

# Crosslake Community Schools

2021-2022

**World's Best  
Workforce &  
Annual Report**

- ◆ Crosslake Community Schools
- ◆ Seat-Based Pre-K-8 and Online K-12



Board of Education Approved October 10, 2022

# Table of Contents

Mission Statement	3
Implementation of Primary and Additional Statutory Purposes (Part II)	4
Student Attendance, Attrition and Mobility (Part IV)	7
Educational Approach and Curriculum (Part V)	8
Innovative Practices and Implementation (Part VI)	10
Academic Performance: Goals and Benchmarks (Part VII)	13
Educational Effectiveness: Assessment and Evaluation (Part VIII)	16
Student and Parent/Guardian Satisfaction (Part IX)	18
EE (Part X)	19
Governance and Management (Part XI)	21
Staffing (Part XII)	25
Operational Performance (XIII)	27
Finances (Part XIV)	29
Future Plans (Part XV)	31
Appendix A - School Calendars	32



# Crosslake Community Schools

- ❖ Crosslake Community Schools' Seat-Based Learning — Serving Pre-Kindergarten-8
- ❖ Crosslake Community Schools' Online Learning — Serving K-12
- ❖ Celebrating Over 20 Years of Student Excellence in Learning

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## ***Mission Statement***

***To grow environmentally literate, community-impacting learners of excellence***

## ***Vision Statement***

***To provide academic excellence that leads to a stronger and healthier community***

## **Serving Students in PK - 12**

Crosslake Community Schools (CCS) offers Prekindergarten (PreK) through Grade 8 in our seat-based *Crosslake Community Schools'* building located in the heart of Crosslake, Minnesota. Because we believe small class size enhances learning, we limit classes to 19 students. We also employ a multi-grade learning environment, creating unique educational experiences that are difficult to duplicate in larger school settings.

Another component of CCS is *Crosslake Online*, an online learning program serving students in grades K-12. The online program features flexible learning opportunities that vary for the different grade bands (K-5, 6-8, 9-12). The online program is primarily asynchronous, with synchronous components focused on student engagement. We offer both comprehensive (full-time) and supplemental (part-time) online learning options.

## **Authorized by Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center (OW)**

CCS has a long-standing relationship OW, formerly Audubon Center of the Northwoods. We renewed our contract with OW over the past year and are currently under contract with them until June 30, 2025.

OW supports Crosslake Community Schools through a model that ensures that CCS fulfills its mission and vision. Furthermore, OW structure provides monitoring and oversight to help guarantee statutory requirements, Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) requirements and CCS' commitment to its community members. The staff from OW and CCS collaborate about professional development and overall school program quality.

The authorizing mission of OW is to ensure quality academic and environmental literacy outcomes for students in Minnesota by conducting effective oversight and evaluation of its authorized schools, providing strategic support to schools and making informed and merit-based decisions about its portfolio of charter schools.

The authorizing vision of OW 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.

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## ***Implementation of Primary and Additional Statutory Purposes (Part II)***

### **Purposes**

To improve student learning and achievement and increase learning opportunities for pupils.

### **Guiding Principle**

To provide a curriculum that is rigorous, challenges all students and has an emphasis on environmentalism and community engagement.

CCS have purposes and guiding principles that enhance our mission and vision. We are always working to improve student learning and our educational approaches. We do so by seeking new pedagogies, developing innovative and engaging instruction, and ensuring we have accurate accountability measures in place.

1. Learning opportunities:
  - a. Small class sizes
  - b. Multiple grade levels under one roof
  - c. Online and seat-based learning options
  - d. Enrichment through a variety of special offerings throughout the school year
  - e. Environmental education (EE), including the use of our Solarium and our newly developed Fresh Air Classrooms
  - f. Project based learning
  - g. Annual Day of Service program honoring Dr. Martin Luther King
  - h. Competitive archery program beginning with 4th grade students
  - i. Competitive clay target team started in 2016
  
2. Innovative teaching strategies:
  - a. Multi-grade elementary classrooms. (Looping model of instruction)
  - b. Environmental learning through Fresh Air Classrooms
  - c. Interdisciplinary instruction at the middle school level
  - d. Online "homerooms" for middle school students and "Online Advisory" (will be renamed "Grade Level Seminar in Fall 2022) for high school students to build connections between students and staff
  - e. Innovative online EE course: Human Encounters with Nature
  - f. In-school aquaponics lab (Solarium) allowing for hands-on learning
  - g. Project based learning model throughout the school
  - h. Differentiated leveled learning opportunities in math
  - i. Experiential models of classroom learning stations, individual and group
  - j. Each online student has a dedicated Learning Coach



3. Measuring outcomes:

a. CCS staff utilizes multiple data points to track student achievement and growth. We also use behavior, social emotional learning, mental health and chemical health data to address the whole student. We use the following data:

- i. STAR Assessment in Reading and Mathematics
- ii. Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments
- iii. Curriculum based assessment such as Benchmark and iXL
- iv. Student performance, attendance and observation data
- v. Project Based Learning outcomes
- vi. Classroom assessments
- vii. Parental information and feedback
- viii. Social Worker and Counselor feedback



4. Accountability measures:

a. CCS works to maintain a high level of accountability and transparency with timely reporting to the entities listed below. We feel this multi-layered approach to accountability is a hallmark, not only of our schools, but all charter public schools that desire to operate at a high level of proficiency and transparency.

i. OW -

- Regular communication creates a continuous improvement and compliance (federal, state, local and OW) cycles
- Epicenter reporting on a regular basis that creates transparency for OW and the public regarding school and board operations

ii. MDE -

- Assessment results
- Oversight of state statutory requirements
- Support from the Charter School Division

iii. CCS Professional Learning Communities, which are led by teachers and focus on student learning. Based on the learning needs of the students, teachers and staff develop professional development goals, curriculum needs and review all aspects of improving student learning

b. MDE reporting protocols based on the reporting calendar

i. To increase student learning through items such as the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments

ii. Quality Compensation (Q-comp - performance pay), resulting in professional development that emphasizes student learning:

- High Reliability Schools framework by Marzano in the seat-based program
- ENVoY-Catalyst classroom management techniques in the seat-based program
- Quality Matters and NSQOL standards applied in the online program
- Content-specific professional opportunities (by grade and content area)
- Peer coaching model with on-going support from trained facilitators

c. MTSS that includes classroom, strategic and intensive interventions that incorporates Title I, Special Education and Individual Student Support

### Student Enrollment and Demographics (Part III)

Student enrollment has been increasing quite steadily and rapidly. The 2021-2022 school year was the first time we implemented an enrollment waitlist in the online program, as we reached capacity for online 6-12 grade in early 2022. We added several staff members to meet the needs of our growing student population.

Number of Students Enrolled	2019-20 All-School	2020-21 Seat-Based	2020-21 Online	2021-22 Seat-Based	2021-22 Online
Pre-Kindergarten	14	12		10	
Kindergarten	24	17		20	5
1st Grade	17	20		17	7
2nd Grade	15	15		22	4
3rd Grade	16	15		19	2
4th Grade	21	17		16	8
5th Grade	18	17	5	16	8
6th Grade	14	14	8	17	12
7th Grade	16	11	14	15	17
8th Grade	18	9	17	15	27
9th Grade	23		34		30
10th Grade	21		38		62
11th Grade	26		40		83
12th Grade	57		64		71
<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>336</b>
<b>Total ADM (Average Daily Membership) for year</b>	<b>283.8 302.91</b>	<b>345</b>		<b>422.09</b>	

### Student Demographics

Demographic Trends	2019-20 All-School	2020-21 Seat-based	2020-21 Online	2021-22 Seat-based	2021-22 Online
Special Education	66	27	51	38	74
English Learners	0	0	4	0	1
Free/Reduced Priced Lunch	55/23	53	54	52	72
Black, not of Hispanic Origin	6	1	8	1	15
Hispanic/Latino	4	1	6	1	10
Asian/Pacific Islander	2	1	4	1	6
American Indian/Alaskan Native	12	1	5	2	16
Two or more races		1	9	4	33
White, not of Hispanic Origin	260	142	206	150	281
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>336</b>

## Student Attendance, Attrition and Mobility (Part IV)

### Student Attendance

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-2022
<b>MDE Overall Consistent Attendance Rate</b>	84.9 (All-School)	Seat-Based: 87.7% Online: 42.6% All-School: 68.4%	Data Not Yet Available

The MDE Report Card does not include consistent attendance data for the 21-22 school year at the time this report was written. According to a report pulled from our student information system, attendance data for 21-22 is as follows:

All-School Average Daily Attendance Percentage: 89.4%  
 Online 6-12: 87.5%  
 Online K-5: 94.0%  
 Seat-based: 91.6%

### Student Attrition

Percentage of students* who were continuously enrolled between October 1 of the 2020-2021 school year and October 1 of the 2021-2022 school year.	Seat-Based	Online
	76.6%	58.3%

*\*Do not include graduating students or those who have completed your school program, i.e., if your school is K-6, do not include students who have completed 6<sup>th</sup> grade.*

Percentage of students* who continued enrollment in the school from Spring 2021 to October 1, 2022.	Seat-Based	Online
	79.4%	63%

*\*Do not include graduating students or those who have completed your school program, i.e., if your school is K-6, do not include students who have completed 6<sup>th</sup> grade.*

The seat-based program's retention rate is higher in the younger grades and becomes lower as students get older. While families are happy with our education program, some choose to leave after fourth grade because we do not have more school-based sports programs that feed into a high school program. With our seat-based program ending at eighth grade, many families want their students to compete with students who will be their teammates through high school. Our archery and clay target teams allow our online students to compete alongside the seat-based students as one team. In addition, students who are drawn to more individual sports such as this will stay with us longer and eventually enroll in the online high school. We are exploring options to add more individual sports such as golf, cross-country and tennis in an effort to attract and retain more students in the middle grades who then can feed into the high school and continue to compete.



Crosslake Online retention rate has increased over time. From our first year to our second year, we only retained 23 percent of students. As the program has become more defined in its programming and as we have added more support systems—like a learning coach being assigned to each student—our retention rate has increased. As the demand for our program has increased and our program has improved, we have seen significant improvement in our retention rate which led to our first enrollment “waitlist” in the 21-22 school year.

## Student Mobility

	Summer Transfers In	# of students on Oct. 1	Mid-year Transfers In	Mid-year Transfers Out	Total Mid-year Transfers	Mobility Index* (as a percent)
19-20	46	423	54	84	238	56.2
20-21		367	128	98	226	61.6
21-22	145	375	180	57	237	63.2

\* Total mid-year transfers divided by number of students on October 1

## Educational Approach and Curriculum (Part V)

CCS' Seat-Based and Online Learning are known for environmental learning, small class sizes and being an integral part of the Central Lakes Region community. In addition, our online programming offers secondary programming—both for those who continue on from our PreK-8 program and new students seeking a high-quality online program. Our emphasis on environmental learning, enhanced through OW, and environmental awareness begins from the time students first enroll and continues throughout each student's school career. CCS' teachers embed environmental learning into their curriculum. In addition, we give students opportunities throughout the school year to engage in experiential learning that further enriches their understanding of the environment and our impact as humans on our surroundings. During the 2021-22 school year, our EE committee chairpersons worked with all teachers to embed EE concepts throughout our curriculum. CCS has separate EE committees for the seat-based and online programs due to the very different nature of curriculum delivery.

Beyond this, CCS PreK-8 is committed to providing small class sizes and multi-age classrooms as a means to enrich the learning experience for our students. This combination of class size and multi-age classrooms allows teachers to more deeply engage students in the educational process. It also allows classroom teachers to develop a greater understanding of individual students because they maintain daily contact over two school years. Feedback from parents about the multi-grade experience for their students is very positive.

Within CCS Online, we have purposefully designed our online program to offer a similar mindset of small class sizes and personalized instruction. We do so by maintaining a lower student-to-teacher ratio than what is offered in a typical online school. We also provide additional staff support through a learning coach model, where teachers who are not directly teaching content, are available to support students.

CCS educators employ personalized learning plans to further ensure individual student needs are met. These plans, along with an emerging formalized MTSS, further strengthens our ability to individualize instruction to meet specific learner needs.

### The instructional program and curriculum

Within each classroom, teaching staff use a number of strategies to assess student progress toward academic standards. Standardized testing, such as STAR and MCA assessments, can help with summative and comparison data from one year to the next and between school districts. In addition, our staff regularly assesses individual student progress through unit or chapter tests, quizzes and the use of individual learning plans that focus on learning goals for each student.

During the 2018-19 school year, CCS began creating a more effective system of MTSS for struggling learners. We continue to improve this system each year and have more staff trained in MTSS each year. In addition, ongoing review of the standards to make sure they align with curriculum offerings help CCS' staff ensure students are on track and in alignment with state and local standards.



### **Remediation and acceleration practices or programming**

Because of the multi-grade classroom model employed by CCS, we are able to blend remediation and acceleration programming within each classroom. In these multi-grade classrooms we provide a relatively seamless offering of individual learning opportunities to students who need additional time or attention to meet standards, and conversely, to those students showing the need or desire to accelerate their learning.

With our online math curriculum iXL, Go Math and teacher developed curriculum, students are able to increase their pace on the standards of the class. This is done on an individual basis. Students also are able to work on enrichment opportunities beyond grade-level content.

In 2020, the CCS PreK-8 seat-based school added an interventionist position. This is an exciting addition to our school because we can better meet the needs of struggling learners and we are able to establish a specialized program for high-ability learners. It became clear in recent years that the lack of a high-ability program was the reason some families chose to leave CCS. In the 21-22 school year, the online program also added math and reading interventionists. Because of these staff additions, we can better serve all our students.

CCS offers Title I services for our seat-based students who qualify. In addition, we work within the MTSS framework. The MTSS framework helps teachers and staff provide students with academic and behavioral strategies for various needs. We also employ our Child Study Team or our 504 Coordinator when there is a need for an assessment for additional services.

### **Special education program**

The Paul Bunyan Special Education Cooperative (PBSC) in Brainerd, Minnesota, provides CCS' special education program management. The PBSC serves all public schools in the Central Lakes Region. The PBSC coordinates the speech/language, occupational therapy and physical therapy support for students. This model enables us to provide one-on-one sessions for students, without needing to hire a full time therapist.

CCS employs two licensed special education teachers in our seat-based school. These teachers ensure that the K-8 students assigned to their caseloads receive the special education services indicated in their IEPs.

Crosslake Online has five licensed special education teachers and a special education coordinator overseeing the delivery of services and support for students who have IEPs.

We primarily meet the needs of our special education students through a mainstream approach, with some students receiving pull-out services in speech, reading and math. Other students may receive special education services within the classroom. CCS also employs paraprofessionals, both in our PreK-8 school and online school. Paraprofessionals, under the direction of licensed special education teachers, provide additional support to students. This support is based on the number of service minutes required by the student's IEP.



### **English learner program**

Upon enrolling in CCS, the Minnesota Language Survey (MNLS) is completed for all students. If the MNLS indicates that the student would potentially qualify for English Learner (EL) services, the next step is for CCS' administrator/school counselor to review the student's records in more depth. There are a number of results that could occur based on this records review:

- Based on previous records and/or test scores, the student is not designated as EL in MARSS or for receiving services.
- Based on previous records and/or test scores, the student is designated as EL in MARSS and will receive services based on CCS' EL Plan of Service.
- If there is any doubt about a student's language ability in English, the student will be screened for English language proficiency.

The EL Plan of Service details:

- LIEP (Language Instruction Educational Program) Placement Procedures
- LIEP Description
- Amount and Scope of Instruction
- Communication of LIEP Information

### PreK program

In 2018, CCS began offering a fee-based PreK program. This program allows us to better serve our families, better prepare students for kindergarten and help us more fully meet our World's Best Workforce (WBWF) expectation of having students ready for Kindergarten. In 2020, we had 12 students enrolled in the PreK program.



Our PreK teacher implements a standards-based, state-approved curriculum to increase the likelihood of student success in kindergarten. The PreK program helps students thrive in school and, at the same time, it helps us achieve our goal of kindergarten readiness.

### After-school and summer program

The CCS' seat-based after-school program, Kids Care, is designed to provide more flexibility for our families by providing them with the option of after school childcare. It also provides our students with learning opportunities beyond the traditional school day in art, physical education, reading, math and social skills. In 2021-22, the program offered after-school programming every school day from 3:15-6:00 PM. Up to 42 students participated.

During June 2022, CCS' online program provided a short extended-year option to students. The program was designed to support credit recovery for 7-12 grade students. CCS' seat-based program offered eight summer school sessions for students in Grades K-8 during June 2022.

### How CCS is staffed to meet its educational mission:

In order to maintain our class ratio of 19:1, meet special education guidelines, abide by MDE requirements for teacher licensure and ensure adequate support staff needs, CCS employed 73 staff members during the 2021-22 school year.

### School Calendars (Appendix A)

CCS Board of Education has approved an annual school calendar for both seat-based learning and online learning that includes 165 days of instruction. The Board of Education also approved an annual testing calendar.

## Innovative Practices and Implementation (Part VI)

### Innovative and Unique Aspects of CCS

Some of the most prominent and unique features of our school that contribute to student success and our school success are:

- Small seat-based PreK-8 and online K-5 class sizes, capped at 19 students per teacher, create a warm and inclusive environment that boosts student support and learning
- Our research-based seat-based PreK-8 and online K-5 multi-age approach to instruction, also known as looping, improves relationships among students and between teachers and students, increases staff understanding of student needs, allows for more efficient instruction and results in higher attendance rates
- With an eye on being community-minded and environmentally conscious learners— both CCS' seat-based program and online program are continually seeking opportunities to incorporate the community and environment into our learning atmosphere. Examples of this include our Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day service program, our annual highway clean-up project, our partnership with the Army Corp of Engineers and our Fresh Air Classrooms.



- Each online student has a dedicated Learning Coach who helps make connections between the student, family, teachers, and the online school programs. The Learning Coach is the student's support, cheerleader, accountability partner, and all-around partner in the learning experience.
- The online program prides itself on our strong focus on relationships and "meeting students where they are at." We have a full-time social worker and a full-time school counselor who work with students to help them have an educational experience that meets their current and future needs.

## Key Successes

The 2021-2022 school year experienced a number of changes, primarily due to new leadership and the online program's major growth. We also were deeply engaged in the process of renewing our charter contract with OW.

- Continued Covid-19 Task Force (Incident Command Team).
- Experienced continuing enrollment increases over the course of the school year. This led to a waitlist in the online program and the addition of several staff members to support our growing student population. Had our largest graduating class ever and celebrated with an in-person ceremony!
- The online program started the "XLake Flex" program which allowed students from other schools (without online programs) to attend our online program on a contractual basis. This helped out some of our other charter school colleagues as they had some students who, for various reasons, were not able to attend school in person. We added a Human Resources/Business Manager position to our district-level staff. This individual has been a great help as we update our policies and processes regarding staff and finances.
- Utilize Fresh Air Classrooms. In the summer of 2020, CCS researched the concept of outdoor classrooms as a way to both reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission and enhance integrated environmental education. With remarkable speed and with the help of key community members, we were able to establish three Fresh Air classrooms on school grounds and secure the use of two additional Fresh Air Classrooms across the street at the Army Corp of Engineers. The Fresh Air Classrooms on CCS' grounds utilize different materials for desks: benches, picnic tables and giant boulders! We are currently working with the community to see if we can improve these Fresh Air classrooms by making them more cold-weather accessible.
- Give to the community. As part of our focus on community engagement and as one of the largest employers in Crosslake, helping and giving back to the community is an important part of our mission and vision. One way we do so is by hosting blood drives throughout the year. We host these about once per quarter. These are so successful that all the available time slots fill up.
- The online middle school program implemented weekly "Homeroom" meetings that facilitated more face-to-face (virtual) meetings between students and staff members. Student engagement in the online program is challenging but increasing and will be a major focus during the 22-23 school year.
- CCS' bylaws were revised and now specify online parent/guardian and teacher representatives on the Board of Directors.
- Enabled CCS to better meet the needs of struggling learners and high-ability learners by adding interventionist positions to the online program.
- We employ a MTSS for our students that we hope lends itself to demonstrating a higher course and program completion rate than typical online schools. Not only do students receive instruction from licensed online staff, CCS also employs an online school counselor, seat-based and online social workers, and licensed teachers who are full-time learning coaches for their cohorts of students.
- The learning opportunities, environmental focus, community engagement and levels of student support across two platforms make CCS truly unique in the Central Lakes region.

