

# Ridgeway Community School

**C.S.D. 4083**



**2010-11**

**Annual Report**

**to**

**Minnesota Department of Education**

**September 2011**

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## **Introduction and Executive Summary:**

**Purpose:** The purpose of this report is to provide our families, our community, our authorizer, Winona Area Public Schools and the Minnesota Department of Education with current information on school enrollment, student attrition, governance and management, staffing, finances, academic performance, operational performance, innovative practices and implementation, and future plans as required by Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10 (2010).

**School History:** Ridgeway Community School (C.S.D. # 4083) opened in September 2001 as a conversion charter school serving kindergarten to fifth grade students with the goal of providing a high quality, well-rounded, multi-age education by capitalizing on the assets of our rural community setting. The school is located near the unincorporated village of Ridgeway in southern Winona County. Winona Area Public Schools (I.S.D. #861) is Ridgeway Community School's resident district and has served as the school's sponsor/authorizer since assisting with its conversion to a charter school in 2001.

Ridgeway Community School (RCS) ended the 2010-11 school year with an enrollment of 89 students in its kindergarten to fifth grade program, up from the 54 students who attended RCS during its first year of operation. The school's fee-based preschool program had 25 students enrolled in its preschool programs.

**School Values, Vision, and Mission Statements:** During the summer of 2010 the RCS board began a strategic planning process. While this process is not finalized, the board has approved the following updated values, vision, and mission statements:

### **Values**

Academics, Children First, Community, Respect, Wellness

### **Vision**

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

### **Mission**

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



**Educational Program:** RCS is chartered as a kindergarten through fifth grade elementary school. In addition to its focus on building community between its students, families, staff and neighbors, the school's charter called for a focus on the core curriculum of reading, writing and mathematics delivered in a multi-age educational environment. The majority of the core reading, writing, and math curriculums were delivered during morning class periods prior to recess and lunch. During the 2010-2011 school year RCS students were grouped into the following multi-age configurations: kindergarten, first grade, second and third grade, and fourth and fifth grade. While most of the classroom instruction for the second to fifth grades takes place in multi-age classrooms, the students are broken out by actual grade level for math and spelling instruction. Beginning with the 2010-11 school year Kindergarten and first grade students were kept in grade level groupings for their regular school day. The school's board of directors has set the maximum class size at 18 students.

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

A central component with the school's focus on community building is the bi-monthly homeroom class. All RCS kindergarten through fifth grade students are grouped into six K-5 homerooms which last a minimum of one hour. Siblings are placed together in the RCS

homerooms where the curriculum includes community building, character development, conflict management skills, health and safety, and service learning. Throughout the school day the RCS staff and volunteers strive to create a school environment in which individual student differences are appreciated and celebrated, and the students are expected to behave in a responsible and respectful manner and to always be prepared and safe.

RCS students also benefit from instruction by specialists in art, physical education, music - including band instruments - as well as special education and speech therapy. Classes are also scheduled for a half hour of library time each week. RCS students can take advantage of the school's growing SELCO affiliated book and media collection with interlibrary loan materials delivered on a weekly basis. We take pride in continuing to achieve our academic goals and becoming the center of a growing community of students, parents, teachers, families, and community members.

**Student Assessment Results:** Once again in 2011 RCS made Adequate Yearly Progress on its MCA II, and MCA III student assessments. While student performance on the 2011 MCA reading assessments exceeded that of its resident district Winona Area Public Schools, they fell one percent below the state proficiency average. The RCS results for the Math MCA III assessments were comparably to Winona's but fell 9 percentage points below the state average. During the 2010-11 school year RCS switched nationally-normed pre and post testing done each spring and fall from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills to the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress or MAP assessments. AIMS Web early literacy, reading fluency, and comprehension benchmarks are given three times per year, with weekly interventions and progress monitoring provided to students who fall below norms.

**Facility Background:** The original 10,000 square-foot brick school building was constructed in 1965 after eight one room school districts consolidated to form I.S.D. # 859 Ridgeway School District. In 1971 the Ridgeway School District joined Winona Public Schools at the direction of the Minnesota Department of Education. In 2001 Ridgeway Elementary School converted to Ridgeway Community Charter School (C.S.D. # 4083) with Winona Area Public Schools serving as its sponsor. In 2006 the school formed a non-profit organization called the Ridgeway Community Association which purchased the school building and grounds from Winona Area

Public Schools. The following year the Ridgeway Community Association undertook a major building expansion and renovation that included a 6,314 square-foot addition. The project added two classrooms, a large school and community library, and an energy efficient geothermal HVAC system. In 2009, RCS received a Federal Charter School Facilities Renovation Grant to provide energy efficient lighting, acoustical management, classroom technology (building-wide wireless and classroom SMART Boards), and an upgrade of the school's kitchen. During the 2010-11 school year RCS began construction on a second expansion of the school facility to provide better instructional space for the fine arts and preschool programs. This "Phase II" addition is being constructed with a major donation from the Don and Roxanne Weber family along with support from school families, community members and area businesses.

**Future Plans:** During the 2011-12 Ridgeway Community School will be working towards the following strategic five year goals. The Future Plans section of this report lists the specific board approved annual goals that will be the focus of our efforts to achieve these goals.

1. **Academic Excellence in all curriculum areas** (including health, wellness, STEM, specials, maximizing use of SMART Board technology)
2. **Better Salaries & Benefit Packages for all Staff**
3. **Classes full with a waiting list**
4. **Dedicated Preschool space with Childcare Center**
5. **Purposeful Character Development and Service Learning Program:**

# Ridgeway Community School 2010-11 Annual Report Narrative

## School Enrollment and Student Attrition:

Ridgeway Community School currently has an enrollment of 90 students in its kindergarten to fifth grade program, up from the 54 students who attended RCS during its first year of operation. The school’s fee-based preschool program has a total of 26 students enrolled in a two morning and three morning program. The majority of students attending RCS reside in the Winona school district, with the remaining students coming from the Houston and La Crescent school districts. Students are transported to RCS on Winona district buses, a bus owned by RCS, and by parents. Thirty-four percent of RCS students qualified for the federal free and reduced lunch program during the 2010-11 school year. In the same year 10% of our students received special education services. The table below shows student enrollment and attrition for the past four years as well as the current student enrollment. Student attrition has been minimal with the primary reason for students leaving the school before fifth grade being a family move or changes in the family schedule or logistics such as early bus pick up times (6:00 am) and long bus rides that make other educational options in the area more convenient.

### Student Enrollment and Attrition Rates

*Data is based on October 1 Average Daily Membership (ADM).*

|                | <b>2007-2008</b> | <b>Student Retention</b> | <b>2008-2009</b> | <b>Student Retention</b> | <b>2009-2010</b> | <b>Student Retention</b> | <b>2010-2011</b> | <b>Student Retention</b> | <b>2011-2012</b> |
|----------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| <b>K</b>       | 8                |                          | 13               |                          | 17               |                          | 16               |                          | 18               |
| <b>1</b>       | 10               | Gained - 3<br>Lost - 0   | 11               | Gained - 0<br>Lost - 0   | 13               | Gained - 2<br>Lost - 2   | 17               | Gained - 2<br>Lost - 4   | 14               |
| <b>2</b>       | 15               | Gained - 3<br>Lost - 1   | 12               | Gained - 0<br>Lost - 1   | 10               | Gained - 3<br>Lost - 1   | 15               | Gained - 4<br>Lost - 3   | 18               |
| <b>3</b>       | 15               | Gained - 2<br>Lost - 2   | 15               | Gained - 1<br>Lost - 1   | 12               | Gained - 4<br>Lost - 1   | 13               | Gained - 2<br>Lost - 3   | 14               |
| <b>4</b>       | 12               | Gained - 1<br>Lost - 1   | 15               | Gained - 0<br>Lost - 0   | 15               | Gained - 1<br>Lost - 2   | 11               | Gained - 4<br>Lost - 3   | 14               |
| <b>5</b>       | 9                | Gained - 0<br>Lost - 5   | 7                | Gained - 0<br>Lost - 0   | 15               | Gained - 1<br>Lost - 1   | 15               | Gained - 2<br>Lost - 1   | 12               |
| <b>Total #</b> | <b>69</b>        |                          | <b>73</b>        |                          | <b>82</b>        |                          | <b>87</b>        |                          | <b>90</b>        |

The RCS open enrollment period is held from February 15<sup>th</sup> to March 20<sup>th</sup>. An open house and Kindergarten Roundup are held during this period. Anyone who submits an enrollment application is eligible for any remaining spaces in each grade level with priority given to siblings of current students and children of RCS teachers. If there are more applicants than space available in classes, a lottery is held under the observation of our authorizer. During the open enrollment period all school families are notified that their kindergarten to fourth grade students will be considered enrolled for the next school year unless the families notify the school otherwise. RCS held a lottery for the first time in March of 2011 for its kindergarten, first and second grade classes. Once a student has been admitted to RCS they receive a registration form that requests information on the student's family, race, ethnicity, immunizations, birth certificate, and educational background. The school's Enrollment Application and Registration forms are included as **Attachment A**. Copies of the school's admission policies are included as **Attachment B**.

## **School Governance**

Ridgeway Community School's seven-member board of directors is comprised of a teacher majority, two parents, and a community member (see table below). The board is elected by the school's parents/guardians and staff at the annual meeting held each May. On May 6, 2011 new teacher, parent and community members were elected to the board.

The RCS board meets every three weeks, with committee meetings being held in-between the regular board meetings to accomplish their tasks. Active board committees for the 2010-11 school year included finance, food service, fundraising, personnel, policy, public relations and recruitment, technology, and wellness. An Authorizer Search Committee was also active during the school year. In June 2010 all seven of the sitting board members participated in the state mandated charter board training with Dr. Chuck Speiker from School Business Solutions, Inc. Newly elected board member Jake Griggs participated in the required training in June of 2011, while Maureen Johnson and Sara Ferguson are scheduled to take the training in November 2011.

During the summer of 2010 the board began a strategic planning process in which it updated its school values, vision, mission (described in the introduction) and three to five year

goals for a desired future state. The board reviewed those goals in September of 2011 and has been providing leadership towards its annual academic and non academic goals described later in this report.

## RIDGEWAY COMMUNITY SCHOOL BOARD Membership

**July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011**

(Members in bold are currently serving on the board)

| Name                          | Board Position                  | Group<br>(teacher,<br>file folder #) | Date<br>Last<br>Elected | Date<br>Seated | Term<br>Expires | Phone Number | E-Mail Address   | Member<br>meeting<br>attendance<br>rate |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|--|---|
| Anderson,<br>Rhonda Rae       | Vice Chair                      | Teacher<br>340025                    | 5/14/09                 | 6/1/09         | 5/31/11         | 507-453-9417 | <a href="mailto:randerson@ridgewayschool.org">randerson@ridgewayschool.org</a> | 14 out of<br>16                         |
| <b>Bergler, Holly<br/>Ann</b> | Member                          | Community<br>Rep.                    | 6/17/10                 | 6/17/10        | 5/31/12         | 507-643-6902 | <a href="mailto:hbergler@rtpcompany.com">hbergler@rtpcompany.com</a>           | 18 out of<br>19                         |
| <b>Conway,<br/>Samantha</b>   | Member 2011<br>Chair 2012       | Teacher<br>422825                    | 5/6/10                  | 6/1/10         | 5/31/12         | 507-458-0598 | <a href="mailto:sconway@ridgewayschool.org">sconway@ridgewayschool.org</a>     | 19 out of<br>19                         |
| <b>Griggs, Jacob</b>          | Member                          | Parent                               | 5/6/11                  | 6/1/11         | 5/31/13         | 507-643-6102 | <a href="mailto:jakegriggs@acegroup.cc">jakegriggs@acegroup.cc</a>             | 3 out of 3                              |
| <b>Ferguson, Sara</b>         | Member                          | Teacher<br>341020                    | 5/6/11                  | 6/1/11         | 5/31/13         | 507-452-0816 | <a href="mailto:sferguson@ridgewayschool.org">sferguson@ridgewayschool.org</a> | 2 out of 3                              |
| <b>Krings, Jennifer</b>       | Chair 2011<br>Treasurer<br>2012 | Teacher<br>430134                    | 5/6/10                  | 6/1/10         | 5/31/12         | 507-896-3485 | <a href="mailto:jkrings@ridgewayschool.org">jkrings@ridgewayschool.org</a>     | 17 of out<br>19                         |
| Lawson,<br>Erik Todd          | Treasurer                       | Parent                               | 5/14/09                 | 6/1/09         | 5/31/11         | 507-457-3126 | <a href="mailto:Erik.Lawson@bench.com">Erik.Lawson@bench.com</a>               | 16 out of<br>16                         |
| Meyer, Sarah                  | Member                          | Teacher<br>413821                    | 5/14/09                 | 6/1/09         | 5/31/11         | 651-261-9373 | <a href="mailto:smeyer@ridgewayschool.org">smeyer@ridgewayschool.org</a>       | 16 out of<br>16                         |
| <b>Vande Berg,<br/>Anne</b>   | Secretary                       | Parent                               | 5/6/11                  | 6/1/11         | 5/31/13         | 507-454-2624 | <a href="mailto:awv@umn.edu">awv@umn.edu</a>                                   | 18 out of<br>19                         |
| <b>Johnson,<br/>Maureen</b>   | Vice-Chair                      | Teacher<br>350491                    | 5/6/11                  | 6/1/11         | 5/31/13         | 507-643-6159 | <a href="mailto:mjohnson@ridgewayschool.org">mjohnson@ridgewayschool.org</a>   | 3 out of 3                              |

## **School Staffing:**

During the 2009-10 School year RCS was managed by a School Coordinator and two Lead Teachers. A copy of the school's organizational chart is included as **Attachment C**.

The School Coordinator reports directly to the school's board of directors and is responsible for maintaining a professional atmosphere in the school while overseeing the school's administration, non-educational staff, school and community enrichment, and special education programs. This individual is also responsible for communication with the school's authorizer, and representing and marketing the school to the public. The School Coordinator is assisted by an Administrative Team that consists of the Business Manager and Administrative Assistant, and Office Assistant as well as the Lead Teachers. The School Coordinator, Jodi Dansingburg, has 27 years of experience in non-profit program administration and has provided administrative leadership to the school since its inception in 2001. The school Coordinator is responsible for non-educational and special education program administration and supporting the board and assurance of compliance with all federal, state, and local laws. The part-time Business Manager, Mary Feathergill, also works as business manager for another area charter school and serves as the charter school representative on the Hiawatha Valley Education District Board of Directors. She has been with the school since it opened.

The Lead Teachers report directly to the school's board of directors and oversee the regular educational and Q-Comp programs with the assistance of the Educational Leadership Team that is comprised of the four other classroom teachers, special education teacher and School Coordinator. In carrying out these duties, the Lead Teachers are responsible for administering teacher professional development, curriculum development and alignment with state standards, instruction and curriculum implementation, school climate, student behavior, student assessment, teacher supervision and evaluation as well as regular classroom instruction. The school's two Lead Teachers have the longest tenure at RCS. Maureen Johnson has 16 years of teaching experience and has been with the school since its inception. Rhonda Anderson has 11 years of teaching experience and has been with the school for seven years.

During the 2010-11 school year the RCS board used a revised rubric for administrative evaluations. A copy of the professional development plans and the evaluation rubric for the School Coordinator and Lead Teachers who do not have administrative licenses are included as

**Attachment D.** A table providing a list of the non-teacher employees of the school is provided below:

**Ridgeway Community School 2010-11 Non-teacher staff information:**

| <b>Name</b>         | <b>Assignment</b>                     | <b>File Folder # or certification</b>                  | <b>Years Employed By School</b> | <b>Left during 10/11</b> | <b>Not returning 11/12</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Aarre, Anna         | Special Ed. Para                      | FFN: 401025  | 2                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Bateman, Colleen    | Bus aide & mower                      | First aid, CPR, AED                                    | 2                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Carrie, Mary        | Food Service                          | Serve Safe   | 2                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Dansingburg, Jodi   | School Coordinator                    | CPI  | 10                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Drussell, LeeAnn    | Preschool Assistant                   | First aid, CPR, AED, Child Passenger Safety Technician | 5                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Engle, Jolene RN    | School Nurse                          | R 084336-4   | 9                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Erickson, Paul      | Bus Driver                            | School Bus Drivers License                             | 6                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Feathergill, Mary   | Business Manager                      |  | 10                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Fort, Linda         | Special Ed. Para                      | ETS Para Pro assessment                                | 4                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Klankowski, Rebecca | Administrative Assistant & Health Aid | Serve-Safe, CPI, First Aid, CPR, AED                   | 5                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Pflughoeft, David   | Custodian                             |  | 10                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Pflughoeft, Samuel  | Custodian                             |  | 4                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Pflughoeft, Sylvia  | Custodian                             |  | 10                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |

## **Teaching Faculty Information:**

Ridgeway Community School has a very dedicated teaching staff. One hundred percent of the school's teachers meet Federal requirements for "Highly Qualified" teachers. Due to the additional classroom space provided by the building addition in 2007, the school added a second section of each multi-age class during the 2007-08 school year. This change, that provided both smaller class sizes and teaching peers, has contributed to higher levels of staff satisfaction.

RCS has participated in the Quality Compensation or Q Comp program developed by the Minnesota Department of Education since the 2007-08 school year. The Q Comp program has provided the RCS classroom and special education teachers with additional professional development opportunities, mentors and coaches, and a framework for teacher evaluations and incentives for achieving professional and student goals. For the past several years, participation in the Q Comp program has supported staff development in reading and differentiated instruction, and improved student performance goal setting, data monitoring and the implementation of intervention strategies. During the 2010-11 school year the Educational Leadership Team purchased the iObservation program developed by Charlotte Danielson to assist the lead teachers with the process managing data for teacher observations and walkthroughs. A copy of the school's Q Comp Report for the 2010-2011 School Year is included as **Attachment E**.

The tables below show the licensed teacher turnover rate and information about the school's faculty during the 2010-2011 school year. Five of the fourteen licensed teachers are not returning to RCS for the 2011-12 school year. Those not returning included one classroom teacher, and the part time music, art, physical education and speech teachers. RCS has had some difficulty retaining special subject teaching positions as they are all part time. Due to our small population RCS is unable to offer full time employment to our special teachers. On occasion we are able to fill out their hours with additional duties away from their area of expertise. This creates turnover in the specials departments which affects the continuity of the program. Construction of a dedicated art and music classroom and additional space for physical education staff and equipment being provided by the new addition may help address the higher turnover rate with the specials teachers. Additional information about the school's staff will be available on the MDE Report Card.

**Licensed teacher percentage turnover rate for core teaching staff:**

| <b>Years</b>       | <b>Turnover Rate</b> |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 2001-02 to 2002-03 | 44%                  |
| 2002-03 to 2003-04 | 40%                  |
| 2003-04 to 2004-05 | 38%                  |
| 2004-05 to 2005-06 | 20%                  |
| 2005-06 to 2006-07 | 20%                  |
| 2006-07 to 2007-08 | 46%                  |
| 2007-08 to 2008-09 | 16.7%                |
| 2008-09 to 2009-10 | 8.3%                 |
| 2009-10 to 2010-11 | 0%                   |
| 2010-11 to 2011-12 | 36%                  |

**Ridgeway Community School 2010-11 Teaching Faculty Information:**

| <b>Name</b>        | <b>File Folder Number</b> | <b>Assignment</b>   | <b>Years Employed By School</b> | <b>Left during 10/11</b> | <b>Not returning 11/12</b> |
|--------------------|---------------------------|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Anderson, Rhonda   | 340025                    | 4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher & Co-Lead Teacher | 8                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Burzinski, Bridget | 443201                    | Physical Education Teacher, Adaptive P.E.                         | 3                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>X</b>                   |
| Conway, Samantha   | 422825                    | Special Education Teacher   | 4                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Ferguson, Sara     | 341020                    | Kindergarten  | 5                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Groth, Joann       | 223935                    | Preschool Teacher   | 10                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Hahn, Susan        | 158963                    | Library Teacher   | 10                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Johnson, Maureen   | 350491                    | 1st Grade Teacher & Co-Lead Teacher                               | 10                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Krings, Jennifer   | 430134                    | 4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher                   | 4                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Meyer, Sarah       | 413821                    | 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher                   | 4                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Rupprecht, Mandy   | 403657                    | Part-time Music Teacher   | 3                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>X</b>                   |
| Bundy, Janice      | 281912                    | Contracted Speech Language Pathologist                            | 1                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>X</b>                   |

|                 |        |   |    |                          |                          |
|-----------------|--------|---|----|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Searles, Galen  | 441550 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher | 2  | <input type="checkbox"/> | X                        |
| Sobeck, Deborah | 294334 | Part-time Art Teacher                           | 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> | X                        |
| Wadewitz, Katey | 420578 | Part-time Special Education Consultant          | 3  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Finances:**

The 2010-11 school year’s final revenue and expenditures exceeded the original budget projections. Revenues exceeded expectations due to a number of unpredictable factors: student enrollment increased, acceptance of numerous grants as well as donations. The board and staff goal planning session at the start of the 2010-11 school year set goals to improve academics with curriculum and technology purchases and increases in salaries and benefits. With the increased revenue the school was able to update curriculum and give raises to all staff this year as well as allow increases in expenditure areas that over the years have been very greatly reduced due to budget constraints. Actual revenues for the 2010-11 school year were \$824,344 and expenditures were \$783,263. The school added \$41,081 to the unreserved/undesignated funds at end of the fiscal year.

The RCS Board of Directors oversees all of the school’s finances. The board’s Finance Committee is comprised of the board treasurer, school coordinator, business manager, a parent, and a community member who is not on the board. Pamela Ristau, CPA, who is experienced in public school district and charter school auditing procedures, conducts our annual audit. The school had no audit finding on the 2009-10 school year audit.

The school will continue to put our educational programs first and maintain a strong financial oversight. This year and the next few years look like they will be very challenging for public education funding, as the state considers their budget deficit. Ridgeway, due to a very nice savings of unreserved funds, has been able to weather the increased holdbacks to all public schools that were issued in both the 2009-10 and 2010-11 school year. We are hopeful that this savings will give us the buffer we’ll need to weather the financial cuts projected from the state in the next few years. A copy of the Financial Reports is included as **Attachment F**.

## **Academic Performance:**

**Academic Program Overview:** RCS employs a variety of instructional models to deliver standards-based curriculum designed to successfully engage all students. Direct instruction, differentiated instruction, small group activities, and project based learning models help us meet the needs of students with a variety of learning styles.

**Multi-age Educational Program with Smaller Class Sizes:** During the 2010-2011 school year RCS students were grouped into the following grade configurations: self-contained Kindergarten, self-contained first grade, second and third grade, and fourth and fifth grade. While most of the second grade through fifth grade classroom instruction takes place in the multi-age configurations, the students are broken out by actual grade level for math and spelling instruction. Inclusive, differentiated instruction is used by all teachers who work diligently and collaboratively to assist and facilitate all students to be challenged in the regular classroom whenever possible. This configuration allowed our class sizes to remain small and contain no more than 18 students.

**Teacher-developed Multi-age Reading & Language Arts Program:** The school uses a teacher-developed language arts program with the goal of integrating reading and language arts standards through exposure to class sets of quality literature. Multi-sensory Orton-Gillingham phonics materials and strategies are used for early-emergent and emergent readers, while the phonemic development strategies support fluency and spelling skill development for students with developing and established reading skills. Spelling patterns and rules are taught using the Patterns for Success in Reading and Spelling program. The program's succession allows the teacher to discuss letter patterns, division rules, root words, prefixes and suffixes, and build student vocabulary.

**Math Curriculum:** RCS purchased and implemented the *Math Connects* curriculum by Macmillan McGraw-Hill in the 2010 school year. RCS teachers evaluated a variety of curriculum and discovered this to be closely aligned with state standards and a good fit for our program. It contains differentiated components to meet the needs of all learners, offers software

to complement our interactive whiteboards, and offers the option to use performance based instruction.

**Science Curriculum:** Members of the ELT worked on aligning our curriculum to the 2009 MN State Science Standards and determined that second through fifth grade needed an updated curriculum to use in conjunction with the Foss kits. The ELT determined that the curriculum *Science: A Closer Look* by Macmillan/McGraw Hill fulfilled the Science the necessary requirements. The Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade would continue to use Foss kits only since it gives the younger children the hands on activities. Ridgeway Community School is hoping to see an increase in their MCA Science scores with the implementation of the new curriculum.

**Academic Goal and Results:**

**Reading Goal** – The percentage of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at Ridgeway Community School, who have been enrolled for a full academic year earning a level of “Meets” or “Exceeds” the standards on the Reading MCA II, will increase from 73.8% to 80% in 2011.

**Results** – While RCS made adequate yearly progress in reading during the 2011 academic year, the school did not meet the academic goal stated above. Proficiency in reading was achieved by 78% of the 37 students enrolled for a full academic year who took the MCA II Reading Assessments in April of 2011. The table below shows results for all students who took the MCA II.

**2011 MCA II Reading Assessment Results**

| Grade                              | Total Students | Does Not Meet Proficiency Standards | Partially Meets Proficiency Standards | Meet Reading Proficiency Standards | Exceeds Reading Proficiency Standards | % Meeting or Exceeding Proficiency Standards |
|------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>                    | 14             | 1                                   | 3                                     | 5                                  | 5                                     | 71.4%  |
| 4 <sup>th</sup>                    | 12             | 2                                   | 1                                     | 5                                  | 4                                     | 75.0%  |
| 5 <sup>th</sup>                    | 15             | 3                                   | 1                                     | 5                                  | 6                                     | 73.3%  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup> | 41             | 6                                   | 4                                     | 15                                 | 15                                    | 73.2%  |

In past years a large percent of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade class had consistently fallen below the goal of 80% of students meeting or exceeding the state proficiency standards. In the 2011 school year the 5<sup>th</sup> grade class went from 53.3% of the class being proficient to 73.3% of the class being proficient. RCS recognizes that our small class sizes may substantially change the percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards. We believe that the interventions that were implemented in the 2010-11 school year with the availability of the ADSIS Grant increased the overall fluency of this class thus bringing the students total proficiency to 73.3%.

We continue to strategize methods to meet our reading achievement goals with the recognition that early literacy is crucial in the development of fluent readers. Each year RCS teaching staff takes steps to improve literacy by attending purposeful staff development, making staff changes, and implementing research based interventions. Our intention is to strive for consistency within our academic goals for our authorizer, state, and Q-Comp program therefore we have changed our reading achievement goal for the 2012 school year to have 75% of the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade students meeting or exceeding in the Reading MCA's in the 2012 school year.

**Math Goal** – Eighty percent of the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at Ridgeway Community School, who have been enrolled for a full academic year, will earn a level of Proficient or above on the Math MCA III in 2011.

**Results** – While RCS made Adequate Yearly Progress for math for the 2011 academic year, the students did not meet the math goal as stated above. Of the students enrolled for a full academic year 51% of students met proficiency standards on the Math MCA III. RCS will be addressing our deficiencies in the Math MCA III's. The Educational Leadership Team will be analyzing the data and determining where the shortcomings are within our curriculum. We will be studying the break down by strand area and developing intervention plans to address individual student needs and weaknesses in the curriculum. We are determined to see an increase in next year's MCA III results. The table below shows results for all students who took the MCA III.

## 2011 MCA III Math Assessment Results

| Grade                              | Total Students | Does Not Meet Standards | Partially Meets Standards | Meet Math Standards | Exceeds Math Standards | % Meeting or Exceeding Standards |
|------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>                    | 14             | 5                       | 2                         | 7                   | 0                      | 50.0%                            |
| 4 <sup>th</sup>                    | 12             | 1                       | 6                         | 2                   | 3                      | 41.7%                            |
| 5 <sup>th</sup>                    | 15             | 2                       | 5                         | 8                   | 0                      | 53.3%                            |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup> | 41             | 8                       | 13                        | 17                  | 3                      | 48.8%                            |

In the 2009-10 school year our newly purchased math curriculum had a significant impact on our MCA II results. Our intention is to strive for consistency within our academic goals for our authorizer, state, and Q-comp therefore we have changed our 2012 math goal to have 75% of 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade students achieve the Meets or Exceeds Proficiency standards on the Math MCA III assessments.

**Other Assessment Data:** RCS uses a variety of assessments to monitor student progress in the areas of Math, Reading Fluency, Early Literacy, and Reading Comprehension. Reading Fluency and Early Literacy Skills are measured three times a year with the AIMS Web benchmarks. Teachers use this data to determine the needs for interventions for students who fall below the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile. An intervention is implemented for targeted students who are progress monitored on a weekly basis to determine growth. The growth is evaluated every six weeks and plans to proceed with or change the invention are discussed. Math fluency and concept applications are measured by the Math Basic Skills Practice assessment three times a year. Data is then analyzed to determine the needs for interventions for math students who fall below the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile.

In 2011, RCS purchased the Northwest Evaluation Association MAP Testing (NWEA) as our pre/post test. The NWEA is adaptable, efficient and seems to correlate to the MCA's better than the IOWA Test of Basic Skills. The MAP testing is also administered on the computer which is the future of state testing therefore the children will be familiar with this method. We will be taking the NWEA MAP testing in the fall, winter, and spring to determine whether progress is being made. The fall scores help to determine curricular areas of need for students.

The winter scores help determine if changes in curriculum are necessary. Finally, the spring scores confirm whether we were able to make the necessary growth.

## **Operational Performance – 2010 - 2011**

Ridgeway Community School continues to strive to improve operational efficiency while working toward fulfillment of our annual non academic goals. The progress towards the goals for the 2010-11 school year is described below:

**Goal 1: RCS will educate students on our core values: “Respect, Responsibility, Prepared and Safe” during two homeroom classes each month to develop lifelong skills in these areas.**

While the staff is continuing to more fully develop our service learning and character development programs, we made substantial stride in achieving this goal with the incorporation of our “Bee all You Can Bee” character development program into our homeroom activities throughout the school year. With this program we featured activities and lessons around a different character trait each month. The traits included: honesty, caring, respect, relationships, fairness, cooperation and safety.

- Other special homeroom activities included our Grandparent’s and Special Persons Day celebration and our Veteran’s Day program.
- Students also participated in a number of service projects during the school year, including deployed soldiers care packages, 10 Days of Giving, Pennies for Patients, and support for the Children with Hair Loss project through an all school hair growing challenge.
- The RCS board has signed on to participate in the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program to support the families of our local National Guard unit that were deployed in June, 2011.

**Goal 2: RCS will encourage students to make good choices regarding health and wellness through physical education and health curriculum and instruction, increased servings of fresh fruits and vegetables from the food service program, and enrichment opportunities including competitive and non-competitive (lifetime) student, staff, family, and community fitness programs.**

This goal was accomplished with numerous activities and projects described below:

- **After School Clubs:** A variety of competitive and lifetime after school clubs were offered to RCS students including: archery, basketball, cross country skiing, dodge ball, flag football, gardening and forestry, hiking, soccer, square dancing, track and field, and volleyball.
- **Field Trips:** RCS K-5 students participated in three fitness related field trips:
  - **Paddle for Life** - fall canoeing outing on Lake Winona.
  - **Winter workout at St. Mary's University** - students used the college's field house, pool, Nordic ski trails, and sledding hill for a fun filled winter workout.
  - **Spring Tree planting outing** - students hiked to a neighboring farm and spent the afternoon planting seedlings on a steep hillside.
- **Family and Community Activities**
  - **Fall Family Hike** – held on an October Sunday afternoon for RCS and community.
  - **Winter Family Sledding and Skiing Party** – a fun filled Saturday afternoon of sledding and cross country skiing.
  - **Community Zumba and PiYo Classes** - were held in the school gym on Monday evenings as a means of providing area residents with an opportunity to exercise throughout the cold weather months.
  - **Miles for Smiles Fun Run and Walk** – This third annual fundraiser was held around West Lake Winona on June 4<sup>th</sup> to support the construction of the school's fitness track.
  - **Healthy Kids Club** – the school provided activities at the winter and spring Healthy Kids Club events put on by Winona Health for elementary aged children.

- **Construction of a School Fitness Track** – construction of a 970 foot school fitness track began in the fall of 2010 with completion of the gravel phase of the track in the spring. Additional fundraising is ongoing to pave the track.
- **Farm to School Program** – the availability of a fully licensed kitchen allowed RCS to participate in a Farm to School Program sponsored by the University of Minnesota. This program provided additional funds to purchase produce and meet from local farmers for use in the school lunch program. The program also included development of a streamlined method of delivery of locally raised items to the school.

**Goal 3: Secure an Authorizer for the 2011-12 school year:**

The work to secure an approved authorizer consumed a great deal of operational effort during the 2010-11 school year. Authorizer applications were submitted to and accepted by Novation Education Opportunities and Winona Area Public Schools, I.S.D. 861 (WAPS). In June, 2011 a five year contract was signed with Winona Area Public Schools under the direction of Superintendent, Dr. Scott Hannon. RCS submitted monthly reports to the WAPS Board, and occasionally made presentations or provides updates at their regular meetings. The annual sponsor review meeting of the RCS and WAPS boards was held on February 8, 2011. WAPS staff provides additional support through meetings or consultations on an as-needed basis with RCS staff. Information about Mark Winter, the new authorizer liaison is described below.

**Charter Authorizer Information**

| Authorizer name                          | Contact information                                    | Authorizer liaison | Contract Termination date |
|--|--|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Winona Area Public Schools<br>I.S.D. 861 | 903 Gilmore Avenue<br>Winona, MN 55987<br>507-494-1529 | Mr. Mark Winter    | June, 2016                |

**Goal 4: Apply for and receive the MDE School Finance Award**

During the 2011-12 school year RCS Business Manager, Mary Feathergill submitted an application and was approved for the MDE School Finance Award.

**School's Non-Profit Status:** Ridgeway Community School continues to be registered as a non-profit corporation with the Minnesota State Attorney General's office. A report of Ridgeway Community School's non-profit status is included as **Attachment G**.

### **Innovative Practices – 2010-2011**

**Ridgeway's RISE Program:** This year we received approval to participate in the Minnesota Department of Education's Alternative Delivery of Specialized Instructional Services (ADSIS) program. The Ridgeway ADSIS Program is called Ridgeway Intervention for Student Excellence or RISE. The additional funds available through this program allowed us to reach a larger population of students who were falling below targeted performance levels in reading and math skills.

Additional staff members were employed to implement additional instruction with research based curriculum for improving reading fluency and math proficiency to reduce referrals of at risk students for special education services. The at-risk students in Kindergarten to third grades used the following curriculums: *Stepping Stones* and *Read Well*. The fourth and fifth grade at-risk students used *Read Well*, *Pals Reading* and *Rewards* as the curriculum. The first to fourth grade students used the software *Earobics* for additional phonemic practice. We were also able to implement Math interventions using *Pals Math*. The first year of implementation of this program went well. The staff is planning for improvements in program implementation for the 2012 school year. The program is being coordinated by RCS Resource Teacher Mrs. Conway.

**iObservation:** In the 2010-11 school year, we purchased an online observation tool that helps to collect, manage, and report data on teacher observations and walkthroughs. This tool helps to promote individual teacher growth and to increase classroom effectiveness. It also allows for immediate feedback, reflection and collaboration. Teachers have access to a resource library for professional development opportunities.

**Brain Breaks:** Many of our school's classrooms are now taking "Brain Breaks" during the middle of longer stretches of stationary lesson time. These breaks take place in the gym or on

our new fitness track and give a 5 to 10 minute period of increased cardiovascular activity to help get the blood flowing through our brains and help our students increase their productivity in the classroom.

**SMART Board:** The K – 5 classrooms received SMART Boards in the summer of 2009 and found them to be an incredible asset. RCS was able to purchase a SMART Board in 2010 for our resource room. The Special Education teacher found it extremely beneficial to raise the level of student engagement and to differentiate instruction to students with a wide variety of needs.

**Stability balls in the classroom:** The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students utilize stability balls in the classroom. Studies have shown that both sides of their brains are engaged in keeping their bodies centered on the balls. When the brain is stimulated, it is more able to focus on classroom instruction.

**Student Enrichment Programs:** With the support of the school's parent, teacher, and community organization RPAC as well as a number of grants our students have enjoyed and learned about the world around them by participating in many field trips and enrichment activities throughout the year:

- **Pint Size Polka** program during **Grandparents and Special Persons Day in September.**
- Touring the historic **Pickwick Mill.**
- **Prairie Fire Children's Theatre** production of the *Wizard of Oz*
- Special school day programs on the history of the **Mount St. Helens eruption, children's poetry, and country school history.**
- **Family and Community evening programs** on astronomy, genealogy, and country school history..
- **Fourth and Fifth Grade Activities:** The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders started off the year with a two-day trip to the Minnesota Zoo that included an overnight in the dolphin building. The 4<sup>th</sup> graders also participated in the Young Writer's Conference at Winona State University while the 5<sup>th</sup> graders dissected defunct computers to see how they are put together.

- **Second and Third Grade Activities:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders had a wonderful time at Whitewater State Park watching the process for making maple syrup and learned more about how the Amish live on a field trip to Mable, Minnesota.
- **Kindergarten and First Grade Activities:** The Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade students enjoyed the performance of the **Stinky Cheese Man** at Viterbo University in La Crosse, WI. They also went to the La Crosse Children's Museum.
- **Preschool:** The preschoolers visited the Winona Fire Department and took time to enjoy their teacher's nearby dairy farm.
- **After School Clubs:** In addition to the fitness oriented clubs described earlier in this report, the school offered after school chess, craft, and math clubs during the 2011-12 school year.
- **Winter and Spring Music Programs** were held with all the preschool to fifth grade students participating. A **Student Talent Show** was held in February in which many of the students participated.

**Future Plans:** During the 2011-12 school year Ridgeway Community School will be working towards the following strategic five year goals by working to achieve the specific one year goals described below:

1. **Academic Excellence in all curriculum areas** (including health, wellness, STEM, specials, maximizing use of SMART Board technology)
  - **Math Goal:** At least seventy-five percent of the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at Ridgeway Community School, who have been enrolled for a full academic year, will earn a level of "Meets" or "Exceeds" the standards on the Math MCA III in 2012.
  - **Reading Goal:** At least seventy-five percent of the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at Ridgeway Community School, who have been enrolled for a full academic year, will earn a level of "Meets" or "Exceeds" the standards on the Reading MCA II in 2012.
  - **Curriculum Goals:**

- Document the alignment of the school's curriculum to Minnesota's revised English Language Arts standards.
- Work to integrate the preschool curriculum into alignment with the kindergarten to fifth grade curriculum.
  
- Develop and implement ELL and Title I Programs and further develop the school's RISE program.
- **Professional Development Goals:**
  - Develop a Professional Development Plan to support the educational staff's work to achieve the academic goals described above.
- **Assessment Goals:**
  - Utilize the data warehouse available through Hiawatha Valley Education District to analyze student NWEA MAP assessment data to assist in planning to achieve MCA math and reading goals.
  - Manage weekly student progress monitoring of students who are in intervention programs in an efficient and effective manner.
- **Special Subject Goal:** Look to incorporate special subject teachers into school-wide effort to achieve math and reading goals and provide improved instructional space for the special classes.

**2. Better Salaries & Benefit Packages for all Staff:**

- Develop a long-range financial plan that assures salary growth for teachers and staff.

**3. Classes full with a waiting list:**

- Work to welcome and recruit new students to classes that are not at the 18 student per class maximum set by the board with an updated brochure, improved signage, and outreach to young families.

**4. Dedicated Preschool space with Childcare Center:**

- Secure funds to complete construction and furnishing of new preschool room.

- Begin planning for an extended day childcare program to fully utilize the new preschool space.

#### 5. **Purposeful Character Development and Service Learning Program:**

- Purchase and implement **Second Step** character development program with preschool to fifth grade classes. RCS has dedicated itself to address bullying by taking a proactive approach and increase character development. We have decided to purchase the *Second Step* program to assist us in making a school wide commitment to the development of characteristics that create a healthy learning environment.
- **Service Learning Projects** – The Educational Leadership Team is developing a six year cycle service learning model that spends three years focusing on local service projects and three years on global service projects. In the 2010-11 school year we collected for regional agencies such as Pennies for Patients, Hair Loss for Children, local food shelves, etc. In the 2011-12 school year our focus is going to be on Heifer International, a global education project to raise funds to help people in under developed countries purchase an animal or animals that will help provide the means to become self reliant.

**Ridgeway Community School's  
2010 - 2011 Annual Report  
Attachments:**

- A. Enrollment Application and Registration**
- B. Admission Policies**
- C. Staff Organizational Chart**
- D. Professional Development Plans and  
Administrative Evaluation Rubric**
- E. RCS 2011 Q-Comp Report**
- F. Financial Reports**
- G. Non-Profit Status**