



Ridgeway Community School

C.S.D. 4083



2018-19

Annual Report

to

Winona Area Public Schools

and the

Minnesota Department of Education

35564 Winona County Road 12, Houston, MN 55943

507-454-9566, office@ridgewayschool.org

www.ridgewayschool.org

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Introduction and Executive Summary

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide our families, our community, our authorizer Winona Area Public Schools, and the Minnesota Department of Education with current information on school enrollment, student attrition, governance and management, staffing, finances, academic performance, operational performance, innovative practices and implementation, and future plans as required by Minnesota Statutes section 124E.

School History:

The Ridgeway school building was constructed in 1965 after eight one-room school districts consolidated to form I.S.D. # 859 Ridgeway School District. In 1971 the Ridgeway School District joined Winona Public Schools at the direction of the Minnesota Department of Education and in 2001 Ridgeway Elementary School converted to Ridgeway Community School (C.S.D. # 4083) with Winona Area Public Schools serving as its sponsor (now Authorizer). The student population has nearly doubled from its original enrollment of 54. The school's charter sets our purpose as providing our kindergarten to fifth grade students a high quality, well-rounded, multi-age education by capitalizing on the assets of our rural community setting. The school is located near the unincorporated village of Ridgeway in Winona County's Pleasant Hill Township. Ridgeway Community School (RCS) ended the 2018-19 school year with an enrollment of 99 students in its kindergarten to fifth grade program. The school's fee-based preschool had 24 students enrolled in its two preschool programs.

School Values, Vision, and Mission Statements:

The school's board of directors used a strategic planning process to develop the following values, vision, and mission:

Values: Academics, Children First, Community, Respect, Wellness

Vision: To be a growing school that is full of inquisitive learners practicing healthy living habits and becoming engaged community members.

Mission: Ridgeway Community School is an academically challenging school with an emphasis on community and wellness that leaves a positive lasting impact.

Educational Program:

Ridgeway Community School (RCS) is chartered as a kindergarten through fifth grade elementary school. In addition to its focus on building community between its students, families, staff, and neighbors; the school's charter calls for a focus on curriculum being delivered in a multi-age educational environment. During the 2018-19 school year RCS students were grouped into the following grade-level configurations: kindergarten, first grade, second and third grades, and fourth and fifth grades. While most of the classroom instruction for the second to fifth grades takes place in multi-age classrooms, the students are broken out by grade level for math instruction.

Inclusive, differentiated instruction is used by all teachers who work diligently and collaboratively to assist and facilitate all students to be challenged in the regular classroom whenever possible. While the school employs a full-time, LD licensed special education teacher, the Special Education Director and support services are provided through a contract with the Hiawatha Valley Education District. Beginning in the 2010-11 school year RCS has offered a reading and math intervention program called RISE (Ridgeway Interventions for Student Excellence) which is supported by the Minnesota Department of Education's Alternative Delivery of Specialized Instructional Services (or ADSIS) program. This program provides partial funding for additional intervention services to reduce the number of students being referred for special education evaluation.

A central component of the school's focus on multi-age education and community building is the school's homeroom program. All RCS kindergarten through fifth grade students are grouped into six K-5 multi-age homerooms which meet four times every year. Siblings are placed together in the RCS homerooms where the curriculum includes community building, character development, conflict management skills, health and safety, and service learning. Throughout the school day the RCS staff and volunteers strive to create a school environment in which individual student differences are appreciated and celebrated. The students are expected to behave in a responsible and respectful manner and to always be prepared and safe. During the 2018-19 school year, the home room focus was on kindness.

RCS students also benefit from instruction by specialists in art, music (including band and orchestra instruments), and physical education; as well as special education and speech therapy. Classes are also scheduled for a half hour of library time each week. RCS students can take

advantage of the school's growing SELCO-affiliated book and media collection with interlibrary loan materials delivered several times per week. As part of the school's wellness program RCS offers a wide variety of after school athletic, lifetime fitness, and enrichment clubs to students primarily through the use of volunteer coaches and club leaders. RCS takes pride in continuing to strive to achieve our academic goals and becoming the center of a growing community of students, parents, teachers, families, and community members.



The Ridgeway Archery Club placed 1st in a tournament in Sparta, WI in March 2019.



The school received a class set of snowshoes through a grant from the Winona County SHIP Program

Student Assessment Results:

Students at Ridgeway Community School are assessed at the beginning, middle, and end of the year using the FASTBridge benchmarking in reading and early literacy skills, and the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments for math and reading skills. The students also take the state mandated MCAs each spring. The teachers at Ridgeway have determined to use the 40th percentile as the low end of the “normal” range. Students below this mark are referred to intervention programs such as our Reading Corps and/or RISE programs.

The MCA math and reading assessments given each spring are taken by our third through fifth grade students. Our fifth grade students also take the Science MCA. The percentage of RCS students scoring a level of meets or exceeds on the 2019 Reading MCA III assessments was 53.3%. The percentage of students scoring a level of meets or exceeds on the 2019 Math MCA III assessments was 48.9%. The percentage of students scoring a level of meets or exceeds on the 5th grade 2019 Science MCA was 38.9%.



Facility Background:

The original 10,000 square foot brick school building occupied by Ridgeway Community School was constructed in 1965 after eight one-room school districts consolidated to form I.S.D. # 859 Ridgeway School District. In 1971 the Ridgeway School District joined Winona Public Schools at the direction of the Minnesota Department of Education and in 2001 Ridgeway Elementary School converted to Ridgeway Community School (C.S.D. # 4083). In 2006 the non-profit organization called the Ridgeway Community Association (RCA) formed to purchase the school building and grounds from Winona Area Public Schools (WAPS). The following year the Ridgeway Community Association undertook a major building expansion and renovation that included a 6,314 square foot addition. An additional renovation was undertaken in 2009 with the assistance of a Federal Charter School Facilities Renovation Grant. During 2013 the RCA completed payments on the construction of a second addition that is providing better instructional space for the fine arts and preschool enrichment programs. In January of 2018 the RCA board paid off one of its two building purchase/renovation loans and was then able to refinance the remaining with a local bank at a lower interest rate.

A number of improvements to the 6 acre school grounds have also taken place since the building was purchased from WAPS. These include the installation of a 960 foot fitness track encircling the athletic field; the relocation and expansion of the school playground; and the establishment of a native prairie area, a rain garden, a vegetable garden, and small orchard. A major playground renovation took place in September of 2015 and a new climbing wall was installed in the summer of 2017 with the assistance of a grant from a BK5K Youth Fund grant. During the fall of 2017 a new GaGa Pit was built next to the school's playground. The GaGa pit was an Eagle Scout project – gift to the school by a Winona Senior High School student.