

# ***PRAIRIE CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOL***

*2015 Annual Report on Curriculum, Instruction and Student Achievement &  
World's Best Workforce Report*



**Minnesota Charter School District #4090**

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Prairie Creek Community School 2014 - 15 Charter School Annual Report and World's Best Workforce Report

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## **1. School Information**

This report provides the staff and families of Prairie Creek Community School (PCCS), the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), Northfield Public Schools, and the general public with information describing the progress of PCCS and its students during its thirteenth year of operation as a charter public school.

Prairie Creek Community School (PCCS) is a charter public school, founded in 1983, that offers progressive education for students in kindergarten through fifth grade. PCCS focuses on progressive education for all students. PCCS is a non-profit trust registered with the Minnesota Attorney General's Office.

### **Mission Statement**

- ***PCCS is a community school.*** Parents, teachers, staff, and students cooperate with one another and with others outside the school to create a joyful and challenging climate for learning.
- ***PCCS is a child-centered school.*** We help children discover the power and excitement of their minds, their feelings and bodies, their relationships, their art. We assure children of their value, encourage their accomplishments, and respect their individual learning styles. We value diversity.
- ***PCCS is a progressive school.*** We emphasize co-operation, promote self-reflection, support innovation, and value change. We share our philosophy and practice with others and learn from them.
- ***PCCS aims to make the world a better place.*** We value justice, gender-fairness, and conflict resolution. We educate children to live as responsive, responsible members of their own communities, now and in the future.

**Authorizer**

Northfield Public Schools  
Chris Richardson, Ph.D.  
507-663-0600

**Relationship with Authorizer**

PCCS opened in 2002

Contract was renewed in 2005 (05/06 to 07/08), 2008 (08/09 to 10/11), and in 2011 (11/12 through 15/16)

Each fall, the director sends a formal report to the Northfield Board of Education regarding the previous school year. The authorizer has been pleased with PCCS and the Board has been supportive of its goals. On May 11, 2015, Dr. Richardson spent a day reviewing the program and meeting with students, staff and parents.

**School Calendar & Hours of Operation**

The first day of school was September 2, 2014 and school ended on June 5, 2014. PCCS was open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 8:15 am to 2:30 pm and Wednesdays from 9:15 am to 2:30 pm.

**Student / Classroom Teacher Ratio**

PCCS employed nine classroom teachers to serve 181 students in grades K-5. The student/classroom teacher ratio in 2014-2015 averaged 20:1.

## **2. Student Enrollment**

Enrollment is expected to be at the targeted 180 students for the 15/16 school year.

	<b>10-11</b>	<b>11-12</b>	<b>12-13</b>	<b>13 -14</b>	<b>14 - 15</b>
Enrollment (K-5)	178	180	180	182	181
Average Daily Membership	179.15	178.39	178.71	181.05	180.95

### **Key Demographic Trends**

Enrollment and gender balance has been consistent since the school expansion in 2009 - 2010.

<b>PCCS Students</b>	<b>10-11</b>	<b>11-12</b>	<b>12-13</b>	<b>13 -14</b>	<b>14 - 15</b>
Enrollment (K-5)	178	180	180	182	181
Male	98 (55%)	84 (47%)	86 (48%)	92 (51%)	92 (51%)
Female	80 (45%)	96 (53%)	94 (52%)	90 (49%)	89 (49%)
American Indian	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Asian/Pac. Islander	8 (4%)	8 (4%)	10 (6%)	8 (4.4%)	8 (4.4%)
Black/Non-Hispanic	4 (2%)	2 (1%)	4 (2%)	3 (1.6%)	4 (2.2%)
Caucasian	162(91%)	165 (92%)	165 (92%)	166 (91.2%)	164 (90.6%)
Hispanic	4 (2%)	5 (3%)	1 (1%)	5 (2.7%)	5 (2.8%)
Students of Color	16 (9%)	15 (8%)	15 (8%)	16 (9%)	17 (9%)
Free and Reduced Lunch	41 (23%)	32 (18%)	25 (14%)	23 (12.6%)	26 (14.4%)
English Language Learners	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Special Education Status	20 (11%)	18 (10%)	24 (13%)	34 (18.7%)	31 (17.1%)

### **3. Student Attendance, Attrition and Mobility**

#### **Attendance**

Attendance percentage for 2015 was 96.3% and met AYP.  
(percentage from Minnesota Report Card on MDE website)

#### **Attrition**

Prairie Creek Community School has consistently low numbers of student attrition each year.

Percentage of students who are continuously enrolled between October 1 of 2014 and October 1 of 2015	96.7%
*five students left the program in this time period - three moved out of the area, two chose to transition to a different school	

#### **Student Mobility**

	10 - 11	11 - 12	12 - 13	13- 14	14 - 15
Mobility Index	0.01	0.05	0.05	0.02	N/A

## **4. 2014-2015 World's Best Workforce Report**

### Goals and Results

SMART Goal	2014-2015 Goals	2014-2015 Goal Results
All Students Ready for Kindergarten	<p>66% of children who come in knowing 12 or fewer letter names and sounds will learn letter names and sounds, and will be reading Fountas and Pinnell "A" books by the end of the year.</p> <p>66% of children who come in knowing 13 or more letter names and sounds will learn letter names and sounds, and will be reading Fountas and Pinnell "C" books by the end of the year.</p> <p>66% of children who come in reading Fountas and Pinnell "A" books or above will move forward at least 3 levels in the F &amp; P system.</p>	<p>82% of this group of students met the goal of reading "A" books by the end of the year.</p> <p>100% of students met the goal of reading "C" level books by the end of the year.</p> <p>100% of children progressed at least three levels.</p>
All Students in Third Grade Achieving Grade-Level Literacy	<p>75% of children who come in reading below Level M will progress at least 4 reading levels by the end of the school year.</p> <p>Those students entering 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading at Level M or above will progress 2 levels.</p>	<p>43% of students progressed at least four levels. (* Percentage breaks down from 3 of 7 students meeting goal)</p> <p>74% of students progressed at least two levels.</p>

<p>Close the Achievement Gap(s) Among All Groups</p>	<p>Prairie Creek will provide intervention literacy and math support for students at risk of not meeting grade level. Intervention teacher will support new goals in literacy targeting students at risk of not being successful in reading. Intervention teacher will use new NWEA MAP math pilot data to support sub-group students in math instruction.</p>	<p>Prairie Creek’s Reading / Math Intervention Teacher provided 20 hours per week instruction in reading/math</p> <p>Prairie Creek’s Focus Rating increased to 58.47% in 2015 from 50.04% in 2014.</p>
<p>All Students Career- and College-Ready by Graduation</p>	<p>Prairie Creek Community School is committed to a mission that focuses on child-centered learning in a progressive education program. Students are intentionally directed to develop the Habits of Mind that will support their success in college and career.</p> <p>This is accomplished by attending to the social and emotional as well as the academic progress of student in a multi-age environment that encourages creativity, the arts and an inquiry-based approach to learning.</p>	<p>Parent Satisfaction Survey 2014-2015.</p> <p>96% of respondents had a an average positive response of 3.0 (out of 4) or higher when surveyed on satisfaction levels with curriculum and learning.</p>
<p>All Students Graduate</p>	<p>As a K – 5 schools, we liaise closely with local traditional middle schools and charter schools. We ensure that</p>	<p>In 2014 – 2015 100% of fifth grade students completed an Honors Project. The honors project demand that students</p>



	students have a successful transition and enter those programs with the required social, emotional and academic skills	are equipped with the study skills that will be required for graduation from high school programs in their future.
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## Identified Needs Based on Data

### Reading

- Progress was measured in 2013-2014 utilizing Work Sampling and MCA goals. Work Sampling scores K – 5 indicated positive growth scores. The MCA growth data goal showed 87.7% of students attaining medium or high growth.
- School determined to set goals aligned to child-centered assessments. 2014-2015 reading goals were set by Fountas and Pinnell reading level measurements.
- Teacher involvement in goal-setting - K/1 and 2/3 teams set SMART goals
- Special Education and Intervention engagement in data review

### Math

- Progress was measured in 2013-2014 utilizing Work Sampling and MCA goals. Work Sampling scores K – 5 indicated positive growth scores. The MCA growth data showed 71.4% of students attaining medium or high growth –goal was 73%.
- School piloted NWEA MAP math in 2014-2015, supported by faculty professional development. The school stated a medium / high growth goal using MCA assessment data.
- The school hired an intervention teacher to support students at risk in math of not meeting grade level
- Teachers developed formative assessments to closely monitor and adjust to student progress through the year.
- The intervention teacher provided parent education and support.

## Systems, Strategies and Support Category

### Students

- Prairie Creek Community School utilizes a comprehensive range of assessments to monitor student progress in reading and math.
- Reading progress is assessed according to the school’s literacy plan.
- Faculty teams (K/1, 2/3 and 4/5) review data and create SMART goals for the year. Each team reviews data alongside the special education team and the director.

Sub-group data from MCA assessments (free/reduced lunch) is reviewed and the literacy / math teacher supports the teams in developing support and goal strategies.

- Literacy plan data is collected fall / spring and formative assessments continue throughout the year with a comprehensive progress report provided to families at the mid-year conference
- At risk students receive more frequent evaluations from the special education teachers and literacy / math intervention teacher to monitor progress.
- The NWEA Math MAP assessment was piloted in 2013 – 2014. The data was reviewed by teams of classroom teachers, special education teachers and the literacy / math intervention teacher. Students identified as being at risk of not being successful were provided with a mid-year assessment so that progress could be monitored and adjustments made to instructional strategies.

### **Teachers and Principals**

- The school director collaborated with the Assessment Coordinator from the authorizing district, Northfield Public Schools to review data and receive training on best practices for data-centered measurement of student progress
- A fall all-faculty work day centered on assessment strategies and review of the NWEA MAP math assessment tool.
- The director reports to the board on student progress each fall and provides a comprehensive review of the Annual Report which highlights accountability goals and student progress. The director is given an annual review each year by the board chair after a review of performance by board and faculty. Goals are then established for the following year.
- The faculty is evaluated according to the Teacher Evaluation Plan.
- Accountability goals are established each year in Reading and Math (see 2014 – 2015 goals above). Goals are developed in conjunction with the faculty/education program committee.
- Two non-academic goals are established each year. 2014-2105 non-academic goals centered on Authentic Assessment practices and Parent Education. The progress towards goals is monitored through staff meetings, weekly faculty professional development sessions and board meetings. Goal success is reviewed in the spring or when MCA data is released to schools.

### **District**

- Prairie Creek faculty engages in a weekly two-hour professional development. Teacher-led committees plan and structure professional development in all curricular areas. In 2014-2015 professional development committee work reviewed new literacy and math measurement tools.

- Faculty liaises with special education teachers and literacy/math intervention teacher to monitor student progress.
- Professional Development also centered on a review of non-academic goals with a literature review of best practices for authentic assessment.
- Special Education team participation in these professional development committees ensures that the progress of student in this category is supported according to best practices of an inclusion model.
- Prairie Creek purchased ten Chromebooks. These support student access to Khan Academy, utilized to provide additional math instruction in foundational skills. The Chromebooks also provide technology to support the administration of the new Math MAP assessments.
- K/1, 2/3 and 4/5 teams meet weekly to review literacy and math instruction.
- A whole faculty professional development initiative focused on Number Talks and Lesson Study. This cycle of lesson design and review was developed in partnership with a math expert from the St. Olaf math department.

## 5. Academic Performance

### Progress on PCCS Contractual Academic Goals including Mission Related goals.

PCCS developed two academic and two non-academic goals for the 2014-2015 school year.

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Explanation of Results</b>
<p><b><u>Math Growth</u></b></p> <p>The number of PCCS students in grades 4 and 5 attaining “medium” or “high” levels of growth in math will meet or exceed 74%</p> <p>(State average in 13 – 14 was 73.90%)</p>	<p>88.1% of PCCS students in grades 4 and 5 attained “medium” or “high” levels of growth in math.</p>	
<p><b><u>Reading Growth</u></b></p> <p><b>Kindergarten</b></p> <p>66% of children who come in knowing 12 or fewer letter names and sounds will learn letter names and sounds, and will be reading Fountas and Pinnell "A" books by the end of the year.</p> <p>66% of children who come in knowing 13 or more letter names and sounds will learn letter names and sounds, and will be reading Fountas and Pinnell "C" books by the end of the year.</p> <p>66% of children who come in reading Fountas and Pinnell "A" books or above will move forward at least 3 levels in the F &amp; P system.</p>	<p><b>Kindergarten</b></p> <p>82% of this group of students met the goal of reading “A” books by the end of the year.</p> <p>100% of students met the goal of reading “C” level books by the end of the year.</p> <p>100% of children progressed at least three levels.</p>	<p><b>Rationale for K-3 Growth Goals</b></p> <p>Prairie Creek Community School believes in nurturing and supporting young readers thoughtfully through the early stages of learning to read. Too much pressure from adults early in the process can have detrimental effects on a child’s intrinsic motivation to read. We believe in carefully assessing the skills of each child at the beginning of the year, and then guiding that child forward. Based on these beliefs, we are setting growth goals for our K-3 students for the year.</p>

<p><b>First Grade</b></p> <p>66% of children will move forward at least four reading levels in the Fountas and Pinnell system.</p> <p><b>Second Grade</b></p> <p>75% of children who come in reading below Level I will progress at least 4 reading levels by the end of the school year. Those students entering 2<sup>nd</sup> grade at or above Level I will progress 3 levels.</p> <p><b>Third Grade</b></p> <p>75% of children who come in reading below Level M will progress at least 4 reading levels by the end of the school year. Those students entering 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading at Level M or above will progress 2 levels.</p> <p><b>Fourth and Fifth Grade</b></p> <p>The number of PCCS students in grades 4 and 5 attaining “medium” or “high” levels of growth will meet or exceed 73%  (State average in 13 – 14 was 72.1%)</p>	<p><b>First Grade</b></p> <p>70% of children progressed at least four reading levels..</p> <p><b>Second Grade</b></p> <p>73% of children progressed at least four reading levels.  74% of children progressed at least three reading levels.</p> <p><b>Third Grade</b></p> <p>43% of students progressed at least four levels.  74% of students progressed at least two levels.</p> <p>83.1% of students in grades 4 and 5 attained “medium” or “high” levels of growth in reading.</p>	<p>*Second and Third Grade team teachers observed that a number of children coming into grade reading either at or above grade level did not meet the goal. This was in due in part to the high-level comprehension elements in the Fountas-Pinnell assessment.</p> <p>The team will consider either changing the goal to a more realistic target, or consider a different assessment tool for higher level readers such as the QRI.</p>
<p><b>Parent Education</b></p> <p>Prairie Creek will create opportunities for parents to learn from teachers and experts about progressive education, parenting skills and emotional intelligence.</p>	<p>Prairie Creek hosted five parent education evenings. Topics covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Progressive Education in the classroom (Curriculum night)</li> </ul>	

<p>Five parent education evenings will be hosted by teachers and guest speakers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Thematic Learning</li> <li>● Math</li> <li>● Supporting Sibling Success</li> <li>● Children and Friendships</li> </ul>	
<p><b><u>Assessment</u></b></p> <p>Review assessment practices and goals in PCCS’ progressive learning environment.</p> <p>Broaden the understanding within parent community of what authentic “assessment” means.</p>	<p>Strategic discussions with board/faculty and community during strategic planning process</p> <p>Director overview presentation to school board on accountability assessments and progressive education assessments</p> <p>Piloting of MAP Math Assessments</p> <p>Review of literacy growth goals and implementation of new practice utilizing Fountas / Pinnell assessments in grades K - 3</p> <p>Development of strategic action plan to educate parent community regarding authentic assessment in 2015-2016.</p>	

Reading and Math Growth

MDE Report Card Data:

<b>MATH</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Percent of students “On Track for Success” The percentage of on track students are those who made medium or high growth and non-proficient students who made high growth.	52.8%	53.6%	67.8%
Percent of students making high growth	22.6%	19.6%	28.8%
Percent of students making medium growth	49.1%	51.8%	59.3%
Percent of students making low growth	28.3%	28.6%	11.9%

<b>READING</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Percent of students “On Track for Success” The percentage of on track students are those who made medium or high growth and non-proficient students who made high growth.	69.8%	73.7%	71.1%
Percent of students making high growth	37.7%	54.4%	45.8%
Percent of students making medium growth	35.3%	33.3%	37.3%
Percent of students making low growth	17%	12.3%	16.9%

**Comparison Growth Data with State and local traditional school (Sibley Elementary)**

<b>MCA Assessments - Medium or High Growth</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>
<b>PCCS</b>			
<b>Reading</b>	83.00%	87.70%	83.10%
<b>Math</b>	71.70%	71.40%	88.10%
<b>Sibley Elementary (Northfield School District)</b>			
<b>Reading</b>	79.9%	72.10%	83.20%
<b>Math</b>	76.3%	79.40%	80.40%

<b>State of Minnesota</b>			
<b>Reading</b>	72.10%	72.10%	73.70%
<b>Math</b>	72.60%	73.90%	74.00%

Proficiency Results in Reading, Math, and Science

For comparison purposes, the data tables below show proficiency percentages from statewide data and three other schools. New Discoveries Montessori School (NDMA) is a charter school in Hutchinson. It is similar in size to PCCS and has similar demographics. NDMA has a comparable progressive education mission fostering inquiry, exploration and the nurturing of a life-long learner. North Shore Community School is charter school in Duluth that serves children in Pre-K - Grade 6 and focuses on developing the lifelong learner with an emphasis on environmental education. Sibley Elementary is a traditional elementary school in the Northfield School district that serves as Prairie Creek’s authorizer.

<b>Proficiency Index Math</b>	<b>Prairie Creek</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>New Discoveries Montessori</b>	<b>North Shore Community</b>	<b>Sibley Elementary</b>
<b>2015</b>	66.7%	61.6%	50.0%	66.3%	76.8%
<b>2014</b>	53.8%	61.9%	47.6%	63.4%	74.7%
<b>2013</b>	62.5%	61.6%	33.3%	62.9%	78.1%

<b>Proficiency Index Reading</b>	<b>Prairie Creek</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>New Discoveries Montessori</b>	<b>North Shore Community</b>	<b>Sibley Elementary</b>
<b>2015</b>	70.0%	60.6%	65.9%	69.7%	76.8%
<b>2014</b>	63.7%	59.8%	62.2%	61.1%	71.2%
<b>2013</b>	65.5%	58.75	43.3%	61.4%	70.2%



<b>Proficiency Rates Science</b>	<b>Prairie Creek</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>New Discoveries Montessori</b>	<b>North Shore Community</b>	<b>Sibley Elementary</b>
<b>2015</b>	80.6%	60.2%	43.5%	70.5%	73.9%
<b>2014</b>	63.3%	54.5%	47.8%	68.3%	73.9%
<b>2013</b>	71.4%	53.4%	42.9%	69.6%	78.1%

Recent years have seen multiple changes to the MCA assessments. Several factors need to be considered during the comparison of standardized test score data. Prairie Creek Community School continues to be mindful of the fact that small cell size will likely result in significant swings in proficiency ratings from year to year. Consequently, the school has developed growth model goals for students in fourth and fifth grades that measure proficiency ratings for continuously enrolled students.

Multiple Measures Rating

<b>Multiple Measurements Rating (MMR) is 56.12%</b>	
<b>Proficiency</b>	<b>7.73 points</b>
Weighted percentage of subgroups reaching targets	30.9%%
<b>Growth</b>	<b>17.63 points</b>
Average Growth Z-Score	0.2355
<b>Achievement Gap Reduction</b>	<b>16.73 points</b>
Achievement Gap Reduction Score	-0.0670
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>42.09 points</b>
Possible points	75 points

<b>Focus Rating (FR) is 58.47%</b>	
<b>Achievement Gap Reduction</b>	<b>16.73 points</b>
Achievement Gap Reduction Score	-0.0670
<b>Focused Proficiency</b>	<b>12.50 points</b>
Weighted percentage of subgroups reaching targets	50%
<b>TOTAL POINTS (across two years)</b>	<b>29.23 points</b>
Possible points	50 points

## 6. Innovative Practices & Implementation

Prairie Creek's progressive philosophy aligns closely with current research and best practices for developing 21st century skills. The school is a multi-age, active learning environment that fosters creativity, critical thinking, and a passion for learning. The school places a strong emphasis on the value of play, the dramatic arts and the development of social and emotional intelligence.

The academic program is centered on a philosophy, rooted in the teaching of John Dewey and other progressive educators, that holds that children will construct an understanding of the world from genuine experiences. Consequently, children engage in thematic study and individual projects throughout the school year. Teachers tailor this study to the children's developmental stages as they progress through the K - 5 program. Inter-disciplinary study is aligned to standards through an annual review by teacher professional development committees. Comprehensive literacy and math plans support this work and ensure continuity and opportunity for reading, writing and numeracy to also connect in authentic ways with other subject areas. Prairie Creek has a strong commitment to the arts, and specialists teach all children in the fields of visual art, music and Spanish. A team of teaching assistants provides an additional level of child-centered support in each classroom.

The general education program is supported by a team of three licensed special education teachers and paraprofessionals that serve Individual Education Program Plan needs. A licensed math/literacy intervention teacher works with children in the K - 2 grades who require additional literacy and math support in the general education setting.

Prairie Creek is committed to a robust model of teacher evaluation. All teachers are supervised and evaluated by the school director each year. The school piloted a teacher evaluation plan in 2014 - 2015 that meets World's Best Workforce Requirements.

### **Student Evaluation**

Prairie Creek Community School is structured around a small, multi-age classroom model to provide a child-centered learning environment. Academic and non-academic goals are established for each child at a fall parent/student/teacher conference. Beyond state accountability measured detailed in this report, progress is monitored through formative assessments in math and literacy and a variety of measures including work samples, portfolios, reports, projects and performance in thematic study areas. Narrative reports that detail student progress are provided to families at the winter and spring conferences.

## **Professional Development**

Student learning is designed by teachers in an innovative community of professional collaboration. Teachers team in professional development committees that review standards and best practices across the curricular areas. These committees meet and plan the weekly two hour professional development sessions for faculty. In addition, the teaching staff participates in two days of professional development at the end of the year for reflection on the year's work and goal setting focused on the mission and purpose of the school. The staff also participates in four days of workshops prior to the start of the school year. The faculty functions as an authentic learning community with teacher leadership employed to develop workshops related to academic and non-academic goals.

During the 2014-2015 school year, the faculty participated in a professional development committee process. Each committee has three classroom teachers, with the director, the special education teachers and the specialists joining as interest and time allow. During a meeting in September, the teachers took the entire list of professional development goal areas and topics that had been determined during faculty retreat in June and work week in August and divided them out among the three committees. They set aside one Wednesday meeting per month for committees to meet. During these meetings, the committees planned upcoming professional development and school events. The committee assigned a particular topic was responsible for leading the Wednesday meeting(s) on that topic or finding a speaker or facilitator to lead. Each committee planned to facilitate about one meeting per month. Committees prioritized the list of tasks to reflect their relative importance.

Weekly professional development meetings included all teaching staff. Some teachers also participated in specialized professional development outside of the regular weekly session.

### **Committee-led Professional Development in 2014 - 2015**

Committee 1 Curricular area of focus: Literacy and the Arts

- Review of standards: Literacy
- Children's books that address social curriculum themes
- Taking care of the whole teacher
- Arts: weaving poetry and literacy into art
- Literacy assessment

Committee 2 Curricular area of focus: Math

- Review of standards: math
- Math Assessment

- Number talks
- Lesson Study
- Computer science/coding

Committee 3 Curricular area of focus: Social Studies

- Review of standards: social studies
- Theme database
- STEM stations

Additional Faculty Professional Development and Training Activities

- Strategic Planning Session with Board
- Progressive Education Institute Review
- Student portfolio review
- Neuroeducation Presentation by St. Olaf staff and students
- Bullying Prevention training

**Community Connections**

Prairie Creek is a community school and is well supported by a vibrant Community Connections team that creates opportunities for parents and families to deepen their relationship with the school. In 2014 - 2015, activities included a series of parent education evenings on school and family related topics, social events such as a carnival, movie nights and family field trips. This group was also proactive in and organizing parent support for the management of key school events..

**Arts Initiatives**

Progressive education requires a strong commitment to the arts. Prairie Creek provides music and visual arts specialist instruction for all students. The school now has a school orchestra serving children in fourth and fifth grade that has become an established part of our program. Prairie Creek continued its rich tradition of arts' residency programming with a month long collaboration with the Heart of the Beast Theater company. In 2014-2015 an arts' committee comprising of teachers and community members was established to provide guidance and planning for a three year cycle of residency experiences for the children.

## 7. Student and Parent Satisfaction

Each spring, PCCS distributes a parent engagement and satisfaction survey to parents/guardians of PCCS students. The survey was designed to measure four domains of parent satisfaction: (a) Community and Climate (5 questions); (b) Curriculum and Learning (9 questions); (c) Faculty and Staff (7 questions); and (d) Governance and Administration (4 questions). Questions in the four domains were close-ended with four response options (4 = Strongly Agree; 3 = Agree; 2 = Disagree; 1 = Strongly Disagree). A fifth domain (Progressive Education) was an open-ended question and parents were asked to identify ways that “PCCS is staying true to its mission as a progressive school.” The last section of the survey consisted of demographic questions (e.g., city of residence, volunteering) and was a mix of close-ended (yes/no, multiple choice) and open-ended questions. Of the 138 total families at PCCS, there were 87 completed surveys for a response rate of 63%.

The results of the survey were very positive.

- There was an overall positive response in all four domains: Community and Climate (98%), Curriculum and Learning (96%), Faculty and Staff (97%), and Governance and Administration (95%).
- Average ratings across the four survey domains of the Parent Satisfaction Survey were also very positive. On average, parent ratings were between 3 (“Agree”) and 4 (“Strongly Agree”) for Community and Climate (3.72), Curriculum and Learning (3.57), Faculty and Staff (3.74), and Governance and Administration (3.61). Averages were very similar to previous survey administrations.
- Parents overwhelmingly agreed that PCCS effectively implements a progressive education approach with students.
- The largest proportions of parents indicated they volunteered at PCCS between 1-5 hours (48.3%), less than an hour (33%), or 6-10 hours (10%) per month and the most commonly reported ways they volunteered included: in the classroom, serving lunch, assisting with events, and assisting/chaperoning field trips. The number of parents who reported volunteering less than 1 hour a month increased by 3% from last year. Our Community Connections group has created a comprehensive booklet that shares ways to volunteer at Prairie Creek so that more families can find a way to contribute that fits into their schedule. They have also updated the website and expanded the use of Sign Up Genius so that families can easily find the opportunities available.
- Of the respondents, 94.2% indicated they attend parent events at PCCS and the most commonly reported events attended were concerts, classroom events, May Day, and curriculum night. 100% of parents attended all of their child’s conferences, held three times throughout the year.

The table below displays the proportion of parents averaging positive responses across the four domains. The large majority felt positively in all four domains. Notably, the percentage of positive responses for Curriculum and Learning increased by 4% over last year’s survey.

**Proportion of Parents Averaging Positive Responses across Domains**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Proportion of Parents with an Average Positive Response (3.0 or higher)</b>
Community and Climate	98%
Curriculum and Learning	96%
Faculty and Staff	97%
Governance and Administration	95%

The table below shows the average score for the four survey domains. As can be seen in the table, the average rating for all four domains fell between the “Agree” (a rating of 3) and “Strongly Agree” (a rating of 4) response options.

**Average Response on Parental Engagement and Satisfaction Survey over Time**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>
Community and Climate	3.62	3.67	3.66	3.75	3.72
Curriculum and Learning	3.51	3.44	3.47	3.46	3.57
Faculty and Staff	3.70	3.69	3.69	3.65	3.74
Governance and Administration	3.38	3.52	3.52	3.56	3.61

Statements with the highest proportion of “**Strongly Agree**” and “**Agree**” responses on the Parent Satisfaction Survey were:

- *“I am provided with opportunities to be involved in the life of the school.” (100%)*
- *“My child is happy at Prairie Creek.” (100%)*

- *“PCCS provides a safe and secure environment for children.” (100%)*
- *“The social curriculum at PCCS is supported in my child’s classroom.” (100%)*
- *“My child is growing in his/her ability to solve conflicts with others.” (100%)*
- *“My child is known by his/her teacher.” (99.1%)*
- *“At PCCS, my child has many opportunities to make connections with children in other grades.” (99.1%)*
- *“My child is learning to research topics of interest, develop and present his/her learning.” (99.1%)*
- *“The school encourages my child to pursue areas of personal interest in daily learning.” (99.1%)*
- *“I feel well informed about what is going on at PCCS” (98.9%)*
- *“The director is responsive to parent concerns.” (98.8%)*
- *“The office staff are welcoming and helpful.” (98.8%)*
- *“Communication with parents from the director is informative.” (98.8%)*

These are all of the questions for which there were no negative responses or a single negative response (the varying percentages reflect different total numbers of respondents).

Statements with the largest proportion of **“Disagree”** and **“Strongly Disagree”** responses were:

- *“I am satisfied with the foreign language experiences my child has at PCCS.” (17% weren’t satisfied) (13% in 2013-2014)(17% in 2012-2013) (32.2% in 2010-2011)*
- *“I am satisfied with my child’s progress in becoming a competent and confident mathematician.”(13.4% weren’t satisfied) (18% weren’t satisfied in 2013-2014)(10.5% in 2012-2013) (12.6% in 2011-2013)*
- *“I feel informed about the work of the Board.” (12.9% didn’t feel informed) (18.8% in 2013-2014)(21.6% in 2012-2013)(18% in 2011-2012)*

In all other areas, over 90% of parents were satisfied. In two of the three areas, growth was made from the previous year. We were surprised by the shift in foreign language experiences. We shifted the program to involve more kinesthetic learning and it may be an opportunity for greater communication and parent education. Communicating the work of the board has been a focus for several years and it appears that the effort is beginning to pay off. Please note that for the statements that had the largest proportions of Disagree and Strongly Disagree, the majority of parents still responded positively to the items.



## **8. Staffing**

Prairie Creek Community School employs highly qualified staff throughout its program. In support of the school's child-centered mission, teachers oversee class sizes that are rarely greater than 20 students. Additionally, the school commits to providing additional classroom staffing support with five general education teaching assistants. These teaching assistants provide morning support in the three K/1 classes with scheduled support in the 2/3 and 4/5 grade teams as well. Targeted support is provided by a team of Special Education teachers and paraprofessionals as well as a Title 1/literacy and math intervention teacher. Specialist classes are provided by part-time licensed Visual Arts, Music and Spanish teachers.

### **Licensed teacher percentage turnover rate:**

Eight of the nine licensed classroom teachers, three Special Education teachers, three specialist teachers (visual arts, music and Spanish) are returning for the 2015-16 school year.

### **2014-15 Licensed Teaching Staff**

<b>Name</b>	<b>File #</b>	<b>License / Agreement</b>	<b>2015-16 Status</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Susan Kesselring	249667	K/1	NR	
Jeanne Avery	435291	K/1	R	
Amy Brown	398391	K/1	R	
Molly McGovern Willis	427419	2/3	R	
Nancy Dennis	394260	2/3	R	
Amy Haslett - Marroquin	374525	2/3	R	
Michelle Martin	406690	4/5	R	
Cathy Oehmke	421554	4/5	R	
Gabriel Meerts	462802	4/5	R	
Angie Ekern	397282	Visual Arts Teacher	R	

Olivia Krueger	471728	Music and Orchestra Teacher	R	
Jennifer Sanders	482424	Spanish	R	
Laura Medwetz	369425	Special Education Teacher	R	
Kelsey Fitschen	450336	Special Education Teacher	R	
Michelle Bigalke	180100	Special Education Teacher	R	
Amy Narveson	385212	Literacy / Math Intervention	R	Returning as K/1 teacher

\* R = Return, NR = Not Return

### 2015-16 Licensed Staff

Name	File #	License / Agreement	Comments
Jeanne Avery	435291	K/1	
Amy Brown	398391	K/1	
Amy Narveson	385212	K/1	
Molly McGovern Willis	427419	2/3	
Nancy Dennis	394260	2/3	
Amy Haslett - Marroquin	374525	2/3	
Michelle Martin	406690	4/5	
Cathy Oehmke	421554	4/5	
Gabriel Meerts	462802	4/5	
Angie Ekern	397282	Visual Arts Teacher	
Olivia Krueger	471728	Music and Orchestra Teacher	

Jennifer Sanders	482424	Spanish	Community Expert Status
Laura Medwetz	369425	Special Education Teacher	
Kelsey Fitschen	450336	Special Education Teacher	
Michelle Bigalke	180100	Special Education Teacher	
Lisa Molitor	291729	Math/Literacy Intervention Teacher	

**Licensed teacher percentage turnover rate:**

2014-15 to 2015-16: (non-returning teachers / total teachers x 100) = 0%

**Licensed teacher percentage turnover trend data:**

	10-11 to 11-12	11-12 to 12-13	12-13 to 13-14	13-14 to 14-15
Percentage	14%	13%	0%	0%

**2014-15 Non-licensed staff**

Name	Assignment	15-16 Status	Comments
Ona Sheets	Business Manager	R	
Colleen Braucher	Administrative Assistant	R	
Theresa Nemec	Office Assistant	R	
Olivia Krueger	Teaching Assistant	R	
David Pennock	Teaching Assistant	R	
Anna Racer	Teaching Assistant	R	
Hannah Feltzer	Teaching Assistant	NR	
Natalie Ojala	Special Education Paraprofessional	R	
Lisa Molitor	Special Education Paraprofessional	R	Math/Literacy Intervention

Nikki Teske	Special Education Paraprofessional	R	
Sarah Forsgren	Special Education Paraprofessional	NR	Moved out of state
Cale Steinhoff	Special Education Paraprofessional	R	
Scott Abdella	Special Education Paraprofessional	R	
Connie Menssen	School Nurse	R	

### 2015-16 Non-licensed Staff

Name	Assignment	Comments
Ona Sheets	Business Manager	
Colleen Braucher	Administrative Assistant	
Theresa Nemecek	Office Assistant	
Olivia Krueger	Teaching Assistant	
David Pennock	Teaching Assistant	
Anna Racer	Teaching Assistant	
Jennifer Sanders	Teaching Assistant	
Natalie Ojala	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Nikki Teske	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Cale Steinhoff	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Scott Abdella	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Alex Gerdes	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Connie Menssen	School Nurse	
Christa Udelhofen	Library	

## **9. Governance and Management**

### **Board of Directors**

The membership of the Board is composed of parents and/or guardians of currently enrolled PCCS students, staff members and community members. The nine members of the 2014-2015 board all completed the three required training modules in the areas of employment law, governance and finance.

The School Board consists of nine members. The director and Chief Financial Officer serve as nonvoting members. Terms of the members run from July 1 to June 30.

There were nine voting members of the PCCS Board for the 2014-2015 school year. Specific information for each Board member can be found in Table 14 below. Overall, Board members had an average attendance rate of 80.5%.

Agendas, meeting minutes, policies, budgets and audited statements are posted on the website: [www.prairiecreek.org](http://www.prairiecreek.org)

### **Board Members 2014-2015**

<b>Member Name</b>	<b>Board Position</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Term End Date</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
Roz Eaton-Neeb	Chair	Parent	6/30/2017	reatonneeb-board@prairiecreek.org
Kelsey Fitschen	Secretary	Teacher	6/30/2016	kfitschen@prairiecreek.org
Ben Miller	Treasurer	Parent	6/30/2015	bmiller-board@prairiecreek.org
Bonnie Jean Flom	Vice-Chair	Community Member	6/30/2015	bjflom-board@prairiecreek.org
Randy Clay	Member	Parent	6/30/2015	rclay-board@prairiecreek.org
Amy Gernon	Member	Parent	6/30/2017	aedwardgernon-board@prairiecreek.org
Julie Cohrs	Member	Parent	6/30/2016	jcohrs-board@prairiecreek.org
Amy Haslett-Marroquin	Member	Teacher	6/30/2015	ahaslett@prairiecreek.org
Dan Rustad	Member	Parent	6/30/2017	drustad-board@prairiecreek.org

### **Board Training Record**

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Governance</b>	<b>Financial</b>	<b>Employment</b>
Randy Clay	8/16/11	8/9/11	8/24/11
Roz Eaton-Neeb	8/16/11	8/9/11	8/24/11
Julie Cohrs	11/14/13	11/19/13	1/30/14
Bonnie Jean Flom	1/8/11	8/9/11	12/17/10
Kelsey Fitschen	9/15/12	9/15/12	9/15/12
Amy Gernon	4/16/15	4/20/15	5/14/15
Dan Rustad	1/22/15	2/23/15	2/5/15
Amy Haslett-Marroquin	11/14/13	12/5/13	8/26/14
Ben Miller	3/14/14	3/12 /14 - 3/24/14	6/11/14

### **Director Professional Development Plan**

Prairie Creek Community School's director, Simon Tyler completed his fourth year as director in 2014-2015. He has a Principal Licensure: File Folder # 367631

## **10. Finances**

As a charter school, we are responsible for the education of children and for having a clear knowledge of business and fiscal responsibilities. Ona Sheets is the Business Manager/Human Resources Coordinator and Keith Johnson is the Chief Financial Officer. The Prairie Creek School Board and Finance Committee meet on the 4th Thursday of each month and the school's financial information is carefully reviewed and discussed at each meeting.

Prairie Creek has slowly built a fund balance reserve, finishing FY15 with a fund balance of \$609,035 (33.7% of annual expenditures) which has kept the school fiscally sound and prepared to weather any unforeseen events. The audited Financial Statements for the year ending June 30, 2015 show General Fund total revenue at \$1,828,673 and General Fund total expenses in the amount of \$1,812,869 resulting in a Net Income of \$15,804.

CliftonLarsonAllen, an independent auditor, has conducted PCCS's financial analysis. PCCS will submit audited financial statements to Northfield Public Schools and the Minnesota Department of Education on or before December 31, 2015.

## **11. Future Plans**

### **Strategic Planning**

In 2014-2015 the Prairie Creek board and community conducted strategic planning process. This process was designed to both reflect back on the school's thirty year history as a progressive school, and also look forward to assess opportunities for growth and development as a program. Community input was critical in this process. A parent survey was administered, followed by a community "World Cafe" conversation evening to receive parent ideas and input. The board and faculty collaborated to develop a strategic plan which was reviewed and approved in the spring of 2015.

### **Strategic Plan Summary**

#### **1. Enhance our Progressive Education Program**

Our school continues to breathe the philosophy and practice of progressive education as determined by our founding families. By sustaining our initial values, Prairie Creek Community School will continue to provide leadership in the area of progressive education and examples of best practices for child centered learning. We will showcase student growth with relentless attention to the developmental needs of each learner. We will continue to attend to the individual and social growth of each child as we enhance our educational program. Thoughtfulness and care will be taken as we integrate technology and innovation within our educational program. Through shared experience and intentional program development, our school will fulfill its mission to make the world a better place.

#### **2. Outreach**

Prairie Creek Community School has been a local leader in progressive education for over 30 years. We have a rich tradition and a vibrant present that we will share with our school community, our region, and the broader progressive education movement. Prairie Creek will continue to examine, celebrate and reflect upon the school's core values and develop a coherent voice when articulating our philosophy. We will systematically communicate our mission and purpose to a diverse audience. We will establish partnerships with educators to deepen our own understanding of progressive education and best practices in the teaching of children.

#### **3. Community Engagement and Program Sustainability**

As a public progressive community school we are committed to providing a well- resourced child-centered environment that recognizes the importance of small class size. Prairie Creek Community School supports and develops progressive educators, invests in their continuing professional development, and creates an inspiring work environment. Prairie Creek Community School seeks the community's engagement in volunteer service and fundraising initiatives. The School Board will guide fundraising strategies that will be implemented within the context of responsible, multi-year budget projections.



### **Strategic Action Plan**

In 2015 - 2016 Prairie Creek board and faculty will create a comprehensive strategic action plan that complements the above statements. This will be shared with the broader school community and the progress towards strategic goals will be reviewed at board meetings.

### **Authentic Assessment**

Professional development centered on a process of reflecting and evaluating assessment systems at Prairie Creek. This work will continue in 2015 - 2016 with academic and non-academic goals aligned to authentic assessments that meet both the requirements of accountability and World's Best Workforce Force mandates as well as the progressive education focus on our school mission.

### **Teacher Evaluation Plan**

Prairie Creek will review the school's teacher evaluation plan in 2015-2016. Faculty evaluation is conducted according to a plan that was developed to align with statutory requirements. Faculty will review systems for peer coaching, measurement of student and engagement. A guide to the characteristics of an effective progressive educator will be developed and integrated into the supervision and review process.

### **Contract Renewal**

In 2015 - 2016 Prairie Creek Community School will seek to renew its contract with authorizer Northfield Public Schools.

The school will work with the authorizer on an agreed timeline and process that will include a Self-Study review and an evaluation report conducted by a team of education experts.