



Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado

New Charter School Application

Colorado Charter Schools Institute

March 2023

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Application Checklist

Application Components		Applicant Check	Reviewer Check
Letter of Intent		x	
New School Application Narrative Items to be completed that are found within the New School Application Narrative	New School Application Assurances	x	
	Geographic District Board Resolution	x	
	Executive Summary	x	
	A. Vision and Mission	x	
	B. Evidence of Need, Support, and Involvement	x	
	C. School Culture	x	
	D. Education Program	x	
	E. Student Services	x	
	F. Goals, Objectives, and Pupil Evaluation	x	
	G. Budget & Finance	x	
	H. Governance & Leadership	x	
	I. Operations	x	
Required Attachments Items to be completed that require the applicant to create separate attachments	Notice to Geographic District <i>if applicable</i>	x	
	Geographic District Board Resolution <i>if applicable</i>	x	
	B LOI Form	x	
	B Letters of Support	x	
	D Curriculum Development / Alignment <i>if applicable</i>	x	
	D Organizational Chart	x	
	D Staff Evaluation Process	x	
	D School Calendar	x	
	D Student Schedule	x	
	E Service Provider Agreements <i>if applicable</i> [found as G_TWF Service Agreement Template]	x	
	G CSI Budget Template [found as a google sheet file HERE]	x	
	H Resumes of Board Members	x	
	H Board Member Agreement	x	
	H Board Bylaws	x	
	H Articles of Incorporation	x	
	H School Leader Resume <i>if applicable</i>	x	
	I Enrollment Policy	x	
	I Discipline Policy [found as C_Discipline Policy]	x	
	I Employment Policy	x	
	I Grievance Policy	x	
	I CSI Waiver Request Template	x	
	Preschool Addendum <i>if applicable</i>	x	
Electronic copy of entire application [folder linked HERE]		x	

Letter of Intent

February 17, 2023

Dear Terry Croy-Lewis,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado (WMPSC), I am thrilled to submit our Letter of Intent to Colorado Charter Schools Institute, to apply for a charter in the D51 Geographic District. Please find the required information below, per the CSI Letter of Intent template.

In partnership,



Hannah Ewert-Krocker
Interim Shared Services Partner, WMPSC

Primary Contact for Application

Full Legal Name: Hannah Ewert-Krocker

Proposed Role at the School (if any): N/A

Email Address: info@wfcopublicschools.org

Phone Number: 562.343.0473

Mailing Address: 5167 Clay St, Denver, CO 80221

Proposed School Information

School Name: Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado

Educational Model (e.g., Core Knowledge, Montessori, etc.): Montessori

Geographic District (i.e. the school district in which the proposed school will be located.): D51

Is this a replication of an existing school in Colorado (not authorized by CSI)? NO

Is the Applicant applying to another authorizer in addition to CSI? If yes, list authorizer here: NO

School's Vision:

We envision a diverse network of community-embedded schools that are led by Teacher Leaders, that are co-created with our families, and that enable all children to cultivate their unique identities and gifts in pursuit of their fullest potential as individuals and contributors to a more just world.

School's Mission:

The mission of Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado (WMPSC) is to provide families with child-centered, authentic Montessori education that bridges academic outcomes and social-emotional development through intimate learning communities deeply rooted in place, equity and belonging.

Projected Enrollment for Proposed School

Year 1: K-3 = 60 (2024)

At Full Build Out: PK-6 = 160 (2028-2029)

Projected Demographics for the School¹

30% Minority

45% Free/Reduced Price Lunch Eligible

12% Special Education

3% Multilingual Learner

3% Gifted/Talented

Board Membership

Latia Henderson, Chair, lhenderson@rooteddenver.org

Kaycee Gerhart, Treasurer, kaycee.gerhart@gmail.com

Morgan Beidleman, Board Member, mbeidleman@reachlearningservices.com

Background Check

In the last ten years, has any member of the applicant team, proposed school leader, or board member been convicted of any felony or any misdemeanor related to violence, dishonesty, or moral turpitude? *NOT TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, PENDING BACKGROUND CHECK*

Proposed School Program Information

- *Is the school intending to meet the state's definition of an online school (multi- or single-district online school) (22-30.7-102, C.R.S.)?* NO
- *Does the school plan to contract with an education management provider, charter school incubator, be part of an existing network, or join a charter school collaborative?* NO
- *Does the school plan to be an Alternative Education Campus (AEC) in line with the state's definition (22-7-604.5, C.R.S., 1 CCR 301-57)?* NO
- *Does the school plan to offer a homeschool option program?* NO
- *Does the school plan to offer preschool program?* YES

¹ The demographic projections have shifted since submitting this Letter of Intent; updates are on pg. 7 of the application.

New School Application Assurances

Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado
[Release from Mesa County Valley D51 School District]
Application to Colorado Charter Schools Institute

By signing below and submitting a New School Application to the Colorado Charter School Institute, the Applicant hereby affirms the following:

- The Applicant is one or more individuals, a nonprofit, governmental, or other entity or organization (§22-30.5-510, C.R.S.)
- All individuals, corporations, or other entities associated with the Applicant and the New School Application have been identified using legal names, and any aliases, prior names, or business names have been included in the application.
- The proposed school will at all times during the term of any charter contract be organized as a Colorado nonprofit organization established and operated solely for the educational purposes described in the charter contract (§22-30.5-507, C.R.S.)
- The Applicant has reviewed and accepts the Voluntary Dispute Resolution procedures contained in the CSI Model New School Contract and the Applicant agrees that such provisions will be included in any charter contract (§22-30.5-509(r), C.R.S., §22-30.5-107.5, C.R.S.)
- The Applicant complies and shall continue to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, ancestry, disability, need for special education services, or any other protected class.

Printed Name: Hannah Ewert-Krocker, Interim Shared Services Partner

Signature: 

Date: March 24, 2023

Geographic District Board Resolution



Mesa County Valley School District 51

Resolution Regarding Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado Request

Board of Education Resolution 22/23: 39

Adopted: December 13, 2022

WHEREAS, on August 15, 2022, the Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado submitted an application to become a District 51 charter school commencing in the 2023-2024 school year; and

WHEREAS, a committee, comprised of District administrators, was charged with reviewing the application; and

WHEREAS, the application was reviewed by the District Accountability Committee per requirements of regulation LBD-R, Relations with Charter Schools (Procedures for Establishment); and

WHEREAS, the findings of the committee and the District Accountability Committee were presented to the Board of Education on November 1, 2022; and

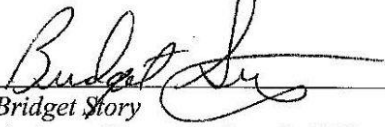
WHEREAS, on November 15, 2022, the Board of Education voted not to approve the Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado's application; and

WHEREAS, on December 1, 2022, Wildflower Montessori Public Charter Schools of Colorado submitted a written request to the Board of Education to be granted permission to apply to the Colorado Charter School Institute to bring a charter school program to the Grand Valley; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 Mesa County Valley School District became an exclusive authorizer, which requires those wishing to open a charter school, through the Colorado Charter School Institute to obtain permission from the Board; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education hereby grants the Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado permission to apply to the Colorado Charter School Institute in accordance with C.R.S. §22-30.5-504(8).

I certify that the information contained herein is accurate and was adopted by the Mesa County Valley School District 51 Board of Education on December 13, 2022.


Bridget Story
Assistant Secretary, Board of Education

Appendices & Required Attachments

[Notice to Geographic District](#)

[Geographic District Board Resolution](#)

[A WMPSC DEIB Agreement](#)

[B Wildflower School Startup Journey Deck](#)

[B GV Montessori Pilot Deck](#)

[B WMPSC Discovery Interview Framework](#)

[B GV Community Engagement Plan](#)

[B GV Planning Year Timeline](#)

[B GV Interest Form](#)

[B Letters of Support](#)

[C equityXdesign Framework](#)

[C Conscious Discipline](#)

[C Restorative Justice](#)

[C Discipline Policy](#)

[D Language Arts Literacy Standards Map](#)

[D Math Geometry Standards Map](#)

[D Child Study Protocol](#)

[D Founding Teacher Leader Exploration Albums](#)

[D WMPSC GV Organizational Chart](#)

[D RFP Charter Financial Management Services 2023](#)

[D GV Job Descriptions](#)

[D Staff Evaluation and Growth and Accountability Cycle](#)

[D School Calendar](#)

[D Student Schedule and Teacher Leader Schedule](#)

[E Wildflower Self-Management Ways of Working](#)

[F_Observing Work Engagement](#)

[G_5-Year Budget](#)

[G_Financial Policies and Procedures](#)

[G_Wildflower Network Membership in Action](#)

[G_Wildflower Network Membership Agreement](#)

[G_Board Development Plan](#)

[G_TWF Service Agreement Template](#)

[G_3-Year Contingency Budget](#)

[H_Bylaws](#)

[H_Policy Board Commitments & Conflict of Interest](#)

[H_WMPSC Bios](#)

[H_Resume BeidlemanMorgan](#)

[H_Resume BreyJenny](#)

[H_Resume Ewert-KrockerHannah](#)

[H_Resume GerhartKaycee](#)

[H_Resume HendersonLatia](#)

[H_Resume ReicksEmma](#)

[H_Resume ReigelGeorgie](#)

[H_Articles of Incorporation](#)

[I_Enrollment Policy](#)

[I_Employment Policy](#)

[I_Grievance Policy and Procedures](#)

[I_Waivers](#)

[I_Facilities Walkthrough Worksheet](#)

[I_Opening a Child Care Center](#)

Executive Summary

Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado (WMPSC) is rooted in our vision to create a network of community-embedded schools that are led by Teacher Leaders, co-created with families and partners, and enable all children to cultivate their unique identities and gifts in pursuit of their fullest potential as individuals and contributors to a more just world.

To do this, WMPSC is creating an ecosystem of four intentionally small, teacher-led charter sites in the Grand Valley where students, grades PK-6, families, and teachers connect deeply and grow together through their school journey. Our mission is to provide families with child-centered, authentic Montessori education that bridges academic outcomes and social-emotional development through intimate learning communities deeply rooted in place, equity, and belonging.

WMPSC Grand Valley is part of the Wildflower state-wide charter ecosystem currently composed of two regions, Grand Valley, which is currently being and Aurora, where multi-site charter schools are proposed. These regional charters are unique - in that they are wholly place-based and led by local Teacher Leaders who bring the Wildflower model to their communities. The WMPSC Grand Valley charter school nurtures each child's unique academic and social needs by providing high quality Montessori learning environments that:

- Offer identity-affirming, differentiated learning opportunities for all students;
- Meet or exceed Colorado state performance management framework standards;
- Consider education to be integral to community health, supporting the transformative solutions outlined in the Mesa County Health Needs Assessment.²

The Wildflower School model is a national movement of Montessori micro-schools all across the country, in 16 states and holding charters in Minnesota, New York, and Washington DC. Wildflower began as an idea launched out of the MIT Media lab as a partnership between parents and teachers who envisioned a new, community-centric educational model. Wildflower was founded as a solution to the traditional U.S. education system that operates from a “factory-model” of post-industrialism which views individual schools as institutions, students as products moving through undifferentiated learning experiences, and teachers as using only tools to teach, rather than developing and sustaining relationships with students as the keystone of their work.³

Wildflower was also founded to uplift all children, countering systematic oppression of people, especially those with marginalized identities, that leads to limited educational and career opportunities.⁴ In Grand Valley, these problems are palpable - schools and their staff are under extraordinary and unprecedented pressure following the pandemic; children and families, especially those living in poverty and marginalization, experience the tension arising from injustice, and organizations are rising up throughout the Grand Valley to bring an equity lens to community development efforts. There is a “turning point within Grand Junction, showing that there are people who are dedicated to learning and growing and willing to show up for [social justice] causes.”⁵

² Mesa County Public Health | Working Together for a Healthy Community. <https://health.mesacounty.us/wp-content/uploads/CHNA-2018-2020-Web.pdf>.

³ Rose, Joel. “How to Break Free of Our 19th-Century Factory-Model Education System.” *The Atlantic*, Atlantic Media Company, 9 May 2012, <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2012/05/how-to-break-free-of-our-19th-century-factory-model-education-system/256881/>.

⁴ Massey DS. Segregation and stratification: a biosocial perspective. *Du Bois Review*. 2004;1(1):7–25.

⁵ Price, Johneth. “Racial Justice in Rural Colorado.” *Harvard Political Review*, 25 Oct. 2020, <https://harvardpolitics.com/racial-justice-in-rural-colorado/>.

WMPSC Founding Teacher Leaders, Georgie Reigel and Emma Reicks, have been ignited by the confluence of this moment in history - by this “turning point” in their hometown, the educational need to bring a high quality Montessori option to families, and by the national Wildflower movement that has been successful in other rural places. Emma and Georgie are change makers, laying the foundation for WMPSC to create the Grand Valley ecosystem of microsites that will be identity-affirming, joyful, and child-centered learning environments for 192 children. Georgie and Emma, as experienced educators and trained Montessorians, are driven by the understanding that the Montessori Method is proven effective for *all* students, yet, too often the domain of a homogeneous and largely elite population.

Since March 2021, Emma and Georgie’s work has been inspired by the founders of Flame Lily, an independent Wildflower preschool in Aurora, Colorado that opened in 2022. The school’s founders are bringing their passion for equity-rooted, affordable learning environments to life by co-locating with a community center serving African immigrants and refugees in Aurora. Meeting the founders of Flame Lily and observing their model led to the creation of the Colorado Wildflower Charter Development team. This team broadened the Wildflower concept beyond one preschool to a network of state-wide charter sites. The result was the creation of Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado (WMPSC) - and evolving the Charter Development team to a formal Board of Directors.

This collective effort to take two Teacher Leaders’ dreams, support them, and develop a vision, mission, and charter around it reflects the Wildflower approach. WMPSC is designed to be responsive to educators with a vision for Montessori microsites and communities who hear about Wildflower and want to work together to bring a Wildflower school to their neighborhoods. This is happening in Grand Valley. At a time when marginalized populations are often isolated, WMPSC is building an ecosystem to develop microsites proximal to Grand Junction, connecting services and social networks that will support our families. Georgie and Emma see the need to prioritize belonging and Montessori access - understanding the economically, racially, and politically diverse population of their hometown.

Our small size makes it easier for children to be seen as individuals and for all families to feel heard in their interactions with teachers, allowing for active classroom roles for parents, parent education on child development, and continuous communication between the whole community supporting each child’s needs. WMPSC sites draw on the assets of the neighborhoods they are rooted in, grounded in the belief that change comes from community and that local communities are fully capable of solving the challenges to which they are closest.

To meet our mission, live our vision, and add educational options to Grand Valley families, WMPSC will create four small Montessori charter sites, serving students in PK-6th grade. Each site enrolls only 32-60 students and is led by two Teacher Leaders. During our first year of operation, WMPSC’s inaugural Primary (Children’s House) and Lower Elementary sites will serve students in PreK-3rd grade. With 128 completed interest forms, as of March 14, 2023, WMPSC - Grand Valley is expected to easily meet their enrollment target of 72 students. As the chart below shows, by 2027-2028, 192 students will be served across all four sites:

Grade level	Year 1 (2023-24)	Year 2 (2024-25)	Year 3 (2025-26)	Year 4 (2026-27)	Year 5 (2027-28)
PK3	6	10	20	20	30
PK4	6	10	20	20	30
K	12	12	24	24	36
1	16	16	16	16	16
2	16	16	16	16	16
3	16	16	16	16	16
4	-	16	16	16	16
5	-	-	16	16	16
6	-	-	-	16	16
Total GV WMPSC Students	72	96	144	160	192
Primary Sites (PK-K)	1	1	2	2	3
Elementary Sites (1-6)	1	1	1	1	1
Total WMPSC Sites	2	2	3	3	4

Georgie and Emma, like all Wildflower Teacher Leaders, are social entrepreneurs, committed to the art and science of teaching and leading a Montessori classroom. Wildflower Teacher Leaders begin imagining their classroom during the School Startup Journey (SSJ), a systemized, holistic professional development program where educators use their experience as Montessorians and equity-minded community leaders to develop their unique vision that meets the regulatory expectations of our authorizer, Colorado Charter Schools Institute (CSI), and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). What emerges from the SSJ are inspiring, coherent school plans co-designed with the community.

Teacher Leaders continue deep and frequent professional development trainings and equity-rooted coaching long after the SSJ, modeling continuous growth and innovation, motivated by the focus on their own well-being and leadership accountabilities. In the Grand Valley, WMPSC Teacher Leaders are supported by charter-wide staff, including: a Shared Services Partner, the equivalent of a traditional charter CEO; a state-wide Finance Partner; and Grand Valley-specific Student Services Coordinator, the equivalent of a Special Education Coordinator. Together, the staff, Teacher Leaders, and direct service site roles, including Learning Specialists, Social Worker, and Teacher Assistants, create the conditions for our community- and child-centered approach and share the work and responsibilities that ensure schools operate to the highest standards.

Our governance and administrative approach is rooted in radical transparency, and employs thoughtful processes for clarifying accountability, integrating multiple perspectives into decisions and collaboratively resolving conflict. As a charter defined by ‘freedom within limits,’ the staff and Teacher Leaders are accountable to one another; the Board of Directors holds the Shared Services Partner accountable for charter-wide responsibilities and Teacher Leaders accountable for site-specific responsibilities, including student performance and well-being. WMPSC is carefully designed as a thriving inclusive ecosystem, reflecting the interconnectedness of children, adults, and community, in order to realize our vision and exceed the metrics outlined in our charter contract.

A. Vision and Mission

Vision Statement

We envision a diverse network of community-embedded schools that are led by Teacher Leaders, co-created with families and partners, and enable all children to cultivate their unique identities and gifts in pursuit of their fullest potential as individuals and contributors to a more just world.

“Visualizamos una red diversa de escuelas integradas en la comunidad que están dirigidas por maestros líderes, que se crean conjuntamente con familias y compañeros, y que permiten a todos los niños cultivar sus identidades y dones únicos en la búsqueda de su máximo potencial como individuos y contribuyentes a un mundo más justo.”

Mission Statement

The mission of Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado (WMPSC) is to provide families with-child-centered, authentic Montessori education that bridges academic outcomes and social-emotional development through intimate learning communities deeply rooted in place, equity, and belonging.

La misión de Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado (WMPSC) es brindar una educación Montessori auténtica, que una los resultados académicos y el desarrollo socioemocional, en entornos de aprendizaje vibrantes y únicos profundamente arraigados en el lugar, la comunidad y el sentido de pertenencia.

WMPSC is a state-wide charter ecosystem currently composed of two locations, the Grand Valley in Western Colorado, where Wildflower is proposing a new multi-site charter school, and Aurora, where Wildflower is already authorized by Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI) to open in Fall 2023. These charters are unique: they are wholly place-based, led by local Teacher Leaders who leverage the Wildflower model to bring about their vision.

In Grand Valley, WMPSC is a network of four intentionally small sites designed to provide an exemplary education to students in grades PK-6. The Grand Valley charter school in Mesa County Valley School District D51 nurtures each child's unique academic and social needs by providing high performing Montessori learning environments that meet or exceed Colorado state academic standards and offer identity-affirming, differentiated learning opportunities for all students.

By creating access to public Montessori education within the historic Western Slope of Colorado, WMPSC is re-centering Montessori to its founding roots in equity and social justice and contributing to a community's need to offer innovative high quality educational choices for children and families. The Montessori Method individualizes learning, supporting each child's unique gifts and needs on the path to self-actualization and independence. Montessori is an ideal learning model and approach for children living in diverse but marginalized settings.⁶

The WMPSC Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Agreement (Appendix A_WMPSC DEIB Agreement) is a commitment that our community agrees to - from Teacher Leaders to board members

⁶ Lillard, A., & Else-Quest, N. (2006). The early years: Evaluating Montessori Education. *Science*, 313(5795), 1993-1994.

to staff. This living document expresses a recursive cycle of learning, acting, and reflecting about our diversity and equity practices, modeling for students and families our approach to a more just world. We are intentional about putting tools in place to be inclusive and create environments where every person feels they belong - and to be held accountable to this vital core of our work.

Additionally, the Wildflower purpose, norms, values, and principles (see figure below) are guideposts for our charter. Our distinctly different model creates thriving sites in the Grand Valley neighborhoods, intentionally small and community-embedded through deep family engagement, teacher-leadership, and sustained local partnerships that endure well after the microsites open.

purpose WILDFLOWER PURPOSE

At Wildflower, we are committed to the **liberation** of every human being, every community and the human spirit, so that we may all live in harmony with our individual purpose and the world around us, free from oppression and able to follow life's unfolding journey.

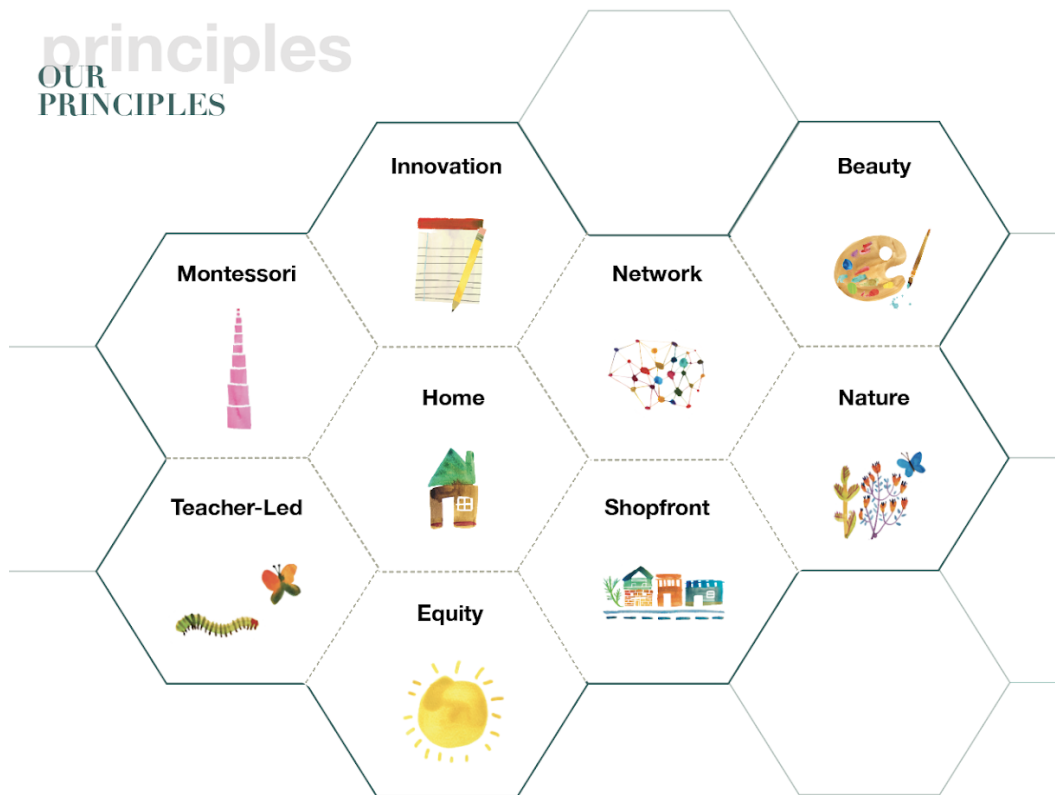
values OUR SHARED VALUES

- × Connectedness
- × Growth

norms OUR COMMUNITY NORMS

- × Anti-Bias Anti-Racist and Unity
- × Autonomy with Support
- × Awareness and Compassion

principles OUR PRINCIPLES



B. Evidence of Need, Support, and Involvement

Target Student Population

B.1. WMPSC Growth Plan

The WMPSC growth plan in the Grand Valley will open four microsites across the Grand Valley, with microsites in Clifton, Orchard Mesa, and west towards Loma by 2028. Cactus Bloom Montessori, the initial Elementary site and a Primary (PK-K) site, will open in 2024; WMPSC will add Primary sites in Years 3 and 5. The detailed growth plan is below:

Grade level	Year 1 (2023-24)	Year 2 (2024-25)	Year 3 (2025-26)	Year 4 (2026-27)	Year 5 (2027-28)
PK3	6	10	20	20	30
PK4	6	10	20	20	30
K	12	12	24	24	36
1	16	16	16	16	16
2	16	16	16	16	16
3	16	16	16	16	16
4	-	16	16	16	16
5	-	-	16	16	16
6	-	-	-	16	16
Total GV WMPSC Students	72	96	144	160	192
Primary Sites (PK-K)	1	1	2	2	3
Elementary Site (1-6)	1	1	1	1	1
Total WMPSC Sites	2	2	3	3	4

B.2. Projected Growth Plan Process

The WMPSC projected enrollment, growth, and matriculation plans were determined based on opening four microsites in the Grand Valley across five years. The growth reflects:

- Montessori practices of a multi-age classroom;
- Three primary microsites, averaging 30 students per site, co-led by two Teacher Leaders;
- One elementary microsite, totaling 96 students, co-led by 5 Teacher Leaders, and co-located by one of the Wildflower Primary microsites and;
- Teacher Leaders' interest in opening a WMPSC microsite in the Grand Valley and time to complete the School Startup Journey (Appendix B_Wildflower School Startup Journey Deck);
- The Grand Valley need to increase PK availability and access;
- Fiscal balance to operate a high-quality micro-school ecosystem supported by charter-wide services.

During our community engagement efforts (Appendix B_GV Community Engagement Plan), we have heard from families about a desire for a small, intimate school community that fosters deep relationships among students and families. Our growth reflects our ability, fiscally and operationally, to offer the following qualities that have been voiced:

- Individualized and hands-on learning opportunities;
- Mixed-age and multi-grades to ease transportation;
- A diverse student body and staff;
- A safe, inclusive learning community;
- Early-care and after-school programming;
- A small, intimate school community that fosters a strong sense of belonging

B.3. Target Student Population

The WMPSC target student population is listed below, based on averages of proximal schools (Section B.5. below) and WMPSC’s commitment to building access to Montessori for marginalized students. WMPSC plans to reflect the demographics of D51 proximal schools, knowing that enrollment at WMPSC is open to all students in D51.

School	%BIPOC ⁷	% Free or Reduced Lunch Eligible (FRLE)	% Special Education	% Multilingual Learner	% Gifted
WMPSC Anticipated Demographic	45.0	68.0	17.0	7.0	3.4
Demographic of Mesa County Valley District 51	30.3	45.0	12.3	3.4	3.4
Chipeta Elementary	43.0	76.0	11.0	14.0	Not available
Nisley Elementary	48.3	81.6	17.7	10.0	Not available
Pear Park Elementary	43.0	70.0	19.0	5.19	Not available
Dos Rios Elementary	41.0	78.0	20.0	2.0	1.0
Chatfield Elementary	37.0	62.0	21.0	5.0	Not available
Clifton Elementary	42.9	84.0	19.0	10.0	0.6
Lincoln Orchard Mesa	29.3	63.0	11.0	Not available	3.6
Rocky Mountain	Not available	74.9	9.3	13.0	0.2

⁷‘BIPOC’ refers to ‘minority’ in publicly available data, defined as all non-White federal race categories: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.

B.4. Projected Student Demographic Process

The projected student demographics were determined by analyzing the demographics of D51 as a whole and the schools across the Grand Valley, from Clifton to Orchard Mesa to Loma, where we plan to locate (detailed in Section I). WMPSC is co-creating our microsites advised by local organizations, like Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families, Hilltop Family Resource Center, and Migrant Education Program West-Central Region, and community leader, Jose Luis Chavez, and several parent advocates. These voices have advised that our projected demographics for BIPOC, FRL, special education, and multilingual learners be higher than the district average and more aligned with the families that their organizations serve. This projection correlates to our Wildflower principle of equity and our norm of unity. WMPSC is in Grand Valley to bring the Montessori Method to all students, especially to a demographic with historically less access to the Method and a population that can benefit from identity-affirming and culturally responsive education.⁸

Existing Performance & Educational Options

B.5. Proximal Schools

Included in the tables below are public, public charter, and independent schools across Grand Junction, specifically in our target areas, detailed in Section I. These schools have been analyzed based on their educational model, grade level, programmatic offerings, and cost. Public charter and independent schools are also listed because we are a unique ‘alternative’ Montessori model that few other proximal schools represent.

School Name	Educational Model	Grade Levels	Programmatic Offerings	Cost
Public				
Chipeta Elementary	Traditional	Pre K - 5th	Transportation Before/After Care Food Service	No Cost
Nisley Elementary	Traditional	Pre K - 5th	Transportation Before/After Care Food Service	No Cost
Chatfield Elementary	Traditional	Pre K - 5th	Transportation Before/After Care Food Service	No Cost
Pear Park	Traditional	Pre K - 5th	Transportation Before/After Care Food Service	No Cost
Lincoln Orchard Mesa	Traditional	Pre K - 5th	Transportation Before/After Care Food Service	No Cost
Dos Rios	Traditional	Pre K - 5th	Transportation Before/After Care Food Service	No Cost

⁸ Lillard, A. S., Taggart, J., Yonas, D., & Seale, M. N. (2021). An alternative to “no excuses”: Considering Montessori as culturally responsive pedagogy. *J. Negro Educ.*

School Name	Educational Model	Grade Levels	Programmatic Offerings	Cost
Charter				
Caprock Academy	Classical Academy	K - 12th	Extended School Day Transportation	No cost
Monument View Montessori	Montessori	Pre K - 3rd	Half- and full-day PK	PK = \$8,500 >K = No cost
Juniper Ridge Community School	Waldorf (in-district)	K - 8	Orchestra Spanish	No cost
Independent				
River Canyon School	Waldorf	Pre K - K	Half-and full-Day	\$8,250/ year
Heartsong Montessori	Montessori	Pre K	Full-day Aftercare	\$8,500/ year

B.6. Proximal Schools Academic Performance

Included in this table are schools in central and east-central Grand Junction, outlining the independent charter and in-district charter schools to understand the options and performance of schools in proximity to our proposed locations.

School Name	Overall Performance (2022 CMAS)	Elem Achievement ELA	Elem Achievement Math	Elem Growth ELA	Elem Growth Math
Public D51 Schools in Grand Junction					
Mesa County Valley District 51 (ELEM)	Improvement (54)* Low Participation	Meets DNM ⁹ ELL, SPED, READ plan	Approaching DNM ELL, SPED	Meets	Meets
Chipeta Elementary	Performance (72.1)	Approaching DNM, READ Bonus not earned	Approaching DNM SPED	Meets	Exceeds
Nisley Elementary	Improvement (49.3)	DNM DNM Minority, SPED, READ Bonus not earned	DNM DNM SPED, FRLE, Minority	Meets	Approaching
Dos Rios Elementary	Improvement (47.8)	Approaching DNM SPED, READ Bonus not earned	Approaching DNM FRLE, SPED	Approaching	Approaching DNM FRLE

⁹ Does not meet

Lincoln Orchard Mesa	Improvement (65.6)	Meets DNM SPED READ Bonus not earned	Meets DNM SPED	Meets	Approaching
Chatfield Elementary	Performance (78.9)	Meets DNM SPED	Meets DNM SPED	Meets	Exceeds
Lincoln Orchard Mesa	Improvement (48.7)	Approaching *SPED DNM READ Bonus not earned		Approaching	Approaching *DNM Minority
Clifton Elementary	Turnaround (25.8)	DNM DNM FRLE, Minority, SPED, READ bonus not earned	DNM DNM FRLE, Minority, SPED,	DNM	DNM
Thunder Mountain	Improvement (47.4)	Approaching DNM SPED, READ not earned	Approaching DNM FRLE, SPED	Meets	DNM
Rocky Mountain	Improvement (46.4)	Approaching DNM FRLE, Minority, EL, SPED, READ not earned	DNM	Meets	DNM
Pear Park	Improvement (50.8)	Approaching DNM Minority, SPED, READ not earned	Approaching DNM FRLE, Minority	Approaching DNM Minority	Approaching
Fruitvale	Meets (54.8)	Approaching DNM EL, SPED, READ not earned	Approaching DNM EL, SPED	Meets	Approaching DNM FRLE
Public Charters					
Caprock Academy (Independent)	Performance (71.2)	Meets DNM SPED READ Bonus earned	Approaching DNM SPED	Approaching	DNM
Monument View Montessori (Independent)	Insufficient Data				
Juniper Ridge Community School (in-district)	Priority Improvement (40)	DNM DNM FRLE, Minority READ Bonus not earned	DNM DNM FRLE, Minority	Meets Insufficient data minority, SPED, ELL	DNM insufficient data FRLE, minority, SPED, ELL

B.7. WMPSC Educational Option

The Grand Valley currently offers limited Montessori options for D51 families, and WMPSC will significantly increase access to an affordable Montessori education option for families in this region. There is only one existing public charter school (Monument View Montessori School), an independent charter school that enrolls approximately 62 students, has a waitlist for 2023-2024, and is located in Fruita. WMPSC will open access for families wishing to enroll their children in a public Montessori school, especially those closer and east of Grand Junction. While there is an existing independent Montessori school in the area, Heartsong, they do not offer an elementary option, hold a waitlist, and tuition can often be unaffordable for the target population WMPSC seeks to serve.¹⁰

While 2022 CMAS data shows student growth, the majority of elementary schools in the geographic area in which WMPSC proposes to open are not yet meeting academic performance or growth expectations, as defined by the Colorado Department of Education.¹¹ Most of these schools, both traditional public and public charter, are either approaching or not meeting in these areas. Given the research outlined in Section E that supports the Montessori Method's effectiveness in academic achievement, particularly for economically disadvantaged students, WMPSC will offer an educational option for the target population that meets or exceeds the academic performance of the regional public and charter schools.

WMPSC also offers a unique opportunity because the Montessori model is inherently designed to support students on an individual and differentiated basis, a model made even more possible by the small size of our microsites. Our Teacher Leaders co-create their microsite with the community, offering individualized support for every student, especially multilingual learners, students with disabilities and mental health needs, and students identified as gifted and talented. WMPSC is targeting to support these subpopulations based on averages either the same as or above district-wide percentages and aligned with public elementary schools in our geographic area.

Existing area schools that offer alternative educational options in both public and private settings (Classical, Montessori, Waldorf) are all at capacity with waitlists. There is a need in D51 for additional spots for families seeking an educational model different from the traditional elementary options currently available in the area.

B.8. Community Engagement

Over the course of the past 10 months, WMPSC Founding Teacher Leaders Georgie and Emma have initiated an extensive community engagement process involving multiple critical stakeholders in the Grand Valley community, including local parents, area non-profit organizational partners, D51 families and employees, and local community leaders (Appendix B_WMPSC Discovery Interview Framework).

Strategies in which Emma and Georgie have engaged these key stakeholders include:

- Social media outreach to local parent groups and on community message boards;
- One-to-one discovery interviews with prospective parents, community leaders, and community organizations;
- Focus groups to solicit parent/guardian input on educational experiences and aspirations for the school;

¹⁰ \$8,500 tuition is ~16% median income in Grand Junction (\$52,504): 2021 US Census data.

¹¹ https://www.gjsentinel.com/news/western_colorado/cmas-data-shows-academic-growth-for-district-51-students-in-math-english/article_13ed0e62-1ff8-11ed-9c5d-6b48306575ab.html

- Informal meet-and-greets/playdates for prospective students and families;
- Outreach to community partners that serve prospective families.

Part of the work of our Founding Teacher Leaders has been virtual and in-person outreach and canvassing at the following partner organizations and local community businesses to garner the required Interest Forms. Through our comprehensive community engagement efforts, we have received 128 Interest Forms for Year 1, detailed in B.9. Outreach and canvassing opportunities that Georgie and Emma have, thus far, attended include:

- Grand Junction Market on Main;
- Social media outreach to local parent groups and on community boards;
- Migrant Education Program Family Institute;
- Storytime with Mesa County Libraries;
- Martin Luther King Jr. week events;
- Outreach and marketing material distribution to community partners that serve prospective families;
- Hilltop Family Resource Center parenting groups;
- Cesar Chavez Celebration (spring 2023);
- Arbor Fest (spring 2023).

They have also worked to partner with local community leaders and organizations, particularly those that serve the diverse target population WMPSC anticipates in our student body. Teacher Leaders have engaged in discovery interview conversations and begun developing mutually beneficial partnerships with the following individuals and organizations:

- Hope of the Grand Valley
- Hilltop Family Resource Center, Sherry Price and Jessica Giles
- Creative Avenues Preschool, Joy Potter
- Headwaters Housing Partners, Grady Lenkin
- Black Citizens and Friends, David Combs
- Jose Luis Chavez, Cesar Chavez Celebration, community organizer
- D51 Migrant Education Program, Koreena Montoya
- Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families (MCPCF)
- The Joseph Center, Jessica Martinez
- Dr. Ann Gillies, Colorado Mesa University
- Approximately 60 local parents as well as local teachers

Additionally, WMPSC Founding Teacher Leader, Emma Reicks, has participated as a Fellow in Moonshot EdVentures during 2022-2023 and has further assimilated authentic community engagement into the planning of Cactus Bloom Montessori School. Appendix B_GV Montessori Pilot Deck illuminates the design and results of the pilot. She will also participate in Moonshot's School Launcher Residency in 2023-2024, launching the residency east of Denver.

Discovery interviews, partnership conversations, and informal connections with local families, such as at the meet-and-greet in the park and the Farmer's Market, were intentionally open-ended, designed to solicit honest feedback about community members' visions for their children's education without expectation or agenda. Through these conversations, our Teacher Leaders learned that families want schools that address the following needs and themes:

- Parents are seen, heard, and involved in their children's education: they want opportunities to be in dialogue and collaborative partnership with their children's schools, including meaningful and intentional connections with teachers and staff;

- School is a place where children are seen for who they are as unique individuals and feel safe being themselves. They want their children to be known, and they want school staff to have a deep understanding of children's backgrounds and specific stories and situations so that educators' care for and response to children can be individualized;
- Schools are small, allowing for the inclusion of parents and the support for children on an individual level, as stated in the first two bullet points;
- Teachers are empathetic and nurture the whole child above and beyond children's racial backgrounds or academic progress;
- Mixed-age classrooms and learning experiences, which allow for more time to follow students' individual learning pathways and for children to learn from and be empathetic to children of different ages.

Many of these desires expressed by community members in the Grand Valley reflect WMPSC's vision for expanding access to individualized Montessori education in the public sector. Additionally, these desires have contributed to and helped to solidify WMPSC's plans for family involvement, including the vision for and development of our local Community Design Teams, which will be hyperlocal coalitions of families, organizational partners, and local community leaders. These Community Design Teams will be involved in and contribute to several key design aspects of the school microsites and will be mobilized once the charter is approved.

Additionally, conversations with local community organizations and leaders about the educational and programmatic needs of historically and educationally disadvantaged students contributed significantly to WMPSC's expected target population, our decision to narrow our site locations to the areas that we are proposing (described in more detail in Section I), and our plans to ensure that our organization is more than adequately staffed to support the needs of students in this target population, specifically economically disadvantaged students, multilingual learners, and students with disabilities and mental health needs (described in more detail in Section D).

It continues to be our goal to prioritize connecting with community leaders and organizations that work directly with educationally disadvantaged students and their families and with whom the relational trust has been established. These plans are described in more detail in Appendix B_GV Community Engagement Plan. For example, there are plans to engage Hilltop Family Resource Center families by offering a free Montessori class. WMPSC also recognizes a language barrier although our outreach and marketing materials (including social media) and forms have been translated into Spanish and a translator joined our events. In our search for a Student Support Coordinator, a desired quality is local experience and Spanish-speaking. We plan to continue to engage with families through these partner organizations throughout the fall. Strategies and details for our community engagement plans that will continue through 2022-2023 can be found in Appendix B_WMPSC: GV_Community Engagement Plan and are noted throughout our Planning Year Timeline, detailed in Appendix B_Planning Year Timeline.

B.9.10.11. Community Interest

Founding Teachers Leaders are using an interest form (Appendix B_GVInterest Form ENG SPA) to solicit interest in enrollment. The following table reflects the total interest forms by grade level received to date. We expect to exceed 250% of our Y1 target by June 2023.

Grade Level	Number of Students in Year 1	Interest Forms
PK	12	44
Kindergarten	12	23
1	12	25
2	16	25
3	16	10
Total	72	128

B.12. Community Support

Even at this early stage, Grand Valley families and community members are energized by the possibility of WMPSC being a viable choice for their child. Teacher Leaders have engaged the following organizations to inform their school design, application, and outreach to families.

- *Hilltop Family Resource Center:* A “one-stop-shop” for families who need services and supports, including, but not limited to, B4 Babies and Beyond, which helps families access health care coverage through Medicaid and CHP+, Family First, which includes weekly support groups for families plus caregiver support groups, and High Fidelity Wraparound, which supports families in identifying and achieving their goals. Our Teacher Leaders have connected with Sherry Price, Deputy Director, and other staff members to assess the need for additional options in both early childhood and elementary education in the Grand Valley. Teacher Leader Emma Reicks has attended multiple parent and family groups to engage in listening and distribute information about the school to families who participate in their programs on an ongoing basis. We will continue to build a partnership with the education professionals at Hilltop in the coming months by offering a free Montessori child care class to interested families to provide exposure to these families about what Montessori looks and feels like. Our vision is to build strong relationships with individual families who will join our Community Design Teams and choose to enroll their children in our Grand Valley sites.
- *Hope of the Grand Valley:* Working to break the cycle of poverty by providing support to families who do not qualify for welfare or housing assistance, this partnership is in its early stages as we have just begun initial conversations with their leadership. We hope to offer a free Montessori child care class during an upcoming parent support group to any interested families to provide exposure to these families about what Montessori looks and feels like. Our vision is to build strong relationships with individual families who will join our Community Design Teams and choose to enroll their children in our Grand Valley sites.
- *The Joseph Center:* Created to support families at the intersection of homelessness and parenting, its mission is to provide hope, establish stability, encourage resourcefulness and

confer a sense of belonging to the greater community. Their programs include a day shelter, parent advocacy, integrated financial services, and outreach. Teacher-Leader Emma Reicks has engaged the Outreach Director and has arranged to participate in an upcoming event to engage families.

- *Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families (PCF)*: Focused on strengthening partnerships within the community to leverage resources that support the holistic development of all children locally by increasing and improving quality care in every child care setting, PCF supports and builds future providers, and connecting families to resources that support the health and well-being of their children to ensure that the needs of every child in Mesa County are met. Our team members have connected with Stephanie Bivins, Director, to understand the early childhood landscape and seek advice throughout the application process.
- *Migrant Education Program West-Central Region (MEP)*: Working to ensure that migrant children fully benefit from the same free public education provided to other children, MEP supports educational programs that reduce education disruptions that can result from repeated moves. These services include but are not limited to, supporting school enrollment, accessing medical, dental, and mental health care, collaboration and communication with school staff, and registration costs for attendance to conferences, workshops, and training. After conducting a discovery interview with members of the MEP team, our Teacher Leader was invited to attend the Family Institute and share information about our microsite. We will continue to engage MEP families one-on-one to include interested parents in our Community Design Teams and hope to co-host an event to provide information and exposure to the Montessori philosophy and practice.
- *Montessori Education Center of the Rockies (MECR)*: MECR is a nationally accredited Montessori training center located just west of the Aurora border in east Denver. One Teacher Leader attended a Montessori certification program at MECR, and MECR will likely be a certification site for future WMPSC Teacher Leaders. We will also connect with teachers currently in their training programs to share information about Teacher Leader opportunities in the WMPSC network if these teachers in training are looking for new communities in which to teach and lead.
- *The Montessori Institute of Denver (TMI)*: The Montessori Institute of Denver is an internationally accredited Montessori training center for early childhood and elementary Montessori certification. WMPSC anticipates sending Teacher Leaders to this training institute for Montessori certification or for ongoing professional development opportunities. We will also connect with teachers currently in their training programs to share information about Teacher Leader opportunities in the WMPSC network. TMI has been a strong supporter of expanding Montessori into the public sector for decades, beginning with the establishment of Family Star Head Start programs. Their support for public Montessori in the Western Slope continues with our ongoing partnership.

Our work to establish partnerships with community organizations has resulted in the submission of letters in support of this application, which can be found in Appendix B_Letters of Support. Community, organization, and facilities' Letters of Support include the following:

Community Letters of Support

Laura Alexander	Executive Director, Montessori Education Center of the Rockies
Stephanie Bivins	Director, Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families
Jenny Brey	Grand Valley Parent, WMPSC Community Liaison
Valerie Carlson	Pastor, American Lutheran Church 631 26 1/2 Rd, Grand Junction, CO 81506
Nevada Drollinger-Smith	Grand Valley Parent
Jessica Giles	Parents as Teachers Coordinator, Hilltop Family Resource Center
Amy Junge	Director of Teacher-Powered Schools, Education Evolving
Matt Kramer	CEO, The Wildflower Foundation. Supporter of charter site startup grants; prospective service provider.
Scott Laband	President, Colorado Succeeds. Coalition of business leaders in support of increasing high quality educational opportunities for Colorado children.
Kevin MacPhail	Pastor, Vineyard Community Church 2711 Unaweep Ave., Grand Junction CO 81503
Katy Myers	Executive Director, The Montessori Institute

Opportunities for Parent/Community Involvement

B.13. WMPSC Parent and Community Input

The Montessori pedagogy is inherently child-focused and individualized. WMPSC parents/guardians will be provided frequent personalized student reports through the use of the Transparent Classroom record-keeping system, as well as attend conference cycles three times per year. Teacher Leaders will immediately and intentionally connect with and engage families in the learning process through home visits before the beginning of school and the initial conference cycle. We plan to create an opportunity for students to visit the classroom before the start of the school year for a 20-30 minutes session to participate in sample Montessori lessons. This early introduction to the school environment gives the children the opportunity to engage with the Teacher Leaders in the classroom, parents/guardians the chance to continue establishing a relationship with Teacher Leaders, and all adults time to observe the children's "work" as they become familiarized with the materials, guides and environment.

The multi-age classroom, wherein a student has the same Teacher Leader for a three-year cycle, is a Montessori element that provides consistency in teaching, learning, and family engagement. The microsite model is intentionally designed for direct and honest communication between home and school. In this model, Teacher Leaders know their students well and share proactively and swiftly on their academic and social-emotional progress.

Our microsites will engage in traditions, activities, and events that strengthen the school-family partnership. Teacher Leaders at each site develop these activities within the context of communities' culture and traditions.

WMPSC ensures that all families can access a Montessori education for their child, regardless of their availability to volunteer, and, as such, there is no requirement for parents to volunteer at the school. Our sites are not reliant on parent volunteer hours. Still, Teacher Leaders will provide a range of volunteer opportunities to meet parents' varying schedules, interests, and skill sets, and family involvement will be encouraged, depending on the capacity of the family. WMPSC will encourage parents to volunteer and keep an updated list of specific ways parents can support the site and their children's learning, both in person and at home.

Families will be integral members of our Community Design Teams and the School Accountability Committee. Our WMPSC Board of Directors will include parents/guardians. Per the Bylaws, the Board of Directors requires two parents/guardian representatives. As such, parents will be involved at all levels of school governance and advising. Teacher Leaders at each site will decide on additional parent/guardian volunteer roles, such as:

- Community liaison
- Activity support or lead (such as music/yoga)
- Field trip support
- Translator
- Advisory Council

We are sensitive to our founding families' linguistic, technological, and particular communication needs. In collaboration with families and in accordance with their needs, Teacher Leaders will make site-based decisions around using phone apps, hard copy information, and/or social media platforms to communicate.

During home visits and registration, Teacher Leaders will ask parents how they would like to receive information and communications. For non-urgent concerns or those who would like to schedule a future visit/appointment with the Teacher Leaders, email will typically be used (with policies giving Teacher Leaders a 24-48 hr time frame to respond Monday-Friday). Teacher Leaders may use Bloomz, Seesaw or other applications for urgent messages or concerns that can be solved quickly. This kind of medium can also help communicate things like snow days, school closures, and other things that need immediate attention. Alongside plans to leverage technology to support school communications, we will ultimately honor families' preferred vehicle to ensure they can each access school information and opportunities for involvement effectively and comfortably.

Like we have done in our current community engagement efforts, we will make every effort to ensure our family communications are communicated in English and Spanish. We will prioritize translating our communications into the other languages our families speak to ensure that communication is accessible to all family members. Teacher Leaders may facilitate monthly family meetings to build community by communicating, educating, and informing parents. Example topics include: "What is Montessori?," "What are practical life skills children can practice at home?," and "How can we help our child develop independence?" Additionally, Teacher Leaders will seek and listen to ideas and concerns raised by parents/guardians. Teacher Leaders will make family events, discussion topics, and site-based schedule decisions through advice they receive from community members, emerging situations, and evolving conditions.

C. School Culture

C.1. WMPSC School Culture

Our sites in Grand Valley are part of the Colorado ecosystem of Wildflower Schools, a decentralized network of small Montessori microsites across sixteen states.¹² The first Wildflower School opened in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 2014. That first school and the others that sprouted around it ignited interest from all over the world in creating teacher-led local microsites using the Wildflower model. Currently, Wildflower has charters in Colorado, Minnesota, New York, and the District of Columbia.

The Wildflower purpose, values, norms, and principles, described in Section A, underpin our school culture to promote a positive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social development. These shared ideas are the roots from which our sites grow and flourish as nurturing and connected learning spaces for wholeness and healing. WMPSC microsites operationalize Wildflower's purpose, norms, values, and principles in the following ways to create a school culture that prioritizes the holistic growth of students, Teacher Leaders, staff, and families:

Wildflower School sites are small.

Teacher Leaders co-lead and co-teach a microsite of 24-96 students in a small school site. A multi-age classroom spans multiple years, starting with PK3-K, first through third grades, and fourth through sixth grades. Research shows that small schools engage students and teachers more completely.¹³

Wildflower teachers are social entrepreneurs.

Teacher Leaders lead the classroom and serve as microsite administrators. Handling these facets of a school develops inspiring leaders and conceptually consistent schools. Research shows that operating with a mix of autonomy and support leads to greater job satisfaction, higher retention rates, and greater happiness in the teaching profession.¹⁴ Given the current wave of teachers leaving the education field following the pandemic, compared with the low turnover of Teacher Leaders in the Wildflower network in the past two years,¹⁵ this model is more effective than ever in retaining top talent.

Wildflower School sites are authentic Montessori programs.

The classroom is a beautiful, culturally embedded, and prepared environment where teachers guide children to ensure they learn core concepts. The Montessori Method integrates academic and socioemotional objectives, having a long-term impact on both with even a few years of early exposure to an authentic Montessori environment.¹⁶

Wildflower School sites focus on diversity and community.

Wildflower designs schools to be both economically accessible and culturally sustaining. Teacher Leaders engage the community, select a facility and build partnerships that center students of the global majority, and deeply engage parents.

¹² Wildflower schools are currently in CA, CO, CT, DC, FL, IN, KY, MA, MN, NC, NJ, NV, NY, OH, RI, PA, PR, VA.

¹³ Blum, R. W. (2005). A Case for School Connectedness. *Educational Leadership*, 62 (7), 16-19.

¹⁴ Allen, J. (2019, September). Allen: The Solution to the Nation's Teacher Shortage? Make Them Entrepreneurs, With Autonomy, Authority and a Salary to Match. The 74. <https://www.the74million.org/article/allen-the-solution-to-the-nations-teacher-shortage-make-them-entrepreneurs-with-autonomy-authority-and-a-salary-to-match>.

¹⁵ Wildflower retention rates of Teacher Leaders = 91% [2019-2020]; 84% [2020-2021].

¹⁶ Lillard, A. S. (2018). Rethinking education: Montessori's approach. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 27(6), 395-400.

Wildflower School sites are innovative.

Wildflower microsites serve as laboratories for child-centered learning informed by data. Montessori teachers rely on detailed observation protocols to gauge student progress and adjust the classroom environment to maximize learning. All Wildflower sites are built on research and insights from the fields of human development, learning science, and organizational theory to create schools with the capacity for transformation.

C.2. Creating School Culture

In our Montessori environments, Teacher Leaders design every element to help children develop self-regulation and conscious awareness of how their actions affect their individual freedoms and the greater good of the classroom community. From returning a classroom object to its correct place so everyone will be able to find it, to helping a younger child who is struggling with a math concept, to working together to create a class constitution, children develop a sense of agency and understand that they are responsible for themselves and the peaceful tone of the classroom.

To prepare children to thrive not just in school but in life, Teacher Leaders create classroom conditions that allow children the freedom to make choices and experience real-life consequences, such as missing the beginning of an activity if a lunch table has not been cleaned or repairing harm with a peer when conflict escalates. Teacher Leaders emphasize prevention first. Through creating a positive, connected, and peaceful learning environment and using positive behavioral intervention and restorative justice principles, Teacher Leaders foster an environment in which students can understand the impact of poor decisions and use these experiences as an opportunity to learn and make amends. This sort of conscious classroom approach resonates with our culturally responsive pedagogy model.

School culture at Wildflower sites ultimately reflects the “Montessori for Adults” philosophy. As Sep Kamvar, founder of the first Wildflower school and The Wildflower Foundation, wrote:

....as the school community settles into Wildflower structures and practices, it creates an ease and joy and growth process that mirrors that of a Montessori classroom. The social environment of the adults is thus prepared to allow for authentic Montessori to flourish, both in the classroom and in the home.

My hope is that such structures will allow for the flourishing of our natural capacities as adults for kindness, for generosity of spirit, for open-mindedness and open-heartedness. My hope is that by unlocking the great power of these qualities, we may work gently together to make the world a more beautiful place.

From the moment a family is introduced to Wildflower during a community engagement event to the time when that same family enrolls their child at a WMPSC site, they are experiencing what the “Montessori for Adults” philosophy means. WMPSC microsites include families and elevate their voices; Teacher Leaders invite students and families to summer programming, open houses, and will complete home visits before the first day of school or if the child enrolls mid-year, pending public health safety standards.

Home visits catalyze authentic school-home relationships with families and are a tool for building cultural responsiveness and cultural bridges. Research shows that in addition to academic results,

there are “documented outcomes to show the positive impact of home visits, outcomes related to school climate, family involvement, and school/family trust. In addition, anecdote after anecdote from participating teachers and families speaks to the power of the visit in increasing empathy and understanding on the part of both parties, as well as in forming the foundation of a relationship that allows information to be shared effectively.”¹⁷

The staff and Board all work in service leadership to support Teacher Leaders so they can create and uphold these personalized and authentic connections. For example, the Shared Services Partner allocates time in their schedule to be present during community of practice events; the Student Support Coordinator is on-site when a Teacher Leader needs to attend community input events; and the Board expects that families and Teacher Leaders are present at Board meetings, both as members and as participants during open meetings.

The “Montessori for Adults” philosophy at WMPSC integrates our adoption of Culturally Responsive pedagogy, Conscious Discipline (CD) and Restorative Justice (RJ) discipline approaches, and healing-centered teaching and learning. These show up in our school culture in specific stakeholder groups, such as:

- *Teacher Leaders and Other WMPSC Employees:* Building a strong school culture begins with the hiring process. Cultural fit will inform hiring decisions, as will completion of a Montessori training course (for Teacher Leaders) and relevant experience. In the Wildflower model where Teacher Leaders share leadership of the environment, these Teacher Leaders must work well together. The School Startup Journey (Appendix B_Wildflower School Startup Journey Deck), detailed in Section H, is a process to determine how two Teacher Leaders who share a commitment to starting a school will work in partnership. Teacher Leaders and other staff will be introduced to the culture before school opening. Professional development days before the first day of school will allow staff to immerse themselves in preparing to practice, adopt, and deliver the culture of the microsite, including training on CD and RJ. As the year progresses, Teacher Leaders will engage in regular professional development, giving them ongoing opportunities to revisit or engage more deeply with CD, RJ practices, and classroom safety.
- *Families:* Families and students will be introduced to WMPSC culture at outreach efforts that take place in advance of the enrollment application process and continue through the summer before opening. Families are encouraged to be part of Community Design Teams and function as a Community Liaison where they can more consistently and fully be co-creators of the microsite. At a pre-opening student and family orientation, Teacher Leaders will guide families about the school’s culture and systems through a series of simulations; at individual home visits with each family and student, as described above, and through the provision of the School and Family Handbook that will outline culture, expectations, and practices. Teacher Leaders will offer monthly family education opportunities throughout the year on topics that focus on specific family needs and will regularly organize family events (e.g., a game or movie night). Staff will also engage families in the school culture by promoting participation at school events, including culminating performances, rituals, and traditions.
- *Students:* The first day of school will begin with an introduction to the school culture. Students will enter classrooms where Teacher Leaders engage them in activities introducing them to

¹⁷ O’Brien, A. (2015, Dec. 22). Family Engagement That Works: Parent-Teacher Home Visits. *Edutopia*. Retrieved from <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/family-engagement-works-parent-teacher-home-visits-anne-obrien>.

school-wide values and practices such as where items belong and how to manage their work cycle materials. Teacher Leaders and the classroom community will reinforce these skills, values, and habits across lessons and interactions as students progress through the middle grades. School-wide rituals and routines will be established and put in place. Tools and practices will be displayed in written materials (e.g., family newsletters) and consistently used across classrooms and during whole-school activities to develop shared communication norms and unite all in the WMPSC mission.

C.3. Social-Emotional Development

The Montessori classroom provides a safe (emotionally, physically, and psychologically) and welcoming setting that provides the necessary academic, social, and emotional supports that all students need. The Montessori philosophy helps young children build emotional intelligence through relationships, interactions, and activities. Montessori education emphasizes teaching children to develop peaceful relationships with one another and with themselves and, as a result, is categorized as a mindfulness education among researchers.¹⁸

Montessori education emphasizes whole child development and is a proven approach to developing children's socioemotional skill development, self-regulation, and executive functioning.¹⁹ Montessori requires students to focus on one particular job for as long as they need, and the WMPSC classrooms will present as minimalist, quiet, and calm spaces designed for the optimal learning environment.

In WMPSC's multi-age setting, teachers have deep knowledge of students' capacities and needs, and students experience consistency of teacher expectations (behavioral and academic) because of these long-term relationships. Over the course of these three years, Teacher Leaders can support students' comfort, security, and emotional health in the classroom and provide high levels of mutual caring and concern. Furthermore, the multi-age classroom empowers older children to recognize the responsibility of modeling good behavior and reinforcing behavioral expectations, creating a safer, more supportive learning environment for all students.²⁰

At WMPSC, Teacher Leaders will be responsible for maintaining the social-emotional health of students, beginning on day one and continuing over students' time in that Teachers Leader's classroom. Over that extended period, Teacher Leaders and WMPSC adults will build and maintain authentic relationships with students so that if they are experiencing any stress, family issues, or conflict with other students, WMPSC can address it promptly and thoroughly. "Studies show that students who have a strong alliance with their teacher perform better academically than those who have any sort of conflict. The key for teachers is to find a balance between maintaining strong student relationships and setting and maintaining class procedures and high expectations."²¹

The Teacher Leaders greet students as they enter to ensure they are ready for the day. Teacher Leaders establish a morning routine of greeting the children and observing them opening their backpacks and communicating with them as they prepare for the day. This routine allows Teacher

¹⁸ Ronen, S. (2021). Montessori Approach in Public Schools.

¹⁹ Duckworth, A. L., & Carlson, S. M. (2013). Self-regulation and school success. *Self-regulation and autonomy: Social and developmental dimensions of human conduct*, 40, 208.

²⁰ Navarra, I. Benefits and Challenges of Mixed-age Classrooms for Small Schools: the Montessori Approach to Early Childhood Education. (2019, June 6) of *the Journal Scuola Democratica*, 334.

²¹ Chatsworth Hills Academy (2017, May 18). *The Importance of Building Close Student-Teacher Relationships*. Retrieved from <https://chaschool.org/importance-building-close-student-teacher-relationships/>.

Leaders to assess that students do not have any objects that are prohibited at school and to understand their mental and social-emotional mindset as the day begins. Teacher Leaders rely heavily on carefully observing the class ecosystem to identify obstacles to its balance and cohesion and prepare appropriate interventions. Interventions include: addressing breaches one-on-one in the moment, bringing issues to the daily community meeting for discussion and problem solving, and preparing small- and whole-group grace and courtesy lessons where role-plays are leveraged to illustrate an issue and allow students to self-correct and practice an alternative behavior. Teacher Leaders respond to any problem or need that a student or students may have, including resolving conflicts through RJ practices. Additionally, WMPSC will contract for counseling and other mental health services in accordance with student needs. WMPSC employs a social worker and learning specialist for direct student support and Teacher Leader consultation.

A physically safe learning environment includes well-developed rules and procedures that students understand. In Montessori settings, classroom ground rules are rules for human behavior that provide limits for the group and the individual. Classroom ground rules allow each child the freedom to choose, concentrate and create.²² Teacher Leaders will expect to revisit and update these ground rules and procedures to meet students' changing needs and the classroom's changing environment. Teacher Leaders will communicate caring through daily actions that show students they belong and that the Teacher Leader is there to help them learn. For example, Teacher Leaders may provide positive feedback in recognition of a student's effort while also providing meaningful feedback needed to drive change (in behavior and/or academics). Our mission-aligned assessment includes the Minnesota Executive Function Scale (MEFS) and the Developmental Environment Rating Scale (DERS) to detail and monitor aspects of our students' social-emotional learning and inform ongoing Teacher Leader professional development.

C.4. Supporting All Students

Maria Montessori developed her method over 100 years ago based on observations and research in schools serving high-poverty communities and children with special needs. Driven by curiosity, social justice, and an equity mindset, Dr. Montessori was a scientist who applied her medical training to teaching and, in doing so, uncovered universal truths about child development. WMPSC is intentionally creating learning environments where Teacher Leaders are developing sites with a social justice, identity affirming, and inclusive classroom focus. The WMPSC Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Agreement (Appendix A_WMPSC DEIB Agreement) calls on the WMPSC community to support all individuals. It builds regular touch points, so the Agreement is a living document to uphold a school culture supportive of students with a variety of needs.

During the Planning Year, staff onboarding, and every Teacher Leader's School Start-up Journey, WMPSC designs for equity. We use the equityXdesign Framework (Appendix C_equityXdesign Framework) to design for the most marginalized students, including students receiving special education services, gifted students, Multilingual Learners, and students at risk of academic failure. Equity shows up in the way we communicate with families and welcome students to events before their first day of school; in the way our Teacher Leaders and staff lean into their own equity and bias work as a regular practice; how our physical spaces accommodate all individuals and how we strive, for not just social justice in our microsites, but environmental and climate justice. We recognize that

²² Montessori Academy (2017, Feb. 8). *What is freedom within limits?* Retrieved from <https://montessoriacademy.com.au/montessori-freedom-within-limits/>.

the most marginalized students and families experience academic gaps - and have less access to resources to create wholeness in their lives.

WMPSC actively embodies a school culture where belonging is centered - and we live into systems where we hold ourselves and one another accountable, even when they are not part of performance management reports.

C.5. Typical WMPSC Student Day

A typical day in the life of a primary and elementary child is one where they take ownership as soon as they walk into the building. They begin by greeting one another while they put away their personal items. At the elementary level, students then collect their work plan to see what their day consists of. The work plan is a tool to track the work they have completed, record their follow-up choices after a lesson, and set priorities in their work.

When the music stops, it informs everyone that it is time for the student-led community meeting. It is a time when both students and adults discuss problems affecting the whole group, which then leads to a discussion where everyone brainstorms solutions they can try. Some days a Teacher Leader might present a whole group lesson, or students will begin to work independently during the morning work cycle. The work cycle is an uninterrupted work time in the classroom, where they choose work they have already had Teacher Leader presentations on and repeat that work for as long as they desire during the work period.

Throughout the cycle, students are given lessons both individually and in groups. They can move freely around the classroom and work at tables or on the floor. While students receive lessons, their classmates work independently throughout all areas of the classroom. Together they review each other's work, rely on each other for help, share materials, and work collaboratively on projects that interest them.

When it is time for lunch, students clean up by organizing and putting away their completed work. After lunch and recess, there is a read aloud, a time to relax and refresh the mind before the afternoon work cycle. During the afternoon, the students return to their independent work or participate in small group reading intervention followed by special programming such as PE, Art, Creative Movement, and Music.

Once again, it is time to clean up and organize for the end of the day. Each child has a classroom job that they complete to get the space ready for the next day, teaching them responsibility for one's environment and community. Lastly, everyone gets their belongings prepared for dismissal. The schedules below detail the order of the day for both Primary and Elementary students. Teacher Leaders finalize this schedule during the School Startup stage, the final stage of the School Startup Journey.

Primary Students Schedule
(Schedule may vary depending on average age of class)

8:15 - 8:30	Arrival
8:30 - 11:15	Classroom work period
11:15 - 11:30	Read Aloud
11:30 - 12:45	Lunch, clean-up, recess
12:45 - 3:15	Nap, afternoon work period, Specials, playtime
3:15	Prepare to go home
3:30	Dismissal
Student day = 7 hours Instructional considering naptime = 4 - 6 hours	

Elementary Students Schedule
(Schedule may vary depending on average age of class)

8:15 - 8:30	Arrival
8:30 - 11:45	Classroom work period
11:45 - 1:00	Lunch, clean-up, recess
1:00 - 1:20	Read aloud
1:20 - 3:15	Afternoon work period, special programming, reading intervention
3:15 - 3:30	Restore classroom and prepare to go home
3:30	Dismissal
Student day = 7 hours Instructional = 5.5 - 6 hours	

C.6. Typical WMPSC Teacher Leader Day

The Teacher Leaders are both teachers and administrators; their schedule reflects how they manage time for these responsibilities. The schedule below is an example of a Teacher Leader's day though exact times will fluctuate based on site design and classroom level:

Teacher Leader Schedule	Teacher Leader #1	Teacher Leader #2	Teacher Leader #3
7:30	Arrival	Arrival	Arrival
7:30 - 8:15	Prepare for students and check-in with each other	Prepare for students and check-in with each other	Administrative work
8:15	Students arrive	Students arrive	Support arrival
8:15 - 8:30	Take attendance and guide students to morning work	Take attendance and guide students to morning work	Administrative work
8:30 - 11:45	Guide students during morning work period	Guide students during morning work period	Attendance calls and connecting with WMPSC staff
12:00 - 1:00	Lunch with children + break (teacher planning)	Lunch with children + break (teacher planning)	Lunch and recess coverage
	Relieved by Teacher Leader Assistant and Recess	Relieved by Teacher Leader Assistant and Recess	
1:00 - 1:20	Read Aloud	Read Aloud	Relieve Teacher Assistant
1:20 - 3:15	Guide students during afternoon work period	Reading Intervention, Administrative work	Guide students during afternoon work period
3:15 - 3:30	Prepare students for dismissal and greet families	Prepare students for dismissal and greet families	Leads dismissal
3:30 - 4:00	Prepare classroom for next day for students/perform administrative work/afternoon meetings	Prepare classroom for next day for students/perform administrative work/afternoon meetings	Prepare classroom for next day for students/perform administrative work/afternoon meetings

A Teacher Leader's day begins with an awareness of self, well before the students enter the space. We must calm and center ourselves before we can connect with our students with respect and peace. We must look at our values, beliefs, habits, strengths, and weaknesses so that we can move and grow with our students emotionally and educationally. Starting the day with a few deep breaths, journaling, silently repeating a simple inspirational phrase, or spending time in nature sets the tone for the day.

Next, the Teacher Leader prepares the physical environment that will serve the needs of their students. They will organize the physical environment to promote independence, self-regulation, and

respect. Together with their co-teacher and assistant, they discuss the lesson plans for the day and any observations that might need to be addressed for the community to be successful.

The Teacher Leader greets each child as they enter the classroom, looking at them with a new lens, as each day is a new day to find something great. When everyone has arrived, Teacher Leaders give students a signal that the community meeting is about to begin. The meeting is a time for connection and community, providing a space to share problems while others listen. After the classroom community addresses all the agenda items, the Teacher Leader validates the concern and asks for ideas from the class that focuses on solutions. Depending on the day of the week, the last portion of the meeting is either a time for sharing, project planning, or presenting a whole group lesson.

As the students prepare for their day, choosing their work during the uninterrupted work period, the Teacher Leader observes the children and acts as part of the environment, not the focal point. As the work period unfolds, Teacher Leaders invite children to individual or small group lessons that fit the specific needs of each student. In between those lessons, they observe the room for concentration, discerning the difference between spontaneous, constructive activity and useless activity, then redirecting when needed.

The transition for lunch begins, a time where there is lots of movement. The adults in the space remain calm and purposeful in modeling the behavior expected of the students. Co-teachers either stay with the children for lunch, have planning time, or take their break. When students come in from recess, the Teacher Leader reads a book aloud to the class, focusing on comprehension, vocabulary, and modeling fluent reading of the text. It is the perfect opportunity to tap into the awe and wonder of the elementary child.

The afternoon work period allows the Teacher Leader to continue their observations, record progress, and finish presenting lessons. It is also when the students participate in specials given by the other co-teacher or assistant, providing time for administrative work or meetings. Observing without judgment is an integral and ongoing part of the Montessori educator's day. There are formal observations where the teacher watches each child or the group as a whole and takes lots of notes and informal observations where the teacher gathers information in the moment throughout the school day. These scientifically applied observation skills allow them to assess the environment for a better understanding of what is needed, in addition to looking into the best way to support each child's individual needs. Then there is an opportunity to choose a course of action, observe its effect, and reflect upon the outcome.

As the children prepare the room for the next day, the Teacher Leader assists them with their job responsibilities and reflects on the day. After dismissal, she continues her work of preparing the space for the next day, communicating with parents, record keeping and planning, and meeting with the teaching team to assess the next steps. Teacher Leaders make site-specific decisions regarding abbreviated school days during the month to schedule professional development and administrative time. We expect that bi-monthly the school day ends shortly after lunch. Teacher Leaders are supported on-site to ensure that there is always an additional adult available at the site.

C.7. WMPSC Discipline Philosophy

At WMPSC, restorative practices are how Teacher Leaders, staff, and students build community and support learning. Discipline will not function to punish, marginalize, or harm students. Instead, all policies and practices related to discipline will serve to ensure that students have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to support their own learning, contribute to the WMPSC community, and thrive in the world beyond school.

Montessori Culture of Discipline

Montessori-trained teachers create a classroom culture where each child feels seen as a unique individual with acknowledged strengths and weaknesses and is encouraged to soar in their areas of strength and to work hard at their areas of challenge. Children are never made to feel embarrassed or inadequate in their challenges because the teacher scaffolds the work so that the child is working at their academic edge without feeling overwhelmed and honors the unique differences that make them who they are and human.

The WMPSC model, with its emphasis on positive behavioral interventions, personalized learning, following the child, and an identity-affirming environment, will combat overreaching disciplinary practices and cultivate each student's sense of belonging. Montessori students enjoy the freedom to move around and work together, practices that align closely with many of the students we intend to engage, who may come from communal and collaborative home cultures.²³

Montessori education may also help to reduce the overuse of exclusionary discipline (e.g., suspension and expulsion), especially for students whose identity makes them two to three times more likely to be suspended or expelled from school than their peers.²⁴ This disproportionate discipline is partially attributable to the spread of zero-tolerance policies and school cultures that emphasize uniformity and compliance and to a shortage of culturally sensitive teachers.²⁵

At WMPSC, all sites and Teacher Leaders align with the same intervention policies and have some discretion to adapt them for their unique student population. The purpose of discipline is to maintain a safe environment for learning to take place. Consequently, a range of interventions is available in consideration of the nature, frequency, and effects of the offense. These interventions may include but not be limited to:

- *Self-Fixes*: Students will be taught strategies, such as de-escalation and calming techniques, for reflecting on behavior, and adults will give them the opportunity to adjust their behavior with guidance.
- *Repairing Harm*: Students always have the opportunity to address the harm they have caused, even if it appears only to affect themselves. Responsible community members understand that harming oneself harms the group. In a primary classroom, reparations would respond to a child that knocks down someone else's work. They would discuss with an adult or the aggrieved child how they could fix the situation. The focus is on problem-solving. What can we do to fix it? This approach focuses on what can be done, instead of fixating on the emotions of what has already occurred and cannot be changed. Our Teacher Leaders support children in

²³ Debs, M. C., & Brown, K. E. (2017). Students of Color and Public Montessori Schools: A Review of the Literature. *Journal of Montessori Research*, 3(1), 1-15.

²⁴ Skiba, R. J., Michael, R. S., Nardo, A. C., & Peterson, R. L. (2002). The color of discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionality in school punishment. *The urban review*, 34(4), 317-342.

²⁵ Shedd, C. (2015). *Unequal city: Race, schools, and perceptions of injustice*. Russell Sage Foundation.

identifying various ways of solving the problem and choosing one solution. In this case, we would encourage the child to help the other child rebuild their work. If they destroy a material, the child may help the adult repair it. If a child verbally hurts another classmate, they could write a letter to the other child. The critical takeaway is that this is child-led. The Teacher Leader's role is to support the child in taking responsibility for their actions and to make sure the child understands it is their role to repair the harm done to the best of their abilities.

- *Conflict Resolution and Mediation:* WMPSC provides students with the time and space to resolve conflicts in productive manners using restorative justice practices, which may involve individuals or groups. Relevant students will engage in conflict resolution activities as an effective means to repair strains on relationships.
- *Temporary Removal:* WMPSC Teacher Leaders will, to the greatest extent possible, broadly avoid using suspension or expulsion as a means of discipline. Sites are designed and staffed to provide a range of support to address any misbehavior that might disrupt learning or create an unsafe environment. Teacher Leaders will play a primary role in addressing these behaviors, and the school culture will reinforce Conscious Discipline and Restorative Justice approaches. We prioritize these inclusive approaches in all discipline situations. Still, we recognize that there may arise problems that will require us to default to suspension and expulsion as a last resort.

There is an expectation that everyone is always “doing their best work” because doing work that is self-chosen and feels meaningful and purposeful drives students—really, any individual. Our job as teachers and staff is to create conditions that allow students to do their best. Teacher Leaders provide students the history of how humans created math and geometry to help them solve real-life problems and all of the fantastic creations and tools that have arisen from this creation—from architecture and astronomy to coding and space travel. They see themselves as part of this continuum of humans exploring math rather than as kids in a classroom doing math worksheets.

In this classroom culture, there is deep respect between children and behavioral norms. A culture of kindness and support allows children to ask for help when needed and call out a child who is being unkind. In the best classrooms, when children see a friend struggling academically or socially, they step in to offer help. In this culture, children get comfortable rising to their best self— meeting their full potential—and become comfortable with risk-taking in their academic work, practical life, and social situations.²⁶

WMPSC Discipline Policy and Procedures

WMPSC views behavior and discipline through the lens of trauma-sensitive approaches, healing-centered engagement, skill building, and approaching our student population in a culturally responsive way. WMPSC understands race and gender disparities in school discipline and also believes that students do not commit infractions at school because they are bad or have problems.²⁷ WMPSC believes students misbehave when they lack the skills to manage their emotions and behaviors. As such, discipline at WMPSC starts with universal, school-wide prevention activities anchored in building structure, routines, and connection opportunities. The focus is on increasing students' capacity to manage their emotions and behaviors in alignment with WMPSC's student code of conduct that will be outlined in the Student and Family Handbook, to be developed once Teacher

²⁶ Stephenson, S. M. (2013). *Child of the World: Montessori, Global Education for Age 3-12+*. Arcata, CA: Michael Olaf Montessori Company.

²⁷ Gregory A, Skiba RJ, Mediratta K. Eliminating Disparities in School Discipline: A Framework for Intervention. *Review of Research in Education*. 2017;41(1):253-278.

Leaders are hired in the Planning Year. Essential components of classroom culture at WMPSC root in Conscious Discipline (CD)²⁸ and Restorative Justice practices, outlined in Appendix C_Conscious Discipline and Appendix C_Restorative Justice.

Student Code of Conduct

WMPSC begins with the behavioral and academic student code of conduct outlined in the Student and Family Handbook, which will be developed in the Planning Year. The student code of conduct will clarify shared community values, norms, and expected codes of conduct; types of infractions; preventative, restorative, and punitive measures aligned to infractions; and staff and community roles in maintaining a positive community. The school and the Board of Directors will review the code of conduct on an annual basis during summer professional development. This annual review will incorporate any areas of improvement based on a review of data or feedback from the previous year. Our Student Discipline Policy (Appendix C_Discipline Policy) aligns with Colorado State Law to ensure that WMPSC complies with state code, including C.R.S 22-33-106.

Students and guardians will be asked to sign a verification that they agree with the WMPSC Code of Conduct at the time of registration. Student and Guardian signatures acknowledge that they have read, understood, and agreed to the expectations to build the WMPSC community and hold each other accountable. Unless there are clear mitigating circumstances, we hold that students are responsible and accountable for their actions. The Student and Family Handbook will outline behavioral and academic expectations and an overview of restorative practices. Students and parents/guardians sign the student code of conduct at registration.

Suspension

Though suspension is a widely used disciplinary technique in general and special education, research has raised serious questions about its effects. Frequent use of suspension has many undesirable and unintended outcomes, including a less healthy school environment, lower academic achievement, higher levels of disruptive or antisocial behavior, and higher school dropout rates. WMPSC avoids suspensions to:

- Focus on behavior as a skill;
- Affirm messages to the child about their value as a person and member of the school community;
- Reflect our commitment to Restorative Justice as a learning tool;
- Use MTSS and tiered intervention with fidelity and to individualize supports for social-emotional, behavioral, and traditional academic needs.

Because of these reasons, in as many cases as possible, WMPSC will utilize in-school suspension (ISS) with students who need an opportunity away from the entire community to reflect, regroup, and determine how to restore. The ISS space not only allows the student to reflect upon the choices made but also to consider, alongside supportive WMPSC staff, how to restore relationships and re-enter the class or school environment. Also, during ISS, students will engage with academic content through one-on-one or small group support from a team member within the school community.

Some offenses may require a different consequence, such as out-of-school suspension (OSS). A suspendable offense can result in up to 10 days away from school; however, in that time, WMPSC will work to ensure that students at least have assignments and access to support, if needed, to process through the work. Before returning to school, the student, with at least one family member or

²⁸ Conscious Discipline (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://consciousdiscipline.com/>.

community support partner, will engage in a re-entry process, which will include an opportunity to determine the best next steps for returning to the classroom or other restorative efforts. WMPSC will have a maximum of 20 days suspension (no more than ten days per incident) for each student for the year to ensure the loss of in-class instruction is limited. We expect that it would be extremely rare for any student to reach this maximum given the other preventative and restorative practices at WMPSC.

Parent/Guardian Notification

In both ISS and OSS instances, parents/guardians will be notified immediately of the infraction and the associated consequence via a phone call home or in-person conversation. Parents/guardians have the opportunity, alongside their student, to conference in person with Teacher Leaders to discuss the situation and determine how the WMPSC community can support the student to return to the school environment.

Ground for Suspension or Expulsion

Per Colorado Code 22-33-106,²⁹ the following may be grounds for suspension or expulsion of a child from a public school during a school year:

- Continued willful disobedience or open and persistent defiance of proper authority;
- Willful destruction or defacing of school property; Behavior on or off school property that is detrimental to the welfare or safety of other students or of school personnel, including behavior that creates a threat of physical harm to the child or other children;
- Declaration as a “habitually disruptive student” means a child who has caused a material and substantial disruption on school grounds, in a school vehicle, or at a school activity or sanctioned event three or more times during the course of a school year. Any student who is enrolled in a public school may be subject to being declared a habitually disruptive student.
- Committing one of the following offenses on school grounds, in a school vehicle, or at a school activity or sanctioned event:
 - Possession of a dangerous weapon without the authorization of the school or the school district;
 - The use, possession, or sale of a drug or controlled substance as defined in section C.R.S. 18-18-102 (5); or
 - The commission of an act that, if committed by an adult, would be robbery pursuant to part 3 of article 4 of title 18, C.R.S. or assault pursuant to part 2 of article 3 of title 18, C.R.S. other than the commission of an act that would be third degree assault under section C.R.S. 18-3-204.
- Repeated interference with a school's ability to provide educational opportunities to other students.
- Carrying, using, actively displaying, or threatening with the use of a firearm facsimile that could reasonably be mistaken for an actual firearm in a school building or in or on school property.
- Making a false accusation of criminal activity against an employee of an educational entity to law enforcement authorities, school district officials, or personnel.

Expulsion

Teacher Leaders will notify parents/guardians of students who are recommended for expulsion. Teacher Leaders will also notify CSI to ensure accountability of the process and be coordinated in

²⁹ “National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments.” *Home* | *National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE)*, <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/>.

terms of alternate options for the student should the expulsion move forward. An expelled student will be subject to due process under Colorado state law. At WMPSC, due process will be as follows (subject to Board of Directors validation):

- Teacher Leaders will follow Colorado state law disciplinary policies and procedures for investigating the facts, obtaining witness statements, and ensuring adherence to due process procedures.
- While the next steps are determined, the student will be suspended.
- Teacher Leaders will work with CSI, as needed, to determine the expulsion length and any additional steps required for the student to return to WMPSC.
- Teacher Leaders shall report any documentable or suspected incident involving illegal drugs, firearms, explosives, or other weapons to the Grand Junction Police Department and/or Mesa County Sheriff's Office as outlined in Colorado statutes.

There will be additional considerations when engaging with students with disabilities (see below for more information).

Appeal Process

Following the decision to expel, parents/guardians of the student in question may initiate an appeal process. Teacher Leaders will give written notice of the expulsion to the parent/guardian within 24 hours after making the decision. The parent/guardian can then appeal the decision. All appeals must be filed, orally or in writing, within five days after receipt of the notice of expulsion. Absent a timely request for appeal, the decision to expel will be final. The appeal will be filed with the Board of Directors. A hearing will be held no later than 10 days after the beginning of the expulsion. Notice of the time and place of the hearing will be provided to the parent/guardian, the student, and Teacher Leaders. The Board of Directors may affirm the decision of Teacher Leaders or order removal of the expulsion unconditionally or upon such terms and conditions as it deems reasonable. The action of the Board of Directors is final.

If expulsion is the final decision, WMPSC understands its role in ensuring that expelled students have access to quality educational opportunities. The Student Support Coordinator will work with D51 and CSI, as needed, to help connect the expelled students to another school in the D51 School District, depending on the reason and circumstances around the expulsion. Teacher Leaders will conduct an administrative transfer in coordination with D51 to one of the other schools in the district.

Parent/Guardian Communication

As stated above, upon student registration at WMPSC, parents/guardians and students will read and sign the student code of conduct and receive the Student and Family Handbook. This document states the individual, peer, and community behavioral expectations of WMPSC students and guides restorative practice. In addition, the Student and Family Handbook will include, but not be limited to, such items as the school academic and holiday calendar, student fees, student information system, technology policy, learning responsibilities, standardized assessments, and dress code. Teacher Leaders will also introduce families and students to the discipline policy and practices during orientation and individual home visits.

Discipline and Special Education Students

Students with disabilities are neither immune from a school district's disciplinary process nor entitled to participate in programs when their behavior impairs the education of other students. Students with

disabilities who engage in disruptive activities and/or actions dangerous to themselves or others will be disciplined in accordance with their IEP, any behavioral intervention plan, and this regulation.

After recommending suspension, removal from a program for more than ten days, or expulsion of a student with an IEP or 504, a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) will be held to determine: whether the student's misconduct was a manifestation of their disability; whether the student was appropriately placed and receiving the appropriate services at the time of the misconduct; and/or whether behavior intervention strategies were in effect and consistent with the student's IEP or 504 Plan. If it is determined that the student's misconduct was not a manifestation of their disability, and the student was receiving appropriate services and intervention, then the recommended consequence (e.g.: suspension, temporary removal from a program or expulsion) can move forward. When such consequences for a student with a disability are deemed necessary, they shall be completed in accordance with the Procedural Safeguards, as defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. However, if it is determined that the behavior was, in fact, a manifestation of the student's disability, the WMPSC team will convene to determine appropriate services and support moving forward.

However, when considering a student for suspension, removal from a program for ten or more days, or expulsion, WMPSC will always take the following factors into account before making a decision:

- The age of the student;
- The disciplinary history of the student;
- Whether the student has a disability;
- The seriousness of the violation committed by the student;
- Whether the violation committed by the student threatened the safety of any student or staff member;
- Whether a lesser intervention would adequately address the violation committed by the student.

Protections in IDEA will apply to any student who has been found eligible for special education services and to any student for whom the school is deemed to have knowledge that they might have a disability (i.e., a student who has not yet been found eligible—including if already referred for an initial evaluation—but the school had a basis of knowledge of a disability). Per 34 CFR § 300.354, should a disciplinary referral remove a student from the classroom, the school will provide free appropriate public education (FAPE) services during the removal period to allow participation in the general education curriculum and to progress towards IEP goals, even if in a different setting. WMPSC will ensure that alternative educational services are provided, to the extent required by law, to a child who has been suspended (in school or out of school) or expelled, enabling them to cover all class material, keep pace with other students, and master curriculum (e.g., additional instructions, phone assistance, home visits, one-on-one tutoring in a location and time of the microsite's choosing).

Implementation, Documentation, and Accountability

The WMPSC Teacher Leaders support both instructional and behavioral aspects within their sites. In terms of behavior, Teacher Leaders employ restorative practices regarding discipline expectations. Teacher Leaders will discuss the next steps with students and parents/guardians once a decision has been made, communicate with the district as needed per discipline procedure guidelines, and communicate with law enforcement as needed. Once all details have been finalized, Teacher Leaders will ensure all information is recorded within three days of final consequences determination using Infinite Campus. At the end of each semester, Teacher Leaders will review student data to determine

trends within particular student groups and consider if there is a disproportionate amount of offenses for traditionally marginalized students. This information will be used to proactively determine the best next steps for all identified students.

Data Collection, SPED and Minority Students

Teacher Leaders are responsible for implementing discipline policies and restorative practices to ensure they equitably and proportionally apply discipline actions across all demographic areas at the site. As stated above, Teacher Leaders oversee that discipline and restorative practices are being implemented fairly and equitably at WMPSC. Teacher Leaders are responsible for entering discipline data, progress monitoring, analyzing data by demographic group (students of color, language learners, gifted and talented, students with disabilities, and at-risk students), and reporting. Teacher Leaders will review all student discipline data and share data at the Board of Directors meeting to hold WMPSC accountable for having a positive school environment with a small amount of discipline infractions. The Student Services Coordinator and Shared Services Partner are also integral to these reporting meetings.

D. Education Program

Curriculum

D.1. Educational Program and Curriculum

WMPSC uses the Montessori Method of instruction to educate PK-6th grade students in four intentionally small microsites. The Montessori Method is a perfect match for our school and our goals and aspirations for students because of its evidence-based outcomes; holistic, child-centered approach; and underlying philosophy focused on serving all children.

Dr. Maria Montessori was an Italian physician and educator who developed her method over 100 years ago based on observations and research in schools serving high-poverty communities and children with special needs. Driven by curiosity and a commitment to equity and social justice, Dr. Montessori applied her medical and scientific training to teaching and uncovered universal truths about child development that led to the creation and refinement of her methodology.

At the core of the Montessori Method is the belief in the innate curiosity and potential of each child. The Montessori Method nurtures students' social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth, ensuring they are "treading always in the paths of joy and love."³⁰ It emphasizes academic learning and executive functioning, and students have ample opportunities to learn using multiple modalities driven by their curiosity. Through tangible, hands-on learning materials that are beautiful and child-friendly, commonly referred to as Montessori materials, students naturally develop their reasoning skills across multiple disciplines and apply and build on their learning in various contexts rather than rote learning. Dr. Montessori developed a complete pedagogy to facilitate the implementation of her method, including an integrated set of student materials and teacher training resources.

While developed a century ago, the Montessori Method is strikingly relevant even, and perhaps especially, today. Its focus on developing the whole child and cultivating growth mindsets³¹ is especially apt for 21st-century learning and living. We have also chosen the Montessori Method because of its proven success with children of different backgrounds and diverse learning styles, needs, and gifts. We have intentionally designed WMPSC with all students of the Grand Valley in mind, including students with disabilities and multilingual learners. The Montessori Method, with its roots in serving students with special needs and schools in low-income communities, supports our commitment to all children.

A substantial body of research indicates that the Montessori Method, when delivered with fidelity, is one of the very few educational models that make a lasting academic and social impact on all children in ways that matter over the long term. A 2003 meta-analysis of 29 school models found that the Montessori Method ranked among the top five in terms of student outcomes.³² Research has also demonstrated that Montessori benefits children from low-income communities and under-represented

³⁰ Montessori Early Childhood Programs. (2020). American Montessori Society. <https://amshq.org/About-Montessori/Inside-the-Montessori-Classroom/Early-Childhood>.

³¹ Lillard, A. S., Heise, M. J., Richey, E. M., Tong, X., Hart, A., & Bray, P. M. (2017). Montessori preschool elevates and equalizes child outcomes: A longitudinal study. *Frontiers in psychology*, 8, 1783.

³² Borman, G. D., Hewes, G. M., Overman, L. T., & Brown, S. (2003). Comprehensive school reform and achievement: A meta-analysis. *Review of educational research*, 73(2), 125-230.

backgrounds in terms of academic achievement, executive function, creativity, social skills, work habits, attendance, and behavior.³³ In one high-quality lottery-based study of authentic Montessori practice in a 'high-needs' public preschool, students assigned to a Montessori program had no income-based achievement gap by the end of preschool.³⁴ Dr. Angeline Lillard, Director of The Early Learning Lab at the University of Virginia, writes:³⁵

Montessori education made substantial headway in reducing the income gap in achievement across the preschool years. Whereas lower income control children were performing a full standard deviation lower than higher income control children by the end of preschool, the difference in income groups in Montessori was just a third of a standard deviation. Statistically, the lower income Montessori children did not differ from the higher income children in either school group by the fourth time point. In keeping with this, the income-achievement correlation was significantly smaller for children in Montessori than for children in the control group. This is a very important and impressive finding in our national search for ways to better help children born at an economic disadvantage.

We are committed to serving diverse students with limited access to a Montessori education (the only other public Montessori school in the Grand Valley, Monument View, is in high demand with a waitlist). Research suggests that the Montessori Primary program may particularly benefit low-income Latino children, especially in building their language acquisition skills. A study at George Mason University examined 13,000 low-income Black and Latino students in the Miami-Dade school district enrolled in either a conventional Primary or Montessori Primary program. The study found that while all children showed improvements in language, motor, and cognitive skills by attending preschool, Latino children – most of whose primary language was Spanish – demonstrated significant gains relative to national benchmarks.³⁶

Other research findings regarding the efficacy of the Montessori Method include the following:

- A 2018 study of public Montessori schools in South Carolina revealed considerable evidence of a Montessori advantage in mitigating education inequalities using an authentic Montessori Method.³⁷
- This same study in South Carolina found, over five years, higher levels of growth in Montessori classrooms compared to traditional classrooms. Students in the Montessori classrooms were found to meet or exceed state standards, and the findings were consistent even when disaggregated by income, race, gender, and other variables.³⁸
- A study conducted in Hartford, Connecticut, showed significantly higher ELA standardized test scores for children in Montessori classrooms than for those in non-Montessori classrooms across all three years of the analysis, controlling for student demographics and previous test scores.³⁹
- The Hartford study also showed a significant Montessori advantage in math and social studies in two of the three years.

³³ Roots in Research: The Ideas and Evidence Behind Wildflower Schools. (2019, January 11). Wildflower Schools.

<https://wildflowerschools.org/roots-in-research>.

³⁴ Lillard, et al, 2017.

³⁵ Lillard, et al, 2017.

³⁶ Ansari, A., & Winsler, A. (2014). Montessori public school pre-K programs and the school readiness of low-income Black and Latino children. *Journal of educational psychology*, 106(4), 1066.

³⁷ Culclasure, B., Fleming, D. J., Riga, G., & Sprogis, A. (2018). An evaluation of Montessori education in South Carolina's public schools. The Riley Institute at Furman University. Greenville, SC.

³⁸ Culclasure et al, 2018.

³⁹ Culclasure et al, 2018.

- Montessori students in both Hartford and South Carolina showed higher levels of executive functioning, were more persistent in the face of challenges, and reported liking school at higher rates.⁴⁰
- Low-income students in Hartford who spent three years in high-fidelity Montessori schools significantly closed their achievement gap with higher-income students.⁴¹
- A longitudinal study of students in Milwaukee also associated Montessori with a significant and lasting impact in the areas of math and science performance long after preschool and elementary school.⁴²

Together, this research demonstrates that Montessori is effective for students in general and is particularly promising for the students we plan to serve in the Grand Valley, with its diverse student population and strong Latino community. Despite the promise and proven success of the Montessori Method across multiple environments and student populations, there is just one public Montessori option for the students of the Grand Valley. We aim to change that with the creation of WMPSC.

Curriculum and Alignment

Although it was originally developed more than 100 years ago, the Montessori Method now has a firm foothold in the education landscape throughout the world because of its proven approach to building strong academic foundations for children and supporting the development of social-emotional skills, executive functioning, and other competencies that align with important 21st-century skills and state policy such as compliance with the READ Act. WMPSC sites differentiate themselves from other authentic Montessori schools because we are grounded in the Wildflower purpose, principles, and norms, with a central commitment to liberatory learning and identity-affirming education.

With Montessori's whole-child approach, our learning objectives for students include both academic growth measures and social-emotional development. Montessori presumes that the natural state of all children, including children with special needs, is positive, peaceful, and intrinsically motivated to learn, and consistent with Montessori philosophy, each classroom is child-centered. Teacher Leaders, who are Montessori trained and certified, guide students in this time-tested curriculum and facilitate the growth of every child, while continuing to grow and refine their practice as teachers; they embody our educational philosophy:

*This is education, understood as a help to life; an education from birth, which feeds a peaceful revolution and unites all in a common aim, attracting them as to a single centre. Mothers, fathers, politicians: all must combine in their respect and help for this delicate work of formation, which the little child carries on in the depth of a profound psychological mystery, under the tutelage of an inner guide. This is the bright new hope for mankind.*⁴³

Montessori Planes of Development and Standards

Dr. Maria Montessori designed her curriculum to reflect the states of child development based upon her observations and research as a physician and educator. The Montessori curriculum, which all Teacher Leaders follow, is organized along these four 'Planes of Development' and promotes learning standards that are aligned with Common Core State Standards and other standardized measures,

⁴⁰ Culclasure et al, 2018.

⁴¹ Lillard et al, 2017.

⁴² Dohrmann, K. R. (2003). Outcomes for students in a Montessori program. Rochester, NY: Association Montessori Internationale/USA.

⁴³ Montessori, M. (1959). The absorbent mind. Lulu.com.

while taking a holistic approach that recognizes the whole child. The Montessori curriculum is fully consistent with the Common Core State Standards used broadly throughout Colorado.

In 2013, more than 50 Association Montessori International (AMI) professionals came together to create a curriculum map (Appendix D_Language Arts Literacy Standards Map & Appendix D_Math Geometry Standards Map) that aligns the Montessori math and language arts/literacy curriculum with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). WMPSC relies on these alignments to ensure that the curriculum is consistent with and supports CCSS requirements and learning outcomes. Our Teacher Leaders have been trained on and regularly refer to this map to prepare our Kindergarten and elementary students to meet standards.⁴⁴ Additionally, WMPSC Teacher Leaders will use Transparent Classroom, today's leading Montessori record-keeping system, which maps the entire Montessori elementary curriculum against CCSS, Next Generation Science Standards, and the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies Standards.

The Montessori Planes of Development, a structured pedagogical approach based on deep analysis and appreciation of individual children, divide children's growth into four six-year cycles, ranging from birth to 24 years of age. Each of these cycles are then divided into halves to create eight three-year stages. For the WMPSC application, the three relevant 3-year stages that reflect traditional Montessori student organization between three and 11 years of age are:

- PK-K (ages 3-6): Primary Program
- Grades 1-3 (ages 6-9): Lower Elementary Program
- Grades 4-6 (ages 9-11): Upper Elementary Program



The Primary Program (PK-Kindergarten)

The Primary Program integrates the following areas of learning:

- Language (oral language, writing, reading)
- Mathematics
- Practical Life
- Sensorial
- Cultural Studies (includes science and social studies)

Per Montessori philosophy, demonstrated by more than a century of practice, primary-age children are “sensorial explorers who manipulate concrete materials to understand ideas.”⁴⁵ Given their strong

⁴⁴ Feez, et al, 2011.

⁴⁵ Irinyi, M. (2008, July 15). Montessori Philosophy: Moving from Concrete to Abstract. NAMC Montessori Teacher Training Blog. <https://montessoritraining.blogspot.com/2008/07/montessori-philosophy-moving-from.html>.

natural desire to gain knowledge of their environment, function independently, and learn through observing and practicing, the 3-6-year-old child is often said to be in the “absorbent mind” stage. Learning standards for our primary classrooms will reflect the 3-6-year-old child’s sensitivity to experiences involving language, order, and movement, while we will also measure their social-emotional and cognitive learning skills. We plan to use the following curriculum, aligned with the listed learning standards:

Primary Standards: PK-Kindergarten

Content Area	Selected Standards
Language/Literacy	Montessori Language Curriculum + Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts + READ Act
Mathematics	Montessori Mathematics Curriculum + Common Core State Standards for Mathematics
Social-Emotional	Montessori Practical Life, Sensorial, Aesthetic & Personal Development Curriculum + Colorado Emotional and Social Wellness Standard
English Language Learning	WIDA Early English Language Learning Standards

The Elementary Program (Grades 1-6)

Our curriculum for the Elementary Program includes materials and activities in the following subject areas:

- Language arts (including phonics, spelling, grammar, sentence analysis, foreign language, creative and expository writing, and literature), including integration of Common Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) curriculum)
- Mathematics (arithmetic, algebra, and geometry)
- Science (natural sciences, physical sciences, and environmental sciences)
- Social sciences (history, civics, economics, anthropology, sociology, and geography)
- Aesthetic development (music, drama, and visual arts)

Elementary children are developing toward an intellectual discovery phase, examining “why” and “how” questions. At this stage, the “reasoning mind” is emerging. Hands-on experiences that apply skills to a wide range of projects and activities include:

- Classifying the world using knowledge systems derived from the educational disciplines;
- Understanding time and change; and
- Building a sense of moral order.

The WMPSC Elementary Program will use the following curriculum and standards:

Elementary Standards: Grades 1-6

Content Area	Selected Standards
Language	Montessori Language Curriculum + Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts + READ Act
Mathematics	Montessori Mathematics Curriculum + Common Core State Standards for Mathematics
Science + Technology	Montessori Cosmic Studies Curriculum + Common Core State Standards for Science + Next Generation Science Standards
Social + Cultural Studies	Montessori History and Geography Curriculum + Common Core State Standards for Social Studies + C3 Framework for Social Studies Standards
The Arts	Colorado Visual and Performing Arts Standards
Social-Emotional	Montessori Practical Life, Aesthetic & Personal Development Curriculum + Colorado Emotional and Social Wellness Standard
Health + Physical Education	Colorado Physical Education Standards
English Language Learning	WIDA English Language Development Standards

Montessori Curriculum

WMPSC adheres to international standards of authentic Montessori as articulated in the Montessori National Curriculum,⁴⁶ which was developed through an international partnership between The Montessori Australia Foundation, The North American Montessori Teachers Association (NAMTA), and Association Montessori Internationale (AMI).

We will adapt and use the Montessori National Curriculum according to the Planes of Development. The curriculum includes carefully designed materials, refined through decades of practice, to both teach children and provide them with opportunities to explore and to teach themselves and their peers. In any given day, week, or year, a teacher's presentation to a child will vary to reflect different "points of interest" based on that child's learning objectives and trajectory, on a timeline tailored to them. While there is an overall scope and sequence to Montessori, it is linear only when there is a dependency between learning objectives. Beyond that, it is personalized for each individual child.

There is notable consistency across authentic Montessori classrooms in that specific materials are used explicitly to support skill development. Lessons and themes are presented individually or in developmentally appropriate, multi-age groupings. All WMPSC Teacher Leaders are Montessori certified by an approved teacher training program (AMI or AMS) and use Montessori materials in implementing their instructional programs.

⁴⁶ Feez, S., & Miller, J. (2011). Montessori national curriculum.

The Montessori National Curriculum, outlined on the following page, meets children's physical, intellectual, social, and emotional needs at progressive stages of maturity.⁴⁷ Students who complete the fully implemented Montessori primary and lower elementary curricula are well positioned to meet or exceed standards for language, math, science, social studies, and other subject areas. Moreover, the Montessori Method is well suited to a push-in model of special education and MLL instruction, since it is inherently child-centered and tailored to individual student needs.⁴⁸

Additionally, WMPSC will use NCMPS's recently published *Elementary (1st–6th Grade) Montessori Curriculum to Standards Alignment (MCSA) Guide*,⁴⁹ which is composed of seven Elementary Albums covering the Montessori Elementary curriculum and is aligned with the Common Core State Standards; College, Career, and the Civic Life (C3) Framework for State Social Studies Standards; and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

⁴⁷ Montessori, M. (2004). *The Montessori Method: the origins of an educational innovation: including an abridged and annotated edition of Maria Montessori's The Montessori Method*. Rowman & Littlefield.

⁴⁸ Renton, A. M. (1990). The Montessori environment as a setting for bilingual education. *Implementing Montessori in the public sector*, 157-161.

⁴⁹ <https://www.public-montessori.org/product/elementary-montessori-curriculum-to-standards-alignment/>

Montessori National Curriculum Summary Table

Site	Practical Life	Sensorial	Mathematics	Language	Cultural Studies Science, Geography, History	Aesthetic & Personal Development
PK3	Preliminary exercises; pouring, carrying, polishing, care of person, care of indoor/outdoor environment, Grace & Courtesy	Visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, gustatory discrimination	Numbers to ten	Spoken language - objects in the environment, read-aloud, sound games, mechanics of writing	Observing natural phenomena, planting & watering	
PK4	Sewing, washing, folding, ironing clothes, preparing food, setting a table, passing objects, accepting and refusing	Temperature, olfactory, constructive triangles, inscribed and concentric figures, bells, music signs and notes	Decimal system, linear counting, memorization of addition, multiplication	Reading, sound-letter correspondence, hand phonetic object game	Puzzle maps, botany cabinet (leaf shapes), zoology vocabulary	Drawing & painting, singing, musical notation, visual thinking strategies
K	Making an introduction, how to apologize, walking gracefully as not to disturb	Chromatic sense, geometric forms (solid and cabinet material)	Skip counting with chains, memorization of addition, multiplication, subtraction, division, passage to abstraction (small bead frame, division with racks & tubes, fractions, measurement)	Phonetic reading, phonograms, word study, puzzle words, reading classification, first books, function of words, parts of speech, word study, spelling	Land and water forms, classification (living, non-living, plant-animal), time, culture/country study	
1 2 3	Care of the environment - plants and animals, table manners, serving and clearing, all of the above, plus mentoring of younger students, preparation for going out	Geometry & Measurement Geometry: congruent, similar, equivalent angles, lines, polygons, circles, mass, volume, length	History of math, counting, decimal system, operations, memorization, money, fractions, passage to abstraction	History of language, parts of speech, reading analysis, grammar and syntax, composition, research, functional writing, literature timelines, literature circles, speeches, discussion, debate, drama	Time, first knowledge, natural history (timeline of life), geography (physical and political), nature of the elements, sun & earth, plant kingdom, animal kingdom	Artist study, elements of design, principles of design, choir, band, musical theater, music composition, visual thinking strategies
4 5 6	Care of environment, going out, preparation for tests	Geometry & Measurement History of geometry, history of measurement, solid geometry, plane geometry, symmetry, similarity, congruence, equivalence	Data & statistics, percentages, fractions & decimals, powers of numbers, squaring & cubing, algebra, relative numbers	Literature timelines, literature circles, speeches, discussion, debate, drama, advanced study of style	Society & civilization, migration, inquiry & research, map reading & making, work of air, atmosphere & wind, work of water, economic geography, work of humans, chemistry of the plant, human physiology, extended research	All of the above, plus: small ensembles, festival opportunities

Instructional Strategies

WMPSC is committed to providing authentic Montessori environments for our students and keeping Dr. Montessori's commitment to social justice and scientific pedagogy alive at every Wildflower site. To deliver high caliber instruction and learning, sites are small enough to be nimble, and Teacher Leaders respond to feedback quickly and thoughtfully, informed and advised by ongoing student performance, affect, and family input.

High-quality instruction at WMPSC reflects this responsive approach and our instructional approach which includes:

1. Guided by the Montessori Method and prepared environment;
2. Focus on foundational cognitive and social-emotional skills;
3. Anti-bias, anti-racist, and identity-affirming education; and
4. Welcoming all learning needs.

[1] The Montessori Method and Prepared Environment

The Montessori Method is grounded in the belief that children learn through interacting with their environment with guidance from a specially prepared adult. A prepared environment includes not only physical aspects but also the social and emotional context in which students and Teacher Leaders share the work of learning and growing.

Key factors of the prepared environment include:

Focus on concrete, hands-on learning: Montessori education is grounded in the exploration of concepts through hands-on learning and Montessori materials, such as the 'golden beads' and the 'stamp game' used to teach place value and computation. After using these tangible materials to learn the meaning of value, a child will be guided to calculate more abstractly using paper and pencil. They may then return to materials, as Montessori manipulatives are engineered to be self-correcting and to support the child's grasp of increasingly complex concepts.

Scaffolded learning: The concrete materials provide children with passages to abstraction and introduce increasingly complex concepts, allowing students to pursue both memorization of facts and deep understanding. Our Teacher Leaders' role is to observe their students, present lessons at developmentally appropriate moments, and then step back to allow children to independently explore, test, and master the self-correcting materials without unnecessary adult interruption. In a lower elementary classroom, this might look like one Teacher Leader presenting "Dynamic Addition" to a child during the work period using the golden beads to conceptually understand place value and regrouping. On subsequent days, the child will have an assigned notecard to complete "Dynamic Addition" on their own, with the Teacher Leader observing the child as they work, intervening only when the child needs guidance, and offering more challenging addition problems as the skill is mastered.

Enriched, orderly learning environment that promotes independence: Independence is a logical outcome of a highly-enriched, orderly environment supported by Teacher Leaders who invite students into deep engagement with meaningful work. Students exercise independence and responsibility as they choose their work, care for their classroom environment, and engage in teamwork with peers. Teacher Leaders carefully design lessons and the classroom environment to promote academic, physical, intellectual, and social-emotional independence. The example above illustrates how a Teacher Leader presents a lesson and then intentionally steps aside for the student to develop

conceptual understanding and skill. The child builds confidence and independence while the Teacher Leader guides the progression of “Dynamic Addition.”

Collaborative learning environment: Montessori encourages collaboration through mixed-age groupings, environments that accommodate free movement, and assessments that emphasize mastery over competition.

Community classrooms: From the moment students enter their classroom, they understand that the classroom belongs to them. Materials are accessible, and children play an active role in maintaining the environment as if it were a home. Students feel valuable and respected, which enhances their learning and experience as part of the school community. Especially in the elementary classroom, children lead the distribution of work and solve problems together. Our Teacher Leaders cultivate a cooperative learning environment and guide students in deciding on snacks, classroom jobs, and other task assignments to support this sense of community and belonging.

[2] Focus on Foundational Cognitive and Social-Emotional Skills

Every child deserves a strong start and a high-quality education. WMPSC seeks to support this imperative as an additional provider of strong early childhood and elementary education in the Grand Valley.

In our first year, we will open one Lower Elementary site, serving students ages 5-8. We recognize that loving, whole-family environments and research-backed learning methods during these early years of social, emotional, and cognitive development are crucial to the child’s development. Authentic Montessori principles inherently align with social-emotional learning (SEL), emphasizing executive functions and social cognition.

In our Primary environment, children regularly experience lessons on how to engage respectfully with one another (referred to as “Grace and Courtesy”). In our elementary classrooms, children identify and solve social problems together. For example, if one child feels left out or alternatively is unkind to another, it is not uncommon for the involved children, or even their peers, to talk about the issue and get the Teacher Leader’s support in figuring out how to resolve it.

[3] Identity Affirming and Liberatory Education

WMPSC is a Montessori learning environment that is also centered in identity-affirming education for all students, families, and teachers. In the diverse community of the Grand Valley, our Teacher Leaders and students embrace the opportunity to learn about and celebrate each other’s differences and integrate into our daily work both intentional and organic discussions about diversity, equity, and justice. We invite and encourage children to be proud of themselves, their families, and their identities and teach students to respect and value differences, recognize bias and injustice, and speak up for what is right.

Our liberatory education model is a way of being rather than a curriculum at our sites. We promote an understanding of social issues that span the broad range of diversity and inequities, including not just race and ethnicity, but gender, language, religion, sexual orientation, physical and intellectual abilities, socioeconomic status, and other identities and differences.

We integrate identity affirmation in the teaching, learning, and life of every classroom. We value our students for who they are, both as individuals and as members of a particular group. Whether a student’s identity stems from race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, and/or sexual orientation,

we affirm that identity. We validate students by ensuring that we show respect for all of the identities students claim as their own. An example of how this would show up in an embedded way in the classroom is by consistently and naturally incorporating the stories, celebrations, and accomplishments of leaders and everyday individuals reflective of the cultural, linguistic, and racial backgrounds of our students or providing opportunities for students to share work in their home language.

During the School Startup Journey, Teacher Leaders delve into their own identity to design and cultivate a community of culturally responsive and identity-affirming adults and children. Teacher Leaders come to WMPSC primarily because of their interest in designing and opening a Wildflower microsite, which by design is a Montessori environment rooted in liberatory education and identity affirmation. During the School Startup Journey and ongoing operation of a site, Teacher Leaders receive additional professional development and coaching around leadership, Montessori practice, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and other inter- and intra-personal skills that the Teacher Leader and/or others have identified as growth areas during feedback and accountability cycles.

The following excerpt from Montessori for Social Justice reflects our understanding of the challenges before us:

We made a promise, as Montessorians, to “Follow the child.” However, do we really follow the child and honor them when our biases get in the way? Can we effectively guide with respect, inclusivity, enthusiasm, and integrity when we are bound by systemic racism? Our reality check: Our Montessori programs are not inherently unbiased. The biggest reason why is because of us, the teachers, the administrators, the parents. We carefully prepare our environments for our children and attempt to promote safe, inclusive schools and classrooms. We encourage no prejudice without actively practicing anti-bias education. We have pictures on the walls that reflect “diversity” and books about Rosa Parks and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., but nothing more. We want multiculturalism without embracing an anti-racist mission. Education is liberatory; teachers are agents of change. As Montessorians, we can do more; we can do better.

By “doing more,” Teacher Leaders at our Wildflower sites embody the value of wholeness themselves and teach students by:

- Nurturing each child’s construction of a knowledgeable, confident self-concept and group identity; this occurs, for example, through student-led family/teacher conferences in which students share with their family members and Teacher Leaders their work portfolios and highlight their individual contributions to the community.
- Promoting each child’s comfortable, empathic interactions with people from diverse backgrounds; this occurs, for example, through frequent collaborative group work and explicitly taught and moderated conflict resolution procedures.
- Fostering each child’s critical thinking and self-awareness about bias; as an example, an essential component of sharing lessons about history with children is to highlight the celebrations and accomplishments of diverse peoples with a particular focus on those of leaders of color and, at the same time, offer the real stories of how biases have prevented communities of color from equitable access to resources and opportunities.
- Cultivating each child’s ability to stand up for themselves and for others in the face of bias; this occurs, for example, by telling stories of how both leaders and ‘ordinary’ people have stood up for the rights of others throughout history and providing opportunities for students to do the

same in the current context (e.g., participating in or developing school celebrations or actions on International Women's Day or International Day of the Immigrant).

[4] Welcoming All Learning Needs

Our Teacher Leaders value all identities and affirm all learners, including diverse learning preferences and interests, cultural roots and languages, and learning profiles and disabilities. A central belief at WMPSC is that all children are competent and capable individuals who will learn and thrive in the right environments. We are radically inclusive and design our sites for the most marginalized students.

Our Teacher Leaders are supported by the Student Services Coordinator, Social Worker, Learning Specialists, and experts in learning science, SEL, and local regulatory practices. WMPSC is seeking to contract with Grand Valley therapists, such as speech-language therapists, but we are also exploring high-quality virtual options given the anticipated shortage of specialists. We have partnered with the public Montessori READ Act Collaborative to enrich our approach and systems and add skills to meet all students' learning needs, as described in Section E.

Structure and Supplemental Programming

Each WMPSC site will operate according to a traditional schedule, August-June, with an average minimum of a seven-hour student day over the D51 elementary academic calendar year of 170 school days. Students will learn math, language arts, culture, and science, along with art, movement, and music, in morning and afternoon work blocks.

From there, Teacher Leaders will design their sites' specific program, including scheduling for:

- Before-care and after-care programming options;
- Exact instructional minutes for work cycles;
- Specials, such as music, yoga, and foreign language;
- Teacher Leader planning and collaboration time;
- Non-instructional days for professional development and parent-teacher conferences;
- Summer programming, if offered.

After School and Summer School Programming

Our Founding Teacher Leaders, Emma Reicks and Georgie Reigel, will offer before, after-school, and summer programming because of the strong community need. This additional programming will support families' work schedules and promote students' academic acceleration, with summer programming also offering greater opportunities for students to be outside. As part of the summer program, we are exploring partnerships with Western Colorado Botanical Gardens and/or Eureka Science Museum, which aligns well with our social and environmental justice values. Our charter budget currently shows revenue and expenses for supplemental programming, though each Teacher Leader team will make this decision for their respective sites when they build out their site budgets during their planning year.

Instruction

D.2. Montessori for All

As mentioned previously, the Montessori Method is effective for students with diverse learning profiles. Our approach with all students is grounded in honoring the wholeness of the child and their inherent academic and social-emotional potential. The Montessori Method is highly personalized and in a “Montessori environment, all children are already on their own informal IEP.”

Students who enroll as a Multilingual learner (ML), and/or with identified developmental delays, language deficits, medically-fragile, and/or any other learning challenge that might inhibit expected progress will be served through a rigorous support process that begins with basic classroom modifications and may progress to more intensive interventions based on the child’s needs and identification. We follow the Child Find process and the Child Study protocol developed by NCMPS, which addresses diverse learning and developmental needs with an emphasis on Montessori’s natural links with special education.

Students who are performing below age level when they enroll in a Wildflower site may need the following classroom modifications:

- Teachers nearby for greater time periods during independent work
- Direct assistance with attention, focus, and concentration
- Structure for behavior
- Guidance in selecting and performing tasks
- Specific and direct oral language development
- Direct teaching of written language and/or math symbols
- Pre-writing and writing practice with a multi-sensorial technique
- Visual Picture System
- Limit choices
- Language presentations modified with specific techniques

Some modifications are naturally occurring components of the Montessori classroom. In the prior example of the child learning “Dynamic Addition,” this child may grow in their independence at a slowed rate, with the Teacher Leader working alongside the student to reteach the lesson after the introduction. Subsequent lessons may involve asking the child to explain the process, tapping into oral expression, and solidifying conceptual understanding. This child may also move away from golden beads as a tool more quickly than others if this manipulative stymies skill building and independence. The Teacher Leader may guide the student to mastering “Dynamic Addition” using pencil and paper (or another material) instead of golden beads.

Our Teacher Leaders employ the following strategies daily to support children and differentiate instruction:

Pacing: In Montessori, lessons are paced according to the Teacher Leader’s observations of the child’s current skill level, not a prescribed idea of when lessons should take place. We encourage children to practice lessons for as long as needed, and use materials/lessons that can be scaffolded up or down. Teacher Leaders respond to the individual needs of the children instead of addressing the class as a whole.

The principle of limitation: Materials are carefully curated and shelves only contain what is necessary for students. In this way, children are not overwhelmed with stimuli.

Multi-age classroom: Older children are encouraged to help and support each other and their younger peers. This creates an atmosphere that is not competitive, as everyone has a turn in needing more help/assisting others.

Physical/concrete materials to support abstract concepts: The environment is multi-sensory, and through beautiful materials, children practice gross and fine motor skills while also learning how to follow directions, concentrate, and complete increasingly complex tasks that reflect daily life, such as handwashing and table washing.

Supplemental programs such as sign language, visual picture systems, and Applied Behavioral Analysis may also be implemented to complement the curriculum and support each child in developing their full potential. When a Teacher Leader has determined that the student is not making adequate or expected progress, they meet with the Child Study Team (CST) (described in Section E) and begin the Child Find process. For a child that enters WMPSC with an IEP, we follow the multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS).

All communication regarding a student's progress and educational concerns will be delivered in the home language of the student's family and/or a translator made available through the Language Access Portal. Family translators are welcome to attend all meetings and assist with home-school communication. All sites will be ADA-accessible, and students, regardless of physical and/or learning disability status, will take part in all school culture-building activities.

WMPSC functions in full accord with federal (IDEA), state (CDE), and local laws and regulations regarding children with special needs. Section E details how we provide fully for children identified with needs for special education and related services, providing services and space to meet IEPs, including specifications for pull-out instruction. When students leave WMPSC, Teacher Leaders, Learning Specialist, Student Services Coordinator, and School Social Worker, as needed, work collaboratively to develop a transition plan.

Inclusivity in Montessori

All students benefit from an inclusive education where students of varying abilities learn together. The unique characteristics of the Montessori educational program lend themselves to providing this inclusive environment. All students will be included in all day-to-day functions of the school and extra-curricular activities unless stated in the child's IEP, and we will provide the full continuum of services necessary based on individual student needs. We prioritize a learning environment where special education and related services are integrated into our general education classroom as often as possible. Our Teacher Leaders work in partnership with one another and Teacher Leader Assistant, Learning Specialist, and Social Worker roles, inclusive of contracted special education service providers, to increase capacity for inclusion.

The instructional methods inherent in the Montessori approach are appropriate for student populations with a wide range of learning needs. Students who are at risk for academic failure are a diverse group of individuals with a diverse set of needs, and so there is likely a combination of strategies that can help many at-risk students succeed and stay in school.

Educational researcher Jeanne Ormrod's recommendations guide our strategies for addressing the needs of Multilingual Learners, students with special needs, and any other at-risk students: differentiated instruction, individualized attention to each child, one-to-one and small group instruction, mixed-age groups, peer tutoring, extra time-on-task, repetition and re-teaching, using multiple modalities and multi-sensory lessons, and special concrete materials. As Montessori practitioners, our Teacher Leaders employ these strategies routinely with all students, not only students with MLLs and students with special needs.

Differentiated and personalized methods of instruction at all of our sites have the advantage of identifying the strengths of children with special needs and MLLs. We incorporate these strengths into the students' work plans to support development in other areas. One-on-one and small-group instruction are basic strategies for differentiation embedded in the Montessori approach. Teacher Leaders use Infinite Classroom for authorizer and district reporting and Transparent Classroom, the leading Montessori learning management system used for observation record-keeping. A consistent assessment protocol, such as the Phonological Awareness and Literacy Kindergarten (PALS-K) screener and growth measures, are used across all WMPSC sites.

For all students, WMPSC will routinely employ Montessori-specific strategies designed to help children with disabilities. Teacher Leaders will teach specific procedures and techniques for fostering attention, which help children focus on completing tasks and learn perseverance and patience; a set procedure for selecting and performing all tasks, which aids in the development of executive function (as well as the cultivation of an orderly learning environment); and specific techniques for increasing gross-motor skill development, eye-hand coordination, and fine-motor skill facility. Using the "Dynamic Addition" example, the Lower Elementary Teacher Leader intentionally introduces the golden beads by aligning the beads on a place value mat and thoughtfully grouping and moving each bead as they add, all the while focusing on the child and materials as they complete the problem. This modeling is a means for the child to then replicate the practice on their own.

Child Study and Multi-Tiered System of Supports

A multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) process is in place to serve students who enter WMPSC with an IEP and complies with the IDEA Child Find protocol . A Learning Specialist and Student Services Coordinator, as well as contracted therapists and a Social Worker, are on staff to support Teacher Leaders beginning in Year 1.

All sites use the same universal screeners to initiate this process for students in PK3-PK4 (Ages and Stages Questionnaire). MTSS also begins when Teacher Leaders determine that a student is unsuccessful with Tier 1 instruction - authentic, high-quality Montessori instruction in the general education classroom. The Teacher Leader then implements Tier 2 interventions in the classroom, such as an additional reading/math group or an alternate material (returning to golden beads or using pictorial representations instead of concrete materials). The intervention lasts for 4-6 weeks, and then data are reviewed by the Child Study team. If sufficient progress is made, the student continues to be monitored. If sufficient progress is not made, the student is referred for an educational evaluation and moved to a Tier 3 intervention comprising intensive instruction in a pullout session with a content and/or behavior specialist. Section E describes the MTSS process in detail.

We are prepared to enroll Tier 3 and 4 special education students and varying disability categories. The following examples are instructional scenarios that illustrate how our charter model accommodates students across the continuum, recognizing that our model is nimble to what the student needs:

- *Ten-hour per week resource for a student as determined by the IEP team with mild disability:* This child could receive specialized reading and/or math instruction two hours per day with a Special Education teacher and/or Teacher Leader outside the classroom while the second Teacher Leader remains in the classroom during the morning and afternoon work cycle to maximize inclusion. The student could receive related services throughout the day with a contracted specialist.
- *Fifteen-hour per week pull-out for a student as determined by the IEP team with moderate disability:* This child could receive daily 1-hour, 1-1 or small group pragmatic language and social-communication instruction by a contracted speech-language therapist; daily 1-1 instruction with a contracted occupational therapist in the classroom, in the small instruction room, and out of doors, as possible; and daily 1-1 instruction with a contracted behavior specialist in the classroom and in the small instruction room. We imagine that these specialized services would occur during both the morning and the afternoon work cycles so the child has time to work with the Learning Specialist on Montessori-specific lessons, as appropriate; we would also encourage specialists to meet with the student during lunch and recess so the student can generalize their skills and the Teacher Leaders would have an opportunity to work in collaboration with the specialist and student.
- *Full-time pull-out for a student as determined by the IEP team with intensive disability:* This child could enroll in one of our larger sites with multiple small instructional spaces. The Teacher Leader would greet the student daily, and we would include them in the morning circle. Then, the child could work with our Social Worker and/or a Montessori-oriented behavior specialist for the morning and afternoon work periods. The Learning Specialist could prepare lessons and consult with a contracted specialist to modify the curriculum for the student's needs and collaborate on positive reinforcement and restorative justice practices if ever needed. The Learning Specialist could also rotate in with the student during the work periods. To ensure the least restrictive environment (LRE), the child could be included in lunch, recess, and specials. The goal for this scenario is for the child to feel part of the rhythm of the day and to form connections with their Teacher Leaders and classmates.

These examples reflect our preparedness and commitment to serve all students along a continuum of needs. Individual service models for each child will vary based on the services needed and the severity of need. Teacher Leaders will also work with specialists toward our collective goal that students with disabilities be integrated into the classroom whenever appropriate; they will have the same access to the general education curriculum as their peers. We will provide all necessary accommodations for the student, including as it relates to standardized testing as specified in their IEP protocol. Teacher Leaders are supported throughout the MTSS process by the Learning Specialist, Student Services Coordinator, and Shared Services Partner.

The Teacher Leaders will participate in annual training offered through Colorado League of Charter Schools, NCMPS, and other organizations such as the Shelton School, which leads Montessori special education trainings to hone their Child Study practices. We anticipate and have budgeted for all Teacher Leaders to be trained in Orton-Gillingham to build their language instruction skills. Teacher Leaders will have time allotted in their schedule for serving as the Child Study Lead, collaborating with a child's special education team, and engaging in wisdom exchange with other Wildflower Teacher Leaders.

WMPSC subscribes to the Child Study protocol developed by NCMPS (Appendix D_Child Study Protocol Deck), which addresses diverse learning and developmental needs with an emphasis on Montessori's natural links with special education. The Child Study protocol is also designed to support the ongoing preparation of the adult as a critical component in preparing the environment. The Child Study protocol is a tiered approach like MTSS that is intentionally designed to make the most of the prepared environment "while building a child-centered professional culture that revolves around meeting the needs of all children, resolving difficulties early, and using a wide range of data to support student development."

Multilingual Learners

Teacher Leaders approach Multilingual Learners (MLL) within a wider culturally responsive mindset; each student is viewed not "as a representative of their culture, but as an individual influenced by social and cultural forces within and beyond the classroom." Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) challenges our community to gain a deeper understanding of not just each MLL and their family, but all our relationships. By grappling with this challenge, we realize the infinite diversity and intersections among what looks like homogeneous groups and how this awareness informs instruction and connections.

The Montessori Method combined with CRP is a powerful combination, ideal for MLL students. Montessori offers: 1) individualized education through differentiation for every child; 2) collaboration among students, which fosters student conversation and authentic opportunities for developing language skills; and 3) the application of hands-on Montessori materials, bringing many lessons to life for emergent bilinguals. At the primary level, all presentations are made first without language, allowing students at all levels of English proficiency equal access to content. At the elementary level, language and gesture are closely tied. The child may attend visually and observe the materials presented. After they are successful at perceiving and comprehending the sensory information that is part of the presentation, language is attached to the object, functions, and attributes connected with the concept, thus scaffolding their language and content learning.

Modifications to the traditional Montessori approach (silent lessons) are sometimes necessitated for an MLL student, as oral expression is a component of language learning. WMPSC embraces district MLL support - both in training and on-site student support. Teacher Leaders respond to the diversity of students in their classroom, eager to understand how to best adapt or modify traditional Montessori approaches to best serve MLLs. As an example, a 7-year-old Amharic speaker will be taught the English alphabet using the Montessori Method's multiple materials as both an oral and a silent lesson. As they progress with English acquisition, the student may continue to receive language and math lessons using Montessori materials but may have modifications during a small group cultural lesson; a Teacher Leader could read text or create scaffolded sentence frames which build productive language skills and confidence. A push-in model for MLL instruction is always preferred unless a child's needs, determined through the MTSS process, suggest otherwise.

Our Teacher Leaders plan to complete the MLL training by the end of their second year at their site, beginning the CDE-mandated training during their School Startup Journey planning year. The MLL Teacher's feedback guides WMPSC Teacher Leaders' continued professional development regarding English language development, disseminating information on how to support children with limited English skills, educating other Teacher Leaders on supporting families to complete the home survey in their language and/or providing an interpreter for the home survey completion, coordinating the WIDA assessment, and making the MLL coach's guidance available to all WMPSC Teacher Leaders. All Teacher Leaders are active in building their sites' culturally responsive mindset. We anticipate a

Teacher Leader holding the role of the lead MLL Teacher Leader to decide about the resources used across sites to modify the Montessori curriculum to support children's English language acquisition in collaboration with the Teacher Leaders and Student Services Coordinator.

Students Below Grade Level

Montessori education is centered on individualized instruction and helps all children reach their fullest potential at their own unique pace, including children considered to be working "below grade level." Every Wildflower site is a mixed-age classroom. An advantage to the mixed age group is that a student may present as a 6-year-old "below grade level" in a lower elementary classroom and show marked academic and social-emotional growth as the older 9-year-old in the same classroom, no longer presenting "below grade level."

Grade level is assessed by Teacher Leaders at the end of each 3-year cycle during PK3-3rd grade, as opposed to at the end of every year. This is in keeping with the Montessori Planes of Development. However, Teacher Leaders make daily observations, keep careful records, and communicate frequently with parents and the instructional team. In grades 3-6, annual CMAS testing and relevant NAEP testing will occur to inform Teacher Leaders on student academic growth over time; comparing class observation and formative assessment with these standardized measures will provide Teacher Leaders with a more robust picture of a child's progress.

Using the MTSS approach discussed above, both primary and elementary students will receive individual support and, if needed, the IEP accommodations and services they require to successfully complete the Montessori program. Intervention and remedial programs outside the Montessori Method, such as an evidence-based reading program like Orton-Gillingham, may be used when advised by the Student Services Coordinator and Learning Specialist.

Students Above Grade Level

The whole-child approach of the Montessori curriculum integrates the development of self-reliance, independence, and respectfulness with academic work. As the child matures, they use personal and social skills to inform and evaluate their own work through individual and group self-assessment. Students are respected as both unique and competent, with an innate desire to learn. They are empowered to direct their own learning through the materials and projects they choose to work on, with the close guidance of the Teacher Leader and an understanding of their individual learning approaches. Each student has an individual learning plan, the design of which they take an increasingly active role in as they mature.

The mixed-age, highly enriched environment is well equipped to meet the needs of accelerated learners. Besides providing the opportunity for children to choose work that is well above grade level (chapter books, long division, and musical notation for five-year-olds; algebra, geometry, and advanced cultural study for elementary students), multi-age grouping allows each child to find their own pace without feeling "ahead" or "behind" their peers. This allows accelerated learners to serve as helpers for other students and to remain in classes with other members of their age group while still being academically and intellectually challenged.

Staffing

D. 3. WMPSC Organizational Structure

What many educational models before us have attempted - creating autonomous school structures that value site-based decision-making—WMPSC implements with fidelity through a thoroughly crafted organizational and staffing model that reimagines teacher leadership, prioritizes decision-making closest to a felt need, and develops systems and operating norms for sustaining this decentralized structure.

At full scale, WMPSC will comprise four microsites with 11 Teacher Leaders and 192 students. The strength of multiple microsites is that it provides a network of support, accountability, and the opportunity to problem-solve and share resources, all while maintaining our commitment to small, community-embedded learning environments. While Teacher Leaders operate concurrently as the site’s “head of school,” “teacher,” and “school administrator,” they are deeply supported through the staff (charter-wide and state-wide), specialized student support roles, and our service provider partnerships. The following anecdote is an excerpt by Erin McKay, a Wildflower Teacher Leader in Massachusetts, explaining how this works in practice:

My co-head and I are the ones who make decisions about our school and community, but it's nice to know we're not alone on an island. We have a wealth of resources and support from The Wildflower Foundation and from the other Teacher Leaders in our region. It's amazing. This support system is made up of people who seem to be experts in every area, including local certification requirements, the Montessori Method, and equity issues. The Admissions and Finance utilities, developed by the Wildflower Foundation, are extremely helpful in reducing administrative burdens. It's amazing.

The decentralized network also ensures that teachers don't have to start from scratch when they want to start a Wildflower School. It's so much work to open a school—the Startup costs, the growing pains—but this way we aren't reinventing the wheel every time. Wildflower offers a ton of streamlined open-source information for its schools. (We also provide it for anyone outside of the Wildflower network who's interested.) We truly want to bring Montessori to as many kids across all socioeconomic strata as possible. We're all separate and autonomous, but we rely on each other to hold ourselves accountable. Embracing non-hierarchy isn't easy and it's not going to work if we don't all show up for each other. Even though it's not easy, it's exciting because it's a new way of handling operations and allows for more freedom in the end.

Our staffing, as depicted in the table below, reflects how the Teacher Leaders are supported at each site and across the charter.

WMPSC Staff	Y0	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Teacher Leaders	0	5.0	6.0	9.0	9.0	11.0
Teacher Leader Assistant	0	3.0	4.0	7.0	8.0	10.0
ECE + Elementary Learning Specialists	0	.50	.75	1	2.5	3.0
Social Worker		.30	.30	.50	.50	.75
Student Services Coordinator	0	.50	.50	1	1	1
Shared Services Partner	.25 ⁵⁰	.25	.25	.50	.50	.50
Finance Partner (state-wide)	0	0	.25	.33	.45	.45

Contracted Staff						
Teacher Leader	.46	0.09	0.28	0	0.18	0
Finance Contractors	The financial services provider and bookkeeper roles will be contracted annually, overlapping the onboarding of a Finance Partner in Year 2					
Speech Language Pathologist	0	Budgeted contracted services				
Occupational and Physical Therapists	0	Budgeted contracted services				
School Psychologist	Budgeted contracted services					
Nurse	Budgeted contracted services					
TOTAL Staff	0.71	9.64	12.33	19.33	22.13	26.70

We have designed our staffing plan to ensure that Teacher Leaders are supported on-site by Teacher Assistants (reflected in Appendix D_WMPSC: GV Organizational Chart). We maintain a ratio no greater than eight students for every adult in Primary (student/staff ratio 8:1) and an average of 15 students for every one adult in Elementary (student/staff ratio 15:1). Charter staff members and Learning Specialists will also work on site and be available as an additional adult in the classroom, however, they are not explicitly calculated in the site ratios.

At the onset, WMPSC will establish a strong staff that supports excellence in teaching, learning, special education, MLL, compliance, and the growth and launch of new charter sites. We will use contracted finance and accounting expertise in our first two years; Appendix D_RFP Charter Financial Management Services 2023, defines the scope of this contractor. As WMPSC sites grow throughout the Grand Valley, the staff will expand to include a Finance Partner in Year 3, and the contractors that were hired to support the charter start-up will be phased out.

Our budget reflects how our staffing expenses will be balanced and how we are investing in creating a sound start-up process to ensure scalable and sustainable growth, centering student support as a staffing priority. WMPSC's formal job descriptions for staff can be found in Appendix D_WMPSC GV Job Descriptions.

The WMPSC organizational structure, as illustrated in the charts below (showing Years 1, 3, and 5), reflects central principles of our management approach and how our :

⁵⁰ State-wide role during Planning Year

Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado Grand Valley

Year 1

State-Wide Shared Services

Shared Services Partner

Grand Valley Microsites

Cactus Bloom Elementary
-3 Teacher Leaders (TLs)
-1 Assistant

Primary 1
-2 Teacher Leaders (TLs)
-2 Assistants

Student Services Coordinator

Learning Specialists (ECE / Elem)

Social Worker

Charter-Wide Shared Services

Contracted Services

- Financial Mgmt & Audit
- IT
- Legal
- Fundraising
- Facilities
- Food Services
- Nurse
- OT, PT, SLP
- School Psychologist
- ECEA/IDEA funds fully set aside to budget for contracted services to meet unique needs of qualifying students

WMPSC Board of Directors
3 - 11 Voting Members
Board includes parents/guardians and community members; Shared Services Partner and TLs (nonvoting)

Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado Grand Valley

Year 3

State-Wide Shared Services

Shared Services Partner

Finance Partner

Grand Valley Microsites

Cactus Bloom Elementary
-5 Teacher Leaders (TLs)
-3 Assistants

Primary 1
-2 Teacher Leaders (TLs)
-2 Assistants

Primary 2
-2 Teacher Leaders (TLs)
-2 Assistants

Student Services Coordinator

Learning Specialists (ECE / Elem)

Social Worker

Charter-Wide Shared Services

Contracted Services

- Audit
- IT
- Legal
- Facilities
- Food Services
- Nurse
- OT, PT, SLP
- School Psychologist
- ECEA/IDEA funds fully set aside to budget for contracted services to meet unique needs of qualifying students

WMPSC Board of Directors
3 - 11 Voting Members
Board includes parents/guardians and community members; Shared Services Partner and TLs (nonvoting)

Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado Grand Valley

Year 5

State-Wide Shared Services

Shared Services Partner

Finance Partner

Grand Valley Microsites

Cactus Bloom Elementary
-5 Teacher Leaders (TLs)
-4 Assistants

Primary 1
-2 Teacher Leaders (TLs)
-2 Assistants

Primary 2
-2 Teacher Leaders (TLs)
-2 Assistants

Primary 3
-2 Teacher Leaders (TLs)
-2 Assistants

Student Services Coordinator

3 Learning Specialists (ECE / Elem)

Social Worker

Charter-Wide Shared Services

Contracted Services

- Audit
- IT
- Legal
- Food Services
- Nurse
- OT, PT, SLP
- School Psychologist
- ECEA/IDEA funds fully set aside to budget for contracted services to meet unique needs of qualifying students

WMPSC Board of Directors

3 - 11 Voting Members

Board includes parents/guardians and community members; Shared Services Partner and TLs (nonvoting)

D.4. Staff Recruitment and Hiring

WMPSC follows a standardized process for recruitment and hiring, to account for biases that are common in hiring practices such as “likeability bias.” This process, adopted because of its success in other Wildflower regions, includes five stages, from creating a job description to closing communication with all candidates. The stages are outlined below:

Stage	Task
Create Hiring Resources	Create Job Description
	Create Job Posting
	Develop criteria for initial review
	Create Hiring Exercise
	Develop criteria for interviews/hiring decision
Build Strong, Diverse Candidate Pool	Create interview conversation questions/template
	Post job in a variety of paid and free advertising spaces
	Use social media to publicize opportunity, including asking networks to post to their social media
	Use networks to reach out to professional connections, including networks of Teacher Leaders and families in existing schools - ask for references
	Evaluate candidate pool for depth and diversity <i>before</i> moving to Initial Review stage
Stage	Task

Initial Review	Use initial review criteria to make preliminary cuts and notify candidates
	Schedule and conduct initial phone interviews
	Invite semifinalists to interview process
Interview Process	Assign Hiring Exercise to semifinalists
	Schedule group conversation with Wildflower charter leaders in other regions
	Conduct group conversations
	Schedule and conduct conversation with current teacher leaders, Board members, or other stakeholders
	Schedule and conduct interview with Board Chair
	Make hiring decision
Make Hire	Make offer to candidate
	After offer accepted, close out remaining candidates
	Complete HR processes

The Shared Services Partner hired in Aurora will be the first hired staff member of WMPSC in April 2023. The job description (Appendix D_WMPSC GV Job Descriptions) describes the responsibilities of the role, informed by the Interim Shared Services Partner, Hannah Ewert-Krocker, who currently holds this role. The recruitment and hiring process for the Founding Shared Services Partner has been managed by Hannah and the hiring will be finalized by the Board Chair, Latia Henderson. The Shared Services Partner will be a state-wide role in the Planning Year, until a local Shared Services Partner is hired for Year 1.

Subsequent hires during the Planning Year include a Student Services Coordinator and a Learning Specialist and will be the responsibility of the Shared Services Partner, with the Board making the final hiring decision. Because WMPSC is committed to a rural place-based and community-embedded model, we are focusing our staff recruitment and outreach efforts on the Mesa County and Western Colorado regions. Recruitment begins with community engagement, directly communicating with our local partners about our staffing needs. We expand communication to our Wildflower network, posting on both our WMPSC and Colorado hub social media accounts. Our recruitment will also widen to include posting our job description to specific Western Slope and Montessori networks, like the early childhood education and education departments and career services at Colorado Mesa University, Mountain Careers, and Colorado Montessori Association.

To date, a recruitment process has not been necessary for Teacher Leaders, as they have been drawn to the Wildflower model through Montessori channels. However, we expect that recruitment may be necessary to bring 11 Teacher Leaders to complete the School Startup Journey by Year 5. With this in mind, WMPSC is leveraging our partnerships with Montessori-specific organizations, specified in Section B, while also presenting at Montessori conferences and cultivating relationships with proximal Montessori organizations that understand our rural model, such as Southwest Institute of Montessori Studies and Keres Children’s Learning Center.

D.5. Professional Development

Teacher Leaders’ professional development begins during the School Startup Journey, before employment by WMPSC. At the forefront of their work at this stage is their Montessori training and coaching by 228 Accelerator, a coaching and consulting organization that “fuels the scaling of radical

and transformative ideas in schools, organizations, and communities.”⁵¹ Teacher Leaders use the equity design framework (Appendix C_equityXdesign Framework) to design their site and build a foundation where every student, family, and Teacher Leader is part of an inclusive and equitable community. Teacher Leader professional development is individualized, reflecting growth areas that the Teacher Leader determines during advice sessions.

Teacher Leaders’ professional development opportunities and our partnerships align with our charter mission and Teacher Leaders’ core responsibilities:

Design and lead a diverse, inclusive, and equitable school community	
Core Teacher-Leader Responsibilities:	Aligned Professional Development Opportunities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop authentic, enduring relationships with community members to inform site design and evolution • Cultivate a committed community of students, families, and stakeholders rooted in partnership • Lead with cultural humility and actively work to disrupt oppressive systems and practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Startup Journey Exploration Albums (Appendix D_Founding Teacher Leader Visioning & Exploration Albums) • Ongoing training and coaching from 228 Accelerator and/or Embracing Equity • Annual Embracing Equity Educators Conference
Guide children in a Montessori environment	
Core Teacher-Leader Responsibilities:	Aligned Professional Development Opportunities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-lead mixed aged groups Montessori classroom designed for diverse population • Employ inclusive teaching practices that meet the needs of every child, including healing-centered instruction • Support caregivers of students to adopt aligned practices at home as desired to create a seamless learning environment • Support all learners, including struggling students and students with special needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance and literacy specific training to meet READ Act, such as the Science of Reading and Common Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA, literacy curriculum) • Refine instructional practices to support the development of an inclusive and responsive classroom • NCMPs coaching and classroom feedback for Child Study Protocol • MLL training through a CDE-approved program and through NCMPs • Understanding Interventions and Therapies in a Montessori Setting through Montessori for Inclusion • Intervention program training, such as Orton-Gillingham reading instruction and Heggerty • Personalized training identified during annual Accountability and Growth Cycles • NWEA MAP, Dibels, Kindergarten Readiness, DERS, and MEFS Administration Training

⁵¹ “About 228” 228 Accelerator, www.228accelerator.com/about/.

Employ strong business and administrative practices

Core Teacher-Leader Responsibilities:

- Build and maintain a balanced budget and implement sound financial practices to ensure accountability and fiscal health
- Ensure accurate and complete records and stay in compliance with regulations at all times
- Operate with sound human resource and legal practices
- Maintain a healthy, well-functioning facility that meets the needs of students and licensing requirements
- Utilize leadership and administrative skills, such as time management, project planning, and systems development, to develop and execute the varied responsibilities of school leadership

Aligned Professional Development Opportunities:

- Wildflower Schools network annual Teacher Leader Gathering
- Regular WMPSC Community of Practice meetings
- Financial and operations self-guided modules and 1-1 support meetings
- Medication administration
- Mandated reporting compliance
- CDE required PD
- School Site Safety Plan
- Suicide prevention and cyber safety Trainings
- CO League of Charter Schools Conference

Teacher Leaders begin this co-creation during the School Startup Journey. In this systemized, holistic professional development program, entrepreneurial educators use their experience as Montessorians and equity-minded community leaders to develop their programmatic vision for a customized microsite that meets the regulatory expectations of the Colorado Department of Education. What emerges are inspiring, coherent school plans co-designed with and deeply connected to the community. Every microsite will become a valued member of its community through building relationships that go beyond the students and families we serve. These relationships will not only support recruitment efforts but also translate into a vibrant school community that reflects the assets and investment of local businesses, nonprofit organizations, and neighbors who have built and contributed to the neighborhood.

- *The Montessori Institute of Denver (TMI)*: The Montessori Institute of Denver is an internationally accredited Montessori training center for early childhood and elementary Montessori certification. Described in Section B.12.
- *Montessori Education Center of the Rockies (MECR)*: MECR is a nationally accredited Montessori training center in east Denver. Several of our future Teacher Leaders attended Montessori certification programs at MECR, and MECR will likely be a certification site for future WMPSC Teacher Leaders. Described in Section B.12.
- *Moonshot EdVentures*: Founding Teacher Leader Emma Reicks is a Moonshot School Launcher Resident supported by Moonshot's 3-stage program that focuses on leadership development, designing and piloting learning environments alongside communities, identifying and supporting connections between Fellows and their local and national networks, and engaging in rigorous school start-up planning.

Our Teacher Leaders plan to complete the MLL training by the end of their second year at their site, beginning the required 45-hour training during their School Startup Journey planning year. The MLL Teacher's feedback guides WMPSC teachers' continued professional development regarding English language development, disseminating information on how to support children with limited English

skills, educating other Teacher Leaders on supporting families to complete the home survey in their language and/or providing an interpreter for the home survey completion, coordinating the WIDA assessment, and making the MLL coach's guidance available to all WMPSC Teacher Leaders.

Teacher Leaders also participate in regular professional development, parent education events, and board meetings. All staff support one another to inform them of pertinent continuing education and the most recent changes in special education and general education regulations and policy. As with other Wildflower schools, we will hold an annual retreat where all Teacher Leaders join the Board of Directors and WMPSC employees. The Wildflower Foundation also holds an annual Wildflower Gathering, where Teacher Leaders across the country convene for a weekend of workshops and socializing.

Teacher Leaders will participate in professional development opportunities tied to our values of Growth and Connectedness. With the input of the Shared Services Partner, who holds the responsibility for human resources, our Teacher Leaders will create a radically transparent process for coaching, observation, and feedback over the year and provide an external lens to ensure all students learn and grow across academic and social-emotional indicators through a culturally responsive Montessori pedagogy. WMPSC will also seek training to meet 45-hour CLDE requirements and MLL student needs.

D.6. Organizational Chart and Accountability Processes

Required Attachments	Content of Attachment	Appendix Item
Organizational Chart	If there is a plan for organizational growth after the first year of operation, include charts for the first and fifth years of operation.	D_WMPSC GV: Organizational Chart
Staff Evaluation Process	Include the process the school will use for staff evaluation that aligns with the school's mission and model and the intent of SB 10-191.	D_Staff Evaluation and Growth and Accountability Cycle

Calendar and Schedule

D.7. School Calendar and Schedule

Required Attachment	Content of Attachment	Appendix Item
School Calendar	Provide a draft annual calendar identifying number of school days, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements	D_SchoolCalendar
Sample Schedule	Provide a sample student schedule or master schedule that shows start and end times of the school day as well as for daily activities (lunch, class periods)	D_Student and Teacher Leader Schedule

E. Student Services

WMPSC is committed to serving all students in the Grand Valley who want to enroll, including those with physical disabilities, Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and/or 504 plans; Multilingual Learners (MLL), children designated as Gifted and Talented (GT), students with mental health needs, and educationally disadvantaged students. WMPSC's vision, mission, core values, norms, and principles create a positive and collaborative learning environment for all students to be who they are within a scaffolded and caring learning community.

E.1. WMPSC Prevention Based Framework

WMPSC will use the MTSS framework and the RTI process as a prevention-based tool to identify and monitor student progress and intervention support as needed throughout the school year to ensure students are growing both academically and emotionally. This is used in combination with the Montessori Child Study Protocol, described in Section D and detailed in Appendix D_Child Study Protocol Deck. The MTSS programming is designed to be a comprehensive system to support the needs of all students through evidence-based strategies, while the Child Study Protocol is a framework for facilitating the process of implementing MTSS, which includes structuring Child Study Team (CST) meetings, identifying the lagging skill that is impeding the child's academic or social-emotional development, generating a specific intervention to address that lagging skill, observing the child's progress and collecting data about the effectiveness of that intervention over an identified period, and then revisiting the progress based on the intervention.

Using the Child Study Team (CST) model, Teacher Leaders at each microsite work with the Learning Specialist, Student Services Coordinator and Social Worker, Teacher Leader Assistants, and contracted School Psychologist, as needed, as well as parents/guardians during the MTSS process. The site CST team, composed of the Teacher Leaders and Student Services Coordinator, meets every other week to discuss student data, which includes formative assessments, TL observations, TC record-keeping, behavioral data, and anecdotal data from families/parents. Teacher Leaders identify students of concern in their bi-weekly site-specific CST meetings, collect and collate data on those students, and bring them to the monthly CST gatherings, which both the Learning Specialist and Social Worker attend. That team then identifies and develops intervention strategies in collaboration with families and evaluates the efficacy of those interventions using anecdotal and quantitative data over subsequent meetings. We also rely on family input about how the child performs and their affect at home. Valuing a holistic view of students by acknowledging the importance of supporting them both academically and socio-emotionally is a top priority.

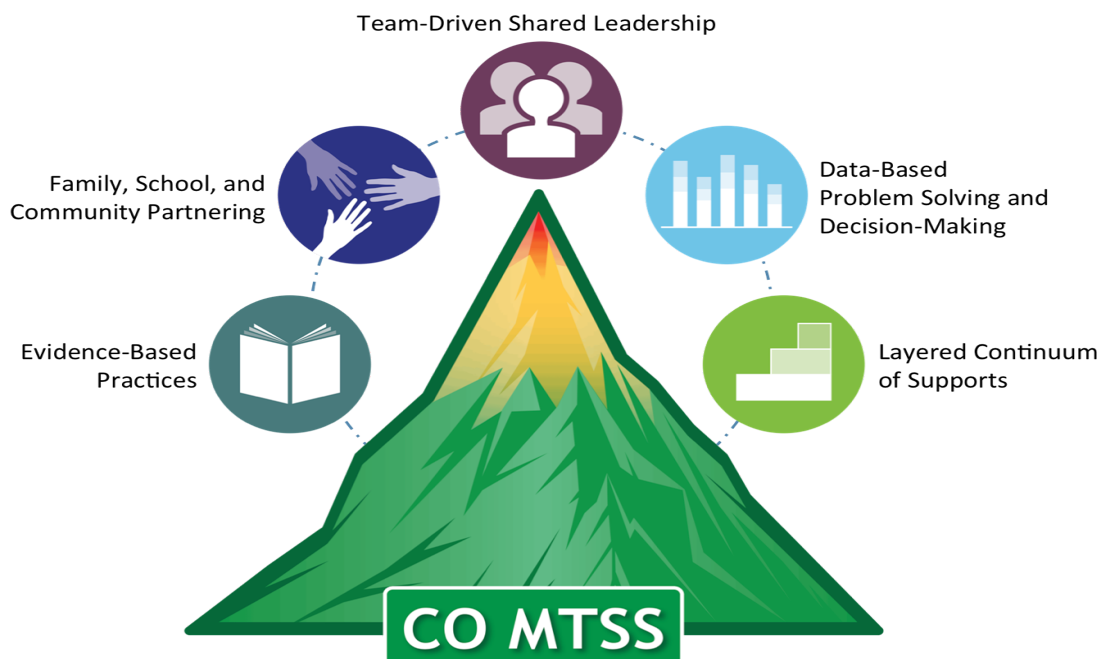
WMPSC's data-driven MTSS process, facilitated using the Child Study Protocol, ensures equal access to support systems for all students and aligns with the Montessori Model. The MTSS plan incorporates the Colorado Department of Education's (CDE) five essential components of the MTSS framework:

- Team-driven shared leadership;
- Data-based problem-solving and decision-making approaches;
- Family, school, and community partnering;
- Layered continuum of supports;
- Evidence-based practices.

WMPSC will follow the MTSS process to identify students for intervention, needed support, and acceleration for all students (including English Learners, at-risk students, underperforming students,

and GT students). WMPSC will follow the RTI process within the MTSS framework:

- *Tier 1: (Universal Level)*: Approximately 80% of students fall into this level, and their needs are typically met in the mainstream classroom through WMPSC's delivery of the Montessori curriculum. WMPSC's curriculum is standards-based with differentiated instruction in a team-teaching model. As students undertake follow-up work in groups and individually, Teacher Leaders can personalize instruction and adapt teaching strategies to address each student's learning style and educational needs. Those struggling to keep up with classes are placed in Tier 2 (Targeted Level).
- *Tier 2 (Targeted Level)*: Approximately 5 -15% of students fall into this level at any given time. Students at this level may need more targeted, specific interventions to achieve academic and behavioral success. Students needing intervention at this level are supported with interventions suggested by the CST. Interventions could include a variety of strategies such as modified assignments, copies of notes, or individual checks for understanding. If targeted interventions are not successful and the student continues to struggle to make sufficient academic progress, a more intensive intervention plan will be put in place.
- *Tier 3 (Intensive Level)*: approximately 5% of students fall into this level and require the most intense interventions due to performance being significantly below expected benchmarks. The student may be moved back into Tier 2 support when learning objectives are met through intensive interventions. Students who remain unresponsive to Tier 3 interventions will be referred to the special education team for clinical evaluation to determine the presence of any learning disabilities.



The three tiers are designed to be fluid: Within all three tiers Teacher Leaders are constantly re-assessing students to determine whether interventions are successful or whether new strategies should be used. This is reflected in the diagram above: the wheel at the center identifies the level with the cyclical tasks to analyze, implement, evaluate, and define.

E.2. WMPSC Student Services Support Program

The WMPSC student services support program is informed by Montessori practices of student-centered learning and our charter, which is designed to create an inclusive learning environment and infuse a sense of belonging and identity affirmation for all students. WMPSC is committed to providing a continuum of services in the least restrictive environment, underscored by the Montessori Method, which benefits students with and without support needs and views inclusion as natural and necessary.⁵²

WMPSC sees our student services support program as fully integrated into our teaching and learning, led by Teacher Leaders who receive professional training that meets state literacy and MLL requirements, as well as follow their own Growth and Connectedness Plan to build their expertise in student services delivery. Teacher Leaders' Professional Development opportunities are described in Section D: Educational Programming. The Teacher Leaders are supported by a Student Services Coordinator (SSC) and robust school-based staff (Learning Specialist, Teacher Leader Assistants) and contractors (School Psychologist, Licensed Occupational Therapist, Speech-Language Therapist, etc.). These contractors are selected and onboarded to integrate them into the school culture and meet WMPSC's strong hiring process, reflected in the Teacher Leader School Startup Journey (Appendix B_Wildflower School Startup Journey Deck). Contractors follow a process that includes training in Wildflower Ways of Working (Appendix E_Wildflower Self-Management Ways of Working), the Montessori Method, and equityXDesign. Contractors are required to shadow a Teacher Leader prior to employment and, as part of the onboarding process, attend a CST meeting and commit to the DEIB Agreement (Appendix A_WMPSC DEIB Agreement).

The onboarding process highlights our Wildflower microsite model and the Montessori classroom culture where all students receive maximum differentiation and are affirmed in their identities, including different learning approaches. The small group and individualized instruction of the Montessori classroom ensures that every child works on concepts specifically geared toward their level of mastery of that concept. Teacher Leaders work with each student individually or in small groups, and monitor and adjust their instruction to address the needs of the individual or small group. Once the student and/or students are on track and working toward their next goal, the Teacher Leader moves on and addresses the next student or group of students at the same personalized level. Montessori observation protocol and assessment and reporting procedures inform this teaching.

Additionally, the microsite model and multi-age classroom give Teacher Leaders and students the opportunity to be seen and learn from one another in a community that centers student needs in a nimble way. For example, a student requiring accelerated instruction in reading might join the older students in the classroom for reading activities, while the same student, finding math more challenging, might stay with their peers or even work with some of the younger students in a class or discrete activity focused on math. With the constant shifting of small group activities and configurations on an as-needed basis, students avoid being pigeon-holed into ability groups or always working with the same students considered to be on the same academic level as them. Instead, they move fluidly to the group or activity which is most individually appropriate for their level of mastery at that specific moment in time for that specific skill or content area, guided by the Teacher Leader and the Montessori progress monitoring tools.

⁵² Implementing Montessori Education in the Public Sector, 1990 p.273.

Budgeting for the Student Services Support Program

Our fiscal plan fully takes into account how WMPSC will support historically underserved students with special needs, students identified as GT, MLL, and students with mental health and/or other health needs. The Standardized Budget Template, detailed in Section G, incorporates the various funding sources used to serve student subgroups, including students with IEPs.

WMPSC will hire Learning Specialists certified in Special Education with specialized training, such as Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) or Reading and Literacy. This role will work with our Teacher Leaders trained in the Child Study Process, Orton-Gillingham, and meeting READ Act 'Science of Learning' and MLL requirements. The Student Services Coordinator supports the assessment and reporting of students and the creation and delivery of academic and socio-emotional support for students, with a keen focus on students with IEPs or 504 Plans.

We have designed our staffing plan to meet the needs of our anticipated special education population. Our staffing structure currently follows a student services staffing allocation formula, recommended by Colorado Charter Schools Institute (CSI). Our budget and Planning Year processes, however, depend on conference with CSI to finalize alignment with district recommendations. The formula for staff-to-student ratio based on identified student needs is currently slated per below:

Student Services Staff Position	FTE Staff: Student Ratio
Learning Specialist	1:85
Student Services Coordinator + Social Worker	1:100
Nurse	1:750
Contracted therapists, such as S-L	1:400

Additionally, our expenses include staffing, curriculum and materials, and professional development. The budget reflects how these expenses are projected to grow based on enrollment, site growth, and expected student needs. In Year 0, we are working to engage an occupational therapist, speech and language pathologist, and nurse. WMPSC is prepared to contract for vision, hearing, and related screenings and services as necessary for an hourly rate. Fundraising is specifically targeted to elevate our special education resources. Our projected salary expenses for student services support is below:

Staffing	Projected Salary Expense				
Role	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Student Services Coordinator	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000
Learning Specialist(s)	\$25,000	\$37,500	\$50,000	\$75,000	\$150,000
Social Worker	\$16,500	\$16,500	\$27,500	\$27,500	\$41,250
Nurse	\$2,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
Contracted therapists, such as S-L, O-T	\$6,000	\$8,000	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Psychologist (assessment and crisis)	\$2,000	\$4,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000

WMPSC is prepared to use curriculum beyond Montessori where necessary and/or helpful to meet student learning goals, and has budgeted curriculum and training for this purpose. To meet READ Act requirements, WMPSC plans to use Amplify CKLA as our core program and assessment tool, Wonder Works and Orton-Gillingham as our intensive curriculum; and The Writing Road to Reading as our supplemental program. Additional curricula Teacher Leaders will consider to meet the unique learning needs of their students include Zones of Regulation, Social Thinking, Step up to Writing and Foundations. These materials average \$3000 annually in our budget.

To meet the ongoing training of Teacher Leaders, we have allocated \$1,000/year for professional development per Teacher Leader. WMPSC anticipates a special education population at or below 17% at full growth. This would likely represent a maximum of nine students per year starting in Year 1 (K-3). Each December, a count of eligible IEP students enrolled in the school will be taken. WMPSC will receive funding during the following school year to assist with the services required for those students. As listed in the Budget Assumptions in Section G, statewide estimates for the 2024-2025 school year put these funding levels at \$1,600/IEP student from IDEA and \$1,232/IEP student from ECEA.

WMPSC Grand Valley will be learning from WMPSC Aurora in our approaches and will continue to consult with CSI and consider ongoing special education insurance models and special education funds to be used with the IDEA and ECEA funds.

E.3. Students Who Have Been Historically Underserved

WMPSC will serve all students who want to enroll in our charter. This includes students who are considered historically underserved due to academic, economic, or social-emotional risk factors and educationally disadvantaged, defined by C.R.S. 22-30.5-106(q)) as students in danger of not graduating, being promoted, or meeting other education-related goals. Risk factors may include but are not limited to socioeconomic status; academic background; behavior, cognitive, or physical problems; family or community environment; and school capacity to meet student needs.

The Montessori model intentionally personalizes the educational approach for each student, which especially benefits educationally disadvantaged students and ensures they will not fall through the cracks. The Montessori model, coupled with WMPSC practices, has the following supports and interventions built in for all students:

- NWEA MAP testing is administered twice a year to identify areas of growth as well as areas in need of further support;
- Presentations of Learning showcase students' areas of challenges and accomplishments;
- Three-year cycles with Teacher Leaders and peers allow students and adults to know each other well;
- The development of elementary portfolios over six years identify personal, academic, and emotional goals and accomplishments of students;
- Individualized standards-aligned observations, record keeping, and reporting in Transparent Classroom.

All historically underserved and educationally disadvantaged students, including students with special needs, those on 504 Plans, those experiencing homelessness, and those in foster care, will follow the same procedures described in the above sections as they pertain to their unique needs and

circumstances, including students with special needs, those on 504 Plans, those experiencing homelessness, and students in foster care. These procedures include working to address a child's housing needs more directly and the transportation challenges inherent in their fluid living arrangements so that WMPSC can be a source of continuity and stability in their lives. Our SSC works directly with families and community social services agencies to help prevent our foster and homeless student population from needing to switch schools and curricula mid-year, which would further educationally disadvantage them. Instead, they will have a chance to engage more deeply in their classwork, develop important relationships with their Teacher Leaders, and benefit from all the academic and socio-emotional supports WMPSC offers.

Additionally, WMPSC is prepared to serve all students regardless of their physical disability. Our sites will meet ADA requirements and will contract with service providers to provide therapy and adapted education to students directly. We expect that our Teacher Leaders and staff will receive additional training to meet the needs of students with physical disabilities and will integrate this into WMPSC's annual professional development plans and calendar, to be finalized during the Planning Year.

E.4. Students with Special Needs

WMPSC operates in full compliance with federal laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. We also understand and will comply with the requirements of Colorado's Exceptional Children's Education Act. WMPSC is committed to providing a continuum of services in the least restrictive environment appropriate to the individual student's needs and consistent with the Montessori Method. This means that students are in class as much as possible. Special Education providers, such as the Learning Specialist and contracted licensed therapists, work with Teacher Leaders to know how to meet IEP minutes and support effective student accommodations and modifications. The Learning Specialist might join a lesson with the Teacher Leader for inclusion support. Some students may require pull-out support; in these situations, the student works with the Special Education provider individually or in a small group. Pull-out support with the Learning Specialist might occur as an individualized or small group lesson in the classroom. These lessons would be consistent with the classroom culture of individualized or small group lessons for all students. In other cases, the Learning Specialist might conduct pull-out support in a separate environment. WMPSC will manage IEPs and progress monitoring through Infinite Campus, which will facilitate efficient and easy communication with district personnel on special education issues.

The WMPSC budget reflects the required resources to support students with special needs. We have allocated funding to employ a Learning Specialist and contracted therapists, such as a certified Speech-Language Pathologist; purchase materials and curriculum for pull-out interventions; subscribe to Infinite Campus; and support all Teacher Leaders in completing focused professional development to understand and teach a student with special needs. WMPSC understands the current scarcity of special education providers, especially in the Western Slope, and is currently working with the Special Education department at Colorado Mesa University to develop an internship placement at WMPSC and also explore high-quality virtual options, if needed.

It is worth reiterating here that several accommodations often present in IEPs and 504s are naturally supported by the Montessori approach to learning, especially given the prevalent use of concrete materials in lessons and independent work. In math, for example, concrete manipulative materials are used to teach nearly all math concepts and can be utilized by children for follow-up work at any point

in the child's learning. It is customary in Montessori classrooms for guides to continue integrating concrete manipulatives in students' learning throughout the elementary years. Given that Montessori pedagogy is an individualized approach to student learning, integrating accommodations and modifications set forth in IEP and 504 plans is common and fluid, and coordination of this work between the Teacher Leader and Learning Specialist will ensure that each individual student is receiving instruction, scaffolding, and support as appropriate, according to their individual needs and learning profiles.

The IEP and Infinite Campus will be used to track progress made toward goals and the effectiveness of various accommodations and modifications. We also will employ a Montessori-based platform, Transparent Classroom, to manage Teacher Leader observations. The SSC is responsible for integrating WMPSC with existing CSI systems for ease of compliance and reporting procedures.

The frequency of progress monitoring will vary by the student's Tier level per below:

1. *Tier 1: Benchmarking* – Assess all students two times per year for universal screening (early identification) and general education progress monitoring.
2. *Tier 2: Strategic Monitoring* – Monitor at-risk students monthly and evaluate the effectiveness of instructional changes.
3. *Tier 3: Intensive Progress Monitoring* – Write individualized annual goals, but monitor progress data much more frequently (ex., bi-weekly or even weekly, depending on the student). The frequent monitoring will take place by the CST via regularly scheduled meetings.

All students with IEPs have a formal annual meeting (which includes the parents/guardians, Learning Specialist, Teacher Leaders, and SSC). The student's IEP is reviewed at the annual meeting to ensure that the student is meeting the IEP goals or making appropriate progress. Strategies may be refined or modified based on the student's progress. A parent/guardian can submit a special request to have a student's IEP reviewed or modified before the annual evaluation is scheduled. In addition, any time a change is made to an IEP, the special education team must call a formal meeting that involves the student's parents/guardians and Teacher Leaders.

The annual IEP meetings are when a student's progress data is evaluated and discussed to determine if they are ready to continue in the general education program without special modifications or accommodations. If it is determined that the student is ready based on progress data cited in IEP, as well as from qualitative observations from the Teacher Leader and the Learning Specialist, then the team will prepare a transition plan to ensure a successful transition into the general education program without modifications. This will be discussed at an IEP exit meeting. Parents/guardians are part of this determination. Students who exit the special education program will still be monitored to ensure continued success.

Identification of Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and 504 Plans

We anticipate that some students with special education needs will have been already identified prior to enrolling in the school and will have an IEP in place. However, other students with special needs might not have been identified as needing additional support due to their young age. As such, we are putting in place a strong process for identifying students who might be in need of additional services.

The CST, described in Section E.1., helps manage this process. If a student is flagged during screening assessment and/or observed to be struggling and the Teacher Leader has already tried a

number of Tier 3 interventions that have not been successful, then the Teacher Leader assembles the CST. The CST discusses the challenges the student is having, along with the different interventions that have been tried and the impact of those interventions. Parents/guardians are notified of this process and are invited to attend a meeting at the onset, per Child Study protocol. The Learning Specialist spends time observing the student in class, working with the Teacher Leaders to determine what research-based interventions to implement, recommending additional interventions, and then monitoring the implementation of those interventions for 30 to 45 days.

The CST implements between three to five interventions during the observation and progress monitoring period. At the end of the observation period, the student is referred for special education testing if the interventions have still not proven effective. Families will have been involved in the CST's intervention work, understand their child's successes, and be informed of the testing if it reaches that point. At that time, the Learning Specialist, Teacher Leaders, and other specialized therapists conduct their own observations and begin testing. To determine eligibility, the special education team must evaluate the child in all areas of the suspected disability. The type of testing and who administers the tests depends on the student's needs. The testing process is based on collecting the broadest base of data possible to ensure that any diagnosis is as accurate as possible.

IEP Development

If the body of evidence indicates that the student has a disability that is having an adverse effect on their educational progress, then the student is eligible for special education services. At this time, the student's family and the special education team meet to review the testing results and begin the development of an IEP for the student. The IEP will be developed and implemented as soon as possible following the determination of eligibility for special education services. When developing an IEP, the team considers the strengths of the student; the concerns of the parents/guardians for the student's education; the results of the evaluation; and the academic, developmental, and functional needs of the student. The IEP will include the following:

- The student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, describing how the student is currently doing in school and how the student's disability affects their involvement and progress in the general curriculum;
- Annual goals for the student that can reasonably be accomplished in a year;
- The special education and related services to be provided to the student, including supplementary aids and services (such as a communication device);
- How (and if) the student is to participate in state and district-wide assessments, including what modifications to tests the student needs;
- Service delivery details, such as when services and modifications will begin, how and how often they will be provided, how long they will last; and,
- How school personnel will measure the student's progress toward the annual goals.

Once the IEP has been fully developed, Teacher Leaders, parents/guardians, and students (when appropriate) will be included in IEP meetings. IEPs are reviewed annually and are thoroughly re-evaluated triennially.

504 Plan Development

At times, a student is not identified upon enrollment as needing an IEP or 504 plan, but WMPSC staff observes any condition that significantly limits daily activities. When this occurs, Teacher Leaders and the Learning Specialist will begin the Child Study protocol, request a testing referral, and draft a 504 plan if testing results indicate a need for a 504 plan. Note the distinction between a 504 plan and IEP

is that a 504 plan typically addresses the need for “accommodations” (such as extended time for testing for a student diagnosed as having ADHD) rather than learning “modifications” (such as a modified curriculum or instruction).⁵³

E.5. Students with Gifted Abilities

WMPSC believes that all students should be treated like they are Gifted and Talented (GT). This is evident in the scaffolding and choice in the Montessori curriculum that gives students opportunities for deep learning, high quality of work standards, access to multiple levels of curricula, and a personalized curriculum that allows them to create their own pathway to learning and work to their fullest potential.

If a student enters WMPSC designated as GT, the student and their Teacher Leaders will maintain the student’s Advanced Learning Plan (ALP). The WMPSC Teacher Leaders and students work collaboratively to develop ALP goals that support student interests and goals. One Teacher Leader at each site will attend CSI training or complete the CDE ALP Webinar Series to support the development of ALPs. Advanced learning projects aligned to a student’s ALP will take place throughout the year. The WMPSC budget aligns with the required resources to support GT students by allocating funding to purchase curriculum and materials for GT enrichment and ALP completion; subscribe to Infinite Campus, which we will use to progress monitor all GT students; and support all Teacher Leaders in completing GT training, as needed.

If a student enters WMPSC without GT identification, Teacher Leaders will refer students for possible gifted identification based on a body of evidence collected during the year, beginning in Kindergarten. Teacher Leaders meet with parents and reference the CDE Gifted Identification Guidance Handbook⁵⁴ before evaluation. The body of evidence will be both quantitative (ex., norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests) and qualitative (ex., performance tasks graded on a rubric, observations, parent/guardian input, interviews). Students may be identified as gifted in the following areas: general or specific intellectual ability; creative or productive thinking; leadership abilities; specific academic aptitude in reading, writing, math, social studies, science, or world language; and/or specific talent aptitude in visual arts, performing arts, musical dance, or psychomotor abilities.⁵⁵ Teacher Leaders will be responsible for developing qualifying students’ ALPs and managing the overall GT program. Our Teacher Leaders are aware and keep attentive of MLL GT students, given that these students oftentimes are not identified. They do this by observing rates of progress, memory, and attention, as well as non-language specific learning, common in the Montessori classroom, such as using manipulatives to understand math concepts.

E.6. Multilingual Learners

Based on demographic data of Grand Valley students, WMPSC anticipates serving approximately 7% of students that will qualify for Multilingual Learner (MLL) services. The WMPSC budget reflects the resources needed to support MLL students and allocates funding to purchase MLD curriculum for the MLD pull-out interventions; subscribe to Infinite Campus, which we will use to monitor the progress of all MLL students; and support all Teacher Leaders in completing the CDE recommended 45 hours of training for MLL instruction. Founding Teacher Leaders Georgie Reigel and Emma Reicks have deep experience teaching MLL locally and in larger urban areas with a significant MLL percentage. Teacher

⁵³ <https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/special-services/504-plan/understanding-504-plans>.

⁵⁴ <https://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/idguidebook>.

⁵⁵ <https://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/idguidebook>, p. 20.

Leaders will attend ongoing MLL training and meetings to stay informed on current research and practice, and we are seeking a Student Services Partner who is bilingual.

Identification of English Learners

In the Planning Year, all WMPSC Teacher Leaders will review CSI's ELD Coordinator training materials to be prepared for the identification cycle.⁵⁶ WMPSC requires that every student's parent/guardian complete a student language data form/ home language questionnaire as part of the enrollment process. This form identifies students whose primary or home language is one other than English. If a student's first language is not English or if the language regularly used by the student's parent/guardian is not English, then the Teacher Leader gives that student the WIDA-Screener to determine appropriate placement. The WIDA Screener is administered within ten days of the student starting school. When a student qualifies for MLL services, WMPSC sends a letter home to the family (in both English and their native language) notifying them that the student will be receiving MLD services. The student's score on the WIDA Screener determines the level of services and the specific strategies in the MLD Plan. The student's MLD Plan will be developed and shared with the student's family within 30 days of the start of the school year.

Students who are identified as not English proficient receive the most intense level of services: one hour of pull-out instruction four days a week. The pull-out instruction will be provided by the MLD teacher. Students who are identified as limited English proficient will receive one hour of pull-out instruction twice a week. Regardless of the student's MLD level, the MLD teacher works with the Teacher Leaders to support the student. All strategies and support services must begin within 30 days of the student's start date at the school.

Once a student has been designated an MLL, they will be assessed annually (using ACCESS testing) to assess growth and to ensure that they are still receiving the appropriate level of services for their language needs. The MLD teacher identifies the appropriate ACCESS for MLLs assessment based on the student's language skills (Tier A for beginning; Tier B for intermediate; and Tier C for advanced). The specific strategies are discussed in the next section. All strategies and support services must begin within 30 days of the student's start date at the school.

Instructional Programs and Practices for Multilingual Learners

In all MLD instruction, whether in the classroom or pulled-out with the MLD teacher, the following essential components of MLD instruction are followed:

- Explicit language objectives are provided during instruction that incorporate listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills that are appropriate for each student's language proficiency level.
- Instruction incorporates appropriate school-adopted texts and materials as well as specific supplemental resources.
- Instruction and strategies are interactive and provide an open environment that allows ELLs to feel safe to experiment with English.
- Instruction provides ample practice and reinforcement activities that are appropriate for each student's proficiency level.
- Student instructional needs are determined by ongoing formative assessments, common formative assessments, and analysis of student writing, reading, and speaking samples.
- Differentiated instruction is evidenced by teaching strategies as well as questioning strategies that are based on students' proficiency levels.

⁵⁶ <https://resources.csi.state.co.us/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/ELD-Coordinator-Training-Aug-22.pdf>

- Differentiated instruction is evidenced by the intentional grouping of students according to proficiency levels as appropriate for the activity (homogeneous/heterogeneous grouping).
- Presentation of Learning assignments and direct instruction assignments are differentiated based upon students' language proficiency levels.
- Vocabulary instruction and practice are part of ongoing classroom language objectives assessed by comprehension checks (both oral and written).

WMPSC uses Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) with MLL during pull-out and in the mainstream classroom. This means that the school uses teaching objectives, instruction, and strategies that are determined by the student's English literacy proficiency and that are designed to develop content understanding and access to the core curriculum. Sheltered instruction focuses on teaching so that content and skills are accessible for all students. It focuses on effective teaching strategies for MLL in all content areas. The rationale behind sheltered instruction is that it provides students with opportunities to learn academic content while simultaneously providing learning opportunities with language, literacy, and social interaction skills. In addition, when comprehensible input and social interaction opportunities are combined, learning tends to be deeper and students retain more information. For Teacher Leaders, sheltered instruction requires planning that involves content objectives, a focus on language, and social objectives.

Teacher Leaders will follow CDE sheltered instruction strategies, described in *Guidebook on Designing, Delivering, and Evaluating Services for Multilingual Learners*.⁵⁷ Teacher Leaders learn the following essentials of sheltered instruction:

1. Tap students' prior knowledge and build background knowledge.
 - Evaluate students' current knowledge.
 - Build a knowledge base that prepares students for instruction.
 - Use both homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping for instruction.
2. Use flexible grouping and cooperative learning strategies.
 - Group students to facilitate cooperation, exploration, practice, and demonstration of both language and content skills and understanding.
3. Use active participation and interactive learning strategies throughout instruction.
 - Give students opportunities to observe, experiment with, build, assemble, disassemble, and manipulate physical objects while developing language skills and content understanding.
 - Move from the concrete to the abstract when presenting lessons.
4. Differentiate instruction by addressing diverse learning styles and developing multiple intelligences. Develop the intellectual capacity of all students.
 - Modify your teaching style to match students' learning styles. If students are not learning the way you teach, then teach the way that students learn.
5. Address listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills throughout instruction. Give students multiple opportunities to take risks with language by providing multiple opportunities for oral expression.
6. Provide access to texts.
 - Adapt the text to match student language acquisition levels.
7. Address students' language acquisition levels through instruction and assessment.
 - Identify the language levels of students.
 - Differentiate instruction based on the language acquisition levels in class.
8. Create a safe learning environment.

⁵⁷ https://www.cde.state.co.us/cde_english/eld-guidebook-2023-principles-contributors-references

- Provide students with environments and situations that are non-threatening.
 - Lower the affective filter in order to provide students with a safe environment in which to think and learn.
9. Connect with students' home languages and cultures.
- Strengthen ties between the home and school.
 - Connect the student's home language and culture with school.
 - Maintain high expectations and then help students reach them.

The Learning Specialist with expertise in MLL will provide support to all WMPSC Teacher Leaders on how to best differentiate instruction for their individual MLL students and will meet with Teacher Leaders during weekly meetings and professional development sessions.

Assessment and Monitoring the Progress of MLL Students

WMPSC creates an MLD plan for each MLL student at the school if one is not already in place. If a student enters with an MLD, WMPSC will follow the existing requirements of the existing MLD plan. The MLD plan includes annual goals and benchmarks for the student, as well as strategies for pull-out support and instructional techniques that will be used in the regular classroom. These plans are developed in collaboration with the families and Teacher Leaders. Once an MLD plan is in place, the contracted MLD teacher also develops and maintains a portfolio of each MLL's work. The portfolio includes examples of student work that offer evidence of learning; the portfolio becomes an effective tool for communicating with parents/guardians on the student's progress. The portfolio also includes the student's assessment results from other testing that happens during the school year, including the NWEA MAP in Math, ELA, and science; portfolio work; and Presentation of Learning assessments.

These assessment results, along with WIDA ACCESS results and other examples of student work, provide a comprehensive picture of the student's progress in developing English language skills. If an MLL is struggling to meet benchmarks, the MLD teacher and the student's advisor will collaboratively discuss additional interventions that can be used to support the student's learning. When a student reaches proficiency (Composite = Level 6) on WIDA, and all other assessment data indicates strong English language skills, then the student will be considered Fluent English Proficient (FEP) and no longer receive services through the school's MLD program.

Per the CDE's guidelines, once the student is identified as FEP, however, the school will continue to monitor the student's linguistic and academic progress for two years. If the student is not advancing as expected, the school will consider re-evaluating the student to determine if they should re-enter the MLD program. If this occurs, WMPSC will document the rationale for why and notify the parents/guardians of the student to obtain their consent to resume MLD services. Once a student shows progress for two full years of monitoring, they will be moved to exit status in the Colorado Data Pipeline.⁵⁸

E.7. Students Performing Below Grade Level

Identifying and meeting the needs of students who are performing below grade level happens on an ongoing basis through several interrelated processes: all age-appropriate students will be tested using NWEA MAPS in math, ELA, reading, and science within ten days of the beginning of the school year and each spring to identify areas of growth. Teacher Leaders are continuously observing students as part of the Montessori Method, evaluating student data and drawing conclusions that inform how they

⁵⁸ https://www.cde.state.co.us/cde_english/1819redesignationguidance, p. 9.

can best meet students' needs. The strategies will vary based on the skills and content, the students who are struggling, and the severity of the challenge. Once a student has been identified as performing below grade level, the student enters the MTSS process described in E.1, and all Teacher Leaders will be trained in the NCMPSC Child Study protocol by Year 1. The WMPSC budget aligns with the required resources to support students performing below grade level by allocating funding to: employ Teacher Assistants that can provide additional support; subscribe to Infinite Campus, which we will use to progress monitor students; and support all Teacher Leaders in completing training to understand and intervene using Montessori approaches and other research-based support.

E.8. Student Mental Health

WMPSC centers wholeness and a healing engaged pedagogy. We recognize the tremendous mental health needs of students, exacerbated by the pandemic. We see school as a place where students can feel safe in their identity, relationships, and growth. As such, WMPSC prioritizes mental and emotional health. Teacher Leaders work with a Social Worker and a contracted School Psychologist, as needed, to identify and meet the needs of students who are experiencing acute and/or chronic mental health distress. Our budget aligns to provide Teacher Leaders ongoing training in suicide prevention as recommended by CDE and to stay professionally astute to understand and recognize how stress, trauma, anxiety, and depression manifest in learning and behavior. Social-emotional learning strategies, such as stress management and growth mindset, are ways in which Teacher Leaders integrate instruction for all students, including those with specific mental health needs. The WMPSC budget reflects a Social Worker on staff beginning in Year 1 and funds to contract with a School Psychologist. The development of the WMPSC Safety Plan (I.6) will include integrating a cognitive-based staff training program in threat assessment and school crises.

E.9. Student Health

WMPSC will contract with a licensed school nurse to support and address student health needs, including the process and procedures for immunizations, record keeping, vision and hearing screenings, health care plans, medication administration, and student illnesses. . Designated WMPSC staff members will be trained to administer medication and first aid. The development of our Safety Plan (I.6) will include consultation with the Mesa County Public Health Department. We recognize that environmental health issues, from area wildfires to heat waves to indoor air quality, affect learning and well-being. The WMPSC budget aligns with contracting with a nurse, based on average costs across the Grand Valley charter schools, and also allocates funds for Teacher Leaders to engage in training that allow them to strengthen their practice around whole child education - which is rooted in healthy children and places.

F. Goals, Objectives, and Pupil Evaluation

WMPSC believes that student observation and data must guide instruction and curriculum and that assessments drive accountability for each student's learning and growth. To support this accountability and growth, WMPSC will administer a multi-faceted assessment plan that measures each student's progress toward meeting the Colorado Academic Standards and developing as a self-actualized, self-driven learner.

We are committed to integrating equity into the design of our assessments plan and every aspect of the testing process so that assessment is valuable rather than harmful to our Teacher Leaders' work and our students' identity and learning. Because WMPSC centers students who are too often at the margins of opportunity, we employ intentional, scientific observation, and equitable measurement focused on vulnerable populations: students whose first language is not English, students with learning differences and/or disabilities, and students who live below the poverty line.⁵⁹ This approach is at the heart of the Montessori Method (See Appendix F_Observing Work Engagement).

This approach requires multiple assessment forms and an understanding that different children excel in different forms of assessment. Teacher Leaders also are deeply committed to observation,⁶⁰ record keeping, and observation-informed decision-making about all aspects of the classroom environment and the student experience – a practice known as the Montessori Observation and Record-Keeping Protocol. Teachers gauge student understanding “by the way they use materials, accuracy of written work, ability to transfer concepts to new situations and showing mastery through one child teaching a concept to another.”⁶¹

At the same time, we believe that there is much we can do to help tie the Montessori Observation and Record-Keeping Protocol to external standards used more broadly across the district, state, and nation. We also aim to increase the objectivity of observation data and integrate academic and non-academic assessments that are aligned with the Montessori Method. WMPSC is wholly committed to and focused on performance and achievement outcomes at all levels, including academically, non-academically, site-based, and charter-wide.

To that end, our culture embraces high expectations for growth, results, and accountability, driven first and foremost by the Teacher Leaders who lead each site and are closest to the needs and achievements of our students. Embedded in our mission is a commitment to provide “authentic Montessori education that bridges academic outcomes and social-emotional development.” Our Founding Teacher Leaders developed our achievement and growth goals with a lens to close opportunity gaps over time between subgroups. This focus on inclusivity and whole child outcomes supports our ability to exceed CDE accountability metrics and SEL and executive function benchmarks. To ensure that CSI and CDE receive all required data, our charter staff includes a Shared Services Partner and Student Services Coordinator to steward the process of consistently gathering and submitting accurate data promptly.

⁵⁹ Milner, H. R. (2018). Assessment for equity. *Educational Leadership*, 75(5), 88-89.

⁶⁰ *Observation in the Montessori classroom is a tool that is used by the adult to follow the child (to assess their abilities and readiness for materials), and developed within the child to help them classify, store, order, and work towards their inner needs in:* Helfrich, S. (2016). Observation. *NAMTA Journal*, 41(3), 259-264.

⁶¹ Scott, C. M. (2017). Un-“chartered” waters: Balancing Montessori curriculum and accountability measures in a charter school. *Journal of School Choice*, 11(1), 168-190.

F.1. School Goals and Progress Monitoring Strategies

WMPSC has formulated SMART goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, and relevant to our mission. The goals include both academic and organizational, community and family satisfaction goals - all designed to measure variables and progress that inform Teacher Leaders, staff, and the Board about how we live into our vision and mission.

Organizational Goals

WMPSC strives to demonstrate exceptional fiduciary and financial responsibility and employee well-being. We will measure these goals through continuous feedback, both formally and informally.

WMPSC Goal	Measure	Frequency
<i>Balanced Budget:</i> Annual budgets demonstrate effective and sustainable allocation of financial resources as measured by balanced budgets submitted to CSI.	Board of Directors Finance Committee Budget review	Monthly
<i>Financial Solvency:</i> EYO annual audit reports demonstrate that WMPSC meets or exceeds professional accounting standards.	WMPSC Audit	Annual
<i>Financial Health:</i> Financial indicators demonstrate financial solvency.	Cash on hand Total margin TABOR min Fund balance Debt-asset ratio	Monthly
<i>Employee well-being:</i> At least 95% of our staff, including Teacher Leaders, Teacher Leader Assistants, staff, and contracted staff rate their experience at WMPSC and the embodiment of our vision and mission as 4 out of 5 or better.	Reflection Surveys	Bi-Annual

Community and Family Satisfaction Goals

WMPSC will measure school culture annually through a Net Promoter score and retention statistics. Every year, WMPSC will provide all stakeholders in our community, including parents/guardians, school partners, and community designers, an anonymous survey. Essential stakeholder groups will participate in the creation of this survey and will advise on its development, implementation, and analysis.

WMPSC Goal	Measure	Timeline
<i>Net Promoter Score:</i> ⁶² >75; This score will be revisited during the Planning Year in coordination with CSI, the Shared Services Partner, and Teacher Leaders	Anonymous survey	Annual

⁶² The NPS numerical score is the percentage of promoters minus the percentage of detractors. The survey is based on a scale of 0-10 and groups responders based on their score: if a respondent provided a score of 9-10, they are considered promoters; 7-8 are passives; and 0-6 are detractors. NPS is a score that has a scale of -100 to 100. According to Bain, above 0 is good, above 20 is favorable, above 50 is excellent, and above 80 is world class.

<i>Re-enrollment:</i> At least 85% of the students enrolled at WMPSC for at least six months in the 2023-2024 school year who remain age eligible will re-enroll at WMPSC for the 2024-2025 school year.	Retention rate	Annual
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Additional District Accountability Goals

WMPSC will receive its first Performance Framework in 2025 (after the second administration of state exams). To ensure we demonstrate district-level accountability, we have set a goal in our charter to perform above the other elementary schools in the target area(s), as defined with CSI during the Planning Year. WMPSC seeks high attendance and believes that our microsite model, where families and students have a heightened sense of belonging, will promote our attendance score and family retention.

WMPSC Goal	Measure	Timeline
<i>Performance Framework:</i> On the 2025 Performance Framework, WMPSC will earn 5% more of the possible points than the average percentage earned by other elementary schools in the target area.	CDE Performance Framework, relative to other elementary schools in District	Annual
<i>Attendance:</i> Average student attendance will be 95% for K-3rd grade during our first year of operation.	Daily attendance	Annual

WMPSC will write an annual Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) as part of CDE's accountability process. The UIP will include the school's demographic information, achievement and growth data, growth and achievement gap analyses, performance reflections, trend analysis, identification of root causes, and action steps for improvement. We will share our UIP annually with all stakeholders along with achievement data which we will report at a minimum, quarterly to CSI and bi-annually at Board of Directors meetings.

F.2. Student Performance Targets

WMPSC has set goals for student growth and achievement by analyzing the CDE School Performance Framework 2022 Outcomes of proximal schools (outlined in Section B). The WMPSC goals amplify the district's emphasis on demonstrating high levels of academic growth and achievement and comply with the Colorado Department of Education Standards of Accreditation Requirements as detailed in the Colorado Charter Schools Act and the Education Accountability Act of 2009 (22-11-101 et seq., C.R.S.).³ WMPSC sought to bring alignment to subgroups when creating our plan - specifically to align reported "minority students" with "all students" goals and ensuring all student groups achieve at least 50 MGP in the first year of operation.

While we will work with CSI to finalize our goals, performance targets, and assessment, we are currently planning to use the following tools:

- NWEA MAP will be our tool for assessing literacy and mathematics progress and achievement for our grade K-6 students. Public Montessori schools across the country use this assessment tool widely. We will also use writing rubrics adopted from CMAS and revised to fit the Montessori curriculum by Teacher Leaders to assess Writing Proficiency;
- Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) assessments, and any relative progress monitoring assessments as required by CSI, will serve as our achievement measure for all students beginning in grade 3;
- The Minnesota Executive Function Scale (MEFS) will be our direct behavioral measure of executive functions. The test assesses working memory, inhibitory control, and cognitive flexibility;
- The Developmental Environmental Rating Scale (DERS) will be our measure for child and adult behaviors and environmental attributes associated with developmental outcomes such as executive function, linguistic and cultural fluency, social fluency, and emotional flexibility.

Both the MEFS and DERS are used widely in Montessori learning environments, and outcomes on these tests correlate with higher fidelity implementation of Montessori pedagogy, making it a valuable tool for continuous school improvement, standard observation, mentoring self-study, and accountability assessment.⁶³

The Mission Specific, Academic Achievement, and Academic Growth goals follow. The Shared Services Partner and Teacher Leaders will use the Planning Year to finalize and seek advice from CSI regarding our academic and non-academic assessments:

Mission-Specific

Measure	Metric	Year 1	Year 2
Minnesota Executive Function Scale (MEFS)	Percentage of students who attend WMPSC at least 90% of the time throughout the course of the academic year making annual progress	N/A	75%
Developmental Environmental Rating Scale (DERS)	Percentage of students who attend WMPSC at least 90% of the time throughout the course of the academic year making annual progress	N/A	90%

⁶³ *Montessori Assessment Playbook*. West Hartford, CT: National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector Press, 2019.

Academic Achievement⁶⁴

Measure	Metric	Student Group	Annual Performance Targets	
			Year 1	Year 2
CMAS English Language Arts (3 rd -6 th)	Mean Scale Score	All Students	740	742
		English Learners	720	725
		Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	730	734
		Minority Students	740	742
		Students with Disabilities	720	723
		Students with Gifted Abilities	755	756
CMAS Mathematics (3 rd -6 th)	Mean Scale Score	All Students	732	734
		English Learners	720	725
		Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	722	727
		Minority Students	732	734
		Students with Disabilities	710	713
		Students with Gifted Abilities	745	746
CMAS Science (5 th)	Mean Scale Score	All Students		600
		English Learners		530
		Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible		520
		Minority Students		600
		Students with Disabilities	N/A	480
		Students with Gifted Abilities		698
NWEA English Language Arts and Mathematics (K-6 th)	Grade Level Proficiency	ALL	55%	70%
Acadience/ DIBELS (K-2 nd)	Grade Level Proficiency	ALL	N/A	80%

⁶⁴ <https://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolview/frameworks/official/2000>

Academic Growth⁶⁵

Measure	Metric	Student Group	Annual Performance Targets	
			Year 1	Year 2
CMAS English Language Arts (3 rd -6 th)	Median Student Growth Percentile	All Students	53	55
		English Learners	52	54
		Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	50	52
		Minority Students	53	55
		Students with Disabilities	50	53
		Students with Gifted Abilities	55	56
CMAS Mathematics (3 rd -6 th)	Median Student Growth Percentile	All Students	60	62
		English Learners	51	53
		Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	55	57
		Minority Students	60	62
		Students with Disabilities	50	53
		Students with Gifted Abilities	64	65
ACCESS for ELLs	Median Student Growth Percentile		80%	82%
NWEA English Language Arts and Mathematics (K-6th)	Individualized Expected Growth Target	ALL	55%	70%

F.3. WMPSC Assessment Matrix

WMPSC's assessment takes place in all grades and across subjects. Student assessment may include, but is not limited to:

- Baseline and Summative Assessments to measure student growth;
- Montessori coursework and student portfolios to provide an ongoing record of student work that ensures mastery, based on Montessori lesson rubrics and checklists;
- Formative Assessments to measure achievement on an ongoing basis, including language development, developmental reading, and writing assessments, along with Common Core Standards-based assessments in literacy and math;
- State assessments, as required by CDE.

In consultation with national leaders on educational assessment and research, such as Wildflower Partner Ted Quinn and peers leading Wildflower Montessori charters in New York and Minnesota, WMPSC has identified a suite of assessments we will employ to measure each child's academic and social-emotional growth, development and attainment. The WMPSC Academic Assessment Schedule for the first two years of operations includes:

⁶⁵ <https://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolview/frameworks/official/2000>

Name	Content Areas (ex: Math, Early Literacy)	Purpose (Rationale for selection & alignment with curriculum and instruction.)	Type (Diagnostic, Interim, Summative)	Frequency (ex: Annual, 2/year)	Administration Calendar (ex: Jan-Feb)
W-APT	English	Identify language proficiency of K students with a home language other than English	Diagnostic	Upon enrollment	Within 30 days of enrollment
WIDA Screener	English	Identify language proficiency of 1st-6th students with a home language other than English	Diagnostic	Upon enrollment	Within 30 days of enrollment
ACCESS for ELLs	English	Statewide assessment measuring language proficiency and growth	Summative	Annually	CDE Testing Window
CMAS	Reading, Writing, Communication; Math; Social Studies; Science	Statewide assessment measuring academic proficiency and growth	Summative	Annually	CDE Testing Window
School Readiness Assessment if needed (such as PALS)	School Readiness	Assess school readiness	Diagnostic	Annually	Summer, before school
Universal Screener: Ages + Stages Questionnaires	Communication Gross motor Fine motor Problem-solving Personal-social	PK developmental proficiency and growth	Diagnostic	Annually	Spring
READ assessment: DIBELS	Reading, Writing, Communication;	Monitor students' academic proficiency and growth relative to Colorado Academic Standards in Reading, Writing, & Communication; triangulate literacy data; predict student performance on summative assessment	Formative	3-6x/ year	Formally every Quarter; informally every 6 weeks or less

Name	Content Areas (ex: Math, Early Literacy)	Purpose (Rationale for selection & alignment with curriculum and instruction)	Type (Diagnostic, Interim, Summative)	Frequency (ex: Annual, 2/year)	Administration Calendar (ex: Jan-Feb)
NWEA Map	K-6 ELA and Math Academic Proficiency & Academic Growth	Triangulate literacy data; predict student performance on summative assessment	Benchmark	Students in grades K-6, 3x/year	Baseline during enrollment or September + Mid-year, end of year
Formative Writing Rubric	Language, Writing mechanics, Written expression	Measure writing growth	WMPSC Criterion based	Bi-annually	September, April

F.4. Corrective Action

The WMPSC MTSS and Montessori Child Study Protocol (Appendix D_Child Study Protocol Deck) is a prevention model. Full implementation of the MTSS procedures in place will allow for ongoing monitoring of progress to goals and system-wide analysis. Our MTSS model enables us to identify and quantify students' gaps in academic achievement, provide appropriate intervention promptly, and assess students' response to intervention. The data gleaned from our MTSS model also informs Teacher Leader instruction, professional development, and growth and accountability processes.

Even with these plans in place, pupil performance could fall below the goals and objectives. The Montessori Method emphasis on student observation, reporting, and nimble instruction is our first line to identify that a student is at risk of not meeting pupil performance targets. The Child Study Steam will use the Montessori Child Study protocol to create a corrective action plan with a timeline. Child Study recognizes the student's needs from a holistic perspective, and Child Study is implemented before a Special Education referral – unless a student enters their program level with an already established IEP or 504 plan.

Typical members of a Child Study Team include family members, Teacher Leaders, specialized service providers, and Student Services Coordinator. After observation, implementation of strategies, and interventions, the team comes together to decide on pursuing an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Whether the child is referred for special education services or not, the Child Study Team will continue working with the special education teacher(s) and the school psychologist to best support the child.

The Shared Services Partner communicates with the Board of Directors and CSI on this corrective action plan during monthly reporting. The School Accountability Committee of the Board monitors the Teacher Leaders, Student Services Coordinator, and Shared Services Partner during the implementation of the plan. These are touchpoints during the annual Growth and Accountability Cycle (Section H).

As described in Section H and Section E (PD), Teacher Leaders' professional development plan is informed by MTSS, Child Study, and Growth and Accountability processes. Teacher Leaders hold bi-monthly pod meetings to analyze trends in their observation, record-keeping, and assessment data, which informs WMPSC-wide growth areas and professional development training.

Teacher Leaders will meet weekly to discuss quantitative and observational data for students at their site. These data meetings will include the discussion of trends in the formal assessments outlined above, disaggregated by population (e.g., FRL students, MLLs, students on IEPs, etc.), deep dives into individual student work samples in order to inform best instructional practices, and analysis of observational data on student work culture and dynamics. These weekly data meetings will support Teacher Leaders in evolving their instructional practices to best meet the needs of the individual students in the program. Teacher Leaders will bring data, trends, and observations from their site-level discussions to the bi-monthly charter-wide pod meetings outlined above.

G. Budget and Finance

Our charter school budget reflects our core values and mission. As such, WMPSC prioritizes its spending in a way that reinforces its priorities for teacher-led Montessori learning environments that center the whole child. To do this, we must operate with high fidelity to our core values - and CSI and stakeholder expectations.

G.1. WMPSC Budget

The WMPSC Budget, found as Appendix G_WMPSC GV 5-Year Budget, is our numerical story. It is balanced each year, based on realistic assumptions for revenue and based on local cost of living and target area demographics for expenditures. WMPSC includes reasonable and adequate costs for all staff, services, supplies, equipment, and facilities included in the application and essential to our four microsites implementing our model with excellence. Our 5-Year Budget Summary, along with a planning year, is below:

5 - Year Budget Summary

	Y0	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Total Revenues	\$295,000	\$1,004,880	\$1,451,832	\$1,991,839	\$2,348,295	\$2,707,196
Total Expenses	\$284,889	\$965,776	\$1,368,133	\$1,938,272	\$2,301,493	\$2,700,851
Annual Net Position	\$10,111	\$39,103	\$83,699	\$53,567	\$46,803	\$6,344
Reserved Fund Balance	\$8,547	\$35,733	\$49,745	\$71,353	\$83,624	\$98,473
Unreserved Fund Balance	\$1,565	\$3,514	\$73,201	\$105,160	\$139,692	\$131,187
Total Fund Balance	\$10,111	\$39,248	\$122,946	\$176,513	\$223,316	\$229,660
Total GV WMPSC Students	0	72	96	144	160	192

G.2. WMPSC Budget Development Process

The WMPSC budget was developed by Sarah Siegrist at Abacus Accounting, LLC and advised by Kaycee Gerhart, Board Treasurer. Founding Teacher Leaders, Emma Reicks and Georgie Reigel; Interim Shared Services Partner Hannah Ewert-Krocker; and Wildflower Partner Rachel Kelley-Cohn,

were advisors during the budget development process. The budget was reviewed by Isabelle Parker, Wildflower CFO, and the full WMPSC Board of Directors.

This collective effort reflects how WMPSC prioritizes co-creation and our Advice Process (Appendix E_Wildflower Self-Management Ways of Working). In the development of our budget, our mission is our throughline. We have prioritized expenses to provide families with child-centered, authentic Montessori education that bridges academic outcomes and social-emotional development through intimate learning communities deeply rooted in place, equity and belonging. The WMPSC microsite and organizational structure - and our emphasis on Teachers as leaders - guided how we allocated funds to professional development, materials and curriculum, and facilities.

The budget development process was iterative and reviewed frequently by the team; as place- and equity-specific variables were understood, the budget was updated, bringing fiscal balance and mission to center. As an example, as Founding Teacher Leaders brought in data around evolving partnerships and community need, the budget was adjusted to align with a different student demographic that affected income and expenses.

In the Planning Year, the Shared Services Partner (SSP) holds the responsibilities to develop the charter budget, advised by Founding Teacher Leaders and integrating their site-specific budget. The SSP receives support from a contracted finance consultant and the Board Treasurer. Because Kaycee Gerhart was involved in the creation of the budget, she will have first-hand experience to be an on-going advisor and understand levers to ensure fiscal health and sustainability.

G.3. Financial Best Practices

WMPSC will employ a combination of personnel, policies, and procedures to ensure adherence to financial best practices. The roles most critical to the integrity of the learning model are direct employees of WMPSC, while contractors are utilized to meet compliance standards and to fill temporary roles as the shared services staff grows. This blended staffing approach to meeting the needs of the organization allows WMPSC to launch and scale sustainably in the initial years of the charter. Financial Policies and Procedures (Appendix G_Financial Policies and Procedures) will provide operating parameters to ensure that all staff and contractors' Roles and Responsibilities are properly delineated to ensure internal controls standards are met.

During the Planning Year, the Shared Services Partner will be a state-wide charter employee and Teacher Leaders will be contracted employees during May and June 2024. These individuals will select the contractors or vendors who will provide core business services during the initial years of the charter, including: financial management and bookkeeping, audit, internal systems setup, IT support, legal services and counsel, Teacher Leader recruitment, human resources support, fundraising and grant writing, and facilities guidance.

As WMPSC matures into its third operational year, Year 3, we will begin to transition certain key functions to charter-wide shared services employees. A Finance Partner will be hired to take on financial management and strategy. By Year 4, the Shared Services Partner will be responsible for human resources, fundraising and Teacher Leader recruitment. The table below summarizes the in-house shared services staff, as well as the contracted capacities planned for Years 0 through 5:

WMPSC Staff	Y0	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Teacher Leaders	0	5.0	6.0	9.0	9.0	11.0
Teacher Leader Assistant	0	3.0	4.0	7.0	8.0	10.0
ECE + Elementary Learning Specialists	0	.50	.75	1.0	2.5	3.0
Shared Services Partner	.25 ⁶⁶	.25	.25	.50	.50	.50
Student Services Coordinator	0	.50	.50	1.0	1.0	1.0
Finance Partner	0	0	.25	.33	.45	.45
Social Worker	0	.30	.30	.50	.50	.75
TOTAL Employed Staff	0.25	9.55	12.05	19.33	21.95	26.70

Contracted Staff						
Teacher Leader	.46	0.09	0.28	0	0.18	0
Finance Contractors	The financial services provider and bookkeeper roles will be contracted annually, overlapping the onboarding of a Finance Partner in Year 3					
Speech Language Pathologist	0	Budgeted contracted services				
Occupational and Physical Therapists	0	Budgeted contracted services				
School Psychologist		Budgeted contracted services				
Nurse	0	Budgeted contracted services				
TOTAL Staff	0.71	9.64	12.33	19.33	22.13	26.70

G.4. WMPSC Budget Assumptions

The following table summarizes the assumptions and drivers behind each line item in the full 5-year budget, based on information available as of March 26, 2023:

Revenue and Expense inflation *A standard assumption of 2% annual expense growth is included. Growth assumptions in revenue vary by funding stream and are noted below.*

Revenues	
Foundation Revenue	\$110,000 loan per site, in site planning years for each site. Offered by the Wildflower Foundation with terms of 3% interest and 7-year repayment, to begin in year 3 of operations.
Preschool Tuition Revenue	Tuition: \$10,428.72 per qualifying pupil, 3 and 4 year olds, per year, the full-time UPK reimbursement rate for qualifying 4 year olds. All 4 year olds qualify for full-time or half-time tuition from UPK. For 3 year olds, tuition will be set on a sliding scale based on family ability to pay. Assumes 20% of families will pay full-rate tuition, and 80% of families will pay a

⁶⁶ State-wide role during Planning Year

	subsidized rate ranging from 25-75% of the full rate. Partial rate payees may also qualify for CCAP to subsidize the cost.
Food Service Revenue	Food services will be offered through the federal food service program in compliance with CDE nutrition program as noted below under Federal Lunch Reimbursement.
Capital Construction	\$300 per funded pupil, K-6th grade. Decreases by 1% annually. Cost driver based on statewide revenue data.
Exceptional Children's Ed Act (ECEA)	\$1,232 per qualifying pupil. Assumes 15% of students K-6th grade qualify, in alignment with elementary schools located in the targeted regions. No annual growth. Cost driver based on statewide revenue data.
(ELPA) English Language Proficiency Act	\$365 per qualifying pupil, beginning in Year 2. Assumes 6% of students K-6th grade qualify, in alignment with elementary schools located in the targeted regions. Decreases by 2% annually. Cost driver based on statewide revenue data.
Gifted and Talented	\$500 per qualifying pupil. Assumes 3% of students K-6th grade qualify, similar to district-wide averages. No annual growth. Cost driver based on statewide revenue data.
READ Act	\$497.06 per qualifying pupil, beginning in Year 2. Assumes 40% of students K-6th grade qualify, in alignment with elementary schools located in the targeted regions. No annual growth. Cost driver based on statewide revenue data.
Mill Levy Equalization Funds	\$800 per funded pupil, K-6th grade. No annual growth. Cost driver assumed, based on historical data.
Title I	\$373 per qualifying pupil. Assumes 60% of students K-6th grade qualify, in alignment with elementary schools located in the targeted regions. No annual growth. Cost driver based on statewide revenue data.
Special Ed (IDEA)	\$1,600 per qualifying pupil. Assumes 15% of students K-6th grade qualify, in alignment with elementary schools located in the targeted regions. No annual growth. Cost driver based on statewide revenue data.
Title III	\$130 per qualifying pupil, beginning in Year 2. Assumes 6% of students K-6th grade qualify, in alignment with elementary schools located in the targeted regions. Decreases by 2% annually. Cost driver based on statewide revenue data.
Title II	\$1,500 annually. No annual growth. Cost driver based on statewide revenue data.
Federal Lunch Reimb	Breakfast and lunch rate: \$6.67/day/student, in line with CDE School Nutrition Department rates. Assumes all students qualify for reimbursement according to Proposition FF.
Charter School Grant	Budget has been built not recognizing this as a revenue source.
Per Pupil Funding (PPR)	\$9,265.71 per funded pupil, K-6th grade. Based on a conservative estimated CSI PPR rate for 2022-23 school year. Increases by 2.5% annually, in line with typical PPR yearly growth.

Universal PK (UPK)	\$10,428.72 full-time reimbursement rate per qualifying 4 year old. Assumes 50% of 4 year olds will qualify. Remaining 50% of 4 year olds qualify at half time reimbursement, \$5,946.85 and will pay the remaining balance out-of-pocket. Tuition for 3 year olds is set at a sliding scale,
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Expenses

Salaries of Regular Employees	Teacher Leaders: average \$60,000 per FTE Teacher Leader Assistant: average \$30,000 per FTE Shared Services Partner: \$70,000 (Years 1-5) Student Services Coordinator: \$60,000 Finance Partner: \$70,000 Learning Specialist: average \$50,000 per FTE FTE allocations by year can be found in Section G
Salaries of Temporary Employees - Subs	Substitutes at \$160/day. Assumes 4 days per instructor (Teacher Leaders and Teacher Leader Assistant) per year. Includes contracted time for Teacher Leaders (TLs) in site planning year. Assumes 80% FTE for emerging TLs for six weeks.
Medicare	Calculated as 1.45% of total payroll, including both regular and temporary employees.
Social Security	Calculated as 6.2% of total payroll, including both regular and temporary employees. Year 0 only.
PERA Expense	21.9% of total payroll, beginning in Year 1. Rate increase of 0.25% annually to address the unfunded pension obligation. Cost driver based on statewide expense data.
Health Insurance	\$5,000 per employee per year. Assumes single premium coverage with 80% of employees eligible/participating.
Dental Insurance	\$330 per employee per year. Assumes single premium coverage with 80% of employees eligible/participating.
Prof Services - Food Service	\$6.67 for breakfast and lunch per student per day. Assumes 100% of students will participate in school provided meals.
Banking and Payroll Service Fees	\$120 per employee per year.
Professional Education Services	Professional development and contracted staff to provide student support. Professional development: \$1,000 per TL and \$500 for TA, SCC, and LSs annually. Student Supports School Psychologist: \$2,000, starting in Year 1 Physical Therapist: \$2,000, starting in Year 1 Occupational Therapist: \$2,000, starting in Year 1 Speech Language Pathologist: \$2,000, starting in Year 1 Consulting Nurse: \$2,000, starting in Year 1
Other Services - Assessments	Annual purchase of NWEA MAPS licenses and other priorities determined during Planning Year.

Legal Services	\$3,000 for start-up needs in Year 0 and \$3,500 in Year 1. \$2,000 allocated charter-wide annually in future years.
Audit and Accounting Services	\$20,200 per year budgeted for independent annual audit and contracted financial management and accounting services. Budget reflects Y0-Y5 with a goal of the financial management to transition in-house starting Y3.
Consultant Services	\$4,000 in Year 0 and Year 1 for Facilities and HR support. Restricted totals in Year 1-Year 5 are set-aside funds to support students who qualify for special services to meet their unique needs. These set-asides are funded with Title I and IDEA funds.
Technical Services	Average of \$2,000 for charter-wide services annually. Additional expenses budgeted in site planning years.
Utility Services	Average of \$330 per site per month for water, sewage, gas and electric.
Repairs and Maintenance Service	5% of annual rent costs
Rental of Land and Buildings	Assumes \$1,000/mo for first Children's House and \$2,000/mo for Lower Elementary in Y1-Y2 in alignment with most recent discussions with prospective sites prior to campus consolidation in Y3.
Rental of Equipment	Flat \$1,000 per site per year.
Insurance	Liability/Building/Theft/Fidelity with growth in alignment to increased enrollment and number of facilities.
Unemployment Insurance	Calculated as 0.3% of total payroll. Cost driver based on statewide expense data.
Workers' Comp Insurance	Calculated as \$2.00 per \$100 of payroll. Cost driver based on statewide expense data.
Advertising, Marketing and Recruiting	Minimum \$2,000 budgeted charter-wide annually to support enrollment. Additional expenses budgeted in site planning years.
CSI and CDE Admin Expense	3% and 1%, respectively, of PPR. Cost driver based on statewide averages.
General Supplies	Instructional materials and curriculum. Assumes \$15,000 one-time expense per site for suite of Montessori materials and \$3,000 per site for special education and social-emotional support curriculum. Average of \$5,000 per site allocated for annual materials replenishment.
Food and Meeting Expenses	\$4,000 in Year 0 and \$2,000 annually in future years for Board support and development.

Leasehold Improvements	\$75,000 for renovations in the planning year.
Furniture and Fixtures	\$10,000 per site in the planning year. Average of 10% budgeted annually for repairs and replacement.
Dues and Fees	Average of \$2,000 per year.
Contingency	At least \$5,000 set aside annually beginning in Y1 for unanticipated expenses or cost increases.
Miscellaneous Expenditures	Wildflower School Contribution are costs associated with training, coaching, and brand use specific to Wildflower model. Expense begins in the first year of site operations. Additional information on the benefits received from Wildflower are detailed in Appendix G_Wildflower Network Membership in Action and Appendix G_Wildflower Membership Agreement DRAFT.
Interest Expense	3% annual, based on balance of Wildflower Foundation loans
Redemption of Principle	7-year repayment of Wildflower Foundation loans (\$110,000 per site). Repayment begins in the third year of site operations.

The ultimate financial goal for the 5-year budget plan is to ensure a positive operating income and both short- and long-term financial solvency. WMPSC understands the need to manage cash very tightly in the first three years, and has built a budget that allows surplus funds to be set aside beyond the TABOR reserve as enrollment increases.

G.5.6. Financial Reporting & Accountability Processes

WMPSC recognizes the importance of sound fiscal management, and especially in our decentralized structure where each site has autonomy to make budgetary decisions that impact their community, we will establish financial procedures to ensure smooth financial management practices.

WMPSC will establish a charter state-wide Finance Committee consisting of the Board Treasurer, Shared Services Partner, Teacher Leader representatives from each regional charter, and contracted financial management provider(s). This committee will meet monthly and process monthly close out reports, hold each other accountable for site financial operations by reviewing monthly bank statements, budget vs actual and balance sheet reports, and establish a sound financial structure documented in detailed procedures that outline Roles and Responsibilities across the WMPSC community. With the Finance Committee spearheading efforts, WMPSC is committed to meeting state and authorizer transparency requirements and will adopt a budget annually, including forecasting beyond the fiscal year. The WMPSC will maintain a balanced budget each year through monthly monitoring of financial statements by the full Board of Directors.

During the Planning Year, WMPSC will finalize and activate the Financial Policies and Procedures, currently in draft (Appendix G_WMPSC Financial Policies and Procedures). These procedures will include processes for payroll including a salary schedule and compensation policies. WMPSC is committed to meeting all CSI and state reporting requirements and will report on all expected financial metrics at least annually and submit annual tax 990 forms. As demonstrated in our proposed budget

and contingency budget, we are committed to meeting and maintaining TABOR and Special Education minimum balance requirements.

WMPSC understands that, per charter requirements, we will be required to conduct thorough audits of finances and operations, annually. A certified public accountant will be contracted annually to perform a financial audit and report findings to the Board of Directors, independent of the consultant or provider conducting financial management for the charter throughout the year. The specific process for identifying and selecting the contracted auditor are detailed in Appendix G_WMPSC Financial Policies and Procedures.

WMPSC is requesting waivers from the state to ensure that our decentralized financial management structure remains true to our organizational mission and supports financial operations and decision-making closest to the felt impact, most often with the microsities and Teacher Leaders.

- C.R.S. §22-32-110(1)(y) Accepting Gifts, Donations, and Grants
- C.R.S. §22-32-109(1)(b) Local Board Duties Concerning Competitive Bidding

WMPSC will comply with all requirements of the Colorado Financial Transparency Act (C.R.S. § 22-44-301 et seq.) by posting all required documents on the charter’s website following the timeline established by CDE. These postings will follow the most recent template for charters per CDE. WMPSC is prepared to provide the transparency necessary to the WMPSC Board of Directors, CSI, and CDE. Appendix G_ WMPSC Board Development Plan outlines financial management and oversight as a core priority and includes policy development, training, and reporting practices for the ongoing board moving through planning and operations.

WMPSC is committed to implementing a sustainable, yet innovative model of decentralized operations that reinforced teacher leadership, along with sound financial management and accountability to CSI and others. WMPSC will report on these metrics to the Board of Directors regularly, so that there is transparency in financial operations and to equip all stakeholders with the information they need to be active advice givers. We intend to finalize financial reporting metrics with CSI during the Planning Year; below are a list of metrics and expectations we are prepared to report on:

Draft Financial Reporting Metrics

WMPSC Goal	Measure	Timeline
<i>Balanced Budget:</i> Annual budgets demonstrate effective and sustainable allocation of financial resources as measured by balanced budgets submitted to CSI.	Board of Director Finance Committee budget review Presented to the Board monthly	Monthly
<i>Financial Solvency:</i> EYO annual audit reports demonstrate the WMPSC meets or exceeds professional accounting standards	WMPSC Audit	Annual
<i>Financial Health:</i> Financial indicators demonstrate financial solvency.	Cash on hand Total margin TABOR min Fund balance Debt-asset ratio	At minimum, annual; monitored monthly by Finance Committee

G.7. Restricted Grant Funding Expenditures

While our budget includes a secured \$75,000 grant for the Planning Year, it does not include the Colorado Charter School Program (CCSP) Grant. We anticipate that such funds will help seed WMPSC's initial growth and startup capital for the charter school in its first three years. We will prioritize any additional restricted grant funding to support further special education, mental health, and Teacher Leader support.

Specifically, we are prepared to increase the FTE for the Student Services Coordinator and Social Worker with additional philanthropic revenue. Our student population, and Teacher Leader and family advice will guide these decisions. We also expect to use grant funding towards facilities' renovations and training that will extend our inclusive Montessori model. As an example, the Montessori "peace corner" may need to be a larger calm space for students with sensory needs.

Wildflower Colorado has a track record of securing substantial philanthropic funding to support current and emerging local schools. During WMPSC's period of community building, stakeholder engagement and planning, we have heard ample interest from funders in continuing to support the growth of Montessori microsites in Colorado. We are confident that partnering with CSI to increase accessibility for PK-6th grade students via the charter model will only accelerate philanthropic support from current and emerging local and national funders.

Wildflower Colorado's demonstrated track record of philanthropic support includes raising nearly \$1,900,000 over the past five years, from the following sources pending charter approval:

- Wend Collective: \$900,000 (over 6 years)
- Gary Community Ventures: \$320,000 in PRI loan funds
- Gates Family Foundation: \$175,000 (pending approval of our Grand Valley charter application)
- The Daniels Fund: \$100,000
- The Buell Foundation: \$75,000
- The Telluray Foundation: \$65,500
- Communities Foundation of Texas: \$50,000
- Constellation Philanthropy: \$62,000
- State of Colorado CIRCLE Grant Fund: \$50,000
- Walton Family Foundation: \$50,000
- The Donnell-Kay Foundation: \$50,000

We are also actively pursuing grants from the following local and national philanthropic sources to support WMPSC:

- Charter School Growth Fund: \$150,000
- The Denver Foundation: \$50,000
- State of Colorado Emerging and Expanding Child Care Grant: \$50,000
- Western Colorado Community Foundation: \$50,000

G.8. Cash Flow During Planning Year

As is typical for Wildflower charter schools, the largest expenses are facilities and staff. WMPSC is planning for a lean year during the Planning Year, staffing only a part-time Shared Services Partner and contractors to set up foundational systems and processes required to create a successful new charter.

WMPSC is seeking the Colorado Charter School Program (CCSP) grant. To plan for funding prior to receiving the CCSP funds, The Wildflower Foundation will play a role in providing cash flow since CCSP is a reimbursable grant.

WMPSC and The Wildflower Foundation

WMPSC is a member of The Wildflower Foundation (TWF) through two separate agreements that serve different, yet critical purposes: The Membership Agreement (previously referred to as the Affiliation Agreement) and the Services Agreement. The Membership Agreement is an agreement signed by every school in the Wildflower Network that defines the expectations for schools that are part of the Wildflower Network, as well as the benefits of membership. In order to operate as a “Wildflower School,” WMPSC must have a signed Membership Agreement. The Wildflower Network Membership in Action (Appendix G_Wildflower Network Membership in Action) provides concrete examples for how Wildflower-affiliated schools may fulfill the commitments of their membership to the Network.

Agreement	Parties	Summary
Membership Agreement	The Wildflower Foundation and Charter Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defines the relationship between The Wildflower Foundation and the charter organization / board; • Teacher Leaders sign a commitment and acknowledgement; • This agreement holds as long as the organization is “A Wildflower School;” • Includes a School Contribution fee of 1-4% of total revenue, once operational.

Additionally, WMPSC may choose to engage TWF for more direct, tailored support to help fulfill its mission in a Wildflower charter setting by entering into a Services Agreement. The Board of Directors may contract with TWF on an annual basis and can continue or dissolve this contractual relationship at any time. It is an at-will relationship, and no Wildflower Foundation staff person will serve as a voting member on the Board of Directors. The Board and TWF will discuss WMPSC needs during the Planning Year and TWF is prepared to support WMPSC with a Services Agreement. WMPSC anticipates establishing a Services Agreement with TWF in the first four years of the charter, starting with immediate support to set up key operating systems and hiring, recruit Teacher Leaders, and fundraise on behalf of WMPSC. The Services Agreement will be revisited each year to determine additional charter-specific WMPSC support wishes to contract for.

Agreement	Parties	Summary
Services Agreement	The Wildflower Foundation and Charter Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optional agreement for additional supports to operate as charter; • Defines the work TWF may take on in the Charter Entity, including any additional payment for service; • Not a condition of membership; • Revisited as roles evolve; • This agreement tends to phase out as the charter becomes more established; • The charter may use portions of its CCSP grant to fund this work, particularly in startup.

WMPSC and TWF are ready to re-imagine charter school governance that truly prioritizes Teacher Leader decisions and centers the child's needs. The WMPSC Board of Directors will be able to learn from the experiences of operating Wildflower charters in Minnesota, New York City, and Washington, D.C. and participate in a network of fellow board members operating decentralized charter schools across the country. Together, this gathering of the communities provide the mentorship and professional learning community needed to bolster WMPSC's board operations and development and position this Board of Directors to be a leader of innovative charter organizational design and governance.

G.9. Contingency Planning

WMPSC is prepared to preserve the credibility of our model and still meet our organizational mission, even at a lower than expected enrollment or increased expenditures. In the event that a contingency budget is necessary, these adjustments allow WMPSC to remain authentic to its learning model and in compliance with CSI requirements. In contingency planning for less than expected enrollment we are able to sustain at 80% funded student enrollment while still implementing the proposed program with fidelity. We did not change our FTE for Student Services Coordinator for Y1-5 and maintained our Social Worker at .3 FTE through Year 2. Modifications to Teacher Leader, Assistant, and Learning Specialist staffing, decreasing facility renovations to focus strictly on health and safety improvements and adjustments to general expenses based on a per pupil cost are reflected in the budget. Even with our contingency plan, we are still able to maintain a maximum instructor to student ratio of 1:9.

The WMPSC 3 - Year Contingency Budget tells the story of a more lean operating structure, where we work to preserve the integrity of the model while also focusing resources where they are most critical - at the microsites. Through this exercise, we plan for 80% enrollment leading to a decrease of \$151,283 in Year 1 revenues. To account for the decline in enrollment, we arrive at a balanced budget by making the following adjustments to save \$136,806 in spending in Year 1:

Year 1, Adjustments to Budget at 80 Percent Enrollment

	Full Enrollment Budget	Contingency Budget (80 percent funded student enrollment)	Notes on Reductions
Enrollment	60	49	Reflects 20% reduction in funded students
Teacher Leaders	Children's House: 2 Lower Elem: 2	Children's House: 1 Lower Elem: 2	Reduce FTE of site-based staff in alignment with smaller student enrollment
Teacher Leader Assistant	Children's House: 2 Lower Elem: 1	Children's House: 2 Lower Elem: 2	Increase FTE to sustain student ratio in Lower Elementary and provide more capacity for operations.
Charter-wide Services FTE	Shared Services: .25 Student Srvs Coord: 0.50 Learning Specialists: .50 Social Worker: .30	Shared Services: .25 Student Srvs Coord: 0.50 Learning Specialists: .50 Social Worker: .30	No change to Shared Services Partner, Student Services Coordinator, Learning Specialists, or Social Worker

Sites	2	2	In year 1, maintain 2 sites despite lower enrollment
Total Revenue	\$1,004,880	\$853,597	Reflects 20% enrollment reduction
Total Expenses	\$968,276	\$24,870	Cost reductions reflect necessary adjustments without cutting key program expenses
Total Fund Balance	\$37,295	\$39,535	The charter is able to remain solvent and meet TABOR requirements and WMPSC mission.

These decisions will balance the budget while allowing us to maintain the number one promise to families which is the teacher to student ratio and our focus on providing services that encourage our students' deep sense of belonging and identity affirmation.

A balanced contingency budget for 80% enrollment was modeled for Years 2 and 3 as well and is available in Appendix G_WMPSC 3-Year Contingency Budget. Should WMPSC continue to see student enrollment at 80% of projections for the first three years of the charter, the following additional modifications will be made:

- Additional reduction of FTEs for site-based staff in alignment with smaller student enrollment
 - Teacher Leaders in Elementary reduced from 4 to 3 in Y2 and 5 to 3 in Y3.
 - Teacher Leader Assistant in Elementary remain at 2 in Y2 and maintained at 3 in Y3.
- Charter wide services expenses:
 - No change to Student Services Coordinator at .50 in Y2 and 1.0 in Y3, nor Learning Specialists at .75 Y2 and 1.0 Y3.
 - Maintain Social Worker at .3 FTE in Y2, reduce from .5 to .3 in Y3.
- Reduction of site renovation budgets from \$100,000 to \$85,000 in Y2. Sites will prioritize improvements focused on ensuring student health and safety and aesthetic enhancements will be deprioritized.
- All expenses based on per pupil drivers reduced to reflect continued lower enrollment

In the event of lower enrollment, these adjustments allow WMPSC to remain authentic to its learning model and in compliance with authorizer requirements. The decreases in staffing and site plans, as well as other student-based expenses, are in line with the lowered enrollment numbers. Static expenses such as facilities leases, site furniture, instructional materials and other basic operational expenses, are sustained in the contingency budget to best preserve the charter mission and educational experience.

Should lower than expected enrollment persist through Year 3 of the charter, we may adjust strategy by growing enrollment first before adding additional sites in later years, recognizing that additional sites may be too costly until enrollment grows to sufficient levels. While our growth of sites may temporarily stagnate, our enrollment does not need to and we can continue to cultivate growth through additional enrollment within existing sites.

Incorporated into the baseline and contingency budget plans, Founding Teacher Leaders created a site budget that they developed with advice from the Board, Shared Services and Finance Partners, and local experts, including Wildflower Partner, Isabelle Parker, who supports Teacher Leaders across the country as they set up their local site budgets.

H. Governance

Governance

WMPSC will employ self-management tools and practices with strong leadership from the Board of Directors. Aligned to our “Montessori for Adults” philosophy,⁶⁷ we believe creating an environment that empowers educators and increases their sense of ownership cultivates an environment for adults to be grounded in their purpose and live into their full potential as educators and leaders. In alignment with Wildflower principles, norms, and values (Section A), WMPSC will follow a decentralized decision-making structure and use the practices of self-management to organize itself, make decisions, engage in discourse when disagreements inevitably arise, and always strive toward radical transparency. These operating strategies have proven successful in other non-hierarchical organizations throughout the Teacher-Powered Schools network⁶⁸ of whom Grand Valley is forming a partnership (Appendix B_Letters of Support) and have been implemented in Wildflower public charter systems in Washington D.C., Minnesota and New York City (Appendix E_Wildflower Self-Management Ways of Working).⁶⁹ By using self-management practices in this construct, WMPSC centers Teacher Leader autonomy and maintains clear accountability to both internal and external stakeholders.

WMPSC Board of Directors

WMPSC is governed by a Board of Directors that is committed to our mission and holds the accountabilities of the charter, entrusted to it by CSI to fulfill these responsibilities. The Board of Directors is a critical stakeholder for decisions the Shared Services Partner and Teacher Leaders are making in service of WMPSC Grand Valley. The Board of Directors establishes this environment within the construct of the charter, laws, and its own governing Bylaws and other organizing policies (Appendix H_WMPSC Bylaws)

The Board of Directors is ultimately accountable to CSI for meeting the metrics in the charter and holds the following clear roles and responsibilities:

- Uphold fiduciary responsibilities;
- Maintain compliance with all applicable laws and policies, WMPSC charter, and other legal requirements;
- Hire the Shared Services Partner and Teacher Leaders, and facilitate the annual leadership review that results in reflection of accountabilities against the purpose and performance of the charter;
- Review and discuss Teacher Leader(s)’ annual performance reviews;
- Validate the annual charter budget;
- Review, revise and renew service provider and major contractor partnerships;
- Review Wildflower Network Membership (Appendix G_Wildflower Membership Agreement Draft) every two years;
- Evaluate each site through the membership reflection process, charter performance metrics, and Teacher Leader performance reviews;

⁶⁷ Kamvar, Sep. (2021) *The Wildflower Collection*, accessed at:
<https://connected.wildflowerschools.org/posts/4415963-montessori-for-adults-by-sep-kamvar>.

⁶⁸ <https://www.teacherpowered.org/about>

⁶⁹ Laloux, F. (2014). *Reinventing Organizations: A guide to creating organizations inspired by the next stage in human consciousness*. Nelson Parker.

- Validate policies to reinforce Teacher Leader autonomy in alignment with accountabilities and laws;
- Maintain Teacher Leader autonomy by resisting making decisions that the Board is not closest to and that would lead to less ownership of those decisions by people closer to the work.

To activate these responsibilities, each board member is asked to sign the WMPSC Board Commitments that help to establish clarity of expectations and how the Board of Directors will carry out its responsibilities (Appendix H_WMPSC Board of Director Commitments). The Board will fulfill its responsibilities through a committee structure (detailed above), policy development timeline, and dashboard of reporting accountability.

H.1. Founding Board Member Matrix

The composition of the WMPSC Board is state-wide, with members residing proximal to the Grand Valley and Aurora regions. The Founding WMPSC Board embodies the charter-wide cultural and linguistic diversity, history and knowledge of the unique communities our sites intend to serve, as well as the areas of expertise required to fulfill the Board's obligations to our non-profit organization. The WMPSC Board holds expertise in the following areas:

- Legal
- Finance
- Real estate
- Marketing/communications
- Mental health
- Multilingual learning
- Special Education
- Montessori in the Public Sector

	1	2	3	Non-voting Members				
Board Member	Henderson	Beidleman	Gerhart	White	Briggs	Reicks	Brey	Reigel
Term	8/22-8/25	8/22-8/24	8/22-8/23					
Board Position	Chair		Treasurer					
Finance			X					
Legal		X						
Grand Valley Community Member						X	X	X
Communications / Marketing	X	X		X				

	1	2	3	Non-voting Members				
Board Member	Henderson	Beidleman	Gerhart	White	Briggs	Reicks	Brey	Reigel
Community Engagement	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Colorado Charter Board, Leadership, or Teaching	X	X	X		X			X
Multi-Language (MLL) Certification				X	X			
Instructional Coaching		X				X		X
Mental Health		X		X				
ECE						X	X	
Parent of Public School Student	X			X	X		X	X
DEIB Experience or Expertise				X		X		
Real Estate / Facilities								
SPED Certification and Expertise		X						
Technology/Data Specialist								

Additionally, WMPSC's ongoing Board Development plan (Appendix G_WMPSC Board Development Plan) centers the accountabilities of the Board of Directors by:

- Continuing the work of equity-focused school design to inform the Board strategy and priorities;
- Hiring key leadership, including the Shared Services Partner role;
- Setting policies and development of tools that microsites can use to develop their own site-specific plans;
- Supporting Teacher Leaders through the School Startup Journey and Wildflower Network Membership;
- Ensuring establishment of systems that will support sound and compliant operations in alignment with the charter contract and applicable laws and policies.

H.2. Founding Board Development

The WMPSC Founding Board was formed in July 2022, transitioning from the Founding Steering Committee which formed in fall 2021. The cultivation of a Steering Committee began by Rachel Kelley-Cohn, Wildflower Regional Site Entrepreneur, as a response to Teacher Leader interest to create Wildflower charter schools in Grand Valley and Aurora. This Teacher Leader interest paralleled family interest to access identity-affirming microsites rooted in Montessori pedagogy.

Since the fall of 2021, this community of visionary leaders has met in person and virtually 17 times, and this application reflects only part of the expansive range of broad and detailed thinking required to move an idea to impact. WMPSC has had an intentional approach to governance development, working to center relationship building, relevancy within the community, prioritizing Teacher Leaders, and committing to self-reflection and growth. The Board, through this focus, has been building an identity that manifested itself in the organization's mission and vision. The Founding Board reflects the community and students the sites intend to serve, by modeling Wildflower's purpose, values, and norms, and also being a group of diverse individuals carrying out anti-bias and anti-racist education. Full bios of the Founding WMPSC Board can be found in Appendix H_WMPSC Bios. As the Board develops, it will further be representative of the communities we serve, comprising founding families and parents, and non-voting Teacher Leaders. Board cultivation in Grand Valley is a priority; currently, there are three Grand Valley Community-Design team members, Jenny Brey, Beverly Brown, and Jose Chavez.

H.3. Board Recruitment

Our strategy to sustain an engaged Board to meet their responsibilities includes: a process to vet new members and ensure their capacity, a thorough onboarding process for new members, clearly defined roles and responsibilities for board members that focus the members' time and leverage their expertise, and both formal and informal meetings that build connection and commitment. We acknowledge that our model requires consistent and deep engagement from our Board of Directors, as well as a collaborative spirit to work in partnership with Teacher Leaders and the Shared Services Partner and help ensure that every microsite thrives.

Board member recruitment centers relationship building. Starting with key contributors to the mission and vision of WMPSC, prospective board members are identified through referrals from community partners, funder contacts, and teacher leader networks. Our effort to attract strong candidates balances WMPSC's need for critical areas of expertise with a bottoms up approach to board development that prioritizes hyper-local representation from the landscapes our schools intend to serve. As defined in our Bylaws, the Governance Committee stewards the process of board member nomination and recommendation. The Committee establishes values and priorities for board member recruitment and facilitates discussion of our governance philosophy. This committee continuously reviews the Skill Matrix to ensure the necessary board member expertise and experience while also ensuring the membership is centered in and from the communities our schools serve. Presently, the Board has identified the skill areas currently needed to round out expertise, which include real estate development and multilingual language; the Board also seeks to widen socioeconomic representation on the Founding Board.

To fulfill these skill and diversity needs, Rachel Kelley-Cohn, the WMPSC Founding Board, and Teacher Leaders are actively cultivating relationships with communities, identifying possible board members for the Governance Committee. This networking will eventually be led by Teacher Leaders at

a regional-level and the Shared Services Provider at a state-level. Ultimately, the committee will bring forward recommendations of new board members and follow the process outlined in WMPSC Bylaws. Board members will be asked to sign the Board Commitment, Conflict of Interest, and the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Agreement within 14 days of being seated on the Board (Appendix_H_Policy_Board Commitments & Conflict of Interest, Appendix A_WMPSC DEIB Agreement).

H.4. Governance Structure

WMPSC will fulfill its responsibilities by creating and sustaining a policy environment that supports the charter and the work of the Teacher Leaders and WMPSC staff. The Board will be organized to support this policy environment as defined in the WMPSC Bylaws. The Bylaws state that the Board will be composed of between three and eleven voting members, in addition to non-voting Teacher Leader(s) and Community Design Team Board Representatives, as well as administrative leadership. Living out our commitment to the local communities we serve, guardians of enrolled students and community members will be included among the voting members of the Board.

The Board of Directors will include a Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. The Board Chair will work with Board members to appoint committee chairs. The Board Chair will preside at all board meetings. The Secretary will perform duties of the Board Chair in their absence, including presiding at any board meetings where the Chair is not present. The Treasurer will be the lead fiscal officer of WMPSC, and the Secretary will keep minutes of the board meetings and retreats.

The Board will use a committee structure to organize its work and responsibilities. The Board of Directors will create standing committees with the following charges:

- *School Accountability Committee:* Our students' identity is affirmed and they are prepared to transform their world. The School Accountability Committee is responsible for making recommendations to Teacher Leaders and charter-wide staff concerning priorities for spending school funds, the preparation of and adherence to the school's Performance, Improvement, Priority Improvement, or Turnaround plan, and fidelity to our mission and to WMPSC's contract with CSI.
- *Equity and People:* Our community reflects our mission and is strengthened by our presence. The Equity and People Committee ensures that all WMPSC stakeholders are living into WMPSC's values, purpose, and norms and that our staff, Board, and student populations are representative of the diversity in our communities.
- *Finance and Facilities:* Our organization and our microsites are financially sound. The Finance Committee is charged with ensuring that WMPSC and all of our microsites have balanced budgets, appropriate reserves, and sound, compliant facilities.
- *Governance:* We maintain a policy environment that meets the needs of the school and our community. The Governance Committee ensures that our policies and procedures adhere to self-management and WMPSC's Ways of Working and that our Board of Directors represents the diversity of our local communities and includes the breadth of expertise necessary to fulfill our mission and vision.

In addition to the Board committees, WMPSC includes advisory committees that are unique to our model. These include: the Community Design Team, hyper-local committees proximal to microsites whose purpose is to facilitate our participatory processes of co-designing charter sites with Teacher

Leaders and community members; and Teacher Leader pod structures, which are regional groups of Teacher Leaders that provide peer support and accountability for site performance, Wildflower's ways of working, and leadership development one another as educators and Montessorians, modeling wholeness, growth and connectedness and the Wildflower Ways of Working.

H.5.6. Board Training and Onboarding

To date, the Board has engaged in Wildflower's Self-Management Learning Series that supports our self-managed organizational structure and our collective ability to carry out key governance responsibilities using the practices of Roles and Responsibilities, Advice, Conflict Resolution, and Radical Transparency. (Appendix E_Wildflower Self-Management Ways of Working). The Board has also engaged in equityXdesign training by 228 Accelerator (Appendix C_equityXdesign Framework) that supported the development of the DEIB Agreement.

Board members will continue to take part in similar workshops, as well as specific governance workshops held by local organizations, such as the Colorado League of Charter Schools. In particular, WMPSC plans to seek training to support self-management governance, employment matters, financial management and oversight, and responsible monitoring and evaluation of school and pupil performance - especially supporting serving students with special needs. The Board will also seek support with succession planning to further strategize how to stagger Founding Board members and ideally onboard one to two new members every year, pulling in specific regional and skill set expertise. The staggered terms of Board members are identified in the Founding Board Member Matrix (H.1).

WMPSC has created a board development plan (Appendix G_Board Development Plan) that specifies board training, capacity building, self-evaluation, and succession planning. The annual budget allocated to board training is \$4,000 during the Planning Year, and \$2,000 each following year. The onboarding experience for board members includes reviewing an overview of WMPSC and a clear outline of expectations included in the organizing policies, Board Commitment, and DEIB and Conflict of interest policies. Members will be oriented to the WMPSC charter contract, have opportunities to meet Teacher Leaders and visit sites, and engage in the Wildflower Self-Management Learning Series. The Board's Governance Committee will facilitate support for this learning plan and coordinate resources from the wider Wildflower network.

Learning Plan	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3
Overview of WMPSC organizing policies	Bylaws, Board commitment, DEIB Agreement, COI	Finance and Employee policies	Additional policy review
School community	TL meet/greet	Site visits	Attend school event
WF Ways of Working	Self-management	Self-mgmt learning series	Self-mgmt learning series con't
WMPSC Accountabilities	Contract review	Charter Goals	Board priorities

H.7. Open Meeting Law, C.O.R.A., and FERPA

Community members, including all Teacher Leaders, staff, and parents and families will be invited and encouraged to attend all open sessions of board meetings. All board meetings will be open to the

public; only those subject matters for which closed sessions are allowed under Colorado Open Meetings Act will be held in closed session; and any official action of the Board taken in closed meeting will be reported on in the following open session. Our board meeting schedule will be posted on our website. The Board of Directors will operate according to the Colorado Open Meetings Act, per Article III. Section I of the WMPSC Bylaws:

Section 1. Meetings. The Board of Directors will meet at least ten (10) times per year to discuss WMPSC operations, to hear reports and updates from the charter community, and to discuss business related to the responsibilities outlined in these bylaws. The Board shall be subject to and hold meetings in accordance with the Colorado Open Meetings Act. The Board shall be subject to and hold meetings in accordance with the Colorado Open Meetings Act.

Directors may meet in-person or electronically (virtually) so long as all Directors participating and the public can all hear each other during the meeting, and technology is in place to ensure such. Directors attending virtually shall be counted as present for all purposes, and virtual attendance shall count toward a quorum. Should any Director plan to attend a board meeting virtually, they will make that known to the Board Secretary at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled Board meeting. The Board Secretary shall then provide for virtual access to the meeting to Directors and members of the public.

The Open Records Act creates a general presumption in favor of public access to government documents. The WMPSC Board of Directors understands the importance of staying in compliance of this law including the following requirements:

- The Board Secretary shall record board meeting minutes;
- The School Accountability Committee shall record School Accountability meeting minutes;
- Minutes will be posted on the school website in a timely manner;
- Minutes will be preserved in paper and electronic forms;
- The Board will make every effort to respond to C.O.R.A. requests within 3 working days;
- The Board will file an extension for extenuating circumstances.

The WMPSC Board will work to develop a policy surrounding C.O.R.A. requests so that it does not become a financial burden of the school. As soon as the charter application is approved, the WMPSC Board will be in full compliance with the law.

Additionally, WMPSC will meet the requirements of FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), which addresses the privacy of students' educational records. Board meetings are scheduled to train Board members about their legal obligations with regard to the Open Meetings Act, Colorado Public Records Act, and FERPA. The first training will take place in October 2022. There will be a training held at the Board retreat before the end of the 2022-23 fiscal year and throughout 2023. Directors commit to building awareness and maintaining compliance with legal requirements per the WMPSC Board Commitments (H_WMPSC Board of Director Commitments).

H.8. Board Materials

Required Attachments	Attachment Description	Appendix Item
Resumes of board members	One file for each member of the applicant team and Board	H_Resume_HendersonLatia H_Resume_BeidlemanMorgan H_Resume_GerhartKaycee H_Resume_Ewert-KrockerHannah H_Resume_ReicksEmma H_Resume_ReigelGeorgie
Bios of board members	Brief biography of each Board member	H_WMPSC Bios
Board Member Commitment	Board member commitment that is signed by all board members and addresses conflicts of interest	H_Policy_Board Commitments & Conflict of Interest
Board Bylaws	Should address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • board election or appointment process • board member criteria • board size • terms and term limits • duties and expectations • requirements for how often the board will meet • attendance requirements • procedures for board meetings and voting • board officers and their roles • board committees • removal • Conflict of Interest (or reference a standalone Conflict of Interest policy). 	H_WMPSC Bylaws H_Policy_Board Commitments & Conflict of Interest
Articles of Incorporation		H_Articles Of Incorporation

Leadership

As described in Section D, WMPSC unapologetically centers the Teacher Leader as the staff member best positioned to bring the dream of schooling that creates safe, affirming, just Montessori learning environments to life. Teacher Leaders have a critical role with a broad responsibility. WMPSC believes that teachers who have autonomy with support and are also leaders making decisions in the best interest of their students and school community have great job satisfaction.⁷⁰

In the WMPSC organizational structure, leadership is distributed. Individuals or roles are accountable to the full community rather than just one person. However, to foster growth and meet external reporting requirements, roles do have points of accountability. For instance, the Shared Services Partner is held accountable by the Board of Directors through facilitation of their hiring and evaluation

⁷⁰ Senechal, J., Sober, T., Hope, S., Johnson, T., Burkhalter, F., Castelow, T., Varljen, D. (2016). Understanding teacher morale.

processes, and in serving as the staff liaison to the Board of Directors. However, the Shared Services Partner is also accountable to peer staff and Teacher Leaders to fulfill their roles and responsibilities.

Teacher Leaders also practice shared accountability to the community and are hired by the Board of Directors during the Startup stage of the School Startup Journey (Appendix B_Wildflower School Startup Journey Deck). When making hiring decisions, the Board must get advice from the Shared Services Partner, peer Teacher Leaders, and other staff before making an invitation of Wildflower Network Membership and making hiring decisions that would affect the WMPSC community. Teacher Leaders and Teacher Leader Assistant roles are site-specific roles.

H.9. School Leadership

Teacher Leaders are our most critical staff members, and the 12-18-month School Startup Journey is the process where qualified teachers become Teacher Leaders at WMPSC. Our staffing is designed to support a minimum of two Teacher Leaders distributing leadership at each site to reach their maximum potential in educating students, centering family engagement, and modeling wholeness in an identity-affirming education model. The staff, including the Learning Specialists, Teacher Leader Assistants, Student Services Coordinator, and contracted providers work in service of the network of WMPSC sites and students, and with Teacher Leaders to support the operation and compliance of individual sites and the charter (Appendix H_Employment Policy). The Shared Services Partner holds a state-level WMPSC role during the Planning Year, allowing for a lens towards wider-system understanding, integration, compliance, and communication.

Teacher Leaders

A WMPSC Teacher Leader is a Montessori teacher with an entrepreneurial spirit, a passion for social justice and characteristics that allow them to evolve as an educator, co-teacher and human being through the School Startup Journey. The Teacher Leader holds the responsibility to be the general education teacher and the academic leader, to balance administrative work and educator capacity at the site level.

Teacher Leaders embody our Wildflower principles, norms, and values by possessing:

- A commitment to authentic Montessori;
- Entrepreneurial leadership;
- A commitment to serving diverse communities;
- A generosity of spirit;
- A willingness to work hard;
- A desire to learn and grow.

At each Primary site, two Teacher Leaders co-lead the microsite. At Cactus Bloom, the Elementary site, five Teacher Leaders distribute leadership, with one or two Teacher Leaders holding more operational responsibilities than the other Teacher Leaders, to manage administrative responsibilities typical of a Principal or Head of School. These (Operational) Teacher Leaders are the first contact with local agencies and coordinating direct-student services.

Shared Services Partner

The role of the Shared Services Partner is to build systems and lines of communication for charter staff and Teacher Leaders to do their best work in service of students, families and communities, while ensuring sites have the autonomy and flexibility to be responsive and adaptive to the unique needs of

each school community. This role is also the default for any responsibility not captured in another role and activates all staff roles to keep an eye on charter-wide metrics and overall school performance.

The Shared Services Partner is the direct contact between the Board of Directors and the other staff. Primary responsibilities currently include the strategic growth, back office operations, and facilitating reflection and learning of peers including Teacher Leaders. The Shared Services Partner collaborates with Teacher Leaders to ensure that site-level activities are synthesized with charter-level activities and are communicated with public education stakeholders such as CSI and CDE. The Shared Services Partner also collaborates with Teacher Leaders to ensure that site-level activities are aggregated to monitor performance metrics and performance goals set forth in the charter. The Shared Services Partner serves as the first point of contact for key stakeholders such as the Board of Directors, CSI, and federal agencies.

Job descriptions of the Teacher Leader and Shared Services Partner are in Appendix D_WMPSC GV Job Descriptions.

H.10. Leadership Recruitment

Our key leadership roles, the Shared Services Partner and Teacher Leaders, are held accountable by the Board of Directors and also hired by the Board. However, the process to be hired is different for each of these roles.

Currently, Hannah Ewert-Krocker is the Interim Shared Services Partner (Appendix H_Resume: Ewert-KrockerHannah). A formal search for a the Aurora Shared Services Partner who will hold a state-wide role during 2023-2024 is underway, with hiring to be confirmed in April 2023.

Emma Reicks and Georgie Reigel are Founding WMPSC Teacher Leaders (Appendix H_Resume_ReicksEmma and Appendix H_Resume_ReigelGeorgie). Rather than a recruitment process, Emma and Georgie, and all Wildflower Teacher Leaders engage in a 12-18 month School Startup Journey (SSJ) that is intense and self-selecting with the expectation that at least one of two Teacher Leaders at each school will have a minimum of three years of “in-field” teaching experience. Teacher Leaders who have successfully moved through the SSJ and meet charter requirements are considered highly qualified for their positions, as they have engaged in the rigorous process that includes two intense and purposeful Advice Process sessions with a cohort of veteran school leaders, demonstrating an astute vision of their site, fiscal health and sustainability data, community input, and operationalizing details.

The School Startup Journey

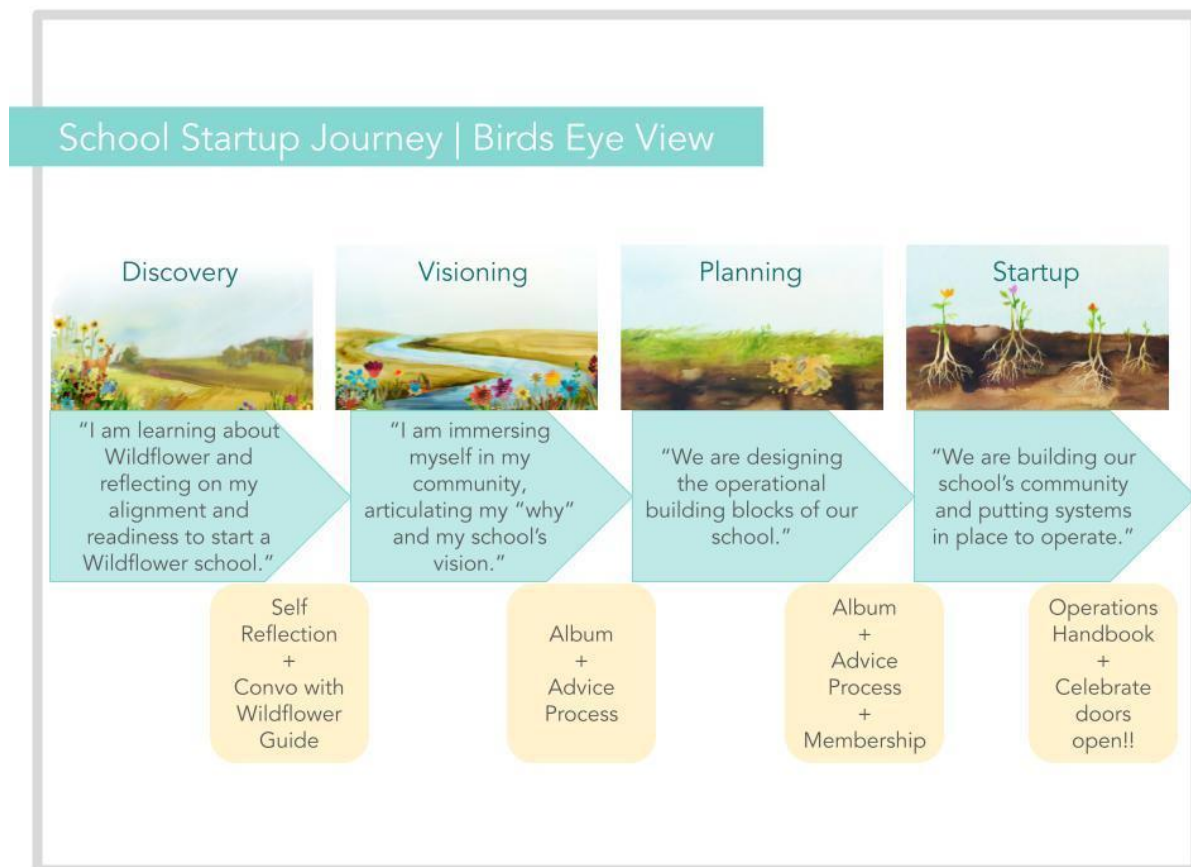
WMPSC Teacher Leaders’ journeys with Wildflower often start as a response to an open invitation, as opposed to a recruitment and hiring process. Every WMPSC site begins as an idea during the School Startup Journey (Appendix B_Wildflower School Startup Journey Deck) and is realized through self-reflection, community participation, the guidance of the Wildflower network and Shared Services Partner, and the support of all WMPSC staff and The Wildflower Foundation.

Teacher Leaders not only need to possess an authentic Montessori background and hold an experience with running a school or other non-profit organization, but also be committed to operating within the Wildflower model of self-management and designing and sustaining a culturally responsive school that meets (or exceeds) our charter goals and the WMPSC commitment to equity and identity

affirmation. The School Startup Journey also affirms a commitment to or experience with running a school or other non-profit business to meet the necessary administrative responsibilities of Teacher Leadership. Teacher Leaders also begin required MLL training through CDE if they do not possess it prior to entering the SSJ.

The School Startup Journey includes a developmental framework organized into four phases: Discovery, Visioning, Planning and Startup. In each stage, Teacher Leaders focus on developing their school plan around core guiding questions (see figure below). Through engagement in learning opportunities and school Startup activities, Teacher Leaders will form their own point of view on these core guiding questions and will create a portfolio of work that supports and demonstrates their point of view.

Once a Teacher Leader believes their thinking on the core guiding questions for that stage is fully developed, they will use the Advice Process to share their work so far and gather advice from others. After gathering advice from their stakeholder team and others interested in engaging, the Teacher Leader decides whether to move to the next stage of the SSJ. This point is critical to the journey: the Teacher Leader is the decision-maker, charting their own path, but the advice-givers help ground the Teacher Leader in the reality of the necessary preparedness to move ahead and help bring to light potential blind spots in their plans or their mindsets.



We describe this framework as developmental because the work of the early stages never really ends; transitioning into a new phase is representative of a shift in focus, and a welcoming of greater detail and complexity into the work. For example, every person in the Wildflower ecosystem begins their journey in Discovery - learning about Wildflower and about what it means to be a Wildflower school.

This work of deepening our understanding and continually growing is foundational to the way that all members of the Wildflower ecosystem work, an expression of our core values and norms. In Visioning, Teacher Leaders learn more about themselves and the vision for their microsite, identifying their priorities for growth as individuals. Similarly, the core work of the Planning stage is focused on thinking through the details of bringing a site to life and developing a strategy; though the shift into the Startup stage indicates a shift in focus toward implementation, Teacher Leaders will continually refine and rebuild their plans as they learn.

The end of the Planning stage is a critical point of a Teacher Leader's SSJ, at which the team is now activated to implement the plan they devised. At the end of the Planning stage, Teacher Leaders enter the School Startup stage where they become employees of WMPSC. This transition is a step-by-step process whereby Teacher Leaders share the detailed work they have completed throughout the Visioning and Planning stages and request that they be recommended to the Board of Directors by the Shared Services Partner to:

- Become a WMPSC employee;
- Deepen neighborhood specific community engagement;
- Begin the Startup stage which includes facility acquisition;
- Enroll and open a new WMPSC site;
- Receive financial support.

Teacher Leaders in WMPSC are supported by the staff once they complete the Planning stage of the SSJ and begin onboarding to become employees of WMPSC. We expect our Founding Teacher Leaders to move from the Planning to Startup stages in Fall 2023, at which time they will work with the Shared Services Partner to continue the Planning Year activities.

H.11. School Leadership Evaluation

While our school accountability processes rely on largely the same inputs and have the same aims as traditional systems, the internal mechanics of the WMPSC system are very different. We believe most people are intrinsically motivated to do good work and that they have the deepest insight into their own performance. We see the most important aspect of accountability as being accountable to oneself. Relatedly, we think of the most impacted stakeholders in retention or compensation decisions as being the individuals themselves. For these reasons, all of our accountability processes center on the individual, who gathers input into their own performance (both absolute and relative), considers goals, results, and context and determines any next steps. The same self-management tools we use for other decisions - the right of stakeholders to object to harmful decisions through the Conflict Resolution Process and Radical Transparency, for instance - provide important guardrails to ensure that decisions are made in the service of WMPSC's mission and vision.

Accountability systems are in place at WMPSC through the self-management practices of advice giving and conflict resolution as well as the more formal Growth and Accountability Cycle, outlined below. This evaluative process culminates in an annual Summative Self Reflection which meets the intentions of Colorado SB 10-191. The Summative Self Reflection is an annual document created by every staff member and submitted to the Board each April. Teacher Leaders use tools to create a thorough reflection document, which involves the input of every WMPSC stakeholder. The Shared Services Partner stewards the process for Teacher Leaders and charter-wide staff decide annually who will steward the process for one another. This process supports staff to receive the feedback they

need from specific stakeholders according to the established timeline, with this Self Reflection process serving as a tool for evaluation.

The responsibility of the School Accountability Committee is to work closely with Teacher Leaders and the Shared Services Partner to collect, review, report, and evaluate the goals outlined in Section F: Goals, Objective & Pupil Performance Standards. The Annual Leadership Growth and Accountability Cycle is our process to exceed compliance requirements and performance standards while including varied WMPSC stakeholders' voices in the process:

Annual Growth and Accountability Cycle: Overview

Tools to support self-management	Timeline	Stakeholders involved in feedback
Annual Goal and Reflection	Goal advice provided in August; Reflection advice provided in February	Teacher Leader partner, Shared Services Partner; 2 other Montessori/Academic leaders identified by the Teacher Leader; 1 additional Board member
Instructional Coaching / Professional Development	August - May	Montessori Instructional Coach (Teacher Leaders) or Growth and Connectedness Coach (Shared Services Partner)
WMPSC Site Review Process	January - April	Board Officer, Shared Services Partner, Student Services Coordinator (Grand Valley), Teacher Leader (Aurora) or Finance Partner, Site Parent, Parent Board Rep
DEIB Agreement 'Shelf Work' Reflection	February-April	Community Design Team Member, Teacher Leader, Parent Board Rep
Annual Community Site Survey / Net Promoter score	March	Anonymous survey for all stakeholders in the community
Annual Summative Self-reflection	Submitted to Board in May	Teacher Leader partner, Teacher Leader Board Reps

Growth and Accountability Cycle: Shared Services Partner

The School Accountability Committee will also define and steward an annual Growth and Accountability Cycle for the Shared Services Partner. The purpose of this process is to support the year-long cycle, designed to hold school leadership accountable through frequent touchpoints looking at the following elements:

- Charter-wide progress on each element of WMPSC's established charter goals;
- Progress towards mission-related goals, such as:
 - Community engagement in microsite neighborhoods;
 - Belonging and identity affirming site culture;
 - Equity approach and modeling;

- Ability to activate the Advice Process and Conflict Resolution Process with staff, Teacher Leaders, and Board;
- Fiscal health of WMPSC;
- Staff satisfaction and retention;
- Student attendance and retention.

Growth and Accountability Cycle: Teacher Leaders

For a Teacher Leader, this would start with the collection of family and peer input and incorporation of student achievement results and other results, all facilitated by processes supported by WMPSC staff. If the Shared Services Partner or board members have direct exposure to the Teacher Leader's work, they may provide input at this stage as well. Once an individual has considered all of the input and integrated it with their own perspectives to form an opinion on the whether they should continue in their role, what they should focus on developmentally, and what if any changes should be made to their compensation, the Shared Services Partner and the School Accountability Committee of the Board have the formal opportunity to offer advice – for example, to suggest that an individual overweighed one aspect of input vs. another or underappreciated the value or consequence of some aspect of the individual's work, or even that they came to the wrong decision on whether they should continue in their role. Next, the individual considers advice, and may refine their determination and next steps. At this point, the Shared Services Partner and the School Accountability Committee receive the evaluations, and they can object to any decisions they identify as harmful.

Outside the formal processes described above, school accountability happens on an ongoing basis through the functioning of strong self-management processes and a focus on growth and connectedness. In self-management, if one Teacher Leader believes that their partner should leave WMPSC, the Conflict Resolution Process gives clear guidance for what to do with that thought to take action. The process can result in a Teacher Leader departure. If a Teacher Leader at one site believes that another site in the charter is not meeting charter goals and mission, they would also use the Conflict Resolution Process which could result in changes to that site. The hallmark of this system is that it gives individuals and the Board access to a tremendous amount of information along the way through our value of radical transparency. These stakeholders can step in when they think things are headed in the wrong direction, but it makes explicit something that good managers do in traditional arrangements: it leaves individuals in charge of the most important decisions that impact their work and career except in the unusual case where an individual demonstrates an inability to handle that responsibility.

Site Review Process

Because our charter is made up of multiple sites, each site is held accountable to charter-wide performance and meeting charter goals. The Site Review Process is the annual process used by WMPSC stakeholders to review every site under the charter (Appendix D_WMPSC Growth Accountability Cycle & Site Review Processes). Stakeholders included in this process are the site Teacher Leaders, a Board Officer, Shared Services Partner, Student Services Coordinator or Finance Partner, and parents / guardians. During the Site Review Process, stakeholders use defined criteria to provide Teacher Leaders advice on the site's operation and alignment with the WMPSC mission.

Beyond this annual routine practice, the Teacher Leaders will provide the Board regular updates on site progress and performance, and the Shared Services Partner will report on charter-wide performance. During the Planning Year, we will seek to refine these processes with the advice from stakeholders close to the decision making, including Teacher Leaders, parents, families, Community Design Team, and Shared Services Partner.

I. Operations

I.1. WMPSC Reporting

Teacher Leaders and charter-wide staff will use Infinite Campus as the primary student information system. Infinite Campus will house student demographic information, attendance, behavior, annual academic performance data (such as CMAS or ACCESS), and information about students with special needs, such as IEP and 504 designations and accommodations. The Shared Services Partner and Student Services Coordinator will work together to maintain student data in Infinite Campus and provide reports, as necessary, to CSI and the CDE. WMPSC's state-wide Shared Services Partner will be familiar with the systems in place during WMPSC Grand Valley's Planning Year which will ensure seamless setup of this system prior to the beginning of the school year. Teacher Leaders and the Student Services Coordinator will be trained during the first three months of WMPSC employment.

Teacher Leaders at WMPSC will also use Transparent Classroom, the leading online Montessori record keeping system, to record student academic progress, including lessons received and skills mastered, for each individual student. Transparent Classroom aligns Montessori curriculum lessons with the Common Core State Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, and College, Career, and Civic Life Framework for Social Studies. Teacher Leaders will use Transparent Classroom to provide individualized reports for each student that demonstrate student mastery of standards. Teacher Leaders will be responsible for entering student-specific data into the Transparent Classroom. These two data platforms will be part of onboarding for all Teacher Leaders and staff.

During spring 2024 (Appendix B_Planning Year Timeline), we will finalize these reporting systems, learning from WMPSC Aurora and consulting with CSI.

I.2. WMPSC Policies

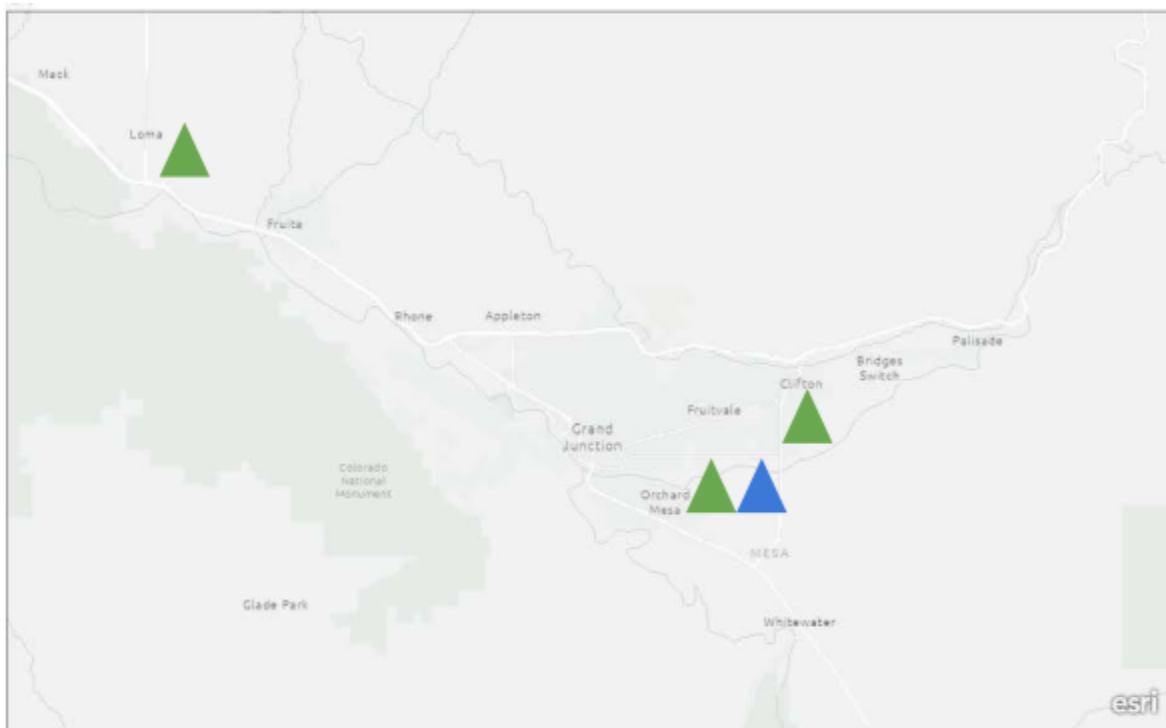
Our governance and administrative approach is rooted in radical transparency, and employs thoughtful processes for clarifying accountability, integrating multiple perspectives into decisions and collaboratively resolving conflict. The following organizing draft policies, developed by the WMPSC Board of Directors, embody this approach. WMPSC will be in full compliance of federal, state, and local law and is committed to the Wildflower Ways of Working (Appendix E_Self-Management Ways of Working).

Required Attachments	Naming Convention for Saving Each Attachment
Enrollment policy	I_WMPSC Enrollment Policy
Discipline policy	C_WMPSC GC Student Discipline PolicyDraft
Employee Policy	H_Employment Policy
Grievance Policy	I_Grievance Policy and Procedures
Requested Waivers	I_Waivers

Facilities

WMPSC sites are intentionally small and embedded in neighborhoods proximal to Grand Junction, in areas that traditionally have not had access to Montessori programs and are designated childcare deserts. Our network of four sites create an interdependent ecosystem - a continuum of PK-6th grade learning for students and families, and a regional hub where Montessori Teacher Leaders support one another. This ecosystem strengthens the neighborhoods, brings community together and informs how Teacher Leaders evolve and adapt the identity affirming learning environments. At the same time, each microsite is its own thriving community.

Each site seeks to be connected directly to the public life of its community, both visually and physically. In Grand Valley, we aspire to build three Primary (PK-K) microsites [depicted by the green triangles in the map below] of no more than 32 students each in Clifton (east Grand Valley), Orchard Mesa (central/south Grand Valley), and Loma (west Grand Valley). These Primary microsites will be in co-location with non-profit organizations, such as neighborhood-nested houses of worship, affordable housing developments, and residential areas. The elementary site, Cactus Bloom Montessori [depicted by the blue triangle in the map below], will also be located in the Orchard Mesa area, proximal to community activity and downtown Grand Junction area and central to the east and west Primary sites.



Each unique site is designed with the needs and preferences of families in mind and is based on American Montessori International and Montessori Foundation facility recommendations, calculating an average of 40 SF needed per student.⁷¹ Cost, opportunity for co-location partnership, and each microsite vision will also drive decisions on specific site locations.

⁷¹ <https://mmsdamps.files.wordpress.com/2017/07/ami-school-standards-7092.pdf/>
<https://www.slideshare.net/marco313/designing-facilities>.

As community-embedded learning spaces, WMPSC sites will partner with local nonprofits to ensure that each child is healthy, safe, engaged, and supported, and that families are linked with a variety of services. As Section B describes, WMPSC in Grand Valley is building relationships with Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families, Hilltop Family Resource Center, and the Migrant Education Program West-Central Region to amplify their work.

I.3. Facility Assessment

Given our vision of community-embedded, small sites in Grand Valley, we have developed the following criteria for identifying viable spaces:

- Along primary commuting routes and public transportation;
- Neighborhood characterized by diversity representative of Loma, Orchard Mesa, and Clifton;
- Sizes of facility reflects the need for 40 SF per student at full enrollment of 32 students (Primary sites) and 96 students (Elementary site);
- Minimum 1,500 SF;
- Close proximity to community parks, green spaces and civic spaces;
- Flexibility to create capacity for 1-2 classrooms and 1-2 small group instruction and/or assessment space;
- Space for a kitchen, student medicine administration, on-site storage and Teacher Leader and operational workspace;
- Restroom facilities meeting CDE child care licensing regulations for before/after care;
- Meets accessibility requirements/ADA compliant;
- Parking is available as needed for ease of family drop off/pick up;
- Sites are by-right from a zoning perspective;
- Option to sign a 5-10 year lease agreement.

In addition to these broad criteria, the Walkthrough Worksheet (Appendix I_Facilities Walkthrough Worksheet) is an identification tool used by Wildflower's Teacher Leaders to support the facility search. Founding Teacher Leaders will work with the Grand Junction Community Development department to ensure our facility meets zoning compliance. They will also collaborate with the hyper-local Community Design Teams to determine the ideal locations for their microsites, informed by local data including enrollment trends at nearby neighborhood schools, child care desert areas, transportation considerations, co-location opportunities with community collaborators, proximal business and organizational partnerships and family interest. The site identification process is done as part of the School Startup Journey, explained in Section E, and is supported by a team of local advice givers most impacted by the Teacher Leaders' location decisions.

Cosmos Montessori in Minneapolis, which is co-located in the Sabathani Community Center – one of Minnesota's oldest nonprofits founded by Black leaders – is an example, below, of the small-scale, community-embedded facility we seek for both Primary and Elementary (until Grade 5 opens). Specific attention is paid to the site's reflection of the Wildflower principles and to the presence of a culturally responsive space that makes every community member feel welcome and safe.



The WMPSC facility search is currently led by Emma Reicks, Founding Teacher Leader, and Theresa Englbrecht. During our preliminary search, we identified two high-potential sites that meet WMPSC’s search criteria. Specifications are below.

I.4. Facility Location

Our growth plan reflects that new sites will be added to the WMPSC network in Grand Valley during our first, second, and fourth years of operation.

	Year 1 (2023-24)	Year 2 (2024-25)	Year 3 (2025-26)	Year 4 (2026-27)	Year 5 (2027-28)
Total WMPSC Students	72	96	144	160	192
Primary Sites	1	1	2	2	3
Elementary Sites	1	1	1	1	1
Total WMPSC Sites	2	2	3	3	4

Emma Reicks has narrowed the search for the first WMPSC microsites to two locations, cultivating strong relationships with the co-locating organizations.

The first site identified is a 1,500 SF space within the Vineyard Community Church at 2711 UnawEEP Avenue. This location in Orchard Mesa is ideal for the Primary microsite because of its proximity to both Clifton and Orchard Mesa. This facility is an unused first-floor wing of a large community church, with access to a stage, kitchen, and large gathering space. The unused wing would be renovated for exclusive use by WMPSC. There is outdoor access and available space in the parking lot for both parking, pick-up/drop-off, and transformation into an outdoor play space. ADA and child care licensing compliance would be ensured during the renovation process. Emma Reicks is in communication with the church leadership who is eager to have the space utilized exclusively by a WMPSC PK-K site (Appendix B_Letters of Support).

The second location identified for Cactus Bloom, the Elementary site, is American Lutheran Church (ALC), 631 26 1/2 Rd, Grand Junction, CO 81506 (see Appendix B_Letters of Support). This location

is imagined to be Cactus Bloom's home until Year 3 when Grade 5 opens and more space is needed. Until then, this space at ALC offers: adjacent bathrooms and a kitchen; over 2000 square feet with ample natural light; and is ADA compliant. There is ample parking for family pick-up and drop-off, and green space for outdoor play. This location is within a 15-minute commute to Nisley Elementary, Pear Park Elementary, and Chatfield Elementary. Grand Valley Transit Route 2 has a stop at 7th Street and Patterson, .8 miles from the school. Our real estate advisor, Gregg Kampf, has drafted a lease that the church council will review, and which will be finalized closer to occupancy.

Below are photos of this proposed initial site:



Beyond these two sites that are being explored, our priority for facility research and acquisition is as follows:

- Co-location with non-profit partners providing direct services to families for Primary sites (such as faith-based centers where Grand Valley community currently centers culture and that has readily available open space for secular co-location);
- Rent or purchase and renovate 5,000+ sq ft neighborhood-nested space, beginning in Year 3 (such as former daycare centers and closed public school facilities) for co-location of Primary 1 and Elementary sites.

Our facility search is also aspirational and unconventional. We imagine possibilities like a commercially-zoned renovated home site in Loma where facilities may be difficult to secure; co-locating in affordable and senior housing developments; and repurposing closed D51 schools for the Primary-Elementary sites' hub.⁷² WMPSC is actively working to engage the community in order to find the best place where access to the outdoors and intergenerational teaching and learning is our norm. Because our model of schooling is purposefully smaller and closer to community, Wildflower schools in other locations⁷³ have successfully built their schools and are thriving in these types of learning environments. We expect the same in Grand Valley.

⁷²https://www.gjsentinel.com/news/western_colorado/d51-demographer-suggests-closure-of-three-schools-this-fall/article_16d0e4c4-af26-11ed-94ed-8ff385be3038.html

⁷³ Wildflower Schools with co-location models include: Flame Lily, Aurora, CO, co-located in a community center; Sundrops, San Jose, CA, co-located in an affordable housing development; Lirio Montessori, Minneapolis MN, co-located in a church; and Mariposa Montessori, Puerto Rico, co-located with a women's shelter.

I.5. Facility Timeline

We understand that securing a facility is a difficult and time-consuming effort so we are already building a team to support this endeavor. We believe an approved charter expedites the facility search process, and we have made inroads and are building relationships with key partners so we can take action on facilities quickly once we obtain authorizer approval. Additionally, the small scale of our sites provides a significant advantage not feasible for more traditional, larger schools. As described above, we have already identified two viable facility options that meet criteria for the WMPSC initial sites in Year 1 and align with our mission and vision.

In order to search and secure a site, Founding Teacher Leaders follow a facility timeline that centers real estate inventory and learning environment culture, as well as the Teacher Leaders who best understand strategies for facility location that are aligned with individual community need, as outlined in the chart below:

	Description	Responsible	Timing
Site 1 Lower Elem: Site Search engage Community Design Team	Explore different options and engage w/ American Lutheran Church	TLs Realtor Advisor: Gregg Kampf, pro bono	June-October 2023
Site 1: Negotiations	Leases drafted	TLs Landlord Legal Advisor: Gregg Kampf, pro bono	October 2023
Site 1: Execute lease	Sign lease to start no sooner than April 2024	WMPSC Board Landlord	April-May 2024
Site 1: Renovations	Site does not require renovations	N/A	N/A
Site 1: Fire Inspection	Coding and safety, aligns with safety plan	TLs SSP	May 2024
Site 1: Design and set-up classroom	Access to Wildflower design supports	TLs	June 2024
Site 1: Ready to serve	Open houses, room set up complete	TLs	Aug 2024
Site 2 CH1 ⁷⁴ : Site Search; engage Community Design Team	Explore options close to Clifton where child care desert is prominent ⁷⁵ and engage with Vineyard Church	TLs Realtor Pro bono Advisor	June-September 2023
Site 2 CH1: negotiations; research contractors	Expand partnerships with contractors, such as Quality Builders of Colorado, Inc.; draft leases	TLs Landlord Legal Pro bono Advisor	September-October 2023

⁷⁴ CH = Children's House (Primary, PK3-K site)

⁷⁵ Center for American Progress, <https://childcaredeserts.org/>

Site 2 CH1: Child Care Licensing; Identify contractor	Engage Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families Team to begin licensure process (Appendix I_Opening a Child Care Center); Use procurement process for contractor bidding	TLs Landlord SSP	November-February 2024
Site 2 CH1: Execute lease	Sign lease to start no sooner than March 2024	WMPSC Board Landlord	March-April 2024
Site 2 CH1: Renovations	Renovations commence	Contractors SSP TLs Landlord	April-July 2024
Site 2 CH1: Fire Inspection	Coding and safety, aligns with safety plan and licensing requirements	TLs SSP	July 2024
Site 2 CH1: Set-up classroom	Access to Wildflower design supports	TLs	July 2024
Site 2 CH1: Ready to serve	Open houses, room set up complete	TLs	Aug 2024
Site 3 CH2: Site Searches; engage Community Design Team	Specific locations informed by family demand; researched need; TL engagement with community design team; consideration to locate in CH1 site when vacated to relocate to shared CH1/ELEM site	TLs Realtor Probono Advisor	Jan-June 2025
Site 3 CH2: Child Care Licensing; Identify contractor	Access WF support to assist preparation of license process; Engage Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families Team to begin licensure process (Appendix I_Child Care 101); Use procurement process for contractor bidding	TLs Landlord SSP	Aug 2025 - Feb 2026
Sites 3 CH2: Execute lease	Sign lease to start no sooner than April 2026	WMPSC Board Landlord	April 2026
Site 3 CH2: Renovations	Renovations commence	Contractors SSP TLs Landlord	May-July 2026
Sites 3 CH2: Fire Inspection	Coding and safety, aligns with safety plan and licensing requirements	TLs SSP	July 2026
Sites 3 CH2: Set-up classroom	Access to Wildflower design supports	TLs	July 2026

Sites 3 CH2: Ready to serve	Open houses, room set up complete	TLs	Aug 2026
CH1 and ELEM Shared Site Search; engage Community Design Team	Specific location informed by family demand; researched need; TL engagement with community design team	TLs	January-June 2025
CH1 and ELEM Shared Site: negotiations; research contractors	Use procurement process for contractor bidding	TLs Landlord Legal Pro bono Advisor	July-Dec 2025
CH1 and CH2: Child Care Licensing; Identify contractor (both sites)	Access WF support Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families Team to begin licensure process (Appendix I_Child Care 101) to assist preparation of license process; Use procurement process for contractor bidding	TLs Landlord SSP	Aug 2025 - Feb 2026
CH1 and ELEM Shared Site: Execute lease	Sign lease to start no sooner than April 2026	WMPSC Board Landlord	April 2026
CH1 and ELEM Shared Site: Renovations	Renovations commence	Contractors SSP TLs Landlord	May-July 2026
CH1 and ELEM Shared Site: Fire Inspection	Coding and safety, aligns with safety plan and licensing requirements	TLs SSP	July 2026
CH1 and ELEM Shared Site: Set-up classroom	Access to Wildflower design supports	TLs	July 2026
CH1 and ELEM Shared Site: Ready to serve	Open houses, room set up complete	TLs	Aug 2026
Site 4: CH3 Site Search; engage Community Design Team	Explore options close to Clifton where child care desert is prominent ⁷⁶ and engage with Vineyard Church location	TLs Realtor Pro bono Advisor	June-September 2028
Site 4 CH3: negotiations; research contractors	Expand partnerships with contractors, such as Quality Builders of Colorado, Inc.; draft leases	TLs Landlord Legal Pro bono Advisor	September-October 2028

⁷⁶ Center for American Progress, <https://childcaredeserts.org/>

Site 4 CH3: Child Care Licensing; Identify contractor	Engage Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families Team to begin licensure process (Appendix I_Child Care 101); Use procurement process for contractor bidding	TLs Landlord SSP	November-February 2029
Site 4 CH3: Execute lease	Sign lease to start no sooner than March 2024	WMPSC Board Landlord	March-April 2029
Site 4 CH3: Renovations	Renovations commence	Contractors SSP TLs Landlord	April-July 2029
Site 4 CH3: Fire Inspection	Coding and safety, aligns with safety plan and licensing requirements	TLs SSP	July 2029
Site 4 CH3: Set-up classroom	Access to Wildflower design supports	TLs	July 2029
Site 4 CH3: Ready to serve	Open houses, room set up complete	TLs	Aug 2029

Safety

I.6. WMPSC Safety Plan

WMPSC will form a charter-wide Grand Valley emergency management team comprised of the Shared Services Partner, two Teacher Leaders, and two parents or guardians of children attending WMPSC. The team will develop a Grand Valley Safety, Readiness and Incidence Management Plan (also known as the Emergency Operations Plan) in coordination with local first responders and guided by the Colorado Safety Schools Act requirements.

The Shared Services Partner holds the responsibility for the charter to be in compliance of:

- Colorado Safe Schools Act (C.R.S. 22-32-109.1)
- Claire Davis School Safety Act
- Emergency Operations Planning
- Threat Assessments
- Site Assessments

Our safety plan will include annual training for all WMPSC employees. Teacher Leaders at each site will also create and maintain a site-based Safety, Readiness and Incidence Management Plan in collaboration with the Shared Services Partner in alignment with and to supplement the charter-wide plan. Teacher Leaders will hold responsibility for site-specific compliance and for teaching students and staff proper procedures in the event of an emergency or crisis.

Transportation

I.7. WMPSC Transportation Plan

WMPSC does not plan to provide free bus transportation during our first five years of operation. Our community-embedded sites will be situated along commuting and public transportation lines to ease getting to and from WMPSC. To support students for whom transportation is challenging, we will guide students to the Kids Ride Free program and our contingency is noted to allocate funds for local subsidized bus passes for parents (to cover an estimated 20% of students for 10 months annually), as needed by families.

Ultimately, our aim is to provide busing to all families, which we believe will be helpful for our families, encourage enrollment and attendance, and be cost effective. We have not included this expense in our first five years' budget in order to be conservative during our startup years and because much will depend upon the location of our sites.

We have built flexibility into our morning schedule to accommodate all families, regardless of transportation method, and to facilitate carpooling. Most students will arrive at 8:15 a.m. for the start of school, but parents may elect to have their child arrive earlier for breakfast and/or early care hours. This will help parents who have limited means to transport their child to school and/or who use the same vehicle to go to work.

For all parents, regardless of the time their child starts school, the doors of the school will open at 7:30 a.m. for early care services and close at 5:30 p.m. for after-school services. Again, this will help with carpooling and provide parents with more options for dropping off and picking up their children.

We will work closely with CSI to support the needs of our students with IEPs and 504s, and students qualifying for free/reduced lunch who need to arrive 30 minutes prior to the start of the school day. In all our microsites, before and after-care are charter-wide defaults to ensure continuity of care and community need.

Experiential learning and field trips are a core component of our model, and Teacher Leaders will determine how to best integrate these into their program to reinforce and expand on student learning and growth. We will carefully select and contract with a private transportation company to provide transportation for field trips and, as possible, seek to use the immediate community within walking distance for outings. We will only contract with a company that meets all regulatory requirements for transporting children and has a strong safety record. We will seek funding and/or adjust site budgets to incorporate these transportation costs along with the other costs associated with these crucial off-site learning experiences. Teacher Leaders may also choose to offer parents the opportunity to volunteer as chaperones for such outings and will comply with all regulations, background checks, and insurance requirements for parents chaperoning students.

Food Services

I.8. WMPSC Food Services Plan

WMPSC will offer breakfast and lunch to all students regardless of ability to pay. We want to ensure all students are fed and there is no stigma attached to free or reduced lunch.

Our sites will initially participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and designate CSI as their School Food Authority and food service provider. By participating in NSLP, we will ensure our food service program is compliant with both Federal USDA guidelines and food safety and facility regulations. Partnering with the district to provide meals and manage reimbursements will ensure consistent quality of meals and reduce administrative complexity during our startup years.

All eligible students will be strongly encouraged to complete the Free and Reduced Lunch Form annually. We will closely follow policies regarding federal and state free lunch programs as they might continue to evolve in response to the pandemic, to ensure that no student goes without breakfast or lunch, including during closures and summer break. As per current policy, students who meet qualification guidelines will receive their meals free or at a reduced price.

Breakfast and lunch will be made available to all other students and staff at a regular price, which will be determined on an annual basis, taking into account actual costs, but prioritizing affordability for families. We have included in our budget an allowance to cover meals in the event a student forgets payment (we will not charge them).

While we plan to start with CSI as our School Food Authority, we will explore other food sourcing options once we are fully operational. Nutrition and environmental sustainability - and the cultural relationship between food and people - are very much a part of WMPSC's holistic approach to children's education and well-being. The Grand Valley holds a unique tension between having a history of farming, hunting, and harvesting and currently being an agricultural hub, yet also being deemed a low access food desert by the US Department of Agriculture.⁷⁷ WMPSC is committed to ensuring that our children and their families have access to high quality, nutritional food, including by potentially growing and producing our own. As such, we have begun to research options such as adopting the 'Building a Healthy School' toolkit from the Colorado League of Charter Schools and being part of Colorado's Farm to School initiative, which resonates with the land-based Montessori Adolescent programming.

Legal Agreement & Insurance Coverage

I.9. Legal Agreement

WMPSC will act in accordance with all state and local charter school laws. Per Mesa County Valley School District 51's Release to Colorado Charter Schools Institute Letter (Appendix I_D51 Signed Release Resolution), WMPSC commits to working with CSI on an agreement during charter contract negotiations:

⁷⁷ US Department of Agriculture, Food Desert Map: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas/>.

WMPSC understands and agrees that the relationship between CSI and WMPSC will “be established by a contract which shall incorporate the charter application once it is approved. The contract also shall reflect all agreements between the district and the charter school including the release of the charter school from Board policies and all requests for release from state regulations which the Board and the charter school shall jointly request from the State Board of Education.”

I.10. Insurance and Liability

WMPSC Aurora currently uses EPIC Brokers and Philadelphia Insurance Companies to provide all our required insurance coverage, which currently includes directors and officers and will include comprehensive general liability, building and contents, errors and omissions (including Teacher Leaders), blanket occupational accident, and excess workers’ compensation insurance. WMPSC Grand Valley will expand the EPIC coverage to Grand Valley, and will also obtain coverage for each charter site, its employees, and its activities.

We have included all these insurance policies in our budget based on actual or projected estimates based on market rates. We have budgeted for comprehensive general liability coverage at \$2,000,000 per occurrence to include bodily injury, property damage, abuse and molestation, employee benefits, and employment practices, as well as an additional \$1,000,000 in coverage for errors and omissions. Once we have secured our facilities, we will obtain building and contents insurance. We have also budgeted for workers’ compensation per state law and will ensure this is in place before employees are hired.

WMPSC agrees that it will not extend the faith and credit of CSI, its authorizer, to any third party or entity. WMPSC acknowledges and agrees that it has no authority to enter into a contract that would bind the authorizer, and that WMPSC’s authority to contract is limited by the same provisions in law or authorizer policy that apply to CSI itself, unless specific exemptions have been obtained. WMPSC is limited in its authority to contract by the amount of funds obtained from CSI, as provided hereunder, or from other independent sources. The WMPSC Board of Directors shall have the authority to approve contracts to which the charter is a party, subject to the requirements and limitations of the Colorado Constitution, state law, authorizer policies, the provisions of the contract, and the Charter Agreement.

To the extent not covered by insurance or otherwise barred by the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act, WMPSC agrees to indemnify and hold the Authorizer and its agents and employees harmless from all liability, claims, and demands on account of injury, loss, or damage, including, without limitation, claims arising from bodily injury, personal injury, sickness, disease, death, property loss, or damage or any other losses of any kind whatsoever that arise out of or are in any manner connected with the charter’s operations. The foregoing provision shall not be deemed a relinquishment or waiver of any kind of applicable limitations of liability provided by the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act.

Pre-school Addendum

PA.1. Student Enrollment

The enrollment table for Years 1-5 follows:

Grade level	Year 1 (2023-24)	Year 2 (2024-25)	Year 3 (2025-26)	Year 4 (2026-27)	Year 5 (2027-28)
PK3	6	10	20	20	30
PK4	6	10	20	20	30
K	12	12	24	24	36

This growth plan reflects the plan to open one preschool (Primary) microsite in 2024, a second Primary microsite in 2026, and a third Primary microsite in 2028, serving 112 PK3-K students at full growth. The WMPSC target student population is listed below, based on averages of proximal schools (see table below) and WMPSC's commitment to building access to Montessori for marginalized students. WMPSC plans to reflect the demographics of D51 as a whole in our target population, given our enrollment policy (Appendix I_Policy Enrollment Draft):

School	%BIPOC ⁷⁸	% Free or Reduced Lunch Eligible (FRLE)	% Special Education	% Multilingual Learner	% Gifted
WMPSC Anticipated Demographic	45.0	68.0	17.0	7.0	3.4
Demographic of Mesa County Valley District 51	30.3	45.0	12.3	3.4	3.4

This projection correlates to our Wildflower principle of equity and our norm of unity. WMPSC is in Grand Valley to bring the Montessori Method to all students, especially to a demographic with historically less access to the Method and a population that can benefit from identity-affirming and culturally responsive education.⁷⁹ We intentionally created a tuition model that supports this commitment, which is detailed further in section PA.7 Recruitment and Enrollment Process.

⁷⁸'BIPOC' refers to 'minority' in publicly available data, defined as all non-White federal race categories: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.

⁷⁹ Lillard, A. S., Taggart, J., Yonas, D., & Seale, M. N. (2021). An alternative to "no excuses": Considering Montessori as culturally responsive pedagogy. J. Negro Educ.

PA.2. PK Evidence

Teacher Leaders are using an interest form (Appendix B_GV InterestForm) to solicit interest in enrollment at outreach and canvassing opportunities. Through our ongoing community engagement efforts, we have received 67 Interest Forms for 12 Primary openings in Year 1. This interest is 275% beyond our capacity in Year 1, detailed in the table below.

Grade Level	Number of Students in Year 1	Interest Forms
PK	12	44
Kindergarten	12	23

PA.3. Community Need

During our community engagement efforts (Appendix B_GV Community Engagement Plan), we have heard from families about a desire for a small, intimate school community that fosters deep relationships among students and families. Our growth reflects our ability, fiscally and operationally, to offer the following qualities that have been voiced:

- Embracing all identities and teaching in culturally responsive ways;
- Individualized learning;
- Mixed-age;
- A diverse student body and staff;
- A safe, inclusive learning community;
- Hands-on learning opportunities;
- A small, intimate school community that fosters a strong sense of belonging.

WMPSC will open access for families wishing to enroll their children in a public Montessori school across the Grand Valley. While there is one existing public Montessori school in the area, they do not offer a micro school environment and they currently hold a waitlist. Additionally, this public charter school is not proximal to east Grand Valley, where identified need exists.

WMPSC also offers a unique opportunity because the Wildflower Montessori model is inherently designed to support students on an individual and differentiated basis, a model made even more possible by the small size of our Primary microsites. Our Teacher Leaders co-create their microsite with the community, offering individualized support for every student, especially Multilingual Learners, students with disabilities and mental health needs, and students identified as Gifted and Talented.

PA.4. Family Engagement

The Montessori pedagogy is inherently child-focused and individualized. WMPSC parents/guardians will be provided frequent personalized student reports through the use of the Transparent Classroom record-keeping system, as well as attend conference cycles three times per year. Teacher Leaders will immediately and intentionally connect with and engage families in the learning process through home visits before the beginning of school and the initial conference cycle. We plan to create an opportunity for students to visit the classroom before the start of the school year for a 20-30 minutes session to participate in sample Montessori lessons. This early introduction to the school environment gives the children the opportunity to engage with the Teacher Leaders in the classroom, parents/guardians the

chance to continue establishing a relationship with Teacher Leaders, and all adults time to observe the children's "work" as they become familiarized with the materials, guides and environment.

The multi-age classroom, wherein a student has the same Teacher Leader for a three-year cycle, is a Montessori element that provides consistency in teaching, learning, and family engagement. The microsite model is intentionally designed for direct and honest communication between home and school. In this model, Teacher Leaders know their students well and share proactively and swiftly on their academic and social-emotional progress.

Our microsites will engage in traditions, activities, and events that strengthen the school-family partnership. Teacher Leaders at each site develop these activities within the context of communities' culture and traditions. WMPSC ensures that all families can access a Montessori education for their child, regardless of their availability to volunteer, and, as such, there is no requirement for parents to volunteer at the school. Our sites are not reliant on parent volunteer hours. Still, Teacher Leaders will provide a range of volunteer opportunities to meet parents' varying schedules, interests, and skill sets, and family involvement will be encouraged, depending on the capacity of the family. WMPSC will encourage parents to volunteer and keep an updated list of specific ways parents can support the site and their children's learning, both in person and at home.

Families will be integral members of our Community Design Teams. Our WMPSC Board of Directors will include parents/guardians. Per the Bylaws, the Board of Directors requires two parents/guardian representatives. As such, parents will be involved at all levels of school governance and advising. Teacher Leaders at each site will decide on additional parent/guardian volunteer roles, such as:

- Community liaison
- Activity support or lead (such as music/yoga)
- Field trip support
- Translator
- Advisory Council

We are sensitive to our founding families' linguistic, technological, and particular communication needs. In collaboration with families and in accordance with their needs, Teacher Leaders will make site-based decisions around using phone apps, hard copy information, and/or social media platforms to communicate.

During home visits and registration, Teacher Leaders will ask parents how they would like to receive information and communications. For non-urgent concerns or those who would like to schedule a future visit/appointment with the Teacher Leaders, email will typically be used (with policies giving Teacher Leaders a 24-48 hr time frame to respond Monday-Friday). Teacher Leaders may use Bloomz, Seesaw or other applications for urgent messages or concerns that can be solved quickly. This kind of medium can also help communicate things like snow days, school closures, and other things that need immediate attention. Alongside plans to leverage technology to support school communications, we will ultimately honor families' preferred vehicle to ensure they can each access school information and opportunities for involvement effectively and comfortably.

Like we have done in our current community engagement efforts, we will make every effort to ensure our family communications are communicated in English and Spanish, at a minimum. We will prioritize translating our communications into the other languages our families speak to ensure that communication is accessible to all family members. Teacher Leaders may facilitate monthly family meetings to build community by communicating, educating, and informing parents. Example topics

include: “What is Montessori?,” “What are practical life skills children can practice at home?,” and “How can we help our child develop independence?” Additionally, Teacher Leaders will seek and listen to ideas and concerns raised by parents/guardians. Teacher Leaders will make family events, discussion topics, and site-based schedule decisions through advice they receive from community members, emerging situations, and evolving conditions.

PA.5. Childcare Licensing

Wildflower has opened two preschools in Colorado, one in Denver and one in Adams County/NW Aurora. We have built relationships with both the Office of Early Childhood, which awarded Wildflower with a planning grant for WMPSC Aurora, and the Early Childhood Council in Adams County, ECPAC, a critical partner in helping community providers like Wildflower navigate the local licensing landscape.

Last year, Wildflower was invited by ECPAC to participate in a working group with OEC and the Governor’s Office to rewrite ECE licensing rules and regulations. The specific purpose was to propose revisions that would make it easier for ECE providers to identify and obtain ECE licenses for facilities located in densely populated areas, such as the ECE deserts WMPSC aims to serve in Grand Valley. The outcome of this working group has been numerous, including understanding licensing procedures and the roll-out of UPK in Colorado.

Once Teacher Leaders confirm a site’s zip code and begin LOI discussions with prospective landlords, they immediately contact the school’s licensing agent accessible on the OEC website to begin building a relationship and tapping into licensing expertise for planning. Teacher Leaders engage licensing agents as early as possible in the process and allow several weeks to clear health and fire inspections following renovations knowing that ECE licensing won’t conduct its initial visit until these other agencies have completed their evaluations and certificate of occupancy has been received.

We intend to follow the schedule of securing site licensure for Site 1, per the schedule below. This process will inform our timeline and approach for Sites 2 and 3.

	Description	Responsible	Timing
Site 1: ECE Council relationship	Build relationship with ECE council in desired community	TLs SSP	Current-Fall 2023
Site 1: Facility consultation	Finalize facility at Vineyard Church and request pre-licensing consultation from ECE council to determine licensing viability and affordability of space to meet PK requirements	TLs SSP ECE Council Representative	Fall-Winter 2023
Site 1: Licensing Agent relationship	Contact licensing agent to begin relationship; apply for temporary childcare and business licenses	TLs	Winter-Spring 2024
Site 1: Secure facility	Sign lease	TLs	April 2024
Site 1: Facility renovations	Complete renovations	TLs SSP Contractor Landlord	May-June 2024

Site 1: Inspections	Health and fire inspections	TLs SSP Landlord	June 2024
Site 1: Certificate of Occupancy	Obtain certificate of occupancy	TLs SSP Contractor Landlord	June 2024
Site 1: License	Secure ECE license	TLs SSP	July 2024

PA.6. Community Engagement

WMPSC centers community engagement in every phase of inception, startup, and operation and Section B.12 and Appendix B_GV Community Engagement Plan details our approach. The Primary (PK) sites are not expansions and follow the same community engagement approach as the elementary site.

PA.7. Recruitment and Enrollment Process

We implement the following strategies to recruit PK students:

- Research the community events happening throughout the spring and summer and be as present as possible in the community;
- Introduce ourselves to shops, restaurants, businesses, in the area that potential families may frequent;
- Use printed materials such as big and small flyers, signs, and banners to spread the word;
- Create social media content to promote ourselves;
- Cultivate relationships with various community organizations already providing direct services to families;
- Facilitate opportunities for founding families to be school ambassadors and utilizing our personal connections in the Montessori community to achieve our enrollment goals.

The preschool tuition structure is intentionally designed to be accessible to families in the immediate area of our preschool sites. We conducted an analysis of tuition at preschool programs in the Grand Valley areas and set the full-pay annual tuition rate at \$10,428, the median point for similar schools. This rate is projected to grow by 0% annually, not knowing how UPK rates will change.

Keeping D51 student demographics in mind, where 45% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch, our preschools will also offer discounted tuition for income-qualifying families. The following table summarizes the tuition rate assumptions made in our budget:

Tuition Rate: 4 year olds	Tuition Amount, per year	% of Families Paying Rate
Qualify for full-time UPK reimbursement	\$0	50%
Qualify for half-time UPK reimbursement	\$4,481.87	50%

Tuition Rate: 3 year olds	Tuition Amount, per year	% of Families Paying Rate
Full-pay, 100% of tuition	\$10, 428.72	20%
75% of tuition	\$7,821.54	30%
50% of tuition	\$5,214.36	20%*
25% of tuition	\$2,607.18	30%*

In addition to offering discounted tuition rates, we will also seek qualification as a Colorado Childcare Assistance Program (CCAP) provider. In doing so, families will be eligible to apply public subsidies toward childcare expenses, minimizing out-of-pocket costs. Based on our internal projections, through a combination of discounted tuition and CCAP subsidies, families who qualify for free or reduced lunch can expect to pay between \$0 and \$5,214 per year. With these projected subsidies, average tuition for all preschoolers is \$4,248 annually.

With the recent passage of universal preschool legislation in Colorado, we acknowledge that several changes to the state funding and tuition structures will continue to evolve and affect our tuition model. We remain committed to leveraging public resources to their full extent to enhance accessibility to WMPSC preschools and minimize costs to families. We will continue to incorporate new funding information into our budget projections and plans as it becomes available. The application reflects our best approach to preschool funding and tuition structures based on the information known at this time.

This WMPSC preschool structure is aligned with the successful Wildflower charter model in Minnesota and we will continually evaluate the efficacy of the model, in terms of equity, fiscal health, and meeting all charter goals.

PA.8. Teacher Leader Qualifications

The Primary sites will be led by Teacher Leaders with necessary qualifications and appropriate knowledge in early childhood curriculum content, assessment, and instruction. Teacher Leaders need to:

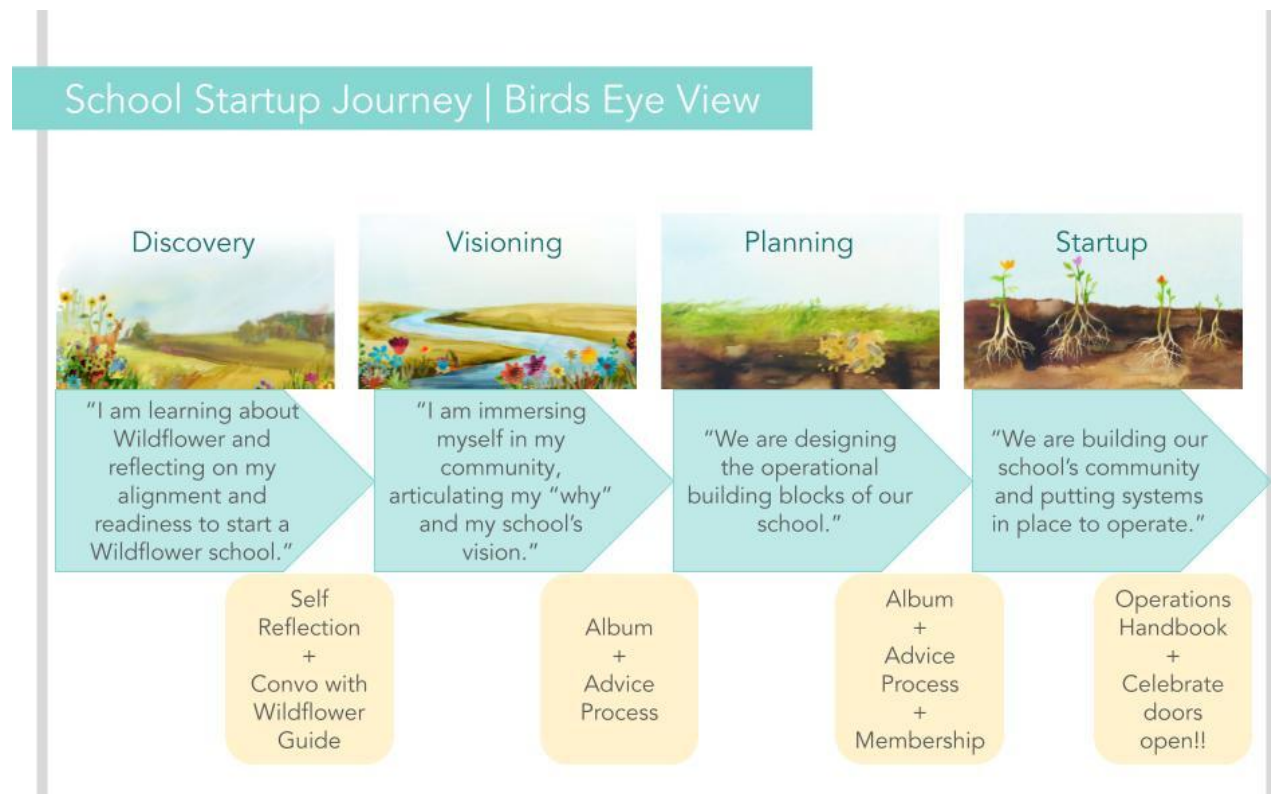
- Possess an authentic Montessori background and certification;
- Hold an experience with running a school or other non-profit business;
- Committed to operating within the Wildflower model of self-management;
- Desire for ongoing growth and professional development to meet federal and state compliance as well as meet dynamic student educational and social-emotional learning needs;
- Passion for designing and sustaining a culturally responsive school that meets (or exceeds) our charter goals and aligns with the WMPSC commitment to equity and identity affirmation;
- At Least one of the two Primary Teacher Leaders will hold Child Care Center Director qualifications.

The Teacher Leader job description is found in Appendix D_Teacher Leader Job Description.

To reach these requirements, Wildflower Teacher Leaders engage in a 9-18 month School Startup Journey (SSJ) that is intense and self-selecting with the expectation that at least one of two Teacher Leaders at each school will have a minimum of three years of “in-field” teaching experience. Teacher Leaders who have successfully moved through the SSJ and meet charter requirements are considered highly qualified for their positions, as they have engaged in the rigorous visioning and planning process that includes two intense and purposeful Advice Process sessions demonstrating an astute vision of their site, fiscal health and sustainability data, community input, and operationalizing details. Every WMPSC site begins as an idea during the School Startup Journey (Appendix B_Wildflower School Startup Journey Deck) and is realized through self-reflection, community participation, the guidance of the Wildflower network and Shared Services Partner, and the support of all WMPSC staff and The Wildflower Foundation.

The School Startup Journey also affirms a commitment to or experience with running a school or other non-profit business to meet the necessary administrative responsibilities of teacher leadership. Teacher Leaders also begin required MLL training through a CDE-approved program if they do not possess it prior to entering the SSJ.

The School Startup Journey includes a developmental framework organized into four phases: Discovery, Visioning, Planning and Startup. In each stage, Teacher Leaders focus on developing their school plan around core guiding questions (see figure below and detailed in Section H.9.).



PA.9. Student Referrals

If our Teacher Leaders have evidence of a delay or believe that a child may benefit from specialized services, from observation, universal screener measures, and/or incoming reporting, they take the following steps to coordinate services:

- Raise the concern with charter-wide support staff, such as our Student Services Coordinator, Social Worker, or ECE Learning Specialist and ask an expert to observe the child;
- If the charter-wide contact shares the Teacher Leaders' perspective, the Teacher Leaders will schedule an in person meeting with the family;
- Teacher Leaders will bring their observations to the family without judgment or labeling;
- At that time, the parents decide if they want an evaluation for their child;
- WMPSC will provide parents with resources and connections depending on their child's needs and work with to identify key partners for engaging in a coordinated referral process.

During our Planning Year, we will solidify relationships with a diverse range of community organizations to support our families and students.

PA.10. Special Education Program

WMPSC is committed to serving all students who want to enroll, including those with physical disabilities, Individual Education Plans (IEPs), 504 plans, Multilingual Learners, Gifted and Talented, students with mental health needs, and educationally disadvantaged students. The WMPSC's vision, mission, core values and norms, and principles create a positive and collaborative learning environment for all students to be who they are within a scaffolded and caring learning community. As such, the WMPSC early childhood special education program includes comprehensive identification procedures, service provision, staffing, special education materials, progress monitoring, and program evaluation.

WMPSC will use the MTSS framework and the RTI process as a prevention-based tool to identify and monitor student progress and intervention support as needed throughout the school year to ensure students are growing both academically and emotionally. This is used in combination with the Montessori Child Study Protocol, described in Section D and detailed in Appendix D_Child Study Protocol. The MTSS programming is designed to be a comprehensive system to support the needs of all students through evidence-based strategies, while the Child Study Protocol is a framework for facilitating the process of implementing MTSS, which includes structuring Child Study Team (CST) meetings, identifying the lagging skill that is impeding the child's academic or social-emotional development, generating a specific intervention to address that lagging skill, observing the child's progress and collecting data about the effectiveness of that intervention over an identified period, and then revisiting the progress based on the intervention.

Our Special Education Program is detailed in Section E and D.2.

PA.11. Staffing Plan

A ratio of 1 instructor per 8 students is maintained at all times. Each preschool site will be staffed by two full-time Teacher Leaders and two full-time Teacher Leader Assistants. ECE Learning Specialist and a Social Worker are also available to support preschool students as needed and are not included in the 8:1 student-to-instructor ratios. The ECE Learning Specialist is maintained at a 1:85 ratio. Specialists, such as Speech-Language therapists, will be contracted, detailed in Section E. The Student Services Coordinator also supports preschool sites and Teacher Leaders.

The WMPSC organizational chart references how our preschool (Primary) sites are part of the WMPSC ecosystem (Appendix D_WMPSC GV Organizational Chart).

PA.12. Pre-School Enrollment Policy

WMPSC will conduct a lottery for all 3 and 4 year old spots if there are more Intent to Enroll forms than available spaces in the preschool program. The full enrollment policy for the preschool program can be found in Appendix I_Policy_Enrollment Draft.

PA.13. Facility Plan

We understand that securing a facility is a difficult and time-consuming effort so we are already building a team to support this endeavor for all our sites, and specifically the Primary sites that will be located in Orchard Mesa, Clifton, and Loma. As described above, we have already identified viable facility options that meet criteria for the initial WMPSC Primary (PK) site and align with our mission and vision.

In order to search and secure a site, Founding Teacher Leaders follow a facility timeline that centers the needs of the community and Teacher Leaders. The timeline for our four microsites is below:

	Description	Responsible	Timing
Site 1 Lower Elem Site Search: engage Community Design Team	Explore different options and engage w/ American Lutheran Church	TLs Realtor Advisor: Gregg Kampf, pro bono	June-October 2023
Site 1: Negotiations	Leases drafted	TLs Landlord Legal Advisor: Gregg Kampf, pro bono	October 2023
Site 1: Execute lease	Sign lease to start no sooner than April 2024	WMPSC Board Landlord	April-May 2024
Site 1 Renovations	Site does not require renovations	N/A	N/A
Site 1: Fire Inspection	Coding and safety, aligns with safety plan	TLs SSP	May 2024
Site 1: Design and set-up classroom	Access to Wildflower design supports	TLs	June 2024
Site 1: Ready to serve	Open houses, room set up complete	TLs	Aug 2024
Site 2 CH1 ⁸⁰ : Site Search; engage	Explore options close to Clifton where child care desert is	TLs Realtor	June-September 2023

⁸⁰ CH = Children's House (Primary, PK3-K site)

Community Design Team	prominent ⁸¹ and engage with Vineyard Church	Pro bono Advisor	
Site 2 CH1: Negotiations; research contractors	Expand partnerships with contractors, such as Quality Builders of Colorado, Inc.; draft leases	TLs Landlord Legal Pro bono Advisor	September- October 2023
Site 2 CH1: Child Care Licensing; Identify contractor	Engage Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families Team to begin licensure process (Appendix I_Opening a Child Care Center); Use procurement process for contractor bidding	TLs Landlord SSP	November- February 2024
Site 2 CH1: Execute lease	Sign lease to start no sooner than March 2024	WMPSC Board Landlord	March-April 2024
Site 2 CH1: Renovations	Renovations commence	Contractors SSP TLs Landlord	April-July 2024
Site 2 CH1: Fire Inspection	Coding and safety, aligns with safety plan and licensing requirements	TLs SSP	July 2024
Site 2 CH1: Set-up classroom	Access to Wildflower design supports	TLs	July 2024
Site 2 CH1: Ready to serve	Open houses, room set up complete	TLs	Aug 2024
Site 3 CH2: Site Searches; engage Community Design Team	Specific locations informed by family demand; researched need; TL engagement with community design team; consideration to locate in CH1 site when vacated to relocate to shared CH1/ELEM site	TLs Realtor Probono Advisor	Jan-June 2025
Site 3 CH2: Child Care Licensing; Identify contractor	Access WF support to assist preparation of license process; Engage Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families Team to begin licensure process (Appendix I_Child Care 101); Use procurement process for contractor bidding	TLs Landlord SSP	Aug 2025 - Feb 2026
Site 3 CH2: Execute lease	Sign lease to start no sooner than April 2026	WMPSC Board Landlord	April 2026

⁸¹ Center for American Progress, <https://childcaredeserts.org/>

Sites 3 CH2: Renovations	Renovations commence	Contractors SSP TLs Landlord	May-July 2026
Sites 3 CH2: Fire Inspection	Coding and safety, aligns with safety plan and licensing requirements	TLs SSP	July 2026
Sites 3 CH2: Set-up classroom	Access to Wildflower design supports	TLs	July 2026
Sites 3 CH2: Ready to serve	Open houses, room set up complete	TLs	Aug 2026
CH1 and ELEM Shared Site Search; engage Community Design Team	Specific location informed by family demand; researched need; TL engagement with community design team	TLs	January-June 2025
CH1 and ELEM Shared Site: negotiations; research contractors	Use procurement process for contractor bidding	TLs Landlord Legal Pro bono Advisor	July-Dec 2025
CH1 and CH2: Child Care Licensing; Identify contractor (both sites)	Access WF support Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families Team to begin licensure process (Appendix I_Child Care 101) to assist preparation of license process; Use procurement process for contractor bidding	TLs Landlord SSP	Aug 2025 - Feb 2026
CH1 and ELEM Shared Site: Execute lease	Sign lease to start no sooner than April 2026	WMPSC Board Landlord	April 2026
CH1 and ELEM Shared Site: Renovations	Renovations commence	Contractors SSP TLs Landlord	May-July 2026
CH1 and ELEM Shared Site: Fire Inspection	Coding and safety, aligns with safety plan and licensing requirements	TLs SSP	July 2026
CH1 and ELEM Shared Site: Set-up classroom	Access to Wildflower design supports	TLs	July 2026

CH1 and ELEM Shared Site: Ready to serve	Open houses, room set up complete	TLs	Aug 2026
Site 4 CH3: Site Search; engage Community Design Team	Explore options close to Clifton where child care desert is prominent ⁸² and engage with Vineyard Church location	TLs Realtor Pro bono Advisor	June-September 2028
Site 4 CH3: negotiations; research contractors	Expand partnerships with contractors, such as Quality Builders of Colorado, Inc.; draft leases	TLs Landlord Legal Pro bono Advisor	September- October 2028
Site 4 CH3: Child Care Licensing; Identify contractor	Engage Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families Team to begin licensure process (Appendix I_Child Care 101); Use procurement process for contractor bidding	TLs Landlord SSP	November- February 2029
Site 4 CH3: Execute lease	Sign lease to start no sooner than March 2024	WMPSC Board Landlord	March-April 2029
Site 4 CH3: Renovations	Renovations commence	Contractors SSP TLs Landlord	April-July 2029
Site 4 CH3: Fire Inspection	Coding and safety, aligns with safety plan and licensing requirements	TLs SSP	July 2029
Site 4 CH3: Set-up classroom	Access to Wildflower design supports	TLs	July 2029
Site 4 CH3: Ready to serve	Open houses, room set up complete	TLs	Aug 2029

PA.14. Pre-School Budget

The table below summarizes the key revenue and expense drivers related to our preschool program. Because the primary site is inclusive of preschool and kindergarten aged students, most expenses are shared across both groups of students. Expenses are proportionately charged against preschool revenues, based on the number of preschoolers enrolled compared to the overall total number of primary students, to ensure appropriate alignment with preschool revenues and preschool expenses.

⁸² Center for American Progress, <https://childcaredeserts.org/>

Revenue and
Expense
inflation

A standard assumption of 2% annual expense growth is included.
Growth assumptions in revenue vary by funding stream and are noted below.

Revenues

Financing	\$110,000 loan per site, in site planning years for each site. Offered by the Sunlight Fund with terms of 3% interest and 7-year repayment, to begin in year 3 of site's operations. <i>Amount of funds to go toward preschool expenses to be prorated based on enrollment</i>
Preschool Tuition Revenue	Tuition: \$10,428.72 per qualifying pupil, in alignment with the full-time reimbursement rate from Universal PreK for qualifying 4 year olds. \$4,481.87 for remaining 4 year olds, which represents the difference of half-time UPK tuition reimbursement (\$5,946.85) and total tuition. Tuition will be set on a sliding scale for 3 year old families based on family ability to pay. Assumes 20% of families will pay full-rate tuition, and 80% of families will pay a reduced rate. Partial rate payees may also qualify for CCAP to subsidize the cost. Currently assumes no tuition rate increase.
Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) Funding/UPK	\$10,428.72 full-time reimbursement for qualifying 4 year olds, \$5,946.85, the half-time reimbursement rate for remaining 4 year olds. \$4,759.02 for qualifying 3 year olds.

Expenses

Note: Site-specific expenses will be shared based on the proportion of preschoolers enrolled at the site. Charter-wide expenses will be shared based on the proportion of preschoolers enrolled in the charter.

Salaries of Regular Employees	Teacher Leaders: average \$60,000 per FTE Teacher Leader Assistant: average \$30,000 per FTE Shared Services Partner: \$70,000 (Year 1-5) Student Services Coordinator: \$60,000 Finance Partner: \$70,000 Learning Specialist: average \$50,000 per FTE Social Worker: \$55,000 FTE allocations by year can be found in Section G
Salaries of Temporary Employees - Subs	Substitutes at \$160/day. Assumes 4 days per instructor (Teacher Leaders and Teacher Leader Assistant) per year. Includes contracted time for Teacher Leaders (TLs) in site planning year. Assumes 80% FTE for emerging TLs for six weeks.
Medicare	Calculated as 1.45% of total payroll, including both regular and temporary employees.
Social Security	Calculated as 6.2% of total payroll, including both regular and temporary employees. Year 0 only.
PERA Expense	21.9% of total payroll, beginning in Year 1. Rate increase of 0.25% annually to address the unfunded pension obligation. Cost driver based on state-wide expense data.

Health Insurance	\$5,000 per employee per year. Assumes single premium coverage with 80% of employees eligible/participating.
Dental Insurance	\$360 per employee per year. Assumes single premium coverage with 80% of employees eligible/participating.
Banking and Payroll Service Fees	\$120 per employee per year.
Professional Education Services	Professional development and contracted staff to provide student support. Professional development: \$1,000 per TL/year and \$500 per TL Assistant, Student Services Coordinator, and Learning Specialists.
Legal Services	\$3,000 for start-up needs in Year 0 and \$3,000 in Year 1 and forward.
Audit and Accounting Services	Average of \$10,000 per year budgeted for independent annual audit. Contracted financial management and accounting services budgeted in first years of charter (Y0-Y2). Financial management will transition to in-house Finance Partner starting Y3.
Consultant Services	\$10,000 in Year 0 for Facilities and HR support. Restricted totals in Year 1-Year 5 are set-aside funds to support students who qualify for special services to meet their unique needs. These set-asides are funded with Title I and IDEA funds.
Technical Services	\$1,500 per site in planning years. \$500 per site annually ongoing.
Utility Services	Average of \$400 per site per month for water, sewage, gas and electric.
Repairs and Maintenance Service	5% of annual rent costs
Rental of Land and Buildings	Calculated per site based on an average of 30 sq ft/student at a cost of \$25/sq ft. Cost per square foot is based on the high-end of the range of available commercial space in the targeted regional area.
Rental of Equipment	\$500 per site per year.
Insurance	Liability/Building/Theft/Fidelity with growth in alignment to increased enrollment and number of facilities. Based on quote obtained for the purposes of budget planning.
Unemployment Insurance	Calculated as 0.3% of total payroll. Cost driver provided by CSI.
Workers' Comp Insurance	Calculated as \$2.00 per \$100 of payroll. Cost driver provided by CSI.

Advertising, Marketing and Recruiting	\$4,000 budgeted in Year 0. Average \$3,000 budgeted annually beginning in Year 1 and forward.
General Supplies	Instructional materials and curriculum. Assumes \$15,000 one-time expense per site for suite of Montessori materials and \$1,500 per site for special education and social-emotional support curriculum. Average of \$2,000 per site allocated for annual materials replenishment.
Food and Meeting Expenses	\$4,000 in Year 0 and \$2,000 annually in future years for Board support and development.
Leasehold Improvements	\$40,000 per site for renovations in planning year and \$50,000 for the third Children's House in Y5.
Furniture and Fixtures	\$10,000 per site in planning year. Average of 10% budgeted annually for repairs and replacement.
Dues and Fees	Average of \$2,000 per year.
Contingency	Annual set-aside for unanticipated expenses or cost increases.
Miscellaneous Expenditures	Wildflower School Contribution are costs associated with training, coaching, and brand use specific to Wildflower model. Expense begins in the first year of site operations. Additional information on the benefits received from Wildflower are detailed in Appendix G_Wildflower Network Membership in Action and Appendix G_Wildflower Membership Agreement.
Interest Expense	3% annual, based on balance of Sunlight Fund
Redemption of Principle	7-year repayment of loans (\$110,000 per site). Repayment begins in the third year of site operations.