

LAURA JEFFREY ACADEMY

2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT & WORLD'S BEST WORKFORCE REPORT





Practicing Mutual Responsibility and Individual Accountability

Searching for Truths

Building Empathy

Developing Generosity of Spirit

Becoming Competent

Acknowledging Paradox and Dilemma

Recognizing Strength in Vulnerability

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL DISTRICT # 4164

1550 Summit Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55105

651-414-6000

laurajeffreyacademy.org

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SCHOOL INFORMATION

YEAR OPENED: 2008

GRADES SERVED: 5 – 8

OUR PROMISE –*To provide an environment in which students are free – to explore their potential, discover their brilliance, and develop their intellect.*

OUR MISSION –*Empowering STEM scholars to be creators, thinkers, and problem solvers with an inclusive, girl-focused education.*

OUR MOTTO – *Asking questions, making choices.*

Laura Jeffrey Academy (LJA) is named after Laura Jeffrey, a long-time Minnesota resident whose life exemplified the love of learning and service to community, the goals of our school. Ms. Jeffrey came of age when there were few career choices available to women and African-Americans. Despite the limitations imposed on her, Ms. Jeffrey was an honors graduate of Macalester College and the only African-American in her class. After she earned a master's degree in library science in night school, she became one of the first African-American librarians in the St. Paul library system and eventually rose to branch librarian. Ms. Jeffrey built a life that exemplified personal strength, intelligence and a passion for her beliefs.

LJA is a Twin Cities tuition free charter school offering a unique STEM-focused, girl-focused educational experience, grades five through eight. Students learn through rigorous study, by asking questions, solving problems, and participating in the community. LJA's interdisciplinary learning and teaching model provides students with the experiences and skills that result in academic and personal success - students who are critical thinkers and leaders.

Our School Framework is based on a holistic approach to education, addressing teaching and learning, resiliency, school climate, and organizational effectiveness. We provide a stimulating learning environment with clear expectations and opportunities to celebrate student learning. LJA's curriculum development and assessment process ensure that personal, school, state and federal standards are achieved.

LJA is run using an educator-led model. The Leadership Team is responsible for the executive functioning of the school in a way that is best aligned with the mission and vision for Laura Jeffrey Academy. As part of the educator-led model, all LJA staff serve on one of four committees: Curriculum and Instruction, School Culture, Family and Community Relations, and Grants and Development. The Curriculum & Instruction Committee oversees and supports the development and facilitation of weekly



and ongoing professional development along with monitoring and supporting curriculum school wide. The School Culture Committee focuses on the advisory curriculum, monthly themes and lessons related to LJA principles or celebrations, and onboarding students within LJA's culture. The Family & Community Relations Committee develops and maintains lines of communication with families, and strengthens our presence in the community. The Grants and Development Committee works to engage board members, staff, and families in fundraising efforts to ensure financial stability and the growth of LJA.

LJA incorporates interdisciplinary learning in Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM), and Language Arts and Social Studies (LASS). The STEM focus is arts and wellness-infused with courses offered in Visual Arts, Music, Physical Education, and Health. Academic success is supported through an inclusive special education program, social workers, behavioral staff, educational assistants, educational specialists, and math and literacy specialists.

Starting Middle School in 5th Grade

Laura Jeffrey Academy's founders created our school by taking into account what works best for students, rather than simply replicating the traditional model.

When students begin at LJA in their fifth grade year, they enter developmentally as children, and when they graduate after the 8th grade, they leave as teenagers. The early adolescent, "tween" years, ages 10 to 14, are a time of major changes. These changes require all children to learn new ways of relating to peers and adults and adapting to a continuously changing self. Bodies and brains are developing at a rapid pace and peer relationships become highly influential. At times, academic focus can be overshadowed as students become focused on who they are and how they fit into the world.

In traditional school settings, early adolescents (especially young girls) can lose interest in academics, particularly in math, science, technology and physical activity. Research shows that this loss of interest begins right around the age of nine or ten and this is what compelled the school's founders to begin middle school in 5th grade. Starting in fifth grade ensures time for staff to get to know each individual scholar and their family before the rate of developmental change and challenge increases in sixth grade. Learning about every student's unique interests, strengths, hopes, and dreams beginning in fifth grade creates an enhanced opportunity to develop authentic relationships and assess each individual student's needs and interests as they move through their middle school years. In fifth grade, a child is developing a sense of belonging to a larger community and opportunities for contributing at Laura Jeffrey Academy begin as students create their social contract together. Former teacher Emily Barnes commented, "Each year I see students come from all around the city, from a wide variety of prior learning experiences, to create a new and outstanding fifth grade class. Students quickly form friendships, and I hear them say over and over again that they've found their people here. Parents tell me that they see a new sense of confidence in their child, as well as a new or increased love of learning. 'My child is actually excited to go to school now!' is a common report from parents of fifth graders over the years. This positivity and energy is carried into our classrooms and enhances the learning experience for the entire class."

Sixth grade is a challenging year for most students, as they begin to mature physically and gain an emerging sense of sexuality, at the same time the role of friends becomes increasingly more important as they figure out their interests and their own sense of agency and power as an adolescent. Even the most resilient child may struggle with this time in their educational experience. Though this can be a challenging time for both caregivers and students, starting 5th grade with a supportive learning environment can help your child move through this critical phase of development, where they can explore their potential, develop their intellect, and discover their brilliance.

We look back at our years of quantitative and qualitative data and conclude that students who begin LJA in 5th grade and graduate in 8th grade make significant gains in academic, social, and emotional development. When comparing students who have been with LJA since 5th grade and graduate in 8th grade to others in local urban districts, LJA students outperform in math, reading, and science. Teachers who teach LJA alum, as well as LJA alum caregivers, and alumnae themselves share stories describing LJA graduates as articulate, thoughtful and critical thinkers, conscientious citizens, and eager participants in their own learning and growth.

OUR PRINCIPLES - our guides for habits of mind as we develop in and out of the classroom.

Practicing Mutual Responsibility and Individual Accountability

- o *We work together to solve problems and are accountable for our own choices, our impact on the community, and the environment as a whole.*
- o *We know we are all responsible for solving problems as a team.*
- o *We each do our part to solve problems and create a strong community.*
- o *We follow through with our responsibilities.*

Searching for Truths

- o *We build communities of inquiry capable of supporting free and open conversation on the most important issues.*
- o *We always look for new important things to think about.*
- o *We ask questions to gain understanding and we encourage others to do the same. .*

Building Empathy

- o *We try to be aware of situations and experiences of others so we can act in ways that are sensitive to the way they see the world.*
- o *We understand that people experience life differently.*
- o *We try to learn more about the ways other people experience things.*

Developing Generosity of Spirit

- o *We assume each of us tries to do what we believe is right and just.*
- o *We recognize it is difficult to have consistency between what we value and how we practice those values.*
- o *We try to help each other build the skills to practice our values.*

Becoming Competent

- o *We help each other become increasingly able to bring about the results we each desire.*
- o *We believe effort creates competence and competence helps build confidence.*
- o *We help each other to be better.*
- o *We know everyone can improve.*

Acknowledging Paradox and Dilemma

- o *We make progress at LJA by opening our minds to complexity while continuing to take action in response to paradox or dilemma.*
- o *Difficult or challenging ideas do not frustrate us. We know life (especially important things) can be complex.*
- o *We are persistent: we don't give up when things are hard and/or complicated.*

Recognizing Strength in Vulnerability

- o *We value help from others to see our shortcomings and potential as we continue to evolve and grow.*
- o *We remember everyone is a work in progress and improves all the time.*
- o *We try to be honest with ourselves and others about the help we need.*
- o *We know asking for help is a sign of strength.*

OUR AUTHORIZER

Laura Jeffrey Academy was originally sponsored by Osprey Wilds (then Audubon Center of the North Woods) in 2007 and we have been partnering with them ever since. Many Laura Jeffrey Academy students, board members, and staff have participated in environmental activities over the years at Osprey Wilds. FY20 was the first year of a 3 year contract, which through an amendment was extended through June 2024.

The authorizing mission of the Osprey Wilds Charter School Division 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 Osprey Wilds 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.

Erin Anderson, Director of Charter School Authorizing Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center

Charter School Division
1730 New Brighton Blvd, Suite #104, PMB 196
Minneapolis, MN 55413
612-331-4181
<https://ospreywilds.org/>



School administration posts this report on the official website (www.laurajeffreyacademy.org) and distributes this report and incorporates information to LJA's authorizer, school employees, parents and legal guardians of students, and stakeholders. This annual report serves to satisfy Minnesota Statute 124E.16, subd. 2: Annual public reports. (a) A charter school must publish an annual report approved by the board of directors. The annual report must at least include information on school enrollment, student attrition, governance and management, staffing, finances, academic performance, innovative practices and implementation, and future plans. A charter school may combine this report with the reporting required under section 120B.11. A charter school must post the annual report on the school's official Website. A charter school must also distribute the annual report by publication, mail, or electronic means to its authorizer, school employees, and parents and legal guardians of students enrolled in the charter school. The reports are public data under chapter 13.

IMPLEMENTATION OF PRIMARY AND ADDITIONAL STATUTORY PURPOSES

The primary purpose of Laura Jeffrey Academy is to improve pupil learning and student achievement. In the following pages of this annual report, we will outline in detail how we implement, measure, and report these processes and outcomes.

This report will outline the additional statutory purpose of Laura Jeffrey Academy: to increase learning opportunities for all pupils; and to encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods. This report will outline methods used to achieve these additional purposes, including afterschool programming, J-term, participation in environmental activities, and partnerships that enhance student engagement and opportunities.

This report will provide examples of the actions taken by Laura Jeffrey Academy that show how LJA improves all student learning and student achievement including increasing learning opportunities for all students through small classroom settings, help for students with specialized learning needs, and systematic structure of academic curriculum. Teachers at LJA use innovative curriculum and instruction methods to deliver relevant and standards-based instruction. Small class sizes, individualized interventions, and inquiry-based learning are a few of the ways we support student success. The report will show in more detail ways we are striving for the best education for students, what our data shows, and our plans for future success.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHICS

Chartered in 2008 as the first and only Minnesota school with a girl-focused curriculum – and one of few public schools with a curricular gender focus in the United States - Laura Jeffrey Academy is an innovative, urban charter school in St. Paul, Minnesota, offering a unique education experience for grades 5-8. Learning from the best parochial and private schools, we chartered to expand opportunities for ALL students and provide access to families who would not otherwise be able to afford the available private options. We are committed to serving a diverse group of families from different socio-economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds.

Student Enrollment

In the 2022-23 school year, Laura Jeffrey Academy enrolled a total of 61 students (on October 1st) and served 76 students throughout the year. Efforts to increase enrollment during the year are outlined further in the report. As we have seen in the past few years, the 5th grade enrollment is lower than our capacity. We will continue to offer 5th grade, as research shows that girls decrease their academic motivation in science, math, and technology around the age of 10 and our mission calls us to help reduce the gender gap in STEM-related fields. In grades 6-8, we have settled into an enrollment level allowing us to focus on creating well-supported, strong classroom experiences with low student to teacher ratios for instruction.



	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
<i>5th Grade</i>	7	13	13
<i>6th Grade</i>	28	20	35
<i>7th Grade</i>	17	34	29
<i>8th Grade</i>	24	13	39
Total	76	80	116

Since the 2021-22 school year Laura Jeffrey Academy has seen a steady increase in overall enrollment from 76 to 116 students in the 2023-24 school year. The Leadership team determined grade level enrollment capacity based on classroom sizes, staffing, and counterbalancing due to combined-mixed-grade-level classes (28 5th graders, 50 6th graders, 28 7th graders, and 50 8th graders). The increase in enrollment had a positive impact on staffing and we were able to hire more educators. Hiring more staff has allowed LJA to maintain the integrity of our programming, an ideal staff to student ratio, average class sizes, more individualized attention, and opportunities for scholars to develop relationships with various adults throughout the school day provides academic and social emotional success.

Student Demographics

Our goal is to maintain a diverse community serving a population consisting of approximately 50% free and reduced meal recipients, and 50% of students who identify as being from an ethnic/racial background other than white. This is intentional to create a learning environment where we can hear multiple perspectives and learn from one another's experiences and viewpoints.

	<i>2021-22</i>	<i>2022-23</i>	<i>2023-24 (est)</i>
<i>Total Enrollment</i>	76	80	116
<i>Male</i>	2	2	11
<i>Female</i>	74	78	105
<i>Special Education</i>	19	15	14
<i>LEP</i>	1	3	2
<i>African American</i>	14	13	25
<i>Latino</i>	7	7	11
<i>Asian/PI</i>	5	2	5
<i>American Indian</i>	3	5	4
<i>White</i>	47	53	71
<i>F/R Lunch</i>	21	20	29

**2023-2024 Special Education numbers do not include incoming students who have not yet been assessed.*

STUDENT ATTENDANCE, ATTRITION & MOBILITY

Student Attendance

At Laura Jeffrey Academy, multiple staff members specifically work to address concerns around student attendance, including our Dean of Students, Social Worker, and Americorps Promise Fellow. These staff members review attendance issues and determine the level of action that is necessary. This can be a conversation with a student, a review of our process, or meeting with the family to talk about how to resolve the issue. Our staff members make efforts to ensure that all students and

families have an understanding about state laws regarding school attendance and how those laws shape our attendance policy at LJA. Staff members also meet with specific students and families to guide them to the necessary resources to get their students to school regularly and on time. Specifically, at these meetings, staff, scholars, and families co-created a plan that met the needs of the individual scholar, while adhering to the laws set forth by the state of MN.

We have developed a relationship with Ramsey County staff, our legal truancy authority for most of our students, to work together both about our process and for specific students.

We work hard as a community to ensure that our school is a safe and engaging environment where students look forward to learning and building friendships.

	<i>2019-20</i>	<i>2020-21</i>	<i>2021-22</i>	<i>2022-23</i>
<i>Overall Attendance Rate</i>	95.3%	99.6%	97.1%	93.05%

Student Attrition

With the goal of orienting new families to our school culture, Laura Jeffrey Academy provides a series of new family events that create relationships with both the students and their families. In the past, those events have been: Back to School Night, a new family potluck, Chili Cook-Off, music concerts, scholar showcasing of projects, History Day, STEM Expo, and more.

LJA works diligently to build relationships with families and students. At the beginning of each year, advisory teachers make home visits to get to know their advisees’ families, answer any questions, ease concerns, and talk about expectations for the upcoming year. This is maintained throughout the year through quarterly check-ins with families around academics as well as any social/emotional needs of each individual.

Some of the key factors we see around attrition are:

- Students looking at high school options. Placement into a school at the end of their middle grades years ensures placement for high school grades.
- We offer sports on a competitive, but recreational level. We welcome all students to participate and do not have traveling or higher level teams.
- Expectations of the family are not aligned with the vision or mission of the school.
- Family lives or moved outside of St. Paul and regularly transporting their own students to and from school becomes too challenging after a while (or in certain winter weather conditions).

- In rare cases, LJA may not be a good fit for students with significant special education needs because of our small size limits peer interactions and can feel isolating. In the past, this seemed true for level 3 Emotional Behavioral Disorder students.

Percentage of students who maintained enrollment from Spring 2023 to October 2023 (omits graduating 8th graders)	92.1%
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Student Mobility

Transfers can be attributed to a few key factors: families moving, transportation issues, dissatisfaction either at another school or within LJA. We are glad to see that transfers into LJA were greater than transfers out of LJA.

	# students on October 1	Mid-year Transfers In	Mid-year Transfers Out	Total Mid-year Transfers	Mobility Index (%)*
2019-20	82	12	7**	19	23%
2020-21	73	2	1	3	4%
2021-22	61	16	8	24	39%
2022-23	82	9	5	14	17%

* Total mid-year transfers divided by Number of students on Oct. 1.

**This number includes two students who were dropped at the very end of the school year after 15 days consecutive absence during distance learning

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
<i>Percentage of students who were enrolled for 95% or more of the school year.</i>	78%	98%	97%	93%

EDUCATIONAL APPROACH & CURRICULUM

Laura Jeffrey Academy is the first and only STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) middle school in Minnesota with a comprehensive girl-focused liberal arts curriculum. In June 2023, LJA graduated its thirteenth class of 8th graders. Alumni are confident in their experiences in high school, involved in extracurricular activities, and enrolled in challenging honors and AP courses.

Curriculum and Instruction: Subordinating Teaching to Learning

Teachers create quarterly units of instruction using the Understanding by Design (UbD) format. Units include learning targets which are based in the Minnesota State Standards. Units explicitly articulate the processes, skills, concepts, and knowledge that students must understand for proficiency.

Learning Targets: outline skills and dispositions that help develop career and college ready students and all learning targets are based on MN State standards or Common Core standards for English/Language Arts. Students work towards mastery of learning targets rather than an overall class grade. This allows students, teachers, and families to gauge learning based on specific skills and/or concepts. Work towards mastery is reported to scholars and families with the following system: Beginning (1), Developing (2), Secure (3), and Exemplary (4).

Student Ownership: students know their year long and quarter learning targets and are graded based on their mastery of each learning target. Embedded in units are formative and summative assessments and students often engage in their own reflection and assessment of learning.

Critical Literacy: Learning to critique texts and deconstruct raced, classed, and gendered cultural expectations leads to increased competence, and thus, confidence in learning. Students identify multiple viewpoints when confronted with issues and identify different perspectives for the factors that impact those perspectives.

Relevant and Rigorous Classroom Time: In LJA's inquiry-based learning environments, scholars solve complex problems that have no obvious answer by making inferences, supporting arguments with evidence, conducting research, interpreting results, and analyzing conflicting explanations. Projects must be well reasoned, well organized, and well documented from credible sources. Teachers encourage discussion, dialogue, and critical thinking as defined by the MN State standards.

Real-world learning: Students engage in many relevant world topics through both their core subject areas and their elective courses. Specifically our LASS curriculum focuses on the rights of a girl, globally and the transformation of women's rights overall. The STEM and math curriculum focus on how students can use evidence and facts to impact decisions and choices in their everyday lives, and how they can use their knowledge to create a better tomorrow. A concrete example is through the exploration of creating their own home. Scholars use their understanding of surface area, cost, calculating Rf-Values with the application of the 13 principles of sustainable design, to address ways they could be creators of sustainable living. Another example would be the indoor grow lab that scholars created. Their produce supported lettuce for all scholars for one lunch a week throughout the school year. The seedlings grown inside were then also transplanted outdoors. Throughout the spring and summer LJA scholars tended to LJA's garden and shared the produce with their families. The produce was also used in LJA's summer Canning and Gardening class to make salsa, spaghetti sauce, and jams.

Teaching and Learning

Social Constructivism and Experiential Education with Equity in Mind

Laura Jeffrey Academy was started to create access to a learning environment for students who wouldn't otherwise have such an opportunity. Therefore, the teachers of LJA tackle important topics while pushing all students further in their learning. LJA is constructed with social and experiential learning, with equity in the forefront. Because of this; learning is a collaborative, social, and cultural experience. Teaching and learning at LJA is evaluated in a variety of ways. The educators of LJA use data from state and FastBridge testing, along with rubrics, classroom performance, and a teacher evaluation process. Teachers are evaluated at LJA using the model provided by the state of Minnesota. Because we are a Q-comp school, teachers are evaluated on performance rubrics three times each year. Teachers work with members of the leadership team as coaches to create performance goals to support individual practice. Teachers at LJA also receive professional development in the areas of classroom management (needs based approach to student discipline), the creation of effective UbD units, utilization of assessment for learning, standards-based grading, and team teaching.

Standards-based, Interdisciplinary, Multi-Age Learning

Laura Jeffrey Academy applies the principles of interdisciplinary learning where students explore a question from several different perspectives. This enables students to develop a broader and more complex understanding of the subject. Classes are structured as multi-age with 7th & 8th grade combined groups and 5th & 6th grade combined groups in all subjects except Math. Multi-age classrooms allow for peer mentoring, individual differences to arise and be celebrated, and for student leadership to be cultivated and nurtured. LJA's two year curriculum cycle is structured with state standards that are combined with the grade levels to allow for scholars to meet all academic standards, without repeating content.

Pedagogy, Assessment and Curriculum

Laura Jeffrey Academy is committed to assess learning and develop an increasingly precise planning, assessment and instructional process. Teaching is subordinated to learning at LJA, where teachers use formative assessment including student self-assessment, rubrics, teacher made assessment and careful observation. Teachers write curricula using the Understanding by Design planning methodology to explicitly articulate standards based learning targets and assessments. Students "own" their learning at LJA and work toward mastery of concepts, knowledge, and skills.

Learning targets are made explicit to students and learning is carefully scaffolded for student understanding. Students showcase their learning at the end of each quarter through a performance, project, or portfolio piece. As students work toward mastery they have the opportunity to revise their work for improved grades and increased understanding.

Remediation and Acceleration Practices or Programming

Laura Jeffrey Academy continued to use an ADSIS (Alternative Delivery of Specialized Instructional Services) grant for the 2022-23 school year to improve our evidence-based interventions in reading, math, and social-emotional learning. Students were assigned interventions based on teacher observations/feedback, Fastbridge and MCA Data. These interventions occurred as pull-out interventions. Data was reviewed regularly and students were shifted into other interventions or accelerations as needed.

Specific interventions for math included: Do the Math Now and small group, targeted instruction. We've found our math needs to be the greatest. LJA added a full time math intervention specialist position in FY21 in order to address this need and have continued to keep the position full time.

LJA's literacy interventionist gives a variety of assessments to develop skills and competencies directly related to each scholar's individual needs. Specific programming we provide include: Words their Way, Easy CBM, and Orton Gillingham System. Our literacy specialist also works with students in small groups and one-on-one, providing a variety of interventions based on the outcomes of these assessments.

Our social emotional interventions were implemented by the Americorps Promise Fellow, which met with 17 students at least 30 min a week, providing interventions that included but were not limited to WOOP goal-setting and Check-in/Check out. Our Social Worker implemented interventions with students who had particularly individualized needs. Specific programming included: Neolith, Zones of Regulation and Individual or small group check ins. LJA's social worker also supervised two social work interns who implemented affinity groups to address additional needs scholars expressed.

Interventionists, teachers and staff were trained in each specific intervention scholars received throughout the school year ensuring we were making data driven decisions not only to place a student into an intervention but to also assess progress as they grew in their competencies. LJA's ADSIS team met bi-monthly to analyze student data, develop processes and support teacher learning. LJA's reading and math teams also met bi-monthly to develop reading/math interventions, progress-monitoring systems and to analyze the data. Staff met weekly in student focus meetings to discuss Tier 1 support. Additionally, a child study team met weekly to review student support as referred by the teachers, support staff and caregivers.

Special Education: Inclusion

The special education program at LJA is an inclusion model, with limited pull out support for the related services of Speech/Language, Developmental Adaptive Physical Education, Vision, Orientation/Mobility, and Occupational Therapy. Special education students receive the general education curriculum with modifications/accommodations as indicated in each student's IEP. Special education staff work with special education students in the classroom individually or in small groups along with general education students to provide support as indicated in the student's IEP.

All special education students are also supported with paraprofessionals or with educational specialists in all classrooms, including elective classes. Educational Specialists (ES) are licensed teachers who are performing traditional paraprofessional roles in the classroom. This practice supports full time teacher contracts in situations where teachers had open blocks in their schedule. Upon review of this practice, teacher learning of special education needs was enhanced as well as student learning and relationships built between students and teachers.

In an attempt to support paraprofessional development, all paraprofessional staff were invited to all in-service learning. In addition, para support staff were also required to attend weekly training with the Special Education Coordinator to address the needs of scholars and classroom learning.

English Learner (EL)

LJA is proud to say we have an English Language Development teacher who is able to service our scholars. This was the first year having an EL Teacher onsite to support teachers and scholars alike in accessing learning across our curriculums.

Staffing to Match our Mission

We intentionally aim to hire a diverse staff with race, class, and gender/gender identity backgrounds that are representative of our school demographics as well as the world around us.

Our staffing pattern reflects what is needed to accommodate the special education inclusion model - with push-in special education teachers and additional paraprofessional staff. During the 2022-23 school year, we maintained a level of having three special education teachers. Special education coordinator duties were divided among the SPED teaching staff and were overseen by a member of the Leadership Team. In addition, we had a school social worker to support special education students' Individual Education Plans goals around socio-emotional/behavioral needs and facilitate 504 plans. LJA employed a total of four paraprofessionals, and two of our general education teachers served as an ES (teacher Educational Specialists) who supported special education students based on Individual Education Plans needs.

School Calendar and Daily Schedule

Each student's schedule consists of the following classes: STEM, LASS (Language Arts and Social Studies), Math, Wellness (Health and Physical Education), Art, Music and Spanish. Sixty minute learning blocks increase time for inquiry-based instruction, experiential lab work, and increases opportunities for students to showcase, perform and reflect on their learning. All students begin their day in a 23 minute advisory class.

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES & IMPLEMENTATION

LASS (Language Arts, Social Studies)

Language Arts and Social Studies (LASS) are taught, interdisciplinary, 60 minute blocks with grades 5/6 together, and grades 7/8 together. Language Arts and Social Studies teachers write curricula that integrate language arts and social studies content and standards to increase relevancy and exploring meaning across subjects. LASS teachers and LJA's Reading Interventionist meet frequently with students in individualized reading and writing conferences and plan for differentiated instruction. Curriculum has a two-year cycle, enabling students to engage with rigorous content in heterogeneous groups. An emphasis is placed on cooperative learning, listening and speaking skills, and becoming critically literate.

Math

Math is the only course at LJA that is not a mixed grade level. This 60 minute course focuses on making connections and solving real world problems. LJA is committed to preparing students to be leaders and citizens who are empowered with the language and processes of mathematics. We seek to inspire students to question the world through a critical lens, one which is always seeking to find solutions to problems that are efficient, elegant, and powerful. To this end, when we teach mathematics, we:

1. Learn cooperatively. We learn best when we problem-solve together and where everyone's talents are recognized. We work together not only to achieve the best possible outcome, but also to encourage our brains to be flexible in seeing a problem from multiple perspectives.
2. Reflect on our process through discussion and writing. We don't simply solve problems in order to get the right answer. We problem-solve so that we can learn new strategies and approaches. It is only through deep reflection that we can apply a strategy from one area to the next.
3. Honor mistakes as a tool for reflection and growth. Mistakes are proof that you are trying. Without making mistakes, we cannot differentiate between successful and unsuccessful lines of thinking.
4. Construct knowledge through investigation. We best understand that which we come to believe through experience. When we investigate and come to our own conclusions, we gain deeper understanding and are empowered to adapt our worldview to incorporate this new understanding.
5. Approach mathematics as a tool that opens doors to a myriad of life choices. Not every student will grow up to be a mathematician, but we hope that every student has the opportunity to apply the mindsets learned in mathematics to their particular goals.

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)

Fifth and sixth grade students enroll in a science class that is infused with introductory engineering content to increase motivation and engagement. STEM courses are 60 minutes and focused on making

connections and solving problems. Every classroom is equipped with advanced technology - each having a Smart Board to aid instructional effectiveness.

Seventh and eighth grade STEM prepares our students for rigorous choices in high school. In STEM, they are provided with a foundation of competency and confidence to excel in college and in fields where women are traditionally underrepresented. Additionally, STEM classes focus on scientific literacy and student understanding of how to analyze and interpret information they receive about the world.

	<p>What a great STEM Expo! I was not only amazed at the work of the students (great research, presentations, and some truly difficult issues for anyone to grasp, let alone for young people to challenge themselves to tackle the questions and dig into finding some answers), but their social interactions - answers questions, engaging me, not just "reading their script," showed tremendous maturity. The entire Expo warmed my heart.</p>	
	<p>- Sean (2022-23 LJA Board Member)</p>	

Guiding STEM Principles

- Nurturing curiosity and wonderment
- Developing the critical thinking skills of identifying, analyzing and using evidence to inform knowledge
- Becoming resilient problem solvers and innovative thinkers
- Applying STEM thinking in and out of the classroom

Principles in Practice

STEM principles are infused throughout our school. As these principles make clear, we believe being a STEM-focused school is more than strong science content and lots of technology (though we believe that is and can be part of it too). When these principles are put into practice, students develop a mindset, skills, and habits that give them the tools for success in STEM fields and beyond, while having experiences that allow them to see how it all can apply to life outside of LJA.

Nurturing curiosity and wonderment

Laura Jeffrey Academy is an environment where inquiry and curiosity are encouraged. We hope to foster these mindsets, with the hope that each scholar who comes through our doors will:

- Pay attention to immediate, local, and global environments
- Constantly ask questions about their world
- Seek out new experiences and ideas different from one's own
- Make connections between topics
- Find connections between topics and their own life
- Love to learn new things
- Enjoy complexity and unanswered questions

Developing the critical thinking skills of identifying, analyzing and using evidence to inform knowledge

Laura Jeffrey Academy challenges students to think critically as they analyze the world around them. Scholars immersed in LJA's curriculum should continually be developing the following skills in all their classes:

- Gathering evidence/data from multiple sources & perspectives
- Distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant evidence/data
- Evaluating evidence/data for reliability, credibility and validity
- Accurately interpreting evidence and explain possible implications
- Analyzing evidence for patterns, differences, similarities and trends
- Making valid inferences based on the evidence and reason
- Identifying potential assumptions and/or bias in sources
- Identifying potential assumptions and/or bias in own collection of evidence
- Synthesizing information to meet intended purpose

Becoming resilient problem solvers and innovative thinkers

Laura Jeffrey Academy scholars apply their knowledge to solve problems and answer questions about their world. As they do, they will be developing important habits of scholarship:

- Defining purpose and target audience
- Taking responsible risks
- Evaluating multiple solutions and ideas to select best approach/product
- Revising based on feedback from peers, mentors and trials
- Learning from failure
- Looking for new questions or new information that may inform problem solving
- Resiliency in group work
- Taking Responsibility toward group success (mutual responsibility) and for individual contributions (individual accountability)

Applying STEM thinking in and out of the classroom

In order to explore their potential, build competence and confidence, and enjoy the success of tackling complex problems, we want LJA scholars to have a variety of hands-on experiences throughout their time here.

- Clubs: Students have the opportunity to pursue various interests and/or lead their own club.
Examples: K-Pop, Dungeons and Dragons, PRIDE, Fermi Math, Speed Cubing, Theatre, Weaving, and Jewelry
- J-term & Other Partnerships: Hands-on classes and experiences with a range of partnerships and service learning opportunities.
Examples: Longboarding with Urban Boat Builders, Knitting and Design, Computer Science and Coding with REM5, Children's Book Design, Winter Survival, Theatre
- Field Trips: LJA commits to getting students out into the community and the natural world.
Examples: Hyland Play Area, Sledding, Nickelodeon Universe, Mississippi Voyageurs, BWCA trip, Science Museum of MN, Bryant Lake Park, Lebanon Hills Regional Park

- Experts & guest speakers: LJA works find individuals who can show how the curriculum is relevant to the “real world”
 - Examples: Friends of the Boundary Waters - Black and Indigenous speaker focusing on individual impact on MN Waters, Eileen Hudon - registered/enrolled Ojibwe tribe member and founding member of Ogitchidakwe Council of grandmothers
 - David Ponder - works with Met Council on water treatment plants
 - Abbey Moore - Mississippi Watershed Management Org staff
 - Green Corp member
 - Marie Lopez del Puerta - physics faculty at University of St Thomas, did a hands-on lesson focusing on telescopes
 - Richard Schuler- physics faculty at University of St Thomas, did a hands-on lesson focusing on solar observation
- Curricular Enhancements:
 - STEM Expo, Adopt-A-Drain with the City of Saint Paul, Capital Regional Watershed, Plantatrium with St Thomas , Bell Museum, Parks based Summer Programming



Girl-Focused

Deconstruction of race, class, and gender in all classes provides students with rigorous topics for discussion and develops critical literacy. Focus on student voice and power throughout curriculum choices supports equity for all students while building 21st century skills of innovation and problem solving. The girl-focused curriculum assures students access to histories and viewpoints that are often left out or ignored in traditional curricula. We believe that our pedagogy, curriculum, and teaching practices are beneficial to any child, regardless of gender identity. At Laura Jeffrey Academy, girl-focused means to ensure all students (no matter who they are) are challenged to think critically, learn a feminist perspective (which calls for equality for all persons), seek out injustice, working for solutions, and will hear stories and see examples of role models who are or have worked to dismantle gender stereotypes and glass ceilings. We welcome any student regardless of gender or gender expression. While doing this, we cannot deny the fact that we also want to reduce the gender gap in

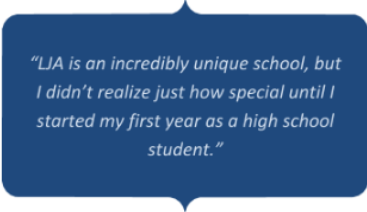
STEM-related fields. We work to increase students' competence and confidence in math and science. A focus on the whole child is expected from all staff and supported by a school social worker and our advisory curriculum. Comprehensive sexuality education in grades 5 – 8 is designed to give students sufficient information to make healthy choices that impact their long term success and physical and mental health.

“Asking Questions, Making Choices,” LJA’s motto, supports an environment where students are encouraged to research, think about, and ask questions to make informed and well thought out choices for their futures.

Critical Literacy

One of the key pieces of our instructional framework is critical literacy. Through critical literacy, we live out our motto of Asking Questions, Making Choices.

Critical literacy is an approach that encourages the reader to actively analyze and deconstruct the texts they encounter in and out of the classroom. In this approach, literacy is about more than the ability to decode or “sound out” the words on the page, or the ability to summarize the main points of a story or article. Critically literate students see any text, whether it is a novel, picture book, textbook, song on the radio, or advertisement, as something that was created by a person or people with their own particular perspective in society, and are able to analyze those texts and reflect on their layers of meaning. Paulo Friere, the educator, philosopher, and author of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, said that critical literacy was a vehicle for students and their teachers to learn to “read the world.”



“LJA is an incredibly unique school, but I didn’t realize just how special until I started my first year as a high school student.”

At LJA, you will see classrooms in which:

- o Teachers guide students in encounters with multiple viewpoints rather than presenting one voice as definitive or authoritative.
- o Students and teachers ask and discuss questions such as: Who created this text? What is this text about and how do we know? Who is allowed to speak, and what are their perspectives on the world? Who benefits from the text? Who or what has been left out from this text?
- o When textbooks are used in the classroom, they are not presented as the ultimate authority on a topic, but rather as another text to be analyzed and deconstructed with a critical lens. Texts are not considered to be universal or unbiased.

- o Students see themselves in the curriculum. In language arts, students see characters with whom they can identify in the stories and books they read; in science and math, students explore how these disciplines relate to their experiences and communities, and in social studies, students learn about the “people’s history,” not just the history from the point of view of the powerful.
- o Teachers regularly consider questions together such as: How are members of the learning community participating in the cycle of making meaning? How does knowledge work in both democratic and undemocratic ways (to liberate or dominate)? To what extent does the study in question have value beyond the classroom and how will students take this learning and own it beyond the walls of LJA?
- o The learning community is engaged in work that aims to learn about and act on social inequalities and injustice.

Critical literacy enriches our inquiry-based learning environment, in which challenging problems are posed and challenging questions are asked on a daily basis in every classroom. This kind of higher order thinking is interdisciplinary in nature, experiential, and the kind of highly rigorous work that helps students prepare for their future education in high school and college. Critical literacy prepares students to become engaged, critical, and justice-oriented participants in our democratic society, and empowers the marginalized and oppressed by building critical consciousness, including the ability to name, act on, and transform injustice in our communities.

J-Term

Laura Jeffrey Academy is committed to making middle school the most valuable time of a child’s education, as it can be deeply transformative and set the stage for future success. In 2022-23, J-term was a four week week period in January where classes were modified to enhance experience and inquiry in interdisciplinary classes. Originally designed to address the post-winter-break restless energy of students, it has become an energizing and highly rigorous platform to deepen connections with the more traditional content and standards.

Experiential education particularly engages students in STEM fields, equipping them with the tools and knowledge to allow experimentation, collaboration, play, and creativity to thrive. 2.5 hour long block classes allow for special topics to be covered in depth and special opportunities like field trips to be more feasible. J-term class offerings in the 2022-2023 school year included: Longboarding with Urban Boat Builders, Knitting and Design, Computer Science and Coding with REM5, Children's Book Design, Winter Survival, and Theatre.



Collaborations and Non-Profit Partnerships

Laura Jeffrey Academy continues to draw interest from post-secondary educational volunteers and tutors. LJA is working to reunite these supporters. These college-aged tutors help address the needs of working towards reducing the achievement gap in math and reading and encourage our students' interest in STEM activities. Past college tutors have come from: St. Catherine's University, Macalester College, the University of Minnesota, University of St. Thomas, North Central University, and Hamline University. Many of these college tutors are studying to become teachers themselves. LJA tutors serve as positive role models and provide opportunities for LJA students to learn about higher education through the eyes of young adults currently working towards a college degree.

LJA was happy to continue our engagement with local non-profit partnerships: EUREKA!, Friends of the Mississippi, Boundary Waters Canoe Area, REM5, AmeriCorps, Girls on The Run, She Rock She Rock, Project Scientist, Great River Greening, and Tickets for Kids to provide a variety of educational experiences from field trips, clubs and curricular enhancements to optional summer programming.

LJA maintains its strong partnership with the Fighting Child Hunger (formerly Sheridan Story) ensuring all families have access to free meals year round.

Organizational Development

Laura Jeffrey Academy's framework is based on extensive theory and research. Philosophical underpinnings of each theory align to create an approach that accelerates student learning, promotes critical literacy and analysis of content, while focusing on closing the opportunity gap. This is a tall order and over the past fourteen years we have been testing our practices that work best for our demographics. Every day staff and teachers implement theory to practice engaging in action research and discussion to improve their practices and thus student outcomes.

We continue to build on innovations we have implemented and refine best practices that have helped us close achievement gaps and accelerate all learners at LJA. In meeting the needs of our scholars, LJA became and continues to be educator-led, with a Leadership Team that tends to the financial and executive functioning of the school, in addition to four staff chaired committees. Those four committees are the following: Family and Community Relations, School Culture, Curriculum and Instruction and Grants and Development. Each committee has its own mission and tasks, as assigned by the Leadership Team. Each committee elects a chair or co-chairs who meet with the Leadership Team on a monthly basis to share progress, identify needs, and problem solve. Laura Jeffrey Academy's board of directors evaluates the Leadership Team on an annual basis drawing on insights and feedback from various stakeholders including staff and families. As the years go on, it is our hope that our structure continues to evolve and adapt in ways that best meet the needs of our community, internally and externally.

Extra Curricular and Events

Extra Curricular:

LJA participated in athletics through St. Paul Parks and Rec. Scholars joined in playing soccer, basketball, and volleyball at LJA. Scholars also were able to engage in both a fall and spring season of Girls on the Run.



Events:

LJA and LJA's LJAPA (Laura Jeffrey Academy Parent Association) worked together to host a series of events bringing together our families, scholars, and staff alike. We celebrated scholars and each other at LJA's Back to School Night, Chili Cook Off, Fall Festival, HighSchool Fair, Bi-Monthly Pizza Night Out, Quarterly TWEEN Talks, Track and Field Day, and End of Year Picnic.

LJA staff, family and scholars were also out celebrating at the following community events: PB&J, Charter School Fair, Grand Old Days, and PRIDE in St. Paul and Minneapolis.

Challenges

FY23 marks LJA's fourth year of being an educator-led school. We continue to improve pathways for communication and transparency. Through weekly staff meetings, and ensuring Leadership's meeting notes are public to staff members, as well as sharing out at the weekly staff meeting, we continue to strengthen our structure and provide transparency to all constituents while maintaining confidentiality. Surveys to staff to better understand and identify communication needs have been utilized to continue to improve communication.

Not unlike other schools, Laura Jeffrey Academy was focused on enrollment. We started the year with a plan created by our Board and CEL, a marketing and public relations firm, to revitalize our recruitment efforts through a digital marketing campaign, marketing materials and internal systems to support the enrollment process. LJA saw an increase in interest. LJA completed approximately 250 in person tours, could have started a waiting list in March, but chose to expand enrollment projections knowing we would need to find additional staffing. While progress has been made in regards to enrollment, we continue to focus on sustaining enrollment and maintaining the culture and integrity of our school and programming.

Highlights of the Strategic Plan

LJA's Board decided to maintain the same goals from our previous strategic plan (set in 2019-20). These four areas were:

- Stabilize budget
- Increase enrollment
- Leverage academic success / marketing
- Increase staff support / retention.

When tasked with these areas in the strategic plan, LJA's leadership team continued to focus its main efforts on increasing enrollment, as this would have a positive impact on the other goal areas, and was the most critical to the school's long term success. Laura Jeffrey Academy began working with CEL to improve marketing and enrollment practices. Upon initial evaluation, this has proven to be a successful partnership as enrollment increased for the start of the 2022-23 school year with a total of 79 students (up from 57 at the close of the 2021-22 school year). This growth continued into the 2023-24 school year where we are projecting a total of 115 scholars to start the year.

Two important successes should be mentioned about the other goal areas:

- Stabilize Budget: LJA ended the year yet again with a positive net income. LJA 's leadership team is dutiful in ensuring our expenses align with our budget and we stay on track, even with limited resources. LJA's board of directors utilized money from the LJA fund balance to pay for a marketing firm to oversee marketing with the hopes of improving enrollment. We still hold a significant fund balance exceeding the recommended 20%.

- Increase staff support / retention: Of the teachers who were offered positions, all staff but one remained at LJA for the 2022-23 school year. Staff who stayed either maintained their current position or took on new roles and responsibilities as they continue to grow their own leadership skills within education.

LJA's Board of Directors will begin the process of creating a new strategic plan starting in the fall of the 2023-24 school year.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: GOALS & BENCHMARKS

Progress on OWELC Contractual Academic Goals & World's Best Workforce Alignment

World's Best Workforce (WBWF) Goal Areas:

- o Ready for Kindergarten [R4K]: All students are ready for kindergarten.
- o Reading Well by 3rd Grade [RG3]: All students in third grade achieve grade-level literacy.
- o Achievement Gap Closure [AGC]: All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.
- o Career and College Ready [CCR]: All students are career- and college-ready before graduating from high school.
- o Graduate from High School [GRAD]: All students graduate from high school.

Indicator 1: Mission Related Outcomes
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Goal 1.1 From FY20 to FY21, the average rating for Laura Jeffrey Academy teachers on a 5-question mission-related subset on the MDE Student Perception of Student Engagement Survey will be 3.75 out of a 5 point scale.

Goal 1.2 From FY20 to FY21, 75% of students will receive a "Secure" (3 points out of 4) or higher on Scientific Thinking Rubric.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Readiness [CCR]

Key Measures & Results for this Goal: In FY22, the average rating on these questions was 4.1, which exceeds the target goal. This goal was not measured in FY20. As well, 81% of students received a secure or higher on their Scientific Thinking Rubric.

How the Data will Impact 2023: Given our success last year, we will use a similar approach to Student Engagement on Scientific Thinking in the 2023-2024 school year.

Indicator 2: English Language Learners

Goal: 2.1 From FY20 to FY22, the aggregate percentage of English Learners meeting target on the ACCESS test grades 5-8 will be equal to or greater than that of the state percentage of English Learners meeting target.

Goal: 2.2

From FY20 to FY22, the average progress toward target for English Learners grades 5-8 on the ACCESS test will be equal to or greater than the state average progress toward target.

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

This was not measured during FY23 as LJA does not have a significant population of EL students.

Indicator 3: Reading Growth

Goal:

- 3.1 From FY19 to FY21, the average growth z-score for all students on state accountability tests will be equal to or greater than 0.00.
- 3.2 From FY19 to FY21, the aggregate percentage of students who achieve a positive z-score on state accountability tests will be greater than 50.0%.
- 3.3 In aggregate, from FY22-FY23, the overall percentage of students whose achievement level on the statewide assessments for reading (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) improved on statewide assessments is equal to or greater than the state percentage.
- 3.4 In aggregate, from FY22-FY23, the overall percentage of students whose achievement level decreased or stayed "does not meet standards" on statewide assessments for reading (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) is equal to or less than the state
- 3.5 For FY19-FY23, the average growth percentile from fall start score of students in grades 5-8 enrolled in LJA for both the fall and spring FAST aReading will be greater than 50%.
- 3.6 For FY19-FY23, greater than 50% of students in grades 5-8 enrolled in LJA for both the fall and spring FAST aReading will have a growth percentile from fall start score of greater than 50%.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Readiness [CCR]

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

3.1 & 3.2: LJA did meet its goal, 3.1 or 3.2, with a z-score of -0.011 and 42.1% of scholars having a positive z-score based on the FY19 data. MDE has stopped publishing the z-scores of the MCAs as of FY21.

3.3 & 3.4: LJA met both goals, with 21.4% of scholars increasing their reading achievement level as compared to 18% for the State of Minnesota. Additionally 21.4% of LJA scholars decreased their achievement level or stayed “does not meet standards” compared to 40% for the State of Minnesota.

3.5 & 3.6: LJA fell short of meeting the goal for both 3.5 & 3.6 The average growth percentile from fall start score on the aReading in FY23 was 40.5%. The aggregate average is 43.1%, both of which approaches the target. The percentage of students who had a growth percentile above 50% on the aReading FY23 was 29.2%. The aggregate average is 35.2%, which falls short of the target. These goals will be changing in the upcoming charter renewal to take advantage of the more indepth growth measurements now available on Fastbridge.

Indicator 4: Math Growth

Goal

4.1 From FY19 to FY21, the average growth z-score for all students on state accountability tests will be equal to or greater than 0.00.

4.2 From FY19 to FY21, the aggregate percentage of students who achieve a positive z-score on state accountability tests will be greater than 50.0%.

4.3 In aggregate, from FY22-FY23, the overall percentage of students whose achievement level on the statewide assessments for math (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) improved on statewide assessments is equal to or greater than the state percentage.

4.4 In aggregate, from FY22-FY23, the overall percentage of students whose achievement level decreased or stayed "does not meet standards" on statewide assessments for math (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) is equal to or less than the state

4.5 For FY19-FY23, the average growth percentile from fall start score of students in grades 5-8 enrolled in LJA for both the fall and spring FAST aMath will be greater than 50%

4.6 For FY19-FY23, greater than 50% of students in grades 5-8 enrolled in LJA for both the fall and spring FAST aMath will have a growth percentile from fall start score of greater than 50%.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready [CCR]

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

4.1 & 4.2: LJA just barely missed meeting measures, 4.1 and 4.2, with a z-score of -0.08 and 48.1% of scholars having a positive z-score based on the FY19 data. MDE has stopped publishing the z-scores of the MCAs as of FY21.

4.3 & 4.4: LJA met both goals, with 25.9% of scholars increasing their reading achievement level as compared to 14.8% for the State of Minnesota, more than 10% higher. Additionally 31.5% of LJA scholars decreased their achievement level or stayed “does not meet standards” compared to 43.6% for the State of Minnesota.

4.5 & 4.6: LJA fell short of meeting the goal for both 4.5 & 4.6 The average growth percentile from fall start score on the aMath in FY23 was 40.1%. The aggregate average is 47.8%, both of which approaches the target. The percentage of students who had a growth percentile above 50% on the aMath FY23 was 41.4%. The aggregate average is 46.0%, which approaches the target. These goals will be changing in the upcoming charter renewal to take advantage of the more indepth growth measurements now available on Fastbridge.

Indicator 5: Reading Proficiency

Goal

- 5.1 From FY19 to FY23, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in grades 5-8 will increase by at least 3.0 points from the baseline proficiency index score (FY15-FY18 baseline -69.0) OR will be greater than that of the state for the same grades (5-8).
- 5.2 From FY19 to FY23, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in grades 5-8 will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – Saint Paul School District) for the same grades (5-8).
- 5.3 From FY19 to FY23, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch subgroup will be greater than that of the state for the same subgroup and the same grades (5-8).
- 5.4 From FY19 to FY23, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch subgroup will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – Saint Paul School District) for the same subgroup and the same grades (5-8).
- 5.5 From FY19 to FY23, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for American Indian and students of color[1] will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – Saint Paul School District) for the same subgroup and the same grades (5-8).
- 5.6 From FY19 to FY23, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for American Indian and students of color will increase by at least 10.0 points from the baseline proficiency index score (FY18 baseline -60.0) OR will be equal to or greater than white students at the school for the same grades (5-8).

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready [CCR] and Achievement Gap Closure [AGC]

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

5.1 & 5.2: LJA scholars performed exceedingly well on the reading MCAs in FY23 with a proficiency index of 79.4, almost 20 points above the state of Minnesota's 60.8 and 34.2 points above St. Paul Public Schools' proficiency index of 45.2. In addition 79.4 is 10 points above the baseline of 69.0. Our aggregate proficiency index for FY19 to FY23 of 70.3 is also higher than the State of Minnesota with 64.5 and Saint Paul Public Schools with 47.0. Despite COVID-19 and distance learning, LJA has continued to foster strong reading proficiency amongst our scholars.

5.3 & 5.4: Likewise, the Free & Reduced Lunch subgroup also performed well in FY23 with a 66.7 proficiency index. 66.7 is higher than our pre-COVID index in FY19 of 53.8. Our aggregate proficiency index for FY19 to FY23 is 51.3, which is higher than both the State of Minnesota with 47.4 and Saint Paul Public Schools' with 35.7.

5.5 & 5.6: LJA scholars of color scored their highest proficiency index in FY23 of 81.8. This is well above St. Paul's result of 36.7. LJA students of color were 21.8 points above the baseline of 60. and 3.8 points above white scholars with a proficiency index of 78.0. Our aggregate proficiency index for FY19 to FY23 was 61.3 which was 22.6 points higher than Saint Paul Public Schools with 38.7. However while we are above the baseline of 60, we fall short of the goal of 70 or being greater than or equal to white scholars who scored 82.3 for the same time period.

Indicator 6: Math Proficiency

Goals:

6.1 From FY19 to FY23, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in grades 5-8 will increase by at least 8 points from the baseline proficiency index score (FY15-FY18 baseline – 53.5) OR will be greater than that of the state for the same grades (5-8).

6.2 From FY19 to FY23, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in grades 5-8 will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – Saint Paul School District) for the same grades (5-8).

6.3 From FY19 to FY23, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch subgroup will be greater than that of the state for the same subgroup and the same grades (5-8).

6.4 From FY19 to FY23, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch subgroup will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – Saint Paul School District) for the same subgroup and the same grades (5-8).

6.5 From FY19 to FY23, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for American Indian and students of color will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – Saint Paul School District) for the same subgroup and the same grades (5-8).

6.6 From FY19 to FY23, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for American Indian and students of color¹ will increase by at least 10.0 points from the baseline proficiency index score (FY15-FY18 baseline –44.6) OR will be equal to or greater than white students at the school for the same grades (5-8).

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready [CCR] and Achievement Gap Closure [AGC]

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

6.1 & 6.2: Math proficiency continues to increase at LJA after distance learning with a proficiency index of 53.2 for FY23 which is 0.5 short of the State of Minnesota with 53.7. However our math proficiency decreased significantly due to COVID-19 and distance learning, which is reflected in our aggregate proficiency index for FY19 to FY23 of 49.1. This falls short of both the baseline of 53.3 and the State of Minnesota with 59.3. We did perform better than Saint Paul Public Schools who had a proficiency index of 34.8 for this same time period.

6.3 & 6.4: LJA continues to work to increase the proficiency of our scholars who qualify for Free & Reduced Lunch. Our aggregate proficiency index for FY19 to FY23 is 25 which falls short of the State of Minnesota with 36. We are above Saint Paul Public Schools’ with a proficiency index of 21.6.

6.5 & 6.6: Our aggregate proficiency index for FY19 to FY23 was 36.7 for American Indian and students of color was above Saint Paul’s result of 27.3. However this result fell short of the baseline of 44.6, as well as below the aggregate proficiency of white students at LJA with a score of 59.9

Indicator 7: Science Proficiency (and Growth)
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Goals:

7.1 From FY19 to FY23, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in grades 5 and 8 will increase by at least 8 points from the baseline proficiency index score (FY15-FY18 baseline -- 57.3) OR will be greater than that of the state for the same grades (5 and 8).

7.2 From FY19 to FY23, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in grades 5 and 8 will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – Saint Paul School District) for the same grades (5 and 8).

7.3 From FY19 to FY23, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for American Indian and students of color¹ will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – Saint Paul School District) for the same subgroup and the same grades (5-8).

7.4 From FY19 to FY23, the aggregate proficiency rate of students continuously enrolled for three or more years will be greater than the state for students for the same grade (8).

7.5 From FY19 to FY23, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for American Indian and students of color will increase by at least 10.0 points from the baseline proficiency index score (FY15-FY18 baseline –42.0) OR will be equal to or greater than white students at the school for the same grades (5-8).

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready [CCR] and Achievement Gap Closure [AGC]

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

7.1 & 7.2: In FY23 LJA had a proficiency index of 53.1, which is higher than the state of Minnesota, at 51.8, and Saint Paul Public Schools, at 32.9 for the same year. Our aggregate proficiency index for FY19 to FY23 was 56.3, higher than the State of Minnesota, at 55.9, and Saint Paul Public Schools at 35.1.

7.3: Our aggregate proficiency index for FY19 to FY23 was 35.0 for American Indian and students of color. This was almost 10 points above Saint Paul Public Schools, at 25.7.

7.4 The proficiency index for scholars continuously enrolled at LJA from grades 5 through 8 had an aggregate proficiency index of 60.6 compared to 54.9 for the state of Minnesota.

7.5 Our aggregate proficiency index for FY19 to FY23 for American Indian and students of color is 35.6, which is less than the baseline of 42.0 and our white scholars at 62.9.

Indicator 8: Proficiency or Growth in Other Curricular Areas or Educational Programs

Goal: N/A

Indicator 9: Post Secondary Readiness

Goal: N/A

Indicator 10: Attendance Not yet available from MDE 9172021

Goal: From FY19 to FY21 the average of the school’s annual consistent attendance rates will be equal to or greater than the state.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready [CCR]

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

LJA’s consistent attendance average in FY20 was 86.5, bringing our average up to 81.4 for FY19 & FY20 combined. The state average was 85.35 in FY19 but has not been released for FY20. Annual Consistent Attendance Rate will not be released for FY21 due to Covid.

Indicator A: Federal and State Accountability

According to the Minnesota North Star Accountability Report in 2022, Laura Jeffrey Academy has not been identified for extra support. This means that all subgroups are performing above necessary levels to qualify for extra support.

EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS: ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

Laura Jeffrey Academy Staff constantly evaluate student progress towards academic standards through PLCs (professional learning communities) that teachers participate in weekly. In PLCs, teachers evaluate the four guiding questions to ensure rigorous curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The four questions are:

1. What is it we expect our students to learn?
2. How will we know when they have learned it?
3. How will we respond when some students do not learn?
4. How will we respond when some students already know it?

Through these guiding questions and collaborative work, teachers and staff are continually pushing ourselves through a growth mind-set to ensure students are learning and progressing.

Scholars who are not growing at a rate desired and are not meeting learning expectations, after various classroom strategies are implemented, are referred to CST (Child Study Team) for further investigation and intervention. The CST at LJA meets weekly to explore student concerns and evaluate interventions. In the 2022-23 school year, teachers met weekly in grade-level teams to evaluate student success and progress.

Assessments

Fastbridge tests are administered three times a year in math (aMath), reading (aReading), and social/emotional (mySAEBERS). Results were shared with teachers in PLC and they identified students needing additional support and ways to meet needs within the classroom.

MCA (Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments) are taken once per year, in the Spring.

Interventions are created to align with the data, and instructional units designed by staff incorporate the needs identified by data.

In addition, classroom formative and summative assessments document student learning.

Grading is standards based. Grading software, JMC, enables parents to access grades online and teachers comment on student dispositional skill development as well as academic performance.

Educational Effectiveness: Assessment & Evaluation

At Laura Jeffrey Academy, we believe that students learn best when given opportunities to ask questions, explore diverse viewpoints, and work together to create knowledge. To this end, teachers work collaboratively to create rigorous curriculum units each quarter that meet Minnesota state standards in each of the respective content areas. Curriculum plans and instructional units are reviewed to ensure inquiry methods and robust questioning for student learning. Each quarter curriculum units are peer reviewed, reviewed by the curriculum teacher leaders, and then shared with LJA's students, families, and community members.

Laura Jeffrey Academy teachers also included student data from FastBridge tests to get a clear picture of each student's performance level and growth throughout the school year. Students took the Fastbridge test in Math and Reading three times a year. The data was used to better inform instruction, create intentional classroom groupings, and identify scholars who need more intensive support through LJA's tutoring and intervention program. The data did not only identify scholars performing below grade level but those above grade level to ensure differentiated instruction to support learning for students at all levels. Teachers monitor progress weekly for each student in all classes and reach out to parents to create learning plans when students are falling behind in meeting classroom learning targets.

LJA's leadership team continued to support teachers by addressing and implementing best practices to increase effective instruction, useful assessments, and increase rigor within curriculum design. During the 2022-23 school year, the leadership team included classroom teachers and instructional leads, including our Data and Assessment Coordinator, as well as our Dean of Students and Office Administrator. The team participated in teacher observations, walk-throughs, and curriculum support. Through the collection of classroom data and teacher reflections, the leadership team and each educator set personal growth goals. As LJA participates in the state model for teacher evaluation and growth, all teachers at LJA receive three formal observations, two formal evaluation cycles, and several walk-throughs each school year. Teachers create growth goals and plans for student success through the observation process and are paired with instructional coaches.

In FY23, the LJA board utilized a review process previously developed for the teacher-led model. The board surveyed families and staff, and used a rubric measuring outcomes around all of the leadership team's roles and responsibilities, in order to provide a comprehensive performance review.

Teacher Equity Data

The school is committed to equitable access to effective and diverse teachers. We are a charter school with its own district so there can be no disparity among schools, the only challenge is the continual one of recruiting and retaining high quality teachers that match the diversity of our students. In 22-23, 66% of classroom teachers had three or more years of experience; 66% had Tier 3 or 4 license in the area they were teaching; 100% had Tier 1, 2, 3, or 4 license; and over half had

advanced degrees. 25% of our teaching staff were teachers of color during the 2022-23 school year. Additionally, 71% of our educational assistants were people of color.

Q COMP ANNUAL REPORT

LJA implements QCOMP via teacher leaders who observe and coach staff, as well as through embedded professional development each week with one weekly meeting focusing on improving or changing the classroom environment for scholars (student focus) and one meeting focusing on improving as a teacher (PLC).

The biggest impact of teacher leaders on classroom instruction was through individual coaching with teachers. Based on observations, teachers and coaches set professional development goals and then developed strategies to try in the classroom to reach these goals. Coaches regularly checked in on the progress of these goals and reflected and revised as necessary. Feedback was tied directly back to MDE's Performance Standards for Teacher Practice rubric. This gave a framework to guide teachers in their self-reflection and clear goals (improvement in various rubric areas) on how to improve their instructional practice. The final step was then to work with coaches to create measurable action steps on how they can reach their goal. Observations and debriefs were always done in teams--almost always with one more experienced evaluator and one newer evaluator-- this allowed for (and required) ongoing conversations of inter-rater reliability and how best to provide constructive & meaningful feedback.

This year we started the observation and coaching cycle earlier in the year. We received feedback that having more purposeful times set aside for coaches to meet with mentees would improve coaching cycles. For the next year we will carry over coaches to continue supporting educators, when the coaching was effective as well as to plan the coaching and evaluation process in advance before the school year begins and to plan certain times for coaching throughout the year.

The review of student focus and PLC meetings showed a clear pattern. Teachers felt that when learning teams were focused on concrete discussions of ways to improve student instruction and using evidence, including student work, to help guide pedagogical decisions, it was very effective. Our weekly learning teams focused on increasing engagement within the classroom. Going forward, learning teams will be more intentionally structured throughout the year to better support the needs of teachers and students.

Classroom instruction was also impacted by the facilitation of learning teams. This year learning teams focused on instructional strategies related to student engagement and restorative practices. These teams shared dilemmas related to student engagement and learned and implemented various strategies based on peer feedback. Learning teams also focused on student engagement on digital learning days.

As we continue to strengthen and align our Qcomp model with our teacher development and evaluation model, we are hoping to expand coaching and mentoring opportunities by developing a strong peer review system. This will strengthen knowledge and familiarity with the Teacher

Practice Rubric, which in turn improves our professional conversations, and thus our ability to have productive learning teams. Part of this improvement will also involve increasing our use of measurable goals within the classroom. By doing so, it will provide a focus for peer review and coaching that allows teachers to more quickly see results, make changes and improve pedagogy for student success.

Our very small system allows us to be very focused on providing the necessary coaching and support to teachers who are struggling to meet performance measures. However, because of our small system, this can be a challenge at times if we have several teachers in need of significant support. Finding ways to spread the expertise necessary for coaching teachers, will help to keep this focus on support sustainable.

STUDENT & PARENT SATISFACTION

Student Engagement and Supports

- Home visits with every family at the beginning of the year help to build relationships between the family and the student's advisor. Home visits enable the advisor to better support the student's interests and goals, and help the whole team better understand the student's strengths and where they might need additional support.
- Schoolwide Social Contract: Each year students work together to create LJA's yearly social contract. Scholars turn the contractual agreements into personal goals they set for themselves to be their best self and meet the social contract agreements. Students then hang their individual goals in LJA's hallways to remind themselves of the agreements they made.



The 2022-23 social contract:

1. WE WILL RESPECT AND INCLUDE EVERYONE WE WILL LISTEN WHEN OTHERS ARE TALKING
2. WE WILL RESPECT THE RULES AND PROMISES WE MAKE
3. WE WILL RESPECT ALL GENDERS AND PRONOUNS
4. WE WILL RESPECT EACH OTHER'S BOUNDARIES
5. TRY TO PARTICIPATE AND IF YOU DON'T WANT TO, TALK TO A TEACHER ABOUT IT
6. BE RESPONSIBLE WITH YOUR SPACE AND FREEDOM THAT IS GIVEN TO YOU
7. STAND UP FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS
8. NO JUDGING
9. LISTEN TO EVERYONE'S THOUGHTS AND IDEAS, CREATE A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT THAT ALLOWS PEOPLE TO GET THEIR WORK DONE.

Family & Caregiver Involvement: creating a community and climate of learning

LJA administered a parent survey in June of 2023. The Parent Satisfaction survey was completed by 40% of our population. The survey supported the Leadership Team in uncovering interests, needs, and concerns of our families.

- 100% of families shared LJA provides a safe learning environment for their child.
- 94% of families shared that their scholar was excited about their learning.
- When families were asked about their overall level of satisfaction with academics at LJA, 56% of respondents said they were very satisfied, 38% respondents said they were satisfied, and 6% of respondents were dissatisfied.
- 96% of respondents said that their student has received the support needed at school.

LJA also surveys scholars every year during the spring. LJA uses this survey to assess the interests, needs, and concerns of our students. We had a return rate of 76% of students who responded.

Some highlights from the student survey:

- 77% of students were moderately or highly satisfied with the academics at the school
- 83% of students said they received the support they need at school
- 76% teacher gives me assignments that help me better understand the subject
- 92% of students said they know what they are expected to do and learn at LJA

Quotes taken from LJA Families during the 2022-2023 School Year:

"She feels academic success which is due to the incredible understanding, kindness and support of the teachers who work with her and believe in her."

"Our scholar has found success in the classroom. Not just focusing on a "grade" but pushing herself to really understand the context and go deeper into her understanding."

"My scholar's confidence has grown and fears have decreased!!"

"Our scholar loves LJA - she loves her teachers, enjoys her classes, and has made some great friends. We are so grateful for the supportive community at LJA!"

"LJA saved us!!! Thank you!"

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

The mission of *Laura Jeffrey Academy's* authorizer, the Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center, is to instill a connection and commitment to the environment in people of all communities through experiential learning. Osprey Wilds defines environmental education as the implementation of values and strategies that foster learning and create environmentally literate citizens who engage in creating healthy outcomes for individuals, communities, and the Earth. The overarching goal of environmental

education is an environmentally literate citizenry. The test of environmental literacy is the capacity of an individual to work individually and collectively toward sustaining a healthy natural environment. This requires sufficient awareness, knowledge, skills, and attitudes in order to create a healthy planet where all people live in balance with the Earth.

Laura Jeffrey Academy believes that environmental education is a key component in supporting our scholars to be well rounded individuals. Through explorations in our natural world, scholars are meeting and superseding school-wide goals. Scholars are exploring the needs of their community, gathering information from others, and creating change based on what they find. Environmental education through the exploration of our natural world is used as a vehicle to address a variety of issues. These issues range from daily choices on energy use, to evaluating our choices which increases our scholar's outcomes, both academically and socially. Laura Jeffrey Academy strives to give scholars a plethora of opportunities to embody the work they learn about by extending it outside of our school walls. Through experiences scholars are able to see the change they desire for their world. Through the use of their voice and personal experiences, scholars gain the confidence and sense of power to create for their environment and future world.

As LJA scholars embark in environmental learning both in and out of the classroom throughout the year, it starts daily in advisory. All scholars are encouraged to spend time outdoors daily (morning walks, recess, reading outdoors, playing nature sounds when journaling and reading). Advisories work with the staff to plan outdoor field trips and community events, which focus on providing an opportunity for connection with our surroundings and each other.

Scholars in 5/6 really focused on learning about our amazing planet Earth. From studying other planets and moons in the solar system, we learned how special our own planet is in its ability to sustain life. 5th and 6th grade scholars also learned all about the greenhouse effect and the shift in our atmosphere's composition of gasses. By exploring those topics, we learned how human activities are threatening this very special planet we share. Throughout the year, 5th and 6th graders also spent time visiting their own particular trees on the boulevard strip, building relationships with non-human living things as well as measuring seasonal changes. When one tree was marked to be cut down, students were so upset that they reached out to the St Paul Urban Forestry department. A local forester kindly came to speak at the memorial service the students organized. We concluded the year by having students research one way humans are negatively impacting the local environment, and then researching strategies which mitigate this harm. Students shared their findings with each other, presenting on everything from light pollution to school composting systems.

Scholars in 7/8 extended their environmental literacy through cross-curricular explorations in Spanish and Math, along with connecting their personal wellbeing to that of the environment's wellbeing. Scholars were responsible for researching an environmental issue specific to their country of study. They analyzed the cause and effect relationship between humans and their natural environment. These scholars then researched mathematical models to explain the changes in their environmental issue in their country of interest. In Art, scholars researched endangered species and

created artwork around their chosen species. Additionally they created informative documentation explaining what to do to stop or reduce the declination of endangered species, using data to support their claim. Realizing that those in government have the ability to influence environmental policy, in LASS, scholars identified and analyzed the positions of political parties on candidates on issues related to the environment.

Scholars in grades 5-8 all had the opportunity in advisory to take a deeper look at runoff and water pollution from runoff. Scholars engaged in keeping 23 drains around LJA clear, worked on collecting their impact, and leading by example.



Challenges

A challenge LJA ran into this year was tracking data from collaborative parties in a school wide initiative, Storm Drain Clean-Up. Teachers and scholars alike forgot to consistently record our data which skewed our final results in which we were hoping to compare and share our data with the wider community.

GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Board of Directors

The Laura Jeffrey Academy (LJA) Board and staff are well-versed in board governance. All LJA Board members have received training on board governance via MDE standards. Our Board continues to expand their passion for LJA's work by attending events, meeting parents and teachers, and becoming more involved in school activities.

2022-23 Board Roster

Member Name	Board Position	Affiliation	Date Elected	Date Seated	Term End Date	Phone Number	Email Address
Kate Agnew	Chair	Community Member	June 2020	August 2021	June 2023	651-414-6000	katea@laurajeffreyacademy.org
Ann Henderson	Vice Chair	Parent	June 2021	July 2021	June 2024	651-414-6000	annah@laurajeffreyacademy.org
Sean Quinn	Treasurer	Community Member	June 2020	August 2020	June 2023	651-414-6000	seanq@laurajeffreyacademy.org
Paul Regan	Secretary	Parent	June 2021	July 2021	June 2024	651-414-6000	paulr@laurajeffreyacademy.org
Lisa Alter Capell	Member	Parent	June 2021	July 2021	June 2024	651-414-6000	lisaa@laurajeffreyacademy.org
Julie Silvers	Member	Teacher	May 2022	August 2022 August 2021 (appointed to fill vacancy)	June 2025	651-414-6000	julies@laurajeffreyacademy.org
Anna Robinson	Ex-Officio	Leadership Team Member				651-414-6000	annar@laurajeffreyacademy.org

Together, the Board and school leaders have tremendous leadership capacity, stemming from their demonstrated commitment to Laura Jeffrey Academy's mission and vision and from their experience in board governance, fiscal management, education, curriculum and instruction, and school and nonprofit management.

Board Training and Development

Laura Jeffrey Academy - Initial Board Training -- Board's Role and Responsibilities		
Board Member Name	Date	Presenter or Trainer
Anna Robinson	Dec 2016	St Thomas
Kate Agnew	Aug 2020	Osprey Wilds
Sean Quinn	Aug 2020	Osprey Wilds
Lisa Alter Capell	Oct 2020	MACS
Paul Regan	Aug 2021	Osprey Wilds
Ann Henderson	Sept 2021	MACS
Julie Silvers	Feb 2022	Osprey Wilds

Laura Jeffrey Academy - Initial Board Training -- Employment Policies & Practices		
Board Member Name	Date	Presenter or Trainer
Anna Robinson	Dec 2016	St Thomas
Kate Agnew	Aug 2020	Osprey Wilds
Sean Quinn	Aug 2020	Osprey Wilds
Lisa Alter Capell	Oct 2020	MACS
Paul Regan	Aug 2021	Osprey Wilds
Ann Henderson	Sept 2021	MACS
Julie Silvers	Feb 2022	Osprey Wilds

Laura Jeffrey Academy - Initial Board Training -- Financial Management		
Board Member Name	Date	Presenter or Trainer
Anna Robinson	Dec 2016	St Thomas
Kate Agnew	Nov 2020	Robert Procaccini, Dieci Finance
Sean Quinn	Nov 2020	Robert Procaccini, Dieci Finance
Lisa Alter Capell	Dec 2021	Robert Procaccini, Dieci Finance
Paul Regan	Aug 2021	Osprey Wilds
Ann Henderson	Dec 2021	Robert Procaccini, Dieci Finance
Julie Silvers	Dec 2021	Robert Procaccini, Dieci Finance

Ongoing Board Training 2022-2023

Laura Jeffrey Academy - Annual Training -- Financial Management		
Board Member Name	Date	Presenter or Trainer
Kate Agnew	Nov 2022	Robert Procaccini, Dieci Finance
Sean Quinn	Nov 2022	Robert Procaccini, Dieci Finance
Lisa Alter Capel	Nov 2022	Robert Procaccini, Dieci Finance
Paul Regan	Nov 2022	Robert Procaccini, Dieci Finance
Ann Henderson	Nov 2022	Robert Procaccini, Dieci Finance

Educator-Led Staff Structure

Laura Jeffrey Academy uses an educator-led model of leadership. Instead of one principal or director, the school is run by a leadership team of 4-7 individuals with equal power. The leadership team includes active teachers as well as administrative staff members. In addition, all full-time staff members serve on committees that support the coordination of many aspects of the school. These committees are the Curriculum & Instruction Committee, the Family & Community Relations Committee, the School Culture Committee and the Development Committee. This structure ensures that all staff members have a voice in the school community and that the people most affected by any big decisions and those working closest with the students are also the people contributing to the decision-making process.

When staff voices are heard, they are more invested in their curricula, their students, and the success of the school. For a school the size of LJA, it is critically important to have staff who are invested. Because all staff are members of committees that plan events and school-wide initiatives, everyone is aware of needs and steps up to accomplish tasks.

This model is more cost-effective because it prevents excessive spending on administrative overhead. Because LJA has active teachers on the leadership team that makes budgetary decisions, this keeps the focus of the budget on the needs of teachers and students, which creates a better alignment between the school’s finances and its values.

One of the greatest advantages of the educator-led model at LJA is the addition of the staff committees. Being part of a committee helps every full-time staff member feel invested in the LJA community and connect with peers in ways that help the school move forward. Committees provide a clear and equitable avenue for staff voice in decision-making and have brought forth many positive changes, such as teacher-led PLCs, increased awareness of school-wide events and curriculum, and investment in enrollment and recruitment goals.

An educator-led system gives everyone more equal footing than a traditional model. Because of this, the staff at LJA, including the leadership team members themselves, have the freedom to take risks, even if they sometimes fail. They know that they are not expected to be perfect, and that the rest of the staff will support them in reflecting on mistakes and making changes for the future. This is how our culture of innovation is sustained - through many attempts at new ideas and the growth that stems from those outcomes.

Management

The leadership team for the 2022-23 school year consisted of five members, three of whom are active teachers, the dean of students, and LJA’s office administrator.

List of Administrators/Qualifications

Laura Jeffrey Academy's Leadership Team

Anna Robinson - Licensed 5-12 Social Studies Teacher

Eileen Linstrom - Licensed 5-12 Mathematics Teacher

Lizzie Forshee - Licensed 5-12 Life Science Teacher

Lyssa Cook - Office Administrator

Terrence Thigpen - Dean of Students

Major Responsibilities:

Leadership and Strategy

- Responsible for leading LJA in a manner that supports and guides the organization's mission;
- Create a welcoming climate and culture in LJA for all students, including students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and LGBTQ students;
- Work with staff to ensure that the LJA mission is carried out through educational programs and community outreach;
- Maintains high standards and expectations for student conduct and enforces discipline and/or utilizes restorative practices as necessary;
- Responsible for communicating with the Board of Directors and providing all information necessary for the Board to make informed decisions;
- Work with the Board to implement strategic plan for LJA to ensure growth and longevity, including reorganization of LJA's administrative and support roles and workflows;

Operations Management/Supervision

- Supervise day-to-day operations of the school;
- Responsible for securing and maintaining contractual relationships with vendors, including payroll, transportation, food service, and facilities;
- Manage LJA's hiring process; ensure process leads to the hiring and retention of a diverse and quality staff;
- Develop employment policies and procedures;
- Supervise administrative staff;
- Responsible for preparation of annual performance audit;
- Ensure compliance with reporting and other statutory obligations;

Fiscal Management

- Develop annual fiscal budget for Board approval;
- Prepare monthly financial statements that accurately reflect the financial condition of LJA for Board review;
- Make budgetary recommendations to and work with Board of Directors to set economic objectives;

- Develop additional resources to ensure the financial health of the organization;
- Provide financial reports to governmental agencies as mandated by law;
- Arrange for annual audit with an outside independent auditor as required by statute;

Communications and Marketing

- Draft communications to scholars and families on school-wide issues;
- Serve as main point of contact for concerns and questions from scholars' families, and is responsive to parents and community;
- Oversee recruitment and enrollment;
- Responsible for promoting and marketing the school in the community to increase enrollment;
- Responsible for promoting LJA by being active and visible in the community and by developing partnerships with other professional, civic, and private organizations;

Administrative Professional Development Plan for Leadership Team & Implementation

The leadership team continued to use feedback from our staff and students, the performance review from the board of directors, and areas that we identified as a team to be areas of growth to inform our professional development plans. We used various professional development opportunities to increase our awareness, expand our knowledge and develop new skills. Those professional development opportunities are listed below:

Educational Leadership & School Culture

- World Language Education by MDE, 6/24/22
- Professional Learning Communities (PLC) Leadership Workshop by MDE, 8/17/22
- Teacher Powered National Conference by TPS/Education Evolving, 11/5/22 & 11/6/22
- Staff Development: Vision and Purpose in a Minnesota Context by Michael Foster of MDE, 4/27/23
- Planning for New Teacher Orientation by MDE, 6/26/23

Supporting Students and Families / Special Education

- MnMTSS by MDE, multiple dates in 6/22
- Introduction to the HEARTS (Healthy Environments and Response to Trauma in Schools) by MDE, 6/17/22
- Operationalizing Empathy: Learning from the Communities We Serve by Osprey Wilds, 8/18/22
- ADSIS Training: MultiTears of Interventions by MDE, 9/20/22
- ADSIS Conference by MDE, 4/20/23
- Science of Well-Being for Teens by Yale University, 5/23 & 6/23
- Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Literacy by MDE's Compass Literacy Team, 6/15/23

Administrative General

- Teacher Retirement System by MDE, 6/21/22 & 6/27/22
- ERC-Finance by BoxFin, 6/30/22

- District ASsessment Coordinator Training by MDE, 12/14/22
- JMC & Ed-Fi Training by MDE, 3/14/23

STAFFING

Laura Jeffrey Academy’s plan for staffing is to be a #1 employer in Minnesota that includes a competitive salary and benefits package, and a collaborative and engaging workplace. Our goal is to maintain highly qualified, passionate leaders who are aligned with our mission and contribute to the growth of all students.

LJA provided ongoing professional development in academic, discipline, and social/emotional areas. Additionally, our professional development is supplemented by all-staff and smaller group meetings to delve more deeply into each topic, allowing the voices of our community and staff to deepen our understanding of multiple perspectives.

Our inclusive model of Special Education provides a number of educational support in all classrooms. This model fits with our overall mission and vision for ensuring that all students have access to a rich and rigorous curriculum. You will find multiple adults in classrooms, understanding the needs of each individual student and supporting both academically and behaviorally.

2022-2023 Licensed Teaching Staff

<i>Name</i>	<i>File #</i>	<i>License /Assignment</i>	<i>2023-24 Status*</i>
<i>Nate Moore</i>	<i>492487</i>	<i>Special Education</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Eileen Lindstrom</i>	<i>483404</i>	<i>Mathematics</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Emily Boettege</i>	<i>357660</i>	<i>Literacy Specialist</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Katherine Kirschmann</i>	<i>514607</i>	<i>General Music</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Lizbeth Rosas</i>	<i>1011761</i>	<i>Art</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Sarah Storla</i>	<i>1012773</i>	<i>Mathematics/Physical Education</i>	<i>NR</i>
<i>Elizabeth Forshee</i>	<i>440010</i>	<i>Science</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Cecelia Watkins</i>	<i>517654</i>	<i>Science/Elementary Ed</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Anna Robinson</i>	<i>403851</i>	<i>Social Studies</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Julie Stewart</i>	<i>394253</i>	<i>Special Education</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Anna Marie Rutz</i>	<i>1002052</i>	<i>Special Education</i>	<i>R</i>

* R = Return, NR = Not Return, C = Changed Roles

2022-23 Teacher and Educational Assistant Professional Development Activities

Laura Jeffrey Academy staff is a community of lifelong learners dedicated to ongoing learning and professional development. LJA staff received training in the following areas during our initial professional development days: LJA’s girl and STEM focus & LJA principles; Understanding by Design; Grading at LJA; True Colors Personality Inventory; Tiered Interventions & Generalized Disability along with a Deep Dive into Best Practices in Special Education; Co-Teaching Models, Approaches to Student Behavior and Mandated Reporting.

Additionally, all LJA staff participated in Storm Drain Clean-Up sessions to kick off the school year. LJA continues to grow our relationship with the natural environment and dedicated space and time to review onsite and local water pollution that was then tracked by scholars.

As we welcomed an EL scholar into our community, LJA staff received professional development on supporting EL scholars in their classrooms.

An important part of professional development for teachers is their weekly Professional Learning Community meetings in which teachers address problems of practice, including but not limited to developing quality assessments and measures of student outcomes. PLCs also have a year-long focus on high leverage instructional strategies which this year focused on distance learning strategies.

2022-23 Licensed Non-Teaching Staff

<i>Name</i>	<i>File #</i>	<i>License /Assignment</i>	<i>2023-24 Status*</i>
<i>Maddi McDonell</i>	<i>507391</i>	<i>School Social Worker</i>	<i>R</i>

* R = Return, NR = Not Return, C = Changed Roles

2022-23 Non-Licensed Staff

<i>Name</i>	<i>Assignment</i>	<i>2023-24 Status*</i>
<i>Emma Welter</i>	<i>Math Interventionist</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Bryna Bostic-Rucker</i>	<i>Special Education Education Assistant</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Rory Fields</i>	<i>Special Education Education Assistant</i>	<i>NR</i>
<i>Lyssa Cook</i>	<i>Office Manager</i>	<i>R</i>

<i>Terrence Thigpen</i>	<i>Dean of Students</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Taylor Heitman</i>	<i>Special Education Educational Assistant</i>	<i>NR</i>
<i>Kimberly Alquicira</i>	<i>Spanish</i>	<i>NR</i>
<i>Yue PhengXiong</i>	<i>Special Education Educational Assistant</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Deon Lara</i>	<i>Special Education Educational Assistant</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Deonte Roberts</i>	<i>Special Education Educational Assistant</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Mellie Ernst</i>	<i>Special Education Educational Assistant</i>	<i>R</i>

** R = Return, NR = Not Return, C = Changed Roles*

Teacher Retention:

We have a large cohort of experienced teachers who are dedicated to the LJA mission. One of our reasons for transitioning to an educator-led model was to improve retention of these hard-working, talented teachers by providing opportunities for their voice to be heard and for them to further develop and use their leadership skills. Retention rates have improved since our switch to becoming an educator-led school. Of the positions offered for the 2023-24 school year, two staff members did not renew their work agreement. One position was not accepted as the educator was looking to reduce their work hours, and the second educator is going back to school to pursue their masters full-time. Two staff members did leave LJA during the school year both due to personal reasons.

<i>Percentage of Licensed Teachers returning for the 2023-2024 school year</i>	<i>92%</i>
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Special Education:

We have the following related service providers:

- o Lakisha Witter, Special Education Director, contracted through HOPE International
- o Melissa Londono-OT, contracted with On the Move Therapy Services
- o Laura Jenson, School Psychologist, Pediatric Psych Services
- o Kelly Barbes-Speech/Language, who is contract through By Word of Mouth
- o Carly Smitkowski, school nurse, who is contract through Hennepin County Medical

The providers set their own schedule around the designated IEP needs. They have a space in the building to do their service and students rotate in to them.

OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Laura Jeffrey Academy continues to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the Osprey Wilds charter contract, including, but not limited to the following:

Transportation

Laura Jeffrey Academy provides school busing to students within the St. Paul boundaries, as long as they live more than 1 mile from the school. Laura Jeffrey Academy partners with St. Paul Public School for transportation and shares buses with Hidden River Middle School students. Additionally, public transportation tokens are provided to those who express a financial need for assistance. We arrange door to door transportation for SPED scholars who have that accommodation written into their IEPs. Costs for this are reimbursed by the state.

Health and Safety

Laura Jeffrey Academy tracks and monitors health histories, concerns and incidents. A contracted school nurse is responsible for reporting health records of each student. Students that need to take medicine during the school day are asked to provide a doctor's note and have the medicine in the original pharmacy container. Medicine is stored in a locked cabinet in the school office and administered as directed by office staff. Each time a medicine is administered the name of the medication, the time, and the dose given is logged by the administering staff member. A vision and hearing screening are offered to grades 5 and 6 once per year in the fall of the school year. Some students require daily/weekly support for medical plans and these are carried out by the health assistants in the office and supervised by the contracted school nurse. Incident record histories are created and filed with each occurrence within our student data system. Safety drill procedures are practiced throughout the year in regard to fire, bus, lockdowns, and severe weather.

During the COVID 19 pandemic, LJA was able to support all staff members in getting vaccinated and boosted. All staff and students were offered COVID-19 rapid tests for at-home use when requested.

Food Service

Staff is trained on food safety and follows guidelines as set forth by the City of St. Paul Food Inspector and MDE. Breakfast and lunch are provided and available to all students.

Hiring Practices

All teachers must have a current license in the State of Minnesota within the subject matter they are hired to teach. The process of hiring begins by publicly posting the job description in multiple places including, but not limited to, LJA's website, EdPost, Indeed, Teacher Powered Schools and Minnesota Association of Charter Schools. Once a sufficient number of applicants have submitted the required resume, references and cover letter, the Leadership Team creates a team to interview the applicants.

These applicants interview with a team relevant to the respective position. Background checks are done on all new staff, board members, and volunteers who work with students.

DUE PROCESS - student discipline data

Expulsion: 0

Out of School Suspension: 0

During the 2022-23 school year, there were 0 total OSS instances:

0 one-day OSS incidents, 0 two-day incidents, and 0 three-day OSS incidents.

This accounted for a total of 0 students receiving OSS during the year.

There were zero out of school suspensions (OSS) during the 2022/23 school year, which is the same as the OSS from the previous school year.

In School Suspension: 0

In the 2022-2023 school year there were 0 instances of ISS, which is the same number from the previous year.

The total number of suspensions (including in and out of school) has remained 0 since the 2019-2020 school year. The rate of 0% indicates success in our Restorative Practices approach, which has helped us be proactive rather than reactive in regards to behavior, and focused our efforts to resolve discipline issues without resorting to punitive measures when possible. LJA has worked to redefine and understand what student behaviors are, as well as what our responses to them are. We recognize that responding with punitive measures to student behavior does not result in students learning desired outcomes. Lastly, this continued decline can be attributed to our focus on student needs and relationship building.

Due Process Data for 2022-2023

The LJA student incident trend has remained the same, as in we did not have any reported discipline incidents. As we speculate about what this could be contributed to, we believe it is due to our ongoing focus on students' needs, and structures that foster the development and strengthening of relationships between students and staff. We also continue to refresh returning teachers and train new staff on needs based approaches to discipline by discussing the overall needs of scholars. Our goal has always been to support student socio/emotional/behavioral skill development while also treating scholars as individuals and creating plans with families to best support each child. LJA additionally continued implementing Restorative Practices to address scholar behaviors. We provided ongoing staff support to ensure fidelity to this framework throughout the school year.

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the charter contract relating to:

- o relevant compliance and reporting requirements to the authorizer, state education agency, and/or federal authorities, including but not limited to:

- * State reporting and applications, including but not limited to: MARSS, STARS, UFARS, EDRS, Q Comp, DIRS, lease aid;
- * TRA/PERA;
- * School website is compliant with statutory and authorizer expectations;
- * Insurance coverage;
- o the school facilities, grounds and transportation, including but not limited to:
 - * Fire inspections and related records;
 - * Viable certificate of occupancy or other required building use authorization;
 - * physical space provides a safe, positive learning environment for students;
 - * appropriate and safe student transportation practices;
 - * health and safety, including but not limited to:
 - Nursing services and dispensing of pharmaceuticals;
 - Food service;
 - Emergency management plan;
- o admission and enrollment rights of students, including but not limited to policies and practices related to admissions, lottery, waiting lists, fair and open recruitment;
- o due process and privacy rights of students, including but not limited to:
 - * Due process protections, privacy, civil rights and students liberties requirements, including First Amendment protections and the Establishment Clause restrictions prohibiting public schools from engaging in religious instruction;
 - * Conduct of discipline pursuant to the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act;
 - * Maintain the security of and provide access to students records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and other applicable authorities;
 - * Transfer of student records;
- o employment including transparent hiring, evaluation and dismissal policies and practices;
- o required background checks for all school employees

FINANCES

Questions regarding school finances for 2022-23 and/or an organizational budget for 2023-24 contact the Leadership Team, 651-414-6000, leadershipteam@laurajeffreyacademy.org.

Financials were provided by Dieci School Finance.

Contact: Robert Procaccini, President and Financial

Manager Phone: 651-251-6983

Email: robert@diecifs.com

Information presented below is derived from preliminary audit figures. The full financial audit will be completed and presented to the Minnesota Department of Education and Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center no later than December 31, 2022.

<i>2022-2023 Finances</i>	<i>Fund 1</i>	<i>Fund 2</i>
<i>Total Revenues</i>	\$1,504,681	\$73,408
<i>Total Expenditures</i>	\$1,767,529	\$46,857
<i>Total Board Assigned Expenditures</i>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<i>Net Income</i>	(\$262,848)	\$26,551
<i>Total Fund Balance</i>	\$388,728	\$50,076

Overview

In FY23, LJA utilized their excess fund balance to invest in marketing to continue to grow LJA's student population, due to this LJA's Fund Balance decreased. It decreased from \$651,576.36 in FY22 to \$388,728.48 in FY23.

Revenues

The school's main sources of income are from state aid relating to ADM, special education funding, federal grants, as well as local grants and donations from the community. LJA is also accessing ESSER II and ESSER III funding to support the needs of our scholars and staff during the ongoing pandemic.

Expenses

The main expenditures the school incurs are related to staffing/benefits, facility rental, and expenses to serve their special education population. The school is a STEM school and tries to spend as much money on related expenditures as the budget allows.

Net Income and Fund Balance

In FY24, the school is projected to have a negative net income of \$16,709 due to continued marketing efforts and utilization of the fund balance. The school's estimated FY24 unrestricted fund balance is \$328,907 which is estimated to be 18.2%.

World's Best Workforce Annual Budget

The school continues to improve their STEM program by working with partners within the community and maintaining a strong curriculum. The school's budget continues to include expenditures to meet student needs with a focus on academics.

FUTURE PLANS

Enrollment & Marketing

As part of our ongoing strategic plan, the board & leadership team continued to work together to devise strategies for increasing enrollment. In order to meet budget numbers, we need to stabilize and begin to incrementally increase our enrollment. After temporarily shifting priorities brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, LJA reignited enrollment and marketing efforts during the 2021-22 school year by seeking out the expertise of CEL marketing firm. This work continued throughout the 2022-23 school year.

CEL worked to develop branding, revise website content, engage in search engine optimization and increase LJA's social media presence along with supporting LJA staff in lead management and workflow. Through this collaboration, LJA was able to increase enrollment for the 2022-23 school year and projections for the 2023-24 continue to increase.

LJA will continue this partnership with CEL to continue the momentum and train LJA to take on additional pieces of lead management and marketing.