0.

- 1—Minimal: Needs support
- 2—Basic: Progressing
- 3—Proficient: Meets expectation
- 4—Advanced: Mastery

Students will be assessed on all five representative skills no later than November 1, 2018. Students who attend all year will show improvement (e.g., from minimal to basic in at least three out of five grade-level math indicators of math growth by the end of the year). Students with initial proficiency in a skill will maintain proficiency.

Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

#### *Seventh and Eighth Graders*

All seventh- and eighth-grade students will be given a benchmark assessment in the fall, by the end of September 2018; and in the spring, by the end of May 2019. This benchmark assessment will be completed using MobyMax, an evaluation program, resulting in a grade-level equivalency based on performance according to Common Core State Standards. Grade-level equivalency is established when the student demonstrates proficiency in the required standards for a particular grade level. The assessment uses a 75% threshold to determine proficiency.

By the end of spring, 80% of the seventh- and eighth-grade students who tested at or below grade level in the fall will improve at least half of a grade level. For example, a seventh-grade student who receives a grade-level equivalency score of 6.3 will improve to a score of at least 6.8.

Students who test above grade level in the fall will remain above grade level in the spring.

Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

#### Special Education Students

Students with active individualized education programs (IEPs) who have been at the school for one entire IEP year will demonstrate progress toward meeting at least 80% of their total IEP goals *at the time of their annual review or reevaluation*. Progress on each goal is defined as achieving at least 75% of the benchmarks under that goal. Please note that ongoing student progress on IEP goals is monitored and reported throughout the academic year through the special education progress reports attached to the regular report cards.

Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

## **Academic Achievement: Standardized Measures**

### The Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening for K4 Through Second-Grade Students

The Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) will be administered to all K4 through second-grade students in the fall and spring of each school year within the timeframe required by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI). Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

### Wisconsin Forward Exam for Third- Through Eighth-Grade Students

The Wisconsin Forward Exam will be administered on an annual basis within the timeframe specified by DPI. This standardized assessment will produce an English/language arts score and a math score for all third through eighth graders. Additionally, fourth- and eighth-grade students will complete the science and social studies tests. Data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

## **Year-to-Year Achievement<sup>22</sup>**

1. CRC will report results from the 2018–19 Wisconsin Forward Exam. In addition, progress will be reported for students who completed the Forward Exam in two consecutive years at the same school. When sufficient year-to-year data are available, the CSRC will set its expectations for student progress, and these expectations may be effective in subsequent years.
2. The CSRC’s expectation for students maintaining reading readiness on the PALS is that at least 75% of students who were in first grade in the 2017–18 school year and met the summed score benchmark in the spring of 2018 will remain at or above the second-grade summed score benchmark in the spring of 2019.

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<sup>22</sup> The CSRC will not have year-to-year achievement measurements for students in K4 and K5.

## **Appendix C**

### **Trend Information**

Table C1					
Downtown Montessori Academy Enrollment					
Year	Enrolled at Start of School Year	Enrolled During Year	Withdrew	Number Enrolled at End of Year	Retention (Enrolled for Entire Year)
2014–15	249	2	3	248	246 (98.8%)
2015–16	264	6	4	266	260 (98.5%)
2016–17	274	4	4	274	270 (98.5%)
2017–18	286	2	2	286	284 (99.3%)
2018–19	299	2	7	294	292 (97.7%)

Table C2	
Downtown Montessori Academy Student Return Rates	
School Year	Rate
2014–15	90.3%
2015–16	90.6%
2016–17*	87.1%
2017–18	90.5%
2018–19	91.4%

Table C3	
Downtown Montessori Academy Student Attendance Rates	
School Year	Rate
2014–15	95.6%
2015–16	95.4%
2016–17*	95.2%
2017–18	95.5%
2018–19	95.6%

<b>Table C4</b>	
<b>Downtown Montessori Academy Parent Participation</b>	
<b>School Year</b>	<b>% Participated</b>
2014–15	100.0%
2015–16	
2016–17	
2017–18	
2018–19	

<b>Table C5</b>	
<b>Downtown Montessori Academy Teacher/Instructional Staff Retention</b>	
<b>School Year</b>	<b>Retention Rate: Employed Entire School Year</b>
2014–15	100%
2015–16	
2016–17	
2017–18	
2018–19	

Table C6			
Downtown Montessori Academy Teacher/Instructional Staff Return Rates			
Teacher Type	Number at End of Prior School Year	Returned First Day of Current School Year	Return Rate
<b>2014–15</b>			
Classroom teachers	10	10	100.0%
All instructional staff	13	13	100.0%
<b>2015–16</b>			
Classroom teachers	11	11	100.0%
All instructional staff	15	15	100.0%
<b>2016–17</b>			
Classroom teachers	13	10	76.9%
All instructional staff	17	13	76.5%
<b>2017–18</b>			
Classroom teachers	13	13	100.0%
All instructional staff	16	16	100.0%
<b>2018–19</b>			
Classroom teachers	14	14	100%
All instructional staff	19	19	100%

NOTE: Includes only teachers who were eligible to return (i.e., who were offered a position for fall).

Table C7	
Downtown Montessori Academy CSRC Scorecard Results	
School Year	Scorecard Result
2014–15	93.4%
2015–16	91.9%
2016–17*	75.2%
2017–18*	84.2%
2018–19*	81.2%

\*The revised pilot scorecard was implemented in 2016–17; results are not directly comparable to scorecard percentages in previous years.

## **Appendix D**

### **CSRC 2018–19 School Scorecard**

**City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee Pilot School Scorecard**  
**K-8TH GRADE** **HIGH SCHOOL**

r: 6/15

<b>STUDENT READING READINESS: GRADES 1-2</b>		
• PALS—% 1st graders at or above spring summed score benchmark this year	4.0	 <b>10.0%</b>
• PALS—% 2nd graders who maintained spring summed score benchmark two consecutive years	6.0	

<b>STUDENT ACADEMIC PROGRESS: GRADES 3-8</b>		
• Forward Exam reading—% maintained proficient	5.0	 <b>30.0%</b>
• Forward Exam math—% maintained proficient	5.0	
• Forward Exam reading—% below proficient who progressed	10.0	
• Forward Exam math—% below proficient who progressed	10.0	

<b>LOCAL MEASURES</b>		
• % met reading	6.25	 <b>25.0%</b>
• % met math	6.25	
• % met writing	6.25	
• % met special education	6.25	

<b>STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: GRADES 3-8</b>		
• Forward Exam reading—% proficient or advanced	5.0	 <b>10.0%</b>
• Forward Exam math—% proficient or advanced	5.0	

<b>ENGAGEMENT</b>		
• Student attendance	5.0	 <b>25.0%</b>
• Student reenrollment	5.0	
• Student retention	5.0	
• Teacher retention	5.0	
• Teacher return*	5.0	

<b>STUDENT ACADEMIC PROGRESS: GRADES 9, 10, AND 12</b>		
• ACT Aspire—% 10th graders who were at or above the composite benchmark score two consecutive years	5.0	 <b>30.0%</b>
• ACT Aspire—% 10th graders below the composite benchmark in 9th grade but progressed at least one point in 10th grade	10.0	
• Adequate credits to move from 9th to 10th grade	5.0	
• Adequate credits to move from 10th to 11th grade	5.0	
• DPI graduation rate	5.0	

<b>POSTSECONDARY READINESS: GRADES 11 AND 12</b>		
• Postsecondary acceptance for graduates (college, university, technical school, military)	10.0	 <b>15.0%</b>
• % of 11th/12th graders tested	2.5	
• % of graduates with ACT composite score of 21.25 or higher	2.5	

<b>LOCAL MEASURES</b>		
• % met reading	5.0	 <b>20.0%</b>
• % met math	5.0	
• % met writing	5.0	
• % met special education	5.0	

<b>STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: GRADES 9 AND 10</b>		
• ACT Aspire English—% students at or above spring benchmark	5.0	 <b>10.0%</b>
• ACT Aspire math—% students at or above spring benchmark	5.0	

<b>ENGAGEMENT</b>		
• Student attendance	5.0	 <b>25.0%</b>
• Student reenrollment	5.0	
• Student retention	5.0	
• Teacher retention	5.0	
• Teacher return*	5.0	

\*Teachers not offered continuing contracts are excluded when calculating this rate.

NOTE: To protect student identity, CRC does not report data on scorecard items with fewer than 10 students. These cells will be reported as not available (N/A) on the scorecard and the total score will be calculated to reflect each school's denominator.

Table D					
Downtown Montessori Academy CSRC Pilot Elementary School (K Through 8th Grade) Scorecard 2018–19					
Area	Measure	Maximum Points	% Total Score	Performance	Points Earned
<b>Student Reading Readiness: PALS</b>	% 1st graders at or above spring summed score benchmark this year	4.0	<b>10.0%</b>	93.5%	3.7
	% 2nd graders who maintained spring summed score benchmark two consecutive years	6.0		97.0%	5.8
<b>Student Academic Progress: 3rd – 8th Grades</b>	Forward Exam reading: % maintained proficient/advanced	5.0	<b>30.0%</b>	87.7%	4.4
	Forward Exam math: % maintained proficient/advanced	5.0		75.9%	3.8
	Forward Exam reading: % below proficient who progressed	10.0		46.7%	4.7
	Forward Exam math: % below proficient who progressed	10.0		60.6%	6.1
<b>Local Measures</b>	% met reading	6.25	<b>25.0%</b>	99.0%	6.2
	% met math	6.25		97.9%	6.1
	% met writing	6.25		94.2%	5.9
	% met special education	6.25		62.5%	3.9
<b>Student Academic Achievement: 3rd – 8th Grades</b>	Forward Exam English/ language arts: % at/above proficient	5.0	<b>10.0%</b>	63.9%	3.2
	Forward Exam math: % at/above proficient	5.0		62.3%	3.1
<b>Engagement</b>	Student attendance rate	5.0	<b>25.0%</b>	95.6%	4.8
	Student return rate	5.0		91.4%	4.6
	Student retention	5.0		97.7%	4.9
	Teacher retention rate	5.0		100.0%	5.0
	Teacher return rate	5.0		100.0%	5.0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100.0</b>			<b>81.2</b>
<b>ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCORECARD PERCENTAGE</b>					<b>81.2%</b>