# INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #624

# SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION PACKET

April 27, 2026

Independent School District No. 624

# MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the White Bear Lake Area School District, the community at the forefront of educational excellence, honoring our legacy and courageously building the future, is to ensure each student realizes their unique talents and abilities, and makes meaningful contributions with local and global impact through a vital system distinguished by:

- *Students who design and create their own future*
- *A culture that respects diverse people and ideas*
- *Safe, nurturing and inspiring experiences*
- *Exceptional staff and families committed to student success*
- *Abundant and engaged community partners*

*Approved by White Bear Lake Area School Board on December 9, 2019*

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 624**
**WHITE BEAR LAKE, MN 55110**

To: Members of the School Board

From: Dr. Wayne A. Kazmierczak
Superintendent of Schools

Date: April 22, 2026

A work session of the White Bear Lake Area School Board will be held on **Monday, April 27, 2026**, at 5:30 p.m. in Room 200 at the District Service Center at Sunrise Park, 2399 Cedar Avenue, White Bear Lake, MN.

## WORK SESSION AGENDA

**A. PROCEDURAL ITEMS**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call

**B. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

1. Central Middle School Update
2. Otter Lake Elementary Update
3. High School Winter and Spring Activities Update
4. Elementary Multi-age Update

**C. ADJOURNMENT**

| | |
|---|---|
| AGENDA ITEM: | **Central Middle School Update** |
| MEETING DATE: | **April 27, 2026** |
| SUGGESTED DISPOSITION: | **Discussion Item** |
| CONTACT PERSON(S): | **Dr. Alison Gillespie, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning** |

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**BACKGROUND:**

Dr. Alison Gillespie, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, and Cathryn Peterson, Principal of Central Middle School will give an update on Central Middle School.




# Central Middle School

*The Middle School Experience*

**PRESENTERS**

Cathryn Peterson, Principal
Lonal Van, Associate Principal

WB 624

# What I know to be true

Because we have all attended school, we bring long-held beliefs about middle school shaped by our own experiences and memories.

However, truly understanding and supporting middle school students is more complex than those experiences alone.

Middle school is a time of rapid change and growth, as students learn to balance new privileges and responsibilities while becoming more independent.

Today, we will give you a glimpse into the complexity of the work we do at Central Middle School to build a community aligned with our mission.

GO BEARS

# Our Mission

The mission of Central Middle School, a diverse and inviting community, is to inspire scholars to reach their full potential through a responsive system distinguished by:

- An equitable, safe, and supportive learning environment
- A culture of open-mindedness, integrity, empathy, and respect
- Authentic relationships that cultivate student agency and joy in learning
- Strong partnerships with families and community.

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# The Middle School Student



Design Your Future




Create Your Success



# Misconceptions

Middle school students are mean, rude, and defiant

Middle school students are emotional and “hormonal”

Middle school students only care about friends and peer influences

Middle school students can’t think critically about complex topics and ideas

Middle school grades “don’t matter”

GO BEARS

# Truths

Middle school student brains are in a period of rapid growth and change

Middle school students struggle with executive functioning

Middle school students care deeply about fairness and justice

Middle school students push boundaries and take risks as they learn independence

Middle school students are self conscious and feel like “everyone” is watching them

Middle school students want adult connection

Middle school students are not “mini adults”

# Teacher Collective Efficacy



# Our Commitment and Focus

**Teacher collective efficacy:** the belief that teachers, working together, can positively impact student performance.

- **Purpose for Learning:** connected to grade level standards and students can explain why the learning is important.
- **Quality of Questioning:** teacher and students ask questions to deepen understanding, uncover misconceptions, and to clarify and assess understanding.
- **Student Status:** positive relationships that foster students' well-being and develop their identity as learners. All are valued for their contributions Teacher creates opportunities for student status to be elevated.

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# Making it Visible



Design Your Future




Create Your Success



# Teacher Actions and Impact

**Increased Student Voice and Agency:** led to increased buy-in, deeper discussions, critical thinking, and improved retention and engagement.

**Improved Questioning:** resulted in students extending their thinking, having conversations with each other, and building off one another's responses.

**Deepened Student Connections and Care:** resulted in increased student engagement and sense of belonging.

**Self Assessment and  Reflection:** enabled students to better own their learning and track their progress.

**Specific Skill Development:** Other areas of improvement included advocating for students' needs, leading to increased independence; offering student choice and movement; improving patience and problem-solving skills; and better using the science of reading with middle schoolers.

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# Teacher Pride

**Student Growth and Achievement:** Educators are most proud of student achievement and growth, including progress in math and a smooth transition to a new, standards-aligned ELA curriculum.

**Collaboration and Peer Support:** Teachers highlight students' collaborative work and peer support, noting that students are starting to lead conversations, helping each other deepen their learning, and encouraging each other's success.

**Positive Classroom Environment and Relationships:** Strong connections with students, staff, and families are a major source of pride, including safe and positive classroom environments and a focus on celebrating student growth.

# Student and Family Voice



# Student Voice

**Supportive Environment and Learning:** Students report teachers care, help, encourage, provide support, and take bullying seriously.

**Instructional Methods:** Students prefer fun games for learning (Gimkit, Blooket, Quizlet), hands-on projects, and group work/partner choice.

**Bear Time:** Students enjoy choice day activities such as grade level tournaments, gym time, and homework/study time.

**Schedule and Passing Time:** Students appreciate the 5-minute passing time and the warning bell to help them manage their time.

**Clubs and Activities:** Students want us to continue to offer a wide variety of clubs, after-school activities, and fun events like assemblies, after school parties, and the snack bar.

# Family Voice: What we are doing well

**Communication & Engagement:** Families appreciate the communication, including daily and weekly emails, teacher communication regarding assignments and tests, proactive teacher outreach about issues or positive feedback, and communication with both parents and students.

**Student Activities & Support:** Families value the  variety of fun and engaging activities, clubs, and after-school opportunities. They report we are effective at supporting students, helping them transition to middle school, ensuring they are aware of expectations, and responding behavior concerns.

**Teaching & Curriculum:** Families report teachers are doing a great job explaining the curriculum, and the content is interesting. Teachers provide flexibility and ownership for students to complete their work, and prepare students to understand the importance of hard work.

**Staff & Environment:** Families tell us  front office staff is great, and students are happy and feel good about themselves and their classes.

# Family Voice: Areas for improvement

**Student Behavior and Accountability:** Families have concerns regarding impacts of cell phones, technology, and social media, student distractions, and providing more support for students dealing with mental health issues, including bullying.

**Communication and Information Access:** Some families desire more consistent and informative communication while others prefer less frequent communication. 6th-grade families express a need for more communication and support during the transition to middle school.

**Enrichment and Academic Structure:** Families want additional challenges students who finish work early, providing engaging learning opportunities that don't rely on reading or computer use.

**Programming and Wellness:** Families would like to see increased non-sports after-school programming (like art or cooking), more recognition for academic achievements, and brief daily opportunities for students to go outside, weather permitting.

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# The Response



Design Your Future




Create Your Success



# Based on feedback we have:

RAMP designation, School Counseling Team

AVID Teacher & Student Agency Survey

Partnership with WBLPD,  Netsmartz Internet Safety Presentation

Partnership with Career Pathways, 8th Grade Career Fair

Monthly family newsletter with resources for families, twice weekly school announcements with activities and resources

Positive post-cards and notes of gratitude

School-wide monthly grade level assemblies, including student celebrations and recognitions

Student driven after school clubs

Bear Time: focus on movement and academic supports

Additional 6th grade transition activities and communication

# The Results




Design
Your
Future


GO GRAD
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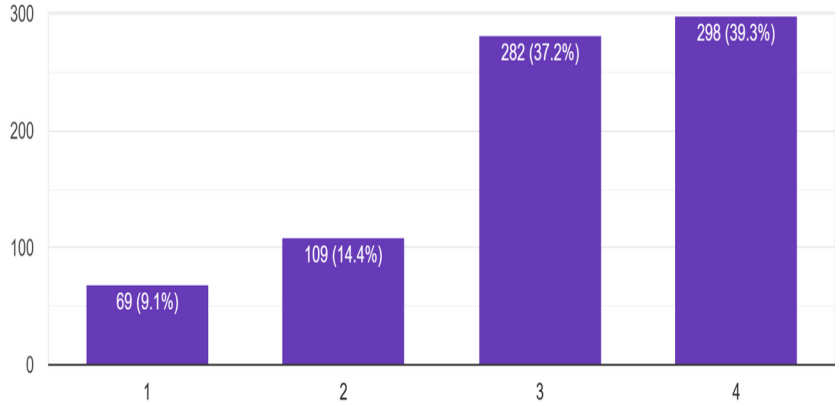

Create
Your
Success



# Sense of Belonging: 9.6% growth in 25-26 compared to 24-25

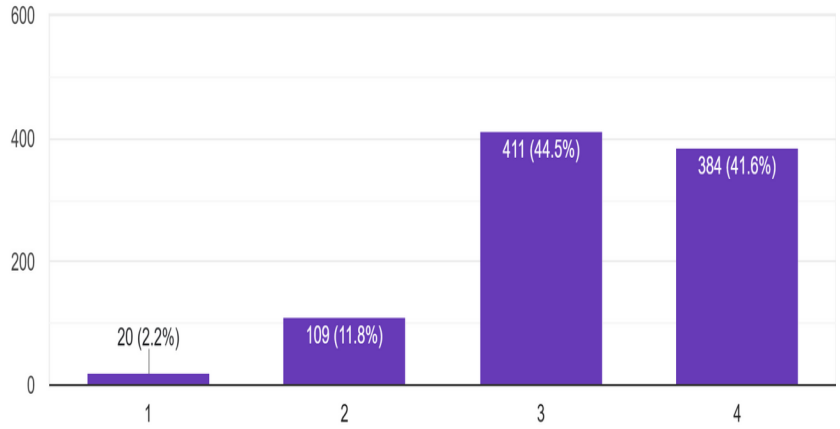
I feel like I belong.

758 responses




I feel like I belong in my school community.

924 responses

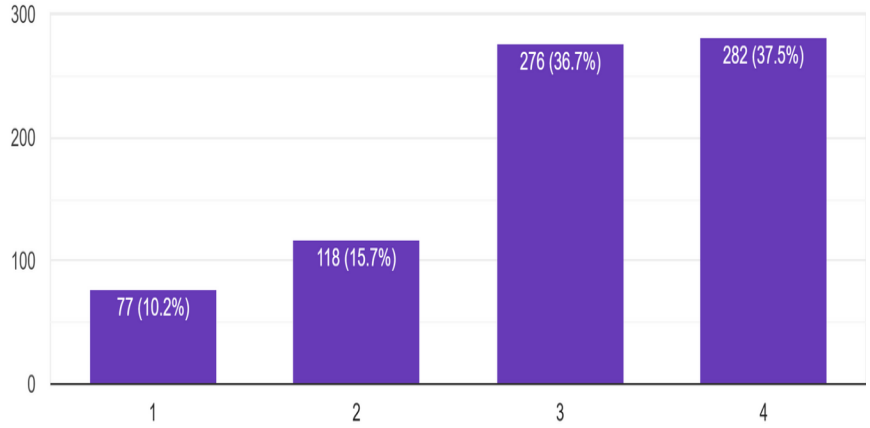



GO BEARS

# Sense of Respect: 12.3% growth in 25-26 compared to 24-25

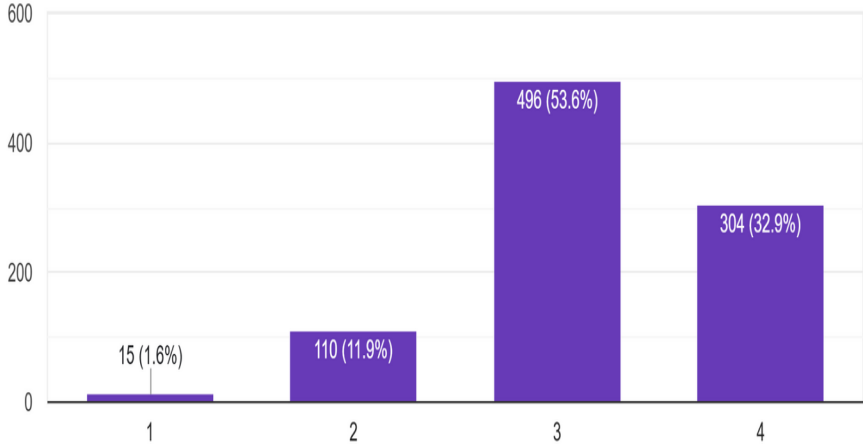
I feel socially accepted.

753 responses




I feel valued and respected in my school community.

925 responses

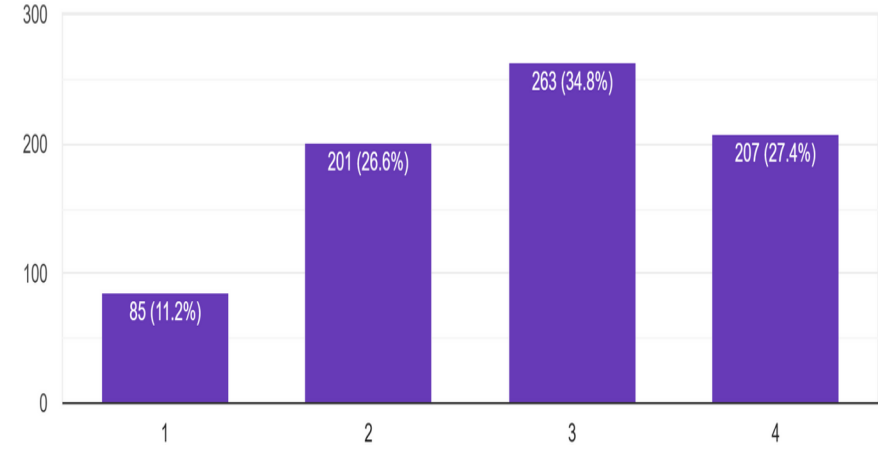



GO BEARS

# Caring Adults: 19.4% growth in 25-26 compared to 24-25

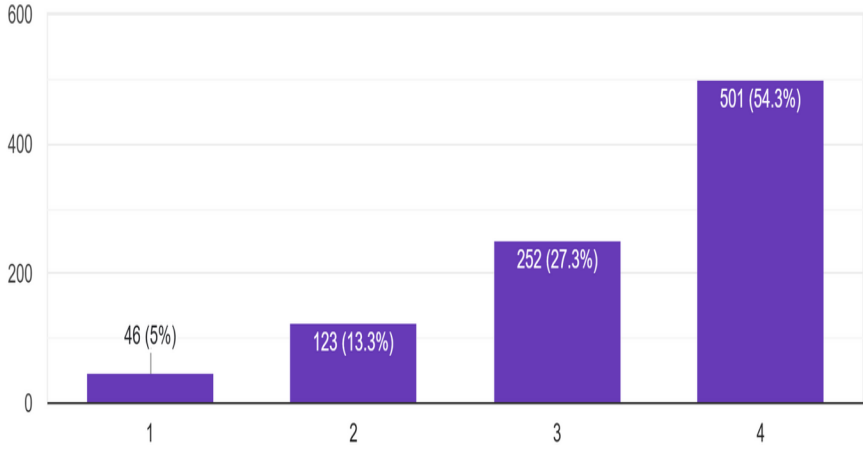
If I had something on my mind, my teacher would carefully listen to me.

756 responses




There is at least one adult at school I can talk to who cares about me.

922 responses




GO BEARS

# Academic Growth: MCA Reading

*2023-2024:*

6th Grade: 67.7 % meets or exceeds

7th Grade: 51.7% meets or exceeds

8th Grade:  41.1% meets or exceeds

*2024-2025:*

6th Grade: 66.3% meets or exceeds

7th Grade: 56.9% meets or exceeds

8th Grade: 55.7% meets or exceeds

# Academic Growth: MCA Math

***2023-2024:***

6th Grade: 51% meets or exceeds

7th Grade: 51.4% meets or exceeds

8th Grade: 46.4% meets or exceeds

***2024-2025:***

6th Grade: 51.4% meets or exceeds

7th Grade: 56.8% meets or exceeds

8th Grade: 54% meets or exceeds

# Going Forward



# Our continued work:

Teacher Collective Efficacy

Learning Walks and Coaching

Data to Support Decisions

Student, Family, and Staff Feedback

Experiences, Activities, and Clubs

Celebrations and Recognitions

# Questions?

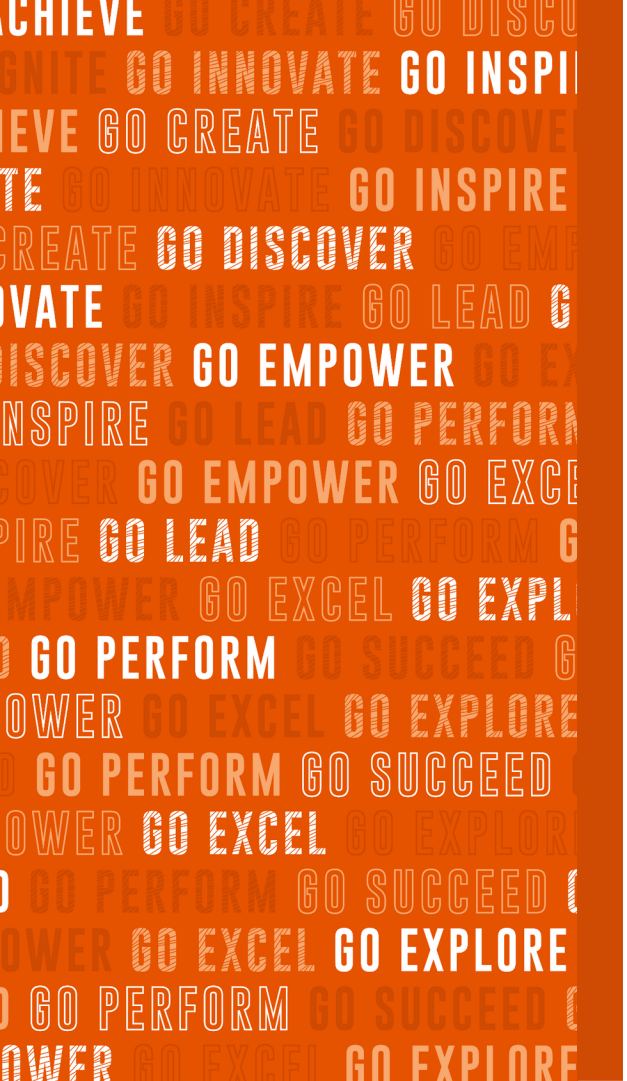


| | |
|---|---|
| AGENDA ITEM: | **Otter Lake Elementary Update** |
| MEETING DATE: | **April 27, 2026** |
| SUGGESTED DISPOSITION: | **Discussion Item** |
| CONTACT PERSON(S): | **Dr. Alison Gillespie, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning** |

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**BACKGROUND:**

Dr. Alison Gillespie, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, and Ang Nelson, Principal of Otter Lake Elementary will give an update on Otter Lake Elementary.




# Otter Lake Elementary

*Otters for Others*

**PRESENTER**

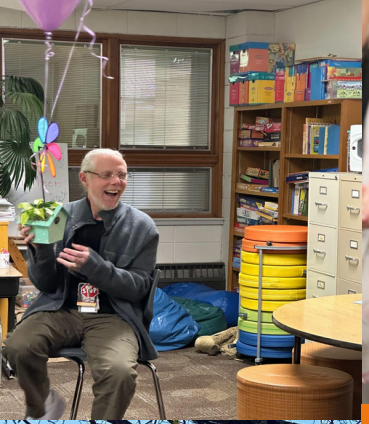
*Ang Nelson, Principal*




# Agenda

- Overview of Otter Lake Elementary
- Otter Lake Elementary Priorities
- Academic Goals
- Student Experience
- What's next?





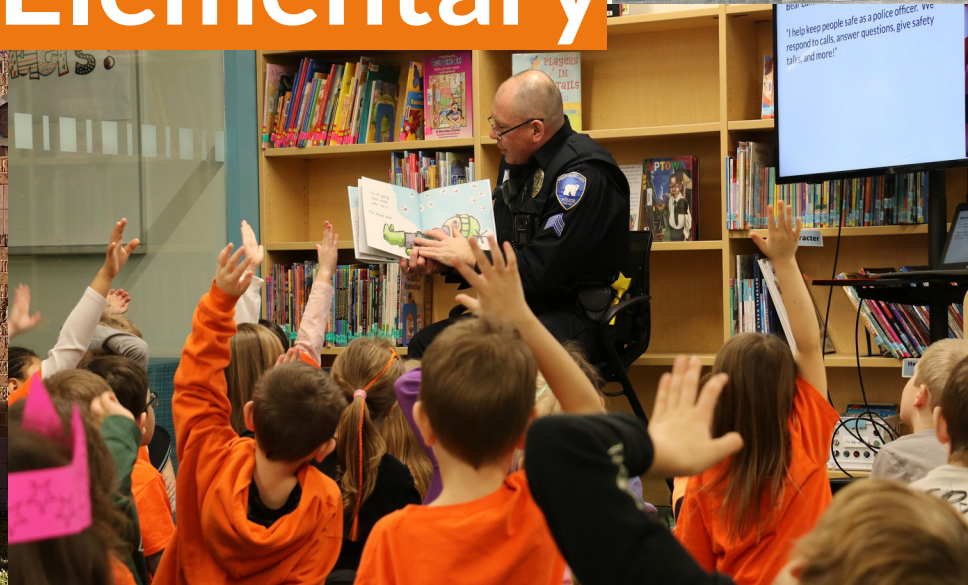







# Otter Lake Elementary






# Otter Lake Elementary

- Students:
  - Over 500 students
  - 72% White
  - 18% Free and Reduced
  - 25% Special Education
- Staff:
  - Over 500 years of combined teaching experience!
- Programming
  - 5 Special Education Cluster programs
  - Spanish Dual Language Program




# School Of Excellence






# Otter Lake Elementary Priorities



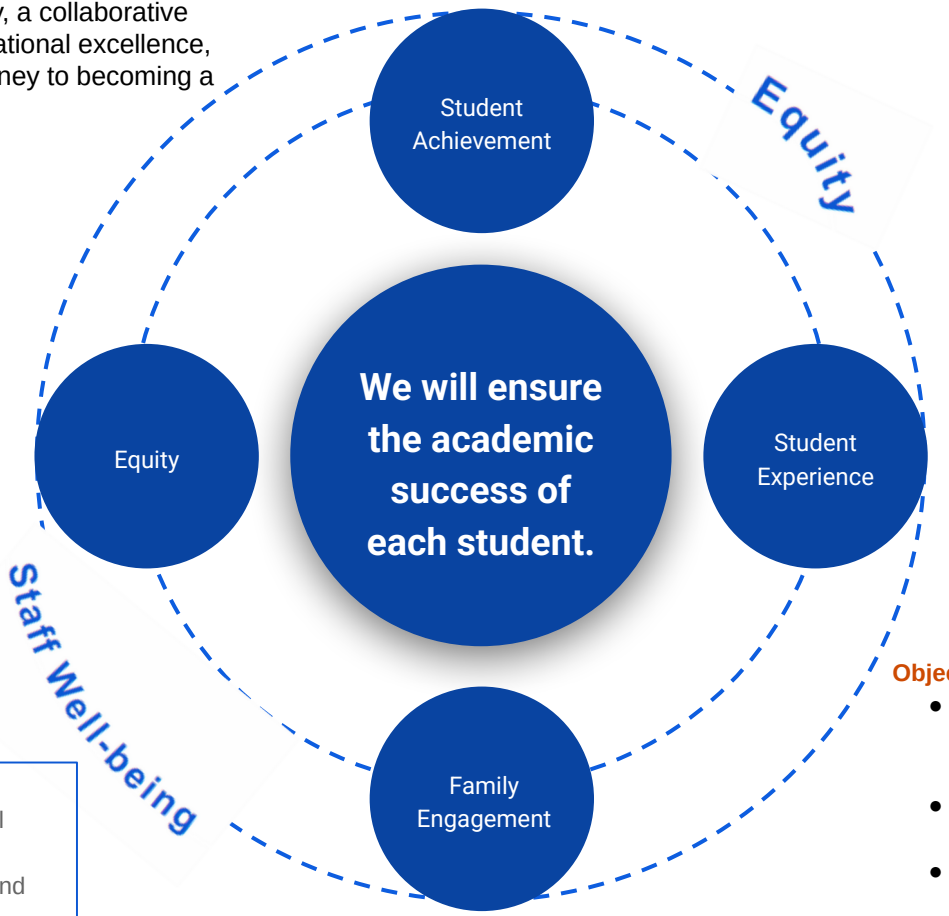
## Mission of Otter Lake Elementary

The mission of Otter Lake Elementary, a collaborative learning community engaged in educational excellence, is to nurture each student in their journey to becoming a lifelong learner.

*We are distinguished by:*

- *authentic learning through critical thinking and inquiry, effective communication and creative problem solving driven by student engagement.*
- *intentional partnerships and meaningful relationships.*
- *honoring and respecting each person's culture, learning style and perspective.*
- *kindness, empathy and compassion.*

# Otter Lake Elementary Priorities 2025.26




**Future Tactics**

*We will ensure the social and emotional growth of each student.

*We will foster intentional, meaningful, and collaborative relationships with students, families, and the greater community.

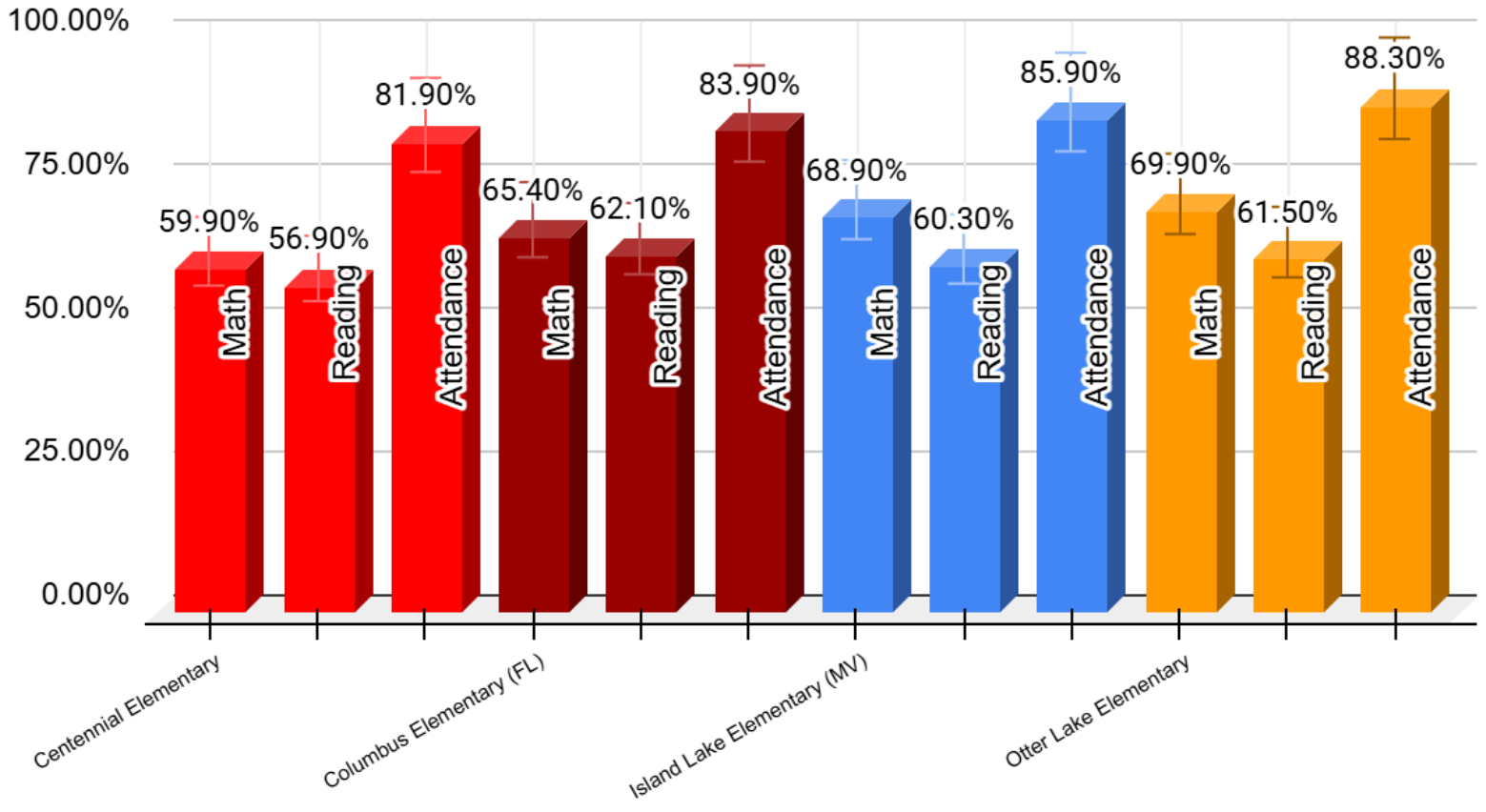
## Objectives of Otter Lake Elementary

- 100% of students will be academically and emotionally prepared for the next step in their learning journey.
- 100% of students feel cared for, valued and respected.
- 100% of students are connected in meaningful relationships within Otter Lake and the greater community.

# Academic Goals



# 2024-25 Comparison Data




*As reported from MDE

# Academic Goals

By spring 2026, 80% of students will demonstrate low risk as measured by grade level FastBridge assessments and 95% of students with IEP Literacy objectives will have met their goal.

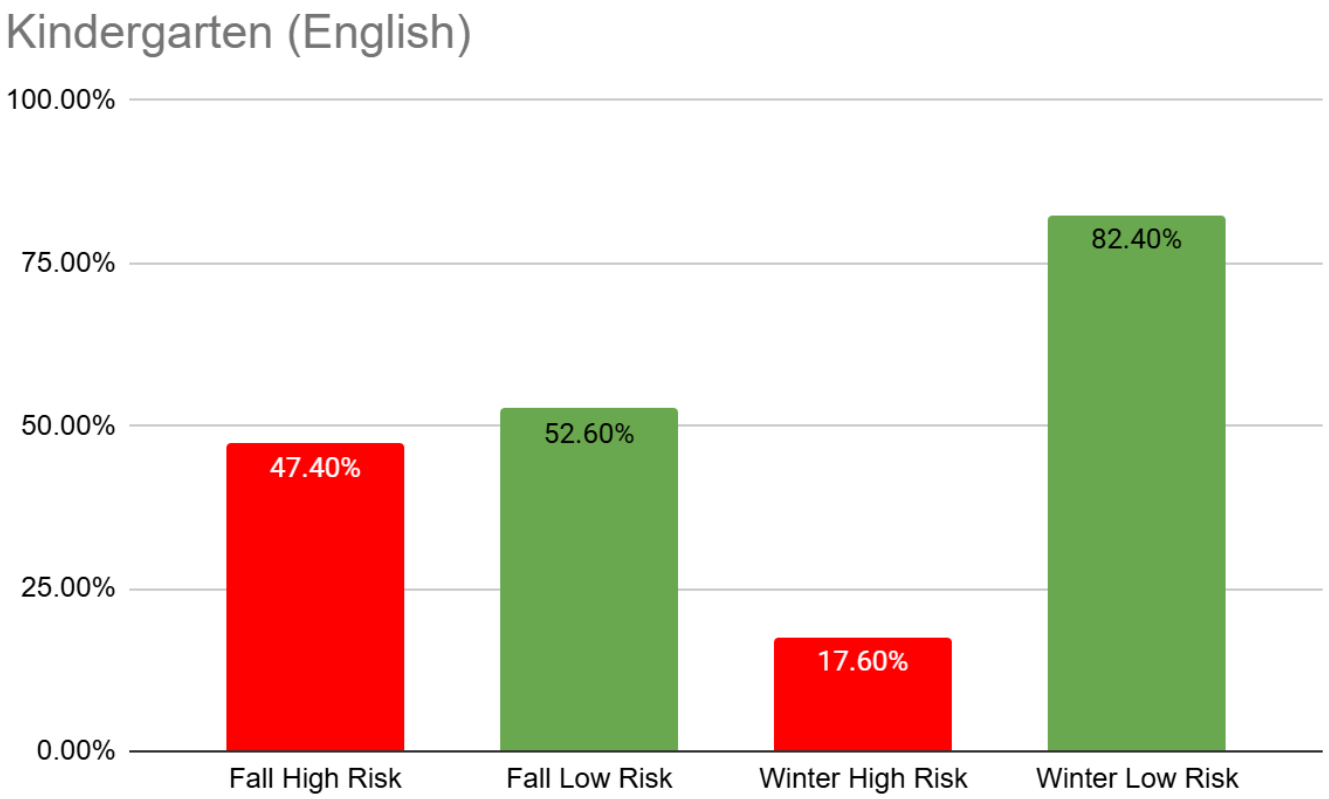
***72% of students demonstrated low risk in the spring of 2025.***

*What is FastBridge?: A researched based universal screener and progress monitoring tool.

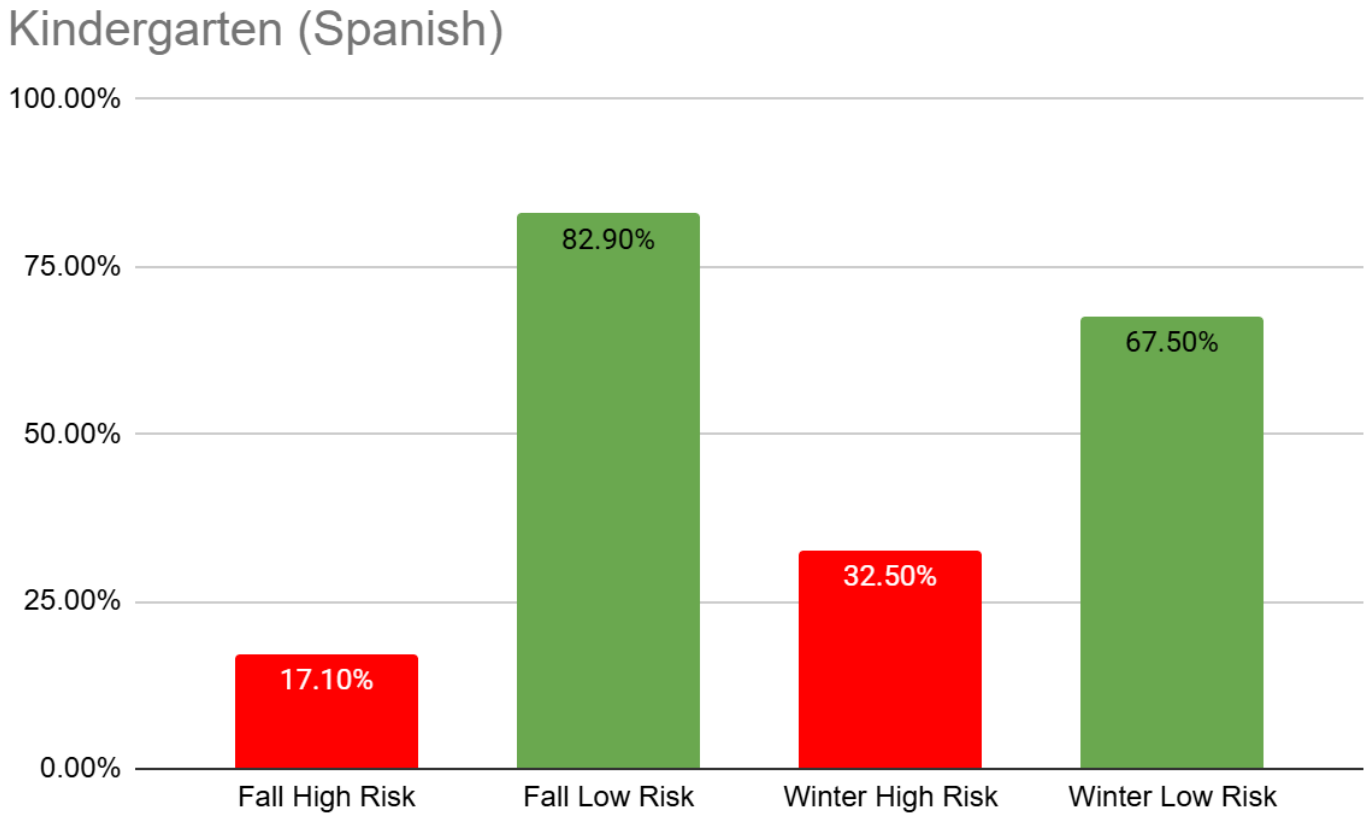
*What is Low Risk?:  A student is considered on track and may not need intervention to meet grade level standards.

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# Kindergarten (English)

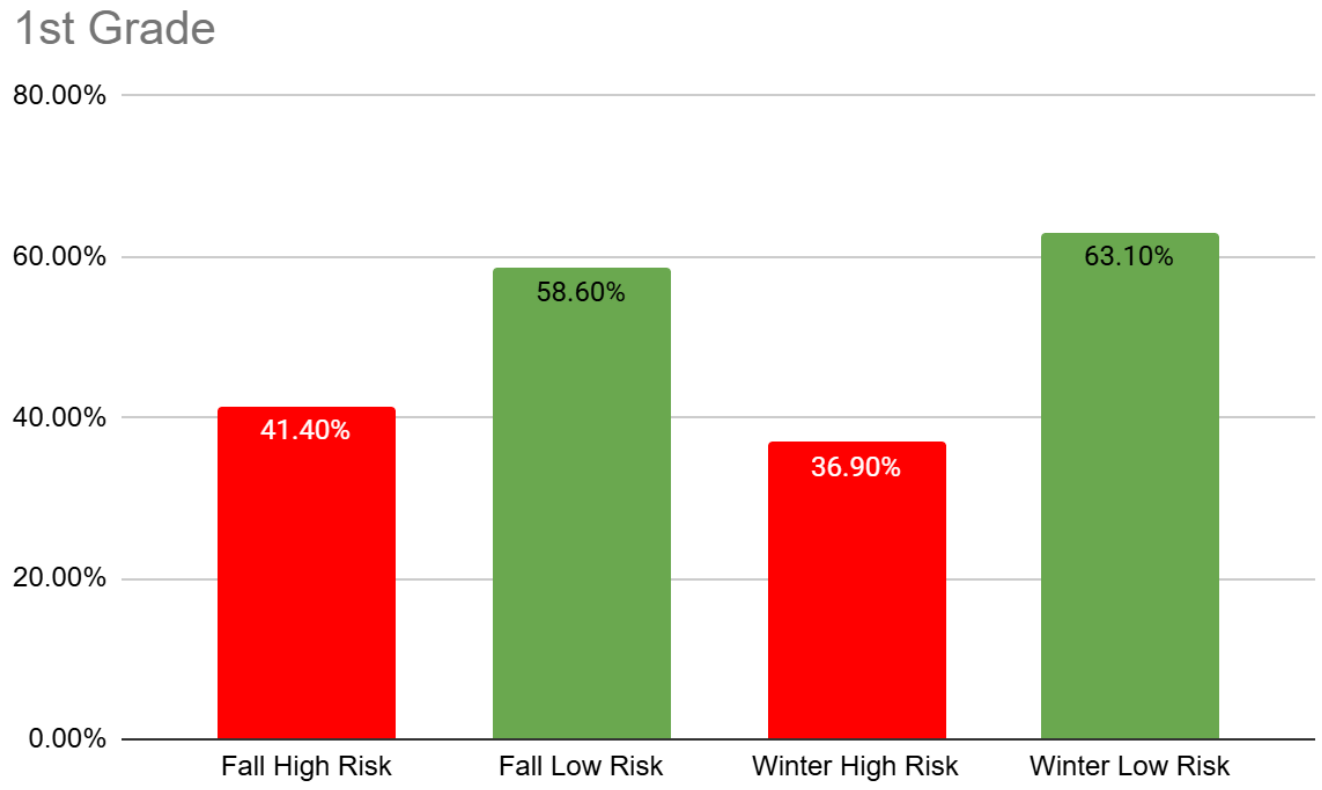


# Kindergarten (Spanish)



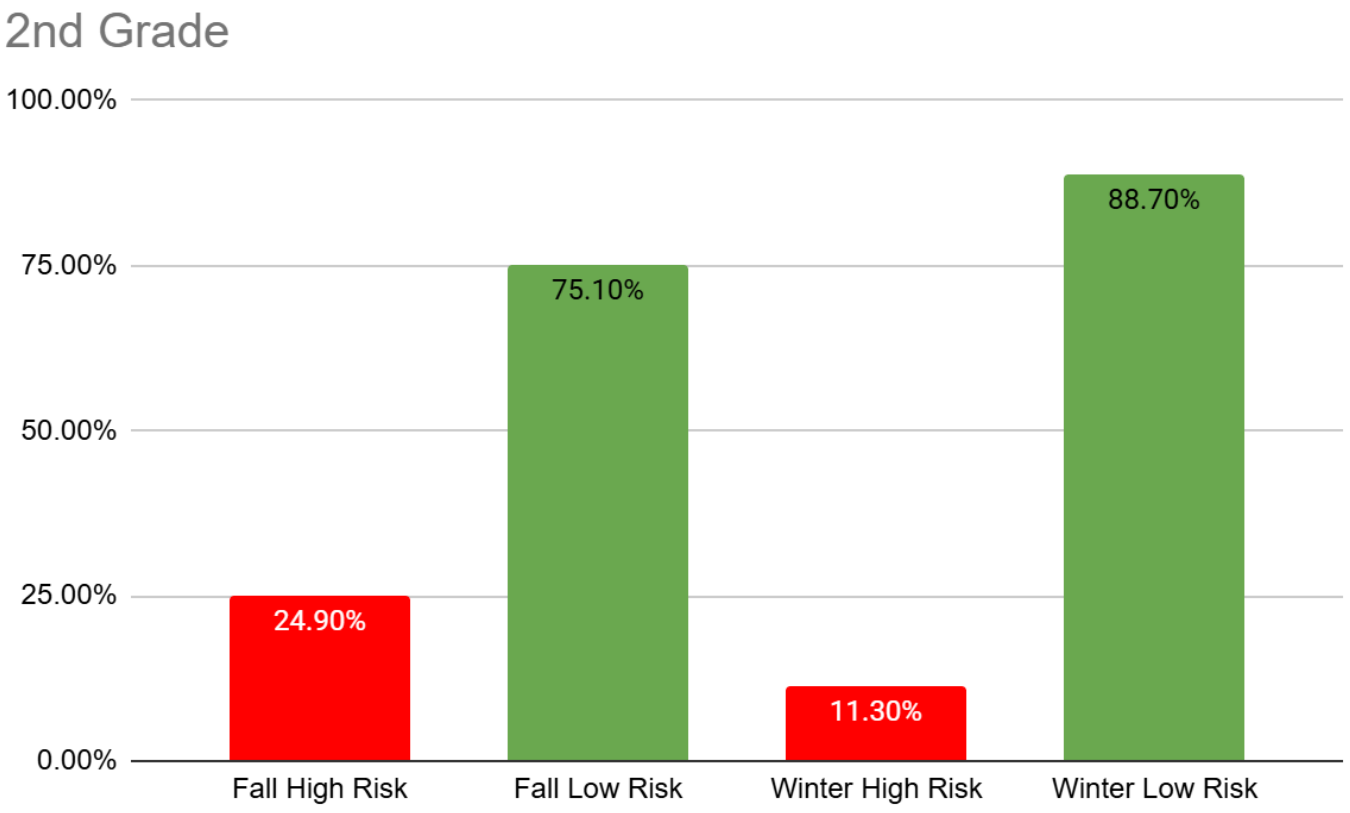

Note: All students in high risk were less than 3 points from slight risk.

# 1st Grade

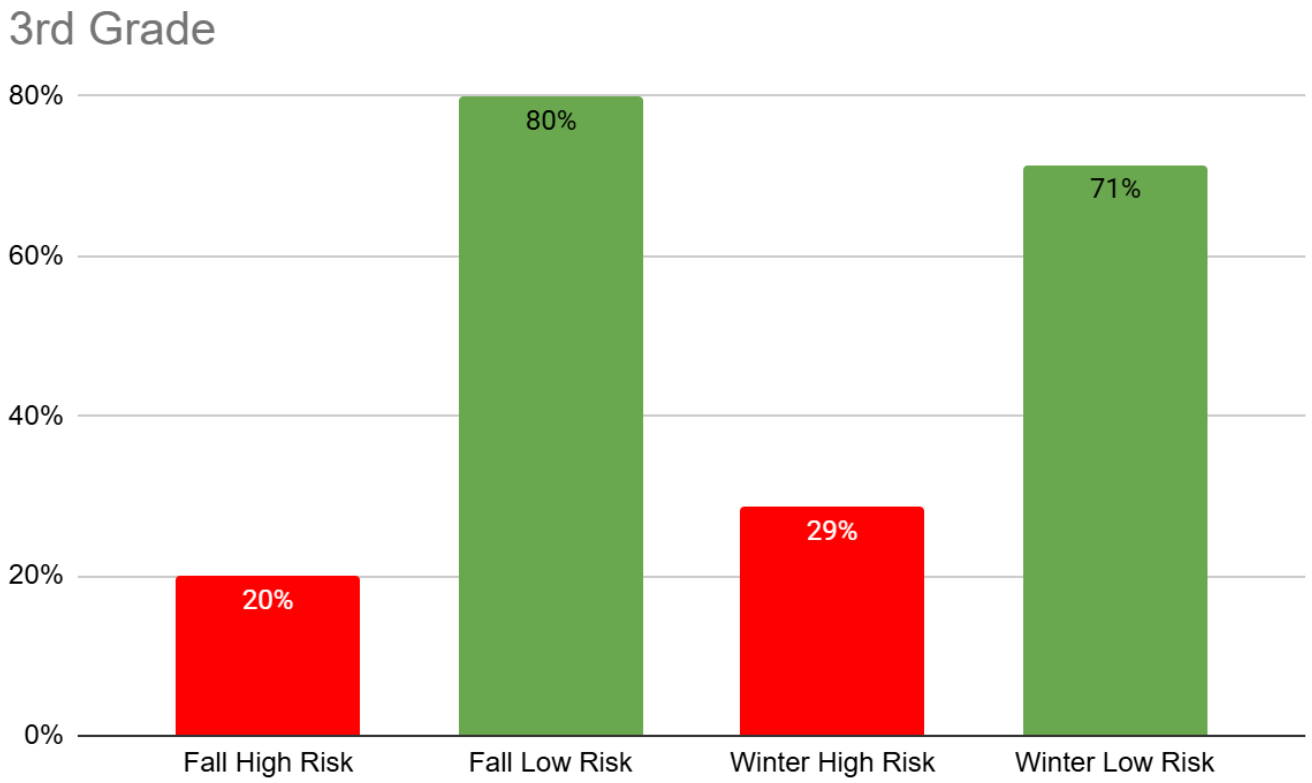



Note: Since this screening, 6 students met their spring growth goal who were in the slight risk category.

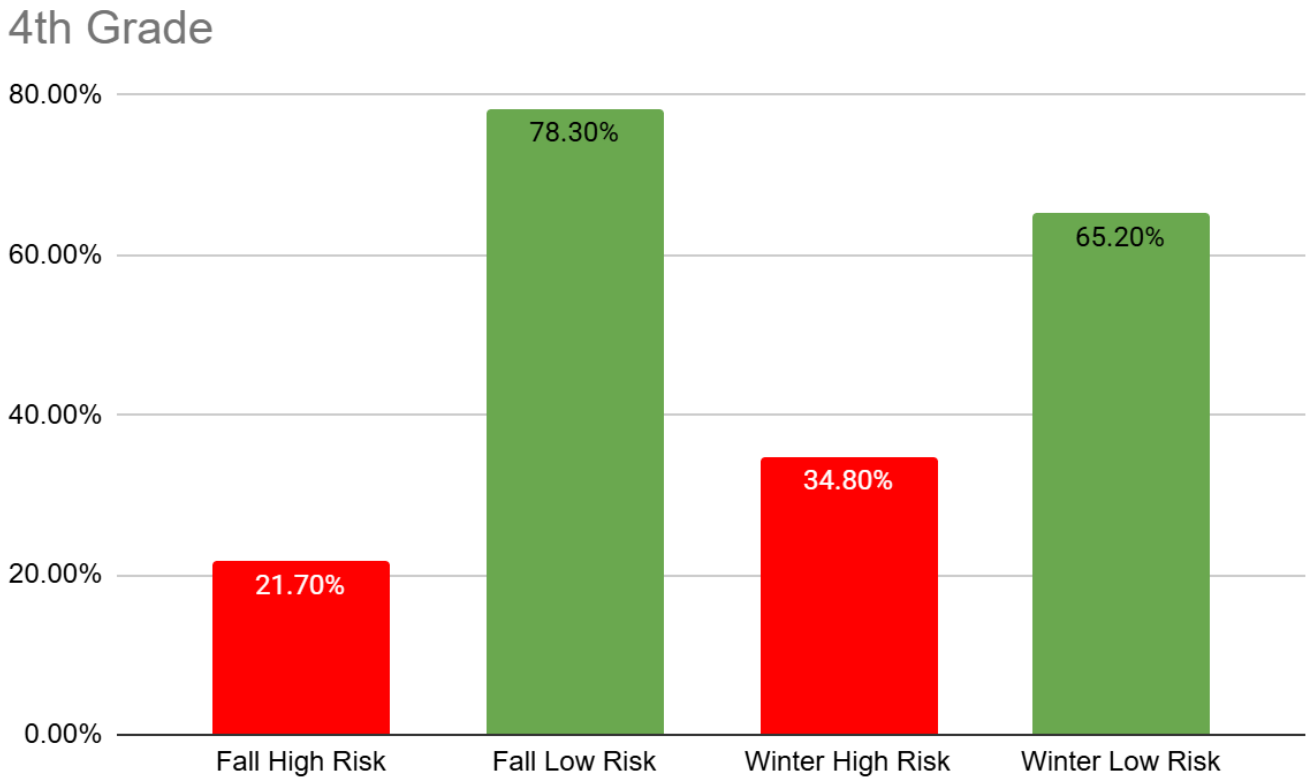
# 2nd Grade


2nd Grade
100.00%
75.00%
50.00%
25.00%
0.00%
24.90%
75.10%
11.30%
88.70%
Fall High Risk
Fall Low Risk
Winter High Risk
Winter Low Risk

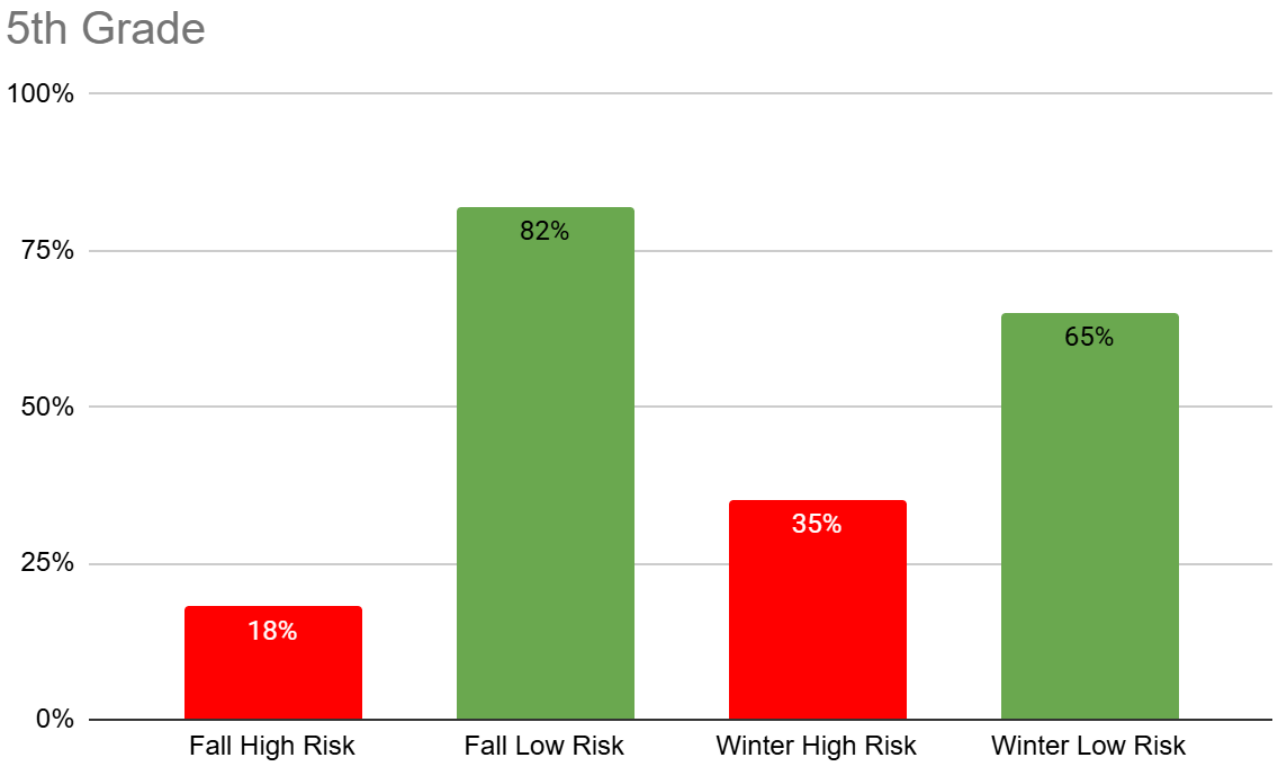
# 3rd Grade


3rd Grade
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
20%
80%
29%
71%
Fall High Risk
Fall Low Risk
Winter High Risk
Winter Low Risk

# 4th Grade


4th Grade
80.00%
60.00%
40.00%
20.00%
0.00%
21.70%
78.30%
34.80%
65.20%
Fall High Risk
Fall Low Risk
Winter High Risk
Winter Low Risk

# 5th Grade

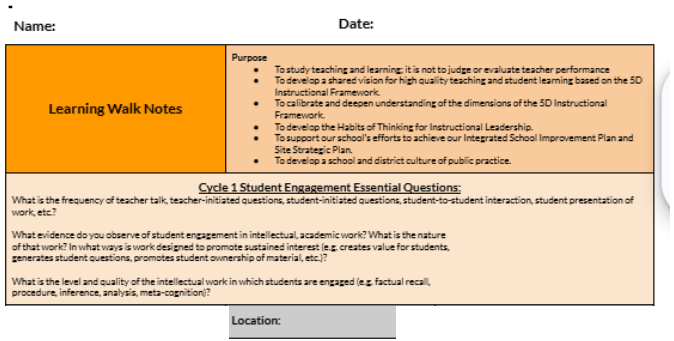



Note: 4 out of 18 students in slight risk were 1 point away from low risk.

# Academic Goals: Action Items



- Instructional Schedule
- WIN Time and MTSS process
- Professional Development (LETRs Learning)
- Team Collaboration
- Parent/Student  Volunteers
- Learning Walks



Name: Date:

| Learning Walk Notes | Purpose<br>• To study teaching and learning; it is not to judge or evaluate teacher performance<br>• To develop a shared vision for high quality teaching and student learning based on the 5D Instructional Framework.<br>• To calibrate and deepen understanding of the dimensions of the 5D Instructional Framework.<br>• To develop the Habits of Thinking for Instructional Leadership.<br>• To support our school's efforts to achieve our Integrated School Improvement Plan and Site Strategic Plan.<br>• To develop a school and district culture of public practice. |
|---|---|

**Cycle 1 Student Engagement Essential Questions:**

What is the frequency of teacher talk, teacher-initiated questions, student-initiated questions, student-to-student interaction, student presentation of work, etc?

What evidence do you observe of student engagement in intellectual, academic work? What is the nature of that work? In what ways is work designed to promote sustained interest (e.g. creates value for students, generates student questions, promotes student ownership of material, etc.)?

What is the level and quality of the intellectual work in which students are engaged (e.g. factual recall, procedure, inference, analysis, meta-cognition)?

Location:

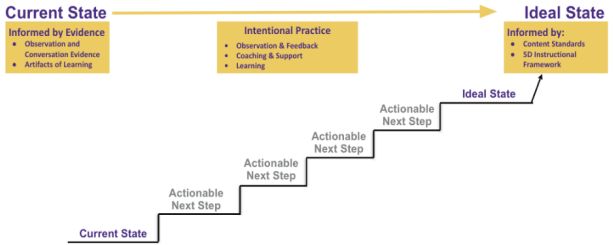


**The Vision: A Dynamic Learning Environment**

We envision a dynamic, equitable, and joyful learning environment characterized by active participation and shared responsibility for success.

**Student Experience: Ownership and Engagement**

*Every student is an active learner who is on task and on topic because they are fully engaged.*

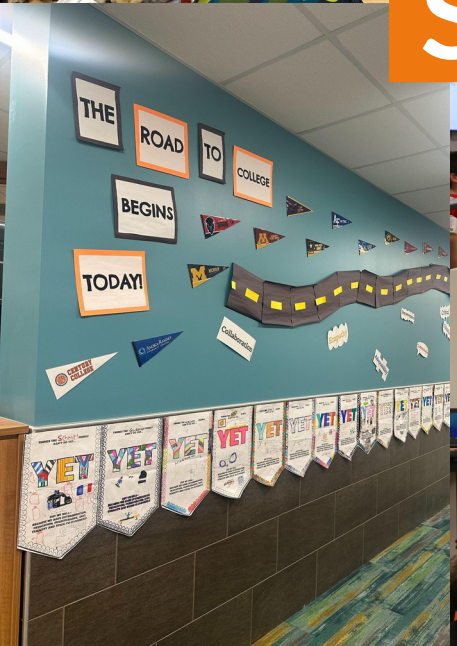








# Student Experience




















# Student Experience Action Items

- Otters for Others: Kindness!
- Family Events (community dinners, Bingo, carnival)
- Month Long Read-a-Thon
- Bear Awards
- School-wide Assemblies (Black Student Union, Kindness, mucal performances)
- Student Ambassadors
- Focus on engaging classroom activities





# What's Next?



# Future Opportunities in 2026-27

- A new Special Education Cluster program
- Spanish Dual Immersion Kindergarten and 1st Grade
- Implementation of new math curriculum
- Focus on students assessing their own learning and monitoring their progress and growth



GO BEARS

# Otter Lake Chant!

Ms. Nelson: Who are we?

**Students: BEARS!**

Ms. Nelson: What do we do?

**Students: We respect!**

Ms. Nelson: What do we do?

**Students: We are responsible!**

Ms. Nelson: What do we do?

**Students: We are ready!**

Ms. Nelson: Why do we do it?

**Students: Because I deserve the best!**

**Go BEARS!**

# Questions?



| | |
|---|---|
| AGENDA ITEM: | **High School Winter and Spring Activities Update** |
| MEETING DATE: | **April 27, 2026** |
| SUGGESTED DISPOSITION: | **Discussion Item** |
| CONTACT PERSON(S): | **Dr. Alison Gillespie, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning** |

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**BACKGROUND:**

White Bear Lake Area High School Activities Director Brian Peloquin, and Assistant Activities Director Taylor Tvedt will provide an update on winter and spring activities and athletics.




# WBLAHS Activities & Athletics Update

*April 27th, 2026 School Board Meeting*

**PRESENTERS**

Taylor Tvedt, Associate Activities Director
Brian Peloquin, Director of Athletics & Activities

# Activity Department

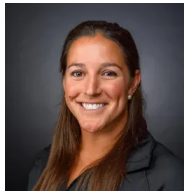








- Brian Peloquin – Activities Director
  - (651)444-6712 brian.peloquin@isd624.org
- Taylor Tvedt – Associate Activities Director
  - (651)444-6713, taylor.tvedt@isd624.0rg,
- Lexi Brownlee – Activities Admin Assistant
  - (651)444-6714, alexis.brownlee@isd624.org
- Mac Leverty - Activities Finance Clerk
  - (651)444-6719, mackenzie.leverty@isd624.org
- Angie Koich & Craig Merten - Athletic Trainers





GO BEARS

# WINTER ACTIVITIES RECAP



# Winter Spirit Week: Fire & Ice

| Monday Jan. 26 | | Tuesday Jan. 27 | | Wednesday Jan 28 | | Thursday Jan. 29 | | Friday Jan. 30 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BonFire: | Ice Castle: | BonFire: | Ice Castle: | BonFire: | Ice Castle: | BonFire: | Ice Castle: | BonFire: | Ice Castle: |
| Flannel Day! | Pajama Day! | Tropical Day! | Tundra Day! | Ref Your Team Day! | Rep Your Team Day! | Silly Sweater Day! | Silly Sock Day! | Wear Red Day! | Wear White Day! |

Winter Spirit Week Dress-up Competition Instructions

**Dress for Team BonFire if:** You want to see Mr. Reetz do the Sodapop dance

**Dress for Team Ice Castle if:** You want to see Mr. Reetz lip sync as Kristoff singing Lost in the Woods

## 2026 ~ Winter Spirit Week

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Boys Basketball 9A** Fieldhouse Court 2 4pm<br>**Boys Basketball B** Galvin Court 4pm<br>**Boys Basketball 9B** Fieldhouse Court 2 5:30pm<br>**Boys Basketball JV** Galvin Court 5:30pm<br>**Boys Basketball V** Galvin Court 7pm<br>**Jazz Band Performance** w/ Costa Rica Bands PAC 7pm | Wrestling Triangular Galvin Court **5pm** | **Girls Basketball B** Galvin Court 4pm<br>**Adapted Floor Hockey** Aux Gym 4:30pm<br>**Boys Hockey JV** TCO Sports Garden 5pm<br>**Girls Basketball 9** Fieldhouse Court 2 5:30pm<br>**Girls Basketball JV** Galvin Court 5:30pm<br>**Boys Swim & Dive V** WBL YMCA 6pm<br>**Gymnastics JV/V** Sunrise Park 6:30pm<br>**Girls Basketball V** Galvin Court 7pm (**Pep Band**)<br>**Boys Hockey V TCO** Sports Garden 7pm | **Pep fest** (Flex Schedule)<br>**The SnowBall**<br>WBLAHS<br>Student Union*<br>7:00 - 10:00 pm |

*The SnowBall is a semi-casual / semi-formal event. Dress like you're going to a concert or a banquet.

# Highlights: Adapted Floor Hockey & Boys Swim/Dive

## Adapted Floor Hockey

- Participants: 15

## Boys Swim & Dive

- Participants: 30 (up from 25 year prior)
- Benedict Hoefer qualified for State in 200 freestyle







GO BEARS

# Highlights: Alpine & Nordic Skiing

## Alpine Ski

- Boys Participants: 14
- Girls Participants: 16
- State Qualifiers: Angus Levins, Cooper Feirn, Josie Guidinger




## Nordic Ski

- Boys Participants: 23
- Girls Participants: 22



# Highlights: Gymnastics & Cheer

## Gymnastics

- Participants: *14*
- Team Qualified for State (first time in 21 years)
- Individual Qualifiers: Mira McQuay (10th) and Grace Mueller (10th) - Only graduating 1 senior
- Sara Crist: Section 4AA Coach of the Year




## Cheer

- Participants: 16 Varsity competitors & 32 in elementary/MS programs
- Adding a competitive JV for 2026-2027
- State Tournament Results: 2nd in Game Day & 3rd in Traditional
- Team Qualified for Nationals: Placed 3rd in Game Day
- MN Coach of the Year: Bre Sherrick

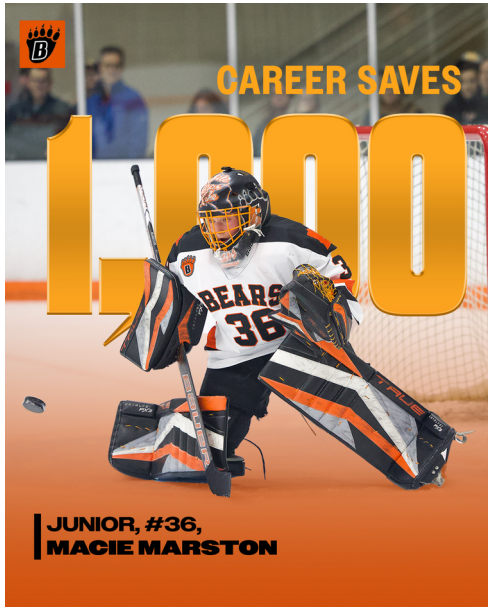



GO BEARS

# Highlights: Hockey

## Girls Hockey

- Participants: 37
- 8-17-1
- Ms. Hockey Finalist: Maddie Lee - also earned 100+ career points
- Macie Marston reached 1000+ career saves




## Boys Hockey

- Participants: 40
- 13-12-3 (SEVEN 1-goal losses)
- Advanced to the Section Championship







GO BEARS

# Highlights: Basketball

## Girls Basketball

- Participants: 39
- 10-17

## Boys Basketball

- Participants: 53
- 9-18
- Colin Piper gets 1000+ points






GO BEARS

# Highlights: Wrestling

## Girls Wrestling

- Participants: 11 - up from 7 and is in “emerging sport status” per the MSHSL
- State Qualifiers: Merick Jensen, Izzy Kane, Calli Lacktorin, and Jinet Demanou (finished 2nd)




## Boys Wrestling

- Participants: 43
- State Qualifier: Indiana Kane (9th)





# Performing & Fine Arts

**One Act Play:** The Curious Incident of the Dog In The Nightime

- Finished 1st in the Sub-Section Final
- Would have won to advance to State but were DQ'd due to set-up time
- Participation: 13 performers + 7 Crew Members

**Spring Musical:** Dear Evan Hansen

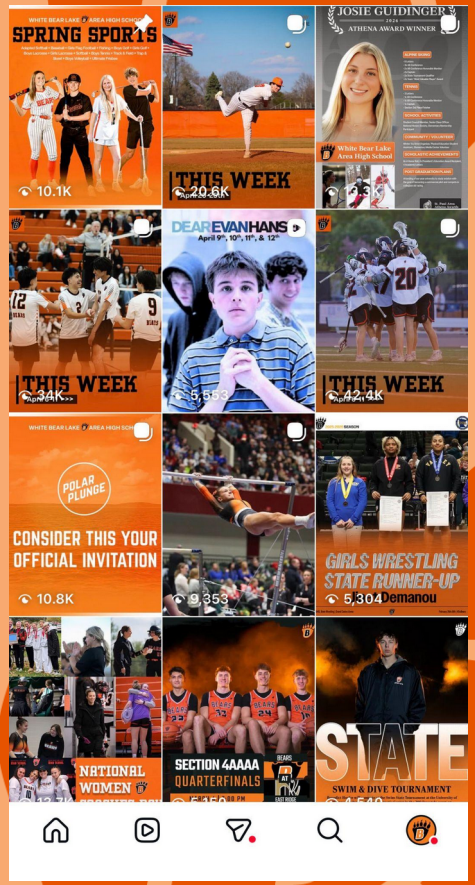
- FIRST high school in the Nation with performance rights
- Sold over 2000 tickets & were featured on Fox 9

**Other Activities:**

- **Speech:** 2 State qualifiers & 3 National qualifiers
- **DECA:** State Champion in the Entry-Level Interview Event, Brooklyn Brown (10th)

**SEC Music Festival:** Hosted at Mounds View

- **Band:** 70 kids performed & 10 involved in Honors Concert
- **Choir:** 37 kids performed & 14 in the Honors Concert
- Orchestra: 35 & 7 om the Honors Concert




# Other Activity Highlights & Data

**High School Student Passes Downloaded:** 2,033 & 651 adult season passes purchased, 210 senior passes

**Winter Competition Ticket Sales:** 12,609

**Cinderella Ticket Sales:** 4,151

**Winter Hudl Streams:** 8,951

**Hudl Broadcasted Games:** 57

- SCCTV Broadcasts : 11 contests

**Boys' Hockey Section Championship:** Sold out Aldrich Arena (over 3,100 in attendance)!

**Social Media:** Highlighted all 11 MSHSL teams (includes One Act) and our spring musical/arts, + non MHSLS teams - Archery, speech, Robotics, and Deca.

- Partnering with Sports photography classes.

GO BEARS

# Questions?

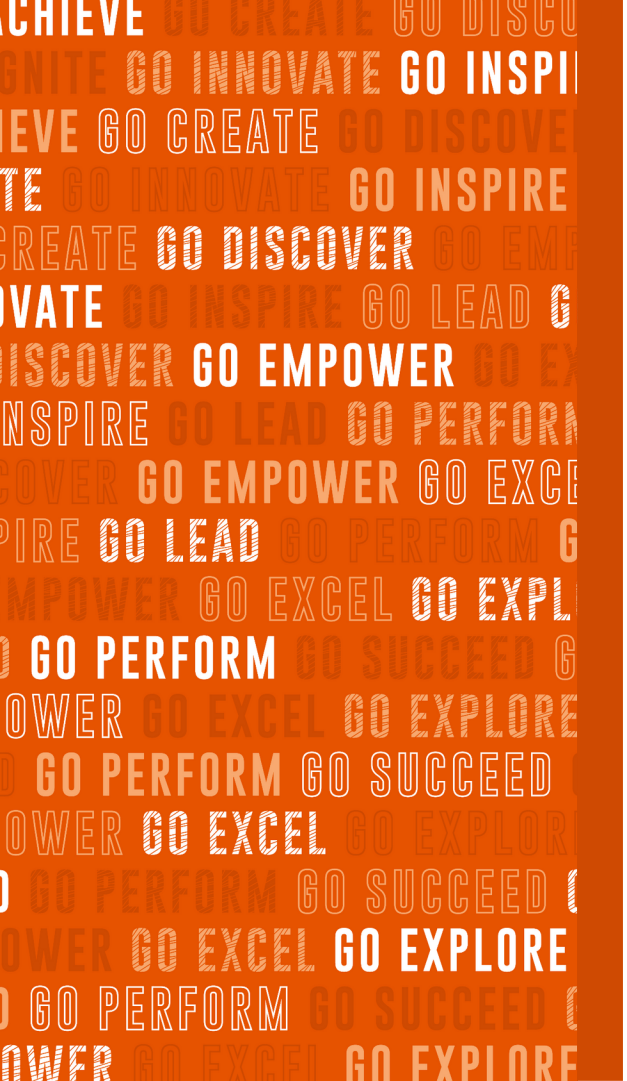


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|---|---|
| AGENDA ITEM: | **Elementary Multi-age Update** |
| MEETING DATE: | **April 27, 2026** |
| SUGGESTED DISPOSITION: | **Discussion Item** |
| CONTACT PERSON(S): | **Dr. Alison Gillespie, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning** |

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**BACKGROUND:**

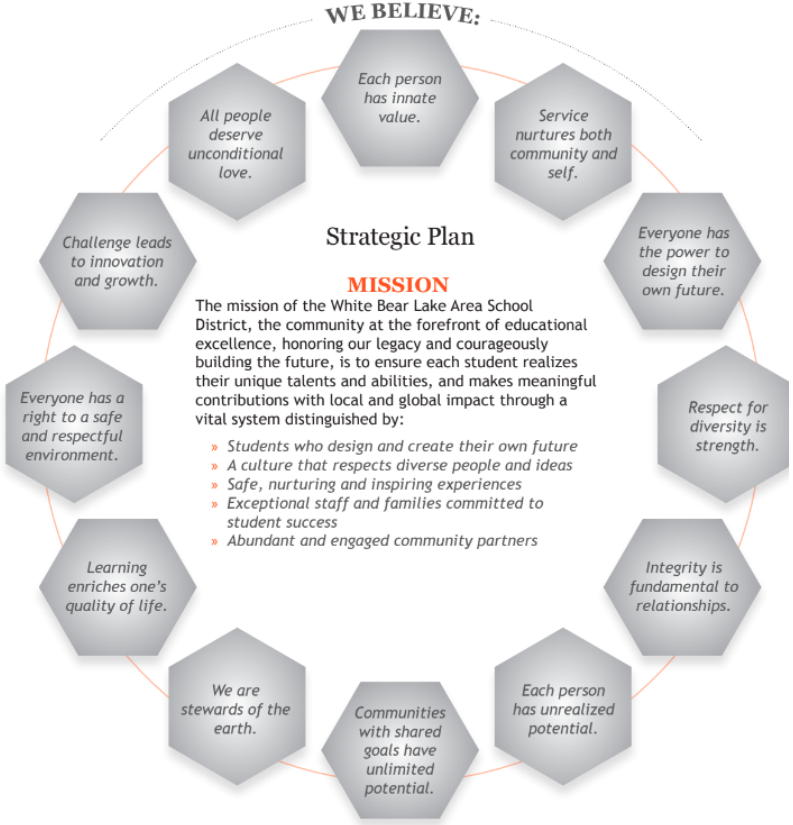
Dr. Alison Gillespie, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, along with Lori Mosser, Principal of Oneka Elementary; Cary Krusemark, Principal of Lakeaires Elementary; Julian Stanke, Principal of Birch Lake Elementary; and Jen Babiash, Director of Teaching and Learning, will provide an update on elementary multi-age programming.




# Multi-age Classrooms

*Grades 4 / 5*

# WBLAS District Strategic Plan




**OBJECTIVES**

*Each student meaningfully contributes to community.*

*100% OF STUDENTS:*
- *feel valued.*
- *accomplish their personalized learning plan.*
- *are prepared for and implement their design for their future.*
- *graduate.*
- *creatively adapt to an ever-changing world.*

**STRATEGIES**

*WE WILL:*
- *create and sustain a safe, equitable and nurturing environment.*
- *promote, encourage and support students' personal learning experiences and aspirations.*
- *ensure our organization continuously transforms to fulfill our mission.*
- *establish healthy and vital engagement with our entire community.*

**PARAMETERS**

*WE WILL:*
- *make all decisions based on the best interest of the student.*
- *respect the dignity and worth of each person.*
- *not compromise excellence.*
- *expect the best of everyone.*
- *practice participatory decision-making throughout the organization.*

# Strategies

The White Bear Lake Area Schools Strategic Plan consists of the following Strategies:

- We will create and sustain a safe, equitable and nurturing environment.
- We will promote, encourage and support students' personal learning experiences and aspirations.
- We will ensure our organization continuously transforms to fulfill our mission.
- We will establish healthy and vital engagement with our entire community.

We act on these strategies in order to accomplish our mission and objectives.

# Grades 4 / 5 Multi-age Classrooms

Seven of our elementary schools are moving to
4 / 5 multi-age classrooms.
Matoska and Otter will make this shift in the future due to other program implementation.



# How did we get here?

- We have both single grade level and multi-age classrooms with varying levels of educator support.
- We have class sizes that exceed the district average because of the relative size of our neighborhood elementary schools, despite educator to student ratios remaining consistent year over year.

*Design your future. Create your success.*

# 4/5 Multi-age Programming

- Schools that are implementing multi-age are doing so to support greater stability and consistency in class sizes, recognizing natural variations in student cohorts.
- All schools will remain aligned to the same district expectations for high-quality instruction and student experience.

*Design your future. Create your success.*

*Design your future. Create your success.*

# Building on What We Have Experienced

- White Bear Lake Schools have used this multi-age programming model for several years.
- We're building on those experiences to strengthen consistency and clarity across our system.
- Multi-age classrooms are in alignment with our strategic plan.

*Design your future. Create your success.*

# A Systemwide Approach Provides Clarity and Support

- A consistent district approach to multi-age allows us to better support students and educators.
- Grades 4 & 5 were chosen due to the strong alignment between grade-level standards and assessments, supporting coherent instruction and student learning.
- Educators will be teaching all core curricular subjects aligned with the 4th and 5th grade MN State Standards

*Design your future. Create your success.*

# Student and Staff Experience

- Students build strong classroom communities and deep relationships with staff and peers across multi-age classrooms.
- Students benefit from peer mentoring, with older students supporting younger students academically and socially.
- Provides a unique opportunity for increased teacher collaboration, as teaching teams expand and share responsibility for student learning.
- Students develop skills earlier to prepare for the middle school transition.

*Design your future. Create your success.*

# 2026-27 Preparation Steps

- A Design Team made up of classroom educators, SPED, Specialists, Intervention, and ML staff will use research and evidence-based practices to develop the framework for 4 / 5 multi-age programming.
- Dedicated curriculum writing time for educators will be available in June. This is voluntary and open to all elementary educators.
- There will be a Grades 4 / 5 Community of Practice next year where educators will be able to learn and collaborate with one another.
- Professional Development for multi-age educators will be delivered throughout the 2026 - 2027 school year and beyond.

# Parent/Guardian Communication and Collaboration

- System-wide family communication went out in early April, with follow up family communication planned before the end of the year.
- PTO/PTA
- Stakeholder Feedback
    - Systems Accountability Committee
    - Teaching and Learning Department
    - 4th and 5th Grade Educators
    - Specialists, Multilingual Learner Educators, and Student Support Staff

*Design your future. Create your success.*

# Creating Common Language for a Guaranteed and Viable Experience

- The framework for our 4/5 classrooms will define what multi-age is within our district.
- It ensures all multi-age classrooms align to our guaranteed and viable curricular and instructional expectations.
- This creates consistency in student experience across schools, regardless of classroom structure.