

2019-20 Combined World's Best Workforce (WBWF) Summary and Achievement and Integration (A&I) Progress Report

District or Charter Name: Spero Academy

Grades Served: K-6

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Annual Public Meeting

These annual public meetings were to be held in the fall of each school year. Held August 1, 2019

District Advisory Committee

District Advisory Committee Members	Role in District
Susan Scheller	Academic Director
Alex Ward	Special Education Coordinator
Stacey Monsen	Parent
Amy Wood	Community Member
Katie Rose Kammerude	Special Education Teacher
Brittany Crouse	Special Education Teacher

Sharla McIntosh Zeigler	Speech and Language Pathologist
Taryn McGovern	Special Education Teacher
Erin Giebink	Accountability Coordinator
Erica Kirsch	Special Education Teacher

Equitable Access to Excellent and Diverse Educators:

Spero Academy serves a high number of students with special education needs, with some from low income and/or diverse ethnic backgrounds. 90% of our students have an Individualized Education Program thereby requiring all our teachers to be licensed in Special Education. In order to ensure that all students, regardless of their Special Education status, FRL status, or ethnic background, have equitable access to excellent teachers, Spero Academy focuses on hiring and retaining:

- Teachers who hold dual-licenses in special education and general education, licenses in special education, or, if licensed in general education, are working on obtaining their special education license.
- Staff in the areas of Occupational Therapy, Developmental and Adaptive Physical Education, Speech and Language Therapy, Music Therapy, and Physical Therapy who serve eligible students on their Individualized Education Plan.

The challenge in finding teachers, including teachers of color, with a Special Education license and in some cases with an Elementary and Special Education is a challenge for Spero Academy. The Executive Director, the Academic Director and the Special Education Director are involved in the initial hiring process, however the Spero Academy Board-related Marketing and Accountability Committees are included in the search for and conversations regarding hiring experienced and in-field teachers.

In the 19-20 school year, Spero Academy has implemented the strategies of hosting student teachers and hiring paraprofessionals who are in relevant teaching programs and implemented a Teacher's Assistant program. Paraprofessionals in a teacher preparation program apply to become a TA and work alongside an assigned teacher where they assist in lesson planning, instructional programming, and assessing student performance. These strategies have been working for us in both hiring high quality paraprofessionals and establishing a pool from which to choose effective and in-field teachers for our school.

In order to monitor the efficacy of teachers, every student has a Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) with measurable goals in Literacy, Mathematics and Social Skills. Progress is monitored monthly by administrative and instructional staff. If progress monitoring of students' PLP goals suggests a teacher is

struggling to help his or her students make monthly progress, administrative staff engage the teacher in reflective conversations regarding improvement strategies.

Spero Academy conducts a Teacher Growth and Development framework that has been implemented to monitor and assess teacher performance and growth twice per year. A peer-coaching model has been established where veteran teachers meet with beginning teachers to assist with increasing their effectiveness in the classroom.

In the 19-20 school year, Spero Academy students were represented by the following ethnic backgrounds:

- Hispanic/Latino: 8%
- American Indian/Alaska Native: .70%
- Asian: 4%
- Black or African American: 19%
- White: 48%
- Two or more races: 20%

In the 19-20 school year, Spero Academy teachers were represented by the following ethnic backgrounds:

- Hispanic: 0%
- American Indian/Alaska Native: 0%
- Asian: 3%
- Black or African American: 3%
- White: 85%
- Two or more races: 9%

Teachers of Hispanic and American Indian ethnicity are not represented in our teaching staff although there is a small percentage of students who are represented by these ethnic backgrounds. Teachers who identify as Black, Asian, and two or more ethnicities are represented at the school. However, the percentage of students who identify with Black, Asian and two or more ethnicities is higher than the percentage of teachers. Teachers who identify as white represent the highest percentage. While the majority of our students identify as white, teachers who identify as white still represent a higher percentage.

Spero Academy will continue to work to recruit effective teachers, who are appropriately licensed of Black, Asian, Hispanic and American Indian ethnicities so that the distribution of ethnicities among our teachers is more representative of our students.

Spero has been working with the University of St. Thomas to recruit teachers of color who are currently enrolled in teacher preparation programs. Spero Academy has hosted student teachers from the University of St. Thomas' Tuition-Free Autism Spectrum Disorder program that prepares special educators to serve and succeed in diverse communities. A paraprofessional of color was hired from this program and completed her student teaching with us. She was then hired in June 2020 although for the 20-21 school year. Our Teacher's Assistant program has aided us in hiring teachers of color. When the

need arose in the middle of the 19-20 school year for a teacher in one of our classrooms, we hired one of our TAs of color who had completed her student teaching with us.

In the Spring of 2020 the Accountability Committee began a conversation for starting a Spero Academy Equity Committee for the 20-21 school year consisting of a diverse group of staff. While the specific goals of the committee were not yet developed at the end of the 19-20 school year, the hope for this team was to focus on school-wide equity development and setting equity goals related to all areas of the school.

Goals and Results

SMART goals are: specific and strategic, measurable, attainable (yet rigorous), results-based and time-based.

All Students Ready for School

Goal	Result	Goal Status
70% of Kindergarten students will meet their Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) goal in the area of Language Arts by the end of the 2019- 2020 school year.	Unable to report because of disruptions due to COVID-19.	_X_ Unable to report

Kindergarten students are assessed for literacy and math proficiency levels within two months of beginning school. Based on assessment results, teachers, parents, and support staff identify PLP goals in the areas of literacy and math based on the student's area of greatest need.

Students' individual goal work time is built into the school day schedule. Spero Academy disaggregates and reports on student goal achievement in several ways based on our accountability agreement with our authorizer.

- Students performing at/above grade level and students performing below grade level based on initial fall assessments
- Students receiving Special Education services and students not receiving Special Education services.
- Students in grades 3-6 identified as exempt (students who take the MTAS instead of the MCAs) and students in grades 3-6 not identified as exempt.

If progress monitoring of students' PLP goals suggests a student is struggling to make monthly progress, the student's classroom teacher will involve support staff, the Academic Director, and the Special Education administrative team in conversations regarding improvement strategies or interventions.

PLP goals are normally tracked monthly from October to May, however due to COVID-19 teachers were unable to obtain reliable data during the months of March, April, and May.

All Students in Third Grade Achieving Grade-Level Literacy

Goal	Result	Goal Status
<p><i>70% of students in 3rd grade will meet their Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) Goals in the area of literacy by the end of the 2019-2020 school year.</i></p> <p><i>Student Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) Goals are established following the fall testing window and identifying each student's area of greatest need based on their performance on the Bridge, ERSI, or Whole- To-Part assessments. Goals are established that the students do not meet based on fall assessments to allow for growth measurement. Baseline data is 0% meeting at the beginning of the school year.</i></p>	<p>Unable to report because of disruptions due to COVID-19.</p>	<p>_X_ Unable to report</p>

Third grade students are assessed for literacy proficiency levels at least twice a year, fall and spring, with an optional winter date if needed. Based on fall assessment results, and following the MN Standards for ELA, teachers, parents, and support staff identify Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) goals in the area of Literacy based on the student's area of greatest need.

Students' individual goal work time is built into the school day schedule. Spero Academy disaggregates and reports on student goal achievement in several ways based on our accountability agreement with our authorizer.

- Students performing at/above grade level and students performing below grade level based on initial fall assessments
- Students receiving Special Education services and students not receiving Special Education services.
- Students in grades 3-6 identified as exempt (students who take the MTAS instead of the MCAs) and students in grades 3-6 not identified as exempt.
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If progress monitoring of students' PLP goals suggests a student is struggling to make monthly progress, the student's classroom teacher will involve support staff, the Academic Director, and the Special Education administrative team in conversations regarding improvement strategies or interventions.

PLP goals are normally tracked monthly from October to May. Due to COVID-19 teachers were unable to obtain reliable data during the months of March, April, and May.

Close the Achievement Gap(s) Between Student Groups

Goal	Result	Goal Status
<p><i>Students who take the literacy MCA's and are enrolled for at least half the school year will increase their proficiency from 20% in 2019 to 30% in 2020.</i></p> <p><i>Students who take the literacy MTAS and are enrolled for at least half of the school year will increase their proficiency from 58% in 2019 to 65% in 2020.</i></p> <p><i>It is not possible to compare growth in proficiency between students with disabilities and students without disabilities, given Spero Academy's enrollment. Therefore we examined the achievement gap between our students who have more profound educational delays who are eligible to take the MTAS and those students</i></p>	<p>Unable to report because of disruptions due to COVID-19.</p>	<p>_X_ Unable to report</p>

<i>with less significant educational delays who take the MCAs.</i>		
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Approximately 92% of the students enrolled at Spero receive Special Education services. There is a low number of students eligible to take the MCAs. Data is disaggregated by looking at student performance for those students who take the MCA versus those students who take the MTAS. Students taking the MTAS represent students who are significantly behind academically than those students who take the MCAs. We determined that proficiency growth on the MTAS should be greater than the MCAs. Therefore, we chose to examine the reading and literacy MCA/MTAS sections for growth.

In 19-20, we provided Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions in ELA for students who demonstrated the need for interventions to increase literacy proficiency. District literacy assessments were administered throughout the year to track whether the interventions were having the intended effect. Teachers collected formative data regularly to ensure that students were benefiting from the interventions and to identify whether additional or alternative interventions needed to be implemented. The hope was that the results of these interventions would be demonstrated by the formative data, district literacy data, and increased state assessment scores. Due to the cancellation of state assessments we were unable to measure the results.

All Students Career- and College-Ready by Graduation

Goal	Result	Goal Status
<p><i>70% of students at Spero Academy will meet their Personalized Learning Plan goal in the area of social/emotional/behavioral skills by the end of the 2019-2020 school year.</i></p> <p><i>Student personalized learning plan (PLP) goals are established following the fall testing window and identifying each student's area of greatest need based teacher observation and scores on the Spero Academy Skills Inventory. This measure has been developed over the last decade and tracks student progress from year to year in the areas of (1) Social Play and Joint Attention, (2) Emotional Regulation, (3)</i></p>	<p><i>Unable to report</i></p>	<p><i>Check one of the following:</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> On Track (multi-year goal)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not On Track (multi-year goal)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Goal Met (one-year goal)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Goal Not Met (one-year goal)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Met All (multiple goals)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Met Some (multiple goals)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Met None (multiple goals)</p> <p><i>Unable to report</i></p>

<p><i>Communication Skills, (4) Life Skills, and (5) Technology Skills.</i></p> <p><i>Goals are established that the students do not meet based on fall assessments to allow for growth measurement. Baseline data is 0% meeting at the beginning of the school year.</i></p>		
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Approximately 92% of our students are on IEPs with 72% identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder as their primary disability. One way to prepare students for success in their educational, college and professional careers is to provide our students with SEL and regulation tools in order to interact successfully with peers and function as a productive member of society.

All students are assessed for social/emotional/behavioral (SEB) skills using the Spero Academy Skills Inventory. Based on results from the Skills Inventory, teachers, parents, and support staff identify a PLP goal for SEB skills.

Students' individual goal work time is built into the school day schedule. Spero Academy disaggregates and reports on student goal achievement in several ways based on our accountability agreement with our authorizer. (see previous goal)

If progress monitoring of students' PLP goals suggests a student is struggling to make monthly progress, the student's classroom teacher will involve support staff, the Academic Director, and the Special Education team in conversations regarding improvement strategies or interventions.

PLP goals are normally tracked monthly from October to May. Due to COVID-19 teachers were unable to obtain reliable data during the months of March, April, and May.