



**FIT ACADEMY**  
• CHARTER SCHOOL •

***FIT Academy Charter School  
Annual Report & World's Best Workforce Report  
2020-21 School Year***

7200 147th Street West, Apple Valley, MN 55124

*Board Approved November*



**Volunteers of America**

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## Verification of Statutory Compliance:

This annual report complies with state statute by addressing all required elements as described in the table below.

Statutory or Contract Required Annual Report Element	Page(s)
School Statutory Purposes <i>and</i> Outcomes	11-16
School Enrollment	11
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## Introduction

FIT Academy, Minnesota charter school, #4244, has now completed its fourth year of operation and is pleased to present this annual report to its authorizer, school community and the public. FIT Academy is a public charter school in Apple Valley, Minnesota. The purpose of FIT Academy is to prepare the whole student for life. We believe our school empowers students to live fulfilling, responsible, and successful lives by purposefully integrating the three developmental areas of *Fitness*, *Intellect*, and *Teamwork*. These three areas make up the FIT acronym and this purposeful integration results in an impact on student development that is far greater than the sum of each individual developmental area.

The primary purpose of FIT Academy is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement under Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10. Additional charter contract defined statutory purposes are increasing the use of different and innovative teaching methods; and creating new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.

FIT Academy opened in the Fall of 2017 as a K-8 school serving approximately 180 students and has added one grade in each subsequent year. In 2020-21, FIT Academy served students in grades K-11 and enrolled approximately 285 students. The school's primary growth focus in 2021-22 will be to add 12<sup>th</sup> grade and continue growth in academic rigor while managing a full return to onsite schooling.

Mission: FIT Academy believes children must have a healthy foundation in order to achieve academic excellence. Our mission is to prepare students by providing a balanced approach to the mental, physical, and emotional development of children.

What makes FIT Academy unique includes the following practices:

- Purposeful integration of Fitness, Intellect, and Teamwork
- School wide focus and commitment to our mission by all stakeholders
- Comprehensive health & physical education curriculum
- “Brain breaks” and physical activation throughout the day
- Monthly focus on a word supporting Emotional Intelligence

FIT Academy believes in this approach because research shows that students involved in regular exercise and sports:

- Perform better than the average student in school
- Are more likely to pursue higher education
- Are more confident and resilient in the face of adversity
- Are less prone to depression and lifelong health issues
- Are less prone to risky behaviors or self-defeating behaviors

## Authorizer

FIT Academy is authorized by Volunteers of America:



**Volunteers of America of Minnesota**

Main Contact: Stephanie Olsen, Manager  
VOA Charter School Authorizing Program  
VOA-MN Education Center  
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Addendum B to FIT Academy’s contract with the authorizer includes details of the authorizing relationship including how the authorizer carries out oversight of its schools. The Addendum specifies, in part:

Volunteers of America of Minnesota (VOA-MN) is committed to fulfilling its role as a charter school authorizer by holding its schools accountable for a range of results. The accountability system presented in this document ensures that VOA-MN will uphold its legal obligation to make sure the schools it authorizes are reaching (or making adequate progress toward) the goals and benchmarks outlined in its charter contract and Minnesota statute.

VOA-MN uses a standard charter contract with unique school-specific terms that capture different approaches to achieving student success. The individuality of each school will be preserved in the “Academic Program Description” addendum to the charter contract.

One of the most important ways VOA-MN gathers information about the schools it authorizes is through on-site visits. Site visits allow the authorizer to observe the school in action firsthand, hear directly from all key stakeholders, and corroborate school-reported information and data. VOA-MN conducts two different types of site visits: Formal and Informal - Monitoring. The Formal site visits will follow a more

structured protocol, and will produce written and oral feedback to the school staff and board. VOA-MN will also make informal monitoring visits to schools for follow-up oversight, special events, and check-ins.

Volunteers of America of Minnesota has developed an assessment system that will be used to determine the extent to which the school is meeting expectations under the VOAMN School Performance and Accountability Framework, as well as guide charter contract renewal decisions. The assessment system uses the same standards scale as the Authorizer Accountability and Oversight System:

- Meets standard
  - Partially Meets / Approaching standard
  - Not meeting standard
- ★ A school may also earn an additional star if the school meets standard in an area of examination and demonstrates an exemplary practice (e.g., academic growth, model policy or procedure). In the Academic Performance section, the star is also synonymous with Exceeding Standards on the tables.

The primary purpose of a charter school is to improve pupil learning and student achievement. VOA-MN holds the schools it authorizes accountable in five major areas: academic performance, fiscal management, board governance, management and operations and legal compliance. Each area has multiple indicators of success and the charter school's performance on each indicator will be rated as indicated in the aforementioned paragraph. Four essential questions drive VOA-MN's accountability of charter schools.

Further sections of Addendum B describe oversight of board governance, school management and operations, academic performance, financial performance, legal and contractual compliance, and site visits.

## Governance

FIT Academy was governed by a five-person Board during 2020-21 with board membership shown below:

Name	Position / Affiliation	Date Elected	Date Seated	Term Expiration	Contact Info*
Jan Markison	Parent/Vice Chair	Sept. 2018	Sept. 2018	June 2021	<a href="mailto:jmarkison@fitacademymn.org">jmarkison@fitacademymn.org</a>
Christopher Stookey	Parent/Vice Chair	October 2020	October 2020	June 2023	<a href="mailto:cstookey@fitacademymn.org">cstookey@fitacademymn.org</a>
Shannon Baker	Teacher	May 2019	May 2019	June 2022	<a href="mailto:sbaker@fitacademymn.org">sbaker@fitacademymn.org</a>
Nancy Schneider	Com. Member/ Treasurer	Nov. 2014	Nov. 2014	June 2021	<a href="mailto:nschneider@fitacademymn.org">nschneider@fitacademymn.org</a>
Angie Halama	Teacher/ Secretary	Sept. 2020	Sept. 2020	June 2023	<a href="mailto:ahalama@fitacademymn.org">ahalama@fitacademymn.org</a>
Claud Allaire	Exec. Director (ex officio)				

\*Members can also be contacted through the school, at 952-847-3798

Annual Training Completed by FIT Academy Board Members in 2020-21			
Member Name Note "full board" where applicable	Type of Activity	Date	Location
Jan Markison	Governance	June 2021	Booth Law
Nancy Schneider	Finance	March 2020	Bergen KDV
Chris Stookey	Finance & Employment	December 2020	MN Charter Board (MNCB)
Shannon Baker	Finance	March 2020	Bergen KDV
Angie Halama	Finance	Sept. 2020	MNCB

Required Statutory Training Completed by Seated Board Members			
Board Member Name	Governance Basic Training Date / Location / Trainers	Finance Basic Training Date / Location / Trainers	Employment Basic Training Date / Location / Trainers
Jan Markison	1/16/19, FIT Academy	10/17/18, FIT Academy	June 2020, FIT Academy
Nancy Schneider	Athlos July 2015	MACS Oct. 2016	MACS Oct. 2016
Chris Stookey	Booth Law, June 2021	MNCB, Dec. 2020	MNCB, Dec. 2020
Angie Halama	September 2020, MNCB	September 2020, MNCB	September 2020, MNCB
Shannon Baker	9/16/20, MACS	11/19/19, MACS	11/20/19, MACS

## Management

FIT Academy was led by a leadership team during 2020-21 school year consisting of the Executive Director, Assistant Director, three PLC Leads, a Curriculum Lead, and Special Education Coordinator. Management duties were primarily performed by the Executive Director, Assistant Director, and Operations manager. The administrative team was supported by a Receptionist, as well as a cadre of specialized contractors. Biographical statements about the individuals filling the three lead administrative positions are included below. All members of the leadership team returned for the 2020-21 school year with the exception of the special education coordinator who left at the end of the school year.

The school leadership team for the 2020-21 school year will be expanded to include more teacher-based leadership roles including a curriculum lead, K-5 lead teacher, and secondary coordinator, all three also serving as teachers. The secondary coordinator will take on administrative duties for grades 6-11 including academic support for the high school students. The curriculum lead, K-5 lead teacher, and secondary coordinator, as well as PLC leads will make-up the curriculum committee to lead the school's curriculum project. The curriculum project is a commitment by the school to establish a curriculum grounded in foundational knowledge that is research proven to support academic growth. This project has also been referred to as the school's effort to increase academic rigor. The curriculum committee will work collaboratively with the administrative team including the executive director, assistant director, and special education coordinator to ensure that curriculum and instruction is aligned and serves the needs of all students. The goal of the curriculum committee is to be collaborative and all staff will be welcome to join committee activities.

FIT Academy Administration, 2020-21					
Name and Position	Admin Lic.	File Folder #	Years Employed	Left During 2020-21	Not Returning 2020-21
Claud Allaire, Executive Director	Y	334615	4	No	
Tamra Paschall, Assistant Director	Y	418980	4	No	
Katie Hanson, Operations Manager	N	None	4	No	
Amie Killorin, Receptionist	N	None	3	No	
Angie Halama, Lead Teacher	N	460771	4	No	

Here are bios of FIT Academy's management team:

- *Claud Allaire, Executive Director.* Claud began the long journey of developing a school in 2011 and has led the school through the founding and start-up process. He earned a teaching degree from the University of Michigan, a masters' in sport psychology from Ithaca College, and completed the Education Specialist program for principals from the University of Minnesota. He has spent the last 30 years as a teacher and administrator in traditional public schools as well as several charter schools. His passion for FIT Academy stems from his background working in traditional and alternative school leadership as well as experience as a high school and collegiate coach where he witnessed first-hand the benefits of developing the whole person through athletic participation.
- *Tamra Paschall, Assistant Director.* Tamra earned her Bachelor's Degree in Biology and Physical Education from DePauw University and a Master's Degree in Athletic Training/Sports Medicine from Indiana State University. She completed the Teacher Licensure program at St. Mary's University in Minneapolis and is licensed as a middle and high school science teacher. Tamra has taught in the traditional public school system in addition to teaching and having an administrative role in the private school setting. Tamra completed her administrative licensure in 2020.
- *Katie Hanson, Operations Manager.* Katie Hanson received her B.A. from the University of St. Thomas in 2011 and has since begun her master's degree in education. She has previously worked in public and charter schools as a paraprofessional, substitute teacher, and long-term substitute teacher. Katie also has experience as an administrative assistant in financial planning and accounting.

The FIT Academy board has adopted an evaluation process and timeline to evaluate the Executive Director, as stated below:

#### August/ September

- The FIT Director and BOD Executive Committee (officers) set measurable goals for the Director that are mutually agreed upon for the upcoming school year. This should include a review of the previous year's evaluation results.
- Goals are approved by the full BOD at the August/September BOD meeting.

### March/April

- The BOD presents the staff and parent survey again to the FIT community to measure change (*end of year review*).
- The survey results are tabulated and shared with the BOD
- The Director may respond verbally and/or in writing to the findings from the survey.
- Board members complete FIT Director Evaluation anonymously and turn it in to the BOD Chair
- The FIT Director will complete a self-evaluation and turn it in to the Board Chair
- The Board Chair will compile the results of the Board and the Director's self- evaluation and complete an overall summary of each. This includes a generalization of the strengths and weaknesses.

### May

- The BOD Chair presents the findings of the individual BOD member evaluations of the FIT Director and the Director's self-evaluation to the full Board.
- The full Board evaluates the performance of the FIT Director.
- Director's review is summarized and recommendation to renew Director's contract is/is not made.

### June

- At the regular June BOD meeting, the BOD will offer the FIT Director a contract renewal, if applicable.

## Faculty Information and Professional Development

FIT Academy has adopted a Teacher Development & Evaluation plan, the aim of which is to provide teachers with the feedback, training, and professional development necessary to best serve the school's students. **Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, sudden closing of schools in November, and transition to distance learning for part of the year, FIT Academy was not able to complete the faculty professional development plan.** The plan consists of four components, as outlined below:

### **Formal Teacher Observation & Evaluation**

Each full-time teacher is formally observed once per year by the Executive Director or qualified appointed evaluator (must be a licensed teacher or administrator, experienced at teacher observations, serving in a leadership role, and MDE trained in teacher development in the last 2 years). Observations will be scheduled within a two-week period following a pre-observation meeting. The steps to each observation are as follows:

- The evaluator will schedule the observation and provide the teacher with a copy of the pre-observation form
- The evaluator and teacher will schedule a pre-observation planning meeting
- The pre-observation form & lesson plan should be submitted to the evaluator by the teacher at least 2 days prior to the observation



- The purpose of the planning meeting is to answer any questions that the teacher may have regarding the observation process
- The evaluator will perform the observation as scheduled using the State Evaluation Rubric
- Within 3 days following the observation, the teacher will provide the evaluator with a copy of the post-observation form
- The evaluator and teacher will schedule a post-observation meeting to take place within 5 days of the observation. The following will be discussed at the meeting: Review of the post-observation form; Review of the teacher's reflective scoresheet; and Review of the evaluator's scoresheet
- Upon review, the evaluator may modify his/her scoresheet to be presented as the final scoresheet
- The evaluator shall sign the final scoresheet and present it to teacher. Teacher has 24 hours to sign it and return it. This document then becomes the Formal Evaluation Document moving forward. Teacher may appeal the evaluator's final scoresheet in lieu of signing it as stated below under "Appeal of Evaluation".
- The teacher will develop an Individualized Growth & Development Plan using the IGDP Form and file it with the lead teacher within 5 days of the post-observation meeting.
- The *Formal Evaluation Document* will be filed in the teacher's personnel file and will be used to provide data for the teacher's 3 Year Review.
- Appeal of Evaluation: Teachers who wish to appeal the Formal Evaluation Document must do so by informing the evaluator, the Executive Director, and the Lead Teacher within 24 hours of being presented the Observer's final scoresheet.

### **Individualized Growth & Development Plan (IGDP)**

IGDP's are developed in conjunction with formal evaluations and must be filed with the evaluator within 5 days of the formal observation meeting. Final review of the IGDP will take place during the next post-observation meeting. The teacher must then develop a new IGDP to be turned in to the evaluator within 5 days of the post-observation meeting.

### **Peer Mentoring**

All teachers are expected to schedule three peer-mentoring observations during the year. It is recommended to schedule one during each of the first three quarters. At least one of the three should be performed by the grade-level Professional Learning Community (PLC) lead. At least one of the mentoring activities should specifically address development in the area of IGDP. There is no formal record of peer mentoring and there is no requirement to report the outcome to administration, however, a log is maintained so that administration can confirm that peer mentoring has occurred.

### **Three Year Review<sup>1</sup>**

In accordance with Minnesota Statute 122A.40, the school is required to perform a three-year review of all teachers based on the following data distribution:

- 35% – Growth Measures as determined by MCA scores

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<sup>1</sup> A Portfolio Evaluation option is available as an alternative to both the Formal Evaluation Document and the Three Year Review. Teachers choosing this must inform the Executive Director in a written email prior to September 15th of the applicable year.

- 45% – Teacher Practices as determined by rubric scores
- 20% – Engagement Measures as determined by rubric scores

There is a document entitled *3 Year Review Document* for additional information on the review process.

### Professional Development

FIT Academy provided professional development for all its teachers throughout the school year during 2020-21. PD for the year focused on three areas: What we teach, How we teach, and Effective use of instructional data. Formal trainings in those two areas were provided during the summer of 2020, before school opened; via refresher trainings with outside specialists during the middle of the year, and through weekly Professional Learning Community meetings. The PLC meetings provided for reviewing progress in terms of literacy across the curriculum and use of data to inform teaching. All teachers were involved.

### Faculty Information

The below table lists all licensed instructional staff employed by FIT Academy during the 2020-21 school year.

Name	File Folder #	Licensure & Assignment	Left During 2020-21?	Not Returning 2021-22?
Allaire, Claud	334615	Principal / Executive Director		
Anderson, Julie	484370	Grade 4		
Baker, Shannon	459851	Grade 3		
Borgstrom, Quinn	517161	MS ELA	Yes	
Boucher, Kelli	437371	Special Education		NR
Brandes, Evan	1006263	Special Education		NR
Cassidy, Ed	365307	Physical Education		
Elasky, Taylor	499422	Grade 3		
Flagstad, Sarah	462800	MS Science		
Gall, Chelsea	499617	Grade 1		
Halama, Angie	460771	Grades 5-12 Social Studies		
Hanson, Katie	471178	Operations Manager		
Holland, Ruth	335659	Kindergarten		
Hurley, Keelin	503086	Special Education		
Jeske, Bill	506161	Grades 5-8 Social Studies		
Johnson, Eric	434085	Grade 5		
Johnson, Shane	1006462	Substitute / Educ. Assistant		
Kalenze, Eric	375988	Grades 9-12 English/LA		
Kline, Shannon	350492	K-12 Visual Arts		
Loe, Diane	358277	Special Education		
Lund, Mechelle	380128	Special Education		NR
McBride, Chris	506065	Grades 5-12 Science		
McKernon, Kari	337618	Special Education	Yes	
Menge, Phil	499094	Grade 2		
Paschall, Tamra	418980	Assistant Director		

Name	File Folder #	Licensure & Assignment	Left During 2020-21?	Not Returning 2021-22?
Pierpont, Jonathon	430384	5-12 Mathematics		
Renn, Janet	292187	Special Education		
Salzman, Amber	510558	Physical Education		
Solbrack, Laura	506119	Grade 3		
Sullivan, Cynthia	475589	Mathematics		
Tonseth, Krystal	1005847	Grade 1		
Trelstad, Katie	487966	French & ELL		NR
Wileman, Mary	1002493	Special Education		

#### Non-faculty Staff

- Dion Wallisch, Special Education Educational Assistant
- Harmony Andersen, Special Education Educational Assistant
- Brian Robinson, Special Education Educational Assistant
- Zach Rivera, Special Education Educational Assistant
- Babiker Mohammed, Special Education Educational Assistant
- Alison Winge, Health Aide
- Eric Pulley, Building Supervisor & Family Liaison
- Ibtihal Awadalla, Special Education Educational Assistant
- Alyssa Schultz, Special Education Educational Assistant
- Jennifer Jacobsen, Special Education Administrative Assistant
- Dominique Boudreaux, Educational Assistant

The school had a 82% employee retention rate from the end of 2020-21 to the beginning of 2021-22.

## School Enrollment

FIT Academy's enrollment for 2020-21 was 286. The table below provides FIT Academy's enrollment at each grade level as of June 1, 2021:

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
2018-19	24.64	37.20	36.63	38.69	22.32	24.25	25.46	17.13	22.37	15.17	14.85	7.25

Here are some further details regarding FIT Academy's student demographics, as of October 1, 2021:

- Most students were Caucasian (54%)
- Students of color included 21% identified as Black, 8% multi-racial, 14% Hispanic, and 4% American Indian or Asian
- 40% of students qualified for free or reduced-cost school meals
- 24% received special education services
- 15% were English Learners

FIT Academy welcomes any student in its served grades, assuming space is available. The school has adopted an enrollment policy including potential lottery procedures, modeled on the Minnesota School Boards Association's model policy. This policy and student application form are available on the school website, at <http://fitacademymn.org/student-application/>.

## Academic Performance

FIT Academy aims to meet its primary purpose under the Minnesota charter statute, to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement, including meeting academic and nonacademic performance standards/goals in Addendum B to the charter Contract. In this section, student achievement is discussed first, with reference to academic performance indicators as specified in Addendum B to the charter contract (School Accountability System & Authorizer Oversight).

### MCA & MTAS ASSESSMENTS: Spring 2021

The MCAs and the alternative assessment Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS) are used each year to measure the academic progress of Minnesota's students. These assessments administered in Reading in grades 3-8, and 10, Math in grades 3-8, as well as 11, and Science in grades, 5, 8 and once in high school. Provided below is three years of comparative data. The table compares statewide data (Left column) with FIT Academy Data (Right column). The data indicates that FIT Academy's science proficiency rose during the pandemic, reading proficiency dropped at about the same rate as the state, and math proficiency dropped at about half the rate as the state.

	MN STATE READING % Proficient (Meet or Exceed)		FIT ACADEMY READING % Proficient (Meet or Exceed)
2019	59.2%		43.1%
2020	No Test		No Test
2021	52.5%		36.6%
	-6.7%		-6.5%
	MN STATE MATH % Proficient (Meet or Exceed)		FIT ACADEMY MATH % Proficient (Meet or Exceed)
2019	55.0%		21.3%
2020	No Test		No Test
2021	44.2%		24.6%
	-10.8%		3.3%
	MN STATE SCIENCE % Proficient (Meet or Exceed)		FIT ACADEMY SCIENCE % Proficient (Meet or Exceed)
2019	50.7%		25.0%
2020	No Test		No Test
2021	43.1%		30.4%
	-7.6%		5.4%

### Comparison Data

Due to the unique patterns of enrollment at FIT Academy, it is difficult to compare results with local schools and local district. This is exemplified by FIT Academy's special education and ELL rates which are much higher than the local district and comparison schools as outlined in the table below:

	FIT Academy	State	District 196	Comparison Schools Westview Elementary & Scott Highlands Middle School
Students of Color	46%	34%	37%	40%
Students with IEP's	24%	16%	15%	17%
Free & Reduced Lunch	40%	36%	22%	28%
ELL Students	15%	8%	7%	7%

### FASTBRIDGE ASSESSMENT

Fastbridge is a local summative assessment which provides immediate results.

FIT Academy completed Fall, Winter, and some Spring Fastbridge assessments and will therefore report this data. For Spring Fastbridge assessments, students in grades K and 1 were not assessed and approximately 70% of students in grades two through ten completed assessments.

Reading National Percentile				
	Fall	Winter	Spring	% Change from Fall to Spring
Kindergarten	40.5	30.3	NA	-10.2
1st	41.1	43.7	NA	2.6
2nd	44.9	47.8	65.7	20.8
3rd	49.4	56.5	69.6	20.2
4th	43.7	45.1	52.1	8.4
5th	35.9	52	41.4	5.5
6th	51.2	40.6	65.3	14.1
7th	50.5	44.4	50.1	-0.4
8th	44.5	36.5	39.5	-5
9th	62.4	62.2	62.1	-0.3
10th	54.4	57	44.8	-9.6
School-wide increase in National Percentile, Fall to Spring				4.20%

Math National Percentile				
	Fall	Winter	Spring	% Change from Fall to Spring
Kindergarten	54.5	55.4	NA	-0.9
1st	55.8	54.8	NA	-1
2nd	49.3	50.4	66.1	16.8
3rd	44.8	46.4	57.2	12.4
4th	42.7	42.4	45.8	3.1
5th	38	39.2	34.9	-3.1
6th	49.1	45.1	53.9	4.8
7th	38.9	37	40.6	1.7
8th	32.6	35.5	48.2	15.6
9th	38.7	37	39.6	0.9
10th	36.9	29.8	42.6	5.7
School-wide increase in National Percentile, Fall to Spring				5.10%

### Findings & Plan for Addressing Needs

The SY2021 MCA and Fastbridge results demonstrate the variability in student performance and the need for FIT Academy to continue to grow interventions for students who come to us with academic deficiencies. The school continues to develop intervention programs and strategies, including adding reading interventions and developing its plan for multi-tiered intervention systems. FIT Academy will continue with some strategies to help address deficiencies such as all-star time and the Student Assistance Team. In the short term, FIT Academy will also increase the availability of Tier 2 interventions for reading. Implementation of our Core Knowledge curriculum is a long-term strategy aimed at improving student performance.

### Additional Statutory Purposes

FIT Academy has a robust teacher led professional development plan which empowers teachers to be leaders in the classroom, provides new professional opportunities for teachers, and includes opportunities to be responsible for the learning program. In addition to the two teacher positions on the school's governing Board, all teachers are responsible for managing and improving the learning program through participation in FIT Academy's Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), which meet weekly for analysis of student assessment results, discussion of instructional strategies, joint planning, and professional development. The school's academic program is led by a leadership committee comprised of a school-wide lead teacher, a secondary program coordinator, three grade cluster lead teachers, a special education coordinator, and representatives from the school administration. All major decisions impacting teaching and learning begin with a discussion by the leadership committee followed-up by

PLC level discussions with teachers. PLC level discussions are often reflected back to the leadership committee for further discussion and planning. For the purpose of organization, our PLC grade clusters in 2020-21 were K-1, 2-5, and 6-11.

## World's Best Workforce Report

The below data summarizes FIT Academy's performance during 2020-21 in the five World's Best Workforce (WBWF) Goal Areas:

- **Ready for Kindergarten [R4K]:** All students are ready for kindergarten.
  - *90% of students enrolled on October 1 in Kindergarten, who are evaluated on the NWEA MAP<sup>2</sup> in both the fall and spring, will test at or above grade level on the NWEA MAP at the end of the school year.*
    - Fastbridge Kindergarten--At or above grade level: NA due to COVID
- **Reading Well by 3rd Grade [RG3]:** All students in third grade achieve grade-level literacy.
  - *The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grade 3 at FIT Academy who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards will be at least 57% in reading on all state accountability tests (MCA).*
    - MCA 3rd Grade—38% Meet or exceed
- **Achievement Gap Closure [AGC]:** All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.
  - *For students enrolled at FIT Academy on October 1, the racial achievement gap between white and non-white students will be less than 10% on all state accountability tests.*
    - Reading: White Students at 52%, Non-White Students at 18%. Achievement Gap is 34%.
    - Math: White Students at 35%, Non-White Students at 11%. Achievement Gap is 24%.
- **Career and College Ready [CCR]:** All students are career- and college-ready before graduating from high school.
  - *Students enrolled at FIT Academy on October 1 in grade 8 will demonstrate proficiency on all state accountability tests (MCA) in the spring.*
    - MCA 8th Grade--Meet or exceeds: Reading = 37%, Math = 28%, Science = 28%
- **Graduate from High School [GRAD]:** All students graduate from high school.
  - *Students enrolled at FIT Academy on October 1 in grade 8 will demonstrate proficiency on all state accountability tests (MCA) in the spring.*
    - MCA 8th Grade--Meet or exceeds: Reading = 37%, Math = 28%, Science = 28%

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<sup>2</sup> FIT Academy used the Fastbridge assessments, as described in the preceding section, rather than the NWEA MAP.

## Academic Program

### Overview

Here is a description of FIT Academy's educational philosophy and instructional strategies for grades K-11, as implemented during 2020-21:

#### Academic Goals:

- Highly rigorous instruction with a focus on building knowledge content. This will be accomplished through the long-term development of knowledge-based curriculum
- Effective use of data to inform instruction. Continued training and professional development to improve effective use of these resources as well as improvement in data practices.
- Opportunities for improving instruction through professional development and peer coaching, particularly in the areas of best practices in routines, classroom management, and student assessments.

#### Research Grounded Academic Beliefs

- PLC driven professional development and best practices
- Emphasis on guided instruction
- Emphasis on a language rich learning environment

#### Programmatic Strategies:

- A balanced approach to course offerings aligned with our mission
- Ensuring a safe, respectful, and encouraging learning environment
- Challenging at standard level during instructional time
- Use of academic all-star time for re-teaching and remediation
- Providing tiered support for those who need additional academic support

#### Multi-Tiered Support Systems:

##### **Tier 1:**

- Academic All-Star Time

##### **Tier 2:**

- Pull-out supports in Reading, Push-in in Math
- After-school programs

##### **Tier 3:**

- Research Based Classroom Interventions
- Special Education support



In an effort to ensure optimal class sizes, FIT Academy has established the following class size limits:

- Kindergarten: 23
- First Grade: 25
- Grades 2 & 3: 26
- Grades 4-8: 28

Summary of FIT Academy's daily schedule for 2020-21:

Grades K-5 School Schedule	Grades 6-11 School Schedule
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Morning Meeting: 20 Minutes</li><li>• English / Language Arts: 90 Minutes</li><li>• Mathematics: 60 Minutes</li><li>• Science &amp; Social Studies: 40 minutes (alternating days)</li><li>• Health &amp; Physical Education: 30-40 minutes (alternating days)</li><li>• Art: 40 minutes (alternating days)</li><li>• Recess/Extended Brain Breaks: 30 minutes per day</li><li>• All-Star Training: 40 minutes per day</li><li>• World Language (Chinese, Spanish, French)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• English / Language Arts: 45 Minutes</li><li>• Mathematics: 45 Minutes</li><li>• Social Studies: 45 minutes</li><li>• Science / Project Lead the Way: 45 minutes</li><li>• Health &amp; Physical Education: 45 minutes (alternating days)</li><li>• World Languages: 45 minutes</li><li>• Art: 45 minutes</li><li>• Recess/Extended Brain Breaks: 20 minutes per day</li></ul>

### Successes, Challenges, & Program Improvement

FIT Academy was successful during 2017-18 in establishing itself as a new charter school with an innovative mission and educational program organized around the elements of Fitness, Intellect and Teamwork. In 2018-19, the school's enrollment grew significantly and the percentage of students with disabilities increased significantly from 17% to 23%. The school also suffered a setback on student achievement in MCA testing with student proficiency dropping in both reading and math from the first year to the second. The school has operated under the impact of COVID for the last 18 months and provided a combination of onsite, distance, and blended learning as a result.

The school has developed a professional development plan to address the challenges experienced in 2019-2020, including regression in reading as a result of the pandemic. The purpose of this plan is to support continued growth towards our two academic goals. These goals are to improve the school climate and increase academic rigor. In 2019-2020, the school hired a Curriculum Lead to help FIT Academy continue to develop and advance a curriculum that is academically challenging and rigorous. It is important to mention that the goal is to accomplish these while staying true to the school's guiding philosophy and principles.

### Guiding Philosophy

FIT Academy believes children must have a healthy foundation in order to achieve academic excellence. Our mission is to prepare students by providing a balanced approach to the mental, physical, and emotional development of children.

### Academic Program

Our educational program consists of effectively coordinating the following priorities:

- Understanding and adherence to the state academic standards
- Development of content or curriculum supporting the building of foundational knowledge
- Implementation of research proven effective teacher directed instructional practices
- Regular and effective use of data to inform instruction
- Focus on a language rich environment & teaching literacy across content areas
- Effective multi-tiered system of interventions

### Professional Development Priorities Supporting Academic Program

- Curriculum project (What We Teach): Alignment of state standards and development of content rich curriculum plan supporting the building of foundational knowledge
  - Professional development during August workshops and professional development days
  - PLC alignment during staff data days
  - Journaling for reflective adjustments
- Teacher development (How We Teach): Teacher development supporting the development of research proven effective teacher directed instructional practices
  - State aligned formal teacher observations
  - Peer mentoring and coaching events
  - Teaching lab discussions on staff data days
- Regular and effective use of data to inform instruction
  - The big idea: Developing this as a constant
  - Administration and review of benchmark data three times per year
  - Administration and review of checkpoint assessment data eight times per year
  - Periodic Monday PLC meetings to plan and review benchmarks, checkpoints, and data
  - Planning informed by data for instruction, intervention, and extension

### Multi-Tiered Intervention Plan

- Tier 1: Intervention during regular instruction in the form of differentiation
- Tier 2: Academic interventions implemented during All-Star time & student assistance team developed researched based interventions in the classroom
- Tier 3: Pull-out intervention for reading or math with possible special education evaluation

### Classroom Instructional Practice Pillars

- Promoting a language-rich environment promoting the use of rigorous academic language
- Establishing classroom routines that promote and support an academic culture

- Provide high expectations and clear feedback that promote a growth mindset

Also in place at FIT Academy is a Board Plan of Action for Oversight of Student Performance, Achievement, and Success, with the following five elements:

1) The board can articulate a shared definition of student performance, achievement, and success. The FIT Academy board of directors defines student performance, achievement, and success as reflecting the school's mission of education the whole child. With this in mind, the board's evaluation will be framed by the context provided through review of student and family satisfaction survey. The board's evaluation of student academic achievement will consist of the following:

- Evaluate aggregate yearlong growth in reading and math using pre and post Fastbridge assessment scores
- Evaluate school MCA score growth by comparing year to year results with particular attention to a cohort of continuing students.
- Evaluate school MCA growth in comparison with local district and state subgroups.

2) The board regularly reviews school results related to school performance achievement and success. The Executive Director and Academic Committee will communicate elements of item 1 to the board at board meetings. This will include:

- General review of Fall Fastbridge pre-assessment results
- Fall review of previous year MCA scores including growth analysis
- Review of student and family satisfaction surveys in the Spring
- Review and analysis of Spring Fastbridge post-assessment and yearlong growth
- Development of academic improvement plan in the Spring for the following year

3) The board has a basic understanding of the educational strategies utilized by the school:

- The Executive Director will present the Academic Improvement Plan to the board in the Spring
- The Executive Director and Academic Committee will present the Academic Plan including educational strategies to the board in the Fall

4) The board has a basic understanding of the assessments and accountability systems the school utilizes to assess and evaluate student performance, achievement, and success:

- The Executive Director and Academic Committee will present this plan of action to the board in the Spring for discussion and understanding
- Board members will review this plan of action and research additional information and knowledge as needed

5) The board understands the relationship between student performance, achievement, and success goals and the terms of the charter contract with the authorizer:

- The board will review and understand the terms of contract with the authorizer
- The board understands its responsibility as it relates to oversight of student performance

## Finances

FIT Academy school contracts with BergankDV to provide accounting and financial management services for the school. Questions regarding school finances and for complete financials for 2020-21 and/or an organizational budget for 2020-21, contact:

Position: Mindy Wachter, Financial Manager

Phone: 952-563-6860

Email: [Mindy.Wachter@bergankdv.com](mailto:Mindy.Wachter@bergankdv.com)

Information presented below is derived from preliminary audited figures. The full financial audit will be completed and presented to Minnesota Department of Education and Volunteers of America no later than December 31, 2020.

FY20 Finances	General Fund	Food Service Fund	Community Service Fund
Total Revenues	3,854,161	84,400	1836
Total Expenditures	3,866,879	58,636	993
Net Income	(12,718)	25,764	843
Total Fund Balance	\$13,889		

### Overview

This was the fourth year of operation for the school. The school's enrollment remained relatively flat at 280 students during the pandemic. FIT Academy accessed PPP funding in 2020 and had the loan forgiven which helped the school maintain a positive fund balance. FIT Academy continues to operate on a tight budget including a lease that is significantly higher than what is allocated in state lease aid. The school took a leadership role in finding a new buyer for the facility in charter School capital and signed a 20 year lease, allowing the school to significantly lower its monthly rent payments.

### Revenues

#### General Fund

General Fund revenues came from the following sources:

State Aids and Grants: \$3,629,080

Federal Aids and Grants: \$213,877

Fees Collected and other Miscellaneous Revenues: \$11,264

#### Food Services Fund

The programs operated in the Food Service fund operated with a surplus, with program revenues collected exceeding the expenses incurred. The school received state and federal reimbursements for meals served to students. During the 2019-20 year the Food Service fund had revenues from:

State Sources: \$5025

Federal Sources: \$70,714

Sale of Lunches and Other Local Revenues: \$2307

#### Community Service Fund

The school operated an afterschool care program for its students. This program operated at a small loss during the year, resulting in a transfer from the General Fund. During the year the Community Service Fund had revenues from:

Fees Collected from participants: \$2829

Expenditures: \$1836

#### **Expenses**

##### General Fund

The school's largest expense was for employee salaries and benefits, at \$2,646,157. The school's second largest expense was for the lease on its school building at \$410,008.

## Service Learning

Due to the pandemic, FIT Academy did not participate in any service learning projects in 2019-20.

## Innovative Practices

One element that makes FIT Academy unique is the integration of the practices of Fitness, Intellect and Teamwork. With more health and fitness offerings than the typical school, and brain breaks during regular classroom instruction, FIT Academy aims to integrate health and fitness into the program in the service of students' academic development.

FIT Academy established a goal of increasing the school's academic rigor and development of a comprehensive curriculum. This effort is driven by teachers and supported by the hiring of a curriculum lead guiding the staff through this process. The school has also embarked on providing extensive world language exposure and opportunities. The benefits of learning multiple languages is supported by research demonstrating that learning multiple languages increases working memory and executive functioning in children.

FIT Academy successfully executed on the delivery of distance learning, both for families desiring paper and pencil instruction as well as those desiring synchronous video instruction. FIT Academy did so in a manner that was seamless and delivered video instruction in a manner that provided the same instruction to students who were distance learning.

## Future Plans

With the implementation of the curriculum development project as well as emphasis on multiple world languages, the school is positioning itself to provide a first rate academic experience to future students. This will be critical in competing with local schools for the recruitment of academically minded students and families. Based on the needs of its students, FIT Academy is also developing robust intervention programs to support the accelerated growth of students who are behind academically.

Fit Academy will serve students in grades K-12 in 2021-22 and with the addition of one grade each year, will see gradual development of its high school program. The high school program is growing with an emphasis on promoting and encouraging enrollment in post-secondary options as early as 10<sup>th</sup> grade and the school also hopes to add a college within the school option. FIT Academy will be graduating its first set of Seniors in 2021-22 and plan to continue growing the school. With a new facility relationship in place, school leadership will engage with Charter School Capital in conversations to expand the existing facility to increase current capacity from 330 to 550 students.