



VERMILION COUNTRY SCHOOL

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL DISTRICT #4207

SCHOOL YEAR 23-24 (FY24)

WORLD'S BEST WORKFORCE & ANNUAL REPORT

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1. School Information

CONTACT INFORMATION

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GRADES SERVED

Vermilion Country School (VCS) serves grades 7-12.

YEAR OPENED

2013

MISSION AND VISION

Mission: Developing successful adults with skills to enrich their communities and the environment.

Vision: Developing autonomy, fostering hope, building relationships, and becoming agents of change: enriching ourselves, our communities, and the world.

Actions: Collaborate, Discover, Reflect, Find Your Place.

AUTHORIZER INFORMATION

In June 2023, the Osprey Wilds Charter School Division recommended the Osprey Wilds Board of Directors renew the charter contract of Vermilion Country School for a full term of five years (July 1, 2023–June 30, 2028), giving the school authority to provide instruction to students in grades 7-12 in the manner set forth in its Application for Charter Reauthorization.

The authorizing mission of Osprey Wilds is to ensure quality academic and environmental literacy outcomes for students in Minnesota by conducting effective oversight and evaluation of its authorized schools, providing strategic support to schools, and making informed and merit-based decisions about its portfolio of charter schools.

The authorizing vision of Osprey Wilds is to authorize a portfolio of high performing charter schools that instill a connection and commitment to the environment in their school communities, while working towards a healthy planet where all people live in balance with the Earth.

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<https://ospreywilds.org/charter-school-division>

2. Implementation of Primary and Additional Statutory Purposes

The primary purpose of Vermilion Country School is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement. The school will report its implementation of this primary purpose in its annual report.

In order to meet the mission and vision set forth by the Vermilion Country School's board of directors, the school and its staff will work closely with students and parents to develop an individualized, goal-oriented, project-based approach to learning that works effectively for each student, while incorporating proven instructional techniques.

- Standards-based curriculum designed by teachers that is responsive to individual student needs.
- Small class size to promote a safe, nurturing environment and lower student-teacher ratio.
- Small group work developing critical-thinking and problem-solving skills as students work together rather than compete against each other.
- Honoring life skills, stewardship and leadership opportunities through a habit of community service which includes regular scheduled events that benefit many in our community, young and old as well as meeting state standards and college and career readiness.
- Multi-grade 7-12 students use inquiry learning in a variety of collaborations with local agencies, community experts, volunteers and cross-curricular activities.
- Cohesive staff team teaching and layering curricular concepts to meet all student levels
- An approach to community based in cultural responsiveness, positive behavior supports, and fair treatment of student-to-student, staff-to-student student-to-staff and staff-to-staff.
- Technology – Students use their own school-issued laptop and VCS uses school wide Google platforms including docs, sheets, calendar, classroom, forms, sites, mail and server. Grades and attendance are available and communicated by an online portal for students and parents to access.
- Weekly school-wide team-building activities to strengthen emotional security and interdependence resulting in ready-to-learn culture. Within classes, using the latest brain research techniques with common language shared from school-wide social skills work.
- Student-led activities and student-led academics are offered, allowing voice and choice, along with intentional opportunities to make a difference in our school climate and our wider community.

The additional purposes of Vermilion Country School are to:

- Increase learning opportunities for all pupils

The school will report its implementation of these additional purposes in its annual report.

1) Increasing learning opportunities for all pupils

VCS operates in an area with rich learning opportunities in environmental education and local economics in forestry/mining that haven't always been used to the full potential by the local school district. VCS staff will capitalize on these opportunities and design program elements to use these resources to the benefit of the students.

Service Learning

Community service is a key element in both the vision and the mission of VCS. We seek meaningful connections to incorporate community service into the students' individual learning plans and elements of environmental education to provide potential college and career opportunities that are available in this region. Students see the need in their communities for support and help to address real problems that affect their lives and families.

Utilization of community-based assets

The work of our small rural school to design a learning environment that truly serves the needs of its community's young people by utilizing the multitude of learning assets and possibilities within the community. The Tower Soudan area is home to many valuable educational assets such as the Department of Natural Resources area headquarters, located in Tower, which maintains staff across a wide range of natural resource disciplines; the new Lake Vermilion State Park; the Soudan Underground Mine State Park; the Bois Forte Heritage Center and Museum; the Superior National Forest; MN North College. The school takes full advantage of all of these for students to develop an understanding of their community - social structure, history, economy, music, art, and ecology.



3. Student Enrollment & Demographics

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Student enrollment increased from FY22 to FY23. The school is attracting a large number of new students across grades 8-11 who are excited about the school's learning environment, environmental education programming, and small school atmosphere.

In future years, VCS will look to increase awareness of our program among 5th & 6th grade students in Tower, Ely, Virginia, and the surrounding area, with a goal of increasing our 7th grade enrollment.

Number of Students Enrolled	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (est)
7th Grade	5	3	9	5	5
8th Grade	2	8	5	14	7
9th Grade	5	8	10	10	13
10th Grade	6	9	8	15	11
11th Grade	8	6	10	9	14
12th Grade	12	9	8	13	5
Total	38	35	50	66	55
Total ADM (Average Daily Membership) for year	30.88	31.83	48.13	58.41	55

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Vermilion Country School has students from multiple communities in the region. The region features small towns with mostly white and American Indian populations. The demographic is mostly lower socioeconomic, and our school population has a slightly higher than average special education makeup due to the alternative nature of the school. In FY23, we anticipate possible increases in special education qualifying students.

Demographic Trends	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (est.)
Total Enrollment	38	35	50	66	55
Special Education	10	8	11	13	22
English Learners	0	0	0	0	0
Free/Reduced Priced Lunch	29	27	27	33	41
Black, Not of Hispanic Origin	0	0	0	2	2
Hispanic/Latino	0	0	0	1	1
Asian/Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	1

American Indian/Alaskan Native	11	10	13	13	15
White, Not of Hispanic Origin	27	25	37	37	36
Two or more races					8

4. Student Attendance, Attrition & Mobility

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Overall in 2023–24, Student mobility declined and retention improved, while overall regular attendance rates declined. Our overall goal for students is to increase credit progress toward graduation, and that goal was met even with declined attendance rates overall.

Student attendance rates declined in the 2023–24 school year as compared to the three previous school years. Consistent attendance is a measure of the number of students who attend school on a regular basis and are not frequently absent. Overall, when looking at longitudinal trends for individual students, we find that attendance at VCS for students is greatly improved when compared with attendance patterns at that student's previous district.

A student is considered “consistently attending” if they attend more than 90 percent of the days in an enrollment year. We continue working with families and students to increase consistent attendance individually and across demographic groups.

	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–2024
Consistent Attendance Percentage	38.7%	16.7%	82.31%	85.17%	74.06%

STUDENT ATTRITION

We are seeing increased student retention over the last three years. From the FY23 to the FY24 school year, of 40 students grades 7–11, we had only 2 students enroll in other districts and not return. We added new students prior to the year beginning, and have continued to enroll students through October 2024.

From our 42 students enrolled Oct 1 of 2022, 40 of them were also enrolled Oct 1 of 2023. From our 42 continuously enrolled 7th–11th students enrolled in spring 2022, we returned 39 in the fall of 2023.

Percentage of students* who were continuously enrolled between October 1 of the 2022–2023 school year and October 1 of the 2023–24 school year.	95.23%
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**Do not include graduating students or those who have completed your school program, i.e., if your school is K–6, do not include students who have completed 6th grade.*

Percentage of students* who continued enrollment in the school from Spring 2023 to October 1, 2023	92.85%
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**Do not include graduating students or those who have completed your school program, i.e., if your school is K–6, do not include students who have completed 6th grade.*

STUDENT MOBILITY

	Summer Transfers In	Number of students on Oct. 1	Mid-year Transfers In	Mid-year Transfers Out	Total Mid-year Transfers	Mobility Index* (as a percent)
2018-19		54	13	16	29	53%
2019-20		39	8	11	19	49%
2020-21		38	10	5	15	40%
2021-22		29	13	7	20	69%
2022-23		36	19	8	27	57%
2023-24	4	51	18	2	20	39%

*Total mid-year transfers (in and out) divided by number of students on October 1.

During the last three school years, we were showing more students enrolling mid-year than leaving for another school mid-year. Some transfers out are due to students moving out of the area. In 22-23 we enrolled 19 students after 10/1/22, and we retained 16 of those students into the fall of 23. For FY24, we had a low number of students transfer out mid-year, accounting for our lowest mobility index in the past 5 years.

Percentage of students who were enrolled for 95% or more of the 2023-24 school year.	59.7%
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The FY24 school year had a proportionally smaller number of students enrolling mid-year than in a typical year, as compared to previous mobility index measures. These students remained in school the remainder of the school year and exhibited improved attendance, as compared to their previous records at other districts.

5. Educational Approach & Curriculum

At Vermilion Country School, we encourage students to articulate their passions, while we leverage their interests to fit curriculum content. This is particularly important for students who have had negative experiences in school and are turned off to traditional learning. When students' curiosity is activated, teaching and learning flow naturally and become fun! Fun environments increase opening up a student's mind to trying new things and making new connections. As educators, our role is to tap into this natural drive and help direct it towards healthy and positive paths.

At Vermilion Country School, equal attention is paid to a balance of priorities: intellectual, physical, emotional, and social. Students today are graduating into a turbulent world, where a

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hurricane of change, unpredictable futures, and disruption to professional and academic paths are now the norm. In addition to overcoming academic challenges, we also strive to help students engage and develop their strengths to lead, and really live and enjoy, a purposeful life.

Students have opportunities to build their resources, develop new skills, and discover their talents. These experiences encourage self-reflective behavior and strengthen relationships to family and the wider community. Living these principles inspires hope and leads to promising futures rich with dignity, purpose, and life and career options.

Special instructional time, with targeted teaching to missing skills, is set aside each day for students who are working below grade level in both math and language arts. Individualized credit recovery options are available for high school students who are missing credits needed for graduation.

Special Education in the FY24 school year consisted of one full time special education teacher and three paraprofessionals. There were thirteen special education students for most of the year. We also engaged Indigo Special Education services to support our team and learners through both Special Education director services and Special Education Coordinator services.

The school year consisted of 169 days. VCS has no English Learner program or students needing services.

In the 2023-2024 school year, VCS required 21.5 credits for high school graduation. This was a shift approved by the school board in October 2023, to match MN state academic requirements for graduation, and to clear the path for our graduating seniors to most efficiently achieve their goals. The credits were approved to match state requirements, including:

- 3 credits Math
- 4 credits Language Arts
- 3 credits Science
- 3.5 credits Social Studies
- 1 credit in Fine Arts
- 1 credit in PE/Health
- 6 credits in Electives

6. Innovative Practices & Implementation

PERSONAL/INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLANS

Each student at VCS sets goals for themselves to achieve over the course of the school year. These goals are reinforced by their Advisor and their classroom teachers. Others may also be a part of this team depending on the student's need; paraprofessionals and special education paraprofessionals who work closely with the student, special education teachers, and even grandparents have been a part of student's teams.

To ensure plans reflect the student as a whole and best help a team set goals and develop a plan to achieve them, Individualized Learning Plan's (ILP's) expectations have been expanded to include Reading Plans, Writing Plans, short- and long-term goals, testing results (NWEA, MCA) with plans to address areas of strength and weaknesses, and fitness plans. In the 2023-2024 school year, Vermilion Country School focused on deepening innovative practices in response to our unique student population and the potential talents, strengths, and areas of growth for our students individually and as a whole.

Innovative or unique aspects of the school, especially as they relate to the school mission

In 2023-24 we began the year with an initiative in experiential environmental learning and group work skills. Our students were divided into 3 cohorts based on age and distributing existing social connections among cohorts in order to increase overall cohesion between the student body. This initiative was a direct relationship between our mission "Developing successful adults with skills to enrich their communities and environment". The environmental experiences of paddling, learning about watershed ecology, and engaging in hiking and exploring in our region created deeper connection between the individual student and the place they live in the physical environment. The group-work skills we learned together were formal, and derived from the work of researchers at Stanford University in "Complex Instruction" where heterogeneous groups of learners are given specific roles to develop specific skills in listening, supporting the group to succeed, and learning about each other through the group work.

• Key successes from past school year;

We experienced success in specific areas of student academic growth and achievement – supporting our 13 seniors toward graduation, even as 5 of the 13 started the year in credit deficiency. These particular seniors formed a leadership group that spoke directly to younger students (both formally and informally) regarding the importance of staying 'on-track' for graduation by passing classes and completing assignments on time to earn credit.

We also experienced specific success in implementing regular field trips to invite students to engage socially with their peers and community. Our ELP this year provided a framework for students to interview and interact with local experts in their area of interest – watershed stewardship, animal ecology, natural resource management.

• Key challenges from past school year

Key challenges from 2023-24 included students needing clear boundaries as they transitioned and transferred mid-year from other traditional learning environments to the Vermilion Country School environment. Engaging students in learning the norms of project-based learning was a challenge when the incoming students were not actively interested in the PBL model. Peer mentorship and/or orientation proved difficult when students saw their enrollment in the alternative environment as "not real school" – we specifically addressed this issue through meeting with guardians and individual students to establish meaningful personal goals related to the student work at school.

7. Academic Performance: Goals and Benchmarks

Because VCS is such a small school, it is very difficult to extract any sort of useful conclusions solely from the data. When a testing group is under 20 students, even a single student can vastly shift the overall scoring of the whole school. So, when reading this section, it is wise to keep in mind that only the most general conclusions can be drawn.

Time for academic interventions was scheduled directly into the daily schedule for the FY23 school year to help fill in gaps in our students' language arts and math skills. We implemented the Math 180 program plus a concepts-based math curriculum for geometry and algebra. Edgenuity Online Credit Recovery is also being utilized in FY23, and a very experienced math interventionist role was implemented to oversee the new programming.

PROGRESS ON OWS CONTRACTUAL ACADEMIC GOALS & WORLD'S BEST WORKFORCE (WBWF) ALIGNMENT

With the renewal of our authorizer contract for FY24-Fy28, we have revised our WBWF and Authorizer goals to align. Also, we have focused on comparing our outcomes to the aggregate result of outcomes from alternative schools across Minnesota. The definition of an "alternative school" is specific to criteria that offer alternatives to students who would otherwise be at risk in a traditional learning environment. Vermilion Country School is an approved project-based learning program by the Department of Education in Minnesota.

▪ **Educational Approach and Curriculum**

The educational program will be targeted, but comprehensive, focusing on state and national academic standards, and designed with flexibility to allow instructional decisions to be made expressly for individual students.

▪ **Reading, Writing, and Math**

We strive to engage in math skills in projects wherever possible but also address math through coursework in teacher-led math courses. Students are assessed when they begin the program, and the program continuously adjusts to ensure they are learning at their level. Each student is placed in their grade-level class, with adjustments made as needed. Students' progress is monitored by their advisor on a regular basis. Students are expected to meet end-of-year progress goals that are pegged to mastering a significant portion of the required standards. Students who excel can progress to the next level of math once they meet their goals, and students who need extra assistance are given personal attention.

Our intervention teachers provide services in both reading and math. Reading and writing are incorporated into all VCS projects. Students learn strategies to read non-fiction pieces through research and advisory activities. Since student research is an integral part of the project-based learning process, students are exposed to a wide variety of reading materials. Students were required to use a variety of sources for their research, including traditionally published sources and online materials. As the school builds its own library resources, student interest and needs are the driving forces behind our book-purchasing decisions. Each student has a reading plan developed with his or her academic team that determines goals for growth and materials that will be read. Every student also develops a writing plan throughout the year that addresses areas for growth.

Our contract with Osprey Wilds includes clearly defined goals and benchmarks for instruction for all student subgroups, as required by the World's Best Workforce plan, as well as processes to assess and evaluate each students' progress towards meeting these goals.

In reporting our FY24 results below, Vermilion Country School identifies that in the 2023-2024 school year we had a large number of students in spring 2024 avoid testing altogether. For a large portion of students, when they did engage in testing, anxiety over results and struggle with overwhelm resulted in many test taking students pause or disqualify their own tests due to guessing on answers (i.e. finishing a 60 question test in 9 minutes, and flag their own results for irrational guessing patterns).

To address these issues, we worked with social-emotional learning protocols to de-escalate, and identify student individual goals in order to connect immediate decisions to consequences for long term goals. Students found – on the whole – that completing credit-bearing work for academic classes was more connected to their long term goals as compared to a standardized test (like the NWEA or MCA).

We are engaging in a longer-term skill building program for students around test taking and coping skills for stress that are connected to completing tasks such as assessments. And, we acknowledge that the results below are from small sample sizes of our student body as a whole. The sample size does not necessarily have a bias toward “good” test takers or “high performers”. Many of our highest capacity students (PSEO participants, high-achieving students) were among the students who struggled or did not successfully complete a standardized assessment.

Note that all comparison subset scores for alternative schools in the state of MN are listed here in the [VCS FY24-28 Academic Goals, Evaluation and Data Profile](#) kept by the Authorizer.

WORLD'S BEST WORKFORCE (WBWF) GOAL AREAS

- **Achievement Gap Closure [AGC]:** All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.
- **Career and College Ready [CCR]:** All students are career- and college-ready before graduating from high school.
- **Graduate from High School [GRAD]:** All students graduate from high school.

Indicator 1: Mission Related Outcomes

Goal: Students at VCS will demonstrate personal growth through the successful completion of an ILP that includes credit tracking, attendance, community service, environmental education, and social-emotional learning.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

Measure 1.1 [CCR] – the aggregate percentage of students that successfully meet their Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) goals in the year will be at least 80%.

FY24 Results: 76.2%, or 48 of 63 students met their ILP goals in FY24. This is an improvement from the 70.8% score in FY23. We look forward to meeting our 80% goal in FY25

Indicator 3: Reading Growth

Goal: Students at VCS will demonstrate growth in reading as measured by state accountability tests and nationally normed assessments.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

Measure 3.1 [CCR] – In aggregate, from FY23 to FY27, the overall percentage of students whose achievement level on the statewide assessments for reading (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) improved on statewide assessments is equal to or greater than the state percentage..

FY24 Results: 66.7% of students, or 14 of 21 tested, showed improved reading level achievement. This compares to 18% of students statewide. **Goal Achieved.**

Measure 3.2 [CCR] – In aggregate, from FY23 to FY27, the overall percentage of students whose achievement level decreased or stayed "does not meet standards" on statewide assessments for reading (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) is equal to or less than the state.

FY24 Results: 33.3% of students did not increase in achievement, or 7 of 21 students. This compares to 40% of students statewide. **Goal Achieved.**

Measure 3.3 [CCR] – From FY23 to FY27, the aggregate percentage of students in grades 7-11 who meet their fall to spring NWEA RIT expected growth target will be at least 50%.

FY24 Results: 60% of students, 9 of 15 tested, met this goal. **Goal achieved.**

Indicator 4: Math Growth

Goal: Students at VCS will demonstrate growth in math as measured by state accountability tests and nationally normed assessments.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

Measure 4.1 [CCR] – In aggregate, from FY23 to FY27, the overall percentage of students whose achievement level on the statewide assessments for math (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) improved on statewide assessments is equal to or greater than the state percentage.

FY24 Results: 50% of students at VCS achieved this goal of improvement. 8 of 16 students. This is above the statewide percentage of 14.8%. **Goal achieved.**

Measure 4.2 [CCR] – In aggregate, from FY23 to FY27, the overall percentage of students whose achievement level decreased or stayed "does not meet standards" on statewide assessments for math (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) is equal to or less than the state.

FY24 Results: 50% of students at VCS decreased or were in the “does not meet standards” category. 8 of 16 students. This is greater than the statewide percentage of 43.6%. **Goal not met.**

Measure 4.3 [CCR] – the aggregate percentage of students in grades 7-11 who meet their fall to spring NWEA RIT expected growth target will be at least 50%.

FY24 Results: 54.5% of students (6 of 11 tested) completed this goal. . **Goal achieved.**

Indicator 5: Reading Proficiency

Goal: Students at VCS will demonstrate proficiency in reading as measured by state accountability tests.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Achievement Gap Closure, Career and College Ready

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

Measure 5.1 [CCR] – The school’s aggregate proficiency index score will increase from the baseline proficiency index score (FY22 baseline score – 34.4) OR be equal to or greater than that of the state for the same grades (7-8, 10).

FY24 Results: 38.1 proficient **Goal achieved.**

Measure 5.2 [CCR] –the school’s aggregate proficiency index score on the MCA reading assessment for students in grades 7-8 and 10 will be greater than that of the aggregate of alternative schools in Minnesota for the same grades (7-8 & 10)..

FY24 Results: Alternative Schools Index is 32.7%. VCS index of 38.1 is greater. **Goal achieved.**

Measure 5.3 [AGC] – the school’s aggregate proficiency index score on the MCA reading assessment for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch group in grades 7-8 and 10 will be greater than that of the aggregate of alternative schools in Minnesota for the same grades (7-8 & 10)

FY24 Results: Alternative Schools Index is 30.6%. VCS FRL index is 38.2%. **Goal achieved.**

Measure 5.4 [AGC] – , the school’s aggregate proficiency index score on the MCA reading assessment for students in the Special Education group in grades 7-8 and 10 will be greater than that of the aggregate of alternative schools in Minnesota for the same grades (7-8 & 10).

FY24 Results: Alternative Schools Index is 18.8 VCS SpEd subset index is 41.7% **Goal achieved.**

Indicator 6: Math Proficiency

Goal: Students at VCS will demonstrate proficiency in math as measured by state accountability tests.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Achievement Gap Closure, Career and College Ready

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

Measure 6.1 [CCR] –the school’s aggregate proficiency index score will increase from the baseline proficiency index score (FY22 baseline score – 15.0).

FY24 Results: 28.1 **Goal Achieved.**

Measure 6.2 [CCR] – the school’s aggregate proficiency index score on MCA math assessment for students in grades 6-8 and 11 will be greater than that of the aggregate of alternative schools in Minnesota for the same grades (6-8 & 11).

FY24 Results: Alternative Schools Index is 19.6. VCS index of 28.1 is higher. **Goal Achieved.**

Measure 6.3 [AGC] – the school’s aggregate proficiency index score on the MCA math assessment for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch group in grades 6–8 and 11 will be greater than that of the aggregate of alternative schools in Minnesota for the same grades (6–8 & 11).

FY24 Results: Alternative Schools Index for FRL is 8.4. VCS score of 25.0 is higher. **Goal Achieved.**

Measure 6.4 [AGC] –the school’s aggregate proficiency index score on the MCA math assessment for students in the Special Education group in grades 6–8 and 11 will be greater than that of the aggregate of alternative schools in Minnesota for the same grades (6–8 & 11).

FY24 Results: Alternative Schools Index for SpEd is 4.5. VCS index of 20.0 is higher. **Goal Achieved.**

Indicator 7: Science Proficiency (and Growth)

Goal: Students at VCS will demonstrate proficiency in science as measured by state accountability tests.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Achievement Gap Closure, Career and College Ready

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

Measure 7.1 [CCR] – From FY23 to FY27, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score will increase from the baseline proficiency index score (FY22 baseline score – 7.1).

FY24 Results: Proficiency index is 40.0. **Goal Achieved.**

Measure 7.2 [CCR] – the school’s aggregate proficiency index score on MCA science assessment for students in grades 8 and HS will be greater than that of the aggregate of alternative schools in Minnesota for the same grades (8, HS).

FY24 Results: Science proficiency for Alternative Schools is reported as 40.0. VCS score is also 40.0. VCS is claiming that more students overall are proficient at VCS (7 proficient plus 2 partially meets standards) compared to all alternative schools reporting (4 proficient plus 4 partially) – so as a literally measure of proficiency, VCS has achieved this goal of more students proficient. **Goal Achieved.**

Measure 7.3 [AGC] – the school’s aggregate proficiency index score on the MCA science assessment for students (grades 8, HS) in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch group will be greater than that of the aggregate of alternative schools in Minnesota for the same grades (grades 8, HS).

FY24 Results: Alternative Schools index is equal to 17.9. VCS index is 40.9. **Goal Achieved.**

Measure 7.4 [AGC] – The school’s aggregate proficiency index score on the MCA math assessment for students (grades 8, HS) in the Special Education group in grades 8 and HS will be greater than that of the aggregate of alternative schools in Minnesota for the same grades (grades 8, HS).

FY24 Results: Alternative school aggregate index is 13.2. VCS index for SpEd is 15.0. **Goal Achieved.**

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

VCS does not have a contractual goal in this optional indicator area.

Indicator 9: Post-Secondary Readiness

Goal: Students at VCS will demonstrate readiness for post-secondary success.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready, Graduate from High School

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

Measure 9.1 [GRAD] – From FY23 to FY27, the school’s aggregate 7-year graduation rate will maintain or increase from the FY19–22 baseline 7-year graduation rate (82.4%) OR will be greater than the aggregate 7-year graduation rate of alternative schools in the state.

FY24 Results: 13 of 14 students graduated on time, with one student continuing. Graduation rate of 92.9% is greater than 82.4% baseline AND Alternative School aggregate rate of 62.4% **Goal Achieved.**

Measure 9.2 [CCR] – the aggregate percentage of graduates that earn at least one college credit prior to graduation will be at least 20%.

FY24 Results: 15.4% **Goal not met.**

Measure 9.3 [CCR] – the aggregate percentage of graduates that are accepted into at least one post-secondary option (college/university, military, apprenticeship, post-secondary training program) prior to graduation will be at least 65%.

FY24 Results: 53.8%, or 7 of 13 students, **Goal not met.**

Measure 9.4 [CCR] – the aggregate percentage of graduating students who meet 100% of their career readiness goals section of their Individual Learning Plans prior to graduation will be at least 80%.

FY24 Results: 92.3%, or 12 of 13 graduating students. **Goal Achieved.**

Indicator 10: Attendance

Goal: Students at VCS will attend the school at high rates.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: N/A

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

Measure 10.1 – the school's aggregate consistent attendance rate is equal to or greater than that of the aggregate of alternative schools in the state.

FY24 Results: The average attendance for the school year was 74.06%, a reduction from the rate of FY23 at 85.17%

The comparison aggregate for alternative schools in the state is not yet available.

One note for FY24, we enrolled students who were in the county truancy program throughout quarter 2, 3 and 4. Student attendance for this subset improved greatly and students made graduation credit progress.

Federal and State Accountability

Our WBWF goals go hand-in-hand with our school goals.

The primary purpose of Vermilion Country School is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement. The school will report its implementation of this primary purpose in its annual report. WBWF goals addressed by the school include:

- **Achievement Gap Closure [AGC]:** All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.
- **Career and College Ready [CCR]:** All students are career- and college-ready before graduating from high school.
- **Graduate from High School [GRAD]:** All students graduate from high school.

Our work will continue to be tracking data individually and disaggregating results in order to make sure we are supporting students to make longitudinal progress as individuals and academic growth year to year. With a small student population, we will be responsible for measuring this progress internally, as our subgroups (FRP, SpEd, American Indian subgroups) are smaller generally than the minimum 20 student grouping needed to show on formal state reports.

The VCS educational program is targeted, but comprehensive, focusing on state and national academic standards, and designed with flexibility to allow instructional decisions to be made expressly for individual students.

The program will be reviewed and refined on an ongoing basis.

The overall instructional program incorporates the following major components:

Standards – The concepts, skills and information that allow focus and alignment of the instructional program across the grade levels.

Assessment – Multiple and varied measures through that students, staff, parents and the broader community are informed of student progress and achievement relative to the goals and standards for student learning.

- A comprehensive, standards-based assessment system.
- Formative assessments will be used to engage students in learning by setting goals, tracking their own progress, and taking the necessary steps to move forward in their learning.
- Growth goals will be set for all students, progress will be monitored, and the student progress data will analyzed by the staff. The staff will use the information from the analysis of student progress data to plan next instructional steps for each student.
- Student performance data from multiple measures will be used to:
 - Inform students, parents, and staff of individual student learning needs
 - Place students in appropriate groups and courses
 - Focus/refocus instruction to address the needs of individual students
 - Inform program refinement efforts, curriculum review, and professional development
- Parents will be kept informed of their child's progress through clear and timely information from the school staff.

- Small class size to promote a safe, nurturing environment and lower student-teacher ratio.
- Small group work developing critical-thinking and problem-solving skills as students work together rather than compete against each other.
- Honoring life skills, stewardship and leadership opportunities through a habit of community service that includes regular scheduled events that benefit many in our community, young and old as well as meeting state standards and college and career readiness.
- Multi-grade 7-12 students use inquiry learning in a variety of collaborations with local agencies, community experts, volunteers and cross-curricular activities.
- Cohesive staff team teaching and layering curricular concepts to meet all student levels
- An advisor-to-student ratio of approximately 1:10 in most academic settings takes place in open classrooms. This ensures cultural responsiveness, positive behavior, and fair treatment of student-to-student, staff-to-student student-to-staff and staff-to-staff.
- Technology – Students use their own school-issued laptop and VCS uses school wide Google platforms including docs, sheets, calendar, classroom, forms, sites, and email. Grades and attendance are available online through JMC for students and parents to access at their convenience.
- Weekly school-wide team-building activities to strengthen emotional security and interdependence resulting in ready-to-learn culture. Within classes, using the latest brain research techniques with common language shared from school-wide social skills work.
- Student-led activities and student-led academics are offered, allowing voice and choice, along with built-in opportunities to make a difference in our school



8. Educational Effectiveness: Assessment & Evaluation

The goal of educational effectiveness is to measure how well the school is performing on a range of measures including instruction, curriculum, and an effective learning culture.

Our school uses local and standardized assessments as primary methods to identify appropriate student academic placement in courses and cohorts for learning. Where appropriate, we use data from NWEA assessments and other local formative assessments designed by our licensed teaching staff. The results of these assessments allow us to appropriate accelerate instructional pacing or opportunities for students – or, on the other end of the continuum, allows us to design small group re-instruction for students with similar learning needs.

We review and evaluate instructional approaches annually in June, with reviews after the autumn, winter and spring NWEA assessment cycles. The strategies and best practices used by teachers are connected to student outcomes in the different areas of literacy and math skills.

Teacher Equity Data FY24:

We work in a rural community where recruitment of experienced educators is a challenge, and we are proud to have such an effective group of licensed educators. Our teaching staff does not have Bois Forte Band members or any wider American Indian identifying teaching staff. This is an area of development for our school within the wider community.

	Licensed Educators (% of total)	3+ Years' Experience (% of total)	Working in Area of Licensure (% of total)	Advanced Degrees (% of total)	Racially / Ethnically Diverse (% of total)
Teachers	100	75	100	50	0
Admin Staff	100	100	100	0	0

Our practices as educators are aimed at ensuring our learning environment affirms and nourishes student identity within their community. Our educational effectiveness practices and assessment of our practices rely on feedback from students through class surveys (both anonymous and individualized) as well as community meeting-type listening sessions where students can speak up about their school experiences.

Our staff do focus on consistent and incremental professional development in cultural competency and celebrating the diversity of student backgrounds and experience – that is a constant throughline for the year.

9. Student & Parent Satisfaction

Fy 24 used a formal system of family surveys given in conjunction with school conferences. We will use a 5 point likert scale to make sure answering our questions is efficient to track results and compare from fall to spring, and year to year. We will be assuring that students also participate in this survey for the 24-25 school year.

We also will use a comments section to support open dialogue from families and students to hear what specifics families and students associate with their perceptions and experiences. (For instance, if small class sizes are most important, or if outdoor education is at the forefront of parent and student expectations.)

example question:

Vermilion Country School offers my student(s) a quality education:

5 4 3 2 1 0
totally agree totally disagree

comments on quality education?_____

Results:
of 38 responding (representing 38 of 52 family households)

	Totally agree	agree	neutral	disagree	totally disagree
VCS offers my student a quality education	24 63.2%	8 21.1%	4 10.5%	0	2 5.3%
VCS is a safe place for my student	31 81.2%	5 13.2%	1 2.6%	0	1 2.6%

Select Comments from the “totally agree” and “agree” sections:

“Ms. Hendy is the reason my student is succeeding”

“VCS allows my student to be themselves, and supports my kid to learn at their own pace.”

“VCS creates a safe environment by working with all students. Even kids who bullied each other at other schools are now doing great together at VCS.”

“My kid wants to go to school everyday. That didn’t happen before Vermilion.”

no comments were made in the “neutral” sections.

Comments from the totally disagree section:

“I want to hear from the board more directly”

“I would like to know what accountability there is for complaints that are sent to the board.”

“I am happy with the work of the teachers with my student. I am not comfortable with answers I receive from my complaints”

As a way to assess and examine equitable experiences of students and families, we look at the change in student-reported confidence, belonging, and trust based on advisory activities and self-reported inventories from students. (These are questions such as “I have __ # of close friends at VCS” or “I have __# of adults I really trust to support me if I need help” or “VCS supports me to be my true self, and be confident in who I am”

In the 2024–25 annual report, we will include aggregated reporting and analysis of these student answers in a method that the answers remain anonymous, but the patterns of student growth are demonstrated.

10. Environmental Education

The mission of Vermilion Country School's authorizer, the Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center, is to instill a connection and commitment to the environment in people of all communities through experiential learning. Osprey Wilds defines environmental education as the implementation of values and strategies that foster learning and create environmentally literate citizens who engage in creating healthy outcomes for individuals, communities, and the Earth. The overarching goal of environmental education is an environmentally literate citizenry. The test of environmental literacy is the capacity of an individual to work individually and collectively toward sustaining a healthy natural environment. This requires sufficient awareness, knowledge, skills, and attitudes in order to create a healthy planet where all people live in balance with the Earth.

For the FY24 school year, students worked on projects relating to environmental impact of local issues such as fisheries, water quality, mining, and waste reduction – and some topics on individual research. Students engaged in research and presentation to the community through an exposition project. Students were also offered opportunities to participate in outdoor activities such as canoeing, fishing, snowshoeing, ice fishing, and sailing on Lake Superior. Students used field trips to the local fishery management office, the wolf center, lake superior aquarium, federal forestry management office, and visits from local experts to inform their research and projects.

Students presented their research and finished projects during a school-wide expo day in May 2024, where school volunteers and their classmates helped judge the group presentations. We were happy to invite our community members to participate in interacting with the students and their presentations.

11. Governance & Management

Includes Annual Board Training & Administrator Professional Development Report(s)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

During the FY24 school year, the board consisted of three community members, two teachers, and two parents.

Sue Beaton resigned her community position after many years of service in April 2024. Karin Schmidt resigned her teacher position on the board in June 2024 after 9 years of service. The school board thanks both Sue and Karin for their input and dedication to the school. Teacher Marjory Wood joined the board in May 2024. Marjory served previously on the board as a community member in 2013 through 2016.

The board is a non-majority board, that means the board retains a balance between the three types of board members, and no single type necessarily holds a majority of seats. The board operates striving for a consensus for all decisions. The school board follows all MN state statute for open meeting law and requirements for charter school boards. The board elections are held at the annual meeting each year. The board is responsible for oversight in areas of management, educational programming, and staffing to create a sustainable organization.

Member Name	Board Position	Affiliation	Date Elected	Date Seated	Term End Date	Phone Number	Email Address
Jodi Summit	Chair	Community	March 2023 (2 year term)	March 2023	March 2025	218-753-2950	jsummit@vermilioncountry.org

Marit Kringstad	Secretary	Community	Feb. 2021 (orig. elected 2019 2-year term)	March 2021	March 2024*	(218) 753-1246	mkringstad@vermilioncountry.org
Sue Beaton	Treasurer	Community	Feb. 2022 (3 year term)	March 2022	March 2025	(218) 753-1246	sbeaton@vermilioncountry.org
Sarah Ramponi	Member	Parent	Feb. 2022 (2-year term)	March 2022	March 2024*	(218) 753-1246	Sramponi@vermilioncountry.org
Miranda Kainz	Member	Parent	Appointed March 2023 (taking over 2-year term)	March 2023	March 2024 *	(218) 753-1246	mkainz@vermilioncountry.org
Marjory Wood	member	Teacher	Appointed May 2024 (taking over 3 year term)	May 2024	March 2025	(218) 753-1246	mwood@vermilioncountry.org
Karin Schmidt	Vice Chair	Teacher	Feb. 2022	March 2022	March 2025	(218) 753-1246	kschmidt@vermilioncountry.org
Sam O'Brien	Ex Officio	Director	NA	NA	NA	218-248-2485	sam.obrien@vermilioncountry.org

*- identifies a board seat that was renewed at the 2024 board elections in March 2024. The renewals are all for 2 year terms.

Board Training and Development

Vermilion Country School board members have all attended the required initial board member training. Vermilion Country School board members also started using the free resources through Osprey Wilds board training as well as MNcharterboard.org trainings to meet training needs.

Initial Training

Provide information on the initial training required by statute completed by each current board member. A possible table format is provided below (add rows as necessary).

Initial Training				
Board Member Name	Original Date Seated	Board's Role & Responsibilities	Employment Policies & Practices	Financial Management
Board Member Name	Original Date Seated	Board's Role & Responsibilities	Employment Policies & Practices	Financial Management
Jodi Summit	1/1/13	10/26/13 MSBA	10/26/13 MSBA	10/26/13 MSBA
Karin Schmidt	3/23/16	4/23/16 St Thomas	4/23/16 St Thomas	4/23/16 St Thomas
Marit Kringstad	3/30/18	1/15/20 CharterSource	1/15/20 CharterSource	1/15/20 CharterSource
Sue Beaton	8/30/21	2/8/22 Osprey Wilds	2/8/22 Osprey Wilds	2/24/22 Osprey Wilds
Sarah Ramponi	8/30/21	Feb. 2022 Osprey Wilds	Feb. 2022 Osprey Wilds	Feb. 2022 Osprey Wilds

Miranda Kainz	3/23	Nov 2023, MNCharterboard	Nov 2023, MNCharterboard	August 2023, MNcharterboard
Marjory Wood	5/24	10/26/13 MSBA	10/26/13 MSBA	10/26/13 MSBA

Annual Training

Annual Training – FY24				
Board Member Name	September 28, 2023 Data Privacy Training (facilitated by Sam O'Brien)	January 25th, 2024 governance and charter contract	Apr 25, 2024 HR and Personnel protocols	May 23, 2024 Finance and Budget Training overview
Jodi Summit	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Karin Schmidt	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sue Beaton	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Marit Kringstad	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sarah Wallert-Ramponi	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Miranda Kainz	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Marjory Wood	not yet seated	not yet seated	not yet seated	Yes

MANAGEMENT

Vermilion Country School worked on a hybrid teacher/staff led management structure based on the model of the Edvisions Cooperative, of which we are a member. Our entire staff meets weekly, on Wednesday afternoons, to discuss day-to-day operations, address concerns, and conduct training.

VCS Executive Director Sam O'Brien continued into the first full year of service as the school director. The goals for the director role included implementing an expanded intervention program through the ADSIS grant, as well as assessing current school programming for alignment with student needs.

The school

LIST OF ADMINISTRATORS/QUALIFICATIONS

Sam O'Brien, Director

Licensed Teacher FF #444810

Previous Experience: April 2014 through June 2021 Director of Great River School #4105-07

December 2022 to current: Director of Vermilion Country School #4207-07

Professional Development Plan for the upcoming (FY25) school year:

Mr O'Brien will pursue professional development in student interventions and expanded student support, as well as outdoor education training and development. Mr O'Brien will collaborate with a professional school administration coach to review management strategies for small teams working with populations that have experienced high levels of adverse childhood experiences.

The professional development plan will include:

- WFR (wilderness first responder) training
- Engagement in SEL training that focuses on DBT implementation as a tier I and II intervention tool
- Engaging with professional administrative coaching throughout FY25

Role/Responsibilities: Provides day-to-day program management, ensures compliance with Minnesota Department of Education and our authorizer requirements, ensures that the school is working towards achieving our stated goals, works with the teaching/staff team, assists the board chair, updates our website to comply with state requirements, oversees the facility, works on student recruitment, supervises program assistants, helps develop the school budget, ensures that funds received are properly accounted for, works with our school business manager, and helps coordinate the annual audit.



12. Staffing

Our school staff teaches both in and out of their licensed area, as part of our innovative, small school model. Our paraprofessional staff is essential for both providing special education and general education support, as well as providing other educational opportunities for our students. We also have support staff (provided by outside agencies) who work with our students on a regular basis, including ADAPT mental health services, Check and Connect student support, and others.

VERMILION COUNTRY SCHOOL				
2023-24 STAFFING				
Name	File #	License and Assignment	2024-2 5 Status*	Comments
Amy Hendrickson	359254	Mathematics; Physical Sciences (Physics and Chem) CCDP allowance for PE, Visual Art, and Social studies	R	
Karin Schmidt	343434	Title I B.S. El. Ed; Music Minor; Reading Specialist K-12 Experimental Program licensure	NR	departing for employment in other district
Sam O'Brien	444810	Visual Arts k-12, CCDP allowance for Science 5-12, including physics 9-12	R	full time director/administration role for 24-25 (not teaching)
Chris Glazer	1023149	5-12 Social Studies	NR	departed midyear for other professional opportunity

* R = Returning, NR = Not Returning

FY24 Teacher Professional Development Activities:

Professional Development for FY24 focused on classroom culture building through restitution practices (as outlined by Diane Gossen through the *Real Restitution* program) as well as SEL toolkit implementation as guided by outside facilitator Julie Young Burns.

Teacher Retention:

Three teachers did not return in the fall of 2023, and VCS did successfully add new staff as well as new positions to support students in the 23-24 school year. Here we will simply report on teacher retention from FY23 to FY24

Percentage of Licensed Teachers from FY24 Not returning in FY25 (2 out of 4 licensed teachers not returning)	50%
--	------------

2022-23 Non-Licensed Staff			
Name	Assignment	2024-25 Status*	Comments
Jackie Ridings	Student success counselor	R	Returning as Tier I licensed social studies teacher
Amy Heglin	Special Education Paraprofessional and Food Service	R	returning
Karla Lundstrom	Office Assistant and Special Education Paraprofessional	NR	Ended role as of 6/30/2024
Jen Shuster-Dahlin	Paraprofessional and Office Assistant	NR	Ended role as of 6/30/2024

* R = Returning, NR = Not Returning

13. Operational Performance

Vermilion Country School has a wide range of operational areas to attend to everyday. Osprey Wilds as the school's authorizer evaluates the school in several areas to ensure all tasks comply with and meet MDE requirements. So far, the school has materially complied with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to:

- Relevant compliance and reporting requirements to the authorizer, state education agency, and/or federal authorities, including but not limited to:
 - State reporting and applications, including but not limited to: MARSS, STARS, UFARS, EDRS, Q Comp, DIRS, lease aid
 - TRA/PERA
- School website is working to be compliant with statutory and authorizer expectations
- Insurance coverage; the school facilities, grounds and transportation, including but not limited to:
 - Fire inspections and related records
 - Viable certificate of occupancy or other required building use authorization
- Physical space provides a safe, positive learning environment for students
- Appropriate and safe student transportation practices
- Health and safety, including but not limited to:
 - Nursing services and dispensing of pharmaceuticals
- Food service
- Emergency management plan;
 - Admission and enrollment rights of students, including but not limited to policies and practices related to admissions, lottery, waiting lists, fair and open recruitment

Due process and privacy rights of students, including but not limited to:

- Due process protections, privacy, civil rights and students' liberties requirements, including First Amendment protections and the Establishment Clause restrictions prohibiting public schools from engaging in religious instruction
- Conduct of discipline pursuant to the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act

- Maintain the security of and provide access to students records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and other applicable authorities
- Transfer of student records
- Employment including transparent hiring, evaluation and dismissal policies and practices
- Required background checks for all school employees

VCS leases their building from the City of Tower and in keeping with the non-traditional education program, the building is a former light industrial building. The main portion of the building is open with four advisory areas separated by short walls, the cafeteria, and library with dividing walls. Additional rooms in the building include a gym, woodworking shop, music room, science room, and office spaces. The kitchen next to the cafeteria provides both breakfast and lunch for approximately 35 people daily. All kitchen, bathroom, and public spaces are cleaned daily and the kitchen is inspected on a regular basis by the local health department.

Transportation is provided daily for students. VCS currently has four vans and one small bus available for the various routes to Virginia, Ely, Bois Forte, Embarrass, and Tower-Soudan. The vehicles are also used for transportation to events, field trips, and activities.

VCS has procedures in place to ensure the health and safety of staff and students while on site. First aid kits and fire extinguishers are located around the building. Staff has been trained on emergency procedures and drills are conducted on schedule and duly recorded.

Administration and office staff have procedures in place for records and ensuring compliance with state and federal laws including discipline data, background checks, hiring procedures, and due process.

The school recently updated its Safety Plans and passed its three-year Fire Marshall visit. We anticipate another fire marshall visit summer 2025.

Engagement with parents and community is handled on several fronts depending on the event or area of need. The staff offers multiple opportunities for parents and community members to be involved including an online volunteer form, in building sign-ups, and contact through various mediums.

14. Finances

For questions regarding school finances and for complete financials for FY24 and/or an organizational budget for FY24, contact:

Name: Jodi Summit
Position: Board Chair
Phone: 218-753-1246
Email: jsummit@vermilioncountry.org

Pam Zahn (Business Manager) and Region 1 (a nonprofit regional cooperative) provided accounting services for VCS for the FY24 school year.

Abdo Solutions provides auditing services for the school. As of November 2024, ABDO has submitted an audited UFARS file to MDE, and will complete our fiscal year audit for submission on schedule for 12/31/2024. The full financial audit will be posted publicly with board materials in a special meeting in December 2024.

Below is the revenue and expenditures report as submitted to MDE and posted on the MN Department of Education website. The revenue and expenditure comparison shows FY24 as compared to FY23. We are proud that our FY24 fund balance reflects a 15% (approximate) reserve. This is a marked improvement from our FY23 and previous years.

DISTRICT NBR-TYPE 4207-07 DISTRICT NAME: Vermilion Country School ECSU 03 ESV REGION 2		MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION 2023-2024 REVENUE COMPARISON		UFR02042070724 RUN DATE 11/24/24 AUDITED DATA AS OF 11/24/24
SOURCE	DESCRIPTION	2022-2023	2023-2024	% DIFFERENCE
LOCAL SOURCES				
092	INTEREST EARNINGS	106.67	245.85	130.48
096	GIFT/BEQUEST-LOCAL	6,231.17	2,105.25	66.21-
099	MISC LOCAL REVENUE	2,119.46	1,445.04	31.82-
	LOCAL TOTAL	8,457.30	3,796.14	55.11-
STATE SOURCES				
201	ENDOW FUND APPORTION	1,480.09	2,995.93	102.42
211	GENERAL ED AID	527,542.21	659,862.99	25.08
300	STATE AIDS & GRANTS	68,765.90	134,142.34	95.07
317	LTEM STATE AID	7,918.68	9,206.65	16.26
360	SPEC EDUCATION AID	132,785.01	290,773.75	118.98
369	MISC STATE REVENUE		10,353.98	100.00
	STATE TOTAL	738,491.89	1,107,335.64	49.95
FEDERAL SOURCES				
400	FEDERAL AIDS & GRANT	64,947.52	63,926.98	1.57-
405	FED AID THRU OTHER	15,939.88	6,266.53	60.69-
471	SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM	3,130.26	2,471.50	21.04-
472	FREE/REDUCED LUNCH	7,877.20	13,353.05	69.52
473	COMMODITY CASH PROG		1,601.65	100.00
474	COMMODITY DISTRIB	1,328.63		100.00-
476	SCHOOL BREAKFAST	3,971.05	9,249.25	132.92
500	FED DIRECT AID&GRANT	9,930.00	16,019.00	61.32
	FEDERAL TOTAL	107,124.54	112,887.96	5.38
	LOCAL, STATE & FED TOTAL REV	854,073.73	1,224,019.74	43.32

Revenue:

A primary increase in revenue is found in source 360 – Special Education Aid. Our special education team and our MTSS protocols worked diligently to provide necessary support and services in FY24, correlating to the increased revenue were increased expenditures in student supports as identified in Individualized Education Plans (IEP's). Other increases are generally correspondent to our increase in enrollment.

DISTRICT NBR-TYPE 4207-07
DISTRICT NAME: Vermilion Country School
ECSU 03 ESV REGION 2

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
2023-2024 EXPENDITURE COMPARISON

UFR02042070724
RUN DATE 11/24/24
AUDITED DATA AS OF 11/24/24

DESCRIPTION	2022-2023	2023-2024	% DIFFERENCE
CATEGORY - FUNDS 1,2,8			
DISTRICT & SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	59,163.05	35,604.67	39.82-
DISTRICT SUPPORT SERVICES	66,929.10	90,141.10	34.68
REGULAR INSTRUCTION	140,557.06	86,855.79	38.21-
VOCATIONAL INSTRUCTION			
SPECIAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTION	216,700.31	515,013.96	137.66
INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES	855.42	22,314.97	2,508.66
PUPIL SUPPORT SERVICES	33,625.34	20,245.34	39.79-
OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE	37,971.92	42,810.75	12.74
FOOD SERVICE	33,716.76	36,314.99	7.71
PUPIL TRANSPORTAION	94,244.19	107,309.37	13.86
OTHER OPERATING PROGRAMS	20,702.97	19,835.92	4.19-
CURRENT OPERATING EXPENDITURES	704,466.12	976,446.86	38.61
CAPITAL OUTLAY - FUNDS 1,8	71,741.68	90,495.58	26.14
COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND 04			
BUILDING CONSTRUCTION FUND 06			
DEBT SERVICE FUND 07			
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	776,207.80	1,066,942.44	37.46

Expenditures:

The greatest single line increase in expenditures is found in the Special Education instruction and Instructional Support services. Also, our total expenditures in FY24 were 1.066M, compared to 1.224M in revenues. We were close stewards of our expenditures in FY24, and will use our newfound financial resources to invest in increased student support.

World's Best Workforce Annual Budget

No funds were specifically allocated to implementing WBWF as programs related to WBWF areas were already in place in some form and so are already accounted for in the budget. We don't foresee this changing in the near future unless requirements change.

15. Future Plans

The school is working to sustain and expand a positive and innovative reputation in the community and surrounding area, and we are seeing increases in enrollment and interest from potential students.

We continue to update our educational program to best meet the needs of our current students.

Our students are spread out over a 45-mile radius from our campus, which makes transportation a higher-than-normal part of our budget. Our transportation costs have increased due to higher gas prices. With higher enrollment this coming school year, we should be able to more efficiently transport students, but we are also looking at needing to replace some of our current fleet of vans. We have added one additional van route this year and are currently at capacity for transportation for students who live outside of the Tower-Soudan attendance area. We are looking to partner with local transportation providers such as Arrowhead transit and Big Woods transportation from Nett Lake to support a more sustainable transportation plan.

Our board has budgeted very conservatively over the past two years and will continue this trend, to make sure our expenditures are below our income. Our budget for the FY25 school year shows us adding to our reserves, and utilizing ADSIS support from the state of MN to expand our support system for students.

We are also looking toward expanding our academic programming to allow VCS to run a blended learning program that allows students to learn asynchronously, at their own pace, and still receive the regular weekly or daily support of licensed teachers and support staff that the students have successful and engaging relationships with already.

Academic Program

Our academic program is focusing on a mastery-based evaluation model, where students demonstrating understanding of skills and standards allows the student to make meaningful progress through the curriculum at their own pace. This allows accelerated learners to find success and for students who have faced challenges in the past to engage with material on their terms and find success.

Here are highlights to our current future plans:

Community Engagement

- **American Indian Cultural Education**
 - Vermilion Country School is an innovative school that has the dynamic flexibility to serve the needs of all students, including specific and unique needs of American Indian students who may not be receiving support or engagement at their current school district. We seek to build a stronger practice of partnership with our American Indian students and the wider community in order enroll every student who wants to pursue graduation and a full education through VCS
- **Spreading the word for our current success**
 - VCS seeks to spread positive word of mouth stories of student success and engagement through our current families. Our small classes, attention to individual needs, academic opportunities, and real educational experiences allow students to find success beyond their previous limitations at other schools. Students discover their potential and thrive at VCS, and we believe that we should have a waiting list of families at every grade level wanting the opportunity to enroll at a school that gives their students the chance to find individualized education and success.

Student programming

- **Check and connect: a schoolwide program for behavior and positive school culture**
 - Our staff will all engage in training on responding to students with meaningful understanding for supporting students living through adverse experiences. Specifically, using the research based model of check-and'-connect, our school will improve outcomes for students by connecting to meaningful student goals and foundations for their social and emotional understanding of school and academic progress.
- **Literacy**
 - Our literacy coaching and instruction is using a blended classroom approach through layered curriculum to engage students in learning activities that are challenging and help students make meaningful progress in their literacy skills.
- **Math**
 - Using a mastery based learning approach, we are differentiating instruction through a blended classroom approach that allows students to progress at an accelerated or re-iterative pace, and make the best use of teacher time to directly tutor and instruct students on progress.

Leadership

- **Structure**
 - VCS currently uses a teacher-led school model and will continue to utilize teacher involvement in key strategic decisions for staffing decisions, academic programs, and important next steps. Now with a full time director, the leadership team consists of teachers and director collaborating on vision for the school, and the director holding responsibility for carrying out execution of plans and actions.
- **5 year strategic plan**
 - Over the course of FY25, we will be continuing our strategic focus points set in FY24 to focus on supporting teachers to implement mastery based curriculum (Modern Classrooms Project) engage in further SEL training (Julie Young Burns) as well as a rigorous Teacher-Powered-Schools partnership (Paula Zwicke) to support governance that engages the interests and input of staff that best know our students.
 - By the end of FY25, we will engage in a community-wide process to draft a 5 year plan that incorporates the ideas and feedback of the community. Publishing this plan by the end of FY25 is our current goal

Facilities

- We look forward to expanding our student engagement and leadership in environmental education and stewardship for the 5+ acre campus surrounding the school. Outdoor projects, building, and awareness of the campus are a key part of our early strategic planning process

