



**Bluffview  
Montessori**

Charter School Annual Report 4001-07  
&  
World's Best Workforce Report



**Submitted to:**

**Winona Area Public Schools  
903 Gilmore Avenue  
Winona, MN 55987**

**Minnesota Department of Education  
1500 Highway 36  
West Roseville, MN 55113**

**November 2019**

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## **Introduction**

Bluffview Montessori School was created on September 29, 1989 by the merger of two separate schools: Bluffview School, a Montessori Learning Center and Montessori of Winona. The school converted to a public school following the Omnibus Education Act of 1991, which allowed for the conversion of private schools to public institutions. Under its Articles of Incorporation, the school was organized exclusively for nonprofit purposes and to “create a quality Montessori school for children.” The school pursues this through a distinctive Montessori approach that embodies individualized instruction, mixed age groupings, an international curriculum, a prepared environment, and Montessori teaching materials. The goals of the school are to improve pupil learning, increase learning opportunities for pupils, encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods, and create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.

This report is prepared annually by Bluffview Montessori School administration and is approved by its Board of Directors.

## **Vision**

Empowered learners unfolding their full potential as whole and unique persons in a global community.

## **Mission**

We pursue this vision through a distinctive Montessori approach embodying individualized instruction, mixed age groups, a prepared environment and Montessori teaching materials.

This Montessori Method of education is based on the principle that education is to be an aide to life, and that it should go far beyond the simple acquisition of factual knowledge in various areas. Montessori schools help children develop a positive attitude and a curiosity toward learning.

The following are the basic tenets of the Bluffview Montessori School curriculum:

- Individualized instruction and a respect for each child’s interests and style of learning
- Extensive use of Montessori materials designed to help develop concentration, coordination, and independence, as well as to give concrete experiences of academic concepts
- A classroom community founded on respect for self, others and the environment that allows the child to develop his or her social sense and awareness of others in a natural and unhurried way
- Opportunities to ask questions, to seek many answers, and to work on projects of special interest
- Class groupings where children of different ages work together. Older children inspire younger children, and by helping them, gain confidence and a sense of responsibility
- An orderly and peaceful educational environment in which the child develops enthusiasm, self-motivation, concentration and the joy of learning

# School Governance

## Members of the Board of Directors

Pursuant to the Bylaws of the School and Minnesota Statutes, Section 124E.07, the Board of Directors consists of a majority of full or part-time certified teachers employed by the School and at least one Winona community member. The remaining two positions are filled by parents of Bluffview students.

The Bluffview Montessori School Board of Directors is a seven member board. All 2018-2019 Board members completed School Board Training in Governance, Financial Management and Employment Matters. All board members had satisfactory attendance at board meetings.

The 2018-2019 members of the Board of Directors included:

Name	Board Position	Group Affiliation	Date Elected	Email Address	Ongoing Training
Lauren Lund	Treasurer	Teacher 461742	May 2017	<a href="mailto:llund@bluffviewmontessori.org">llund@bluffviewmontessori.org</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance, Employment and Finance- MACS</li> <li>• Financials and Budgeting- BergenKDV</li> <li>• Open Meeting Law</li> <li>• Non-profit Law</li> <li>• MN Employment Law</li> </ul>
Kelly Dicke	Member	Community Member	May 2017	<a href="mailto:kdicke@bluffviewmontessori.org">kdicke@bluffviewmontessori.org</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance, Employment and Finance- MACS</li> <li>• Financials and Budgeting- BergenKDV</li> <li>• Open Meeting Law</li> <li>• Non-profit Law</li> <li>• MN Employment Law</li> </ul>
Ann-Marie Dunbar	Chair	Parent	May 2017	<a href="mailto:adunbar@bluffviewmontessori.org">adunbar@bluffviewmontessori.org</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financials and Budgeting- BergenKDV</li> <li>• Open Meeting Law</li> <li>• Non-profit Law</li> <li>• MN Employment Law</li> <li>• Employment in Charter Schools, Governance and Finance- MACS</li> </ul>
Erich Lippman	Member	Parent	May 2015 Re-elected May 2018	<a href="mailto:elippman@bluffviewmontessori.org">elippman@bluffviewmontessori.org</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance, Employment and Finance- MACS</li> <li>• Financials and Budgeting- BergenKDV</li> <li>• Open Meeting Law</li> <li>• Non-profit Law</li> <li>• MN Employment Law</li> </ul>
Emily Schultz	Member	Teacher 418761	Appointed 11/28/18 Elected May, 2019	<a href="mailto:eschultz@bluffviewmontessori.org">eschultz@bluffviewmontessori.org</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charter School Board Training</li> <li>• Financials and Budgeting- BergenKDV</li> <li>• Open Meeting Law</li> <li>• Non-profit Law</li> <li>• MN Employment Law</li> <li>• Employment in Charter Schools- MACS</li> </ul>
Katie Kinneberg	Vice Chair	Teacher 423840	May 2013 Re-elected May 2016, 2019	<a href="mailto:kkinneberg@bluffviewmontessori.org">kkinneberg@bluffviewmontessori.org</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financials and Budgeting- BergenKDV</li> <li>• Open Meeting Law</li> <li>• Non-profit Law</li> <li>• MN Employment Law</li> <li>• Employment in Charter Schools- MACS</li> </ul>
Molly Leifeld	Secretary	Teacher 462786	May 2015 Re-elected May 2018	<a href="mailto:mleifeld@bluffviewmontessori.org">mleifeld@bluffviewmontessori.org</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance, Employment and Finance- MACS</li> <li>• Financials and Budgeting- BergenKDV</li> <li>• Open Meeting Law</li> <li>• Non-profit Law</li> <li>• MN Employment Law</li> </ul>

# School Management & Administration

## Administration

### **Henry Schantzen**

Head of School

July 2017-present

The following disclosure is provided as required by MN Statute 124 E.12 subdivision 2.

*The board of directors and an individual who does not hold a valid administrative license and who serves in an administrative, supervisory, or instructional leadership position shall develop a professional development plan. Documentation of the implementation of the professional development plan of these persons shall be included in the school's annual report.*

### **Professional Development Plan for Henry Schantzen, Head of School**

The Bluffview Montessori School Board has approved a Professional Development Plan (PDP) for the Head of School. The Professional Development Plan (PDP) covers such areas as:

- Instruction and assessment
- Human Resources and personnel management
- Legal and compliance management
- Effective communication
- Board, authorizer, and community relationships
- Financial management

Some of the activities approved for the Head of School for the 2018-2019 school year included:

- Involvement in community organizations and building external relationships including Engage Winona, Chamber of Commerce, etc
- Developing and/or delivering BMS staff development and parent education sessions
- Attending workshops and seminars pertaining to data analysis of Fastbridge, EduClimber and MCA assessments, as well as charter school law, Special Education program administration, and regulatory issues as scheduled by the Minnesota Department of Education or the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools
- Implement PLCs, including targeted Professional Development for staff
- Attending computer and technology training
- Research leadership development opportunities, including but not limited to Montessori
- Attaining Crisis Prevention Institute certification
- Analyzing assessment data to evaluate curriculum scope and sequence and align Montessori curriculum to updated Minnesota state standards
- Maintaining current memberships in the American Montessori Society

## 2018-2019 Faculty Information

### Management and Administration

This table contains information for all members of the school management/administrative team and also includes faculty employed by the school that did not serve as classroom teachers.

All of our Kindergarten and Elementary classrooms have a lead teacher and a full-time teaching assistant. Our special education program also employs paraprofessionals that assist students in the classroom.

Name	File Folder Number	Assignment	Returned for 19-20
Ament, Alexis		Receptionist	N
Bacon, Greta		Program Paraprofessional	Y
Cloutier, Lori	334515	Assistant Head of School	Y
Dulak, Karen		Classroom Assistant	N
Foley, Stirling		Program Paraprofessional	Y
Hill, Esther		Program Paraprofessional	Y
Libera, Joe		Maintenance	N
Gifford, Sheena		Program Paraprofessional	Y
Hansen, Evangeline		Classroom Assistant	Y
Heim, Cody		Program Paraprofessional	Y
Johnson, Carly		Food Service	Y
Kerr, Carol		Classroom Assistant	Y
McCullough, Jena		Classroom Assistant	Y
Metz, Lorrie		Classroom Assistant`	Y
Meyer, Joyce		Classroom Assistant	Y
Pasche, Amber		Librarian	Y
Polachek, Cheryl	450969	Behavior Interventionist	Y
Polachek, Criss		Classroom Assistant	Y
Price, Diana	430989	Classroom Assistant	Y
Rourke, Ruth		Administrative Assistant	Y
Serjogins, Kendra		Classroom Assistant	Y
Schantzen, Henry	385789	Head of School	Y
Schute, Melissa		Program Paraprofessional	N
Skillicorn, Kelly	304706	School Counselor	Y
Simmons, Stephanie		Transition Assistant	Y
Smith, Cynthia		Food Service	Y
Stenberg, Louise		Transition Assistant	Y
Wadewitz, Km		Program Paraprofessional	N
Wenger-Vaughn, Roz		Program Paraprofessional	Y

## Teachers

This table contains information for ALL teachers employed by the school or providing services contractually.

Name	File Folder Number	Assignment	Years Employed by the School	Returned for 19-20
Aarre Anna	421025	Kindergarten Teacher/Pre-K	7	Y
Bell, Kim	382280	Special Education Teacher	3	Y
Booth, Meghan	486642	Math: Grades 7 & 8,	4	Y
Borkowski, Sandra	347177	Art	24	Y
Dubis, Chris	478314	Music, Instrumental Music	3	Y
Fink, Brianna	416148	Lower Elementary: Grades 1-3	13	Y
Fischer, Michaela	485123	Special Education Teacher	1	Y
Heim, Rachel	485226	Upper Elementary: Grades 4-6	4	Y
Hohensee, Pat	161429	Title I – Math	12	Y
Kinneberg, Katie	423840	Kindergarten Teacher/Pre-K	11	Y
Leifeld, Molly	462786	Lower Elementary: Grades 1-3	8	Y
Lund, Lauren	461742	Language Arts: Grades 7 & 8	5	N
McClatchey, Eldridge	510858	Physical Education	1	Y
Merchlewitz, Shelly	333395	Intervention Teacher	9	Y
O’Connell, Amy	494596	Upper Elementary: Grades 4-6	2	Y
O’Grady, Kate	337836	Science: Grades 7&8	7	Y
Partington, Kristee	352473	Upper Elementary: Grades 4-6	22	N
Schultze, Emily	418761	Intervention Teacher	8	N
Skoglund, Natalie	180150	Kindergarten/Pre-K	2	N
Swogger, Kristine	462637	Title I, EL	7	Y
Wagner, Shelby	480351	Social Studies/History: Grades 7 & 8	1	Y
Weaver, Brooke	482591	Special Education Teacher	4	Y
White, Mariah	478840	Lower Elementary: Grades 1-3	4	Y

In addition to being licensed by the State of Minnesota in their respective areas, Montessori elementary classroom educators prepare for their teaching assignments by either completing the requirements for a Montessori teaching certificate or enrolling in an approved Montessori training program. The Montessori certification process is extremely rigorous and involves 1-2 years of graduate level course work, a practicum in the developmental area of assignment, and final written and oral examinations.

Our faculty turnover from 2018-19 to 2019-2020 was 19%. Reasons for departure included changes in personal career goals, relocation, salary dissatisfaction or significant life events.





## School Admissions and Enrollment

As a charter school, Bluffview Montessori School has a limited capacity to enroll students. We have identified the capacity for each grade level from Kindergarten through sixth grade as 25 students. Total capacity for our Erdkinder program (7th – 8th grade) is 40 students. Most of our students enter the charter school program their Kindergarten year. Each year 25 Kindergarten positions are available. Preference is given to siblings of currently enrolled students and staff children. All remaining positions are filled via a public lottery.



Openings in the elementary and junior high grades occur only when a class is at less than capacity. If the number of applications exceeds the number of available spots, then available positions in those are filled by means of the public lottery. Preference is given to siblings of currently enrolled students and staff children. The procedures for the lottery and application form can be found on the following pages.

## **Policy 501**

### **BLUFFVIEW MONTESSORI SCHOOL POLICY 501 ADMISSIONS**

#### **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for enrollment of students to BMS.

#### **II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

The Bluffview Board of Directors believes that parents have the responsibility to select the most appropriate educational programs for their children and that parental commitment to the educational program is a significant and positive choice. The board also recognizes that choice in the selection of a public school provides parents and learners an opportunity to seek a school that best fits their needs and interests. This policy addresses the terms and conditions of student enrollment in Bluffview Montessori School.

#### **GUIDELINES 501**

##### **I. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

###### **A. Children's House**

1. Children must be 33 months of age by their first date of attendance.
2. Children must be toilet trained.
3. Enrollment of classroom shall not exceed 20 children with a ratio of one adult per every ten children enrolled.
4. Continued enrollment is subject to the child's ability to contribute to the classroom community and flourish in the Montessori learning environment as determined by the teaching team.

###### **B. Kindergarten through eighth grade**

1. Children must be age 5 by September 1st of the current school year to enter Kindergarten. The parent of a child whose fifth birthday falls between September 2 and September 30 inclusive may request early admission of that child to kindergarten under conditions described in Policy 502.
2. Students must live in the State of Minnesota.
3. One of the following conditions must be met
  - a. The custodial parent of a student must live in Minnesota.
  - b. A Minnesota Driver's license is required for proof of residency.
  - c. The parents of a student who live together must live in Minnesota.
4. Eligible students who submit a timely application shall be enrolled, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of classroom (elementary-25, and middle school-40), Montessori program level (kindergarten-25, lower elementary-75, upper elementary-75, and middle school-40) or entire school program (215). The classroom or program level may only be overenrolled under special circumstance and at the discretion of the teaching level team.
  - a. If the number of applications exceeds the number of openings, then students shall be accepted by lot. Lottery drawing takes place in February.

- b. A drawing shall be held at each grade level if the number of applicants exceeds the positions available.
  - c. Preference for enrollment shall be given to a sibling of an enrolled pupil and to a foster child of that student's parents before accepting other students by lot. Preference for enrollment shall also be given for children of school staff.
5. Waiting Lists: Waiting lists are constructed in the order drawn in the lottery. After conclusion of the drawings, Bluffview shall add to the waiting lists on a first come first serve basis. This waiting list is used to fill subsequent openings for the following academic year.

## **II. REQUIRED FORMS**

- A. Enrollment form (for new students)
- B. Student Information Form
- C. Health form including immunization records
- D. Emergency information
- E. Contract form and deposit for Children's House
- F. Early Childhood Screening records (Kindergarten only)
- G. Previous school records including any Individual Education Plan (IEP) information.

### **Legal References:**

MN Statutes 124E.11: Admission Requirements and Enrollment

## Application

**Bluffview Montessori School**  
1321 Gilmore Avenue  
Winona, MN 55987  
507-452-2807

**2018-2019**

## SCHOOL APPLICATION FORM

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
DATE RECEIVED	_____
ENROLL DATE	_____
ROOM/GRADE	_____
BIRTH CERT. ATTCH.	Y or N
MARSS #	_____

**NOTICE TO PARENT/GUARDIAN:** Tennessee Warning-MN Stat. 13.04.subd. 2: As a part of the permanent record for all students registered in the Bluffview Montessori Charter School/ISD 4001, information deemed private or confidential is collected. This data will be available only to district employees on a need-to-know basis. Failure to provide complete and accurate information may result in inaccurate records and incomplete services.

### STUDENT INFORMATION

_____	_____	_____
Last Name (Legal Name)	First	Middle
_____	_____	
Parent's Last Name	Parent's First Name	
_____		
Address		
_____	_____	_____
City	State	Zip
_____	_____	
Home Phone #	Cell Phone #	
_____		
Email		

## Please indicate grade

**Charter School** (circle one)   KG   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8

### Extended Day Programs

The YMCA runs the after school care program. Information can be disseminated in the Bluffview Office, or by contacting the YMCA directly.

## Student Background and Demographics

### Student Enrollment and Attrition

This table identifies the number of students enrolled at Bluffview from the 2016-2017 to the 2019-2020 school years. Data is based on October 1 Average Daily Membership.

GRADE	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Kindergarten	24	22	23	
One	23	25	26	
Two	21	23	25	
Three	23	24	25	
Four	26	22	25	
Five	24	29	22	
Six	22	23	29	
Seven	23	22	19	
Eight	14	17	21	
<b>Total</b>	200	207	215	

### Other Student Demographics

2018-19

Race/Ethnicity	Percentage of Entire Student Body
Native American	-
Asian & Pacific Islander	2%
Hispanic	3%
Black, not Hispanic	1%
White, not Hispanic	85%
Two or more races	9%

### Student Participation

#### Attendance

The actual attendance rate for students during the 2018-2019 school year was 95.2%.

The Consistent Attendance as measured by the North Star Reporting system was 84.04%

## Educational Approach and Curriculum

*Describe the school's key pedagogical approaches and how they align to the vision/mission.*



Bluffview's vision is "to empower children to unfold their potential as whole and unique persons in a global community." We pursue this vision through a distinctive Montessori approach that embodies individualized instruction, mixed age groupings, an international curriculum, a prepared environment, and Montessori teaching materials.

This Montessori Method of education is based on the principle that education is to be an aid to life, and that it should go far beyond the simple acquisition of factual knowledge in various areas. Montessori schools help children develop a positive attitude and a curiosity toward learning. Bluffview's educational philosophy is inspired by the research of Dr. Maria Montessori, by her models for the classroom, and by the developmental learning materials she created.

The following are the basic tenets of the Bluffview Montessori School curriculum:

- Individualized instruction and a respect for each child's interests and style of learning
- Extensive use of Montessori materials designed to help develop concentration, coordination, and independence, as well as to give concrete experiences of academic concepts
- A classroom community founded on respect for self, others, and the environment that allows the child to develop his or her social sense and awareness of others in a natural and unhurried way
- Opportunities to ask questions, to seek many answers, and to work on projects of special interest
- Class groupings where children of different ages work together. Older children inspire younger children, and by helping them, gain confidence and a sense of responsibility
- An orderly and peaceful educational environment in which the child develops enthusiasm, self- motivation, concentration, and the joy of learning

The academic program at Bluffview Montessori School is based upon specific grade level outcomes and is aligned with Minnesota academic standards. Classes at the school are organized in mixed-age groupings.

### Children's House (Ages 3-Kindergarten)

Dr. Montessori believed that no human being is educated by another person. The young child possesses what Montessori termed "the absorbent mind" and seeks to build or construct his very being. Dr. Montessori felt, therefore, that the goal of early childhood education should not be to fill the child with facts from a pre-selected course of studies, but rather to cultivate the child's own natural desire to learn.

For that reason, most lessons in the Children's House environment are given as individual presentations.

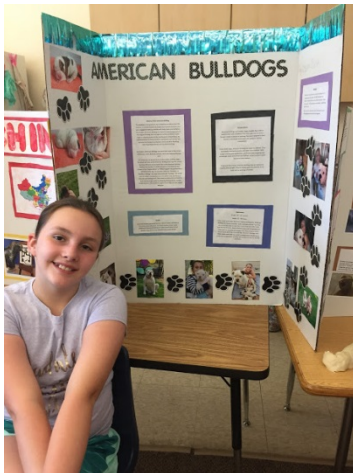
This objective is approached in two ways: first, by allowing each child to experience the excitement of learning by his/her own choice rather than by being taught; and second, by helping the child perfect his natural tools for learning, so that the child's abilities will be maximized for future learning situations.

Didactic Montessori materials have this dual, long-range purpose in addition to their immediate purpose of giving specific information to the child.

Math, language, geography, and science are introduced and explored. Sensorial exercises, social graces, self-care, and care of the environment are also key components of the Children's House. Kindergarten students continue their education within this mixed-age environment and emphasis is put on continued personal development in the areas of advanced reading and mathematics, science, geography, and cultural subjects. Self-care, independence, and social graces are also taught and encouraged.



### Elementary



The physical and psychological characteristics of the child begin to change as he or she enters the elementary years. At this age, children have an intellectual power unsurpassed at any other and are natural explorers of the world around them. They bring to their work two important tools: powerful reasoning minds and the ability to imagine. These intellectual tools, combined with a natural urge to collaborate with peers, opens a field of exploration so vast that virtually any concept or system can be explored and integrated into a comprehensive whole.

In these learning environments, children delve deeply into the process of researching, classifying and ordering phases of history, botany, geology, geometry, language, and mathematics. Subject areas are integrated throughout the curriculum rather than being presented as separate disciplines. Teachers use stories, pictures, charts, and timelines to enrich the children's understanding and spark their interest in learning.

Mixed age learning continues in the elementary years. At Bluffview, our Lower Elementary program serves students in first through third grade and our Upper Elementary program serves students in fourth through sixth grade.

Lessons change from individualized to small, collaborative group lessons.

### Middle School

Bluffview's middle school program addresses the needs of the adolescent student in an environment created specifically for seventh and eighth grade students. Students and teachers work together to promote a community atmosphere of learning. The middle school strives to fill the needs of the early adolescent and provides a safe, secure and developmentally appropriate environment to assist students in reaching their full potential.

Bluffview's middle school curriculum is focused on developing world citizens and cultivating life/work skills. These skills are acquired and refined through the application of language, mathematics, science, and cultural studies to specific enterprises and community involvement projects. Preparation for becoming and developing as a contributing member of society is woven into all aspects of the program.



The program also allows students to pursue research in areas of interest and to extend their learning beyond the classroom. This is accomplished through independent study, extended field trips, outreach, a student-run business, and community internships. Parents, teachers and students work in partnership to guide the self-actualization of the student.

### Specialist programs



Art, physical education, vocal and instrumental music programs provide students with a balanced approach to integrating academics and daily life. Licensed teachers in each specialty area are employed to ensure that high quality programs are delivered.

Art, Vocal and Instrumental Music, and Physical Education programs provide students with a balanced approach to integrating academics and daily life. Licensed teachers in each specialty area are employed to ensure that high-quality programs are delivered.



***Describe the school's key process to review and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and curriculum.***

District curriculum is reviewed on a continuous-cycle to identify strengths and weaknesses of instruction and curriculum and to ensure career and college-readiness leading to the world's best workforce.

District curriculum and instruction will be reviewed and evaluated for effectiveness in relation to best practice and student outcomes. Strategies for improving instruction, curriculum and student achievement will be identified and implemented. Instruction and assessment are aligned with local, state or national academic standards, instructional strategies are evaluated, and new instructional strategies may be embedded in the curriculum. Staff are expected to monitor student progress and adjust instruction as needed to facilitate student learning.



The elements below are connected to a continuous improvement process that reviews, supports and/or evaluates the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction.

- Curriculum review cycle which includes curriculum alignment to MN State Standards
- Curriculum implementation of new / innovative ideas
- Review of disaggregated MCA data and District Benchmark Reports by Pearson
- Teacher evaluation system that targets improving instruction through reflection and professional growth
- Peer Learning Communities developing “I Can” statements and Common Formative Assessments to guide instruction
- New teacher mentoring program
- ADSIS program provides supplemental reading, math and behavior instruction
- Title I program supports reading and math instruction
- School wide culture/climate initiatives
- District Technology Committee provides direction for the technology needs of our district
- Culture of continuous improvement: PLC Teams, Educator Evaluation and Peer Review
- RTI team/admin/general education teachers review of FastBridge data each month
  - Tier 1 students - Core instruction provided for all students
  - Tier 2 students - Supplemental instruction and/or classroom interventions provided for students identified as needing additional assistance
  - Tier 3 students - Problem Solving Teams follow the Response to Intervention process to assist students needing more intensive interventions

## Equitable Access to Excellent Teachers

*WBWF requires districts to have a process in place to ensure low-income students, students of color, and American Indian students are not taught at disproportionate rates by ineffective, inexperienced, and out-of-field teachers. The legislation also requires that districts have strategies to increase equitable access to effective and diverse teachers.*

Bluffview places great value on and invests in excellent teachers. We always strive to hire quality, in-field licensed teachers. One aspect of teaching at Bluffview is that 10 of 13 general education teachers are sent back to school upon being hired for at least one year of Montessori Pedagogical instruction and practice. The school reimburses them over a five year period for the tuition incurred.

If a teacher is identified as ineffective within our Evaluation Framework (Danielson) then administration evaluates the potential of the teacher, and may choose to either dismiss the teacher or help them create a targeted Professional Improvement plan.



Regarding annual student placement assignments to new classrooms, we undergo a thorough process to balance classrooms by evaluating academics, behaviors, and personalities of the students to match them with teachers and classroom environments that will help them flourish as learners. Economic status/race, etc has no place in the discussion.

55/212 students identified as FRP SY 2018-19	% of students taught by an experienced teacher	% of students taught by effective teacher	% of students taught by in-field, licensed teacher
Free/Reduced Price Students	44/55 = 80% of Low-income students taught by experienced teacher	100% All teachers classified as effective according to the District Teacher Evaluation Model	100% All general education teachers are licensed in-field
Non FRP Students	134/157 = 85.4% of Non-low-income students taught by experienced teacher	100% All teachers classified as effective according to the District Teacher Evaluation Model	100% All general education teachers are licensed in-field

## School goals and benchmarks for instruction and student achievement

<b>Bluffview Montessori School 2017-2018 Reading Goal</b>
<b>Proficiency Goal:</b> Increase the percent of students proficient on the 2018 MCA III reading assessment from 67.2% to 70%
<b>Result: 73%</b>
<b>Bluffview Montessori School 2018-2019 Reading Goal</b>
<b>Proficiency Goal:</b> Increase the percent of students proficient on the MCA III reading assessment from 73% in 2018 to 77% in 2019.
<b>Result: 69.6%</b>
<b>Bluffview Montessori School 2019-2020 Reading Goal</b>
<b>Proficiency Goal:</b> Increase the percent of students proficient on the MCA III reading assessment from 69.6% in 2019 to 74% in 2020.

<b>Bluffview Montessori School 2017-2018 Math Goal</b>
<b>Proficiency Goal:</b> Increase the percent of students proficient on the 2018 MCA III math assessment from 59.1% to 63%
<b>Result: 58.4%</b>
<b>Bluffview Montessori School 2018-2019 Math Goal</b>
<b>Proficiency Goal:</b> Increase the percent of students proficient on the MCA III math assessment from 58.4% in 2018 to 63% in 2019.
<b>Result: 54.1%</b>
<b>Bluffview Montessori School 2019-2020 Math Goal</b>
<b>Proficiency Goal:</b> Increase the percent of students proficient on the MCA III math assessment from 54.1% in 2019 to 62% in 2020.

<b>Bluffview Montessori School All Children Ready for School Goal 2018-2019</b>
<b>Goal:</b> The PK4 students will increase their phonetic awareness from an average of 3.1 letters correctly (sound) recognized during the fall screening window to an average of 12 letters correctly (sound) recognized during the spring screening window.
<b>Result: 9.2</b>
<b>Bluffview Montessori School All Children Ready for School Goal 2019-2020</b>
<b>Goal:</b> The PK4 students will increase their phonetic awareness from an average of 3.2 letters correctly (sound) recognized during the fall screening window to an average of 10 letters correctly (sound) recognized during the spring screening window.

<b>Bluffview Montessori School Read Well by Third Grade Goal 2018-2019</b>
<b>Goal:</b> Increase the percent of third grade students meeting or exceeding FastBridge literacy benchmarks (areading) from 80% on the Fall screener to 90% in the Spring. <b>Result: 87%</b>
<b>Bluffview Montessori School Read Well by Third Grade Goal 2019-2020</b>
<b>Goal:</b> Increase the percent of third grade students meeting or exceeding FastBridge literacy benchmarks (areading) from 86% on the Fall screener to 91% on the Spring screener.

<b>Bluffview Montessori School All Students College Ready Goals 2018-2019</b>
<b>Goal:</b> All grade 8 students will participate in a career exploration assessment. <b>Result: Met</b>
<b>Bluffview Montessori School All Students College Ready Goals 2019-2020</b>
<b>Goal:</b> All grade 8 students will participate in a career exploration assessment.

***Describe the process for assessing and evaluating each student's progress toward meeting state and local academic standards.***

All students are evaluated each semester on their progress through the classroom curriculum using a narrative report.

During the 2018-2019 school year, Bluffview utilized Fastbridge assessments in Reading and Mathematics three times per year (K-8). Data from these assessments combined with teacher input is used to place students into interventions. Students in interventions are progress monitored to evaluate growth. We used the Fastbridge behavioral screener, SAEBERS, with K-8 students as well as with the Pre-school students to populate a population for the Behavioral Interventionist.

Bluffview utilizes MN State Assessments (MCAIII) in math, reading, and science along with the Pearson District Benchmark Reports to examine student progress towards meeting MN state standards.

***Describe the special education program.***

Bluffview Montessori School has staff members licensed to provide special education and related services for those students who meet criteria and have special education needs. Parents and students are directly involved with school and appropriate outside agency staff in the development of the special education program and the student's Individual Education Program (IEP) for school-age children.

Students are eligible for special education services until the IEP Team decides to terminate services. Students remain with their general education peers in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) to the extent the IEP Team determines is appropriate. Special education program evaluation is accomplished through a single strategic plan to improve due process compliance and program results for students with disabilities.

***Describe the English learner program.***

Montessori School offers an educational program to meet the needs of students who are English Language Learners in grades K-8. This program addresses two areas: language acquisition and cultural adjustment.

In the area of language acquisition, the goal is to provide students with the opportunity to develop communication skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing, thereby enabling the students to be successful within the academic general education classroom.

The program will assist the students through their cultural adjustment by helping them develop an understanding of American culture. At the same time, the students will be encouraged to share their cultural backgrounds and realize the importance of their role in a multicultural society.

## Innovative Practices

### Character-based Learning

The Bluffview Montessori curriculum offers many opportunities to integrate character-based learning with elements of the Peace Curriculum. Students learn practical skills necessary to develop qualities of being a good citizen. Respect for self, others, the environment and the community is expected of all students and is the guiding force in everything students do during the school day. Thematic learning activities also encourage student learning to extend outward into the community. During the 2017-2018 school year, educators also used strength-based strategies from The Virtues Project and Core Virtues to further create a culture of caring and character.

### Focus on Peace

Bluffview Montessori is an International Peace Site. International Peace Sites commit to five peace actions:

- Seek peace within yourself and others
- Reach out in service
- Protect the environment
- Respect diversity
- Be a responsible citizen of the world



*Explorers of the Week are often recognized for displaying virtues.*



## Multi-age Learning Environments

The multi-aged classrooms of Montessori schools, like Bluffview, allow students to stretch their minds rather than being constrained by artificial barriers such as grade or age. When a teacher gives a lesson intended for 7 year olds, for instance, any student in the room may attend, including younger students who are interested. Teachers consciously prepare the environment so that instruction is inclusive and differentiated as much as possible. Multi-aged classrooms also give students additional opportunities to learn leadership skills and learn how to live in a cooperative social environment.



## Response to Intervention (RTI)

Bluffview's tiered intervention program continues to be an outstanding success. The school received ADSIS funding for 2018-2019 and the school board budgets for ADSIS interventionists (Tier 3) to work closely with Title 1 teachers (Tier 2) and provide additional instruction to students needing extra instruction in reading or math.

## Immersion



The Encarta Dictionary defines the word immerse as: to become completely occupied with something, giving all your time, energy, or concentration to it. Immersions at Bluffview Montessori School are key experiences specifically planned for Erdkinder (junior high) students to travel, study, and work together and usually involve several days away from school and home.

During the 2018-2019 school year, our 7th and 8th grade students spent three days at Whitewater State Park and three days at Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center. They also had an overnight canoe/camping trip at Prairie Island.

Erdkinder students also participate in the community and explored future careers through internships. The junior high students initiated contact with community businesses, created resumes, and interviewed for internship opportunities. Each student spent several days working alongside community business leaders and shared their experiences with classmates upon returning to school.

## Micro-economy



Our adolescent program includes a business education typically not experienced until adulthood. Bluffview middle school students help to run a community coffee house once a month. This foundation provides a deeper understanding of adult life and the role that finances play in personal responsibility and social organization.

Running a business first hand offers students early exposure to the meaning of money and the basis of economic systems. Students plan, operate, and account for business ventures related to the coffee house. The students come to understand principles of supply and demand, marketing, accounting, use of capital resources, and division of labor as they contribute to the local economy.

## Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

PBIS is a school-wide framework for organizing and creating a positive school climate. It is used to build the capacity of school teams to identify clear behavior outcomes for all staff and students, utilize evidence-based practices to achieve those outcomes, and understand data/information use to support sustainable, safe and positive learning environments.

In 2015, the Bluffview PBIS leadership team completed two years of training with the Minnesota Department of Education to support understanding and implementation of School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SW-PBIS). Our shared behavioral expectations for student expectations are based upon the 3 Respects at Bluffview- Respect for Self, Respect for Others, and Respect for the Environment.



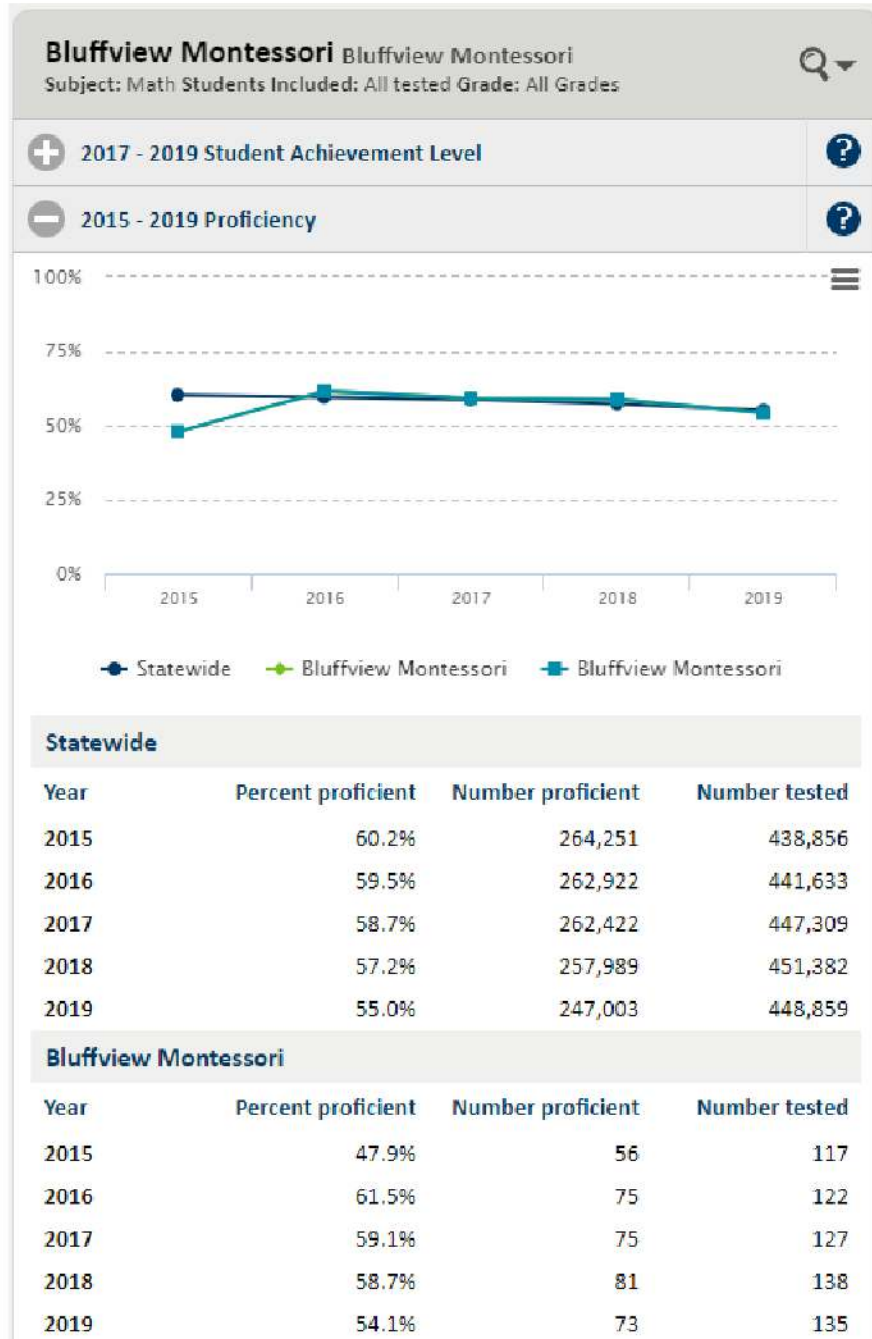
## Educational Partnerships

Bluffview works collaboratively with 2 local universities and a Technical College in Winona to increase their student involvement. Students in teacher education training programs serve as volunteers, complete field experiences, and student teach in our school whenever possible. This provides our students with extra tutoring and leadership models, and creates beneficial community partnerships with Winona State University, St. Mary's University, and Southeast Technical College.

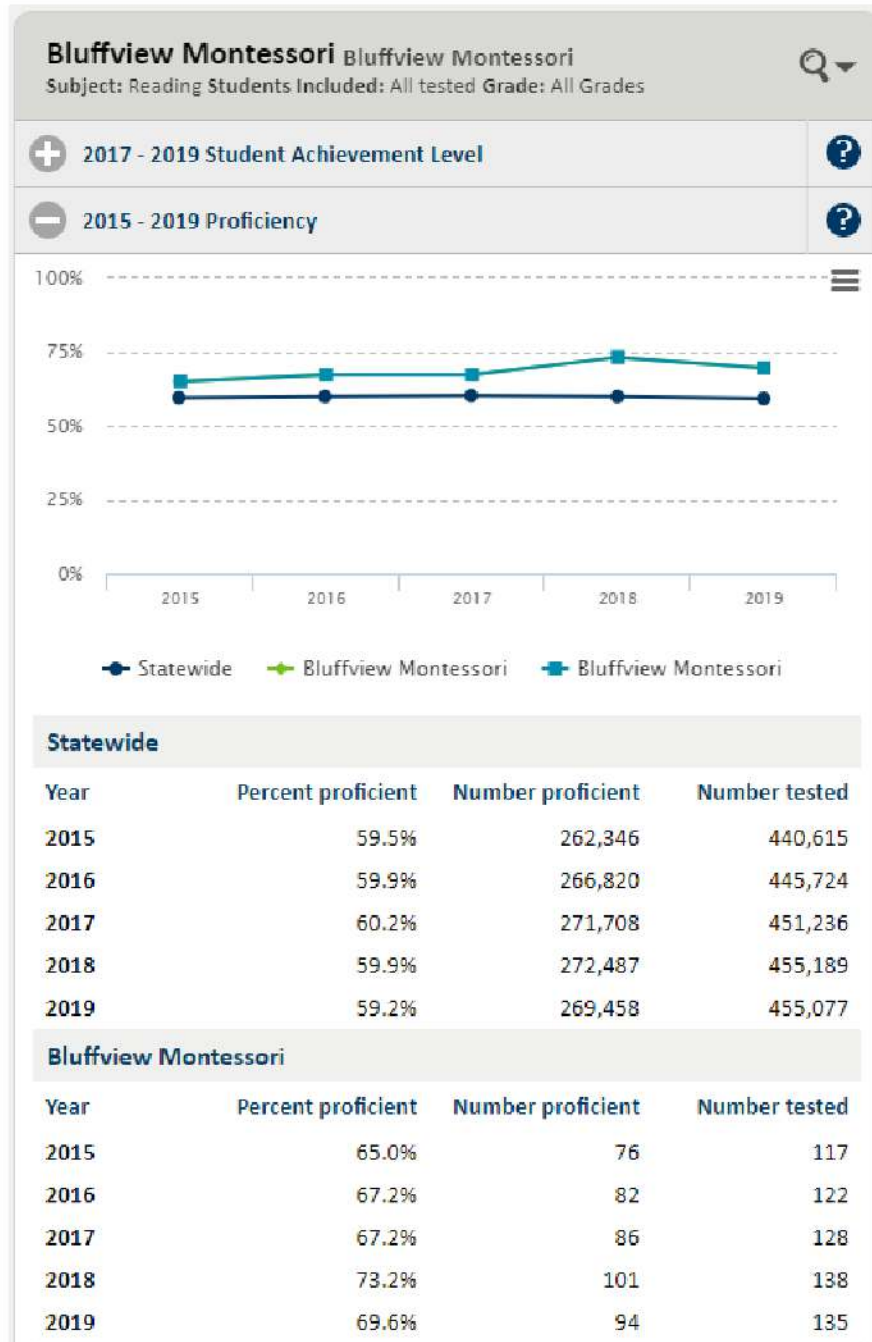


# Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments

## Summary Proficiency MCA III Math 2019 All Grades



## Summary Proficiency MCA III Reading 2019 All Grades



## Summary Proficiency MCA III Science 2019 All Grades



## Achievement Gap

### Reduction Data 2018 vs 2019

% proficient on MCA	2018 Reading	2019 Reading	Result
<b>Free/Reduced</b>	21/36 58.3%	20/37 54.2%	-4.1%
<b>Non</b>	80/102 78.4%	74/98 75.5%	-2.9%
<b>Gap</b>	20.1%	21.3%	-1.2% net gap reduction
<b>SPED</b>	2/15 13.3%	2/16 12.5%	-0.8%
<b>Non</b>	99/123 80.5%	92/119 77.3%	-3.2%
<b>Gap</b>	67.2%	64.8%	-2.4% gap reduction
<b>Students of color</b>	9/17 53%	9/18 50%	-3%
<b>Non</b>	92/121 76%	85/117 72.6%	-3.4%
<b>Gap</b>	23%	22.6%	0.4% gap reduction

% proficient on MCA	2018 Math	2019 Math	Result
<b>Free/Reduced</b>	18/36 50%	13/37 35.1%	-14.9%
<b>Non</b>	63/102 61.8%	60/98 61.2%	-0.6%
<b>Gap</b>	11.8%	26.1%	-14.3% net gap reduction
<b>SPED</b>	1/15 6.7%	1/16 6.3%	-0.4%
<b>Non</b>	80/123 65%	72/119 60.5%	-4.5%
<b>Gap</b>	58.3%	54.2%	4% gap reduction
<b>Students of color</b>	6/17 35.3%	3/18 16.7%	-18.6%
<b>Non</b>	75/121 62%	70/117 59.8%	-2.2%
<b>Gap</b>	26.7%	43.1%	-16.4% gap reduction

Though we are mindful of the small number of students included in each subgroup, we fully intend to close the achievement gap. There is work to be done. The school is tackling this work energetically and with a sense of urgency and optimism. A variety of strategies are in place to improve student performance including:

- Ensuring alignment of Montessori curriculum to State Standards. Our focus remains on math. We implemented PLC's last year, and are now continuing our focus on Tier 1 math instruction and the generating of data that directly correlates to areas that need improvement.
- Providing new teachers with teacher mentors and a clearly laid out plan
- Meeting in data teams/level intervention teams at least one time/month to:
  - Determine whether Tier 1 instruction is meeting at least the needs of 80% of students

- Identify students in need of Tier 2 or Tier 3 support
- Review data on which specific skills appear to be relative strengths or weaknesses.
  - How to parlay the weaknesses into strengths.

Additionally we intend to:

- Continue to develop MTSS (Multi-Tier System of Supports) plan, with a Standard Treatment Protocol for Title and ADSIS interventions and the use of EduClimber as our data warehouse
- Continue to provide specific training on using data to guide instruction, including the examination of the Pearson District Benchmark reports for the last 4 years to identify consistent weaknesses.
- Include level teams, including both general and special education staff, in examining progress monitoring data more frequently
- Conduct fidelity checks to monitor if curriculum and interventions are being implemented as intended
- Re-examine the effectiveness coefficients of the intervention programs that are being used, replacing ineffective curriculum programs with new, research based effective ones- notably in the area of math
- Refine the additional focused Tier 1 time 3 days/week of math foundational practice for grades 4-6.

## Stakeholder Satisfaction

### Parent Survey

Parents of students were asked to complete a survey in the spring of 2019. Twenty one percent of individual parents responded.

- Overall, 91.6% of consider Bluffview to be an “excellent school”.
- Areas of greatest strength for Bluffview Montessori School revolved around culture/community and education. The themes included:
  - Small school culture that creates a community of strong respect, values, learning, engagement, and connection.
  - Safe environment
  - An education that is individualized for each child
  - An education that incorporates Montessori principles
- Areas of greatest improvement revolved around communication and school services. The themes included:
  - Board communication
  - School website being up to date – a new website was built 7/19 in part to mitigate this, as well as to bolster communication effectiveness.
  - Discipline/bullying-too many perceived instances of bullying were no reported, therefore we covered that topic during this year’s parent orientation.



## Program Challenges

### Maintaining an Authentic Montessori School



Quality Montessori environments include a Montessori-trained teacher and a teaching assistant. Bluffview's commitment to staff classrooms in this manner greatly impacts our budget and teacher salaries. We will continue to seek out funding from other sources, including fundraising and grant opportunities that will increase our general revenue.

Many skills that are taught in a Montessori school are difficult to measure. We emphasize development in independence, self-direction, inner discipline and peaceful resolution skills. We focus on practical life skills and how they can be applied through service to the community. All of these skills, while necessary for success, are very difficult to measure.

Testing presents a challenge to some of our students, simply because it is not common place here, and doesn't always reflect accurate student progress. The use of Montessori materials offers students concrete experiences which guide them toward abstraction. Although we

consistently observe student mastery in our classrooms, our students are not always able to demonstrate mastery through standardized tests. We implement test-taking skills into our curriculum and provide opportunities for students to practice simulated tests prior to actual assessments.

Where we see the most discrepancy between what children do in the classroom and what they demonstrate in their standardized assessments is in math. The school renewed subscriptions to on-line math practice software (Study Island) for the 2018-19 academic year in an effort to help the children make the leap from the concrete world of Montessori math to the abstract world of demonstrating their skills on the computer. This software is used in the classroom in limited amounts and for the purpose of supporting the children in learning how to demonstrate what they do know on the computer vs. the Montessori materials. The program is also available for students to utilize from home for additional practice.

## Finances

Bluffview contracts with to manage our accounting services, audit preparation, payroll processing, grant management, financial reporting and other financial management services. Partnering with BKDV's professional business management team allows Bluffview's administration to concentrate on keeping its teaching mission clear and focused.

Bluffview Montessori School undergoes an annual audit after June 30 of each year. The fiscal audit for the year ending June 30, 2019 was recently completed and the school has been issued a clean audit.

Links to financial documents for the 2018-2019 school year are included in appendices to this report.

As a charter school, Bluffview's financial health and stability is dependent on student enrollment. Cash flow challenges arise as the result of state holdbacks. Bluffview's need to borrow money to maintain operating needs of the school is directly related to the percentage of owed revenue held back by the State of Minnesota.

The school's financial management company can be contacted at:

### **BergenKDV**

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West Farmington, MN 55024

Phone: 651.463.2233

Fax: 651.463.3605

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## Authorizer

**Bluffview Montessori School is authorized by:**

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Annette Freiheit

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**Winona Area Public Schools Liaison to Bluffview Montessori School:**

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Winona Area Public Schools has authorized Bluffview Montessori School continuously since its first year of operation in 1993. A five-year Charter Agreement with the Winona Area Public Schools was renewed in June 2016.

## **School Report Card**

The data previously included on the school report card pages is now available through the Minnesota Department of Education's Data Center. The center was designed to provide parents, educators, schools, districts and citizens with easy access to test results, revenue and expenditure data, demographic information and other critical data in a centralized location. This information can be accessed at <http://rc.education.state.mn.us/>

## **Non-Profit Status**

The Minnesota Non-Profit Status follows this page in printed versions of this report and can be accessed by means of the following link in electronic versions of this report:

[Bluffview Montessori non-profit status](#)

# **Budget**

[Long Range Budget](#)