

Executive Director Report

Crosslake Community School - May 2025

Organizational Structure Update

As mentioned, the new organizational chart outlines our streamlined leadership structure at Crosslake Community Schools. At the top level, our Executive Director/Superintendent leads our District Cabinet, consisting of seven key positions: the Executive Director plus five District-level administrators and two Program Directors.

The District positions—HR/Business, Assessment/Curriculum, MARSS/Ed-FI Coordinator, Technology, and Special Education—provide specialized expertise across both our Seat-based and Online learning programs. These positions directly report to the Executive Director while supporting both program areas.

Each learning program (Seat-based and Online) has its own Director/Principal with dedicated staff. The structure includes critical support positions like Administrative Assistants, specialized coordinators, and teaching staff organized by grade levels.

We've also highlighted our crucial contracted vendor partnerships that supplement our in-house expertise in areas like Special Education, Finance, HR, and Marketing.

This structure is designed to balance administrative efficiency with comprehensive educational leadership across both our learning programs.

Compensation Plan Implementation

Following the Board's consideration of our compensation plan, we are moving forward with implementing the approved adjustments. The Board had the option to approve comprehensive pay scale adjustments for all staff categories to provide complete financial clarity, or to focus on specific staff groups with the remaining adjustments to follow in June.

The key components of our compensation approach include:

- Paid holidays for all hourly employees
- The MN PELSB Tiered pay scales for teachers, coaches, interventionists, social workers, school counselors, and related staff as established by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)

- A 3% increase for hourly staff, coordinators, managers, directors, and the executive director

This approach addresses our primary goal of ensuring fair and equitable pay scale resolution, particularly for the staff who inspired the compensation planning dialogue years ago.

For implementation context, the MN PELSB Tiered pay scales require state licensure as mandated by the Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB). Any staff member who falls within this category but is not currently licensed will need to pursue, at minimum, a Tier 1 licensure and meet its annual requirements with our district posting their position with MDE. For clarity, Tier 1 licensure was created due to teacher shortages, but is not considered high quality by PELSB standards, which is why these positions are required to be posted with MDE in the event a higher licensed tier candidate is available (Minnesota Statutes 122A.181). There is training that comes with state licensure assignments, training that benefits both our staff and students.

To clarify organizational roles, the coordinators referenced are not "lead teachers", "chairpersons", or the "extra duties as assigned" tiered licensed staff, but rather full-time positions with either supervisory requirements and/or workload analysis that denotes higher compensation and thus a separate pay scale.

If the Board opted for the phased approach, I will continue refining the pay scales for coordinators, managers, directors, and the executive director position for presentation at the June Board meeting based on the direction provided today.

Creative Planning has prepared six budget projection models covering the next three school years that demonstrate the financial impacts of different compensation approaches. These projections highlight the importance of our continued marketing efforts to support our compensation goals while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Enrollment & Attendance

Current Enrollment:

- Seat-based: 147 students
- Online K-5: 38 students
- Online 6-12: 322 students
- Total: 507 students (District Cap: 500)

Average Daily Membership (ADM):

- Seat-based: 144
- Online K-5: 37.6
- Online 6-12: 305.1
- Total: 486.79

Academic Highlights

Literacy Initiatives

- Successfully secured the Empowering Schools with Proven Literacy Solutions Grant from the Hawn Foundation
- Provides Tier 2 Literacy Curriculum for grades 4-12
- Includes strategic consulting and ongoing professional development
- Offers data-driven progress monitoring tools
- 27 staff members completed Phase One training with LETRS EC and CAREIALL for the MN READ Act

End-of-Year Assessment

- State testing window has been completed
- Spring screening (MN READ Act) continues through May 23
- Results will inform our Local Literacy Plan reporting to MDE

Innovative Learning

- Math Lounge: New Tier 1 intervention launching this fall to provide structured tutoring sessions for Geometry and Algebra 2
- Experiential learning through outdoor education continues as a cornerstone of our approach
- Environmental literacy activities have included butterfly life cycles, trout observation, and agricultural connections

Major Achievements & Events

Governor's Fishing Opener Youth Event

- Our district-wide 5-8th grade students participated in the Governor's Fishing Opener on May 9
- Students received an official State of Minnesota Proclamation declaring "Fishing Education Day"
- Successful collaboration with MN DNR, law enforcement, Explore Minnesota, and the Governor's office

MACS Innovation Award

- Our online school's MESS-E team was recognized as a finalist for the Minnesota Charter Schools Innovation Award
- Team represented CCS well and gathered ideas for future programming

Upcoming Celebrations

- 8th Grade Graduation (Seat-based): May 19
- Talent Show (Seat-based): May 21
- 8th Grade Graduation (Online): May 30
- Senior Graduation: May 30, 2-4 PM

Operations Update

Professional Development

- Implemented a new structured PD request process effective immediately
- Summer PD requests will be evaluated through an equity lens by direct supervisors
- Decisions prioritize student benefit, cost-effectiveness, and regional options

Staff Recognition

- Health Aide, Gina Anderson's quick intervention saved a staff member's life
- Multiple staff recognized for innovative teaching and exceptional student support
- Parent testimonial highlighted the positive impact of our school: "Moving to CCS was the best thing we could have done for [student]. This year was a complete 180 from last year."

Program Updates

Online Program

- Online 6-12 final grading process is underway with student work due May 23 and grades due May 28
- Elective course registration for 2025-26 is open through June 27
- Summer school registration deadline approaching

Seat-Based Program

- Last full day of school scheduled for May 23 with PTO-sponsored activities
- Summer office hours: June 2-July 31, Monday-Thursday, 7:30-11:30am
- Open House for 2025-26 school year scheduled for August 26 (4:30-6:00pm)
- PreK enrollment open for children 4 years old by September 1

Legislative & Funding Updates

State Budget Agreement

- Governor's Office, Senate, and House have reached agreement on Universal Budget Targets
- Education Finance Committee has a zero target for 2026-27 (maintain current spending)
- \$420 million in cuts required for 2028-29 biennium
- Special session appears likely
- Will continue monitoring potential charter-specific impacts

Looking Ahead

- Theme for the 2025-26 school year announced: "FORWARD"
- Continuing to strengthen environmental literacy initiatives
- Focus on mental health awareness and support for students and staff
- Board election results pending

Respectfully submitted,

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Executive Director
Crosslake Community School