Woodlands School

A Case Study

Introduction

Woodlands School is a K-8 charter school that is authorized by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM). Under state statutes (118.40.2r) this school is an independent charter school with its own school board and budget and is not associated with any school district. Under Wisconsin law Woodlands (WS) is a public school and its enrollment is open to any resident of the City of Milwaukee. In charter terminology this type of school is referred to as a 2r school, taken from the section in state law that defines the independent charter.

Prior to becoming a UWM charter school in 2003, WS had a long history as an education institution and program. The school's original role was that of a campus school for Alverno College, a women’s college in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In 1889 the school separated from Alverno and became an independent private school eventually accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Central States. It relocated from the Alverno campus into a former catholic school on the south side of Milwaukee and remained there until the archdiocese of Milwaukee sought to reclaim the space for another school. Woodlands moved from that site to their current location at 5510 West Bluemound Avenue in Milwaukee in 2001. This facility was formerly a catholic elementary school that was closed a number of years ago.

Currently the WS board of directors and leadership staff are opening a second school to satisfy the demand for enrollment in this particular program. The expansion to a second location is considered to be a measure of success as well as meeting parent demand.

Philosophy

The Woodlands School has developed its philosophy over the years and presents it in the parent handbook (p.2) as follows:

“Woodlands School is a community of persons creating an environment in which teachers, parents and children share the responsibility for learning. Students are encouraged to discover, explore and create in order to develop the attitudes and skills necessary for effective living. Prime consideration is given to developing moral and spiritual values, a positive attitude toward life and a healthy self-concept. The design reflects the belief that learning to live with a flexible environment and the openness to change foster in the child the ability to cope with and increasingly complex body of knowledge and rapidly changing society. The school philosophy further emphasizes that involvement with people of many races and cultures enriches the growth of human understanding. Education founded in these beliefs give rise to both a happy, sensitive, creative child and an adult who while intellectually free, is morally and social responsible.”

The school’s mission and vision statements, from the same handbook, that amplifies their focus:
**Mission:** Woodlands School-Creating the character of the community through diverse education

**Vision:** Internal- Woodlands will be a nationally recognized model school where whole child achievement is respected and nurtured. External – The best of what an urban education can be.

From a professional perspective the language of these statements promotes or reflects a “whole child” approach to education. This implies, but is not limited to an educational approach that places an emphasis on both the academic and social behavior dimension of a child’s growth and development. These statements trace their history to the work of John Dewey and the progressive movement that found momentum in education beginning in the 1920s and into the 1950s.

Apparent in the interviews of the staff and administration is a guiding principle(s) that is used to organize and express the culture of the school. They call it the *WOODLAND WAY*. It consists of the following general principles:

1. **Time for Living** – Students, teachers and staff focus on their rights and responsibilities to themselves, the community and the world.
2. **Diversity** – Diversity adds another dimension hopefully reflecting the diversity of the community. Learning focuses on the student strengths, challenges and individual approaches to learning.
3. **Discovery Based Learning** – Teachers work together to integrate individual disciplines into a common theme. Themes are used to allow students in put basic skills into a real life context.
4. **Integrated Curriculum** – The academic areas of Woodlands are:
   - Art
   - French
   - Library/Technology
   - Music
   - Physical Education
   - Language Arts
   - Math
   - Science
5. **Excellence for Every Child** – Identify each child’s strength and needs. The teachers’ goal is to grow the needs and enrich the strengths. Developing a learner who understands her or his own learning and can effectively manage their academic performance.
6. **Life-Long Learning** – Woodlands promote life-long learning through ongoing assessment, students’ learn to value and assess their own performance and can demonstrate their learning through continuous demonstration and expression of the outcomes of their personal efforts.

These elements are operationalized by use of the following model that is stressed by all staff to and with students to create a school culture that defines the major expectations for academic and behavioral performance at the school.
School Culture

The academic culture of the school is shaped by the following mnemonic device- RESPECT-that is stressed with students and parents to create the integration of the schools philosophy and guiding principles.

- **Respect for Learning (Create a Culture for Learning)**
- **Education that is Integrated (Interdisciplinary work that is collaborative and connected)**
- **Set Up Life Long Learning (Meaningful Learning)**
- **Pride in Diversity (Value and Honor for All)**
- **Excellence (Growth to reach Potential)**
- **Creative Discovery-Based Learning (Problem Solving/Learning by Doing)**
- **Time for Living (Respect and Responsibility to Others)**

The school believes these tenets describe the character building aspect of the culture of their school. These elements of the Woodland Way are expressed consistently by staff and administration in their approach to developing both their instruction, organization of curriculum, and approach to the social development of the child.

Woodlands has defined goals for students that express how the philosophy of the school guides expectations for students:

1. To develop a positive perception of one’s self.
2. To initiate the process of becoming a life-long learner.
3. To accept responsibility for behavior and learning.
4. To develop those attitudes and skills necessary for effective living.
5. To creatively respond to and positively effect change.
6. To participate in the discovery of moral and ethical values.
7. To acquire the basic tools of learning in reading language arts, mathematics, science, social science and the arts.
8. To relate to people of other races and cultures with understanding, respect and concern.

Unique Characteristics of School

Multi-grade

Woodlands School prides itself on its multi-grade approach with two grades of students in a classroom. Thus you get the following grade arrangements:

K4/K5, 1/2, 3/4, 5/6, and 7/8

The placement of students is such that each year approximately one-half of the students are new to the teacher and the other half are students the teacher had the year before. While most elementary schools operate on the single grade model, Woodlands is a strong advocate of the multi-grade approach. They cite certain benefits of this model, 1) students who return to the same teacher (sometimes referred to as “looping”) set the behavioral standards for new students in the classroom because they know what the teacher expects; 2) teachers expect returning
students to be of assistance (generally academically) but also help to establish the routines for the classroom quickly and 3) the multi-grade focus places demands on the teacher to be able to differentiate her or his instruction to meet the varying needs of children.

**Time for Living**

This thematic is one of the guiding principles. Each month a Time for Living team meets with one of the staff to conduct a session that has a predefined theme for discussion i.e. “What does personal responsibility mean to you?” Each team consists of one child from grades 1-8 and a student remains with that team for every year of attendance. Thus each year a student would progress in seniority so to speak with one student exiting (graduation or moving) and one student entering the team.

These groups depend not only on the adult leader, but after a few years of membership older students become a role model for the new students. The monthly theme is predetermined by a teacher team, but could be modified to adapt to a particular issue that may prove to be opportune. This group process is aided by the fact that neither student nor staff turnover is high, thus there is a consistency to the groups and experiences are shared over time.

**Guided Movement**

Whenever a class moves to another location a teacher or aid is always with the group. This is practical given the layout of the school which the author would describe as a “rabbit warren”. While this would be expected for small children, commonly upper grade students would move without adult oversight. However, for Woodlands these are also teaching/learning/social growth opportunities that promote the overall approach to the whole student. This also facilitates an orderly transition to the new class with the teacher assisting the specialty teacher in the transition of the students and to inform each other of any specific concerns that may have arisen during the instructional session.

**Quiet Lunch**

The initial observation of the school lunchroom by this author was somewhat disturbing in that for at least 10 and maybe 12 minutes there was complete silence. It was quiet, an unusual experience, for just about any public school lunchroom setting. At a set interval a teacher raises her or his hand and the general sounds of lunchrooms begins. When asked why this was done, teachers indicated that this was developed years ago to assure that students ate their lunch or at least most of it before socialization began. The implication was that at times the lunch period focused too much on social dynamics and a lot of food was either not consumed or thrown away. What was unique is that students did this willingly as they understood the need to eat. No doubt a topic for Time for Living at one time.

**Portfolio Review**
Woodlands uses the student portfolio concept as a way to both demonstrate student accomplishment and growth over time. Most portfolios reflect works from across the curriculum and in 8th grade students assemble a graduation portfolio along with an essay on their accomplishment and personal growth while at Woodlands. In general the essays reflect the Woodland Way and its impact upon the graduating student. The portfolios are then presented to teams of reviewers, most from outside the school, who discuss and critique the portfolio for the students. Maintaining these portfolios requires strong commitment from students and staff.

Classroom Aides

Woodlands is committed to the idea of having a teacher and teacher-aide in each classroom save for grades 7 and 8 which share aides. Observationally a visitor has to work hard to figure out who is the teacher and who is the aide. Aides are part of the overall plan and provide instruction as well as assistance for students. A number of aides are certified teachers, in some cases hoping to gain a teacher position when a vacancy occurs. The communication between teachers and aides appears to be almost unspoken as they seem to anticipate the other in managing both instruction and behavior.

Buddies

The Buddies program is the linking of 7/8 students with students in Kindergarten and first grade. This linkage of one older student with one or two younger students is played out in support for reading, assistance with art projects and serving as escorts at the end of the school day to insure that the very young students get the parent’s car safely. The older students seem to relish serving in this role and this also facilitates the use of role models in shaping behavior and expectations at Woodlands.

Transportation

Charters schools that are considered to be independent (2r) are not eligible for transportation under a quirk in state law. Thus there is no yellow bus and all transportation is parent based for drop-off and pick-up daily. The system used by Woodlands is to have a staff member stand at the parking lot entrance and as each car enters they call out, via walkie-talkie the number given to the parent/child over the schools intercom system. When a student hears the number he or she is allowed to leave the classroom. Younger students all have buddies to escort them for pick-up. There is also a before and after school program, paid for by the parent, that provides supervision until the parent can arrive.

What elements contribute to the success of this school?

Results of Interviews
In virtually every interview of teachers and staff there was a consistent way of describing the success and culture of the school. Terms such as “whole child”, “The Woodlands Way”, “life-long learning”, “respect for oneself and others” were used to describe the focus of the culture of
the school. Teachers and staff found that they could work together because of this common understanding or agreement.

Teachers specifically noted that they were “allowed to teach” in this school, this statement was made in the context of many not all of the teachers had taught elsewhere. Their comparison with previous working environments was capped by the comments of one teacher who said she/he took a “$10,000” pay cut to teach here. Another teacher drives well over an hour to get to this school and feels that she/he is willing to do that to be able to teach with a sense of “meaningfulness” rather than just regimented periods. Being allowed to teach did not imply and individualistic approach but rather the opportunity to work with other professionals in a unified commitment to educate and inform young people.

An additional element that was probed during the interviews was the social/behavioral culture of the school. Almost all staff felt that they contributed to the child’s developing sense of self and that this was part of their role in the total development of the child. Teachers seem to enjoy the relationship with students. Turnover or mobility of students is low as well as low staff turnover thus creating an environment of familiarity over time. As one staff member noted, this place is like Cheers, the old TV show, “where everybody knows your name.” Lower elementary teachers can maintain a continuity of contact even with 7th and 8th grade students. The nature of the building promotes ongoing contact as students young and old must interact on many occasions during the day. This contact between young and old students is further promoted by the “Buddy Program” discussed earlier.

Interviews suggested that staff were pleased with leadership and understood the challenges of a school whose fiscal resources are limited, but respected the efforts to address their needs in a meaningful and respectful way. Teachers generally accepted idea of certain administrative duties being assigned to them, whether it was developing next year’s academic calendar, grouping students for the following year, working cooperatively and knowing that if the school and its students were to be successful that they needed to pitch in. Leadership at the school was viewed as facilitative of the mission, a gentle urging for things to be done, openness to questions and problem solving. One person characterized leadership as “motherly” but when necessary a clear decision to resolve an issue.

Even when some issues festered, internet connectivity was one such issue, staff seemed willing to be patient and not constantly grumbling about inconsistent access. The one topic that it seemed leadership couldn’t solve was the salary gap between teachers at this school and the Milwaukee Public Schools. A continuing gap of $10,000 to $15,000 is evident in their data and may at some point cause staff to leave to meet the needs of their family, particularly if they were the major bread-winner.

Remarkable in the interviews was the expressed support for the multi-grade approach for Woodlands. Teachers enjoyed the model and preferred it to their previous teaching positions. Many staff commented on the nonuse of textbooks. They took pride that they could build a curriculum using their knowledge, the team perspective and where appropriate each team member being the goto expert in a particular subject. An example would be the in grades 4/5 one teacher is the language arts expert, one is the social studies expert and one is the math expert.
Asking another teacher how to do something or gaining from observing someone else’s teaching is common and expected.

**Results of Classroom Observation**

The researcher had the opportunity to visit and observe in almost every class, except French, scheduling just didn’t work. Most classrooms have an aide, many certified teachers, who do teach and operate as a colleague, part of the team and are viewed by students in the same light as the teacher. Most classes are around 23-25 in size and students move from one room to another depending on the subject. Movement of students is efficient, with a limited amount of hassle and always supervised by an adult to insure timely transitions and is always considered to be a teachable moment should the opportunity arise.

Student behavior requires few prompts to transition, begin work, finish work or reset their behavior. One unique observation was that since teachers stress pro-social development and cooperation they do not need to waste time to begin a lesson or to get the appropriate attention needed. Students work with little wasted effort nor do they engage in extended socializing wasting both instructional and independent work time. It was not unusual to have students in the higher grade helping students in the lower grade in a classroom. In many respects this seems to be the desired outcome and there is little resistance among the students to such activity.

Teachers were well prepared and demonstrated an ability to adapt curriculum when giving one-on-one instruction. Working in a multi-grade environment means that teachers must prepare broadly and need to adapt readily should a lesson not possess meaningful outcomes. The demand of a multi-grade curriculum seems to help expand the teacher’s range of instruction and also promotes a level of confidence to handle a wide range of subject matters and issues.

Woodlands curriculum stresses a lot of project based learning with students developing greater levels of independence in defining and shaping these projects as they advance though the grades. Rarely did any teacher raise their voice except for an occasional surprise of praise at a positive outcome.

By third grade students have a large three ring binder for their work and this becomes their bible for school. There is a learning curve for students to use the binder, keeping it organized and being consistent from teacher to teacher to use the binder in an effective way. Selectively, as each year goes by the students seem to know how to use the binder and selected some of their best work for the portfolio they will develop for a final presentation in May of 8th grade; a graduate thesis so to speak.

When a behavioral issue arises in the classroom or hallway, staff will revert to the elements of the Woodland Way to correct, redirect or define what needs be brought to the fore for resolution. Problem solving is not postponed to later and then forgotten. Problem solving in the moment is a characteristic of the program.

Teachers were universally satisfied in their opportunity to teach, their enthusiasm for the opportunity to assist in the development of their students is evidenced in their commitment to
working on projects that demonstrate that the student has mastered or at least understood the concept/principle being advanced by the teacher. If a student offers a unique or questionable interpretation, it would be common in the upper grades for teacher to ask student to verify their position, i.e. research the idea and then report back, rarely was there a statement of disapproval or outright rejection of a student’s statement. Learning to analyze what one says or believes was stressed as part of the Woodlands Way.

Role of Curriculum

Curriculum at this school is teacher drive as informed by the MAP testing as well as professional judgment of teachers. It is quite evident in interviews that teachers take pride in not being dependent on textbooks to determine their curriculum. While textbooks are available as a resource, teachers almost express distain for any type of dependence on it. Teachers and aides must work across at least two grade levels because of the multi-grade practices of the school. Additionally teachers and aids take great pride in developing curriculum, being able to adapt it and then frequently tie the subject into a project that is defined as integrating the concept with application. Teachers focus on having students demonstrate their competencies in applied ways encouraging student to integrate the subject in a broader perspective. For example in teaching math student might be encourage to display how a concept could be applied in other academic areas.

The lack of textbooks to define the student curriculum requires teacher to develop their knowledge base of curriculum and seems to encourage positive interactions at the unit level to share information, instructional strategies and content more readily.

This adds to the cooperative environment that seems to define a portion of the schools success.

Why does this school work?

There are potentially many factors that make the school a success, a school that “exceeds expectations” rating from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. But some major themes emerge from both observation and interviews. One is the commitment of all staff to the mission of the school. A willingness to integrate this philosophy into the operation of their classroom in both the management of behavior and the academic program, but the high expectations they have for their students. These expectations are clearly communicated to students and parents and seem to be an essential element.

A second theme that emerged was the willingness of staff to cooperate to achieve the mission/vision. This is an environment/culture where colleagues recognize the contributions of staff and are openly public about their about their appreciation. They almost to a person teach with their doors open, save for the music room which occupies a room adjacent to a major walkway with lots of student movement throughout the day.

Evident in the interviews was the role of leadership. Leadership has a democratic quality/style that motivates, respects, and advocates for staff and students. Leadership also evidences a “facilitator” style to seek solutions and resources in an environment where there are clear fiscal
limitations. Leadership never loses focus on the priorities for student learning and when pressed to explain it in more detail, the answer is always, “it requires good teachers to implement the mission”.

Often the research literature on successful schools focuses on the leadership style as a critical element, especially for schools that are failing to achieve public stated academic standards, i.e. standardized testing. However, this school is not failing by state standards, so what is the leadership role? Certainly the transformational leader is not called for as the school needs to sustain its success not change it. Nor does the transactional model/style of leadership describe Woodlands. Rather this leader must bring together a number of themes or practices to sustain the school. These include continual promotion of the mission/vision, hiring of professionals, “who want to teach” and recognizing that teaching is more than certification, teachers must become members of the community or team within the vision of the school. When asked about modifying their curriculum to meet the new common core standards, she note, that this will not be a challenge, because teachers at Woodlands are always looking for opportunities to improve.

The drive to sustain student achievement and the recognition that curriculum and teaching are critical is paramount in this environment. As noted earlier, teachers enjoy working in this school, it sustains their professional role and provides a continuous feedback loop on student progress. Administration works hard to maintain this collegial and productive culture. Listening to staff is seen as critical in that they want and need to be heard.

Observationally, I have concluded that all the elements of this school, leadership, teachers, aides, staff and parents are in agreement on the authority patterns present at Woodlands. These authority patterns are the results of leadership and staff agreeing/collaborating to operate within a set of guidelines, The Woodland Way, implementing these principles for both social and academic expectations. For students these authority patterns create the structures in which they can succeed and share with others. The opportunity to succeed and share is powerful in this school’s culture.
Woodlands School Achievement and Evaluation Data

Academic performance plays a critical role in the accountability standards used by UWM to grant an initial charter and at time of contract renewal (contract are for a maximum of five years). The major standards used by UWM are the established state of Wisconsin exam known Wisconsin Knowledge and Concept Exam or WKCE. This test covers reading, math, language arts, science and social studies from grades three through eight and at tenth grade. In addition to the state required exams UWM requires the use of the NWEA Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) which measures student growth from year to year and establishes growth targets for adequate progress. This test is very helpful for teachers in their academic planning and is administered, in fall, winter and spring.

In addition to the state exams, UWM Charters are required to have comparison schools, i.e. schools that have similar demographics, for evaluative purpose and comparison is always made to Milwaukee Public School district average. This academic data allows for relative comparisons to determine if a charter school is meeting or exceeding performance standards. The data that follows presents this information as well as additional descriptive information that further help describe the characteristics of this school.
Figure 1:

![WKCE – Reading – Combined Grades](image)

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007-08</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WL</td>
<td>MPS</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>WL</td>
<td>MPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
<td>38.7%</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
<td>41.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
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</table>
Results suggest that Woodlands consistently outperforms MPS WKCE results and parallels state-wide test results.
Figure 3.
Test results clearly indicate that at 8th grade, the exit year or culmination of the schools curriculum, the school generally exceeds the state-wide WKCE. This data suggest that Woodlands students are well prepared to enter high school.

Figure 4.
As suggested by the reading results, albeit with greater variability, 8th grade Math test results again equal or exceed state-wide averages.

Figure 5.

Both enrollment data and attendance data (shown below) suggest a very stable program.
Figure 6:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007-08</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Woodlands</td>
<td>95.30%</td>
<td>95.30%</td>
<td>95.60%</td>
<td>95.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milwaukee</td>
<td>87.40%</td>
<td>87.90%</td>
<td>88.20%</td>
<td>90.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>94.40%</td>
<td>94.40%</td>
<td>94.40%</td>
<td>94.80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Woodlands school shows very little turnover of students from year to year. The results are positive.
The chart on discipline demonstrates a learning environment with few behavioral/discipline issues and suggests a school that promotes positive behavior.
These rates of faculty mobility/turnover are very small suggesting stability and a desirable environment.
The teacher/pupil ratio has shown variance from year to year. Student, staff and parent satisfaction data are collected annually by UWM’s Charter School Office.
Students show a high degree of, and gradually increasing level of satisfaction.
Parent satisfaction for this school has remained consistently high.
The faculty survey is based on the Baldrige Criteria for Educational Excellence and measures the quality level that faculty members believe exists with certain aspects of the school. Results reveal that the faculty believes that SOHE is achieving a high level of quality in these areas.

**MAP SCORES**
The following tables and graphs report test results for a test called Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). This test does not report grade results but uses a standardized measure of academic growth. It measures how much progress a student has made to comparison students and academic standards. The test reports the “academic growth” and then characterizes those results into major categories: Meeting Expected Growth, Exceeding Expected Growth, Not Meeting Expected Growth, and Below Growth.

The advantage of this test is that it provides to both teachers and students more feedback on their performance than the WKCE required by the State of Wisconsin.

Figure 14.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Grade 3</th>
<th>Grade 4</th>
<th>Grade 5</th>
<th>Grade 6</th>
<th>Grade 7</th>
<th>Grade 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>65.60%</td>
<td>77.80%</td>
<td>53.30%</td>
<td>42.40%</td>
<td>48.10%</td>
<td>75.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>80.00%</td>
<td>76.70%</td>
<td>44.00%</td>
<td>48.30%</td>
<td>43.80%</td>
<td>40.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>63.90%</td>
<td>54.80%</td>
<td>56.30%</td>
<td>42.90%</td>
<td>65.40%</td>
<td>58.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>60.00%</td>
<td>58.30%</td>
<td>57.10%</td>
<td>79.40%</td>
<td>53.80%</td>
<td>60.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each WLS student takes MAP assessments in Reading and Math in both the Fall and the Spring semester. NWEA MAP assessments are nationally normed. In addition, Fall MAP assessment results include an expectation of the average amount of growth a student is
expected to make by the Spring, based on that student’s Fall RIT score and their grade level. The graph above shows the percent of students that met their expected Fall to Spring growth in Reading. There is variability in the results.

Figure 15.

Variability was also found in Math in the percentage of students meeting their expected Fall to Spring growth.
NWEA MAP tests are nationally normed. This graph shows that the average WLS student (grades K-8) in Spring of 2008 scored less than 1 point above the MAP national norm in Reading. This number has risen steadily from one year to the next with the average WLS student (Grades K-8) in the Spring of 2012 scoring over 3 points above the national MAP norm in Reading.
When looking at the average points above/below the national norm by grade level there is more variability in the results.
Figure 18.

This graph shows that the average WLS student (grades K-8) in Spring of 2008 scored about 6 points below the MAP national norm in Math. This number has risen steadily from one year to the next with the average MCPS student (Grades K-8) in the Spring of 2012 scoring 1 point above the national MAP norm in Math.
When looking at the average points above/below the national norm by grade level there is more variability in the results. However, the average WLS student in the Spring of 2012 scored less below the national NWEA MAP math norm than the average Wisconsin student in the Spring of 2008.
Because NWEA MAP assessments have national norms for each grade level and subject area, it is possible to determine the percent of students that score above the average. This graph shows that the percent of students (Grade K-8) scoring above average in Reading at
WLS has been steadily increasing for the past 5 years, with over 63% of students scoring above average in Reading in the Spring of 2012.

Figure 21.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Grade 3</th>
<th>Grade 4</th>
<th>Grade 5</th>
<th>Grade 6</th>
<th>Grade 7</th>
<th>Grade 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2008</td>
<td>70.00%</td>
<td>55.20%</td>
<td>35.50%</td>
<td>43.30%</td>
<td>81.80%</td>
<td>56.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2009</td>
<td>59.40%</td>
<td>55.60%</td>
<td>63.30%</td>
<td>42.40%</td>
<td>48.10%</td>
<td>75.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring 2010</td>
<td>56.70%</td>
<td>58.10%</td>
<td>46.40%</td>
<td>58.10%</td>
<td>40.60%</td>
<td>48.10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring 2011</td>
<td>51.40%</td>
<td>58.10%</td>
<td>53.10%</td>
<td>57.10%</td>
<td>53.80%</td>
<td>51.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2012</td>
<td>66.00%</td>
<td>58.30%</td>
<td>60.00%</td>
<td>64.70%</td>
<td>55.60%</td>
<td>72.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When looking at the percent of students scoring at or above the national NWEA MAP norm in Reading by grade level, the results are more variable.
Figure 22.

This graph shows that the percent of students (Grade K-8) scoring at or above the national NWEA MAP average in Math at WLS steadily increased from Spring 2008 to Spring 2012. In the Spring of 2012 there were over 55% of Wisconsin students that scored at or above the national average.
This graph shows that the percent of students scoring at or above the national NWEA MAP norm in the Spring of 2012 was higher than the percent of students scoring at or above the national NWEA MAP norm in the Spring of 2008 for grades 4 through 8.

Total revenues and revenues per student (shown below) are consistently, slightly higher than total expenditures and expenditures per pupil.
Figure 24.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>$2,640,428</td>
<td>$2,572,478.00</td>
<td>$2,630,166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditures</td>
<td>$2,632,542</td>
<td>$2,814,315</td>
<td>$2,854,400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Revenue & Expenditures
In the 2010-11 school year MPS per pupil expenditures were in excess of $14,000 and the State-Wide Average was just below $12,000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007-08</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>$9,087</td>
<td>$9,397</td>
<td>$8,810.00</td>
<td>$8,740.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditures</td>
<td>$8,908</td>
<td>$9,368</td>
<td>$9,638.00</td>
<td>$9,498.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 25.
Woodlands has been a strong academic performance school since its inception as a charter school. Performance has always exceeded that of MPS and frequently meets or exceeds state averages on the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam. Realistically comparisons with suburban districts may be more meaningful.

Figure 26: Comparison of combined (grades 3-8) **WKCE Reading** results for WDS and Milwaukee County suburban schools.
Figure 27: Comparison of combined (grades 3-8) WKCE Mathematics results for WDS and Milwaukee County suburban schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elmbrook</th>
<th>Greenfield</th>
<th>Shorewood</th>
<th>Wauwatosa</th>
<th>West Allis</th>
<th>Whitefish Bay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>P/A</strong></td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>92.6%</td>
<td>79.7%</td>
<td>88.1%</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>77.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Econ Dis</strong></td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>42.1%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minority</strong></td>
<td>58.5%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>27.2%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WKCE Math Comparison: 2011-2012 WDS v. Milwaukee Suburban Schools**