



Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Authorizer Annual Report

Authorizer Information

Name of Authorizing Organization: Osprey Wilds

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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 of Directors makes decisions regarding the ongoing authorization of any particular school.

Authorizer Processes

New Charter School Applications in FY 2024 (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 2024 (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 2024	Projected Opening Date	Did this School Open as Planned?	If No, Provide Reason(s) and Revised Projected Opening Date
Angela Day School for Liberation and Progressive Education	September 5, 2023	No	Inadequate enrollment

Charter School Expansion Applications (to add primary enrollment sites or grades, including instructional prekindergarten or preschool programs) in FY 2024 (B.2)

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

Yes

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
Glacial Hills Elementary School	Grades 7 and 8	Disapproval	N/A	Application did not provide evidence of a longitudinal record of demonstrated student academic performance.	N/A

Early Childhood Health and Developmental Screening Requests in FY 2024 (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 2024 (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 2024 (B.9)

Did your organization engage in charter renewal activities in FY 2024?

Yes

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
Aurora Charter School	Yes	07/01/2024-06/30/2027	N/A
Aurora Waasakone Community of Learners	Yes	07/01/2024-06/30/2027	N/A
Discovery Public School	Yes	07/01/2024-06/30/2029	N/A
Excell Academy for Higher Learning	Yes	07/01/2024-06/30/2029	N/A
Harvest Best Academy	Yes	07/01/2024-06/30/2029	N/A
Laura Jeffrey Academy	Yes	07/01/2024-06/30/2029	N/A
Riverway Learning Community	Yes	07/01/2024-06/30/2029	N/A
Voyageurs Expeditionary School	Yes	07/01/2024-06/30/2029	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 2024.

Progress on Osprey Wilds' organizational goals related to authorizing is provided below in the section "Charter School Portfolio Performance." Please see pages 23-32.

Authorizer Structure of Operations (A.3)

Describe changes, if any, to your organization's structure of operations related to authorizing in FY 2024 (for example, organizational changes, new positions, updated full-time equivalencies of authorizing positions, etc.).

During SY 2023-24 the OW CSD experienced no personnel hires or terminations. Erin Anderson continued in the role of Director of Charter School Authorizing, Emily Edstrom Moore, Ashley Estis, and Pat Hartman continued in

the roles of Authorizing Specialist, Addie Mazza (formerly Washington) shifted to the role of Authorizing Specialist, and Jolene Palme continued in the role of Finance & Compliance Analyst at 0.625 FTE.

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 transitioned from Epicenter to Aerie 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 2024.

Amy Daly, OW Board of Directors

Amy brings a wide array of expertise and insight to the OW Board. She is an HR strategist, leader, and business partner with 25 years of proven success leading the adoption of systems, processes, and behaviors that drive performance, optimize talent, enable enterprise transformation, and foster an innovative culture. Her roles in the last decade at Ecolab have included oversight of finance and facilities in addition to acting as the Senior Director of Global HR for the company. In particular, her experience with employment law, policies, and practices are relevant to charter school operations, law, and finances.

Jessica Prenzlów-Morgan, OW Board of Directors

Jessica is an experienced educator who holds a K-12 Minnesota Principals License in addition to her Master of Arts degree in Education. Since 1996 she has held a variety of positions at Harambee Elementary School (a magnet school in the Roseville Area School District). Her leadership roles have focused on teaching and instruction, including among others: Gifted and Talented Building Lead, Building Assessment Coordinator, Executive Board of United Educators 6067, Educational Leadership Team, and District Mentor Trainer. She has presented nationally at the NWEA conference as well as at several MN conferences. She lends critical insight to the Board of Directors in the areas of academics and operations.

Chris Steel, OW Board of Directors

Chris is uniquely positioned as a Dentist who joined the Osprey Wilds Board of Directors because of his connection to the land on Grindstone Lake and environmental mission. His adjacent experience with small business employment, community engagement, financial management, and operations informs his role as a board member and contributes to sound oversight.

Kleber I. Ortiz, Contracted Evaluator

Kleber provides research-based insight and skills as a contracted evaluator, drawing upon years of teaching and leadership experience at both traditional district and charter schools (White Bear Lake Public Schools, Minneapolis Public Schools, El Colegio Charter High School, Andersen United Community School) and post-secondary institutions (Winona State University, Hamline University, Minneapolis Community and Technical

College). Kleber received the 21-22 Outstanding Educator of the Year Award from Minneapolis College as well as the Board of Trustees Educator of the Year Award for Excellence in Teaching from the MN State System in 2022. A self-described Latinx scholar and educator, he has experience leading teacher professional development, curriculum planning, and implementation along with advocating for Grow Your Own efforts and ethnic studies. Kleber is bilingual in Spanish and English which supports oversight in schools with a dual language program or a high population of English language learners. Kleber is a doctoral candidate at Mankato State University, and holds a 5-12 Social Studies teaching license.

Maya Warsame, Contracted Evaluator

Maya joins the OW slate of contracted evaluators with a range of valuable professional experience, including experience in school start-up operations, as a co-founder of a school, dean of students, teacher, and board member. In her work as a designer and co-facilitator of national cohort of teacher-led Montessori schools, she has experience in operations (resource allocation, coordination of supports and training) and strategic financial management. She is a licensed K-6 teacher and holds an AMI Montessori Primary Certificate.

Regina Seabrook, Contract Evaluator

Regina holds several professional educator licenses (7-12 Social Studies, K-12 Principal, and District Superintendent) and has years of teaching and research experience. Most recently she has served as the founder and executive director for American Dialogue Company LLC providing research-based racial equity and intercultural-focused professional development, consulting, and evaluation services for school districts and organizations. Additional experience that supports high quality charter school oversight includes: serving as the Director of Research, Curriculum, and Professional Development at Equity Alliance MN; serving on the Marshall School Board of Trustees; being recognized as a 2010 Finalist for Minnesota Teacher of the Year and the 2024-2026 Jackson Scholar.

Knowledge and Skill Development of Authorizing Leadership and Staff (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 FY24 OW dedicated resources to ongoing professional development that resulted in improved authorizer practices.

Osprey Wilds staff attended several national conferences both virtually and in-person. In October 2023, Addie virtually attended the North American Association for Environmental Education Conference and Ashley attended the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Conference. In June, Erin and Ashley attended the NACSA New School Application Summit to deepen their understanding and skills in support of implementing accessible, rigorous, and equitable new school application processes.

Throughout the year, CSD staff participated in a variety of equity-focused trainings. In November 2023, Erin and Ashley 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. Two OW staff participated virtually in the national A-GAME Convening, “Redefining Quality, Empowering Change: Transforming Education through Disruption, Equity, and Innovation” in February, April, and May of 2024. Erin attended the training sessions from the National Equity Project on “Designing and Facilitating Meetings for Equity.” All 5 full-time staff attended the University of Minnesota’s Leading in Equity Action and Diversity (LEAD) Conference in August 2023 and the Student-Centered Learning for Equity Conference in May of 2024. 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.

Other training and development included:

- Addie attended an Excel training in September to support data management and analysis.
- Jolene attended a Writing Essentials Workshop in February through St. Cloud State University to strengthen evaluation writing skills.
- Addie attended the Midwest Environmental Education Conference in November.

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 FY24 include:

- Preparation for Osprey Wilds New Board Member Training, Leaders’ Retreat, School Leader Community of Practice, and EE Office Hours.
- Erin provided training to all staff on using the board observation feedback form, operations performance evaluations, writing renewal evaluations, and facilitating effective meetings.
- Staff meetings and internal staff trainings: Review of issues related to the legislative changes new in SY23-24; 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. renewal site visit 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 training on the renewal process to the Charter School Committee (CSC) in November 2023 and the OW Board of Directors in December 2023.

If not provided above, please document the annual successful completion of training of your organization’s staff members during the previous year relative to chartering and an authorizer’s role and responsibilities.

Minn. Stat. 124E.05, subd. 2 (2023) as amended by the [Laws of Minnesota 2024, chapter 109, article 6, section 5.](#)

Per MN Stat. §124E.05 subd. 2, “The role of an authorizer is to ensure that a school it authorizes has the autonomy granted by statute, fulfills the purposes of a charter school, and is accountable to the agreed upon terms of the charter school contract in order to safeguard quality educational opportunities for students and maintain public trust and confidence.”

In addition to the training provided in the previous section, Osprey Wilds staff completed the following training in alignment with the statutory role of an authorizer:

- 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.
- Emily attended the Innovative Quality Schools Conference in August.
- Pat attended “NACSA’s Authorizing 101” session in October.
- Three staff attended the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) Conference in October 2023. At this conference, staff attended sessions focused on individual and organizational particular areas of need, such as embedding indicators of distress in monitoring and oversight, culture and climate site visits, valuing community co-design in the school design process, and redesigning the new school application process.
- Erin attended NACSA’s session “Becoming a Trusted Authorizer: How do we foster accountability without disempowering leaders?” in April.
- The team participated in periodic job-embedded training on elements of OW’s AAP, charter contract, and statute pertaining to charter schools, specifically: training on Exhibit M and school closure procedures, training on exhibit N and new statutory EMO/CMO requirements, and review of the OW AAP narrative.

In addition to the training described in the previous section, Osprey Wilds staff completed the following training in alignment with the statutory responsibilities of an authorizer:

- Pat attended MDE Bootcamp sessions throughout the fall.
- Jolene and Erin attended NACSA’s “ESSER and the Fiscal Cliff: Preparing for Effective Oversight” session in February.
- Erin attended the Center for Learner Equity’s “Move Together: A Call to Action to the Charter Ecosystem for Students with Disabilities” training conference in March.
- All staff attended a training on generating and reading FastBridge academic testing reports in September.
- Emily attended the MDE COMPASS Summer Institute in June.

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.

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).

Capacity. In July 2023, the CSD conducted annual planning to identify which staff would be the primary contact for each school in the portfolio as well as what training offerings would be offered in the school year. Through this process, the 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 ensuring schools receive high quality technical assistance based on demonstrated need and designed to prevent future problems. To fill this gap, Osprey Wilds created an Authorizing Specialist, Technical Assistance position focused on key elements of school performance evaluation and oversight, particularly related to technical assistance resources and training. This position is also primarily responsible for leading oversight of environmental education programs, as well as the contracting process for new school and renewal contracts. This role is key in ensuring the CSD is structuring oversight and providing guidance and resources that are responsive to school performance, improving the quality of OW's charter school portfolio.

In August 2023, the CSD created its annual plan for staffing and completing renewal site visits and evaluations. As in the past, the plan included leveraging contracted evaluators in addition to staff to ensure comprehensive and targeted oversight of each school in renewal. This self-evaluation process revealed a need for greater and more skilled capacity amongst contracted evaluators. To meet this need, OW built an asynchronous, self-paced training course for both CSD staff and contract evaluators on conducting and documenting site visits. In addition to establishing inter-rater reliability, the course is designed to build authorizer capacity to give robust, aligned, and high quality feedback to schools following a site visit in order to support high quality charter schools.

Infrastructure. In the fall of 2023, OW self-evaluated its process documentation practices for a variety of compliance activities, improving areas of confusion and redundancy and creating some new monitoring tools for clear and efficient communication with schools. These tools were then collected in a spreadsheet shared with each school. They include tools for monitoring website requirements, annual report compliance, the rate of on-time Aerie submissions, lottery policy compliance, required policies, bylaws compliance, affiliated building company oversight, pre-school/prekindergarten program monitoring, and graduation requirements.

Practice. In November, Osprey Wilds completed the MACSA survey on Authorizer Practices in the Renewal Process, self-reflecting on the degree to which OW fully implements the MACSA standards for renewal. In February, the CSD reviewed how the CSD is upholding the NACSA principles in its work. In May, the team reviewed school performance data to identify areas of demonstrated need to begin planning for proactive technical assistance in the coming school year. At a June strategic planning meeting the team proposed revisions to the Operations Evaluation Indicator 1, created a tool for monitoring indicators of distress in schools, and piloted the first component of an equity-decision making tool that had been developed throughout the course

of the year. Later in June, the team evaluated OW's current financial performance framework against NACSA's model financial performance framework, adopting some revisions in line with the model.

Additionally, the CSD engages in regular reflective practice during strategic planning and staff meetings 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. Meeting agendas have standing items to identify elements of OW practice that reflect NACSA principles, document examples of student-centered learning demonstrated by schools in the portfolio, and to track annual authorizing activities for each school to ensure that they are receiving the visits and observations needed each year.

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. (Osprey Wilds' authorizing leadership 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 School Authorizers (MACSA) monthly meetings, as well as through other channels. Further, Osprey Wilds is a resource to authorizers around the country. Examples from FY24 include:

- In October, Erin participated in an interview on equity-based charter authorizing practices for the Center for Learner Equity.
- In October, Erin participated in several different NACSA Conference events including:
 - Presenting OW's community centered new school ready to open process to the NACSA board of directors
 - Participating in a panel discussion in the "Community Based Authorizing: Current and Evolving Strategies" session
 - Co-presenting a session called "Reducing the Burden of Data Management on Authorizers and Schools" with Novation Education Opportunities and Innovative Quality Schools
 - Presenting the session "Seeking Liberatory Collaboration: Amplifying Impact through Community Input"
- In December, Erin shared effective authorizing resources regarding indicators of distress, site visits, renewal, writing site visit letters, performance evaluations, and OW's contracted evaluator agreement with the University of Wisconsin charter authorizing office.
- In February, Erin shared OW's site visit evaluator training course and site visit protocols with NOLA Public Schools.
- In February, Osprey Wilds authorizing work was discussed in the journal article, "Charter Authorizing, Applications and the Needs of Historically Marginalized Students: A Cross State Analysis" in *Educational Policy* (Sage Journals).
- In June, Erin and Ashley presented on OW's school leader incubator at the NACSA New School Application Summit.

- Throughout the year, Erin participated in the A-GAME Early Adopters cohort.

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

- In August, Erin presented to MACSA on changes in statute to new school application requirements.
- In December, Emily facilitated anti-bias, anti-racism training for MACSA focused on using an equity decision-making tool to evaluate market need and demand studies.
- 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 FY24.
- In December, Osprey Wilds provided Innovative Quality Schools with clarification about the purpose of charter review in the intervention process, shared contract language about contacting vendors and charter school release agreement, and provided guidance on board member compensation.
- In January, University of Saint Thomas requested guidance on charter school merger oversight.
- In March, Erin presented OW's affiliated building company oversight process to MACSA.
- In April, Pillsbury United Communities reached out to Osprey Wilds to learn about its contract amendment process and resources for charter revocation related to finances and bond monitoring with.
- In April, Volunteers of America reached out to discuss lessons learned from financial charter school closure.

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) provided proactive support and technical assistance that was 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 was completely voluntary and not required. OW regularly provided technical assistance and strategic support in the following three ways:

1. **Resources & Strategic Support.** Osprey Wilds published and disseminated 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 set clear criteria and expectations, provided examples of what it means to meet such criteria and expectations, and provided quality feedback to schools regarding their performance in relation to these criteria and expectations.
3. **Professional Development.** Osprey Wilds offered 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. 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 August, OW sent reminders to schools about changes to website, notification, and reporting requirements, and hosted a Cruz-Guzman case update for schools. Throughout the school year, Osprey Wilds hosted a regular Community of Practice for school leaders, generally featuring a guest speaker and time for discussion. The topics were chosen to provide proactive support, development, and technical assistance to the portfolio of charter schools. These meetings were led by school leaders, Osprey Wilds staff and evaluators, and other external experts and focused on improving capacity in the areas of academics, environmental education, finance, governance, operations, and compliance. Sessions were designed both in response to demonstrated needs of schools and to proactively address emerging issues. The overall goal of the Community of Practice was to promote excellence by connecting school leaders with people, information, and resources they can tap to improve the learning, achievement, and success of all students. In FY24, Community of Practice topics included legislative changes, educator mental health, parent engagement and more.

In addition, OW staff offered individual technical support to school leadership over the course of the year in these areas: school lottery policies, the renewal application process, fulfilling arts education requirements, conflict resolution and complaint procedures, employee background checks, crisis communication resources, using MDE report card to report data, guidance on finance reports, special education program requirements, transportation questions, open meeting law, ED succession planning, board member conflicts of interest and elections, guidance on the Environmental Literacy Plan, alternative licensing pathways, records retention policies, Exhibit J, affiliated building company oversight, and more.

Governance Resources. Throughout FY24, Osprey Wilds created four new issues of The Sounding Board, a periodic publication promoting quality charter school governance. The content of these publications was specifically designed to prevent problems and was identified primarily through OW oversight and evaluation activities (e.g. board meeting observations, review of monthly board meeting minutes, questions / concerns submitted by schools, etc.) and questions from school leaders and board members. The issues published were: "Public Comment" (September 2023), "MN Government Data Practices Act" (October 2023), "Financial Oversight" (November 2023), and "Complaint Policy" (December 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 included, "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. OW provided a variety of supports throughout the school year related to environmental education. Throughout the year, Osprey Wilds hosted “EE Office Hours” for Environmental Education Coordinators and other key staff at schools in its portfolio. These meetings provided a structured yet flexible space where school staff can come together to discuss challenges, share ideas, work through problems, and launch ideas collectively. Facilitated by an OW staff member, these sessions encouraged collaboration, sharing of best practices, and practical solutions. This approach fostered a supportive learning environment and helped prevent future problems by leveraging diverse insights and expertise. OW staff also provided one-on-one technical assistance to support goal writing, development of Environmental Literacy Plans, and identifying effective ways to measure students’ environmental literacy. In the spring, Osprey Wilds aggregated and circulated to its portfolio a list of low and no cost teacher trainings taking place over the summer as a way to connect schools with professional development, curriculum, and resources.

Leaders Retreat. The retreat was titled “Leadership Practices to Cultivate a Sustainable School” and was held November 8 & 9, with a follow-up session in April 2024. Given that Osprey Wilds is a statewide authorizer, all sessions were virtual. The event featured a keynote presentation by Diverse Charter Schools Coalition and tactical sessions facilitated by members of MDE’s Principal Leadership Support team. Around 25 school leaders and board members attended one or more sessions. The goals of the retreat were to support school leaders to better be able to:

- identify aspects of the school community ecosystem as assets for teaching, learning
- foster teacher leadership and model sustainable practices
- build a trusting, positive, and sustainable learning culture

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 FY24 (eight schools). Evaluations were informed by site visits and board observations, and feedback from renewal evaluation activities were 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 provided 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. 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 published 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 provided specific feedback to schools on areas of performance that were of concern along with key requirements to address those concerns. While Osprey Wilds did 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 outlined for schools to address, we provided schools with needed guidance to improve their performance.

Aerie. Osprey Wilds used the software platform Aerie as a compliance tool to gather key documents and provided schools with a calendar of key requirements. This tool served both Osprey Wilds and the school, as it gave us a systematic means to gather and monitor schools' compliance activities and other key school performance data, but it also gave assistance to schools in that it provided 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 charter 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.

Osprey Wilds' plan to promote the model replication of high performing charter schools includes the following strategies:

- Require new charter school applications to include research that provides evidence that the program will achieve the desired outcomes for the proposed student body in order to identify high quality models to promote within the portfolio. (See Section VI. Educational Program, Question 4, in Attachment "OW New Charter School Application Guide.")
- Maintain a two-phase expansion application process, which reduces application burden while maintaining rigorous evaluation standards. (See attachment, "OW Expansion Application Guide.") In the first phase, schools submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) to Submit an Application. Upon receipt of the NOI, Osprey Wilds will review the school's performance to determine whether to invite the school to submit a full application. If evidence clearly shows that the school has fulfilled the requirements of the application in one or more of four key areas (academics, environmental education, financial, operations), no additional information is needed in the full application. (See attachment, "OW Expansion Application Guide," NOI Review Rubric.)
- Promote and support replication of existing high quality schools' models and practices.

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

- Identify best practices (in OW authorized schools, charter or district schools throughout Minnesota, or nationally) and disseminate those practices to schools in the OW portfolio through publications (such as

the EE Update and the Sounding Board) events (such as the Community of Practice and EE Office Hours), and other opportunities for connecting school leaders or technical assistance.

- Maintain a “fast track renewal” process, which reduces application burden while identifying OW authorized schools that have implemented best practices and disseminating those schools’ strategies. A school that is considered “Eligible for Fast Track Renewal” attains all of its contractual outcomes in Exhibit G as determined by Osprey Wilds’ Academic Performance Evaluation (i.e., 100% or more of possible points). As a result, the school earns a condensed renewal application and site visit, including collection of the school’s best practices for future dissemination by Osprey Wilds.
- Provide exemplars of best school practices to all schools via Aerie. Such exemplars include but are not limited to sample policies, templates, and guidance documents.
- Promote school networking and sharing by providing all school leaders and board chairs with easy access to colleagues to support the dissemination of best practices among schools via its School leaders and board chairs contact list.
- Encourage high quality charter schools to expand, replicate, and document best practices by providing voluntary technical assistance, such as review of grant applications to pursue such activities prior to submission by schools.

Specific activities and resources implemented during FY24 are outlined below:

- In July 2023, OW shared several examples of early admission to kindergarten policies from the portfolio with Noble Academy.
- In January 2024, OW shared school leader evaluation policies from North Shore Community School and Aurora Charter School with Glacial Hills Elementary School. Later in February OW shared the same policies with Academic Arts High School, and in March shared them with Higher Ground Academy.
- In January 2024, OW connected the school leader at Aurora Waasakone Community of Learners with school leaders at Harvest Best Academy, North Lakes Academy, and AFSA K-12 to share practical strategies and solutions related to K-3 discipline practices.
- In March 2024, OW shared Aurora Waasakone Community of Learners’ Code of Conduct and Behavior Management Flow Chart with Endazhi-Nitaawiging.
- In June 2024, OW connected Cannon River STEM School with Glacial Hills Elementary School for guidance and strategies for seeking grant support for the school.
- In FY24, no OW authorized schools were eligible to apply for replication / significant expansion grants as determined by the 2024 High-Quality Charter School Comprehensive Performance Framework.

Under the current methodology, “High Quality Charter Schools” must meet five of six academic outcome measures and five compliance checks. In 2024, three additional schools (Higher Ground Academy, Laura Jeffrey Academy, and Metro Schools) 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.

Portfolio Information

General Charter School Portfolio Data (as of June 30, 2024)

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	4305	No	K-8	216	Minneapolis / St. Paul	09/02/2025
United Academy of Excellence and Leadership	4300	No	K-8	450	Brooklyn Park	09/01/2025

Operational Charter Schools in Authorizer’s Portfolio

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	CSP Grant Recipient	Grade Levels Served in FY 2024	Location
Academic Arts High School	4119	No	9-12	West Saint Paul

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	CSP Grant Recipient	Grade Levels Served in FY 2024	Location
AFSA K-12	4074	Yes	K-12	Vadnais Heights
Aurora Charter School	4067	No	PS-8	Minneapolis
Aurora Waasakone Community of Learners	4271	Yes	K-8	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
Endazhi-Nitaawiging	4298	Yes	K-8	Red Lake
Excell Academy	4068	No	PS-8	Brooklyn Park
Glacial Hills Elementary	4168	No	PS-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 2024	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-3	Minneapolis
New Discoveries Montessori Academy	4161	Yes	PS-8	Hutchinson
Noble Academy	4171	Yes	K-8	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-4	Grand Portage
Partnership Academy	4097	No	PS-8	Richfield
Prairie Seeds Academy	4126	No	K-12	Brooklyn Park
Riverway Learning Community	4064	No	PS-12	Winona

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	CSP Grant Recipient	Grade Levels Served in FY 2024	Location
Swan River Montessori	4137	No	PS-6	Monticello
Three Rivers Montessori	4266	Yes	PS-6	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 through 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
Glacial Hills Elementary School	No	Yes	No

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 through five	Officially Recognized Instructional Prekindergarten Program for four-year-olds to prepare children for entry into kindergarten the following year
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 2024

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

No

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

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?

Yes

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	Reason(s) for Closure	Effective Date of Closure
Legacy of Dr. Josie R. Johnson Montessori School	4189	Financial Insolvency	01/12/2024

Charter School Portfolio Performance

Academic Performance

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 FY24 (based on FY23 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	FY24	FY23	FY22	FY20
Data Year	FY23	FY22	FY21	FY19
A.1 Mission Related Outcomes	78.8%	79.4%	48.4%	63.3%
A.2 English Learners	50.0%	75.0%	33.3%	42.9%
A.3 Reading Growth	37.1%	48.6%	33.3%	33.3%
A.4 Math Growth	37.1%	31.4%	30.3%	27.3%
A.5 Reading Proficiency	52.9%	44.1%	33.3%	59.4%
A.6 Math Proficiency	26.5%	17.6%	15.2%	25.0%
A.7 Science Proficiency	44.1%	47.1%	39.4%	53.1%
A.8 Proficiency in Other Curricular Areas	43.5%	66.7%	52.0%	69.6%
A.9 Post-Secondary Readiness	87.5%	50.0%	33.3%	40.0%
A.10 Attendance	44.8%	57.1%	50.0%	62.5%

As noted in the table below, the percentage of schools meeting goals declined from FY23 to FY24 with the exception of Math Growth, Reading Proficiency, and Math Proficiency, which increased slightly, and Post-Secondary Readiness, which increased by 37.5%.

Increase or decrease from FY23 to FY24 evaluations									
A.1	A.2	A.3	A.4	A.5	A.6	A.7	A.8	A.9	A.10
-0.6%	-25.0%	-11.4%	5.7%	8.8%	8.8%	-2.9%	-23.2%	37.5%	-12.3%

Attainment of Mission Related Goals experienced a slight decline from FY23 but overall has exceeded pre-pandemic levels (based on comparison with FY19 data). Similarly, attainment of goals related to English

Language acquisition decreased from FY23 but performance is above pre-pandemic levels. Reading Growth, also down from last year, has increased from FY19 performance.

Science Proficiency, Proficiency in Other Curricular Areas, and Attendance indicate areas for growth across the portfolio as a whole.

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 an Early Adopter 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 other 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.

FY24 (FY23 data)	FY23 (FY22 data)	FY22 (FY21 data)	FY20 (FY19 data)	FY19 (FY18 data)	FY18 (FY17 data)
42.9% (15/35)	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%.

FY24 (FY23 data)	FY23 (FY22 data)	FY22 (FY21 data)	FY20 (FY19 data)	FY19 (FY18 data)	FY18 (FY17 data)
14.3% (5/35)	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 continued to make progress toward this goal in FY24 and met the target for the first time since FY20 (evaluations based on FY19 data). 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. OW returned to this practice in FY24 and is considering what other supports are needed to help schools move from “approaching standard” to “meets standard,” especially given the changes in schools since 2020, the continuing focus on learning loss recovery, and the financial pressures facing many charter schools.

Operational Performance

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 FY24. Complete information on operations and governance performance evaluation is available on the [OW website](#).

Indicator Area	Percent of schools that met the standard			
	FY24	FY23	FY22	FY21

O.1.1 Mission and Vision	76%	79%	72%	75%
O.1.2 Instruction and Assessment	53%	61%	50%	53%
O.1.3 Educational Requirements	94%	97%	100%	100%
O.1.4 Special Education	97%	97%	100%	100%
O.1.5 English Learners	73%	85%	91%	94%
O.1.6 Parent & Student Satisfaction	73%	85%	91%	94%
O.2.1 Board Composition & Capacity	33%	55%	69%	66%
O.2.2 Board Decision Making & Oversight	24%	33%	38%	38%
O.2.3 Management Accountability	39%	52%	53%	56%
O.3.1 Facilities & Transportation	97%	97%	100%	100%
O.3.2 Health & Safety	88%	97%	100%	100%
O.4.1 Admissions & Enrollment	76%	88%	88%	84%
O.4.2 Due Process & Privacy	94%	94%	97%	94%
O.5.1 Licensure	97%	97%	100%	100%
O.5.2 Staff Retention	85%	85%	88%	91%
O.5.3 Employment Practices	79%	88%	97%	94%
O.6.1 Charter School Annual Reports	42%	61%	72%	75%
O.6.2 Insurance	79%	79%	88%	84%
O.6.3 Authorizer & State Compliance	48%	67%	88%	81%

Areas of strength of Osprey Wilds authorized schools are in meeting key compliance requirements including educational requirements, special education requirements, facilities and transportation, due process & privacy, and licensure. These areas have remained strong over the past four years. Schools generally are implementing education programs aligned to their stated missions and visions. (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.)

It is important to note that, as statute and regulations have changed and responsibilities for authorizers have become more transparent in statute, Osprey Wilds has significantly increased the quality and detail of its compliance monitoring. This has had significant impacts on the results of the operations performance evaluation. While OW is transparent and communicates consistently and frequently about changes, there is sometimes a lag as schools work to meet new expectations from the legislature, Minnesota Department of

Education, and the authorizer. OW anticipates that as it continues to provide high quality technical assistance, clear and consistent expectations, and regular feedback, this will improve.

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. In addition, 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 the learning, achievement, and success of all students”). In response, OW significantly revised its operations performance framework in 2024. Instead of one indicator area broadly capturing Instruction and Assessment, there are now five separate indicator areas focused on Instructional Practices, Curriculum, Assessment, Professional Development, and Equity. The goals of these revisions is to provide schools with greater transparency about what is actually being evaluated, clarify criteria in order to strengthen inter-rater reliability, base ratings on criteria that are less subjective and can be effectively triangulated (e.g. interviews, observations, and document review), and align the criteria with relevant statute, where applicable.

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 clearly aligned to the Osprey Wilds frameworks so that schools are able to make explicit connections to contractual obligations and expectations. OW offers charter school support, development, and technical assistance that is based on demonstrated need and designed to prevent future problems. 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 by schools 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.

FY24	FY23	FY22	FY21	FY20	FY19
18.2% (6/33)	30.3% (10/33)	32.4% (11/34)	31.3% (10/32)	30.3% (10/33)	30.3% (10/33)

As noted above, since Osprey Wilds began tracking and reporting on this data, it has also increased its expectations related to governance. Charter school boards across the portfolio have consistently struggled, year after year, to meet these expectations—even though they are primarily based in statute, the charter contract, and the bylaws following its own bylaws. Persistent governance issues are a known issue across Minnesota; in fact, the Minnesota Department of Education was awarded funds as part of its FY23-27 Charter School Program Grant to conduct a Board Governance Research Study to identify and document root cause(s) of persistent governance issues. This is an especially important focus area for OW because governance issues impact charter schools’ operational performance which in turn affects the sustainability of the school. Ongoing issues include evaluation of the school leader, monitoring academic performance and holding the school leader accountable

for academic performance, financial oversight, policy implementation, conflicts of interest, open meeting law, and statutory compliance with nonprofit law.

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.

Financial Performance

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 schools that were evaluated in FY24 (based on FY23 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	FY24	FY23
	Data Year	FY23	FY22
F.1.1 Budgeting		75%	81.8%
F.1.2 Enrollment Variance		69%	81.8%
F.1.3 Financial Policies & Practices		44%	63.6%
F.1.4 Financial Reporting		56%	54.5%
F.1.5 Financial Audit		69%	54.5%
F.2.1 Current Ratio		100%	100%
F.2.2 Days Cash on Hand		50%	90.9%
F.3.1 Fund Balance Percentage		50%	81.8%
F.3.2 Total Margin / Aggregate Three-Year Total Margin		63%	72.7%
F.3.3 Debt to Asset Ratio		75%	90.9%

Data documents that overall, schools' financial performance is changing as they continue to grapple with learning loss, implement significant legislative changes, and juggle the end of federal pandemic-related funds. As noted above, Enrollment Variance (typically a relatively strong indicator) slid in FY24, indicating that schools struggled with accurately predicting enrollment. (In the past this has hovered between 50-60%, although increasing over time, so 69% is still relatively high given the history of the portfolio.) Many schools also did not meet standard for Days Cash On Hand (60 days or higher) and Fund Balance Percentage (20%). In many cases this was related to Enrollment Variance—schools overstated enrollment (and thus overestimated revenue) and had to dip into the fund balance to close the resulting gap.

As noted in the previous section, board governance is a consistent issue across charter schools. Boards' failure to provide oversight of financial performance also has impacts on this section. Boards struggled with ensuring that they have in place statutorily and contractually required financial policies and monitoring those policies with

fidelity. One bright spot is that many schools resolved audit findings, especially those related to segregation of duties. This has been an ongoing area of focus for Osprey Wilds for many years. OW will continue to focus on this, as well as identifying ways to support schools to implement corrective action plans (CAPs) related to these findings.

Budgeting and financial oversight practices have been a specific focus of Osprey Wilds' technical assistance over the past four years. 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.

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

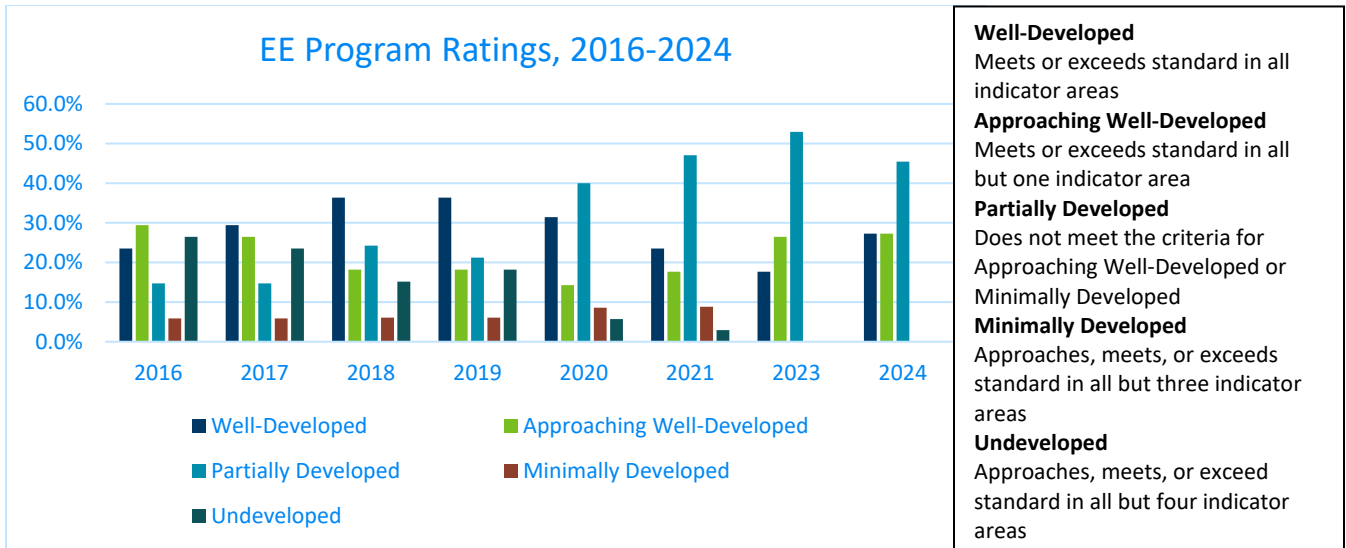
1. Increase the percentage of schools that Meet Standards on 100% (5 of 5) of financial management measures on Financial Performance Evaluation.

FY24	FY23	FY22	FY21	FY20	FY19
22.9% (8/35)	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. In addition, when OW revised its financial performance evaluation framework in 2024, it moved the Enrollment Variance indicator area from an indicator of near-term financial health to an indicator of financial management. This particular change has contributed to a drop in schools meeting all financial management measures. In addition, 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 (if applicable)

Consistent with Osprey Wilds' mission, all schools authorized by OW must increase the environmental literacy of all students through environmental education. The following chart summarizes performance of schools in OW's portfolio since 2016. This information includes data from the most recent renewal evaluation for each school, most recently updated with evaluations 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.



The number of schools with well-developed EE programs increased in 2024. An additional marker of success is that since 2019 the portfolio has gone from eight schools with minimally or undeveloped EE program to ZERO.

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.

2024	2023	2021	2020	2019
54.5% (18/33)	44.1% (15/34)	41.2% (14/34)	45.7% (16/35)	54.5% (18/33)

Overall, the performance of Osprey Wilds authorized charter schools in the area of environmental education (EE) continued to improve in FY24. 54.5% of schools earned a rating of well-developed or approaching well-developed. This is the same as pre-pandemic levels, which reached a high in 2019. This likely indicates that schools are learning to implement EE while also balancing ongoing challenges related to learning loss, attendance, staffing, and other post-pandemic related issues.

The following table summarizes the performance of schools in OW's portfolio against the environmental education goals in the schools' contracts. This information includes data from the most recent renewal evaluation for each school, most recently updated with evaluations completed in FY24 (based on FY23 year-end environmental education survey data).

Indicator Area	Percent of schools that met the standard
EE.1 Awareness	78%
EE.2 Knowledge	78%
EE. 3 Attitudes	78%

EE.4 Skills	75%
EE.5 Action	72%
O.1.7 Environmental Education Program	68%
O.2.4 Environmental Education Oversight (Governance)	60%
O.3.3 Sustainable Operations	72%

OW continued to focus on this area in FY24 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.