



## ANNUAL EDUCATION REPORT (AER) COVER LETTER

February 3, 2022

Dear WGM Parents and Community Members:

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER) which provides key information on the 2021-2022 educational progress for Walden Green Montessori. The AER addresses the complex reporting information required by federal and state laws. The school's report contains information about student assessment, accountability, and teacher quality. If you have any questions about the AER, please contact Mark for assistance.

The AER is available for you to review electronically by visiting the following website: <https://bit.ly/3qXD1YM>, or you may review a copy in the front office.

For the 2021-2022 school year, schools were identified based on previous years' performance using definitions and labels as required in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). A Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) school is one that had at least one underperforming student subgroup in 2018-19. An Additional Targeted Support (ATS) school is one that had a student subgroup performing at the same level as the lowest 5% of all schools in the state in 2017-18. A Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) school is one whose performance was in the lowest 5% of all schools in the state or had a graduation rate at or below 67% in 2016-17. Some schools are not identified with any of these labels. In these cases, no label is given.

Walden Green Montessori was identified as a school that did **not** need a label. We have worked diligently to close our achievement gaps among sub-groups and to ensure all of our students prosper from their daily instruction in a holistic learning environment.

Nonetheless, there are key challenges for Walden Green's academic data. We are a public Montessori school with a vision for student growth that is different from the test-prep mentality of traditional education. The brief, snapshot approaches typified by M-STEP or NWEA are not sensitive enough to capture what Montessori students actually know and are able to do. Likewise, standardized assessments only provide a glimpse of one particular day in a child's education. The data is valuable for our school improvement process; however, it only reflects one piece of the pie when it comes to measuring overall student growth. Another key challenge for Walden Green's data is our school size. We are a small learning environment, with around 30 total students in each grade, and we service children from various different districts around West Michigan. This makes data trends fluctuate more frequently from year to year.

Furthermore, the ongoing pandemic has significantly impacted Walden Green's data. Last school year, the following factors were key challenges to our academic growth:

- Overall decrease in face-to-face instruction due to:
  - 14% to 20% of student population participating in full-time distant learning option.
  - 7 weeks of school-wide remote learning (late November through early January).
  - Various 10 to 14 day periods of quarantine/isolation for students/staff due to COVID symptoms.
- COVID protocols, such as cohorting students and social distancing, limiting the feasibility of small group instruction.
- Mental health of some remote learners (a handful of 4th-8th graders demonstrated increased anxiety and low growth on spring assessments).

- Inordinate amount of time spent of COVID-related logistics and adjusting to changes throughout the pandemic.
- Fluctuation of enrollment that occurred from October to May (various students transferring in and out).
- Math data in particular was negatively impacted by the pandemic. Students enrolled in remote learning had a median growth percentile of 24, while in-person learners had a median growth percentile of 56.

In order to accelerate student growth and close gaps in achievement over the past two years, the following key initiatives are underway for Walden Green learners:

- ▶ Four teachers received their Montessori training
- ▶ Algebra I course for 8th grade students
- ▶ K-5 Mystery Science curriculum
- ▶ DELTA Math Assessment Screener for 1st-8th grade students
- ▶ CCSS Gradual Release Math Lessons for 2nd-6th grade students
- ▶ Updated MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Support) Program - a comprehensive framework used to provide targeted support for all learners: academic, behavioral, social and emotional services
- ▶ MAP Accelerator math program: personalized online learning tool for 3rd-8th grade students

These school initiatives will pave the way for addressing areas we can improve in accordance with the following AER Report (<https://bit.ly/3qXD1YM>).

State law requires that we also report additional information on the following:

#### 1. PROCESS FOR ASSIGNING PUPILS TO THE SCHOOL

- ▶ Each year we send a notice home for all enrolled students with detailed instructions for re-enrollment before the stated deadline (typically the end of March). After this process, siblings are allowed to apply for grade level openings. The open enrollment period is also posted in the newspaper. For new families wishing to join our school community, we provide and accept applications from parents and guardians wishing to enroll their child for the upcoming school year before the stated deadline (typically mid-April). If there are more applications than spaces available for any particular grade level, we hold a random selection drawing for the spaces available. That date is posted each year.

#### 2. THE STATUS OF THE 3-5 YEAR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- ▶ The Single Building District Improvement Plan is a planning tool designed to address student achievement and system needs identified through the school's comprehensive needs assessment (CNA). The following school improvement strategies are underway:
  - Administrators and teachers will implement a system of data collection and analysis and data-based decision-making to support a three-tiered model of instructional intervention.
  - Guided reading is small-group reading instruction designed to provide differentiated teaching that supports students in developing reading proficiency. The small group model allows children to be taught in a way that is intended to be more focused on their specific needs, accelerating their progress.
  - Words Their Way (WTW): Word Study In Action Developmental Model uses the research-based developmental approach to word study that is student-centered and assessment driven. The goal of this approach is the progression of word knowledge, including the development of phonics, spelling, word recognition, and vocabulary.

- Teachers will engage in on-going professional learning and follow-up coaching on the use of instructional technology in mathematics to support conceptual and procedural understanding. Teachers will examine instructional technology tools in concert with best practices in mathematics and match the right tool with each practice.
- Gradual Release Model: Teachers will provide guided practice (a component of Direct Instruction) using “I do”, “We do”, and “You do” with frequent checks for understanding using the Montessori Curriculum and CCSS materials. Teachers will also use a variety of informal assessments to guide students through the first three phases. Once the students have shown proficiency by meeting the learning goal on three consecutive measures, teachers should provide distributive/spiral-based practice throughout the year.
- Teachers will use NWEA and DELTA Math data to make instructional decisions in an ongoing and systematic way - identifying standards to emphasize in whole group instruction and identifying students to receive Tier II and Tier III supports.
- Blend Montessori and Next Generation Science Standards. Research shows that the best way to learn science is by doing science. By combining the Montessori Science Curriculum and Next Generation units we will integrate the disciplinary core ideas, infuse science and engineering practices, and crosscut concepts that lead to deeper understanding of the natural and designed world.
- Students will be instructed and assessed in the narrative, informational, and argumentative writing styles. A combination of the Montessori Method and CCSS Writing Standards will be fully implemented using a writer’s workshop approach.

### 3. A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EACH SPECIALIZED SCHOOL

- ▶ Walden Green Montessori is located in the beautiful resort town of Spring Lake, Michigan with a population of 2,398. To fulfill the need of Montessori within our community, we became one of the state’s first, non-profit public charter schools. We hold true to the core tenets of Maria Montessori’s time-tested methodology and have made certain that we are addressing the Common Core State Standards as well. We built our own building in 2007, which sits in the middle of beautiful woods, allowing our children to interact daily with the natural wonders around us. Our stakeholders continually strive to improve our fine school and educate our students to prepare them for the world beyond our doors. We do this through child-centered activities that: develop curiosity, creativity and character; foster independence and social responsibility within a community framework; inspire the love of learning independently and collaboratively; highlight global justice, fairness, and peace.

### 4. IDENTIFY HOW TO ACCESS A COPY OF THE CORE CURRICULUM, A DESCRIPTION OF ITS IMPLEMENTATION, AND AN EXPLANATION OF THE VARIANCES FROM THE STATE’S MODEL

- ▶ Walden Green students are taught based on principles of Montessori education. Our students learn through hands-on materials that address the traditional standards in learning. We offer a Montessori-based education that integrates 21st Century Learning Skills as well as Common Core State Standards. Rather than learning as a whole class, our children work independently or in small groups on topics that are specific to their needs. Our classrooms are multi-aged so that each student can work at his/her own pace in a given content area. For further details, visit: <https://www.waldengreen.org/who-we-are.html>

5. THE AGGREGATE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS FOR ANY LOCAL COMPETENCY TESTS OR NATIONALLY NORMED ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

- ▶ Reading: Percent of 2nd-8th Grade Students Meeting the Fall Achievement Benchmarks
  - 78.3% (Fall 2020, NWEA MAP Growth Assessment)
  - 76.3% (Spring 2021, NWEA MAP Growth Assessment)
- ▶ Math: Percent of 2nd-8th Grade Students Meeting the Fall Achievement Benchmarks
  - 67.5% (Fall 2020, NWEA MAP Growth Assessment)
  - 69.6% (Spring 2021, NWEA MAP Growth Assessment)
- ▶ Reading: Percent of 3rd-8th Grade Students Meeting the Fall Achievement Benchmarks
  - 69.6% (Fall 2019, NWEA MAP Growth Assessment)
  - 76.0% (Fall 2020, NWEA MAP Growth Assessment)
- ▶ Math: Percent of 3rd-8th Grade Students Meeting the Fall Achievement Benchmarks
  - 67.4% (Fall 2019, NWEA MAP Growth Assessment)
  - 53.2% (Fall 2020, NWEA MAP Growth Assessment)
- ▶ Actions steps to help future assessment data:
  - K-3rd receiving F.A.S.T. Reading Intervention Training, Y5s receiving OG training, Title I receiving L.E.T.R.S. training.*
  - Renewed commitment to small group/ability-based instruction and Montessori-based practices.*
  - First Friday Staff PD: 30 minutes each month to review/practice essential Montessori presentations among colleagues.*
  - Additional PD: lead teachers will receive 10 hours of virtual coaching from NWEA to help increase their expertise in systematically utilizing MAP Growth data for differentiated instruction.*
  - Ensure K/1st students have adequate exposure and practice with laptops instead of iPads (since NWEA is taken with computers).*
  - Infuse more NWEA-aligned vocabulary into our math and literacy instruction.*
  - MAP Accelerator for 3rd-8th Grade: a personalized learning program includes recommended practice problems, instant feedback, scaffolded help, personalized spiral review, and instructional videos.*
  - Free After School Tutoring in math and reading from late November to early May (Tuesdays + Thursdays).*

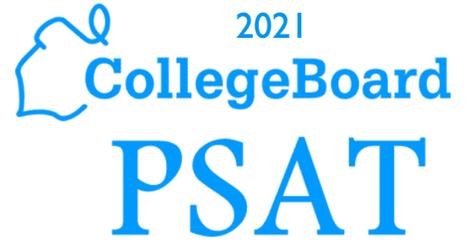
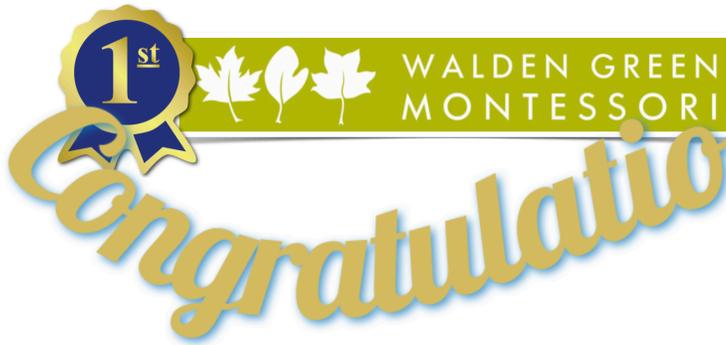
6. IDENTIFY THE NUMBER AND PERCENT OF STUDENTS REPRESENTED BY PARENTS AT PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

- ▶ Walden Green Montessori strives for at least 90% participation during parent/teacher conferences. Our staff will accommodate parents' schedules so that the necessary communication occurs between home and school each year.
  - 239 students, 98% (2019-2020)
  - 227 students, 92% (2020-2021)

Despite the ongoing complexities of COVID-19, this is an exciting time for our program as we further optimize our unique learning atmosphere through *compassion* and a *tenacity* for excellence in education. It is a privilege to witness the vision, mission, and values of Walden Green Montessori flourish in new ways. Thank you for partnering with us to help your children reach their full human potential!

For a stronger Walden Green,  
*Mark Roessing*

Mark Roessing  
Principal  
Walden Green Montessori



**RANKED #1 FOR READING AND MATH**  
(AMONG ALL PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN OTTAWA COUNTY)

<b>READING AND WRITING</b> (PERCENT CAREER AND COLLEGE READY)	
WALDEN GREEN MONTESSORI	100%
OTTAWA AREA ISD AVERAGE	74.5%
STATEWIDE AVERAGE	63.6%

<b>MATH</b> (PERCENT CAREER AND COLLEGE READY)	
WALDEN GREEN MONTESSORI	72.7%
OTTAWA AREA ISD AVERAGE	46.4%
STATEWIDE AVERAGE	36%