



Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Authorizer Annual Report

Authorizer Information

Name of Authorizing Organization: Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center

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Name and Title of Primary Authorizer Contact: Erin E. Anderson, Director of Charter School Authorizing

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Authorizing Mission:

The authorizing mission of Osprey Wilds is to ensure quality academic and environmental literacy outcomes for Minnesota students through effective charter school authorizing. The authorizing vision of Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center is to authorize a portfolio of high performing charter schools that instill a connection and commitment to the environment in their school communities, while working towards a healthy planet where all people live in balance with the Earth.

Authorizer Summary:

Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center (Osprey Wilds or OW, formerly the Audubon Center of the North Woods) is a nonprofit, residential environmental learning center on the shores of Grindstone Lake near Sandstone, Minnesota. The Center offers a variety of environmental learning experiences for people of all ages, with programming in natural history and science, team building, adventure programming, and outdoor / environmental education. The mission of Osprey Wilds is to instill a connection and commitment to the environment in people of all communities through experiential learning. The vision of Osprey Wilds is a healthy planet where all people live in balance with the Earth.

In 2003, Osprey Wilds became a sponsor of charter schools in order to further its mission and expand its educational programming. That year, Osprey Wilds was granted authority by the MN Department of Education to sponsor charter schools under Minnesota statute. In response to statutory change in 2009, Osprey Wilds renewed its commitment to charter schools and became an approved charter school authorizer in December 2010. Since that time, Osprey Wilds has grown to become the largest authorizer of charter schools in Minnesota by number of schools authorized. Osprey Wilds remains committed to authorizing charter schools as an effective vehicle for advancing the organization's mission and vision.

The OW Charter School Division (CSD) conducts oversight and evaluation of all schools authorized by Osprey Wilds throughout the state. The CSD is comprised of professionals with charter school authorizing and evaluation expertise. This includes both employees of Osprey Wilds and contracted evaluators. The CSD is overseen and monitored by the OW Charter School Committee and the OW Board of Directors. Ultimately, the Osprey Wilds Board makes decisions regarding the ongoing authorization of any particular school.

Authorizer Processes

New Charter School Applications in FY 2023 (B.1)

Did your organization review any new charter school applications?

No

If no, please provide an explanation:

Osprey Wilds received a Notice of Intent from one applicant. The school did not submit a full application to Osprey Wilds.

If yes, complete the table below for each application.

Name of Charter School Applicant	Authorizer Approval or Disapproval	Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Approval or Disapproval	If Disapproved, Reason(s) for Disapproval	Application Withdrawn by Applicant
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

New Charter School Openings in FY 2023 (B.2)

Did your organization engage in ready-to-open activities?

Yes

If no, please provide an explanation:

N/A

If yes, complete the table below for each charter school scheduled to open.

Name of Charter School Projected to Begin Serving Students in FY 2023	Projected Opening Date	Did this School Open as Planned?	If No, Provide Reason(s) and Revised Projected Opening Date
Endazhi-Nitaawiging	9/6/2022	Yes	N/A

Charter School Expansion Applications (to add primary enrollment sites or grades, including instructional prekindergarten or preschool programs) in FY 2023 (B.2)

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

Yes

If no, please provide an explanation:

N/A

If yes, complete the table below for each application.

Name of Charter School	Proposed Additional Grades to be Served (including prekindergarten and/or preschool) and/or Location of New Site	Authorizer Approval or Disapproval	MDE Approval or Disapproval	If Disapproved, Reason(s) for Disapproval	Application Withdrawn by Applicant
Metro Schools	Prekindergarten	Disapproval	N/A	Application did not meet Osprey Wilds' criteria for approval	N/A

Early Childhood Health and Developmental Screening Requests in FY 2023 (B.2)

Did your organization review any requests for official early childhood health and developmental screening program recognition?

No

If no, please provide an explanation:

OW did not receive any request for official early childhood health and developmental screening.

If yes, complete the table below for each request.

Name of Charter School	Authorizer Approval or Disapproval	MDE Approval or Disapproval	If Disapproved, Reason(s) for Disapproval	Application Withdrawn by Applicant
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Charter School Change in Authorizer Requests in FY 2023 (B.2)

Did your organization review any change in authorizer requests?

No

If no, please provide an explanation:

Osprey Wilds did not receive any change in authorizer requests.

If yes, complete the table below for each request.

Name of Charter School	Authorizer Charter School Requested to Transfer From	Authorizer Approval or Disapproval	MDE Approval or Disapproval	If Disapproved, Reason(s) for Disapproval	Application Withdrawn by Applicant
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Charter Contract Renewals in FY 2023 (B.9)

Did your organization engage in charter renewal activities in FY 2023?

Yes

If no, please provide an explanation:

N/A

If yes, complete the table below for each school.

Name of Charter School	Was Contract Renewed?	If Yes, Term of Contract Renewal	If No, Reason(s) for Nonrenewal
Academic Arts High School	Yes	07/01/2023-06/30/2026	N/A
Central Lakes Adventure School (formerly Pillager Area Charter School)	Yes	07/01/2023-06/30/2026	N/A
Discovery Woods School	Yes	07/01/2023-06/30/2028	N/A
East Range Academy of Technology and Science	Yes	07/01/2023 - 06/30/2026	N/A
La Crescent Montessori and STEM School	Yes	07/01/2023 - 06/30/2028	N/A
MN Wildflower Montessori School	Yes	07/01/2023 - 06/30/2028	N/A
Oshki Ogimaag Charter School	Yes	07/01/2023 - 06/30/2026	N/A
Vermilion Country School	Yes	07/01/2023 - 06/30/2028	N/A

Additional Authorizer Activities

Authorizer Organizational Goals (A.2)

Describe the progress your organization made on its organizational goals related to authorizing in FY 2023.

Progress on Osprey Wilds’ organizational goals related to authorizing is provided below in the section “Charter School Portfolio Performance.” Please see pages 20-29

Authorizer Structure of Operations (A.3)

Describe changes, if any, to your organization’s structure of operations related to authorizing in FY 2023 (for example, organizational changes, new positions, updated full-time equivalencies of authorizing positions, etc.).

During SY 2022-23 the OW CSD experienced some personnel changes and added an additional 1.0 FTE. Erin Anderson continued in the role of Director of Charter School Authorizing, Emily Edstrom Moore continued in the role of Authorizing Specialist, Addie Washington continued in the role of Administrative Assistant / Environmental Education Evaluator, and Jolene Palme continued in the role of Finance Analyst. The Charter School Division added a second Authorizing Specialist position in August 2022 that was filled by Ashley Estis, bringing the CSD to 5.0 FTE for the first time in its history. Nalani McCutcheon departed the role of Associate Director of Charter School Authorizing in November 2022 and Patrick Hartman replaced her as an Authorizing Specialist in January 2023.

The CSD had part time program and administrative support from Jolene Palme and Alul Yesak. Combined, their time totaled approximately 0.625 FTE. Alul Yesak departed the role of Compliance Clerk in March 2023. That role was consolidated with the Finance Analyst position to create the Charter School Finance & Compliance Analyst role for the 2023-24 school year. Contracted consultants provided additional support to ensure the CSD's capacity to provide quality oversight to schools, and OW staff in Sandstone provided administrative, HR, accounting, environmental education, leadership, and governance support totaling approximately 0.25 FTE. The CSD continued to use Epicenter as a tool to enhance compliance and document management of schools.

Authorizing Staff Expertise (A.4)

Briefly describe the background and experience, in the areas of charter school academics, finance, operations, and law, of any authorizing staff, committee members, board members, consultants, etc. new to your organization in FY 2023.

Ashley Estis, Authorizing Specialist, Charter School Leadership

Ashley has worked in education for over 10 years. She has a bachelor's degree in urban elementary education through Metropolitan State University. She has experience teaching middle school and high school students with emotional and behavioral disorders and autism spectrum disorder. Ashley also has experience teaching Pre-K, 2nd and 4th grade. Ashley is passionate about culturally responsive education and environmental justice for our youth.

Patrick Hartman, Authorizing Specialist, School Sustainability

Pat brings over 15 years of experience in education, primarily as a high school biology teacher. In addition, he has built and implemented an elementary STEM program, worked as a middle school math paraprofessional, coached soccer and Nordic skiing, served as a union representative and vice-president, and science department head. Pat grew up just outside of the Twin Cities and earned a degree in German from St. John's University. After graduation he dabbled in the workforce, mostly as a coffee shop manager, but the world of education was calling and Pat earned a Master of Arts in Teaching from Hamline University. He is passionate about education, specifically environmental literacy.

Barbara Lindeke, OW Board Member and Charter School Committee (CSC) Member

Barbara brings years of teaching and board experience to the OW Board and CSC. She was a social studies teacher at Anoka High School from 1979-2009, and prior to that she worked as a teacher at an area learning center alternative school from 1978 to 1984 in Anoka-Hennepin Independent School District #11. Barbara has developed expertise in nonprofit finance from serving on the board of the St. Paul Audubon Society for over 10 years (2012-2023), and she was the board president from 2013-2017. She brings a passion for nature and education to her roles with Osprey Wilds.

Samba Fall, OW Board Member and Charter School Committee (CSC) Member

Samba joins the OW Board and CSC with a range of valuable professional experience, including working in the Hennepin County Office of Multicultural Services and serving as the Director of Multicultural Kids Network, a nonprofit organization that provides educational programming through a multicultural lens. Samba has worked in translation and interpretation services for several companies (Dunya Languages, Norman G. Jensen Inc.) and has experience with business operations from previous roles at Medtronic and Fidelity Information Services. He is passionate about youth education and building intercultural collaboration.

Authorizing Leadership and Staff Skill Development (A.5)

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

Osprey Wilds is committed to advancing the skills and knowledge of its staff. Staff members are evaluated at least once a year and monitor progress toward their personal and professional goals at least monthly. During evaluation meetings, staff members and their supervisors identify professional development needs and set professional goals. All professional development is aligned with the authorizer's organizational goals (A.2) and reflects self-evaluation of the capacity and needs of the team and the individual (A.9). As a result, in FY23 OW dedicated resources to ongoing professional development that resulted in improved authorizer practices.

On the national level, the Osprey Wilds staff attended several conferences both virtually and in-person. All five OW staff attended the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) Leadership Conference in October 2022. At this conference, staff attended sessions focused on individual and organizational particular areas of need, and also made and continued to deepen connections with authorizers within Minnesota and across the nation. In addition, all five staff members as a team co-facilitated the NACSA session, "Onboarding: A Tool Toward Inclusive Team Transformation," on October 25, 2022. OW staff participated in the national Authorizing for All meetings monthly from January to May 2023, with Erin serving as a facilitator. These sessions convened authorizing staff from around the country to collaborate on initiatives to design equitable and anti-racist authorizing practices and standards using the Liberatory Design for Equity Process.

In October 2022, Addie attended the North American Association for Environmental Education Conference in Tucson, AZ. Later, Addie participated in a workshop series introduced at the NAAEE Conference that explored equitable evaluation practices (eeVAL). The eeVAL sessions (March through May) focused on the values underpinning culturally relevant environmental education and evaluation.

Through July and August 2022, OW staff completed the Promise54 DEI Accelerator program which launched in the spring of 2022. This was an opportunity for the CSD to grow its diversity, inclusion, equity, and racial justice

efforts through a structured process. The DEI accelerator provided tools, resources, and a cohort of fellow educators to advance progress on internal DEI and anti-racism initiatives over an 8-month experience. As a result of this accelerator, the CSD identified key priorities to begin working on and redesigned its hiring and onboarding processes to focus on creating an inclusive environment.

Throughout the year, CSD staff participated in a variety of equity-focused trainings. In November 2022, Addie, Ashley, and Emily attended the Overcoming Racism Conference held in St. Paul which offered opportunities for deeper learning related to equity and justice and access to anti-racism resources. Erin, Pat, Alul, Emily, and Addie attended a “Freedom Dreaming” webinar hosted by the National Equity Project in January. In April and June, Ashley participated in EnTere Ed Collective meetings, a new NACSA collective designed for and by BIPOC authorizers and authorizing-adjacent professionals. Erin attended NACSA’s “A Seat at the Table” workshops from February to June where she gained incisive tools and perspectives on how to use data to identify DEI gaps, steps to create the conditions for DEI to be an institutional value, and how DEI data matters in authorizing specifically. Finally, all staff attended the Student Centered Learning for Equity Conference, “Amplifying Students, Elevating Community” in Minneapolis in May. The variety of sessions provided CSD staff an opportunity to hear lessons learned from local educators building student agency and community partnerships in their school communities.

On the local level, Osprey Wilds staff attended monthly Minnesota Association of Charter School Authorizers (MACSA) meetings. In these meetings, staff members received updates from the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MACS), reviewed legislative initiatives, and also shared challenges, effective practices, and learning with other authorizers from around the state. Erin attended the MN Association of Alternative Programs conference in February, building connections with educators and state leaders in alternative programs. In addition, Osprey Wilds organizes and presents an annual Environmental Education Teacher Workshop and a virtual Leaders Retreat. Osprey Wilds staff participates in those learning opportunities as well, attending sessions relevant to environmental education, charter school finance, governance, and leadership.

Other training and development included:

- Nalani and Addie attended the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools “CSP Rules Update” session in July.
- Erin attended the “How to Position Yourself to Win the CSP Grant” training session in April.
- The team structured regular onboarding training for two new staff members, Ashley and Pat, throughout FY23. Training focused on OW’s AAP, contract, and statute pertaining to charter schools.
- Erin provided training to all staff on using the board observation feedback form, operations performance evaluations, the bylaws compliance checklist, and the lottery policy checklist.

Osprey Wilds authorizing staff and leadership engage in ongoing job-embedded professional development. This happens through staff meetings, internal staff trainings, board and committee meetings, ongoing consultations, and on-the-job training. Examples in FY2023 include:

- Preparation for Osprey Wilds Leaders Retreat sessions and EE Teacher Workshop sessions.
- Staff meetings and internal staff trainings: Review of issues related to the Cruz-Guzman lawsuit; ongoing sharing of articles, readings, and books among the team (e.g. Mug Club, an occasional 30-minute

discussion group); onboarding new staff to internal processes (including conflicts of interest), relevant statute, and the Minnesota educational landscape.

- Ongoing consultation and mentorship with fellow authorizers and contract evaluators: This happens at team meetings, during phone consultations, and through site visits and other evaluation processes (e.g. new school application process).
- On-the-job training and sharing of effective practices: As team members often have the opportunity to do site visits, board observations and other school meetings together, we have the opportunity to learn with and from one another through observation and feedback.

CSD staff provides ongoing training for Osprey Wilds board members at committee meetings and board meetings. For example, Erin provided the Charter School Committee (CSC) and with training on the renewal process (November 2022) and the CSC Decision-Making & Engagement Tool (June 2022).

Authorizer Self-Evaluation (A.9)

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

Capacity. OW conducted a self-evaluation of its portfolio and discovered that one of the greatest needs in improving school performance is talented and consistent school leadership. In response to that self-evaluation, in August 2022, the CSD hired an Authorizing Specialist with a focus on Charter School Leadership. The role was designed to leverage the skills and perspectives developed through the role of authorizing specialist as an incubator for a strong charter school leader in the future. The primary role of this position is to work in collaboration with the Charter School Division (CSD) team to develop a student-centered, community-driven new school proposal or prepare for leadership of an operational charter school. By embedding with the CSD, the Authorizing Specialist, Charter School Leadership will build a toolkit of practices essential to school success, including effective academic models, school operations and governance, and financial management. As a member of OW's authorizing team, the school leader will observe practices across the portfolio and leverage this knowledge to build a strong foundation as a school leader.

Nalani McCutcheon departed in November 2022. In preparation for hiring a replacement, the CSD reflected on and evaluated its internal staff capacity and structure. Through this process, CSD staff self-evaluated its internal ability to oversee the portfolio of charter schools and identified a need for an Authorizing Specialist focused specifically on proactively supporting schools before they demonstrate indicators of distress, especially given the significant impacts of Covid-19 and staffing shortages statewide.

To fill this gap, Osprey Wilds created an Authorizing Specialist, School Sustainability position focused on key elements of school performance evaluation and oversight particularly related to the educational program, including instruction and assessment. This position is also primarily responsible for overseeing the development of improvement plans by schools on probation for academic performance, oversight of new school ready-to-open activities, and processing site and grade level expansion applications from existing schools. This role is key in ensuring the CSD is increasing the quality of OW's charter school portfolio.

The CSD has regular strategic planning meetings to measure progress toward its authorizer organizational goals (A.2) and ensure it is carrying out its work in alignment with its mission, vision, values, JEDI commitments, and strategic goals. Each of these meetings involves self-evaluation of progress toward the goals as well as other key indicators (such as NACSA principles). During one strategic planning meeting, staff evaluated individual capacity, assigning school's primary contacts in alignment with staff strengths and availability. As part of these meetings, OW staff has established a regular practice of reflecting on professional development and sharing key learnings and takeaways with the entire team in order to build the capacity of the entire staff, not just the individual(s) who attended the training.

Infrastructure. In March 2023, the new configuration of CSD staff updated its documentation of internal processes and tasks using a responsibility assignment (RACI) matrix. This matrix breaks down OW responsibilities by MAPES evaluation area and assigns who is Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed on each item. The RACI matrix allows OW to avoid role confusion, ensure there are adequate human resources for its authorizing work, and ensure work is balanced across the team. The RACI matrix also helps identify gaps, set clear expectations for team members about their duties and roles, and review as needed to support capacity building and self-evaluation.

In December 2022, OW staff reviewed the CSD's strategic goals and priorities, identifying items that were completed and those that should be prioritized within the remainder of FY23. In January 2023, the CSD designated time for collaborative project planning, establishing specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound goals for the identified projects. The project planning documentation established an infrastructure for accountability toward accomplishing these important tasks.

Practices. In the fall of 2022, OW self-evaluated its process documentation practices for contract amendments, filling in missing steps in the process to ensure updated exhibits are filed correctly and accessible. Additionally, the CSD engages in extensive reflective practice to evaluate and improve practices. For example, OW staff reflected on the learning outcomes from the Leaders Retreat, establishing priorities and lessons learned for future training offerings.

As noted above, from March to September 2022, OW staff participated in the Promise54 DEI Accelerator through a grant provided by NACSA. This was an opportunity for the CSD to reshape its hiring and onboarding practices with a diversity, inclusion, equity, and racial justice lens through a structured process. The accelerator required OW staff to use an "Action Planning Workbook" to support planning and implementation of a DEI plan that was informed by internal survey data and self-evaluation of that data. As a result of this accelerator, the CSD identified key priorities to begin working on and redesigned its hiring and onboarding processes to focus on creating an inclusive environment. Once the accelerator was completed, the CSD continued to work on the DEI Action Plan for the remainder of 2022, and used the same process of self-evaluation to create a new DEI Action Plan for 2023.

Authorizer High Quality Authorizing Dissemination (A.10)

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

Osprey Wilds has been a leader among authorizers in Minnesota, sharing best practices and assisting other authorizers in high quality authorizing. (This was affirmed when Osprey Wilds was evaluated by the Minnesota Department of Education in summer 2020, earning a score of 3.81 and a rating of Exemplary.) OW engages with other Minnesota authorizers through the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MACSA) monthly meetings, as well as through other channels. Further, Osprey Wilds is a resource to authorizers around the country.

Examples from FY2023 include:

- In August 2022, the National Charter Schools Institute requested that Erin “be part of our advisory group of early adopters” as A-GAME was applying for a CSP Dissemination grant.
- In August 2022, Erin conducted an interview with Kelly Wynveen of WestEd discussing “authorizing practices and how [OW] incorporates community needs or input.”
- Addie was re-elected to serve as secretary of the MACSA board and Emily was re-elected to serve as treasurer of the MASCA board in FY23.
- Erin served on the Authorizing for All Leadership Team, facilitating breakout groups, opening sessions, and collaborating in the planning and sequencing of sessions during spring 2023.
- Nalani, Erin, Emily, Alul, and Addie co-presented the session “Onboarding: A Tool Toward Inclusive Team Transformation” at the NACSA Conference on October 25, 2022. Erin and Alul co-presented an additional session at the conference as a part of the NACSA Equity Design Lab, “A Focus on the Power of Empathy.”
- Erin participated in the NACSA Leaders Program, which concluded in October 2022.
- Throughout spring 2023, Erin co-facilitated A-GAME virtual convenings.

In addition, several authorizers from within and outside Minnesota have sought out OW’s assistance, including:

- In August 2022, OW provided resources on distribution of assets during school closure to Innovative Quality Schools via email.
- In September 2022, the Colorado Charter School Institute requested, “your insights and takeaways from your experience authorizing...a microschool.”
- In April 2023, Grand Valley State University requested resources on the new school application process, which OW provided via email.
- In May 2023, the Louisiana Department of Education requested Osprey Wilds’ resources on microschool accountability, which OW provided via email.
- In May 2023, NOLA Public Schools requested, “the document your team uses to articulate the appropriate level of detail you expect from school financial statements,” which OW provided via email.
- In May 2023, Spokane Virtual Learning Partnerships reached out for information to better understand how charter authorizers use NWEA MAP data for evaluating student growth for charter schools, and information on OW’s methodology for responsive goals for alternative schools, which was provided via an informational interview.
- In June 2023, Volunteers of America requested guidance on mutual nonrenewal which was provided via email.

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

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

Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center (Osprey Wilds or OW) provides proactive support and technical assistance that is based on demonstrated need and designed to promote excellent performance of, prevent problems in, and protect the autonomy of the schools in its portfolio. In efforts to protect schools' autonomy, technical assistance offered by Osprey Wilds to authorized schools is completely voluntary and not required. OW regularly provides technical assistance and strategic support in the following three ways:

1. **Resources & Strategic Support.** Osprey Wilds publishes and disseminates a variety of resources and tools designed to anticipate problems, share information on quality practices being implemented at other schools, and provide timely information regarding Osprey Wilds policies and practices.
2. **Compliance & Contractual Expectations.** Osprey Wilds sets clear criteria and expectations, provides examples of what it means to meet such criteria and expectations, and provides quality feedback to schools regarding their performance in relation to these criteria and expectations.
3. **Professional Development.** Osprey Wilds offers professional development opportunities to prevent problems, promote continuous improvement, and encourage sharing of practices between and among its authorized schools.

While Osprey Wilds provided much of the same support as described in previous years' annual reports, the impacts of Covid-19 continued to impact schools in Osprey Wilds portfolio, particularly with high staff turnover and burnout. The Osprey Wilds Charter School Division pivoted to create more opportunities to connect and communicate with school personnel to address changing dynamics and challenges arising from the pandemic. Many of OW's resources are documented on the Charter School Division website and additional avenues of technical support are summarized below:

School Leader Support. Several schools in Osprey Wilds' portfolio experienced a leadership transition in FY23. To proactively address the specific challenges posed for school directors entering a position during a time of great change in education, Osprey Wilds continued scheduling targeted onboarding sessions with the Director of Charter School Authorizing and new school leaders. Establishing clear expectations, supportive resources, and personal communication was a preventative step taken to ensure that schools did not experience acute leadership issues during an extraordinarily stressful time. In addition, OW staff offered technical support to school leadership over the course of the year in these areas: the contracting process, school leader performance evaluations, open meeting law, online and blended learning options, strategic planning, personnel policies and practices, board member conflicts of interest and elections, parent complaints, the role of the board chair, guidance on the Environmental Literacy Plan, expansions, school leader recruitment and hiring, and more.

Governance Resources. Throughout FY23, Osprey Wilds created five new issues of The Sounding Board, a periodic publication promoting quality charter school governance. The issues published were: "Supporting the School Leader" (October 2022), "Teacher and Staff Retention" (January 2023), "Personnel Files" (February 2023), "Conflicts of Interest" (May 2023) and "Cameras in Classrooms" (June 2023).

In addition, Osprey Wilds continued to offer no cost, virtual new board member training twice a year (the first Tuesday of August and the first Tuesday of February). Sessions include, “What Boards Need to Know About the Charter School Contract,” “What Boards Need to Know About Their Roles & Responsibilities,” “What Boards Need to Know About Charter School Employment Policies & Practices,” “What Boards Needs to Know About Open Meeting Law,” “What Boards Needs to Know About Open Meeting Law,” and, “What Boards Need to Know About Charter School Financial Management.”

OW also offered virtual board training specifically related to financial management and oversight, including the webinars, “What Boards Need to Know About Charter School Financial Management, Part 2,” “What Boards Need to Know About Charter School Audits,” and “What Boards Need to Know About Charter School Budgets.”

Environmental Education. Osprey Wilds continued to offer onboarding for school staff in the EE Coordinator role. While this support was critical during years impacted by the pandemic, it is a proactive support that has also been beneficial as schools are recovering from the pandemic (especially given that many of them are rebuilding their EE programs). In addition, Osprey Wilds also sent a bi-monthly Environmental Education Update to schools with resources, ideas, and upcoming professional development opportunities. Archives of OW’s various publications are available on the OW Charter School Division website.

Environmental Education Teacher Workshop. The FY23 EE Teacher Workshop was offered as a virtual experience on June 16, 2023 with 42 participants in attendance at one or more sessions. The workshop offered two sessions, one on “Aligning EE with Mission and Vision” facilitated by Addie Washington and Pat Hartman. The second session provided curricular resources and was titled “Building Up EE in Your Curriculum Framework,” facilitated by Nadine Meyer, Education Director, OW. In addition to the two breakout sessions, participants were given an introduction to updated documentation processes for school EE programs, with time for questions and networking.

Leaders Retreat. The retreat was held on August 17 & 18, 2022. Given that Osprey Wilds is a statewide authorizer, all sessions were virtual. In total nearly 60 school leaders and board members attended one or more sessions. The goal of the retreat was to help school leaders and board members operationalize empathy and center community voice. A highlight of the series was a panel discussion featuring school leaders and board members who were experienced in building partnerships and systems that place community at the center. Given the conflicts that school boards have worked through in the past two years, the panel focused on what school leaders and boards can do to build trust within the community to create sustainable school systems. Although the sessions for the Leaders Retreat were all held virtually, they incorporated a variety of engaging components including keynote speakers, icebreaker activities, and small breakout groups for discussion, polling, and facilitated conversations.

Evaluations. Osprey Wilds conducted academic and financial evaluations on each school in our portfolio, and evaluated the environmental education and operations performance of each school in renewal during FY2023 (eight schools). Evaluations are informed by site visits and board observations and feedback from evaluation activities is presented to the schools’ boards during a regular meeting to ensure their understanding of the criteria and the school’s performance in relation to those criteria. As stated above, we believe this provides critical technical assistance to guide schools’ ongoing improvement efforts.

Templates. Osprey Wilds provided schools with specific templates for key submissions including but not limited to the required charter school Annual Report and World’s Best Workforce Report. While schools were not required to use this template, they had to meet statutory requirements in the report. Anecdotally, we saw that, in general, schools that used the template published and submitted charter school Annual Reports/World’s Best Workforce Reports of higher quality. OW also publishes guidelines for statutorily and contractually compliant bylaws, websites, lottery policies, and a list of required policies to provide transparent expectations for schools.

Interventions. As school performance dictated, Osprey Wilds issued interventions such as Notices of Concern or Notices of Deficiency. These interventions provide specific feedback to schools on areas of performance that are of concern along with key requirements to address those concerns. While Osprey Wilds does not provide direct assistance to support schools in addressing concerns (in accordance with our Policy on Authorizer Role and School Autonomy), we strongly believe that through these interventions and the specific requirements we outline for schools to address, we are providing schools with needed guidance to improve their performance.

Epicenter. Osprey Wilds uses Epicenter as a compliance tool to gather key documents and provide schools with a calendar of key requirements. This tool serves both Osprey Wilds and the school, as it give us a systematic means to gather and monitor schools’ compliance activities and other key school performance data, but it also gives assistance to schools in that it provides a calendar of reminders for Osprey Wilds, MDE, and other important submission / compliance deadlines.

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

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

Osprey Wilds has consistently disseminated best practices of high performing charter schools to school leaders, board members, and other key staff at OW authorized schools. OW’s intentional plan for disseminating best practices and replicating successful models is clearly referenced in its approved authorizing plan and is aligned with our authorizing mission.

On an annual basis, Osprey Wilds conducts the following activities to replicate and disseminate best practices of high-quality charter schools:

- Environmental Education (EE) Updates include information and resources on best school practices and highlights on specific successes of Osprey Wilds authorized schools. An archive of EE Updates is available on the Charter School Division website.
- The annual Osprey Wilds Leaders Retreat (LR) brings together school leaders, teachers, and board members from OW authorized schools to learn about and share best practices. This retreat has happened annually since at least 2010.
- An annual Osprey Wilds EE Teacher Workshop brings together environmental education coordinators, teachers and school leaders from OW authorized schools to learn about and share environmental education strategies, techniques and best practices. This workshop has happened annually since 2015.

- At both the EE Teacher Workshop and LR, sessions included a mixture of school leaders, OW staff or external evaluators, and contracted experts sharing best practices. Materials from these sessions as well as the agenda and other conference documents are available to participants after the retreat via recordings and email.
- Osprey Wilds provides exemplars of best school practices to all schools via Epicenter. Such exemplars include but are not limited to sample policies, templates, and guidance documents.
- OW provides all school leaders and board chairs with easy access to colleagues to support the dissemination of best practices among schools. Osprey Wilds maintains and provides to its authorized schools contact information for school leaders, board chairs, EE Coordinators, and finance managers to encourage communication, sharing, and dissemination.

Specific activities and resources implemented during FY2023 are outlined below:

- In August 2022, OW organized the Leaders Retreat panel, “Operationalizing Empathy: Learning from Communities We Serve.” Leaders from one school in the OW portfolio (Higher Ground Academy), along with Kevin Xiong, the Executive Director of New Millennium Academy, and Tierney Carroll, the founder of School Transformation Collaborative, shared innovative practices with other school leaders and board members in the portfolio.
- In January 2023, OW staff connected the school leader at Partnership Academy with Noble Academy, Prairie Seeds Academy, and Excell Academy as schools with good examples of instructional coaching, school-wide behavior response systems, and working with family populations that speak languages other than English.
- In January 2023, OW sent language regarding best practices for public comment at board meetings from Endazhi-Nitaawiging and World Learner School to Academic Arts High School.
- In June 2023, OW shared North Lakes Academy’s draft of its Malicious and Sadistic Conduct Policy with the portfolio as an example.
- In FY23, MDE did not publish a list of charter schools eligible to apply for replication / significant expansion grants as determined by the 2022 High Quality Charter Methodology. However, in 2022, Excell Academy and Noble Academy were identified as “High Quality Charter Schools” under this criteria.
 - Under the current methodology, “High Quality Charter Schools” must meet five of six academic outcome measures and five compliance checks. In 2022, three additional schools (Higher Ground Academy, Glacial Hills Elementary School, and Best Academy) met the academic threshold but missed one or more compliance checks. This is an area that OW has identified for ongoing monitoring and support as it is important to help schools fulfill these compliance requirements in order to access the resources of the CSP grant.

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Portfolio Information

General Charter School Portfolio Data (as of June 30, 2023)

Preoperational Charter Schools in Authorizer's Portfolio

Name of Charter School	Charter School Local Educational Agency (LEA) Number (if assigned)	Charter Schools Program (CSP) Grant Recipient	Grade Levels Approved to Serve	Projected Enrollment when Fully Enrolled	Proposed Location	Proposed Opening Date
Angela Day School for Liberation and Progressive Education	4299	Yes	K-8	154	Minneapolis	09/05/2023
St. Cloud Social Justice Academy	4296	Yes	K-8	216	St. Cloud	09/05/2023
STEM Micro School	N/A	No	K-8	216	Minneapolis / St. Paul	09/02/2025
United Academy of Excellence and Leadership	4300	No	K-8	450	Brooklyn Park	09/03/2024

Operational Charter Schools in Authorizer's Portfolio

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	CSP Grant Recipient	Grade Levels Served in FY 2023	Location
Academic Arts High School	4119	No	9-12	West Saint Paul
AFSA K-12	4074	Yes	K-12	Vadnais Heights
Aurora Charter School	4067	No	PreK-8	Minneapolis

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	CSP Grant Recipient	Grade Levels Served in FY 2023	Location
Aurora Waasakone Community of Learners	4271	Yes	K-6	Bemidji
Best Academy	4192	Yes	K-8	Minneapolis
Cannon River STEM School	4194	No	K-8	Faribault
Central Lakes Adventure School (formerly Pillager Area Charter School)	4080	No	7-12	Pillager
Crosslake Community School	4059	Yes	PreK-12	Crosslake
Discovery Public School	4081	No	6-12	Faribault
Discovery Woods Schools	4198	Yes	PS-6	Brainerd
East Range Academy	4166	No	9-12	Eveleth
Excell Academy	4068	No	PS-8	Brooklyn Park
Glacial Hills Elementary	4168	No	PreK-6	Starbuck
Great Expectations School	4100	No	K-8	Grand Marais
Higher Ground Academy	4027	No	K-12	Saint Paul

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	CSP Grant Recipient	Grade Levels Served in FY 2023	Location
La Crescent Montessori & STEM School	4054	No	PS-12	La Crescent
Laura Jeffrey Academy	4164	No	5-8	Saint Paul
Legacy of Dr. Josie R. Johnson Montessori	4189	No	PS-6	Minneapolis
Metro Schools	4131	No	K-12	Minneapolis
Minnesota Wildflower Montessori School	4265	Yes	PS-K	Minneapolis
New Discoveries Montessori Academy	4161	Yes	PS-8	Hutchinson
Noble Academy	4171	Yes	K-9	Brooklyn Park
North Lakes Academy	4053	No	K-12	Forest Lake
Northern Lights Community School	4146	No	6-12	Warba
North Shore Community School	4084	No	PS-6	Duluth
Oshki Ogimaag Charter School	4195	No	K-6	Grand Portage
Partnership Academy	4097	No	PS-8	Richfield

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	CSP Grant Recipient	Grade Levels Served in FY 2023	Location
Prairie Seeds Academy	4126	No	K-12	Brooklyn Park
Riverway Learning Community	4064	No	PS-12	Winona
Swan River Montessori	4137	No	PS-6	Monticello
Three Rivers Montessori	4266	Yes	PS-8	Elk River
Vermilion Country School	4207	Yes	7-12	Tower
Voyageurs Expeditionary School	4107	Yes	6-12	Bemidji
World Learner School	4016	No	1-8	Chaska

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

Name of Charter School	Officially Recognized Early Childhood Health and Developmental Screening Program	Officially Recognized Instructional Preschool Program to provide early childhood education and preparation for transition to kindergarten for children ages three to five	Officially Recognized Instructional Prekindergarten Program for four-year-olds to prepare children for entry into kindergarten the following year
AFSA K-12	Yes	No	Yes
Aurora Charter School	No	Yes	No

Crosslake Community School	No	No	Yes
Discovery Woods	No	Yes	No
Excell Academy	Yes	Yes	Yes
La Crescent Montessori School	No	Yes	No
Legacy of Dr. Josie R. Johnson Montessori (formerly Bright Water Elementary)	No	Yes	No
Minnesota Wildflower Montessori School	No	Yes	No
New Discoveries Montessori Academy	No	Yes	No
Noble Academy	No	No	Yes
North Shore Community School	No	Yes	No
Partnership Academy	No	Yes	No
Riverway Learning Community	No	Yes	No
Swan River Montessori	No	Yes	No
Three Rivers Montessori	No	Yes	No

Charter School Portfolio Activity in FY 2023

Did any charter schools leave your organization’s portfolio and transfer to another authorizer during or at the end of the year?

No

If yes, complete the table below for each applicable school.

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	New Authorizing Organization	Effective Date of Transfer
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Did your organization terminate or revoke the charter contract for any charter school before the end of the contract term?

No

If yes, complete the table below for each applicable school.

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	Reason(s) for Contract Termination	Effective Date of Contract Termination
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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

No

If yes, complete the table below for each applicable school.

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	Reason(s) for Closure	Effective Date of Closure
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Charter School Portfolio Performance

Academic Performance

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

The following table includes the performance of Osprey Wilds authorized schools in each indicator area on the Academic Performance Evaluation Framework. OW provides a comprehensive academic performance evaluation annually that covers indicator areas shown in the table and that is based on a school’s academic contractual goals (i.e. Exhibit G). Performance ratings are based on whether schools meet contractual goals in each area. Each goal area may include multiple measures that could include absolute performance, improvement, or comparative performance. Not all schools had ratings in each area. For example, Post-Secondary Readiness is only for schools that serve students Grades 9-12.

Information is from the most recent evaluation for each school, completed in FY23 (based on FY22 academic data). OW did not create academic performance evaluations during the 2020-21 school year due to a lack of data. Accountability data from ACCESS, MCA, MTAS, and many other measures (e.g. STAR, NWEA MAP, FastBridge, etc.) was disrupted in FY20 due to Covid-19 related school closures and implementation of distance learning, and many schools were unable to conduct spring administrations of school administered testing. As a result, data routinely required to assess the school’s progress toward its academic and academic-related goals in Exhibit G was unavailable.

In line with Minnesota’s ESSA waiver, and due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on data collection and usability, MCA, ACCESS, and MTAS data collected during the 2020-21 school year was not be used for accountability purposes. To that end, in FY22 Osprey Wilds provided an academic evaluation to all schools based on FY21 data, but used FY19 data to inform accountability decisions (e.g. renewal) until FY22 data became available. In the FY22 academic performance evaluations, OW used FY21 data in aggregates only when it benefited the school. Aggregates of comparison data used the same years included in the aggregate for the school.

Indicator Area	Percent of schools that met or exceeded the standard			
	Evaluation Year	FY23	FY22	FY20
Data Year	FY22	FY21	FY19	FY18
A.1 Mission Related Outcomes	77.1%	44.1%	54.3%	60%
A.2 English Learners	17.1%	5.9%	8.6%	17.1%
A.3 Reading Growth	48.6%	32.4%	31.4%	51.4%
A.4 Math Growth	31.4%	29.4%	25.7%	51.4%
A.5 Reading Proficiency	42.9%	32.4%	54.3%	48.6%
A.6 Math Proficiency	17.1%	14.7%	22.9%	22.9%
A.7 Science Proficiency	45.7%	38.2%	48.6%	45.7%
A.8 Proficiency in Other Curricular Areas	45.7%	38.2%	45.7%	37.1%
A.9 Post-Secondary Readiness	22.9%	14.7%	17.1%	22.9%
A.10 Attendance	45.7%	47.1%	57.1%	60.0%

As noted above, the academic performance evaluations completed in FY23 represent academic data from FY22, the first year in which most schools were fully back in-person (with some disruptions due to local Covid-19

outbreaks and some schools offering a distance learning program for students opting to learn from home). Despite those ongoing challenges, the percentage of schools meeting or exceeding their goals began to rebound to levels similar to FY19 (documented in the FY20 evaluations), the school year immediately preceding the pandemic. As noted in the table below, the percentage of schools that met or exceeded the goal in each indicator area increased from FY22 to FY23 with the exception of attendance, which is consistent with statewide and national trends.

Increase or decrease from FY22 to FY23 evaluations									
A.1	A.2	A.3	A.4	A.5	A.6	A.7	A.8	A.9	A.10
33.0%	11.3%	16.2%	2.0%	10.5%	2.4%	7.5%	7.5%	8.2%	-1.3%

While some of the contractual goals were renegotiated to reflect the realities and changes schools experienced due to Covid-19 and distance learning, mainly this reflects the hard work of students, teachers, and school staff to ensure student learning in very difficult circumstances.

OW continues to invest in an Authorizing Specialist focused on key elements of school performance evaluation and oversight particularly in the area of school academic performance. This role’s primary duty is academic data management and analysis, which is used to give feedback to schools that will support decisions about curriculum and instruction. This role is also tasked with contractual goal setting, which includes negotiating goals for renewal contracts, new school contracts, contract extensions, and other revisions as needed. Finally, this role implements and oversees a school intervention protocol, and monitors the execution of school improvement plans related to academic performance.

OW has also refocused its efforts to work with schools in renewal to develop performance improvement plans and strengthen its internal processes to monitor progress. All OW evaluators, both contract and staff, are tasked with crafting useful champion and developmental feedback relevant to schools’ mission & vision, instruction & assessment, and other areas of the education program in order to support continuous improvement and drive academic performance.

Osprey Wilds continues its work as a member of the National Authorizer Leadership Team (NALT) of the A-GAME Project (Assessing Global Access, Academic, Mission, and Engagement), co-directed by the National Charter Schools Institute and Momentum Strategy & Research. Through this project, OW partners with authorizers from across the nation to develop and disseminate resources and tools to help charter school authorizers create responsive goals that are designed to capture all student learning, especially the learning that is not captured by state assessments and traditional measures. OW is continuing to develop its alternative accountability measures that better represent the success of schools than traditional assessments, especially for schools that serve students at risk of dropping out.

Schools earn an overall score on their academic goals and the academic performance framework, which is calculated as a percent. Osprey Wilds has two goals from its 2020-2025 strategic plan related to schools’ academic performance:

1. Increase the percentage of schools that earn at least 75% on the Academic Performance Evaluation.

FY23 (FY22 data)	FY22 (FY21 data)	FY20 (FY19 data)	FY19 (FY18 data)	FY18 (FY17 data)
34.3% (12/35)	23.5% (8/34)	37.1% (13/35)	48% (16/33)	40% (14/35)

After an unsurprising dip in performance in FY22 (based on FY21 data), Osprey Wilds is again making progress on this goal although recovery continues. Osprey Wilds is working with schools to more closely align the measures in their contracts to reflect the AR in SMART (Achievable and Realistic), including incorporating alternative accountability measures for high schools that serve a high population of students at risk of dropping out.

n.b. As noted above, there is no updated data for the 2020-21 school year, because these evaluations are based on data from FY20. Because there were no spring assessments due to impacts from Covid-19 and distance learning, there was limited to no data to evaluate. Any data that was captured during the FY21 school year was aggregated in the FY22 academic performance evaluations.

2. Reduce the percentage of schools that earn less than 50% on the Academic Performance Evaluation or maintain below 20%.

FY23 (FY22 data)	FY22 (FY21 data)	FY20 (FY19 data)	FY19 (FY18 data)	FY18 (FY17 data)
20% (7/35)	47.1% (16/34)	14.3% (5/35)	15.2% (5/33)	23.5% (8/35)

Again, after an unsurprising jump in the data in FY22, OW made progress toward this goal in FY23 and nearly met the target. In FY22 Osprey Wilds provided an academic evaluation to all schools based on FY21 data to help schools monitor progress toward their contractual goals as well as establish and document baselines for student growth and proficiency. It also helps Osprey Wilds establish portfolio-wide baselines for growth and recovery and set realistic goals given this new reality. This is reflected in OW’s progress toward both of these strategic goals.

Exhibit P of Osprey Wilds’ charter contract establishes, “If a school attains less than half of its contractual outcomes in Exhibit G as determined by OW’s Academic Performance Evaluation (i.e., less than 50% of possible points), the school would be considered a candidate for nonrenewal.” Based on Osprey Wilds’ ongoing oversight and academic performance evaluation, a school that earns fewer than 50% of the points on the academic performance framework is typically placed on formal intervention or corrective action as described in Exhibit Q of the charter contract. If a school is placed on intervention, Osprey Wilds engages in additional oversight activities as warranted, such as focused site visits or monitoring a required remediation plan.

In FY22 and FY23, however, this approach seems neither useful nor compassionate given that so many schools’ performance was impacted by Covid-19, often in ways beyond their control. While this approach seemed to be having some impact, prior to the pandemic, OW must also consider what other supports are needed to help schools move from “approaching standard” to “meets standard,” especially given the changes of the last three years and the increased focus on learning loss recovery.

Operational Performance

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

The following table includes the performance of Osprey Wilds authorized schools in each indicator area on the Operational Performance Evaluation. OW provides expansive qualitative and compliance-related feedback in Operational Performance at least once during the contract term, so these ratings are based on the most recent evaluation for each school completed between FY20 and FY23. Complete information on operations and governance performance evaluation is available on the [OW website](#).

Indicator Area	Percent of schools that met the standard			
	FY23	FY22	FY21	FY20
O.1.1 Mission and Vision	79%	72%	75%	73%
O.1.2 Instruction and Assessment	61%	50%	53%	52%
O.1.3 Educational Requirements	97%	100%	100%	100%
O.1.4 Special Education	97%	100%	100%	100%
O.1.5 English Learners	85%	91%	94%	97%
O.1.6 Parent & Student Satisfaction	85%	91%	94%	94%
O.2.1 Board Composition & Capacity	55%	69%	66%	61%
O.2.2 Board Decision Making & Oversight	33%	38%	38%	36%
O.2.3 Management Accountability	52%	53%	56%	52%
O.3.1 Facilities & Transportation	97%	100%	100%	100%
O.3.2 Health & Safety	97%	100%	100%	100%
O.4.1 Admissions & Enrollment	88%	88%	84%	82%
O.4.2 Due Process & Privacy	94%	97%	94%	94%
O.5.1 Licensure	97%	100%	100%	100%
O.5.2 Staff Retention	85%	88%	91%	88%
O.5.3 Employment Practices	88%	97%	94%	94%
O.6.1 Charter School Annual Reports	61%	72%	75%	76%
O.6.2 Insurance	79%	88%	84%	85%

O.6.3 Authorizer & State Compliance	67%	88%	81%	79%
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Areas of strength of Osprey Wilds authorized schools are in meeting key compliance requirements including health and safety, facilities and transportation, employment practices, licensure, insurance, educational requirements, due process & privacy, special education requirements, and English learner requirements. These areas have remained strong over the past four years. Schools generally are implementing education programs aligned to their stated missions and visions, and this number has increased since FY20. (It is important to note that this evaluation area has expanded to also include criteria such as implementation of statutory practices and other indicators of mission alignment, such as stakeholder perception and staffing levels.)

Areas for improvement continue to include the areas related to board governance, although some of the decrease in percentage of schools that met standard O.2.2 is due to increased accountability and clearer expectations related to this indicator area as well as increased monitoring and oversight by OW evaluators. While the percentage of schools meeting Indicator Area O.1.2 (instruction & assessment) is lower than desired given the primary purpose of charter schools (“to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement”) it has increased over the past four years.

Osprey Wilds continues to strengthen its mechanisms for providing meaningful and timely feedback to the schools it authorizes in the area of operations. OW provides site visit feedback that is more clearly aligned to the Osprey Wilds frameworks so that schools are able to make clear connections to contractual obligations and expectations. OW has used its Leaders Retreat as a time to provide clarification on each of those frameworks, allowing school to ask questions and gain additional insight into the rationale for each indicator. This has led to school’s having a greater understanding of OW requirements and expectations, allowing them to use the information more effectively. Additionally, OW has seen an increased focus on the areas that are the subject of continuous feedback.

Osprey Wilds has one strategic goal as it relates to schools’ operations performance:

1. Increase the percentage of schools that Meet Standard on 100% (3 of 3) of governance measures on Operations Performance Evaluation.

FY23	FY22	FY21	FY20	FY19
30.3% (10/33)	32.4% (11/34)	31.3% (10/32)	30.3% (10/33)	30.3% (10/33)

This number has remained basically flat since OW began tracking it. In response to this data Osprey Wilds has continued in efforts to provide training, guidance, and feedback to the schools in this area as outlined in other parts of this report. Beginning in FY21 and beyond, OW offers new board member training bi-annually (August and February) and board meeting observation feedback aligned with the evaluation. OW will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of these changes and iterate as necessary to facilitate stronger board governance and decision-making related to the primary purpose of charter schools. Early evidence, such as greater compliance with statutory board training requirements, reflected in Indicator area O.2.1 above, indicates these

interventions are working. From FY18 to FY22, schools meeting standard on this indicator area increased from 47% to 69%. (That number decreased in FY23 in part due to schools’ challenge in holding board elections during the pandemic.)

Financial Performance

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

The following table includes the performance of Osprey Wilds authorized schools in each indicator area on the Financial Performance Evaluation. Osprey Wilds provides a comprehensive financial evaluation annually that covers areas of financial management, short-term financial health, and long-term financial sustainability. Information is from the most recent evaluation for each school, completed in FY23 (based on FY22 year-end financial data). Complete information on Osprey Wilds’ financial performance evaluation is available on the [OW website](#).

Indicator Area	Percent of schools that met the standard			
	Evaluation Year	FY23	FY22	FY21
Data Year	FY22	FY21	FY20	FY19
F.1.1 Budgeting	85.3%	85.3%	87.9%	90.9%
F.1.2 Financial Policies & Practices	58.8%	73.5%	78.8%	81.8%
F.1.3 Financial Reporting	61.8%	64.7%	75.8%	87.9%
F.1.4 Financial Audit	55.9%	55.9%	60.6%	72.7%
F.2.1 Current Ratio	100%	100%	100%	100%
F.2.2 Days Cash on Hand	70.6%	76.5%	60.6%	54.5%
F.2.3 Enrollment Variance	76.5%	79.4%	66.7%	51.5%
F.3.1 Fund Balance Percentage	67.6%	64.7%	60.6%	54.5%
F.3.2 Total Margin/Aggregate Three-Year Total Margin	76.5%	76.5%	81.8%	72.7%
F.3.3 Debt to Asset Ratio	85.3%	76.5%	69.7%	84.8%

Data documents that overall, schools are performing well financially. Financial management indicators are strong for most schools, though approximately 44.1% of schools’ audits included findings. It should be noted, however, that the significant increase in audit findings between FY20 and FY21 is due to a change in the way in which OW evaluates legal compliance findings. In the past, OW has not included legal compliance findings in its evaluation. However, in order to support greater accountability and encourage schools to implement corrective action plans (CAPs) related to these findings, OW changed its practice (and updated its approved authorizing plan) to issue a rating of “Does Not Meet Standard” if any previous year audit findings have been repeated in most recent audit. As a result, more schools are earning a rating of “Does Not Meet Standard” in this indicator area until those issues are resolved. This trend continued in FY23 evaluations.

Additionally, Osprey Wilds observed a rebound in the debt to asset ratio overall in evaluations completed during FY23. The change in this measure across the portfolio is primarily due to the funds received from PPP loans at

several schools in the portfolio, which were forgiven during the evaluation period and do not represent a threat to the schools’ long-term sustainability.

Schools have demonstrated continued strong performance in the area of budgeting, especially as it relates to school boards considering how they invest in the school’s program to improve student outcomes. Strong budgeting practices are especially important as boards balance changes to enrollment and monitor the impacts of and recovery from Covid-19 related learning loss.

Short term indicators are generally strong with 100% of schools well positioned to meet current obligations. The percentage of schools meeting standard in the days cash indicator decreased slightly from FY22. Increases in FY21 and FY22 were likely due to the infusion of federal funds related to Covid-19 related recovery. This remains an ongoing area of monitoring for Osprey Wilds as schools approach a related “financial cliff” brought on by the abrupt ending of federal pandemic relief funds, slowing or decreasing enrollments, and slowing state revenues. Schools continued to improve their practices related to effectively predicting enrollment, with more than 3/4 of schools accurately projecting enrollment. In the past this has hovered between 50-60%, although increasing over time. This is likely related to stronger budgeting and financial oversight practices. (This has been a specific focus of Osprey Wilds’ technical assistance over the past four years and is an area of ongoing monitoring.)

Finally, a positive trend of increasing fund balances continued with more than 60% of schools meeting the current fund balance target of 20% on the FY23 evaluation (the highest in any of the past four years). Many schools are still far above the 20% threshold.

Osprey Wilds has one strategic goal as it relates to schools’ financial performance:

1. Increase the percentage of schools that Meet Standards on 100% (4 of 4) of financial management measures on Financial Performance Evaluation.

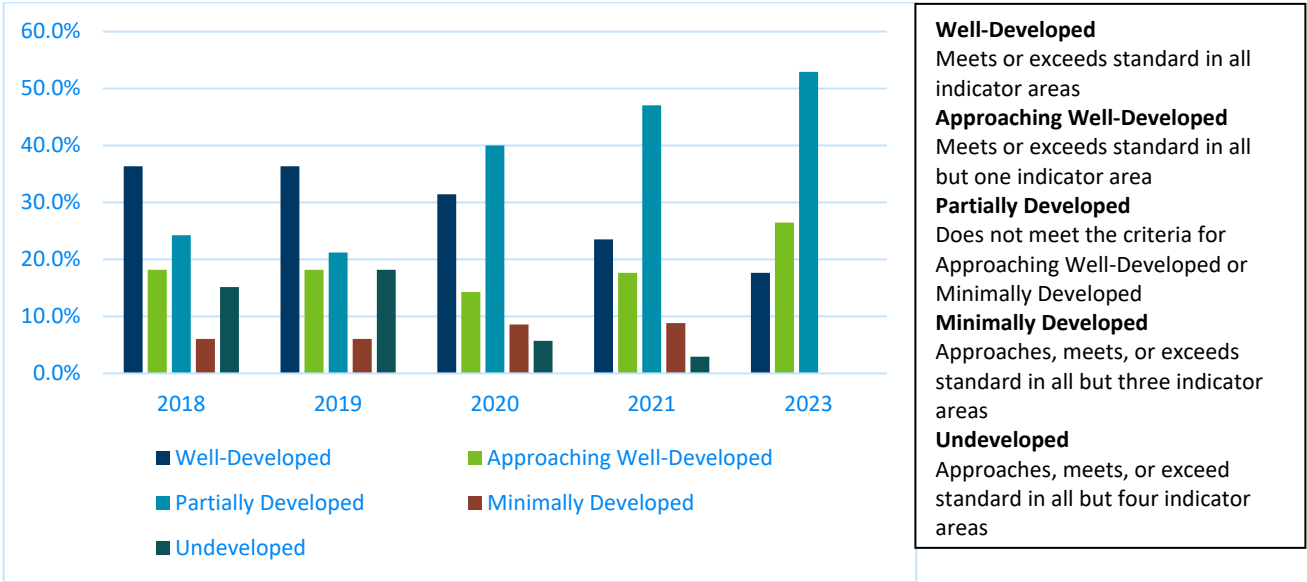
FY23	FY22	FY21	FY20	FY19
35.3% (12/34)	44.1% (15/34)	48.5% (16/33)	55.9% (19/34)	52.9% (18/34)

As noted above, Osprey Wilds has tightened up many of its evaluation practices related to financial management, especially related to audits, policies, and practices. Specifically, OW is ensuring that all schools have in place relevant financial policies required by statute, contract, and regulation (e.g. annual charter school assurances), that those policies are on file with the authorizer, and posted to the school’s website. Because this work typically occurs as schools move through renewal, OW expects that this figure will rebound as schools adapt, revise, and publish required policies.

Other Performance

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

Consistent with Osprey Wilds’ mission, all schools authorized by OW must increase the environmental literacy of all students through environmental education. The following summarizes performance of schools in OW’s portfolio over the past six years. This includes information is from the most recent evaluation for each school, completed in FY24 (based on FY23 year-end environmental education survey data). Because renewal evaluations were not yet complete in FY23 when the annual report was submitted, data from evaluations completed in FY23 (based on FY22 year-end environmental education survey data) is included with 2023 data.



Overall, the performance of Osprey Wilds authorized charter schools in the area of environmental education (EE) improved in FY23 – 44.1% earned a rating of well-developed or approaching well-developed, a slight increase from 41.2% in FY21. (Again, please note that 2022 performance data is included with 2023 due to the timing of renewal evaluations.) While overall the percentage of schools earning a rating of well-developed or approaching well-developed has decreased from a high of 54.5% in 2019, this is likely due in part to challenges with implementing EE while schools are also balancing ongoing challenges related to learning loss, attendance, staffing, and other pandemic-related issues. However, a significant marker of success is that since 2019 the portfolio has gone from eight schools with minimally or undeveloped EE program to ZERO! This is cause for celebration. In addition, there are three schools that have not yet been formally evaluated (all three schools are in their first contract period with Osprey Wilds).

Osprey Wilds has a strategic goal in this area as follows:

1. Increase the percentage of schools that earn an EE Program Rating of Well-Developed or Approaching Well-Developed.

FY24 (FY22 & 23 data)	FY22 (FY21 data)	FY21 (FY20 data)	FY20 (FY19 data)
44.1% (15/34)	41.2% (14/34)	45.7% (16/35)	54.5% (18/33)

It continues to be a challenge to meet the goal in this strategic area as OW authorized schools straddle two different evaluation frameworks (in FY25 all schools will finally be on the same one as schools’ contracts are renewed and OW negotiates new EE goals using the current evaluation framework) and schools target resources toward recovery from learning loss and other challenges in the wake of Covid-19. However, there are some bright spots in the data. When comparing just data from the current EE performance evaluation framework (v. 3.0) across the last few years, there are clear signs of strength in that most schools are meeting their environmental education goals, as evidenced by the table below.

(Again, as noted above, information from 2022 and 2023 is included in evaluations completed during FY24, indicated in the column labeled “2023” below. Reporting on school performance is always one year in arrears.)

Percentage Meets or Exceeds	2023 (30 schools)	2021 (15 schools)	2020 (11 schools)	2019 (9 schools)
EE.1	70%	67%	73%	67%
EE.2	70%	60%	55%	44%
EE.3	73%	67%	64%	56%
EE.4	70%	80%	82%	78%
EE.5	60%	53%	55%	44%
EE.6.1	73%	73%	73%	75%
EE.6.2	67%	67%	64%	63%
EE.6.3	70%	67%	55%	50%
EE.7	67%	73%	64%	75%
EE.8	73%	80%	73%	75%

OW continued to focus on this area in FY23 by working with schools to develop relevant and realistic environmental education goals, creating responsive EE teacher workshops and other trainings to support implementation, and staffing the Charter School Division with experienced environmental education and school staff. Currently 3/5 full-time CSD staff are environmental educators, including a licensed 9-12 life science teacher.