2022-2023
Aspen Academy
World's Best Workforce Summary

THINK

Tenacity | High Expectations | Integrity | No Excuses | Kindness

Aspen Academy, #4184, is a public charter school serving students in grades K-8.

World's Best Workforce Contact Information:
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Summary Meeting: September 13, 2022 - 4:15pm
New Plan Development: September 13, 2022 - 5:00pm
Public Meeting: October 17, 2022 - 4:30pm
Board Approval: October 17, 2022 - 6:00pm

2022-2023 District Advisory Committee:
Melanie Jiskra, Director/Principal
James Jotter, Assistant Principal
Dr. Lorien Parson, Title I Coordinator
Dr. Erin Haley Strub, MTSS Coordinator
Brandy Mosser - Special Education Teacher
Cindy Carey - MS Science Teacher
Stephanie Smitley - Math Interventionist, Parent, Board Member
Mandi Berndt - EL/Latin Teacher
Cara Wiese - Second Grade Teacher
Diane Sterna - Third Grade Teacher
Tim Spika - Paraprofessional, Community Member

Equitable Access to Effective and Diverse Teachers

WBWF Requirement: WBWF requires districts and charters to have a process in place to ensure students from low income families, students of color, and American Indian students are not taught at disproportionate rates by inexperienced, out-of-field, and ineffective teachers. The legislation also requires that districts have strategies to increase access to teachers who reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of students.

- An **ineffective teacher** is defined as a teacher who is not meeting professional teaching standards as defined in local teacher development and evaluation (TDE) systems.
- An **inexperienced teacher** is defined as a licensed teacher who has taught for three or fewer years.
- An **out-of-field teacher** is defined as a licensed teacher who is providing instruction in an area which he or she is not licensed.

Describe your process for ensuring students of color, American Indian students and students from low income families have equitable access to experienced, in-field, and effective teachers.

How did the district examine equitable access data? What did you look at? How frequently do you review the data? Who was included in conversations to review equitable access data?

Aspen Academy WBWF Committee examined the current list of active licensed teachers who are employed with the district. We reviewed the data from the STAR report that lists employees and includes data including name, license number, areas of licensure, and years with the organization. We reviewed the staffing data throughout the year, as staff members changed and then again at the end of the year's current list of employees. Currently, we have one teacher teaching with a state approved out of field license permission on our licensed teaching staff.

Through our building-wide scheduling we ensured that all students of color, American Indian students and students from low income families had equitable access to experienced, in-field, effective teachers. The teachers at Aspen Academy all can be defined as inexperienced or experienced in-field, and effective teachers. All students at Aspen Academy may have an inexperienced teacher for a content area and will have access to experienced, in-field effective teachers throughout their day. Administration and committee members were included in conversations to review equitable access data.

What strategies has the district initiated to improve student equitable access to experienced, in-field, and effective teachers? What goal(s) do you have to reduce and eventually eliminate equitable access gaps?

Aspen Academy's professional development plan ensures that all teachers, novice or veteran, continue to receive opportunities for growth and development. Aspen Academy's teacher professional development included strength based peer coaching, mentor/mentee assignments, new teacher monthly cohort and continued work in Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Effective Teaching Strategies throughout the year. All teachers, regardless of status, are on the observation cycle either through formal or informal administrative evaluations. All teachers new to Aspen Academy were formally evaluated three times last year. We work to incorporate culturally relevant teaching strategies across all content areas.

Administration was very diligent in recruiting efforts, which started early to hire effective and experienced teachers. Our goal remains building those partnerships with universities that place student teaching candidates with us so we can be a part of their educational training.

Through the staffing efforts, the district continues to reduce, with the goal of eliminating, equitable access gaps through innovative professional development and peer coaching. Implementing more data reviews and use of data to drive instructional decision making we can work to further develop highly effective teachers.

One of our goals was to implement the PLC, professional learning community, with our primary teachers, focused on the LETRS training – the science of reading research and application. Our kindergarten team of teachers made instructional changes from their new learning through the LETRS training and the results were noticeable with an aggressive growth shown with their current grade level of learners. We incorporated weekly collaborative instructional planning meetings with grade levels.

WBWF Requirement: WBWF requires districts and charters to examine student access to licensed teachers who reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of students. A growing body of research has demonstrated that all students benefit when they are taught by racially and ethnically diverse staff throughout their career, and students of color and indigenous students benefit even more. Consequently, working to increase teacher racial diversity is beneficial to all schools.

Describe your efforts to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of teachers in your district. Which racial and ethnic student groups are present in your district are not yet represented

in your licensed teacher staff? How many additional teachers of color and American Indian teachers would you need in order to reflect your student population?

Aspen Academy's highest demographic of racial and ethnicity is White at 53% with the next highest Black or African American at 19% and American Indian or Alaska Native at 1%. Aspen Academy's racial and ethnic students in our district not yet represented in our licensed teaching staff include Hispanic or Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and 2 or more Races.

An experienced educator has more than three years of experience. Aspen Academy has 47% students of color or American Indian or Alaska Native students and is considered to have neither a high-nor low number of students of color or American Indian or Alaska Native students. Aspen Academy would need to hire 19 teachers of color and American Indian or Alaska Native race and ethnicity to represent our current student population.

The teacher shortage, regardless of race or ethnicity, is an epidemic across our country. We continue to pursue our goal in increasing and retaining teachers of color and American Indian teachers by partnering with local universities, broadening job posting locations, and networking with other districts and personnel for potential employees. We have had some fortunate results in hiring staff through personal recommendations and references from previous teachers and employees. We have been creative in hiring in house guest teachers who gain experience with the district and then move into their own classroom within their first two years.

Our goal is to work to acquire effective teachers, both of color and in licensure areas, to increase our diversity of teaching staff to better reflect our student body.

GOAL RESULTS

2022-2023 Goals
1. All Students Are Ready for School

2024-2025 ASPEN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL GOAL

Each year through FY 2025, 95% of all the School's kindergarten students continuously enrolled since the first day of school will be able to:
- **generate all sounds of the first 26 phonograms (letters a-z) by April 1 of each year.**
- **count to 32 by June 1 of each year and**
- **identify all 26 upper and lower case letters by February 1 of each year.**

Result - Not Met
- 93% of scholars could generate all sounds of the first 26 phonograms
- On a fluency measure, kindergartners grew an average of 46 sounds in a minute from fall to early spring
- 93% of scholars could count to 32
- An increase over the 2021-2022 percentage of 27 - 92% of scholars could identify upper case letters and 77% of scholars could identify lower case letters

BUILDING SITE GOALS 2022-2023
Kindergarten:
- In the Fall, the target for the Letter Sounds benchmark assessment is 3 correct in 1 minute. In the Fall, 18 scholars scored 0 letter sounds, which is in the "high risk" category. From Fall to Spring, there will be a movement of students from the "high risk" to "some risk" benchmark category of Letter Sounds.
- In the Spring, scholars scoring 0 Letter Sounds in the fall will score between 27-40 letter sounds in the Spring, moving into the "some" risk category.

Result - Met
- 16 scholars moved into the low risk category for letter sounds, with scores between 41 and 96 letter sounds per minute

- In the Fall, the target for the Number Sequencing assessment is 4 correct. In the Fall, 21 scholars were below 4, scoring in either the "high or some risk" benchmark category. From Fall to Spring, there will be a movement of students from the "high risk" to the "some risk" benchmark category of Number Sequencing.

Result - Met:
- There were 6 scholars in the high risk category on number sequencing, 5 of those moved to the some risk or low risk categories.

- In the Spring, scholars scoring below 4 in the fall will score between 7-9 in Number Sequencing in the Spring.

Result - Met
- Nineteen of the 21 scholars scoring below 4 in the fall obtained a spring score above 7

2. All Students in Third Grade Achieving Grade-Level Literacy

2024-2025 ASPEN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL GOAL

Every year Aspen Academy will outperform, by overall percentage, the district of Prior Lake/Savage, in science, reading, and math.

By the end of the 2024/ 2025 school year, Aspen Academy will score:
- **3rd grade proficiency rates will be no less than 10 points higher in reading than the state average on the MCAs.**
- **No less than 13 percentage points higher than the state average for all students in reading.**

BUILDING SITE GOALS 2022-2023

First Grade:
- On the Nonsense word benchmark assessment in the Fall, 40 students scored below the Fall target of 10, scoring in the "some" to "high risk" category. Students with Fall scores in the "some risk" category will increase an average of at least 3 points on the Nonsense Words benchmark by Winter.

Result - Met
- The 29 scholars in the some risk category grew an average of 12 points on the Nonsense Word assessment

- Students with Fall scores in the "high risk" category in the fall, will increase at least 5 points on the Nonsense Words benchmark assessment by Spring.

Result - Met
- The 6 scholars in the high risk category increased their Nonsense Words by an average of 13 points with an range of 6 to 19 points growth

Second Grade:
- In the Fall of second grade, the target for Curriculum Based Measurement-Reading (CBM-Reading) is 56 words read correctly in 1 minute. In the Fall of 2022, 31 students were below the target of 56, scoring in either the "some" or "high" risk categories. By Spring there will be an average increase of at least 34 words correct (1 word per week) for students that scored in the "some" or "high" risk categories in the Fall.

Result - Met
- The 31 scholars that were below target in the fall increased their number of words read correctly by 45.2 words

Third Grade:
- In the Fall of third grade, the target for CBM-Reading is 87 words read correctly in 1 minute. In the Fall of 2022, 26 students were below the target of 87, scoring in either the "some" or "high" risk categories. By Spring there will be an average increase of at least 34 words correct per (1 word per week) for students that scored in the "some" or "high" risk categories in the Fall.

Result - Met
- The 26 scholars in the some or high risk category increased their number of words read correctly to 55.7 words.

3. Close the Achievement Gap(s) Between Student Groups

2020-2025 ASPEN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL GOALS

- **All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed. Each year, for each reading and math, the average number of progress points generated by school students based on changes in their achievement levels, for students identified in the FRP subgroup, will exceed two.**

Result– Partially Met
- In 2023, Aspen Academy generated 2.17 progress points for students in the FRP subgroup in the area of reading and 1.57 progress points in the area of math.

- **Each year, the School will demonstrate higher school-wide proficiency rates than the Prior Lake-Savage School District for reading, math, and science (for the same grades as offered by the school) for economic subgroups; and higher than the Shakopee school district for racial subgroups.**

*Result: **Partially met***   *Science*   *Reading*   *Math*
F/R Lunch   *Not Met* 27.6%/30.5%   Met 53.8%/42.5%   Met 44.2%/36.9%
(Aspen Academy / Prior Lake Savage)

Partially met – The proficiency rates that are in bold and highlighted indicate where Aspen Academy has higher proficiency rates for those subgroups in 2023.

	Reading		Math		Science	
Racial Subgroups	AA	Shakopee	AA	Shakopee	AA	Shakopee
Hispanic/Latino	**50%**	29.4%	**60%**	22.7%	NA	NA
American Indian/Alaska Native	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Asian	**78.9%**	57.4%	**73.7%**	49.9%	**78.6%**	34.9%
Black/African American	**47.8%**	42.9%	**37.3%**	28.2%	**33.3%**	16.4%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
White	61.6%	64.1%	**61.0%**	58.5%	**62.3%**	48.5%
Two or more races	**78.9%**	59.9%	**73.7%**	45.5%	NA	NA

*AA = Aspen Academy

For the 2022-2023 school year, Aspen Academy will close the special education gap in reading by 24% and math by 21% to be on track to close the achievement gap in four years.

Results - Did not meet

> 2020-2021: Reading: 35.6% proficiency gap
> Math: 29% proficiency gap
> 2021-2022: Reading 35.5% proficiency gap
> Math: 31.5% proficiency gap
> 2022-2023: Reading: 29.5% proficiency gap
> Math: 33.9% proficiency gap

4. All Students Career and College Ready by Graduation

2024-2025 ASPEN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL GOAL
&
BUILDING SITE GOAL 2022-2023

Each year, the School will administer a nationally-normed assessment in at least grades 4 and 8. For 4th grade students who remain in the School through 8th grade:

> ● If their 4th grade national percentile ranking was less than 70%, at least 50% of the students will increase their national percentile Ranking.

Result: Met - There are nineteen continuously enrolled (from 4th grade to 8th grade) scholars at Aspen Academy during the 2022-2023 school year.

Twelve scholars were below the 70th percentile in the area of reading as 4th graders. 50% of those students increased their national percentile ranking in

the area of reading based on their fall 2023 administration of the nationally normed assessment.

Nine scholars were below the 70th percentile in the area of math as 4th graders. 56% of those scholars increased their national percentile ranking in the area of math based on their Fall 2023 administration of the nationally normed assessment.