



2020-21 Annual Report

Mission & Overview

Wasatch Charter School is a K-8 tuition-free charter school in the Salt Lake Valley guided by the principles of public Waldorf education that provides a comprehensive education program integrating academics, arts, movement, nature, and social responsibility into everyday learning. Through a culture of holistic learning and dedication to the optimal development of each individual child, WCS nurtures intellectual, social and emotional, and physical capacities through an artistic, hands-on, interdisciplinary approach to core academic subjects which enables each student to blossom into an imaginative, engaged, competent, life-long learner. Our students, teachers, faculty, and families emerge as confident, creative, strong critical thinkers and environmental stewards, empowered to act positively in their own lives and communities.

OVERVIEW

The 2020-21 school year was a unique and challenging school year for all of the Wasatch community. The year involved shifting 25% of students to a new remote learning program, quarantines and weeks of school-wide remote learning, cleaning procedures, changes to classroom practices to limit the mixing of students and activities, such as singing indoors, and constant responses to deal with the ever-changing challenges of Covid-19.

Despite many challenges and limitations on many of the traditional ways that we build community, we saw growth. We witnessed students who were happy to be able to come to school and continued to learn, despite disruptions. We felt deeply how our school community helped to anchor faculty, staff, and families during much uncertainty. We witnessed academic growth, as well as social and emotional growth in the face of great obstacles.

The last year showed the strength and the value of community and connection as fundamental aspects of our school community and purpose. It was a reminder of how we can pull together, be flexible, support one another, and nurture community in the midst of many changes and uncertainty. And, it was a reminder of how critical and valuable it is to provide an educational opportunity that nourishes all aspects of developing children.

Emily Merchant
Executive Director

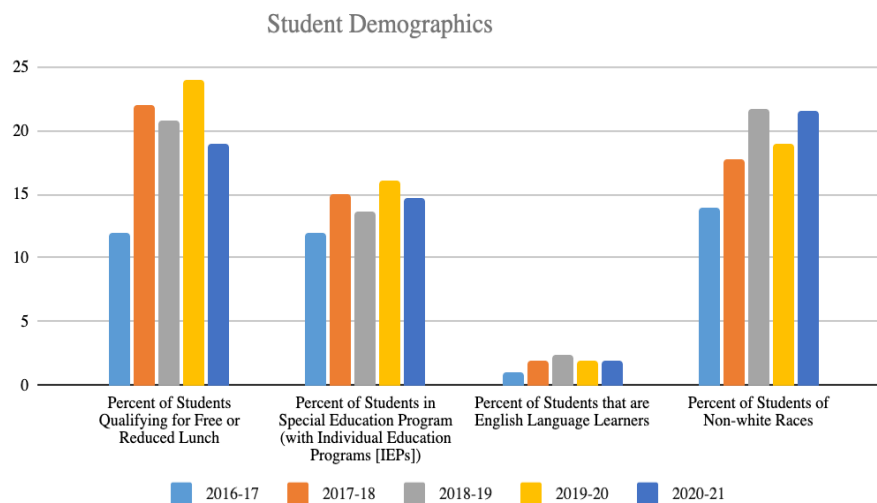
2020-21 Key Accomplishments

- ★ School was held every day, whether online or in-person! For 2020-21 that was a significant feat.
- ★ Maintained online and in-person instruction throughout the year, flexing to respond to changing needs and considerations.
- ★ Implemented consistent interventions for math and reading across grades, including through Zoom meetings, in-person instruction, summer programs, and home visits.
- ★ Provided quality training to teachers, including on-site math workshops, Orton Gillingham reading training, and curative training.
- ★ Continued growth of innovative “Special Class” in special education, our “Lotus” class. Developed unique movement-based approach to working with students.
- ★ Very high student and staff retention.
- ★ Academic growth and progress was made across all grades as measured by internal assessment metrics, even with interrupted and remote learning.
- ★ Fundraising engagement and revenue generated increased, even with a new format to all events, including Harvest Festival, sustainer drive, and Spring Gala.
- ★ Governing Board leadership stabilized, Director and Board Evaluations were implemented, Policy Review was more timely.
- ★ Dramatic reduction in disciplinary actions, including suspension for behavior that violated the school’s Code of Conduct.

Our Community

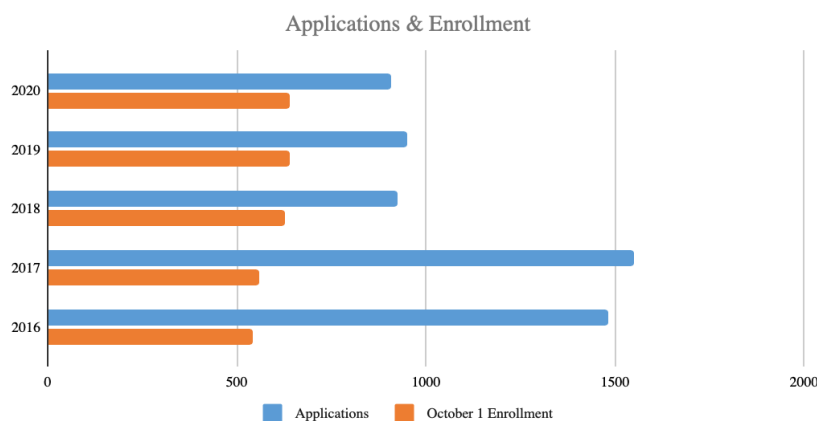
Demographics

In our fifth year, all demographic measures remained relatively close to the previous years, as demonstrated below. The data on free and reduced lunch may be an under-representation as a large number of students were learning remotely (and hence without any reason to apply for lunch assistance) and since federal Covid-relief measures provided for free lunch for all students (also diminishing the need for families to apply for assistance). WCS does not have a mechanism for gathering this socioeconomic data from any other source.



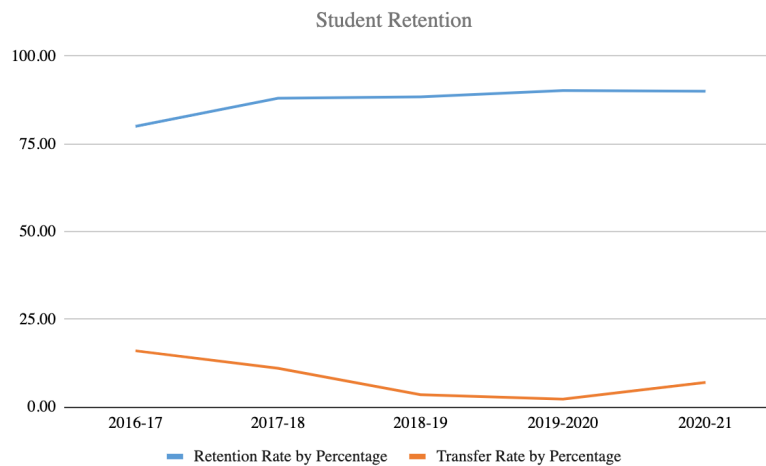
Enrollment

WCS maintained consistent interest in enrollment, once again fully enrolling to our maximum and maintaining sizable waiting lists throughout the year.



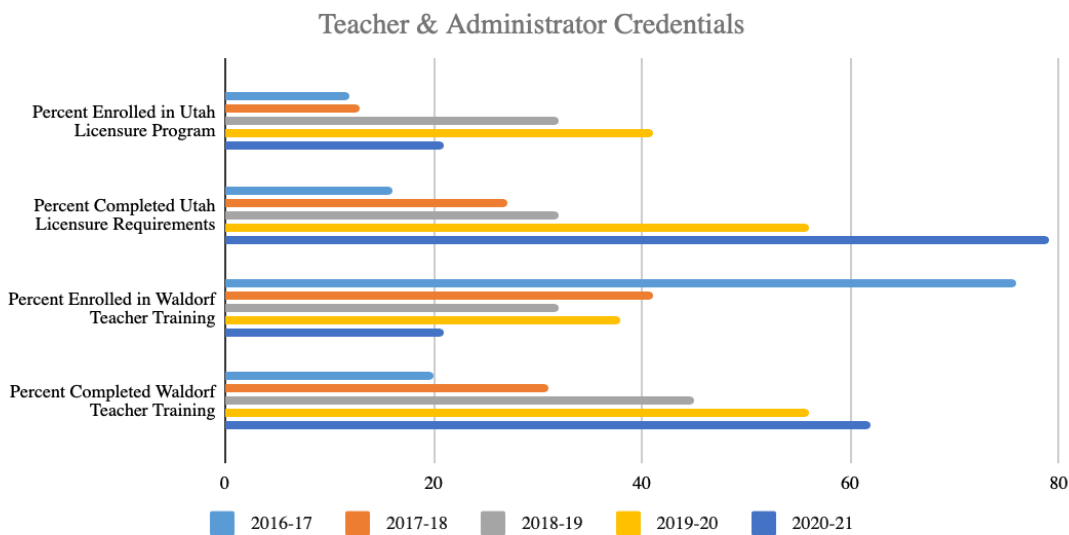
Retention

WCS maintained year to year student retention with 90% of our students returning for the 2019-20 school year. The within year transfer rate (the number of students who withdraw *during* the school year) was slightly higher than in the previous two years at 7%, in large measure based on changing family circumstances and choices in the Covid pandemic. On both measures, WCS outperformed the State average for all charter schools (81% and 8.6%, respectively).



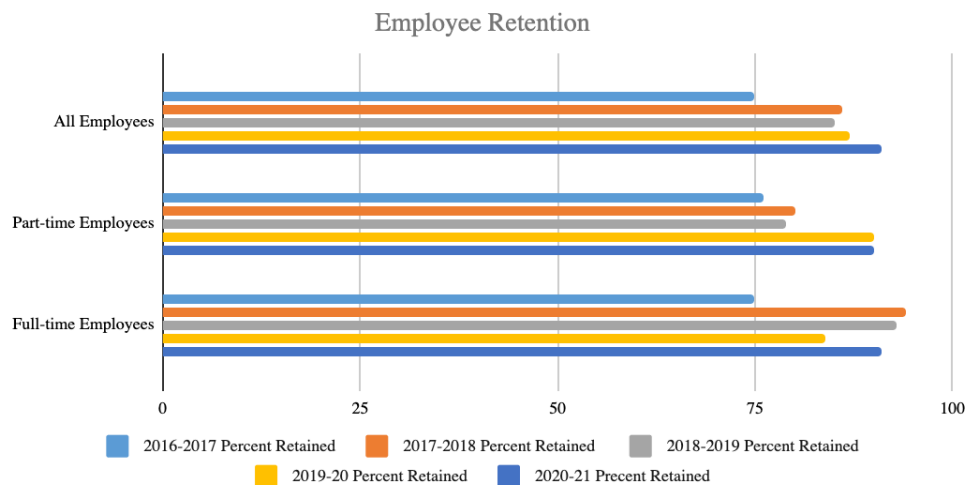
Employee Qualifications & Training

Additional teachers completed Waldorf training in the summer prior to the 2020-21 school year, and many teachers began or continued training programs as well. A significant increase occurred in the number of teachers with Utah teaching licenses, as well as those involved in a licensure training program. Overall, a far greater number of teachers have been with the school for multiple years and have completed State licensure and Waldorf training.



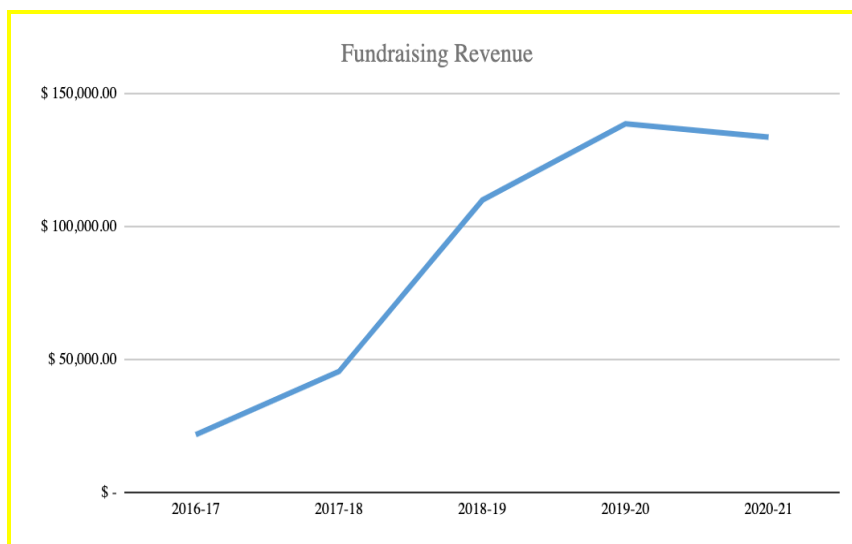
Employee Retention

WCS had very strong employee and teacher retention again from the 2019-20 school year to the 2020-21 school year. Overall retention of all employees was the highest yet at 91%, with the retention of both part-time and full-time employees being 90% and 91%, respectively. This is particularly noteworthy given the many pressures from the pandemic.



Fundraising

WCS continued to have significant community investment in our programs and mission, with revenue from various fundraising activities holding steady, even during the pandemic. Our first year raised just under \$22,000 and the second year's fundraising activities brought in over \$45,000, an increase of over 200%, and the third year netted \$109,666, with the fourth year bringing in \$138,353, in our fifth year, we maintained close to that level with \$133,358 in total donations and funds raised.



Family & Community Engagement

Community engagement was a challenge in the 2020-21 school year given the Covid pandemic. Volunteers in the building, community events, field trips, and other activities were significantly curtailed. However, attendance at Family council meetings increased as they were held remotely in the evenings, and participation from parents was still significant. With remote learning for all students on Fridays, more connection of families to their child's classwork occurred than has happened in previous years. Virtual meetings and events also helped to maintain a sense of community.

Key Elements

These aspects of our original charter application and agreement with the State Charter School Board have been deemed to be central to fully implementing our mission and vision of a fully realized Waldorf school within the context of the Utah Charter School system. Annually, we review progress to help re-center and prevent mission creep.

Maintain a large enough student population to offer all programmatic elements listed in the approved application.
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Meets: Enrollment has remained steady, with consistent interest allowing WCS to continue to grow and develop all program elements intended. Wasatch enrolled 639 students as of the October 1 student count and maintained an Average Daily Membership of 625 throughout the school year.

Be based on a developmental approach to curriculum which uses Waldorf methods and partners with public or private Waldorf associations.
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Meets: Teachers and administration are utilizing developmental approach to curriculum, Waldorf methods, and working with a variety of trainers and mentors to deepen faculty knowledge and work. WCS is a member of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education and also attends events and trainings associated with the Association for Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA).

Teachers actively participate in a Waldorf teacher training within 2 years of employment and complete training within the expected timeframe for the selected program.

Meets: As noted above, 62% of teachers and administrators have completed Waldorf training and another 21% are actively enrolled in a training program / plan at this time.
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Integrate the Utah Core Standards into the existing Waldorf curriculum to seamlessly teach competencies and material.

Meets: Guides for teachers, professional development and alignment documents are all developed or in process to support the seamless integration of standards into the Waldorf curriculum. This is a matter of on-going effort and development, as it relies, in part, on teacher experience and competencies.

Integrates arts and hands-on activities into curriculum to promote human development and brain development, including all five of the key methods through which children build neural connections: music, art, handwork, movement, and forming personal connections to adults.

Meets: Arts, hands-on activities, music, movement, handwork, and connection continue to thrive in WCS. These elements are clearly demonstrable in classroom observations. Professional development and collaboration is being facilitated to continue to support teachers in growing their own expertise in these areas.

Offers specialty classes taught outside Main Lessons and practice periods that further integrate and reinforce curriculum content and holistic development.

Meets: Specialty classes have been able to build on curriculum in all areas. Class teachers and specialty teachers are collaborating more. A few examples include:

- 5th grade study of Ancient Greece and enhancement through the training for the Greek Pentathlon in Games classes
- Handwork classes in 1-3 grade that build fine motor skills, patterning skills for mathematics, bi-lateral brain integration for reading, coordination, concentration
- Gardening classes for 7th grade that supplement CTE classes on land use, agriculture, and farming

Use a holistic approach of formative assessment.

Meets: WCS provides narrative-based reports for parents on student progress and uses portfolio reviews to highlight student growth and learning in grades 6-8.

Teachers loop with students, staying with same group of students for multiple grades, when possible from grades 1 – 8.

Meets: Many teachers have been able to loop with their classes, although individual needs and circumstances and changes in staffing often create exceptions and always will.

Includes a Family Council that meets regularly, typically monthly during the school year, to coordinate efforts to involve families, build school culture, participate in committees, and provide advice to governing board regarding family and student needs.

Meets: New Family Council leadership and new structure helped to strengthen this body.

Other improvements included:

- Greater involvement of Parent Coordinators with Vice-chairs serving as liaisons with particular grades
- More reports from Committees and Working Groups
- Online meetings are being met enthusiastically
- New volunteer tracking system is in place and being utilized

Has a garden and farming program which partners with local farms and gardens, outdoor education programs, and local natural resource organizations to provide educational experiences to students, including instruction in gardening and cooking.

Meets: WCS secured the lease to farm 11 acres of county land near to the school site. Additional gardening and farming opportunities have emerged through this collaboration, including a CSA. Work continues towards including items from the garden in the school lunch program. Gardening classes have included more cooking.

Students receive regular foreign language instruction.

Suspended. Optional online Spanish classes were offered for students; however, a shortened schedule in response to the pandemic resulted in the suspension of regular foreign language instruction.

Students receive consistent musical instruction through their class activities and specialty classes (in grades 4 – 8).

Meets: Lower grades 1-3 have music classes. Students from grades 4-8 have strings twice a week. Singing and recorder playing in Main Lessons and choirs has been lessened due to the pandemic and only happened outdoors during the school day.

Incorporates movement into Main Lesson activities and into the school day through games and eurythmy classes.

Meets: Movement is alive and well in WCS and is a part of the beginning of all classes Main Lessons. Classes from 1-8 grade have games class and eurythmy. All teachers are receiving more training on bringing movement into their classrooms, particularly therapeutic movement throughout the day.

Incorporates sustainable living practices, environmental stewardship, and experiential learning through outdoor experiences and sustainable practices.

Meets: Many outdoor experiences occurred, including nature walks, hikes, time outdoors, gardening and camping trips. Continued work occurred on gardening program, recycling program, and farming, as well as supporting teachers in developing an understanding of how to teach outdoors.

Uses a community-wide approach to discipline, including offering training to teachers, parents, and community members on the “3 streams” (or an equivalent) approach to working with students on discipline, social inclusion, and Rti processes

Meets: The 3 Streams program is robust and includes an effective referral process for promptly addressing student needs and teacher and parent concerns. This included online meetings with students and lots of innovative supports during the pandemic. The Rti process is formalized with referral forms and format for Support Circle meetings with parents, 3 week follow-ups and SPED referral process. Progress monitoring is formalized and supported by the Assessment Coordinator.

Parents and families are involved in a community of learning, including regular festivals, classes, and activities that connect to the purposes and mission of WWCS.

Meets: Many activities are occurring regularly, such as parenting classes, Family Council Meetings, Back to School Night, Panel Discussion & Class Parent Nights. Some offerings have been lessened in the pandemic, such as Visiting Lecturers, and Festivals and Assemblies.

Charter Agreement Performance Measures

Percentage of students demonstrating growth on WCS Assessment Rubrics at the beginning and end of the year on a variety of competencies.

Students demonstrated growth over the course of the year. However, without full participation in assessments during the 2019-20 school year due to Covid-19, there is not yet year-to year data to analyze.

Percentage of students in grades 6 – 8, who have attended 3 FAY, who are proficient according to the state summative ELA assessment: Greater than or equal to 3%.

2020-21 would have been the first year to analyze this data, given the lack of data in 2019-20. This goal was met in 2017, but lagged in the most recent year.

Percentage of students in grades 6 – 8, who have attended 3 FAY, who are proficient according to the state summative Mathematics assessment: Greater than or equal to 5%.

2021-21 would have been the first year to analyze this data, given the lack of data in 2019-20. This goal has not yet been met, but the trajectory is positive.

Percentage of students in grades 6 – 8, who have attended 3 FAY, who are proficient according to the state summative Science assessment: Greater than or equal to 4%.

2021-21 would have been the first year to analyze this data, given the lack of data in 2019-20. This goal has not yet been met, but the trajectory is positive.

Percentage of students in grade 3 reading on grade level at the beginning and end of the year: 90%

2016-17: **88%** of students in third grade that were proficient at the beginning of the year remained proficient at the end of the year.

2017-18: **100%** of students in third grade that were proficient at the beginning of the year remained proficient at the end of the year.

2018-2019: **100%** of students in third grade that were proficient at the beginning of the year remained proficient at the end of the year.

2019-2020: No data available for school year; State end-of-year assessments did not occur due to Covid pandemic and closure of in-person schooling.

2020-2021: **100%** of students in third grade that were proficient at the beginning of the year remained proficient at the end of the year.

Percentage of students in grade 3 not reading on grade level at the beginning of the year who are reading on grade level at the end of the year: 40%.

2016-17: **10%** of students who were not proficient at the beginning of the year reached proficiency by the end of the year. WCS met its UNIFORM GROWTH GOAL as set and calculated by the Utah State Board of Education.

2017-18: **6%** of students who were not proficient at the beginning of the year reached proficiency by the end of the year. WCS again met its UNIFORM GROWTH GOAL as set and calculated by the Utah State Board of Education.

2018-19: **29%** of students who were not proficient at the beginning of the year reached proficiency by the end of the year.

In 2018-19, the State's cut score for the UNIFORM GROWTH GOAL increased from 48% to 60% and shifted to include not only 3rd Grade students, but all of 1st-3rd. WCS scored 59% and just missed the newly increased standard as set and calculated by the Utah State Board of Education.

2019-2020: No data available for school year; State end-of-year assessments did not occur due to Covid pandemic and closure of in-person schooling.

2020-2021: **29%** of students who were not proficient at the beginning of the year reached proficiency by the end of the year.

WCS again met its UNIFORM GROWTH GOAL as set by the State (Goal: 60% of Grades 1-3 make typical or better progress). WCS had 74% of our students make typical or better progress. 9% higher than the State's average.

Percentage of students in grades 1 – 8 missing $\geq 10\%$ of school days: 14% or less.

2016-17: 15% of students missed over 10% of the school year.

2017-18: 22% of students missed over 10% of the school year.

2018-19: 12% of students missed over 10% of the school year.

2019-20: 6.4% of students missed over 10% of the school year.

2020-21: 6.79% of students missed over 10% of the school year. However, numbers were hard to track based on Covid pandemic and extensive quarantines / remote learning.

Student Achievement Scores

Overall, students were assessed using two tools: DIBELS (an indicator of early reading used in grades 1-3 and administered three times a year) and NWEA (a benchmark assessment used internally for students to track progress in ELA and math).

READING LOWER GRADES

Overall, reading scores for students in grades 1-3 have increased over the course of the years that the school has been operating, as shown on the charts below. For the 2020-21 School Year, 47% of students in grades 1-3 were considered at or above benchmark in reading and 74% of these students made “typical or better progress.” This exceeded the State averages of 43% proficient and 65% typical or better progress.

As we expect within our Waldorf model, these numbers look lower because our first graders have a slower start to reading. However, we consider to see significant growth overtime and have consistently increased third grade proficiency to exceed that of the State overall.

DIBELS PROFICIENCY by GRADE				
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21
1st	39	11	14	28
2nd	50	32	29	53
3rd	63	59	65	61

DIBELS PROFICIENCY by COHORT				
	2017	2018	2019	2021
1st-3rd	39	32	65	
2nd-3rd	50	59		
1st - 2nd		11	29	
1st - 3rd			14	60.7

Male Students Proficient on Acadience Reading	48%
Female Students Proficient on Acadience Reading	45%
Caucasian Students Proficient on Acadience Reading	46%
Other Racial Groups Proficient on Acadience Reading	50%

Students with Disabilities Proficient on Acadience Reading	25%
Economically Disadvantaged Students Proficient on Acadience	27%

MATH LOWER GRADES

We also saw growth over the year on Accadience Math in the lower grades.

ACCADIENCE MATH GROWTH of PERCENT PROFICIENT by GRADE - 2021			
	Beginning of Year	Middle of Year	End of Year
1st	25	28	39
2nd	92	87	88
3rd	45	50	63

UPPER GRADES

In the upper grades, nearly every grade in math showed increases in the percentage of students scoring at grade-level proficiency from the Beginning of the Year to the End of the Year on NWEA MAPS, our internal assessment for monitoring progress, as shown below. For ELA, the growth in proficiency varied by grade level, while the overall proficiency levels were higher for ELA than for math.

2021 MAPS GROWTH in ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS by PERCENT PROFICIENT		
	BOY	EOY
4th	68	62
5th	65	59
6th	73	75
7th	74	78
8th	80	67

2021 MAPS GROWTH in MATH by PERCENT PROFICIENT		
	BOY	EOY
4th	46	48
5th	47	58
6th	51	60

7th	53	53
8th	58	59

On the State required RISE assessments, student cohorts scored as follows.

RISE ELA Proficient BY GRADE:

3rd ELA-23.9%
 4th ELA-23.9%
 5th ELA-16.1%
 6th ELA-39.4%
 7th ELA-37.9%
 8th ELA-26.8%

RISE Math Proficient by Grade:

3rd Math-10.7%
 4th Math-21.4%
 5th Math-11.6%
 6th Math-14.9%
 7th Math-18.1%
 8th Math-29.3%

RISE Science Proficient by Grade:

4th Science- have yet to see score reports
 5th Science-have yet to see score reports
 6th Science-45%
 7th Science-26.5%
 8th Science-33.3%

WCS Percent Proficient on RISE	ELA 32.4% Math 16.7% Science 35.2%
State Percent Proficient on RISE	ELA 43% Math 42% Science 47%
Male Students Proficient on RISE	ELA 30% Math 20%

	Science 40%
Female Students Proficient on RISE	ELA 34% Math 13% Science 31%
Caucasian Students Proficient on RISE	ELA 82% Math 18% Science 40%
Other Racial Groups Proficient on RISE	ELA 28% Math 8% Science 2%
Students with Disabilities Proficient on RISE	ELA 6% Math 4% Science 13%
Economically Disadvantaged Students Proficient on RISE	ELA 23% Math 8% Science 30%

Our Operations

Governance

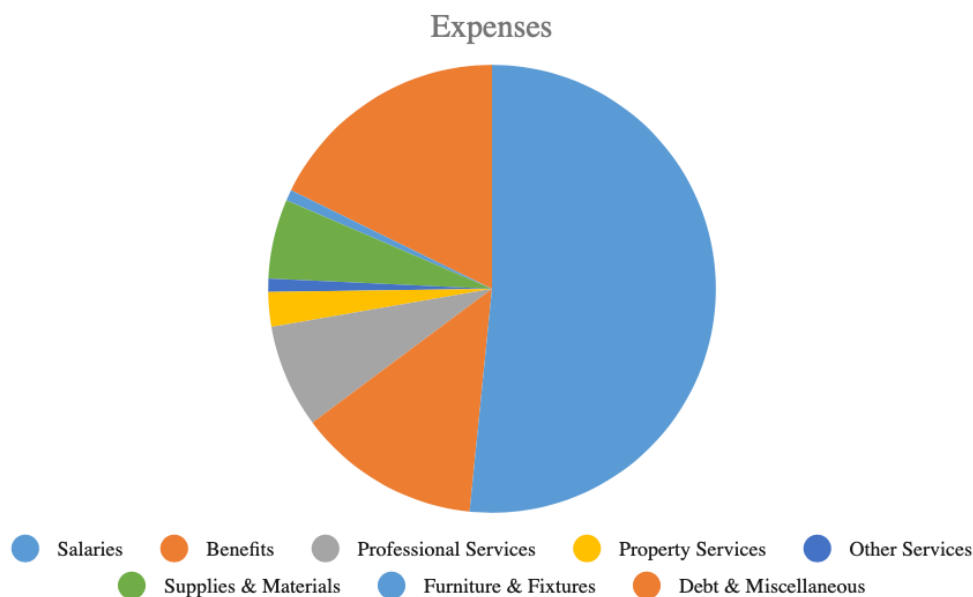
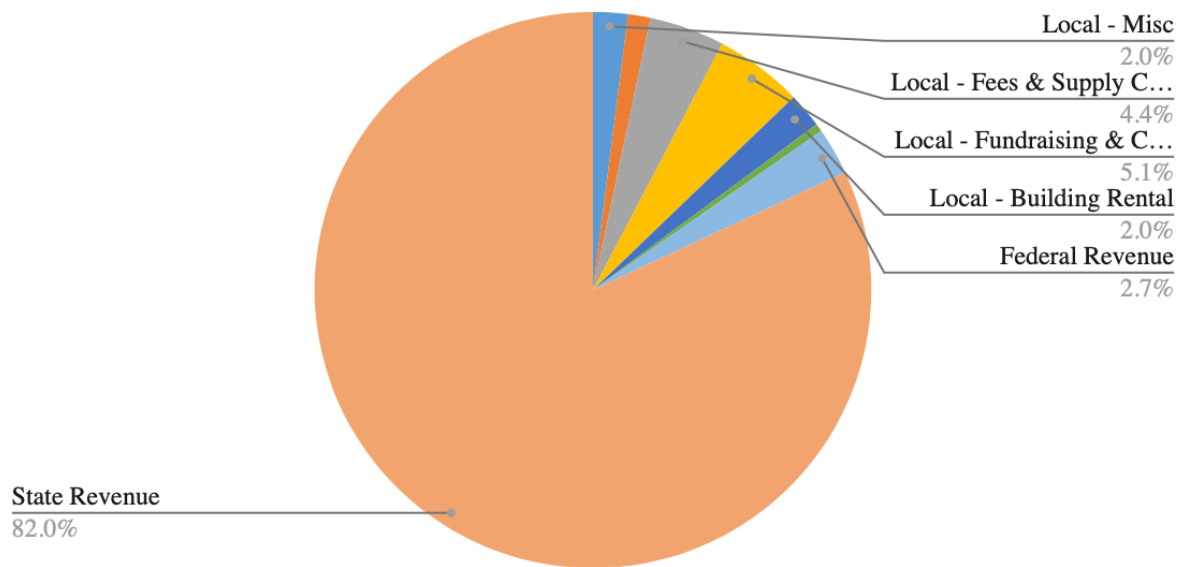
Governance of the school is overseen by a 5-11 member Board of Directors and their appointee, the Executive Director. Over the course of the 2020-21 school year, the Board of Directors has increased in professionalism, received helpful training, and reviewed policies, as well as maintaining ongoing responsibilities for oversight of budgets, operations, and fundraising. The Board also developed and implemented a formal Executive Director Evaluation and Board Self-Evaluation process as well as improving Board handbooks, agreements, and on-boarding processes.

Key required functions that have been complied with include:

- ❖ The Governing Board has instituted policies and programs to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the Charter Agreement as well as compliance with all governing laws, regulations, and rules.

- ❖ The Governing Board has a website with the content requirements found in R277-482, Utah Administrative Code, posted at least 180 days prior to the opening day of school. In addition, the SCSB requires the website contain links to school data and accountability reports maintained on other websites (e.g., student assessment, audited financial statement, etc.); links to Governing Board meeting dates, agendas and minutes; and reports created by the Governing Board to provide evidence of how the Charter School performed compared to the assurances and school accountability measures in this Charter Agreement.
- ❖ The Charter School's Governing Board has submitted such reports as required by state and federal law, this Charter Agreement, and as may be requested by the SCSB.
- ❖ WCS protects the rights of students with disabilities.
- ❖ WCS has all full-time class teachers with a current license or temporary authorization to provide that they are State Qualified. Details on qualifications are above.
- ❖ WCS complies with Governance Requirements and the developing Governing board policies, including those related to oversight of an Education Service Provider, if applicable and governing board by-laws, Utah Open & Public Meetings Act, Governing board code of ethics, Governing board conflicts of interest, and Governing board composition and/or membership rules (e.g., requisite number of qualified teachers, restriction on employees or contractors serving on the board, etc.).

Finances



WCS is carefully managing state, federal, and local funds to meet all priorities and needs. State funding comprises 82% of all revenue to the school, with Federal funds providing 3% and Fundraising making up 5%. The vast majority of funding is used to pay salaries and benefits, comprising 65% of all costs. Building expenses (including maintenance, grounds care, and other costs) comprised 19% of expenses, with the lease alone making up 16% of total budget. Professional services comprise 7% of the total budget, including professional development costs and special education service providers.

Pursuant to U.C.A. § 63G-7-604(4) and Rule 37-4, U.A.C, the WCS obtained and maintains insurance through the Utah State Division of Risk Management or other suitable insurance

carrier (with a general policy holder rating of not less than A and a financial rating of AAA as rated in the most current available “Best Guide” Insurance Report) coverage to insure against all claims up to and including the limitation of judgments established by statute and rule. Such coverage shall include but not be limited to:

- 1) General liability;
- 2) Employee dishonesty bond;
- 3) Workers’ compensation, as specified by federal law;
- 4) Comprehensive/collision consistent with cash values of vehicles if applicable;
- 5) Liability insurance specific to the School’s Governing Board’s financial officer or treasurer or business administrator consistent with coverage designated in USBE rule.

SCSB is named as an additional insured under any and all general liability insurance policies required by this section.

In terms of State Financial Metrics, the following information provides details by metric.

Number of Material of Significant Audit Findings, Current Year
<p>2016-17: No findings on enrollment audit.</p> <p>Two findings on financial audit which have been addressed and formal response is being sent to USBE by May 30.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Need to increase coverage on Treasurer’s Bond 2. Need to formally appoint Records Officer (Ms. Merchant and Ms. Salisbury had been identified and attended training, but training was in December 2015 and there had not been a formal Board vote. That has been remedied for the coming year.)
2017-18: No material findings.
2018-19: One finding related to additional spending from a project fund part of bond that was not listed in the original budget as “revenue.”
2019-20: No material findings.
2020-21: No material findings.

Number of Unresolved Audit Findings from Prior Year
2016-17: N/A
2017-18: See Above. All findings have been addressed.

2018-19: N/A
2019-20: N/A
2020-21: N/A

Maintain bond covenants
2016-17: N/A - School does not have a bond.
2017-18: Covenants were maintained for the months in which they existed.
2018-19: Covenants were maintained.
2019-20: Covenants were maintained.
2020-21: Covenants were maintained.

Adherence to Operational Budget: Within 5%
2016-17: Current projections are for less than 1% deviation from budget projections. Final budget will be accurate.
2017-18: Yes.
2018-19: No.
2019-20: Yes.
2020-21: Yes.

Occupancy Costs: 28% or less
2016-17: 17.5%
2017-18: 17.5%
2018-19: 19%
2019-20: 19%
2020-21: 19%

Debt service coverage ratio: 1.1
2016-17: 1.39
2017-18: 1.31
2018-19: 1.24
2019-20: 1.32
2020-21: 1.25

Cashflow: Positive
2016-17: Meets. Cash flow has remained positive all year.
2017-18: Meets.
2018-19: Meets.
2019-20: Meets.
2020-21: Meets.

Total Margin of Net Income to Revenue (for 3 years aggregated): Positive
2016-17: 5.3%
2017-18: 4.2%
2018-19: 3.8%
2019-20: 4.7%
2020-21: 3.58%

Enrollment Variance (October 1 count compared to projections): 95%
2016-17: 100%. October 1 enrollment was 540 (as verified on audit). Projections for 2016-17 were 540.
2017-18: October 1 count was 558. Budget was 540.
2018-19: October 1 count was 628. Budget was 634.

2019-20: October 1 count was 640. Budget was 640.
2020-21: October 1 count was 641. Budget was 640.

Unrestricted Cash on Hand: 30 days with a positive trend.
2016-17: 48 days cash on hand.
2017-18: 44 days cash on hand.
2018-19: 61 days cash on hand.
2019-20: 42 days cash on hand.
2020-21: 67 days cash on hand.

Ratio of Assets to Liabilities: 1.0 with positive trend
2016-17: 2
2017-18: 1.0
2018-19: 1.01
2019-20: 1.04
2020-21: 1.02

Debt to asset ratio: less than or equal to .9
2016-17: Meets -- more assets (cash and property) than debt
2017-18: Meets
2018-19: Meets
2019-20: Meets
2020-21: Meets

Our Plans for Success

Framework for Success

Based on State requirements and school-level leadership, WCS has developed a comprehensive “Framework for Success.” This document represents analysis of the root causes of challenges, areas of strength and opportunities for growth. This document synthesizes many elements with a desire to weave together State mandates and required goals with the mission, vision and culture of WCS as a Waldorf School.

This document includes:

- An Overview of the Paradigm and Definition of “Success” at WCS
- Strategic Priorities for the 2020-21 School Year
- A Long-term Vision / Strategic Plan
- Required State & Federal Plans

This document is available on the school's website at:

<http://wasatchwaldorf.org/teacher-and-student-success-plan/>.