

LIONSGATE ACADEMY



ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Lionsgate Academy

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MISSION, VISION, & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mission

The mission of Lionsgate Academy is to foster self-determination by providing a transition-focused, personalized education for all, specializing in educating autistic learners.

Vision

Our vision is to create an inclusive, innovative academic community where students may safely experience the transition to young adulthood. Here we are all partners in learning; empowering students to become confident, flexible, and self-disciplined. Students are challenged to grow through a balance of academic, social, and emotional experiences so they are adequately prepared to become active citizens in their local and global communities with the highest quality of life possible. A transition focus is infused throughout the school's programming and activities.

Executive Summary

Lionsgate Academy is a public charter school that opened in 2008. Lionsgate Academy completed its 15th year of operation on June 30, 2023.

Lionsgate Academy operates three programs: our junior/senior high school program, our transition program, and our setting 4 high-needs program. Our junior/senior high school program offers a standards-based curriculum in all core subjects and meets the Minnesota State Standards for graduation. This program is offered at our Minnetonka and Shoreview Campuses. The Shoreview Campus completed its fifth year of operation in June of 2023.

Our Achieving Independence and Maturity (AIM) Program is for students receiving transition-based services who are between the ages of 18 to 21. This program is available to students who qualify based on a team decision through the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) process. Our Lynx Program is for students in grades 7 through 12 who require a separate educational setting. The AIM program is located at our North St. Paul Campus at 2342 Helen St. North. Our Lynx program was moved to co-locate at the Shoreview campus.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT & STUDENT ATTRITION

During the academic year 2022-2023, Lionsgate Academy served 399 students. Reported ADM for Lionsgate was 388.59. Discrepancies between students enrolled and reported ADM are attributable to a number of factors including students enrolled in PSEO and other programs that remove the student from school for extended periods of time.

Lionsgate served 156 students in grades 7 through 12 at our Minnetonka Campus (152.95 ADM), 172 students in grades 7 through 12 at our Shoreview Campus (171.10 ADM), 24 students in our Lynx Program (21.10 ADM) and 49 students in Lionsgate's Achieving Independence and Maturity program (AIM) (43.44 ADM). Students who withdraw from Lionsgate during the school year are usually replaced by students on the waiting list.

Year	Grades							PSEO	Total Average	Attrition Rate
	7	8	9	10	11	12	12 & 13			
08-09	26.50	12.74	14.36	14.00					67.60	18%
09-10	21.08	21.16	19.77	16.55	15.08				93.64	21%
10-11	28.78	28.28	25.82	22.02	25.52	12.87			133.29	19%
11-12	20.40	28.12	25.17	24.73	17.95		22.66		139.22	3.5%
12-13	21.32	21.95	25.33	24.0	22.58		32.05		147.86	9%
13-14	22.94	22.08	23.70	25.87	22.26		38.92		155.77	6%
14-15	21.15	23.81	23.78	22.00	24.78		46.42	0.28	162.22	6%
15-16	13.81	21.93	23.73	24.49	20.00	17.56	36.90	3.02	161.44	2%
16-17	23.27	27.85	24.74	23.63	21.44	18.85	42.75	1.95	184.48	3%
17-18	21.41	24.75	30.76	28.00	27.08	19.00	33.42	1.96	186.38	4%
18-19	39.42	41.52	44.22	44.88	26.89	20.66	30.95	3.18	251.72	3%
19-20	46.00	49.28	49.82	51.04	42.26	23.88	28.23	4.11	294.62	4%
20-21	51.50	53.53	56.27	49.18	57.25	38.12	31.81	0.66	337.74	3.3%
21-22	52.61	56.10	63.36	53.32	49.87	51.02	38.41	3.17	367.86	3.0%
22-23	63.3	57.04	61.39	64.03	47.67	43.81	43.44	7.91	388.59	2.6%

Table 1. Student Enrollment

Attrition for Lionsgate in the 2022-2023 school year remained low with a 2.6% attrition rate. Due to the extensive waiting list, students who were unenrolled after October 1st were replaced with students from the waiting list.

The waiting list for the 2022-23 school year was as follows:

Year	Grades							AIM	Total
	7	8	9	10	11	12			
12-13	56	57	51	4	-	-		-	168
13-14	32	39	29	30	-	-		-	130
14-15	65	39	45	15	-	-		-	164
15-16	52	48	38	17	11	4		0	170
16-17	74	37	65	31	18	5		0	230
17-18	62	71	60	38	22	5		0	258
18-19	73	48	67	38	28	5		0	259
19-20	85	69	65	48	28	10		0	305
20-21	67	69	93	25	21	9		0	284
21-22	25	48	32	42	15	4		4	170
22-23	44	54	75	28	37	8		8	254

Table 2. Lionsgate Academy Waiting List

The waiting list numbers account for *unduplicated* families between the Minnetonka and Shoreview programs and demonstrates a continued need for Lionsgate programming across the Twin Cities Metro area.

GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Governance

Lionsgate Academy utilizes a balanced governing board that includes three parents, three licensed staff, and three community members.

Each May, an election for open board seats is held. For the spring of 2023, one licensed staff position, one parent position and one community member position was open for election.

Table 3 shows the board members with contact information, Table 4 shows board members and includes their terms of service and training.

2022-2023 Lionsgate School Board

Name	Board Position	Member Affiliation	Election Date	E-Mail Address
Ann Wiesner	Chair	Parent	06/01/2019	board.awiesner@lgamn.org
Pauline Bangma	Vice Chair	Community	10/19/2021 (Appointed)	board.pbangma@lgamn.org
Amiri Brotherson	Treasurer	Community	05/22/2020	board.abrotherson@lgamn.org
Molly Figenskau	Secretary	Teacher 483720	05/22/2020	board.mfigenskau@lgamn.org
Jason Pusey	Director	Parent	06/02/2021 (Appointed)	board.jpusey@lgamn.org
Janet Ha	Director	Teacher 463480	06/02/2021	board.jha@lgamn.org
Rachel Osband	Director	Parent	5/20/2022	board.rosband@lgamn.org
Jeff Nickolas	Director	Community	5/20/2022	board.jnickolas@lgamn.org
Andrew Birnstengel	Director	Teacher 479152	5/20/2022	board.abirnstengel@lgamn.org

Table 3. 2022-2023 Board of Directors

Board Training

All newly seated board members for 2022-2023 attended the 3 required board trainings as documented below.

BOARD MEMBER	Date Seated	Term End Date	School Governance	School Finance	School Employment	Data Practices Law	2021 Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion	2022 Cultural Competency	2023 Charter School Finance
Amiri Brotherson	06/16/2020	07/01/2023	02/10/2021	11/28/2020	01/27/2021	10/28/2021	01/30/2021	03/08/2022	01/07/2023
Molly Figenskau	06/16/2020	07/01/2023	09/17/2020	09/22/2020	01/28/2021	10/19/2021	01/30/2021	03/08/2022	01/07/2023
Jason Pusey	06/15/2021	07/01/2023	03/15/2022	05/28/2022	06/01/2022	06/01/2022	–	03/08/2022	01/07/2023
Janet Ha	06/15/2021	07/01/2024	06/18/2021	06/18/2021	08/12/2021	10/10/2021	–	03/08/2022	01/07/2023
Ann Weisner	06/15/2021	07/01/2024	10/19/2021	10/19/2021	10/19/2021	10/19/2021	–	03/08/2022	01/07/2023
Pauline Bangma	10/16/2021	07/01/2024	03/14/2022	03/10/2022	11/11/2021	11/11/2021	–	03/08/2022	01/07/2023
Rachel Osband	06/21/2022	07/01/2025		01/07/2023		–	–	–	01/07/2023
Jeff Nickolas	06/21/2022	07/01/2025	10/17/2022	01/07/2023	10/12/2022	–	–	–	01/07/2023
Andrew Birstengel	06/21/2022	07/01/2025	11/15/2022	11/15/2022	11/15/2022	–	–	–	01/07/2023

Table 4. School Board Terms and Training

Board Committees

Every member of the board of directors must volunteer for one of three standing committees: finance, executive director evaluation, and governance. The chairs of the committees were as follows:

- Finance – Amiri Brotherson (community member, treasurer)
- Governance – Janet Ha (teacher member)
- Director Evaluation – Andrew Birstengel (teacher member)

The finance committee met monthly prior to the full board of director's meetings. Governance met monthly on the second Tuesday of the month.

The director evaluation committee met monthly to ensure a fair, timely, and accurate evaluation of the performance of the executive director. The committee developed a method for evaluation drawing heavily from the MASA, MESPA, MASSP, and BOSA guidelines for Minnesota school principals. The director's evaluation was focused on the new executive director search and onboarding. The Ad Hoc Executive Director Search Committee was created, with Amiri Brotherson, Molly Figenskau, and Jason Pusey, to fulfill this function.

School Board Development Plan

The Lionsgate School board conducts a self-evaluation annually to determine areas of growth. Past evaluations indicate that Lionsgate's infrastructure and board operations are satisfactory to exemplary. Each board member participates in the three required trainings within six months of being seated. The board then selects a topic for the entire board that will meaningfully improve their knowledge and skills. The 2022-2023 topic was *Charter School Finance*. This training was provided by Aaron Leisen, Lionsgate Academy Director of Finance and Operations on January 7th, 2023.

Authorizer

The authorizer for Lionsgate Academy is Novation Education Opportunities (NEO). Novation Education Opportunities (NEO) Vision: To be the leading Minnesota Authorizer of high quality charter schools. Lionsgate re-entered into a contract with NEO from 2020 to 2025.

Novation Education Opportunities (NEO) Mission: To oversee innovative charter schools through consistent, ongoing and robust evaluation to achieve significant and measurable student growth for the benefit of our schools and community.

NEO seeks to enhance public education in Minnesota by supporting charter schools which validate quality performance. The sole purpose of Novation Education Opportunities (NEO) is to authorize public charter schools in accordance with Minnesota Statute 124E which governs the duties and responsibilities of charter school authorizers.

NEO is located at 3432 Denmark Ave., Suite 130; Eagan, Minnesota 55123. Their contact information is as follows: executive.director.neo@gmail.com; 612-889-2103.

Management

Dr. Diane Restorff was the executive director of Lionsgate Academy for most of the 2022-2023 school year. She has led Lionsgate Academy since 2012. Dr. Hala Asamarai began functioning as the new executive director in June 2023. Dr. Restorff and Dr. Asamarai were assisted by an administrative team that serves to ensure Lionsgate is managed in a fiscally responsible, compliant, and legal manner.

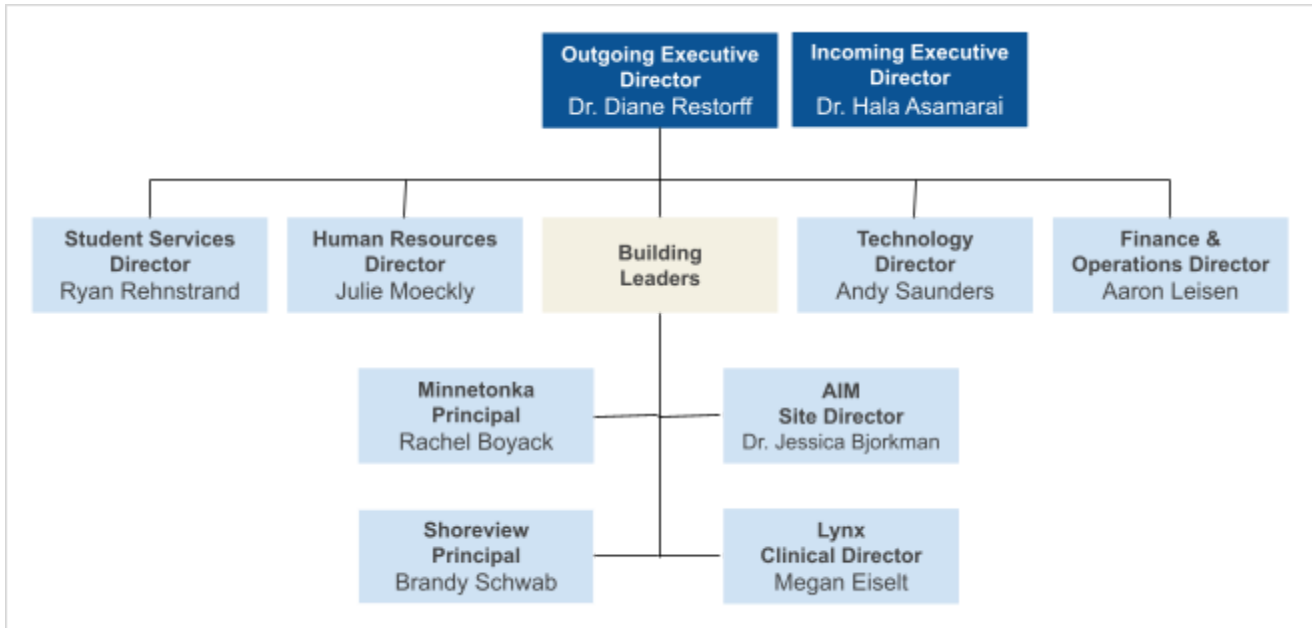


Figure 1. 2022-23 Organizational Chart

Executive Director Development Plan

The executive director evaluation committee establishes goals and objectives for the director for the following year. Dr. Restorff's professional development plan for the 2022-2023 school year consisted of goals to hire the new executive director and get her onboarded and oriented to the Lionsgate Academy district.

STAFFING

Lionsgate Academy employed 369 regular employees during the 2022-2023 school year. Forty-four percent of the staff are educational assistants who play important and varied roles at the school. All educational assistants are hired to support the needs of our special education students who have a documented need for paraprofessional support.

Support service providers at Lionsgate include social workers, speech and language pathologists, school psychologists, adaptive physical education teachers, and occupational therapists. Due to high medical needs of the student population, Lionsgate retains a licensed school nurse and two LPNs. All service providers meet identified needs from comprehensive evaluations and may include services around mental health, emotional regulation, social skills, skills of daily living, transition skills, speech & language needs, fine and gross motor needs and other health needs.

Administrative assistants provide support such as STAR and MARRSS reporting, special education reporting and accounting, attendance, substitutes, transportation, purchasing, communications, and other vital functions. Tech and operations are responsible for student and staff computing needs, building upkeep, network and testing support.

Licensed administrators include the Director of Student Services, Building Principals and Site Coordinators holding licensure in their field, and special education coordinators. Non-licensed administrators include directors of Human Resources, Finance and Operations, Technology, and the Executive Director.

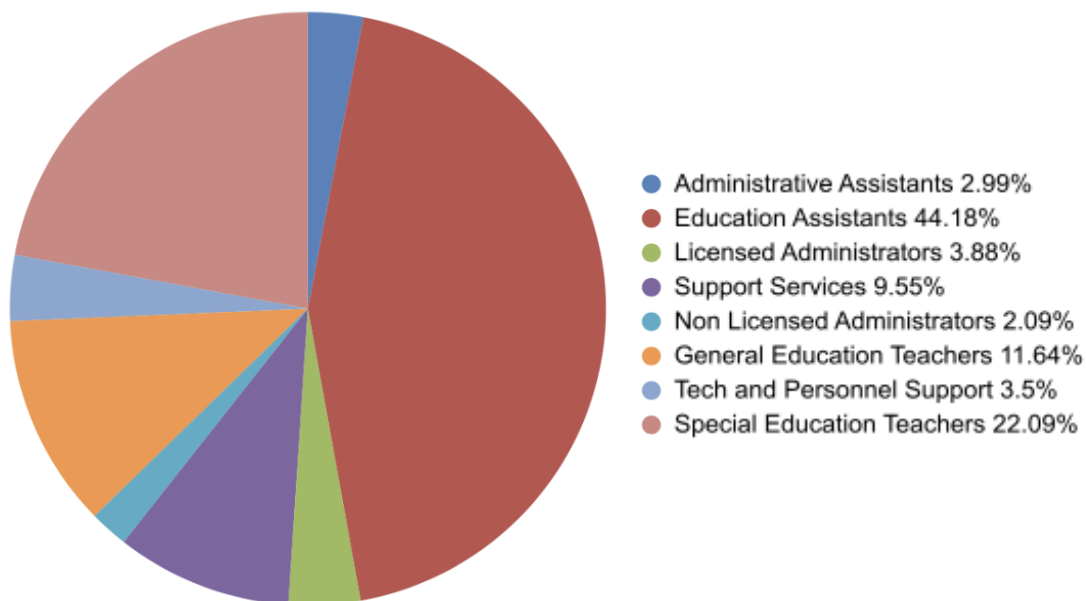


Figure 2. Staffing by Position

Staff Retention and Attrition

Overall, the attrition rate of staff increased from 23% in 21-22 to 28% in 22-23. Staff attrition is calculated by dividing the number of staff (with replacement) by the number who resigned during the 2022-2023 school year. When the number of individuals who were involuntarily terminated and the number of individuals who left within 6 months of hire are subtracted, the attrition rate was 17.8%.

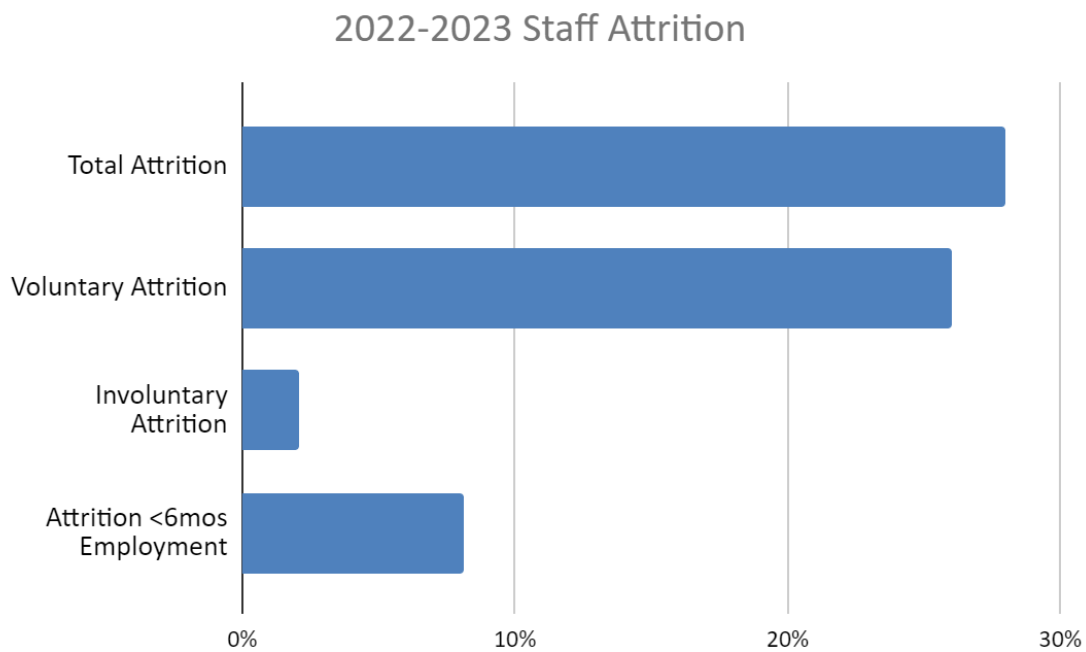


Figure 3. Staff Attrition

FINANCES

Almost all of Lionsgate Academy's students' education programming includes at least some special education components. As such, the cost to educate our students is significantly greater than those for other schools. Lionsgate's revenue and cash flow is derived primarily from Special Education funds received from the State of Minnesota. The Lionsgate Foundation, an unaffiliated non-profit foundation, provides the largest share of private contributions to the School.

The director of finance and operations for Lionsgate Academy is Mr. Aaron Leisen. Lionsgate uses Dieci School Finance LLC, an accounting services firm that specializes in charter schools, for accounting, financial statement preparation, and audit coordination. Lionsgate's audit firm is MMKR – Malloy, Montague, Karnowski, Radosevich & Co., PA. There were no material findings in the most recent audit.

Total revenues and expenditures for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023 were approximately \$27 million and \$27 million respectively. This represents a 13% increase in revenues and 14% increase in expenses. Revenue and Expenditure increases relate to a 6% increase in the number of students and 7% inflationary factors. Cost per ADM increased by \$4,930 or 8% compared to 2022. A breakdown of the components of revenues and expenditures is illustrated in the following table and graphs.

Revenues and Expenditures Combined General and Food Service Fund Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023

Revenues:	<u>Prior Year</u>	<u>Current Year</u>	<u>% Total</u>	<u>Increase (Decrease)</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Special Education	18,845,186	21,691,793	80%	2,846,608	12%
General Education	4,001,154	4,230,391	16%	229,237	1%
Federal	326,061	251,721	1%	(74,341)	0%
Local Support	649,985	791,370	3%	141,386	1%
Total Revenues	23,822,386	26,965,275	100%	3,142,890	13%
Expenditures:					
Special Education	10,230,507	11,763,154	44%	1,532,647	6%
General Education	4,190,411	4,236,960	16%	46,549	0%
Admin	1,245,739	1,335,938	5%	90,199	0%
Pupil Support	658,248	623,141	2%	(35,106)	0%
Facilities & Operations	3,449,218	4,115,008	15%	665,790	3%
Transportation	3,897,178	4,832,070	18%	934,892	4%
Total Expenditures	23,671,301	26,906,271	100%	3,234,970	14%
Revenues > Expenditures	151,085	59,005			

Revenues

Revenues for Lionsgate Academy were largely from state special education, making up 80% of total revenue. General education revenue accounted for 16% of the total revenue. Revenue from Federal sources included special education revenue and accounted for 1% of the total. Other sources of revenue were grants and donations which accounted for 2.8% of the total revenues.

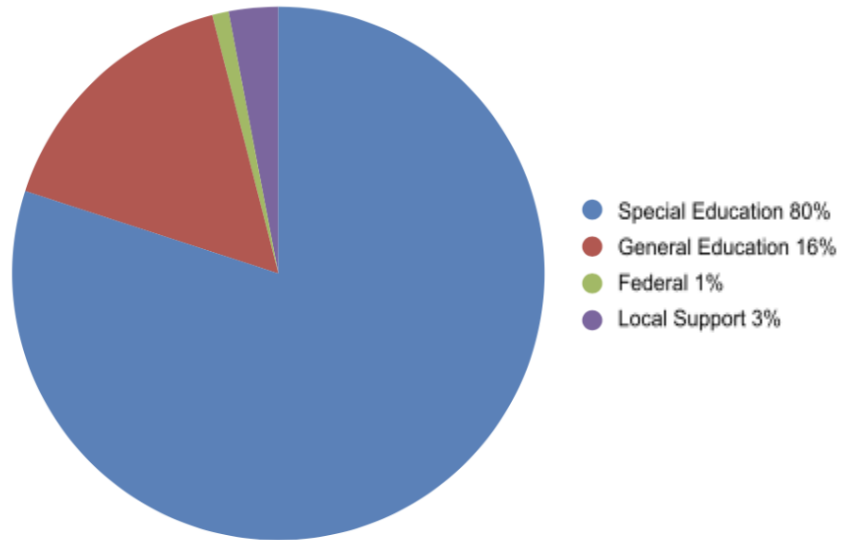


Figure 4. Revenue

Expenditures

Lionsgate expenditures are illustrated below. The largest portion of expenditures was in special education (44%), followed by transportation (18%), general education (16%) and facilities and operations (15%). 5% of expenditures were attributed to administrative costs. 2% of expenditures fell under pupil support.

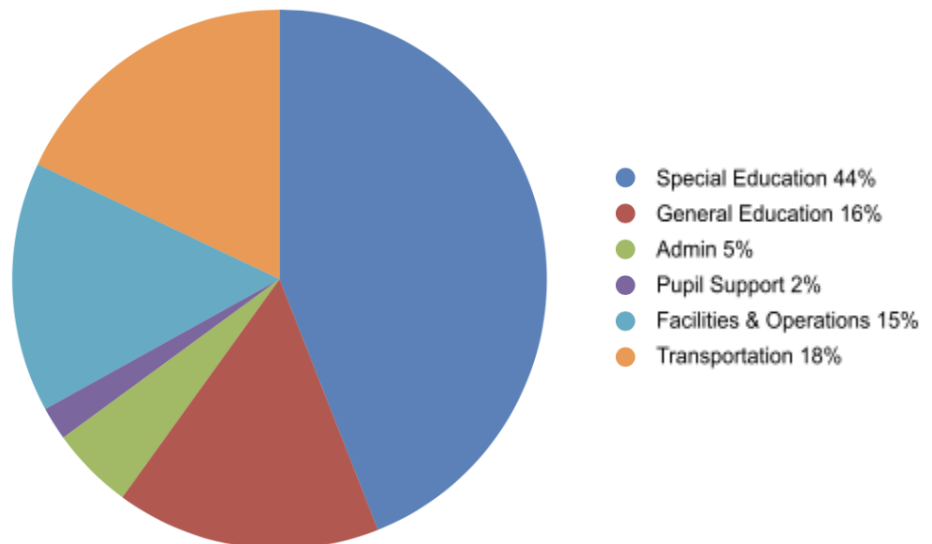


Figure 5. Expenditures

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES AND IMPLEMENTATION

Professional Development

For the all-school training in October of 2022, Ms. Natalia Gaston-Davis, from Take a Breath LLC, provided a keynote called “Take a Breath - Self-Care”. In addition, all staff attended different breakout sessions based on their needs and interests.

Restorative Practices School Wide Implementation

During the 2022-2023 school year, the entire Lionsgate Academy district undertook implementation of restorative practices. A steering committee composed of representatives from each program developed a method and materials to build community circles across all campuses. Ultimately, this program is intended to improve social relationships among students, teach life-long skills for repairing relationships and reducing out of school suspensions.

Read 180/System 44

Many students at Lionsgate Academy continue to require direct instruction in reading in order to make academic progress. In the 2022-2023 school year, Lionsgate undertook implementing the Read 180/System 44 program into language arts classes.

New Executive Director

The 2022-23 school year was the last year for Executive Director, Dr. Diane Restorff. An executive search team led the development of the process for hiring the new Executive Director, Dr. Hala Asamarai.

Full-Time SRO

During the 2022-23 school year, the SRO started serving full time between the Shoreview and Lynx schools.

FUTURE PLANS

DEIB & RP Coordinator Position

Next year, in order to expand staff and student cultural competency, Lionsgate Academy will open the position for Diversity Equity Inclusion Belonging & Restorative Practices Coordinator, and hire for it. This will be a newly created position, so the job description will be flexible and responsive to the existing needs.

Autism Mentorship Program

Next year Lionsgate will partner with AMP, Autism Mentorship Program, to provide our students with mentors who can function as supporters and role models for students who are autistic.

Transition Model for Lynx Students

Next year, Lionsgate will create a plan that clearly states options for Lynx students who need to enroll in a transition program.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT & WORLD'S BEST WORKFORCE

The World's Best Workforce is a local accountability program for all schools in Minnesota. Lionsgate Academy utilizes the Performance Framework with its authorizer, NEO, to meet the accountability requirements for student achievement and other performance measures. The annual meeting for the World's Best Workforce was held virtually on March 9th, 2023.

The district advisory committee for the World's Best WorkForce is:

Name	Role in District
Brandy Schwab	Principal, Shoreview Campus
Ann Wiesner	School Board Chair
Aaron Leisen	Director of Finance and Operations
Sara Byzdovsky	District Transition Coordinator
Rachel Boyack	Principal, Minnetonka Campus
Diane Restorff	Executive Director
Jessica Bjorkman	Site Director, Transition Program

Equitable Access to Qualified Teachers

The term “equitable access gap” refers to the difference between the rate(s) at which students from low income families, students of color, and American Indian students are taught by inexperienced, out-of-field, or ineffective teachers and the rate at which other students are taught by the same teacher types. This is not to be confused with the “achievement gap” (how groups of students perform academically); rather, “equitable access gap” is about which student groups have privileged or limited access to experienced, in-field, and effective teachers.

Districts/charters are encouraged to monitor the distribution of teachers and identify equitable access gaps between and within schools, but they may also make comparisons to the state averages or to similar schools. It is important to note that some of the most significant equitable access gaps occur at the school and classroom level. Districts/charters may also use other indicators of “effectiveness” such as teachers receiving stronger evaluations overall, teachers with strengths in particular dimensions of practice (e.g., culturally responsive practices), teachers certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, or teachers with demonstrated student growth and achievement results.

Lionsgate administration reviews data annually. This review allows us to monitor if we need to make adjustments for ensuring equitable access to experienced, licensed teachers for students of color, American Indian students and students from low income families.

Method

Lionsgate uses an index system that weighs 3 factors: 1) licensing, 2) years of experience teaching outside of LGA, and 3) years of experience at LGA. These factors are described below:

- Licensing: - The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) is the state agency that oversees all new and renewing Minnesota teacher licenses. PELSB employs a tiered system of teacher licensure that allows a number of pathways to become a licensed teacher in MN. Lionsgate considers the tier of license in creating its equitable teacher index. Level of license accounts for 1/3rd of the total index.
- Years of Teaching Experience – Lionsgate considers overall years of teaching experience in the index. Years of experience is scaled and accounts for 1/3rd of the overall equitable teacher index.
- Years of Experience at Lionsgate Academy - Because of the unique approach to education at Lionsgate Academy 1/3rd of the equitable teacher index is a measure of the total number of years at the school. Lionsgate has proudly launched the careers of 83 paraprofessional-to-licensed professional careers since 2008. Lionsgate values the knowledge of the Lionsgate culture and resources as contributing to the overall experience of our licensed teaching staff.

Each teacher is assigned an index value based on the factors above. The combined scores of all teachers are averaged, yielding a mean quality index score and a standard deviation. Student schedules are examined and each student receives a score based on the mean of his teachers' indices. Any student whose teacher index score falls below 1 standard deviation is flagged. Any student who falls into this category will have the schedule reviewed to determine if changes can be made to bring the student's index into range.

In addition to the within group comparison described above, Lionsgate also compares the means of the teacher quality indices between our white students and students of color to determine if there is a significant difference between the teacher quality index between the student populations of the Minnetonka and Shoreview schools. (Population sizes are too small for the Lynx and AIM programs). We used a pooled t-test to determine the significance of the differences between the means. The 2022-2023 data produced a t-test result of 0.0475. A t-test result less than 0.05 indicates that there is not a significant difference between the mean teacher quality indices for white and students of color at Lionsgate Academy.

Teacher and Student Racial and Ethnic Diversity Alignment

The following racial and ethnic groups are present in our district among students and are not yet represented in our licensed teacher staff: African American or Black and American Indian/Alaskan Native. Lionsgate would need to add 28 BIPOC teachers to reflect our student population.

	Students	Staff	Teachers
White	66%	77.4%	89.5%
Black/African American	11%	9.50%	1.8%
Latinx	7%	5.4%	3.5%
Two or More	10%	5.0%	2.6%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	3%	0.9%	–
Asian	4%	1.8%	1.8%
Decline to Identify	--	–	0.9%

The root cause contributing to a lack of student access to teachers of color and American Indian teachers is the disproportionate unavailability of teachers of color. Research suggests strongly that there is a lack of supply of teachers of color due to hiring bias, certification tests that teachers of color are less likely to pass, a racial gap in bachelor's degree attainment, and lower retention rates for teachers of color among other factors. (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). To further challenge our ability to hire teachers of color, charter schools pay less and have more expensive medical benefits, so that Lionsgate must compete with districts who can pay as much as \$4,000.00 more for a first year teacher.

The Lionsgate Foundation is offering some tuition reimbursement to teachers at Lionsgate who are enrolled in programs leading to licensure. Lionsgate has sought to partner with Learning Disability Associates (LDA) and the University of St. Thomas to support their state-approved alternate path to licensure program.

SMART GOALS

Smart goals for the 2022-2023 WBWF report were drawn from the contract performance framework. Lionsgate is in a five-year contract with the authorizer.

Close the Achievement Gaps between Student Groups

Lionsgate Academy focuses on closing the achievement gap between students receiving special education services and their non-disabled peers in the state of Minnesota. Lionsgate uses student proficiency on MCA scores in mathematics, reading, and science to compare the achievement of our students receiving special education services and the state.

Over 90% of students at Lionsgate Academy receive special education services. Lionsgate disaggregates students by those receiving special education services and those not receiving special education services. We identify individual needs in the areas of math, reading and science through the use of the NWEA MAP assessment. Students who are more than 2 grade levels below their peers as measured on the MAP have identified goals on their individualized education plans in the areas of math and reading. Additionally, Lionsgate uses science and language usage scores on the NWEA-MAP assessment to place students in classes where they can receive specialized instruction. Often courses are co-taught with a special educator and a general educator to ensure that access to the general education curriculum is provided for students with special needs. Lionsgate implements its strategies well, reviewing student placement at least two times per year. The NWEA MAP assessments provide individualized growth targets for these students which are monitored in the fall and spring to help teachers determine if teaching practices are effective.

Goal: The schools 2022-2023 Proficiency rate for reading is greater than 10 percentage points of the resident district in reading as measured by MCAs over time for students receiving special education services.

Result: Lionsgate Academy students receiving special education exceeded the resident district by 17%.

Goal is *met*.

All Students Career and College-Ready by Graduation

Students who enroll at Lionsgate who are at or above grade level continue to make expected growth as measured by the NWEA-MAP.

Goal: At least 80% of students who are performing at or above grade level meet their growth targets in reading and math as measured by the NWEA-MAP assessments.

Results: The 2022-2023 average growth on NWEA MAP for math is 88% and the 2022-2023 average growth on NWEA MAP for reading is 97%.

Goal is *met*.

All Students Graduate

With Lionsgate's high percentage of students receiving special education, our graduation rate accounts for the 3 years of transition services to which all students may be entitled depending on their individual needs. Transition placement is an IEP team decision. Once the team determines that the student has met the IEP goals in the areas of transition, that student may graduate. Lionsgate's personalized learning environment is supportive in helping almost all of our students graduate from high school.

Goal: Ninety percent of continuously enrolled students either graduate on time or graduate within the 7-year graduation period.

Results: The 2022-2023 graduation rate is 100%.

Goal is *met*.

Goal: More than 80% of students are on track to graduate.

Result: In the 2022-2023 school year, 94% of students were on track to graduate as measured through their credit accumulation and progress on IEP goals.

Goal is *met*.