

District Superintendent's Report

Jenna Leadbetter, Ed.D.

Crosslake Community School | Board Meeting — March 23, 2026



Enrollment & ADM Update

CCS currently serves **594 enrolled students** across both programs. Our board-approved three-year enrollment targets are 600 (Year 1), 660 (Year 2), and 690 (Year 3) against our approved 700-student cap. We are close to our Year 1 enrollment target. However, it is important for the board to understand the distinction between enrollment and ADM, as ADM is the number the state funds us on.

Current Enrollment by Program

Program	Enrolled	% of Target	ADM	Conversion
In-Person K–5	104	109%	106.63	~98%
In-Person 6–8	29	57%	29.66	~98%
In-Person EC	6	32%	—	—
In-Person Total	139	84%	136.29	98%
Online K–5	52	91%	49.60	~95%
Online 6–8	77	96%	64.40	~84%
Online 9–12	326	82%	306.40	~94%
Online Total	455	85%	420.40	92%
District Total	594	85%	556.52	94%

Understanding the Enrollment-to-ADM Conversion

Enrollment is our headcount — the number of students registered and attending at a given point. ADM (Average Daily Membership) is the number the state pays us on, calculated across the full year. A student who enrolls mid-year counts for only part of the year. This is why enrollment and ADM never match perfectly.

Key Insight: Our enrollment-to-ADM conversion rate has held steady at 92–97% over the past four years. This means that for every 100 enrolled students, we are funded for approximately 94.

Historical Conversion Rate

Year	EOY Enrollment	ADM	Conversion
SY 2022–23	437	424	97%
SY 2023–24	507	468	92%
SY 2024–25	521	488	94%
SY 2025–26 (Projected)	600	~564	94%

What This Means for Our Targets

Our board-approved targets of 600, 660, and 690 refer to **enrolled students**. Based on our historical conversion rate of 93–96%, the projected **funded ADM** at each target is:

- **Year 1 (600 enrolled):** Projected ADM of 558–576
- **Year 2 (660 enrolled):** Projected ADM of 614–634
- **Year 3 (690 enrolled):** Projected ADM of 642–662

This means our budget models need to be calibrated to ADM, not enrollment. I am working with Adam Hewitt at Creative Planning to ensure our financial projections reflect these conversion rates. I am projecting a maximum ADM of 650–672 (93–96%) at full enrollment capacity.

Two strategic priorities directly improve this conversion rate: getting students enrolled before day one of the school year (fall enrollment push), and reducing mid-year attrition. Every student who starts on day one counts toward ADM for the full year; every student who enrolls in January only boosts ADM for the back half.

SY 2026–27 Enrollment Projection

Based on current data, our preliminary SY 2026–27 enrollment projection is as follows:

- **454** current online students
- **-49** graduating seniors
- **-60** projected summer leavers
- **+145** projected new online enrollments by end of October
- **= 490** Online students by end of October
- **+145** In-person returning (EC intake replaces 8th grade graduates)
- **= 635** District enrollment by end of October

At a 94% conversion rate, 635 enrolled students would yield an ADM of approximately 597. To reach the Year 2 target of 660 ADM, we would need enrollment closer to 700–710 or a meaningful improvement in our conversion rate through earlier enrollment and stronger retention.

The FY26 budget revision approved at the February board meeting continues to guide our financial planning. Creative Planning (Adam Hewitt) remains engaged in monthly financial oversight, and our fund balance remains healthy.

Legislative & Advocacy Update

The Minnesota legislative session continues, with several bills directly affecting charter school funding equity. CCS has been actively engaged through MACS, building on the advocacy work Board Director Mindy Glazier and I conducted at Charter School Day at the Capitol in February.

Key Issues CCS Is Tracking

- **Safe Schools Revenue:** Multiple bills in both the House and Senate would extend this funding to charter schools at \$36 per pupil. Charter schools have historically been excluded from this revenue stream.
- **Lease Aid & Facilities Funding:** Lease aid has not been increased since 2013. In FY23, Minnesota charter schools collectively pulled \$32.2 million from general funds to cover facility costs that state aid didn't cover. CCS continues to advocate for lease aid reform.
- **Local Optional Revenue:** Currently available to traditional districts but largely inaccessible to charters. At approximately \$724 per pupil, this represents a meaningful funding gap.

Federal Landscape

Congress passed a \$79 billion FY26 federal education budget that maintains most major K–12 programs — including Title I, IDEA, Title II, and Title III — at roughly current levels. However, the U.S. Department of Education has transferred administration of several federal programs, including Full-Service Community Schools, to the Department of Health and Human Services. We are monitoring for potential impacts on the FSCS grant opportunity CCS is pursuing.

Education Equalization Credit

I shared an update with the board earlier this month regarding the Education Equalization Credit (EEC) legislation being advanced by the Minnesota Rural Education Association (MREA). This proposal intersects directly with charter funding equity issues and we will continue monitoring its progress.

Active Grant Applications

Three grant applications are in active development with deadlines approaching:

- **Full-Service Community Schools (FSCS) Startup — In-Person Site:** Due March 30. Up to \$600,000 over three years. Would fund a full-time FSCS Site Coordinator at the in-person campus and expand wraparound student and family services.

- **Full-Service Community Schools (FSCS) Startup — Online Site:** Due March 30. Up to \$600,000 over three years. Would support the online program’s statewide virtual community school model. I will serve as District FSCS Director across both sites.
- **MnMTSS Infrastructure Development Grant:** Due April 3. Supports continued implementation of the Minnesota Multi-Tiered System of Supports framework, building on our June 2025 Introduction training and our district MnMTSS & Strategic Outcomes Team’s ongoing work.

Combined potential: up to \$1.2 million in FSCS funding plus MnMTSS support. These applications are being developed in coordination with district cabinet and will be reviewed before submission.

Electric School Bus Grant Program

Applications are now open for the Minnesota Department of Commerce Electric School Bus Grant Program. Funding covers the purchase of up to three new electric school buses (or repowering existing buses to electric), charging infrastructure installation, and administrative costs. Depending on financial need and prioritization criteria, Commerce will cover 80–90% of bus purchases and 65–95% of all other eligible expenses, with up to \$3.3 million available this round.

Applications are accepted from March 23, 2026 through June 18, 2026 at 5:00 PM CST. An informational webinar is scheduled for Thursday, April 9 from 1:00–2:00 PM, and I am registered to attend.

I am hopeful this grant will be open to charter schools and, if eligible, I intend to apply with a vision of acquiring Type 3 hybrid vehicles to assist in CCS’s district transportation needs.

Charter Renewal & Authorizer Relations

CCS’s charter renewal cycle with Osprey Wilds is approaching for the 2026–27 school year. Through advanced planning and our strong partnership with our authorizer, CCS is well-positioned heading into this process. Osprey Wilds released its 2025 authorizing framework with updated requirements, and I have been proactively reviewing these against our current documentation and compliance posture.

Policy work is ongoing in coordination with the updated framework. MSBA policies slated for the March board meeting are ready for review, with two exceptions: the AI Model Policy has been removed as it continues to evolve at state and federal levels, and we are awaiting guidance from Osprey Wilds on the Procurement Policy, as MSBA is renaming Policy 721 (Uniform Grant Guidance) to “Procurement Policy” — potentially creating overlap with our existing procurement policy. I have reached out to Osprey Wilds for guidance on whether to consolidate.

Board Elections

The formal call for School Board Director nominations has been sent to all in-person and online families. Paula Green coordinated distribution on February 24. Board elections will take place later this spring.

Department Updates

The following district department managers will provide brief updates to the board at the April 2026 board meeting:

- **Gena Jacobson**, District Special Education Manager
- **Kathy Faust**, District Food Services Manager
- **Will Lyke**, District Technology Manager



Looking Ahead

- **March 30:** FSCS Grant Applications Due
- **April 3:** MnMTSS Grant Application Due
- **April 8–10:** Osprey Wilds Environmental Field Trip (Online 6–12)
- **April 9:** Electric School Bus Grant Informational Webinar
- **April Board Meeting:** Department updates from Gena Jacobson (Special Education), Kathy Faust (Food Services), and Will Lyke (Technology)
- **May 6:** MACS Innovation Award Luncheon (St. Paul)
- **June 18:** Electric School Bus Grant Application Deadline

As always, I remain grateful for this board's leadership, trust, and partnership. We are building something exceptional at Crosslake Community School, and it is a privilege to lead this work alongside each of you.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenna Leadbetter, Ed.D.

District Superintendent

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