

Minnesota Transitions Charter Schools Annual Report for School Year 2024-2025

(completed fall of 2025)



Each school year Minnesota Transitions Charter Schools (MTCS) develops an Annual Report in conjunction with the Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness (CACR). The Annual Report and the CACR Report are presented in an annual public meeting with stakeholders and posted on the district website for public view. The information presented is focused on the progress made on strategies and initiatives that MTCS has engaged in for the 2024-2025 school year.

The K-12 academic community of MTCS is the largest group of charter schools in the state of Minnesota. Opened in 1995, it is a tuition-free, public school with 9 school options that serve students in the Twin Cities metro area through our 5 brick and mortar school sites, as well as greater Minnesota through our 4 online options. The district office is located at 2872 26th Ave South Minneapolis, MN 55406. www.mtcs.org 612-722-9013

School Sites

School Name	Director/Principal	Grades Served
Banaadir Elementary	Kelly Nyberg	K-5
Banaadir Academy	Andrea Miller/Mahad Mohamed	6-12
MTS Elementary	Nick Sofio	K-6
MTS High School	Niffy Reiling	7-12
P.E.A.S.E Academy	Michael Durschlag	9-12
MN Virtual High School	Bill Glenz	6-12
MN Virtual Elementary	Alyssa Scherkenbach	K-5
MN Connections Academy Elementary	Brad Swanson	K-6
MN Connections Academy Secondary	Brad Swanson	7-12

Mission and Core Values

We are a student-centered learning community that inspires and supports all learners to achieve excellence through equitable, relevant learning experiences.

<u>Be Respectful</u> -Show consideration for self, others and property <u>Be Responsible</u> -Carry out obligations in a dependable manner -Acknowledge the consequences and rewards of one's choices -Contribute to society <u>Have Compassion for Others</u> -Show empathy, generosity, kindness, patience and sensitivity	<u>Have Integrity</u> -Display honesty, perseverance, confidence and pride -Show the courage of your convictions -Be trustworthy <u>Appreciate and Celebrate Diversity</u> -Recognize and honor the dignity of each individual -Celebrate differences among culture, gender and ability -Work cooperatively with others and resolve conflicts
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Authorizer Information

Pillsbury United Communities – Office of Public Charter Schools (PUC-OPCS) authorizes and oversees charter schools that boldly engage and affirm all students in innovative, challenging, authentic, relevant and equitable learning opportunities. Pillsbury United's primary role as an authorizer is to hold schools accountable for their performance, in accordance with their charter school contract.

Pillsbury United Companies (PUC) -Office of Public Charter School 1701 Oak Park Ave North Minneapolis, MN 55411
612-302-3425

Charter School Purpose

Minnesota Transitions Charter Schools seeks to provide diverse, innovative learning opportunities that empower all students to reach their full potential. Students engage in hands-on experiences inspired by science, technology, engineering, and math. The blended learning model combines online digital media with traditional classroom instruction, allowing students flexibility and choice in their learning path, pace, time, and place. Leadership development is fostered through the JROTC program, available to middle and high school students, which builds character and leadership skills. For students seeking flexible, individualized options, the full-time online program supports academic success and graduation. The Careers and Work Experience Program connects classroom learning with real-world applications, preparing students for employment, college, and post-secondary training. Additionally, the Digital Music Program offers students creative opportunities to compose, record, and collaborate using professional studio equipment, fostering both technical and artistic growth.

Student Enrollment and Demographics

Enrollment, Ethnicity, and Subgroups - reported on Oct 1, 2024 (MARSS for SY 2024-2025)

Enrollment	MTCS District	Banaadir Elem	MN Virtual Elem	Banaadir Academy	MN Virtual 6-12	MTS Elem	MTS High	P.E.A.S.E	MN Connections Academy K-6	MN Connections Academy 7-12
Oct 1, 2024	5682	149	29	125	561	85	158	22	1017	3536
Oct 1, 2023	4943	128	N/A	112	483	89	139	21	911	3021
Oct 1, 2022	4879	128	N/A	95	446	87	176	18	990	2889
Student Attrition		1.5%								

Ethnicity	Total	Hisp	Amer Ind	Asian	Black	Pac Islander	White	2 or more races	Other Indigenous Peoples
MTCS District	5682	500	329	109	988	13	3399	340	4
Banaadir Elem	149	2	1	0	142	1	2	1	0
Banaadir Academy	125	0	0	0	124	0	0	1	0
MN Virtual 6-12	561	61	37	11	89	1	333	29	0
MTS Elem	85	7	9	0	54	0	9	6	0
MTS High	158	38	28	0	65	0	16	11	0
P.E.A.S.E.	22	1	0	1	1	0	18	1	0
MN Virtual Elem	29	5	1	0	12	0	10	1	0
MN Connections K-6	1017	82	71	31	154	3	586	88	2
MN Connections 7-12	3536	304	182	66	347	8	2425	202	2

Subgroups	MTCS District	Banaadir Elem	MN Virtual Elem	Banaadir Academy	MN Virtual High school	MTS Elementary	MTS High	P.E.A.S.E	MN Connections K-6	MN Connections 7-12
English Learners	334	97	0	74	13	8	21	1	38	82
SPED	1229	10	0	12	156	19	50	5	225	752
Free/ Reduced	3845	>90%	23	>90%	347	>90%	>90%	9	733	2240
Homeless	167	0	6	NR	36	21	28	NR	16	55

Governance and Management

MTCS Board of Director Members

Board Member	Seat	Term Expires	Email
Matt Edgar	Chair	2027	medgar@emailmtcs.org
Alex DeGroot	Vice Chair	2028	adegroot@emailmtcs.org
Nikki Reinardy	Secretary/Treasurer	2027	nreinardy@emailmtcs.org
Arianna Edington	Teacher	2028	aedington@emailmtcs.org
Tyler Frankhouse	Community Member	2026	tfrankhouse@emailmtcs.org
Zahra Farah	Teacher	2026	zfarah@emailmtcs.org
Jynaya Jackson	Parent	2027	jjackson@emailmtcs.org
Belle Thompson	Parent	2028	bthompson@emailmtcs.org
Sam Trojan	Teacher	2026	strojan@emailmtcs.org

Election Process for Board Members can be found [here](#)

Board Training: Our school board participates in ongoing training to ensure strong governance and compliance with state and federal requirements. Board members receive regular guidance from the district's attorney on data privacy laws, ensuring that student and staff information is protected in accordance with legal standards. In addition, several members attend the annual Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) training, which provides professional development on effective school board leadership, policy, and educational best practices.

Annual Board Evaluation

The school board completed a board self evaluation review with MSBA on June 13th, 2024. After the self evaluation, the following information was discovered; The school board demonstrates a strong commitment to ethical governance, transparency, and collaboration through clearly defined processes and ongoing professional growth. The board follows structured procedures for gathering input and data before making critical decisions, ensuring open communication, shared access to information, and collaboration with the superintendent. Annual self-assessments, goal setting, and adherence to written communication protocols reinforce accountability and professionalism. The board also emphasizes regular policy reviews, mentorship for new members, and participation in regional and state-level learning opportunities. The board ensures that all decisions align with the district's strategic plan and goals. The board supports hiring and retaining highly qualified staff, evaluates policies related to student success and staff development, and encourages community engagement in curriculum and budget decisions. Accountability focuses on monitoring progress toward strategic goals, recognizing school achievements, evaluating the superintendent, and using data to address achievement gaps through an equity lens. Finally, Advocacy and Communication highlights the importance of unified messaging, cultural responsiveness, and clear processes for stakeholder communication. The board works as "One Voice," ensuring consistency, transparency, and trust while advocating for students and maintaining strong connections with the community.

Leadership Professional Development

Superintendent Shawn Fondow has actively pursued a wide range of professional development to strengthen leadership, instructional practices, and district governance. This includes participation in MDE COMPASS training, Chisago Lakes Science of Reading training, and charter leader development focused on principal evaluation. Governance and leadership skills were enhanced through school board training covering roles and responsibilities, bylaws, transparency, accountability, open meeting law, data practices, and school finance, along with strategies for fostering a culture of belonging. Compliance and safety were addressed through sessions on bloodborne pathogens, mandated reporter training, school law, workplace harassment and discrimination prevention, and the MN School Safety Conference. Culturally responsive practices and equity initiatives were explored through training on observation frameworks, Native education advocacy, American Indian language and culture licensure, and Native Voices for PBIS. The superintendent also engaged in multiple Gender Neutral Restroom Cohort sessions and Title IX guidance, reflecting a commitment to inclusive, safe, and effective district leadership.

Staffing

Our district is committed to creating an inclusive and effective learning environment for every student. We prioritize maintaining small class sizes to ensure individualized attention and strong student–teacher connections. We also believe that students benefit from seeing themselves reflected in their educators, so we actively seek to employ staff who represent the diversity of our student population. In addition, we ensure that all staff are highly qualified, properly licensed, and receive ongoing training to provide the highest quality instruction and support for our learners.

	Teachers	Administrators	Other Licensed Professionals	Paraprofessionals	Other Non-Licensed Staff
Count	205	15.7	41.5	35.6	56.3
Percent	57.9%	4.4%	11.7%	10%	15.9%

	Tier 4	Tier 3	Tier 2	Tier 1
Count	155	48	12	10
Percent	68.9%	21.3%	5.3%	4.4%

MTCS has 24 students per licensed teacher, 22 students per licensed teacher/ support staff and 19 students to all licensed staff.

[List of all MTCS Staff and their License #](#)

Finances

Minnesota Transitions Charter School continues to demonstrate strong fiscal health and responsible financial management. While the authorizer, PUC, encourages schools to maintain a 12–15% fund balance, MTCS exceeded that goal with a 21.54% fund balance in FY24 and is currently projected to reach approximately 23.3% in FY25, adding an estimated \$1.3 million. Although the district strategically planned to spend down about \$500,000 of the fund balance in FY25 to invest in program growth, particularly within its Virtual program, projections indicate continued positive growth even after these investments. Over the past five years, MTCS's fund balance has grown substantially from \$643,730 in FY20 to a projected \$15.5 million in FY25. Despite ongoing funding challenges compared to traditional K–12 districts, MTCS remains committed to using its resources creatively to attract and retain quality staff. If enrollment trends plateau or decline in certain programs, the district may consolidate programs or schools to maximize resources and reinvest in thriving programs and staff development.

Director of Finance-Scott Marine with School Management Services

Student Learning Data

Fastbridge (Local Standardized Assessment)

Based on the FastBridge reading results, students across MTCS demonstrated notable growth from fall to spring. In Early Reading (K–1), the percentage of students at low risk increased from 32% to 44%, while those at high risk decreased from 46% to 34%. Growth data show that 66% of students achieved typical or aggressive progress. In aReading (grades 2–12), the proportion of students scoring at the advanced level grew from 16% to 22%, and 64.6% of students demonstrated typical or aggressive growth, indicating strong academic progress. For Auto Reading (grades 4–12), 51% of students achieved typical or aggressive growth, though the percentage of high-risk readers rose slightly from 25% to 32%. Overall, the data suggest meaningful reading gains across most grade levels, particularly in early literacy and comprehension growth.

Based on the FastBridge math results, students across MTCS demonstrated steady growth from fall to spring. In Early Math (K–1), the percentage of students at low risk remained strong at 49%, while those at high risk rose slightly from 20% to 24%. Growth data show that two-thirds (67%) of students made typical or aggressive progress, reflecting solid gains in foundational math skills. In aMath (grades 2–12), the percentage of advanced students increased from 13% to 18%, and over half (56%) demonstrated typical growth, signaling steady progress in math comprehension. Although the proportion of high-risk students held steady at 28%, the data suggest many students moved upward within their performance levels. For CBM Math Automaticity (grades 2–12), 40% of students showed typical growth, and 12% achieved aggressive growth, though there was an increase in students identified as high or some risk. Overall, the results indicate continued math growth across the district, particularly in conceptual understanding and application, with room for improvement in fluency and automaticity.

Pillsbury United Community Authorizer Goals

During the 2024–2025 school year, MTCS demonstrated measurable academic progress across its schools, with most sites meeting or exceeding goals in both reading and math. In reading, the majority of schools, including Banaadir Elementary and Secondary, MTS Secondary, MN Virtual 6–12, and Connections K–12, met their targets, while P.E.A.S.E. Academy exceeded expectations with 80% of students performing at low-risk or advanced levels. Although overall reading performance improved, MTS Elementary and MN Virtual K–5 fell short of their goals, highlighting the need for continued focus on early literacy instruction and targeted interventions. Math results were particularly strong across the district, with Banaadir Elementary, Banaadir Secondary, MTS Secondary, P.E.A.S.E. Academy, and MN Virtual K–5 meeting expectations, and MN Virtual 6–12 and Connections K–12 exceeding them. Virtual programs showed notable gains in mathematical understanding and application, demonstrating the effectiveness of blended and online instructional strategies. Overall, the district's academic outcomes reflect strong progress, particularly in math achievement, while emphasizing the importance of continued investment in early literacy instruction to ensure balanced growth across all grade levels.

Full goal reporting document found [here](#)

Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness (CACR) Goals: (Percent met in indicated in red)

Goal #1 - READING -The percentage of students in the ethnic subgroups who meet or exceed on the Reading MCA will increase based on the following targets for each subgroup.

Black: 30% to 31% **23.7%**
Hispanic: 30.6% to 32% **33.2%**
American Indian: 32.1% to 33% **22.9%**
Asian: 31% to 32% **40%**
White: 40.4% to 42% **37%**
Two or More Races: 41.3% to 43% **39.3%**

Goal #2 - MATHEMATICS -The percentage of students in the ethnic subgroups who meet or exceed on the Mathematics MCA will increase based on the following targets for each subgroup.

- Black: 7.9% to 9% **9.6%**
- Hispanic: 10.7% to 12% **9.6%**
- American Indian: 10.6% to 12% **5.6%**
- Asian: 18.6% to 20% **22.2%**
- White: 16% to 17% **14.9%**
- Two: 13% to 14% **14.5%**

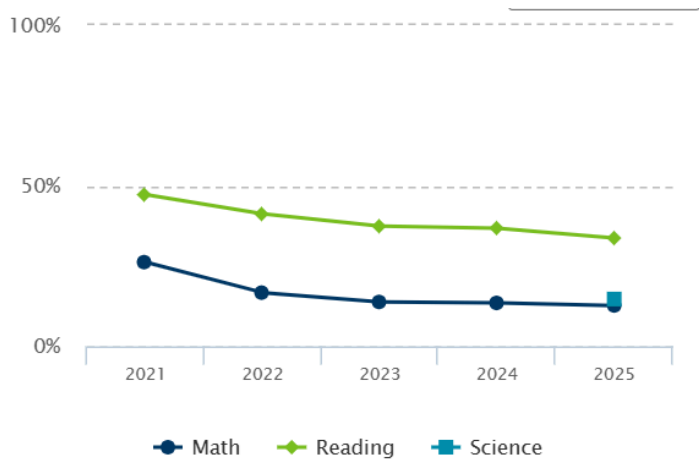
Goal #3 - All Students Ready for School: By September 30, 2024 all seat based elementary schools (Banaadir Elementary, and MTS Elem) will have 90% or greater of their Kindergarten students enrolled on the first day of school be screened by the end of the first month of school. **96%**

Goal # 4 - All Students are Ready for College and Career: The percentage of MTCS students who are eligible to graduate in SY 2023-2024 will have completed a career and college readiness course either in a seat-based format or online through MN Virtual School by June 30, 2025. 100%

Goal # 5 - All Students Graduate: The MTCS 4-year graduation goal for the district will be 65.8% with no subgroup below 50.0% as measured by the MN 4-year graduation rates. 61.5%
American Indian- 35.1%
Asian 55.6%
Black 56.8%
Hispanic 44.8%
White 66.7%
2 or more races 52.8%

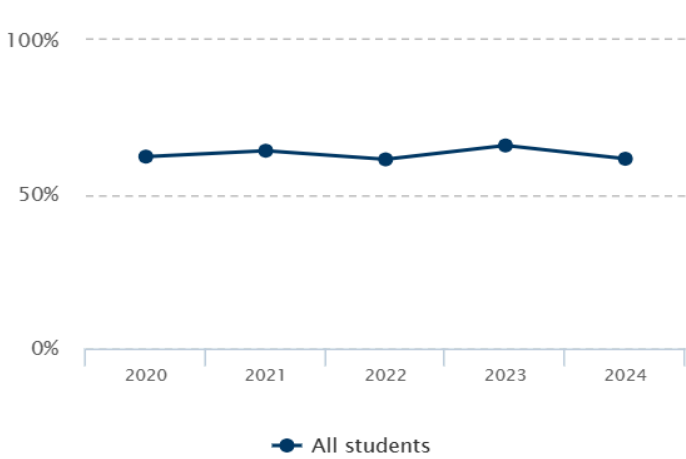
Goal # 6-All students are prepared to be lifelong learners: By the end of the school year, the percentage of MTCS students who consistently attend school according to the Northstar Consistent Attendance benchmark will increase from 81.2% to 82%. 68.7%

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) District Wide



Subject	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Math	26.2% (274)	16.7% (346)	13.8% (279)	13.5% (278)	12.7% (292)
Reading	47.2% (494)	41.2% (855)	37.4% (753)	36.8% (726)	33.7% (760)
Science	N/A (N/A)	N/A (N/A)	N/A (N/A)	N/A (N/A)	14.7% (191)

Graduation Rate District Wide



Demographic	Year	Graduated count	Graduated %
All students	2020	398	62.2%
All students	2021	470	64.1%
All students	2022	457	61.3%
All students	2023	570	65.8%
All students	2024	598	61.5%

The district-wide data from the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) and graduation rates show both areas of progress and ongoing challenges. MCA results indicate a gradual decline in math proficiency from 26.2% in 2021 to 12.7% in 2025, while reading scores have remained relatively stable, ranging from 41.2% in 2022 to 33.7% in 2025. Science assessments, introduced in 2025, show 14.7% proficiency. Graduation rates have fluctuated slightly over the past five years, ranging from 61.3% to 65.8%, with the most recent rate in 2024 at 61.5%. These trends highlight the need for continued focus on strengthening core academic instruction, particularly in math, and providing targeted support to improve student achievement and graduation outcomes district-wide.

Professional Development

MTCS supports teacher growth and instructional excellence by providing structured professional development days that also foster collaboration across grade levels and content areas. These days are intentionally designed to give teachers meaningful opportunities to learn together, share expertise, and apply new strategies that enhance classroom instruction. During each professional learning day, staff can choose from a variety of sessions led by outside consultants, district administrators, or fellow educators, allowing them to focus on the topics most relevant to their professional goals and student needs. These sessions also provide opportunities for teachers to review results from district-wide common assessments, discuss strategies that are proving successful in some classrooms, and determine how those strategies can be adapted and implemented in their own teaching. This flexible, teacher-centered approach ensures that professional learning is both engaging and practical, while promoting a strong culture of collaboration and continuous improvement across the district.

Equitable Learning

At MTCS, we believe that building an equitable and inclusive environment begins with professional development that strengthens our staff in cultural competency, trauma-informed practices, and inclusive teaching strategies. We ensure equity in hiring by recruiting diverse candidates, auditing for bias, and upholding fair policies. We also partner closely with families, including those of English language learners, to make sure every student receives the support they need to thrive academically and socially.

Students are offered a wide variety of extracurricular opportunities that support both academic and personal growth. Offerings include seasonal sports and numerous clubs such as Anime Club, Arts & Crafts Club, Book/Reading Club, Cosplay Club, Pet Club, Dungeons & Dragons Club, E-Sports Club, Fitness and Wellness Club, Food/Cooking Club, Gender and Sexuality Alliance Club, Mindfulness Club, Money Club, Music Club, Neurodiverse/Neurospicy Club, Sports Club, Student Parents Club, Students for a Sustainable Future Club, Theater Club, Writer's Club, and Gardening Club. These experiences provide multiple ways for students to engage, lead, and express themselves, fostering inclusion, belonging, and equitable learning. Educational experiences such as Fall and Winter Camp trips and participation in the Archery National Competition further allow students to apply skills in real-world settings and recognize diverse strengths.

Our inclusive classrooms celebrate student diversity, race, language, culture, abilities, and learning styles, viewing these differences as strengths that enrich learning. We provide resources and personalized learning plans to address challenges like poverty and food insecurity, ensuring every student has equal access and opportunity. Flexible class options, an inclusive curriculum, and varied teaching methods support student success while creating classrooms where every student feels valued and heard.

Instruction is interactive, personalized, and flexible. Teachers use educational technology such as PearDeck, WeWillWrite, and Gimkit to create dynamic lessons. Project-based learning, including media literacy and research projects, allows students to explore real-world topics and develop critical thinking. Collaboration among staff ensures alignment across subjects, while school-wide initiatives such as spelling bees and academic competitions promote engagement. Lessons are adaptable through translation options, varied pacing, and multiple ways to demonstrate mastery. Smaller class sizes and data-informed instruction from tools like IXL and FastBridge allow teachers to meet individual needs. Student voice and choice are embedded throughout instruction, empowering learners to connect learning to their experiences and demonstrate mastery in meaningful ways.

Future Plans

The MTCS Strategic Plan provides a roadmap to promote equity, student achievement, staff growth, and family engagement. Built with input from staff, students, and families, it focuses on five key areas: Equity, Student Achievement, Student Support, Staff Support, and Family Partnership.

Key District Goals:

- Maintain and improve school facilities.
- Enhance teacher observations and support through coaching and mentorship.
- Expand communication channels and strengthen culture and climate.
- Promote diversity in leadership and create "Grow Your Own" pathways for staff.
- Increase extracurricular opportunities based on student interest.

Key Building Goals:

- Revitalize libraries and classroom resources.
- Strengthen college and career readiness through curriculum, field trips, and guest speakers.
- Use data-driven instruction to guide teaching practices.
- Develop academic skill-building programs and student leadership opportunities.

Organizational Goals:

- Increase parent engagement through planned events and liaison partnerships.
- Align professional development with district priorities and staff growth.

Progress toward these goals has been achieved through the work of the Superintendent and his leadership team/cabinet members. MTCS Operations Cabinet, which meets bi-monthly to discuss building improvements and operational enhancements. Key accomplishments include hiring additional maintenance staff, establishing a mentor program for teachers, improving communication with parents and families via apps, expanding extracurricular activities and clubs, including sports, arts, and student interest groups, with support from an activities director, hiring a librarian to revamp library spaces, implementing college and career readiness programs at secondary sites, using data-driven discussions in both director cabinet meetings and teacher professional development, increasing parent engagement opportunities, and providing additional professional development for staff based on choice.

This plan continues to guide MTCS in fostering an inclusive, high-achieving educational environment and will be reviewed in the 2026–2027 school year to establish updated goals.

Click here to view the MTCS Strategic Plan- [Strategic Plan](#)