



Annual Reports

**Curriculum, Instruction, School Achievement
&
World's Best Workforce**

School District #4239

2020-2021 School Year

Submitted to the District Board of Directors

VERIFICATION of STATUTORY COMPLIANCE

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INTRODUCTION

The 2020-2021 school year marks the completion of Twin Lakes STEM Academy's (TLSA) formerly known as Tesfa International School, sixth year of operation. TLSA is a free, public charter school serving students in kindergarten through grade 6 residing in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. During the 2020-2021 school year TLSA served a population that included over 95% of students qualifying for Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL) and over 70% of students identified as English Language Learners (ELL) .

We are proud of the academic growth of the students in our program which will be detailed in this report. Furthermore, we have built a strong school culture supported by the evidence that in fall 2020 we had 100% teacher retention and 80% student retention during the Covid-19 pandemic. We have evolved as a school characterized by academic growth and stability in staffing and finances.

HISTORY

TLSA began operation in the fall of 2015. A deep commitment to improving the educational options for the historically underserved children in the Twin Cities, drove the development of Tesfa. Consequently board members that exhibit enthusiasm for the unique mission and vision for Tesfa International School joined the team. A demonstrated commitment to educational equity, and a high degree of expertise continue to be represented on the board, the staff and throughout the Tesfa community.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

85% Black,
14% White/Other
1% Two or More Races
70% English Learners (LEP)
95% Free & Reduced Lunch Qualification
12% Special Services Students

MISSION STATEMENT

Through a global-minded education, we empower and prepare all students with the empathy, knowledge, and skills to take risks and pursue goals that contribute meaningfully to their community.

STATUTORY PURPOSE

The content of this annual report fulfills the required data elements and information requested by the Minnesota Department of Education and by Volunteers of America (VOA). State statute requires that school districts create and publish an Annual Report on Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Achievement. Furthermore, this report fulfills the **World's Best Workforce Report** requirements identified by Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11.

TLSA's mission and vision are fully aligned with a number of statutory purposes contained in *Minn. Stat. § 124D.10, Sec. 1B. 1*. Its' educational focus lies in *improving learning and increasing opportunities for area students*, particularly those from low-income families. TLSA places a high value on academic rigor, data-driven instruction, and accountability with a focus on preparing each student toward eventual graduation from high school and college. We hold ourselves accountable for results supported by data. Tesfa has carefully designed an educational program that has the capacity to deliver upon its promises:

- TLSA will “improve pupil learning” and “increase learning opportunities for pupils” by providing a rigorous and comprehensive program.
- TLSA will “measure learning outcomes and create innovative forms of measuring outcomes” by using multiple on-line adaptive learning programs to measure student progress toward state and college readiness standards.

AUTHORIZER

TLSA is proud to have Volunteers of America (VOA) as our authorizer. The school has completed our sixth year of operation and will be entering its third contract with our authorizer. VOA expects its charter schools to provide a quality education and operate a quality school program.

VOA's expectations regarding accountability and performance are clearly stipulated in its contract and through their oversight of school submissions, site visits, attendance at board meetings and other district sponsored events. Copies of each month's board packets, which include agendas, minutes, financial information, and board policies are submitted to the authorizer for review and feedback.

VOA completed a site visit during the school year, which provided the school with critical and constructive feedback about the school's operations and progress. The authorizer liaisons attended board meetings, visited the school, and maintained ongoing communication with school management in order to provide up to date information.



Volunteers of America of Minnesota

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DISTRICT GOVERNANCE

The School Board is the policy making body for TLSA. The Board is responsible for school programs & operations by law; it delegates some portion of that authority to the Executive Director. The School Board monthly meeting schedule is posted on the website as are copies of the Board summary minutes. Elections for the School Board are held in May for available positions. Terms of service are two years. Parents, school faculty, community members, and the public are welcome to attend regularly scheduled Board meetings.

2020-2021 Charter Public School Board

Name	Board Position	Group Affiliation (if teacher, file folder #)	Date Elected or Appointed	Date Seated	Term Expiration or resignation	E-Mail Address
Patrick Exner	Board Chair	Community Member	May 2020	June 2020	June 2022	Patrick.exner@tesfainternationalschool.org
Abigail Hendricks	Vice Chair	Teacher	May 2018	June 2018	June 2021	Abby.hendricks@tesfainternationalschool.org
Al-Qudah	Beth	Parent	May 2020	June 2020	June 2022	alqudah@tesfainternationalschool.org
Elizabeth Robertson	Board Member	Teacher	May 2018	June 2018	June 2021	elizabeth.robertson@tesfainternationalschool.org
Amir Orandi	Board Member	Parent	May 2018	June 2018	June 2021	Amir.Orandi@tesfainternationalschool.org
John Groenke	Board Member	Community Member	May 2018	June 2018	June 2021	John.groenke@tesfainternationalschool.org
Mohamed Selim	Board Member	Community Member	December 2019	December 2019	June 2022	mohamed.selim@tesfainternationalschool.org
Jonas Beugen	Executive Director Ex-Officio	Ex-Officio Staff				jonas.beugen@tesfainternationalschool.org

**REQUIRED STATUTORY TRAINING
COMPLETED BY SEATED BOARD MEMBERS**

Board Member Name	Governance Basic Training Completed	Finance Basic Training Completed	Employment Basic Training Completed	Dates, locations and trainers
Patrick Exner	X	X	X	MNSBA August 2018
Abigail Hendricks	X	X	X	MNSBA August 2018
Mohamed Selim	X	X	X	MNSBA Fall 2020 on-line
Amir Orandi	X	X	X	MNSBA August 2018
John Groenke	X	X	X	MNSBA Fall 2020
Beth Al-Qudah	X	X	X	MNSBA Fall 2020 on-line
Elizabeth Robertsob	X	X	X	VOA Conference January 2020

2020-21 School Management / Administrative Team Information

Name	Admin License Yes/No	File Folder Number	Position	Years Employed by the School	Left During 20/21	Not Returning 20/21
Jonas Beugen	Y	355690	Executive Director	5	NA	Returning
Jason Stockwell	Y	436077	Assistant Principal	4	NA	Returning

MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION

The school's management team consists of an Executive Director who is responsible for the overall operations of the school, budget, employee evaluation, human resources, and state reporting. An assistant director reports to the director and is primarily responsible for teaching and learning, curriculum, and assessment. The Assistant Principal assists with all areas of operational and instructional management. The school contracts with a business manager who provides accounting and payroll services for the school. Other contracted services include a director of special education, school psychologist, developmental adapted physical education consultant, speech language pathologist, occupational therapist, MVNA school nurse, and technology consultant.

DESCRIPTION OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Executive Director provides educational leadership; maintains positive behavior management policies; communicates to the board, staff, families, students, and the community; manages the building operations; oversees financing, budgeting, and grant writing; oversees human resources; oversees operations; and reports to the state.

Supervision:

The Director is supervised by the School Board of Directors.

Evaluation:

The Executive Director's job performance is monitored systematically against the job expectations. Reasonable progress must be made toward accomplishment of the Board's policies, annual objectives and goals, and the school's organizational operation.

School Faculty Information

2019-2020 Faculty Information

Name	File Folder Number	Assignment/ Subject	Left During 19/20	Returning 21/22?
Abigail Hendricks	396283	Elementary Teacher		Returning
Janelle Kopa	1002025	Elementary Teacher		Returning
Jennifer Goeplen	484601	Elementary Teacher		Returning
Marissa Wynja	1002663	Elementary Teacher		Returning
Melanie Niewendorp	417419	Elementary Teacher		Returning
Malaney Peterson	489209	Elementary Teacher		Returning
Megan Kufal	487806	Elementary Teacher		Not Returning
Paige Merwin	501384	Elementary Teacher		Returning
Chanin Smith	498709	Elementary Teacher		Returning
Julia Nyangacha	508727	Elementary Teacher		Returning
Terry Hill	1006084	Physical Education Teacher		Returning
Jonathan Braziel	478171	Special Education Teacher		Returning
Jennifer Reeck	474576	Special Education Coordinator		Returning
Elizabeth Robertson	475077	ESL Teacher		Returning
Seynab Warsame	NA	Kitchen Staff		Returning
James Cosgrove	NA	SPED Para		Returning
Amin Khelifa	NA	SPED Para		Returning
Jill Phillips	NA	SPED Para		Returning
Falis Mohamed	NA	SPED Para		Returning
Elena Hanson	NA	Office Manager		Returning
Mandy Kasowicz	423029	Sped Director-Contracted		Returning
Heather Schmidt	102943	OT-Contracted		Returning

Professional Development

TLSA has developed an extensive professional development program for staff members that is focussed upon helping teachers expand their capacity to meet the high expectations established by the school. All teachers and most support staff members participated in intensive training in three primary areas of focus for 2020-2021. Strategic Directions. ENVOY and digital learning trainings were held over several days throughout the school year,

Strategic Directions Planning

Our team worked with the regional center of excellence to collaboratively plan to increase student achievement. As a result of this work we established two primary instructional areas of focus:

1. Effectively utilizing and emphasizing academic language for English Learners.
2. Productive struggle in math instruction.

The staff engaged in extensive training in both of these strategies throughout the school year.

Envoy

In August 2020 all staff members participated in a two day training designed to prepare the team to implement Envoy strategies as a school wide approach to creating a calm and positive learning environment.

Strategic Directions Team (SDT)

Our SDT which includes all licensed staff members met weekly for 2 hours throughout the school year. These meetings consistently included at least one segment that was designed to have a professional development focus. Each of the extensive trainings noted above was revisited in these meetings as were several other topics focussed on the professional growth of staff members

Student Enrollment and Attrition

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Attrition / Retention Rates
2015-16	32.55	17.91	19.07	19.70	10.94	16.40	14.60	131.17	NA
2016-17	38.58	13.71	15.21	22.78	12.92	17.24	13.99	134.43	
2017-18	32.64	25.32	32.24	22.29	24.21	17.98	10.76	167.44	*30%
2018-19	26.63	22.25	26.04	29.90	21.70	22.25	15.53	164.30	72%
2019-2020	35.99	22.66	26.96	29.83	24.76	22.53	16.49	179.22	77%
2020-2021	19.70	28.54	17.99	23.11	19.65	17.60	13.95	140.46	74%

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

Mathematics

TLSA utilizes curricula that make specific allowances for inquiry-based and conceptual learning. Through the SDT structure the faculty have developed an instructional scope and sequence that is tightly aligned with Minnesota standards for mathematics. It is intended that students become competent users of the language of mathematics, and can begin to use it as a way of thinking, as opposed to seeing it as a series of facts and equations to be memorized. TLSA believes that Investigations in Number, Data, and Space provides students with the research-based, rigorous learning students deserve. Investigations was created to support students in the deep understanding of mathematical concepts necessary for future mathematical success. A truly progressive math curriculum, Investigations sets itself apart from other more traditional math curricula and pairs well with the school-wide adopted strategy of productive struggle in mathematics because of its commitment to student dialogue, reasoning, and desire to lead students through real thinking in inquiry-based, real-life experiences.

Literacy

TLSA addresses the Common Core Standards by building upon the Benchmark Literacy program as a curricular resource for developing a balanced literacy and guided reading program. TLSA uses the Benchmark Literacy Program because it provides a comprehensive and balanced approach to literacy instruction. Benchmark Literacy supports student mastery of the five essential elements of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension) and research has shown that this program helps to increase student achievement for all learners. Benchmark Literacy is aligned with Common Core State Standards, and provides many resources such as motivating texts (with a balance of fiction and nonfiction); whole group, small group and one-on-one instructional resources; and uses specific components and materials to target phonics, phonemic awareness, comprehension vocabulary development and fluency skills. Benchmark Literacy offers differentiation for special education students and English Language Learners through visuals and activities, which engage students at a variety of achievement levels.

STEM

TLSA began the process of fully implementing Project Lead the Way (PLTW) as a rigorous and comprehensive STEM curriculum. The Units are tightly aligned with Minnesota standards in science and also provide for cross disciplinary instruction particularly in literacy.

Physical Education

TLSA has a physical education program to align with the National Standards for growth and development. The focus is in the areas of physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and nutritional well being, along with motor skill acquisition. The physical education program is a balanced program promoting the skills and knowledge of our students, with the goal of students understanding their bodies, ways to maintain a healthy lifestyle, and the connections that can be made to the rest of the world. Every student at TLSA has access to a 30 minute physical education class multiple days each week

World Language

TLSA believes that acquiring a second world language is a critical part of a well-rounded education. As such, TLSA offers a choice between Spanish Language and Arabic Language to all students. TLSA chose these languages with consideration of input from our parent and student community as well as a goal to increase the diversity in the student body..

ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments

The MN Comprehensive Assessments (MCA-III, MTAS), are tests that measure how well a student has mastered the state's academic standards in 3rd through 6th grade in reading and math. Students do not pass or fail the MCAs but are considered "proficient" if they meet or exceed the standards set by the State.

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and corresponding interruption in regular instruction TLSA had been experiencing excellent growth scores in both Reading and Math on the MCA Assessments.

On the most recent MCA assessments prior to Covid-19 (spring 2019) TLSA performed in the top 5% in the state on the North Star Report in the category of academic growth for both reading and mathematics.

The MCA's were not administered in Spring 2020 due to Covid-19. It has been widely acknowledged that they would have little validity and reliability for MCA assessments administered in spring 2021. Consequently, the Minnesota Department of Education did not include these scores in the determination of school performance for the 2020-2021 school year.

Despite the reality that the spring 2021 assessments hold little if any value in evaluating the performance of school's during 2020-2021 the results are included below and included below as required by statute and presented without further comment.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment Results

TLSA – SPRING 2021 MCA III READING Achievement Levels: GRADE 3, 4, 5, 6 – Reading Performance							
	Gra de	Total #Tested	Does Not Meet Standards	Partially Meets Standard	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Proficiency
SPRING 2017 2018 2019 2021	3 rd	22 18 24 CCTS	61.9% 77.8% 62.5% CCTS	3.3% 11.1% 12.5% CCTS	4.8% 11.1% 25.0% CCTS	0% 0% 0% CCTS	9.1% 11.1% 25.0% CCTS
SPRING 2017 2018 2019 2021	4 th	12 20 19 CCTS	66.7% 70.0% 63.2% CCTS	16.7% 25.0% 10.5% CCTS	16.7% 5.0% 21.1% CCTS	0% 0% 5.3% CCTS	16.7% 5.0% 26.3% CCTS
SPRING 2017 2018 2019 2021	5 th	16 17 19 CCTS	56.3% 58.8% 36.8% CCTS	12.5% 11.8% 31.6% CCTS	25.0% 29.4% 31.6% CCTS	6.3% 0% 0% CCTS	31.3% 29.4% 31.6% CCTS
SPRING 2017 2018 2019 2021	6 th	14 10 14 CCTS	53.8% 50.0% 42.9% CCTS	23.1% 20.0% 21.4% CCTS	23.1% 30.0% 35.7% CCTS	0% 0% 0% CCTS	23.1% 30.0% 35.7% CCTS

Overall Proficiency:

2017 -18%

2018 -17%

2019-29%

2021 20%

*CCTS = Cell Count Too Small to Report

TLSA. District – SPRING 2021							
MCA III Math Achievement Levels: GRADE 3, 4, 5, 6 – Math Performance							
	Grade	Total # Tested	Does Not Meet Standards	Partially Meets Standard	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Proficiency
SPRING	3 rd						
2017		23	78.3%	21.7%	0%	0%	0%
2018		18	55.6%	5.6%	38.9%	0%	38.9%
2019		24	33.3%	16.7%	41.7%	8.3%	50.0%
SPRING	4 th						
2017		13	61.5%	30.8%	7.7%	0%	7.7%
2018		20	60.0%	30.0%	10.0%	0%	10%
2019		19	57.9%	15.8%	26.3%	0%	26.3%
SPRING	5 th						
2017		19	89.5%	10.5%	0%	0%	0%
2018		17	88.2%	11.8%	0%	0%	0%
2019		19	42.1%	36.8%	21.1%	0%	21.1%
SPRING	6 th						
2017		16	68.8%	18.8%	12.5%	0%	12.5%
2018		CCTS	CCTS	CCTS	CCTS	CCTS	CCTS
2019		14	42.9%	35.7%	21.4%	0%	21.4%

*CCTS = Cell Count Too Small to Report

Overall Proficiency:

2017 - 4%

2018- 14%

2019- 32%

2021- 7%

TLSA. District – SPRING 2021 MCA III Science Achievement Levels: GRADE 5 – Science Performance							
	Grade	Total #Tested	Does Not Meet Standards	Partially Meets Standard	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Proficiency
SPRING	5 th						
2017		20	75%	15%	10%	0%	10%

2018		20	58.8%	23.5%	18%	0%	18%
2019		22	59.1%	13.6%	27.3%	0%	27.3%
2021		13	CCTS	CCTS	CCTS	CCTS	CCTS

Please note: Only Students who are enrolled by December 15 are counted for calculations on participation and proficiency.

ACCESS

ACCESS is the State of MN designated English Language Proficiency Exam. It is given at all grades K-6 and measures English Language Proficiency in the areas of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. It also uses a formula to calculate scores in the areas of Comprehension and Oral Language. Below is the overall composite score for the ACCESS test for students in Grades K-6.

ACCESS COMPOSITE SCORE RESULTS (SCHOOLWIDE)

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Total #	Entering	Beginning	Developing	Expanding	Bridging	Reaching
2017- #81	24.7%	33.3%	28.4%	13.6%	0%	0%
2018 #80	10%	31.3%	33.8%	23.8%	1.3%	0%
2019 #79	8.9%	34.2%	39.2%	16.5%	1.3%	0%
2021 #77	28.6%	26.0%	33.8%	11.7%	0%	0%

NWEA-MAP

MAP tests are computerized assessments done in the fall and winter, of each year. These assessments show student growth over time as well as providing nationally-normed grade equivalent benchmarks and predictors of performance on the State MCA assessments. Students set goals for growth at each assessment window and teachers are able to pinpoint individual learning targets (standards) for their students.

Fall-Winter 2020-2021 MAP Data

MAP READING FALL - WINTER GROWTH

Winter RDG	#of students Fall	Fall Median	#of students Winter	Winter Median	<i>norm Growth</i>	Actual Growth
k	20	132	20	137	9.7	5
1	27	152	27	154	9.9	2
2	24	159	26	10	8.8	11
3	23	177	23	162	6.7	-15
4	20	187	17	187	5.8	0
5	17	192	18	204	6.5	12
6	13	198	12	202	3.6	4
Total	144		143			

MAP MATH FALL - WINTER GROWTH

Winter RDG	#of students Fall	Fall Median	#of students Winter	Winter Median	<i>norm Growth</i>	Actual Growth
k	20	134	20	137	10.5	3
1	27	153	27	167	10.1	14
2	18	157	17	171	9	14
3	23	167	22	173	7.8	8
4	22	190	21	191	7	1
5	17	204	18	204	5.6	0
6	13	198	13	204	4.8	6
Total	190		165			

FINANCES

TLSA is currently in a strong financial position. The School's business management for 2020-2021 was contracted out to an accounting company whose primary role is to advise the Finance Committee and School Board on budget and fiduciary matters. Dieci School Finance, LLC, was the recognized and independent professional accounting firm that Tesfa contracted with for business management services and accounting.

TLSA contracts with a separate company to issue payroll and an independent auditing company, Clifton, Allen, Larsen Inc, Inc. was used for the annual audit.

Fund Balance:

- Fund Reserve-all funds as of June 30, 2020 are estimated at \$636,392 which is 23.44% of the annual budget.

Fiscal Year 2019 Timeline of Audit:

- Clifton, Allen, Larsen Inc. is the audit firm of the school for 2020-2021.
- Audit fieldwork was completed during September 2021.
- Final audited financial statements are expected to be completed by November 30, 2021.

SERVICE LEARNING

A key element of all VOA Authorized schools is engaging students in authentic action projects which encourage students to use the knowledge they acquire throughout their learning to take action to make the world a better place. TLSA students typically participate in a variety of service learning throughout the year. However, due to the challenges associated with service learning during Covid and distance learning, the school paused service learning for the 2020-2021 school year with a plan to return to service learning in Fall 2021.

Innovative Practices

Innovative Practice #1 - Personalized Learning through Technology Integration

Prior to Covid-19 causing schools to engage in distance learning, TLSA students were already supported by a 1 to 1 iPad approach that included learning through a variety of educational applications and programs. The implementation of this program helped teachers create a highly differentiated and engaging instructional approach. As a result, we had a successful transition to distance learning and were able to effectively meet the needs of our students. This practice has also helped us effectively address the learning needs of our English Learners through a variety of learning tools.

Innovative Practice #2 Longitudinal Implementation of scientifically based instructional strategies

- During the 2020-2021 our Strategic Directions team met on a weekly basis and worked towards fully implementing two specific strategies over a three year period.
 - Explicit instruction of academic language to support all learners but particularly English Learners.
 - An emphasis on productive struggle in math instruction and learning.

Innovative Practice #3 Project Led the Way Curriculum and Instruction as a Comprehensive Approach to Implementing a High Quality STEM Program

Future Plans

- The school finalized plans to move to our new long term home in Brooklyn Center on July 1, 2021.
- Continue the process of transitioning and developing our STEM focus.
- Pre-K and Middle School Expansion -TLSA plans to add 7th and 8th grade to our programming in fall 2023. Our finances, enrollment and facility have all reached levels needed to support expansion.