

# Sounding Board

*A publication of Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center Charter School Division*

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## **Board Oversight of Academic Outcomes**

October 2025

Academic and Academic-Related Goals (Exhibit G) is one of the most critical pieces of a school's contract. This exhibit contains the agreed upon performance expectations that the school will be held to during its contract period. Per the charter contract, performance on the indicators in Exhibit G are the primary factor in determining a school's renewal. This means that how well the school is doing on its academic goals is the first thing that Osprey Wilds (OW) considers in considering whether or not to renew a school and, if so, whether the school gets a five-year contract or a Corrective Action Renewal (three years or fewer). Ensuring the board understands how to oversee a school's academic performance in relation to its goals is an essential function of the board. The information below provides critical touch points, guidance, and recommendations for the oversight of the school's academic outcomes

Osprey Wilds has a number of expectations for every school to facilitate effective oversight of academic outcomes:

- OW expects boards to review progress on the school's academic measures at least four times a year during board meetings, and to document the discussion in board meeting minutes.
- OW expects that board members know what the school's contractual academic measures are and have a general understanding of what they mean.
- OW expects that board members will ask questions about their school's academic performance when they are not sure how to interpret results.

### **Interpreting the Academic Performance Evaluation**

In order to support the school in meeting these expectations, OW provides an annual academic performance evaluation based on data from the most recent school year. The academic evaluations are summative, which means that performance on the measures aggregates during the contract term until all years of the contract are incorporated into the final academic evaluation completed during the renewal process. Performance on the academic evaluation is the primary factor impacting whether or not the school's contract will be renewed, and if so, for how long.

Reviewing the school's annual academic evaluation allows the board to ask how well the school is serving its students, and what areas of the educational program may need attention. The board can then work with the school leader to allocate funds, or provide other support, to address any identified needs.

Below is an example of a summary table from an academic evaluation, followed by an explanation of each area and what it means.

### Summary of Indicator Points

Indicator	Points Possible	Points Earned	Performance Ranking	Percent Earned Through FY23	Percent Earned Through FY22
1: Mission Related Outcomes	8	12	Exceeds	150.0%	100.0%
2: English Language Learners	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
3: Reading Growth and Progress	20	17.25	Meets	86.3%	82.5%
4: Math Growth and Progress	20	16.5	Meets	82.5%	82.5%
5: Reading Proficiency	9	7.25	Meets	80.6%	68.8%
6: Math Proficiency	9	5	Approaches	55.6%	40.6%
7: Science Proficiency	8	8.5	Exceeds	106.3%	106.3%
8: Other Proficiency or Growth	6	9	Exceeds	150.0%	100.0%
9: Post-Secondary Readiness	15	16.5	Exceeds	110.0%	90.0%
10: Engagement	5	0	Does Not Meet	0.0%	0.0%
Overall	100	92.0	Eligible for Renewal	92.0%	79.8%

Area	Description	What to Look For
Indicator Area	<p>There are ten indicator areas in which a school may have goals. Each indicator area has a variety of measures (individual goals) for which data is analyzed in relation to performance targets. Performance on each measure is rolled up to overall performance for the indicator area.</p> <p>All schools will have goals for indicator areas 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 10.</p> <p>Schools serving high school students will have goals for indicator 9.</p> <p>Indicator 2 becomes applicable once a school serves ten (10) or more English Learners.</p> <p>Indicator 8 is flexible, though schools serving preschool, prekindergarten, and kindergarten students will have goals for those grades in this area.</p>	<p>Are there any indicators that you do not have goals for? Is that in line with your program, or do you think something is missing?</p>

Area	Description	What to Look For
Points Possible	This indicates the total points possible for an indicator area. This is negotiated between the school and OW during the contract renewal process.	What does the distribution of points communicate about your priorities as a school? Is the distribution in alignment with the school's mission and vision?
Points Earned	<p>The total points earned during the year of reporting.</p> <p>OW's expectation for meets standard is 75% of points earned overall.</p>	<p>Did the school earn at least 75% of points overall?</p> <p>If not, did we make progress towards this standard?</p>
Performance Ranking	<p>Each indicator area gets a ranking based on the percentage of points earned:  Does Not Meet (less than 50% earned)  Approaches (50%-74% earned)  Meets (75%-100% earned)  Exceeds (101%-150% earned)</p> <p>The evaluation also receives an overall performance ranking*:  Candidate for Non-Renewal (less than 50% earned)  Eligible for Renewal (50%-100% earned)  Eligible for Fast Track Renewal (101%-150% earned)</p>	<p>Which indicators have the same performance ranking from year to year?</p> <p>Which increased or decreased?</p> <p>Were you already aware of any areas of concern? If so, have they been discussed and addressed? If not, what can be put in place to ensure there are no surprises for the current year's outcomes?</p>
Percent Earned through FYXX	Demonstrates the school's progress year over year.	<p>Which indicators earned the same percentage of points from year to year?</p> <p>Which increased or decreased? What measures within that indicator contributed to the increase or decrease?</p>

Area	Description	What to Look For
Analysis	Highlights strengths and areas of concern on which the school should focus its attention.	<p>Did the analysis section highlight any areas of strength or concern that you missed?</p> <p>Are there any areas of concern to be lifted up and addressed by the board?</p>

\*Exhibit P of the school's contract reviews the different categories and what it means for renewal.

### Effective Oversight of Academic Outcomes

In order to build a regular and effective practice to oversee the school's academic performance, boards should:

- Review academic data in relation to its contractual goals at least four times per year.
  - As a board, you should set the expectation that updates on academic outcomes are being shared by school leadership regularly.
  - Any time the board is presented with academic data from the current school year, it is critical to ask, "How does this impact progress toward our academic goals? Are we on track to meet our performance targets?"
    - This context is crucial to understanding not only the impact of the school's program on student learning, but also if the school is hitting the targets identified in the contract to demonstrate success.
    - If you are not on track to meet performance targets, the board should ask what is being done to ensure a better outcome before the end of the school year. Also, is there anything the board could be doing to support these efforts (e.g. making changes to the budget, seeking different support or additional materials, etc.)?
  - Example calendar for what academic data to review and when:
    - September: Expect to see and review MCA data for Reading, Science, and Math. Review results in comparison to the targets in the contractual academic goals. Review state-reported consistent attendance data as well.
    - October/November: Review results from beginning-of-the-year growth assessments. How are school leaders and teachers using this information to make decisions about supporting students?
    - February: Review results from winter growth assessments, if applicable. Also ask for a mid-year progress report on any mission-related or school-developed goals for which data needs to be collected internally.
    - March / April: Review state-reported graduation rate data, if applicable.
    - May/June: Review results from end-of-the-year growth assessments. Review results in comparison to the targets in the contractual academic goals. Did the school hit its targets? Did the school improve from last year in any areas of concern? What evidence demonstrates that there may be some changes needed to the educational program, and what needs to be in place to address these areas effectively?

- June / July: Review results from any other goal areas that are not based on standardized assessments, such as career and college readiness, Kindergarten readiness, or mission-related goals.
  - Academic Performance Evaluation: Review when received from OW, and discuss as a board.
- Ensure that the school leader performance evaluation process evaluates performance in relation to OW contractual academic and environmental education goals and expectations.
  - Minnesota statute and the charter contract requires that the school's performance evaluation process evaluates school leader performance in relation to OW contractual academic and environmental education goals and expectations. This means that performance on the academic and environmental education evaluations must be included in the performance evaluation of the school leader.
  - Performance on academic and environmental education goals are the first factors considered during the renewal process and have a direct impact on if the school will be renewed, and for how long. Ensuring that the school leader is held accountable for these outcomes throughout the contract term will help everyone be prepared and informed on how well the school is doing prior to entering the contract renewal process.
- Use academic performance information in decision making.
  - Engage in the Work:
    - Boards need to focus on what the school values and work tirelessly to achieve it. "What we have always done" and "It's always been this way" are excuses to disengage.
    - Think critically, look at data from multiple sides, and ensure that the school leader knows what outcomes the board is expecting.
    - Make sure that when the board reviews data, it uses that data to measure progress toward the school's contractual goals.
  - Ask the Hard Questions:
    - Is the mission / vision and instructional methods appropriate for the population that is coming to the school?
    - When the school disaggregates its data by different student groups (socio-economic status, race/ethnicity, English Learner, etc.), are there any gaps? What is being done to address these?
    - Does the school foster a culture that expects / demands student achievement?
    - Is student achievement part of the school leader evaluation? Does the board articulate measurable goals regarding improved student achievement in its evaluation process?
  - Prioritize Improvement:
    - Does the school budget reflect its priorities? Is the school spending money in a way that supports student achievement?
    - Is the board providing the school leader and teachers with support in improving student achievement? Does the board take time to recognize when there is improvement?
    - Are the school's systems aligned to get the expected results?
- How can I set myself up for success?
  - Ask for a copy of the school's most recent academic performance evaluation.
  - Check the school leader evaluation process to make sure performance on academic outcomes is included. If not, the process should be revised.
  - Check the school's MCA results, attendance, and graduation rates (if applicable) on [MDE Report Card](#).