

Charter School Annual Report 2014-15



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**Produced by the High School for Recording Arts
and Designs for Learning**

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Pillsbury United Communities Charter School Annual Report Rubric

Per...	Requirement	Included on...
Statute	Is the Annual Report posted to Charter School website?	Will be posted at www.hsra.org , by 11/30/15
Statute	Was the Annual Report distributed to school employees, parents, and authorizer in a timely manner?	Will be distributed by 11/30/15
Statute	Does it contain school enrollment data?	See School Enrollment and Student Attrition
Statute	Does it contain school attrition information?	See School Enrollment and Student Attrition
Statute	Does it contain an update on governance and management? - Including board trainings attended by each board member during the past year.	See Governance; and Board Training
Statute	Does it contain an update on staffing structure? - Including professional development activities for the past year.	See School Management, Administration and Staffing
Statute	Is there financial statements included?	See Finances
Statute & Contract	Is there an update on the academic performance? - Particularly in alignment with the charter school contract academic and non-academic goals and the performance framework.	See Academic Performance / HSRA Academic Performance in 2014-15
Statute	Is there an update on the operational performance?	See Operational Performance; HSRA Operational Performance in 2014-15
Statute	Does the report discuss innovative practices and implementation?	See Innovative Practices and Implementation
Statute	Does the report update on future planning?	See Future Plans
Statute & Contract	Is there a summary on how the school is meeting the primary and additional purposes per MN Statute. - Including the primary purpose to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement. - Including the additional purposes to: -Increase learning opportunities for all pupils; -Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods; - Measure learning outcomes and create different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes; - Establish new forms of accountability for schools; - Create new professional opportunities for teachers.	See HSRA and the Statutory Purposes of Minnesota Charter Schools

High School for Recording Arts: Introduction

The High School for Recording Arts, Minnesota Independent School District #4039, has now completed seventeen as an independent charter school, and is pleased to present this annual report for the 2014-15 school year. The purpose of the High School for Recording Arts (HSRA) is to deliver an educational program that engages learners, many of whom have been expelled, have dropped out, or are otherwise not enrolled in school. **The mission of HSRA is to provide youth the opportunity to achieve a high school diploma through the exploration and operation of the music business and other creative endeavors:**

- Culturally Sensitive
- Alternative Educational Programming
- Personalized Project-Based Learning
- Diverse Population
- Drug-Free Learning Environment
- Adult-Supervised
- Positive Mentoring
- Safe Space
- Job Training

HSRA's vision statement, revised by school leadership in the spring of 2013, states that: **HSRA creates a culture of acceptance and creativity that realizes the full potential of all young people, despite previous challenges. We engage students through exploration of music, media, technology and the entertainment industry so that they acquire both core learning and real-world, 21st-century skills. In addition to earning a high school diploma, HSRA students are empowered to be responsible citizens and lifelong learners who pursue post-secondary education and productive careers.**

HSRA began as a pilot program developed by St. Paul-based recording studio, Studio 4 Enterprises, in December 1996. High School for Recording Arts was born in July 1998 with its approval as an independent charter school district by the Minnesota Department of Education. Youth in the community immediately exhibited interest in this program. Through word of mouth, enrollment in the program, which began with just fifteen learners, stabilized at 200-230 students at the school's first facility (550 Vandalia Street). During 2012-13, HSRA and Studio 4 leadership began planning a move to a new location, which was accomplished during the summer of 2013. The 2014-15 school year was HSRA's second year in its new facility, a former Bally Fitness building which was renovated for the school and Studio 4 recording studios. Plans for HSRA's building company to purchase the building were put in place during 2014-15, and bore fruit in the fall of 2015, with closing on the building purchase on October 9, 2015.

The High School for Recording Arts educational program partners with a professional music production facility, Studio 4. Many students learn through individual and group projects related to core academic areas and to the music industry. Access to the recording studio helps keep students motivated for academic learning. Studio 4 shares space with Another Level Records, a student-operated recording company where many HSRA students work. ALR students create a weekly half-hour radio program called the Studio 4 All Access Top 4 Countdown, which airs on local radio station KMOJ FM. The program includes interviews and local news items as well as music created by high school students.

The balance of this report is organized around the ten required elements of charter school annual reports as specified by Minnesota statute (M.S. 124D.10, subd. 14).

School Enrollment and Student Attrition

The policy of the High School for Recording Arts is to accept all students who request enrollment, as long as they are Minnesota residents and in grades 9-12. Registration materials are available at the school or via the school’s website. Details on the demographics of students attending HSRA are provided in the “HSRA Student Body” chart, in the Program Challenges section below.

Student Enrollment and Attrition Rates

This table identifies the number of students enrolled at the school during the 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15 and estimated 2015-16 enrollment. Data is based on October 1 enrollment.

School Year	9	10	11	12	Total	Growth Rate ¹
2012-13	53	46	35	53	187	-5%
2013-14	83	66	43	43	235	+36%
2014-15	73	79	65	61	278	+18%
Estimated 2015-16					300	+8%

¹ Calculated based on change from 10/1 of the previous school year to 10/1 of the reported school year, divided by the previous year’s figure.

Student enrollment at HSRA was fairly stable over the past several years prior to 2013-14, with Average Daily Membership around 200 students. To accommodate the needs of its mobile student population, HSRA continues enrolling students throughout the year. Typically enrollment climbs from fall through the spring. During 2013-14, with the move to HSRA's new facility, enrollment climbed significantly, though the school year began with many parts of the facility still under construction (the recording studios were not available for use until January 2014; and the school kitchen was not ready until early spring). Growth in enrollment continued through 2014-15, with the school completing the year with Average Daily Membership of 282.42, by far the highest ever. The location and overall attractiveness of the building are helping HSRA recruit and retain more students than ever.

For 2015-16, HSRA's budget is built on 300 students. As of November 2015 the school is on-target to meet this expectation, with 333 students enrolled and Average Daily membership at 296.80 as of Nov. 17.

Governance and Management

Governance

HSRA is governed by a Board which usually meets every two months throughout the year with additional meetings as needed. During 2014-15 there were six meetings and four special meetings for a total of ten. Board members serve staggered three-year terms; no terms expired during 2014-15, hence no election was needed. Officers were chosen at the annual meeting in October. A new parent board member was appointed at the September, 2014 meeting to serve out the term of the previous parent member who left the Board after her son left HSRA.

Details on the HSRA Board are provided in the table below.

2014-15 School Year High School for Recording Arts School Board

This table contains information for ALL board members.

Name	Board Position, Group Affiliation	Date Elected	Date Seated	Term Expiration	Contact Information	Meeting Attendance
Paula Anderson	Vice-Chair; Teacher member (#323788)	Jan. 2014	Feb. 2014	Oct. 2016	651 287-0890; paula@hsra.org	10 / 10
Tonya Draughn	Parent	N/A	Sept. 2014	October 2015	651 287-0890	7 / 9
Wayne Jennings	Chair; Community	Jan. 2014	Feb. 2014	Oct. 2016	651 644-2805; wayne@institute4learning.org	9 / 10
Carei Thomas	Treasurer;	Oct. 2012	Oct.	Oct. 2015	cajole@qwest.net	7 / 10

Name	Board Position, Group Affiliation	Date Elected	Date Seated	Term Expiration	Contact Information	Meeting Attendance
	Community		2012			
Darryl Young	Secretary; Teacher (#384827)	Oct. 2012	Oct. 2012	Oct. 2015	651 287-0890; darryl@hsra.org	8 / 10

Authorizer

The High School for Recording Arts' Authorizer is Pillsbury United Communities. The 2014-15 school year was the first year of a new five-year charter contract with Pillsbury. The contract runs July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2019. The Authorizer contact is Larry McKenzie (mckenziel@puc-mn.org ; 612 302-3409).

School Management, Administration and Staffing

Management of HSRA is facilitated through a Leadership Team. The 2014-15 school year was Tony Simmons' fifth year as HSRA's Executive Director. The HSRA Leadership Team includes the Executive Director; David Ellis, Founder; Paula Anderson, Education Director; Bonnie Hughes, Business Manager; and Phil Winden, Studio Director. The Director, Founder, Business Manager and Studio Director are employees of Studio 4 and serve HSRA through the school's contract with Studio 4. David Ellis and Tony Simmons have worked together since 1995-96, even prior to the inception of HSRA. Paula Anderson joined the HSRA team in 2003, and the other Leadership Team members have also been in place for several years. At its meetings the Leadership Team reviews goals and objectives, and current status of the school's operations.

2014-15 HSRA School Management and Faculty ²					
Name	File Folder Number	Assignment	Years Employed by HSRA	Left During 2014/15	Not Returning 2015/16
Tony Simmons		Executive Director (via contract)	Contract, 14	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paula Anderson	323788	Education Director/English Facilitator	11	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
David Anderson		Paraprofessional	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Riana Aulet		Business Dept. Support	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

² 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 (e.g. curriculum coordinators, social workers, counselors, administrative assistance, paraprofessionals, custodial, technology, librarians, etc.)

2014-15 HSRA School Management and Faculty²

Name	File Folder Number	Assignment	Years Employed by HSRA	Left During 2014/15	Not Returning 2015/16
Todd Barnes		Development Director (formerly at HAS)	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Katherine Beecham	198188	College Counselor	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Layne Bellamy		Security Lead	15	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Layne Bellamy II		Special Education para	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Matthew Brown		Technology Manager	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
David Cox		Maintenance	10	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Zach Cox		Advisor	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Charlitta Ellis		CYS Program Director	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pierre Fulford		Front Desk	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Geoffrey Gill		Advisor	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amanda Galloway		Advisor (formerly at HAS)	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adrian Gorder		Paraprofessional	1	x	x
Malik Hollon		Orientation Support	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Juan Jackson		HAS Program Coord.	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regina Jackson		Paraprofessional	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cameo Johnson		Administrative Clerk	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Susan Kelley	346511	School Psychologist	Contract, 7	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Roger Lind		Business Office Support	4	x	x
Nickie Lobley		Paraprofessional	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alexis Mann		Advisor	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	x
Leah McGinley		Administrative Assistant	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jewelynn McLaurin		Behavioral Paraprofessional	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jonathan Moore		Dean / Student Engagement Coord.	9	<input type="checkbox"/>	x
Barbara Murphy	375984	Math Facilitator / Student Data Administrator	12	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agapito Otero		Facilities Manager	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Michael Padgett		Education Assistant	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nicolas Phillips		Paraprofessional	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2014-15 HSRA School Management and Faculty ²					
Name	File Folder Number	Assignment	Years Employed by HSRA	Left During 2014/15	Not Returning 2015/16
Brian Sandifer		Cultural Liaison	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damon Trent		Paraprofessional	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tabitha Wheeler	407062	Social Worker	12	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Danei Willson		Paraprofessional	1	x	x

Professional development for HSRA staff during 2014-15 included the following:

- Summer staff development, August 2015 (five days):
 - Next Five Years (new school goals)
 - Effective Strategies for Over-Age and Under-Credited Youth
 - Security / Emergency Preparedness
 - Anti-bullying / Safe Schools Legislation; Data Privacy; New Charter Legislation
 - Special Education Update
 - Department Presentations around Goals and Strategies
 - Performance Results from 2013-14
 - Check & Connect Program
 - Supportive Tool for Assessing Growth in Educational Systems (STAGES)
 - Project Based Learning
 - Technology and Learning
 - Updates from Housing Advocate, HAS program, Access Pass, Studio, and VIP
 - Competency Based Learning and Updated Graduation Requirements
- Staff day, September 2014:
 - Health Update from school nurse
 - Competency Based Learning and Validations
 - Check & Connect
- Administrative Evaluation Training, November 2014
- Leadership Training, November 2014
- Competency Based Learning and Validations, January 2015
- Group Re-Engagement on 2015-16 goals, Department Planning and Team Building, May 2015 (two days)
- Summer staff development, June-July 2015 (five days):
 - Literacy Training

- Check & Connect Training
- Project Based Learning Training

In addition to these trainings which were held at the school, HSRA instructional and administrative staff attended a number of conferences and workshops off-site. During August 2015 the Professional Development cycle began again, with two full weeks of staff training and planning, for the new school year.

Director’s Professional Development Plan

HSRA’s Director, Tony Simmons, does not have administrative licensure. He has a J.D. from Rutgers University, and practiced criminal, business and entertainment law before moving to Minnesota in 2001 to join High School for Recording Arts/Studio 4. He participated in the Center for School Change Leadership Academy, which provided each participant with an education and a business mentor, opportunities to visit outstanding public schools in another city, support for a yearlong project designed to help improve school achievement, and several workshops. His professional development plan includes:

- Job Description and Annual Goals
- Development Plan
- Employee and Manager Performance Review Memo
- Performance Review template

Mr. Simmons was on a working group convened by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA), that examined alternative accountability measurements for charter schools serving at-risk populations and produced the report *Anecdotes Aren’t Enough: An Evidence-based Approach to Accountability for Alternative Charter Schools*. This involvement began during 2012-13 and has continued since, including a presentations on alternative accountability at the National Charter Schools Conference in Las Vegas in June 2014, and in New Orleans in June 2015.

In January 2015, Mr. Simmons presented a “Special Innovation” session on HSRA at Big Picture Learning’s Leadership Conference in Oakland, CA. Tony also serves on the board of the Reaching At-Promise Students Association (RAPSA), a national organization with a mission to *improve the lives of at-promise students by providing relevant and current professional development opportunities for all educators* (see www.rapsa.org).

Conferences and trainings Mr. Simmons attended in Minnesota during 2014-15 included:

- Sixth Annual Charter School Law Conference sponsored by the Booth Law Group, Innovative Special Education Services, and the Minnesota Association of Charter

Schools, July 2014

- Education Evolving's meetings with Minnesota charter school leaders to study emerging issues
- Third Annual Minnesota Charter School Conference sponsored by Clifton Larson Allen, the Center for School Change, and the MN Association of Charter Schools, July 2015

During 2014-15 Tony, along with HSRA's founder and a Studio 4 employee who is an alum of HSRA, were part of a Bush Foundation Community Creativity Cohort. Participation in the Creativity Cohort offered both study and development in integrating arts into the community; HSRA's three participants regularly attended meetings of artists and individuals working in the arts, from Minnesota and North and South Dakota. HSRA was the only school among the Community Creativity grantees. This initiative related directly to HSRA's vision which calls for engaging students in education through exploration of the arts; Mr. Simmons had the opportunity to reflect with other leaders on how to continue the work of re-engaging students through the arts.

At the school, a major focus for Mr. Simmons during 2014-15 was continuing to lead HSRA's transition to fully utilize the new building, including expanding the program to serve a larger-than-ever student population and refining the career ladder for emerging leaders among HSRA staff. He also led the process of applying for bonds for the building purchase, working closely with the HSRA building company.

Board Training

HSRA board members attended training on Finance November 12, 2014, provided by Designs for Learning. Training on Governance was held December 17, 2014, provided by attorney John Cairns. Training on Personnel / employment law was held February 25, 2015, also provided by John Cairns. Training addressed mandated areas and was customized for HSRA.

HSRA Board members learn together during board meetings and through longer-serving, more experienced members coaching the newer members to help them improve their understanding of how to meet the responsibilities of serving on a board. Also, HSRA is a member of the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools, and members receive MACS materials relating to governance.

Staffing

In addition to the Leadership Team, HSRA administration has created career-ladder positions among its teaching staff in order to stabilize the program and ensure effective transition into the future. Lead positions include Assistant Director or Student Support and Engagement, Assistant Education Director, Lead Advisor, and Lead Special Education Advisor. All are filled by teachers.

HSRA’s teaching staff was stable during the 2014-15 school year with the exception of one teacher leaving during the year; two teachers from 2014-15 did not return for the following school year. The table below lists all HSRA licensed teaching staff during 2014-15.

2014-15 High School for Recording Arts Teaching Faculty Information³				
Name	File Folder Number	Assignment/ Subject	Left During 2014/15	Not Returning 2015/16
Paula Anderson	323788	English Facilitator	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Joey Cienian	452457	Social Studies Facilitator / Asst. Director of Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maureen Foss	395378	Math Facilitator	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dan Frey	445216	English Facilitator / Asst. Director for Student Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sayra Loftus	453220	Math Facilitator / Asst. Director of Education	x	x
Barbara Murphy	375984	Math facilitator/Student Data Administrator	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dario Otero	47606	Lead Special Education Facilitator	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tracy Richardson	412167	Special Education Facilitator	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Abby Rosen	476392	English Facilitator	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Renee Swanson	452059	Science Facilitator	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stella Warira	448967	Special Education Facilitator	<input type="checkbox"/>	x
Darryl Young	384827	Special Education Facilitator	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

³ This table contains information for ALL teachers employed by the school or providing services contractually (e.g., special education teacher, reading specialist, speech therapist).

Finances

The financial stability of High School for Recording Arts has been solid during its 17 years of operations. The school has consistently maintained a fund balance and robust financial health. A budget for the 2014-15 year was approved on June 25, 2014. The original budget and the revised budget which was approved June 2015, are shown below. The original budget was based on 250 students, but enrollment easily exceeded that, and the revised budget was based on 280 students. HSRA's final Average Daily Membership of 282.42 was the school's highest ever.

The final-revised budget as of June 2015 showed a modest increase in fund balance, after two years of decline. However, HSRA benefited from a voluntary reduction in fees by HSRA's management company, Studio 4. Due largely to this change, the fund balance increase in Fiscal 2015, by \$300,368, climbing from \$387,141 on June 30, 2014, to \$687, 519 on June 30, 2015.

HSRA Budget, 2014-15			
		Original	Final-revised
Student enrollment		250	280
REVENUE			
	General Ed Aid	2,399,092	2,894,408
	Special Ed-State	260,084	301,939
	Special Ed-Tuition Reimbursement	122,393	111,676
	Special Ed – Federal	49,000	68,670
	Lease Aid	394,200	394,200
	Title I	87,089	83,350
	Title II	10,782	13,950
	Grants & Donations	100,000	364,729
	Fed Lunch	58,100	22,247
	Fed Breakfast	1,500	7,481
	St Lunch	17,542	1,247
	St Breakfast	500	375
	HAS Program total revenues	310,700	310,700
	TOTAL REVENUE	3,810,982	4,598,101
EXPENSES			
	Salaries	1,152,553	1,116,987
	Benefits	367,335	412,521
	Consulting – Police (security); Audit; Legal; Health; and Building improvements (last item not included in Original budget; accounts for most of the increase)	157,050	250,295
	Consulting – Designs for Learning	36,000	51,800
	Consulting – Studio 4 – Admin. support & HR	124,183	188,137

HSRA Budget, 2014-15			
		Original	Final-revised
	Consulting – Studio 4 – Business mgmt.	47,763	72,360
	Consulting – Studio 4 – Music studio program	296,129	448,633
	Consulting – Studio 4 – Operations	57,315	86,832
	Consulting – Studio 4 – School admin.	429,865	651,242
	Communications	6,000	1,499
	Postage	4,000	2,884
	Utility Services	30,600	30,550
	Insurance	26,000	34,420
	Repairs & Maintenance	25,000	47,729
	Transportation	93,750	110,000
	Travel	3,500	18,453
	Operating Leases/Rent	438,000	461,060
	Sped Contract Services	-	12,604
	Supplies & Materials	68,500	106,596
	Building & Tech Equipment	23,200	62,841
	Loan Interest	5,000	4,250
	Dues & Memberships	24,700	24,700
	Food Service contractor	77,642	54,479
	HAS Program total expenditures	310,700	310,700
	TOTAL EXPENSES	3,804,786	4,582,701
	Increase (Decrease) Fund Balance	6,196	15,400

Academic Performance

HSRA Academic Program Summary

Despite the daunting challenges in serving a population whose problems seem so entrenched, so multigenerational, and so difficult to solve, we have had many examples of hard-won success. HSRA has begun to track data in more complex ways that give a richer and more accurate picture of how the school is doing.

While we strongly believe in measuring students in multiple ways, we also recognize that testing is important – especially in this controversial high stakes testing environment. Demonstrating our students’ proficiency through standardized testing is a constant struggle for us, especially since so many are so far behind when they come to our program. However, we are seeing some significant progress in this area, some continuing struggles that we are working hard to address, and are generally moving in the direction of showing the gains of our individual students that

have had continuous attendance in our program. In 2014-15, a solid majority of students who took the Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures of Academic Progress tests in both fall and spring exceeded expectations. Since most of our students enter our program significantly behind in their skill level in Reading and Math, our percentage of students who score at grade level on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments given in 10th and 11th grade has not traditionally been very high. We do, however, have a history of outperforming other area alternative charters and public schools in these test scores, and have never been identified as a Priority School under MDE's NCLB waiver. In fact, MDE has met with us and has shown considerable interest in working with schools serving populations like ours to develop more appropriate means of measuring accountability.

Detailed academic performance results are included below, in the "HSRA Academic Performance in 2014-15" section.

HSRA's academic programs engage and retain young people who might otherwise end up on the streets without a high school education. HSRA is a project based learning environment. Students learn by creating interest-driven projects overseen by their advisor. The project based curriculum provides a way for learners to navigate through the subject areas they must master on their path toward graduation. Instead of breaking up learning into specific subject areas, a learner decides on a project to work on, then seeks out teachers with relevant content-area expertise to support the project. In addition to addressing academic content standards, student-designed projects at HSRA provide hands-on experience in managing one's own work, problem solving, and how to work together as a team.

In addition to individual projects, there are group projects, small classes, and a variety of guided study opportunities based on students interests and needs. HSRA is increasing the number of community-based learning experiences available for our students; we are focusing on building more connections to the community. Community-based projects HSRA ran during 2014-15 included:

- The *Visual Inclusion Program* (VIP) at HSRA is a school-based project at HSRA that has been running since the 2011-12 school year. VIP teaches special education students how to explore the world through multiple forms of visual communication. This project was designed to create transitional opportunities for special education students by developing entrepreneurial skills, post-secondary options, community engagement and leadership skills. VIP students become experts in the field of video production and technology. VIP students are empowered by co-designing their own projects with the special education team. The program is specifically designed for the special education student, but can include opportunities for the special education to act as a consultant with regular education students. The intent of this process is to focus on each student's creative strengths and to create skills in self-advocacy, while acting as a technology consultant. VIP was designed as a unique and

innovative program that will disarm the negative stigma that is sometimes created in association with special education programs. HSRA's VIP has contracted with various organizations to create Public Service Announcement videos.

- This year HSRA continued to carry out multiple Junior Achievement courses and activities, assisted by the generous support of State Farm:
 - *JA Finance Park* helped boost our economics education and guided students through realistic personal financial planning and career exploration. The Finance Park aspect of Junior Achievement was made available to all HSRA students as a guided study. Students concluded their guided study by completing an online simulation, which gave them a real life scenario to financially plan around. Many students added an individual project to summarize their learning from this program
 - *JA Job Shadow* provided our students with the opportunity to engage in various workplaces and discover new careers, by actively shadowing employees of places such as AT&T Corporate, Microsoft, and Rock the Cause (RTC). Some students continue to stay in touch with their job shadow partner and RTC worked extensively with our JA Company (see below) on their endeavors throughout the year.
 - *The JA Company Program* was a year-long group project where students went through all the steps it takes to start up, run and liquidate a real company. By organizing and operating an actual business enterprise, students not only learn how businesses function, they also learn about the structure of the U.S. free enterprise system and the benefits it provides.

- *Urban Music* – The Urban Music Project continued in 2014-15 as a yearlong class where the students researched the historical constructs that have led to so many Black and Brown people being imprisoned today. Topics included the 13th amendment, Jim Crow Laws, the prison industrial complex, the war on drugs, police harassment, the New Jim Crow, recidivism, children of incarcerated parents, illegal immigration and a culminating project focusing on self-awareness/introspection. Students interpreted these topics through songs which they wrote and performed. Through *Urban Music* students develop a sense of social consciousness and a self-concept that one can have a positive effect upon their community, as well as learning about audio engineering, songwriting, instrumentation, mixing and mastering.

- HSRA's student-run company, LYME (for Leave Your Mark Everywhere) was revived during 2014-15 and carried out three marketing projects in the spring. One focused on financial literacy for young people; supported by a grant from State Farm, the student group generated a five-song EP on the subject. In another project, students created a commercial for a local senior center which was shown on tv. Finally, LYME students created a promotional spot for HSRA itself, to aid in recruiting students; this 30-second commercial was aired in

August 2015.

Here is a summary of how the HSRA program allows students to meet the State Standards in academic core areas:

Language Arts: HSRA's schoolwide approach to reading/literacy, is Daily Language Arts. Daily Language Arts (DLA) focuses on literature which is of high interest and relevant to students' lives. The DLA approach follows strategies advocated by Alfred Tatum in *Teaching Reading to Black Adolescent Males*, which seem highly applicable to HSRA's population. Specific DLA strategies include daily dictation, word walls, reading a book in common (all students and staff) supported by supplementary materials, support for learning vocabulary from context, free-writing, enrichment activities around DLA books in community meetings and student projects, and writing exercises supported by expository writing lessons. For 2014-15, DLA classes switched from 60 to to 45 minute blocks to accommodate HSRA's revised advisory schedule. DLA is offered four times a day by two separate teachers, and students are able to sign up for the time that fits their schedule.

In addition to DLA, HSRA students take a number of different English/Language Arts courses. They must demonstrate a range of writing skills, from five paragraph essays to journals to research papers with documentation. HSRA students engage in many forms of inquiry, both by themselves and in small groups. It is now common practice that students keep DLA journals where they respond to questions, reflect on the day's reading, develop and record new vocabulary, and refine their personal voice. Using these journals, along with larger group readings and multimedia activities helps HSRA students develop their skills as readers, writers, and most importantly, critical thinkers.

Public speaking opportunities abound at HSRA, and students are coached to improve their skills. HSRA also uses reading across content areas, and other disciplines which include reading, writing and speaking skills in their courses and projects. In addition to DLA, Language Arts classes/workshops during 2014-2015 included Poetry in Motion, Hip-Hop, History and The Arts, and Book Groups (students read and discussed a specific work, facilitated by a teacher).

Expository writing and response-to-text writing were taught in DLA for all students. Guided study opportunities in Language Arts included Accessing Information, Intro to English (grammar and basics of writing), Literary Analysis, Effective Communication, MCA Writing, Introduction to High School Poetry, Intermediate and Advanced High School Poetry, and Grammar.

Math: The HSRA math program is organized around *Concentrated Math*, required of all students. Concentrated Math is a highly individualized program of instruction designed in accordance with the Minnesota Academic Standards in Mathematics. HSRA utilizes a deeply differentiated spiral curriculum that addresses the four mathematics content strands comprehensively every three years, with the main focus areas addressed each year. Students are placed in skill-level groups in order to receive the appropriate level of work. Each group learns the same general topic, but groups vary in speed and depth in which they explore each topic. This creates a sense of community among the levels and blurs the lines between "low" and "high" level groups. The highest level group will explore the most advanced skills and applications related to a given topic, while the lowest group may spend

more time on the remedial skills needed to complete the standards and applications tied to the topic. Since age is not a deciding factor in the groups, purely math skill level, this structure allows us to expose the all students to the content on the MCA exams. It provides lower level students the chance to get the remediation they need, while still becoming comfortable with the topics they will see on the exam. We witnessed a rise in student confidence in even studying for the exams, as they had seen and experienced success with related material.

At the beginning of each year (or during orientation when they enroll throughout the year), every student is administered the Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test in order to establish baseline data. There is also a school-developed math diagnostic test which correlates well with the MAP. Initial results from these assessments are used to place students in targeted math groups. The results of the test informed the Concentrated Math program throughout the year.

In addition to Concentrated Math, HSRA students take additional Math courses in order to meet state standards and build the mathematical literacy skills to succeed in everyday life. Math classes/workshops offered during 2014-15 included: Skills to Pay the Bills, Sports Math (geometry/statistics focus), Aviation (math/physics), the Junior Achievement Company Program, (physics/math), and Khan Academy Workshops. There are also guided study opportunities in Math available to students. Here are some details on three of these courses:

- Aviation: Students learn about the parts of a plane, how they move and how to fly. Students learn the physics behind flight of lift, thrust, gravity and drag along with Bernoulli's Principal. They learn some history of flight and about different types of planes along with math related to aviation.
- Skills to Pay the Bills: Students in Skills to Pay the Bills learn about interest and credit and the different ways that you can earn interest and get credit. They learn about budgeting and setting goals in their budget to get bigger items. Students learn the difference between good credit and bad and scams that are out there, such as short term payday loans. They learn about net worth and net income and about taxes.
- Sports Math: Students learn about the different statistics that are done in football, baseball, and basketball and how to figure the statistics out. Using geometry skills they learn about arcs and angles when shooting or throwing that gives the best distance or chance of making a shot or throwing on target. They learn about the geometry in the shapes of the fields, courts and rings. Students use reflection points to find the hole in one in mini golf and for shooting pool.

Additional elements of the math program include Khan Academy and Junior Achievement –

- Incorporating Khan Academy as a supplement to the Concentrated and additional math courses provides key support in meeting each of our student's individual needs. Students utilize this valuable online tool as a motivating way to review remedial skills, but also to explore advanced courses with the guidance of a math instructor. This program motivates students by providing instant feedback and video tutorials that are designed for visual learners. It is also a valuable teacher tool as it provides organized data to inform instruction and assignments.
- Recognizing a need to support general confidence, enjoyment and fluency with real-life, everyday math, HSRA offers courses and options to help students gain experience in these areas. The

Junior Achievement Company Program supports learning about everyday math and also gives students hands-on experience with the financial aspects of planning and running a business. Additionally, HSRA is able to boost economics education and guide students through realistic personal financial planning and career exploration with the *Junior Achievement Finance Park* curriculum.

Social Studies: The Social Studies Program at HSRA meets the requirements laid out in the state standards through a combination of traditional classes, guided study opportunities and individual projects. The content and format of these different elements is designed to develop both subject knowledge and primary skills in a number of areas. Subject knowledge covered includes but is not limited to key events, people, places and concepts in U.S. and world history, rights and responsibilities of citizens, the role of government, economic systems and religion and cultures of the world. The program also focuses on developing key skills such as gathering, interpreting and analyzing information, understanding cause and effect, consideration of diverse perspectives, evaluating primary and secondary resources, developing and discussing ideas and concepts, and active involvement in social, economic and political issues. Social Studies workshops/classes included U.S. History, Economics, Civics, Personal Heritage Projects (exploration of family roots), Now News (focused on news media/current events), Global Issues, Language Arts Rooted in History and Social Studies Content, History of American Music, Street Law, and Urban Music.

Science: HSRA students can take a number of courses, or participate in guided study opportunities and/or projects to meet the state standards in science. HSRA science courses and other learning opportunities, such as various Biology workshops, an Environmental Science workshop called “Get Your Green,” Chemistry/Physics workshops and Senior Science, are designed to increase subject knowledge, as well as develop critical thinking skills and scientific reasoning.

Students in biology class explored life science topics related to the interdependence of living organisms, environment and ecosystems, genetic variation, cellular biology, the environmental effects of human consumption, consumerism and industrial production and science concepts related to environmental science and climate change. Students learned concepts of biology using student led inquiry, experiential learning, questioning and investigation.

Through the Get Your Green class, students explored in depth the principles of science, technology, engineering and math by studying environmental issues, electricity and renewable/alternative energy sources, green jobs/economy, and skills needed for such jobs. Students applied the knowledge they gained in the studios and developed Get Your Green music and a music video in order to educate their peers and the community. This project was exhibited and presented at the Will Steger Foundation summer institute for a group of approximately 100 environmental science educators.

Senior Science gives students the opportunity to explore science that is relevant to them from not only a science perspective, but as a productive member of society. Students then take the topics and develop relevant projects to educate the community about them.

Urban Ecology, a one-month intensive workshop, was added this year. Through this workshop

students were taught principles of urban ecology, had multiple site visits to support the content and met with community experts to expand their knowledge further. Site visits included a tour of Downtown St. Paul's EcoDistrict, a tour of a native prairie oak savannah along the Mississippi River, a tour of the Ford Parkway Lock and Dam system, site visits to community gardens and a walking tour of University Avenue's storm water management system. Students were able to meet with community experts who work with the City of St. Paul's urban planning related to storm water management, environmental advisory, native plant and invasive species management.

All coursework and curriculum is designed to meet state graduation standards. Students are always encouraged to do their own science project on subjects of their interest, and this includes earth and space science, physical science, and the life sciences.

Arts: High School for Recording Arts students meet state arts standards through active engagement in a number of artistic endeavors. They learn the technology and theory behind creating and recording music, receive individual instrumentation lessons, participate in choir and other singing groups, and perform often—both in school and at various public events. They create and host their own radio show on KMOJ FM, a Twin Cities commercially successful radio station, and are involved in video production. They also have classes in dance and theatrical improvisation. They take courses in the history of music. There is an art therapy course called Artist Café, run by the school social worker. During 2014-15, Scott Harold of Rock the Cause continued to work with students on the business of music, and especially the digital release of albums (this collaboration began during 2013-14). During 2014-15, HSRA received a Minnesota State Arts Board grant that allowed the school to work with the MacPhail Center for Music to support students performances and create a CD of students' music. To be a graduate of HSRA, students must demonstrate study of and achievement in the arts, as well as participation in an artistic community.

Initially sponsored by Lubrication Technologies, Inc., HSRA students have remained involved in graphic arts work including logo and package design, e.g. DVD label and jewel case designs. Graphic arts work continued in 2014-15 and includes individual projects and teaming with group projects as the latter need graphic-arts work done. HSRA students have also participated in commercial ventures, and have produced advertising jingles and Public Service Announcement videos.

The curriculum provides incentives for further study and higher education, lays the groundwork for personal business development, and builds students' confidence and familiarity with the services and institutions of society. Through these programs, HSRA helps turn youth with the potential of being social problems into productive members of society. HSRA's programs prepare youth to take jobs in the recording industry as well as teaching the business and job skills necessary for entry level and skilled positions in various occupations.

The HSRA program seeks to implement the Community Learning Centers (CLC) model, a national education reform design focusing on integration of learning into the community, individualizing the learning program, and obtaining active involvement of all students in their own learning. A particularly critical feature of the CLC model for the HSRA program is the

advisor/advisee system. Each student has an advisor who is responsible for understanding all the points that a learner needs to cover to complete their education, which points the learner has already completed, and which they need to complete.

HSRA Academic Performance in 2014-15

Accountability for results is at the core of the charter school concept. HSRA’s Goals and Performance Targets were extensively updated during the summer of 2014, for HSRA’s new five-year charter contract. Goals and Targets are now split into five areas, with multiple measures for each:

- Academic Goals (6 measures)
- Mission, Vision and Strategies (11 measures)
- Governance (2 measures)
- Finance (3 measures)
- Operations and Leadership (2 measures)

A table summarizing the six Academic Goals and measures follows, with the Goal/target in the left column and HSRA’s results from 2014-15 in the right column. HSRA met three of four Goals for which there were specific targets for 2014-15 (for two of the Goals, a baseline was set).

Next there is a table summarizing the eleven Mission, Vision and Strategies goals and measures. Since these goals mainly address aspects of school performance closely related to academic success (e.g. student retention, graduation rate, post-secondary acceptance and student engagement), the Academic Performance section seemed the most logical place for them. HSRA met six of the seven goals for which there were specific targets for 2014-15 (for four of the goals, there was no specific target but a baseline was set).

HSRA Academic Goals and Results, 2014-15	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NWEA Growth Target, Reading: At least 50% of students meet or exceed Growth Projection 	<p>Review of HSRA’s MAP test results showed 178 students took the MAP Reading test in the fall, and 76 tested in the spring (this includes several who tested after end of the official spring MAP test window). Forty-six students tested both times; analysis of their results shows that 29 of 46 or 63% met or exceeded their projected score. HSRA met this target.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NWEA Growth Target, Mathematics: At least 50% of students meet or exceed Growth Projection 	<p>Review of HSRA’s MAP test results showed 181 students took the MAP Math test in the fall, and 101 tested in the spring (this includes several who tested after end of the official spring MAP test window). Sixty-four students tested both times; analysis of their results shows that 40 of 64 or 63% met or exceeded their projected score.</p>

HSRA Academic Goals and Results, 2014-15

HSRA met this target.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Postsecondary or Workforce Assessment target: Baseline for Accuplacer test results to be set during 2014-15, with improvements in performance in the subsequent four years. 	<p>Review of HSRA's Accuplacer data from 2014-15 showed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 seniors took the English test (27 tested altogether); the 18 students' average score was 64.1 17 seniors took the Math test (26 students tested altogether); the 17 students' average score was 52.5 <p>These scores will serve as a baseline for increases in future years.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Credits earned, overall: Students enrolled for a full semester and in regular attendance (means attending at least 75% of days enrolled) will earn at least 4.75 credits on average 	<p>Review of enrollment and credits-earned information from 2014-15 showed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st semester: total of 77 students continuously-enrolled⁴ and with at least 75% attendance; these students earned 4.68 credits on average. 2nd semester: total of 57 students continuously-enrolled and with at least 75% attendance; these students earned 8.23 credits on average⁵. <p>Overall, the average number of credits earned for both semesters was 6.1. HSRA easily exceeded this target.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Credits earned, newly-enrolled students⁶: At least 75% of these students will complete more credits at HSRA than last previous full semester. 	<p>Review of enrollment and credits-earned information from 2014-15 showed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st semester: total of 46 students in grades 10-12 who were continuously-enrolled, though two were previously-incarcerated; average credits earned by the remaining 44 during the first semester was 3.95 credits. HSRA administration was able to find information regarding credits earned the previous full semester for 41 of these students, and the average was only 1.7 credits. Twenty-five of the 41 students earned more credits fall term at HSRA than the previous full semester. 2nd semester: total of 24 students who met the criteria (excluded students enrolled 10/1/14 or earlier); average credits earned by these students during the second semester was 5.13. HSRA administration found information regarding previous full semester credits for

⁴ Means enrolled by 10/1/14 and remaining through the end of the first semester.

⁵ The HSRA Education Manager noted, many of these students (23 of the 57) graduated and were finally finishing credit-bearing projects, some of which they had been working on much more than one semester.

⁶ Means students newly-enrolled in 2014-15, in regular attendance, for whom previous-year credits earned data is available; limited to students in grades 10-12, and will not include students who were incarcerated prior to enrolling at HSRA.

HSRA Academic Goals and Results, 2014-15	
	<p>all 24 of these students; and the average was only 2.01 credits. Nineteen of the 24 students earned more credits spring term at HSRA than the previous full semester. Overall, 44 of 65 students (68%) meeting the criteria earned more credits their first semester at HSRA. HSRA narrowly missed this target. However, it is worth noting the average <i>credits</i> earned was far higher at HSRA than last previous semester: combined average credits earned by the 65 students in this group was 4.44 at HSRA, compared to 1.82 at their previous schools.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Credits earned through Post-Secondary Enrollment Options: Baseline number of students earning PSEO credit to be set during 2014-15 	<p>HSRA supported juniors and seniors taking the Accuplacer, in order to qualify for PSEO; a number of students did qualify, and 11 earned credits through PSEO during 2014-15. This will serve as the baseline for increases in future years.</p>

HSRA Mission, Vision and Strategies Goals and Results, 2014-15	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic planning: The HSRA Board of Directors will review and update its strategic plan annually. 	<p>Completed for 2014-15, at 12/17/14 Board meeting. HSRA met this target.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student retention, within the year: Proportion of HSRA students enrolled Oct. 1 who are retained at year's end will increase in 2014-15 at least to 66%, from the baseline of 64% set during 2013-14 (this calculation excludes students who graduate before year's end). 	<p>Review of 2014-15 enrollment data showed the following: There were 280 students enrolled by October 1, 2014, who did not graduate prior to the end of the school year; of these 280 students, 178 or 63.6% remained enrolled as of the last day of the school year. HSRA narrowly missed this target.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student retention, year-to-year: The proportion of students who completed the 2013-14 school year and are eligible to re-enroll, who do return and attend HSRA for at least 12 weeks during 2014-15, will be measured during the spring of 2015 to set a baseline. 	<p>Review of enrollment data from 2013-14 and attendance data from 2014-15 showed the following: There were 205 students enrolled in June 2014, who were eligible to re-enroll (didn't graduate). Of these students, 152 or 74.1% re-enrolled during 2014-15 and stayed at least 12 weeks (60 days). Seventy-four percent will be the baseline upon which HSRA seeks to improve on this measure for 2015-16.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduation rate, annual: HSRA's graduation rate will increase in 2014- 	<p>Review of 2014-15 enrollment data showed the following: There were 82 students who met the criteria to be included in this measure, i.e. enrolled by Oct. 1 and counted as a</p>

HSRA Mission, Vision and Strategies Goals and Results, 2014-15

<p>15 from the baseline of 85% set during 2013-14⁷.</p>	<p>senior, plus students who enroll later but are deemed graduation candidates based on credits (this is 22 more than in 2013-14). Of these students, 78 or 95% graduated by year's end. HSRA met this target.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduate rate, six-year: HSRA's six-year graduation rate as reported by the Minnesota Dept. of Education, will increase over the previous year⁸. 	<p>NOTE: MDE data lags a year for this measure. The state's data shows HSRA's 2013-14 six-year grad rate was 34.5%. This counts students in the Class of 2012 and graduating in 2012, 2013 or 2014. There were a total of 119 students; 41 graduated; 24 continued; 42 dropped; status of 12 was unknown. The 34.5% rate by this measure will form a baseline for increases in future years.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-secondary acceptance: At least 90% of graduates will be accepted to college or other post-secondary institutions by graduation, as evidenced by acceptance letters in their digital portfolios. 	<p>Evidence of acceptance in a post-secondary program is required for all graduates. Most applied to and were accepted at a two-year college such as St. Paul College or Minneapolis Community Technical College; a few were accepted at four-year colleges are a trade-school. HSRA met this target.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal learning plans: At least 90% of HSRA students in regular attendance will have active personal learning plans (PLP)⁹ as judged by biannual review carried out by administration. 	<p>Advisors at HSRA work consistently with all students in regular attendance, ensuring that each of their students has a PLP around which their schoolwork is organized. HSRA has met this target by thoroughly building PLPs into standard practices put into effect through the advisory system.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project-based learning: At least 75% of HSRA students who are continuously enrolled and in regular attendance will earn at least some of their credits through school-based projects. 	<p>Review of 2014-15 enrollment data showed 46 students met the criteria for this measure, i.e. enrolled by 10/1/14, remained continuously enrolled through the end of the school year, and attended at least 75% of days enrolled. Of these students, 42 or 91% earned projects credits; HSRA met this target.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent engagement: HSRA staff will engage caregivers of those students who are consistently living with a caring adult¹⁰: Baseline proportion of caregivers contacted will be measured in 2014-15, and targets for improving 	<p>Review of 2014-15 enrollment data showed a total of 142 students continuously enrolled, i.e. enrolled by 10/1/14 and remaining to the end of the school year. Review of the list by advisors showed 72 of the 142 students living with a caring adult; in 62 cases the adult had been contacted (86%). The 86% rate by this measure will form a</p>

⁷ Graduation rate is defined as: proportion of continuously-enrolled students in the program as of Oct. 1 who are deemed graduation candidates based on credits, combined with the proportion of students who enter later but who are deemed graduation candidates based on credits, who do graduate by year's end.

⁸ Specific Targets will be set for 2014-15 and the subsequent three years in the spring of 2015, when six-year graduation rate data for 2013-14 will be available.

⁹ Active means there is a completed PLP form, the PLP is reviewed with the student regularly, and is used as a framework for the student's program.

¹⁰ This sub-set of HSRA students will be defined based on advisors' knowledge of students' living arrangements.

HSRA Mission, Vision and Strategies Goals and Results, 2014-15	
on this baseline set for the subsequent four years.	baseline for increases in future years.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student engagement: HSRA students will continue to show higher ratings on EdVisions' Hope Survey¹¹ administered in the spring, than students at traditional schools. 	<p>HSRA students took the Hope Survey in the spring of 2015. Surveyed students' overall Hope rating was 54.71. This is an increase from spring 2014 when HSRA's overall rating was 52.58, HSRA's result remains well ahead of the traditional schools' average composite score of 47.66.</p> <p>HSRA met this target.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student re-engagement: Proportion of students who previously dropped out will be consistently tracked in 2014-15 and a baseline set defined in terms of the fraction of these students who were enrolled by Oct. 1 and remained at the end of the year. 	<p>This information is self-reported by newly-enrolling students; a total of 49 students who enrolled by October 1, 2014 reported having previously dropped out. Thirty-six of these students (73.5%) remained enrolled at the end of the school year¹². The 73.5% rate by this measure will form a baseline for increases in future years.</p>

Operational Performance

Accountability for results is at the core of the charter school concept. HSRA's Goals and Performance Targets were extensively updated during the summer of 2014, for HSRA's new five-year charter contract. Goals and Targets are now split into five areas, with multiple measures for each:

- Academic Goals (6 measures)
- Mission, Vision and Strategies (11 measures)
- Governance (2 measures)
- Finance (3 measures)
- Operations and Leadership (2 measures)

Academic and Mission, Vision and Strategies goals are addressed in the above section. The tables below summarize HSRA's 2014-15 goals, measures and results in Governance, Finance and Operations and Leadership. HSRA met six of the seven targets in these areas.

¹¹ The Hope Survey instrument measures several constructs relating to school environment and the extent to which students feel supported, engaged, and optimistic about their ability to succeed. The constructs measure Engagement; Autonomy; Belongingness; Goal Orientation; and Academic Press. There is a composite scale combining all the constructs measured, on which possible scores run from 0-64.

¹² It is also worth noting that 13 of the 36 remaining students graduated at the end of the school year. Eight of the 36 were un-enrolled (dropped out) at some point during the 2014-15 year but returned by the end of the year

HSRA Operational Performance in 2014-15

HSRA Governance Goals and Results, 2014-15	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board assessment: At least 60% of HSRA Board members will annually complete a survey to identify areas for improvement. 	<p>HSRA's Board completed a self-assessment in April 2014 but this was not done during 2014-15. HSRA did not meet this target.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board training: At least 60% of HSRA Board members will attend an annual customized training to enhance their skills and knowledge in Governance, Personnel, and Finance. 	<p>Training was held in the three required areas, with at least 60% of members attending in each case:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance: training held Nov. 12, 2014, provided by HSRA's financial services provider Designs for Learning; three of five members attended Governance: training held Dec. 17, 2014, provided by attorney John Cairns; four of five members attended (however the individual who was absent was trained on Governance on Feb. 25, 2015) Personnel (employment law): training held 2/25/15, provided by John Cairns: four of five members attended training

HSRA Finance Goals and Results, 2014-15	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit findings: HSRA will have fewer than eight findings in the 2013-14 audit. 	<p>NOTE: This measure lags a year, and the annual report is due before the audit is complete. HSRA's auditor reported to the Board on Feb. 25, 2015, the HSRA had only three minor audit findings in the Fiscal 2014 audit. HSRA met this target.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund Balance: HSRA will maintain a positive fund balance as of 6/30/15 	<p>Audited Financial Statements show HSRA's Fund Balance increased by just over \$300,000 from 6/30/14 to 6/30/15: from \$387,151 to \$687,519. HSRA met this target.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundraising: HSRA will increase the proportion of revenue from donors during 2014-15, from the baseline baseline of 1.8% in 2013-14. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FY14: Revenue from grants and donations totaled \$47,404 FY15: Grants & donations totaled \$150,942 (per un-audited figures as of 10/13/15) <p>HSRA is meeting this target.</p> <p>NOTE: HSRA's Board discussed this measure at its December 2014 meeting and would like to revise the measure to reference amount of revenue from donors rather than proportion of the total.</p>

HSRA Operations and Leadership Goals and Results, 2014-15	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development Plans: At least 80% of staff employed throughout the year will have two PDP/Review meetings 	<p>There were 39 staff employed at HSRA during 2014-15. HSRA administration reports, virtually all staff had the two meetings; and set and completed SMART goals. So although numeric data was not available on the 39 staff members' review meetings and SMART goals, the two Operations and Leadership Goals can be considered complete. HSRA is meeting this target.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff SMART goals completion: At least 80% of HSRA staff employed throughout the year will complete SMART goals set forth in their initial meetings. 	

Program Successes

Program successes and best practices in place as HSRA during 2014-15 included the following:

- HSRA students who remain continuously enrolled are making progress in Reading and Mathematics as shown by fall and spring pre-post scores on the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). Analysis of 2014-15 pre-post data showed that 63% of students who took the test in both fall and spring met or exceeded projected spring scores, in both Reading and Math.
- Renewal of the charter contract: In the spring of 2014 HSRA's charter contract was approved by its authorizer, Pillsbury United Communities, for the maximum term of five years.
- Successful restructuring of the school, with the establishment of three departments: Academic, Studio and Administration. Revision of staffing structure began with HSRA's move to its new building in 2013. For the 2013-14 school year staffing was reorganized with the establishment of the three departments of Academic, Studio, and Administration; beginning in 2014-15 Student Support and Engagement was added as a fourth department. Lead staff from each of the four departments plus lead administrative staff meet on a regular basis to review current data on school operations and plan improvements. HSRA leadership is continuing to consider revisions to school organization to ensure good results and staff accountability.
- Continuing to effectively serve Homeless students. A large proportion of HSRA's students experience homelessness, as discussed below in the Program Challenges section. However, an analysis of semester-credits earned, by homeless students who remained continuously enrolled for a full semester, showed that these students earned an average of 3.6 credits per semester in 2013-14, and 4.4 per semester in 2014-15. Earning five credits per semester is considered to be on-track for graduation, so many homeless students are making the expected academic progress.

- At HSRA, every student has a Personal Learning Plan (PLP), developed by the student, their advisor and with involvement by parents requested. The PLP reflects the student's own interests and aspirations, as well as their needs in terms of earning academic credits toward graduation. PLPs are informed by assessment data such as MAP test results.
- Continuing success of the Visual Inclusion Program (VIP), a strategy designed to create transitional opportunities for special education students by developing entrepreneurial skills, post-secondary options, community engagement and leadership skills. First established during 2011-12, VIP empowers special education students by focusing on their creative strengths, and allowing them to use these strengths while learning about video production and technology.
- HSRA student projects that keep learning relevant to students' lives included the Junior Achievement programs and HSRA's student-run weekly radio program, *Studio 4 All Access*.
- Requiring graduation portfolios from all graduates, including a college acceptance letter. This requirement for graduation has been in place since 2009-10. HSRA's guidance counselor provides assistance to seniors in applying to colleges; their acceptance letters are part of their graduation portfolio which is required for graduation. Students are also required to work with the guidance counselor on their Financial Aid Form. Staff have observed that the college application process helps students think through what they want to do after graduation, helping them prepare for the next stage in life.
- Effective support for the advisory system. HSRA's lead advisor serves as a mentor to all advisors, with particular attention to new staff. The lead advisor coaches instructional staff in state standards and HSRA's graduation process, so staff understand how to help meet graduation requirements through HSRA's portfolio-based system. Time is scheduled for each advisor to meet with the lead advisor. The lead advisor monitors the other advisors' students' work in reading and math to ensure standards are met, and observes the advisors to assure their effectiveness in working with students on projects. HSRA's staffing model includes lead teachers who create content for the DLA and math meetings/trainings, and carry out professional development under the oversight of the lead advisor and Education Director. HSRA's Assistant Director models best instructional techniques, and also does observations. A formal plan is in place for advisors to observe and evaluate each other; after advisors observe colleagues they discuss best practices and learned from each other so all are able to enhance their instructional strategies. HSRA's school day starts late on Fridays, so there is time Friday morning for an all-staff meeting and advisor and other committee meetings, before students arrive.

Since 2013-14 HSRA has had in place a Tiered advisory system, with three tiers: Alpha for newly-enrolled students; Beta for the majority of students; and Delta for students approaching graduation. This system remained in place during 2014-15 and worked well, but toward the spring HSRA leadership identified the need to separate some of advisory duties from the content-area teaching role. Beginning in the fall of 2015, some advisory roles are being filled by non-teaching staff, who are able to focus their full energies on advising. Also, in the spring of 2015 three staff people were identified to take responsibility for extra tracking and support for graduation candidates; HSRA leadership believes this helped increase graduation numbers.

- Implementation of Check and Connect to retain students and keep them engaged in education. This is a research-based truancy prevention program developed at the University of Minnesota, focusing on practical strategies to prevent truancy and re-engage at-risk students and families. Advisors identify students who are at risk due to factors outside school, and a staff member works with the students to help them address challenges they are facing, and stay in school. The Check and Connect program was strengthened in 2014-15 with two Americorps Promise Fellows at HSRA specifically to work with Check and Connect, each with a caseload of approximately 30 general education students. For 2015-16 Check and Connect is being implemented by advisors with all students, while those with academic or behavior red-flags are referred to lead Check and Connect staff for more intensive assistance. There is a Check and Connect student engagement coordinator, with whom new students work for two weeks after which they are passed either solely to the advisor, or additional services recommended.
- During the past several years, HSRA has utilized Daily Language Arts as its schoolwide approach to reading/literacy. Daily Language Arts (DLA) focuses on literature which is of high interest and relevant to students' lives. There is a 45-minute period every afternoon for schoolwide DLA. The DLA approach follows strategies advocated by Alfred Tatum in *Teaching Reading to Black Adolescent Males*, which are highly applicable to HSRA's population. Specific DLA strategies include schoolwide books read in common, daily dictation, word walls, support for learning vocabulary from context, free-writing, enrichment activities around DLA books in community meetings and student projects, and writing exercises supported by expository writing lessons. Beginning in 2012-13, HSRA has put a special emphasis during DLA on nonfiction and supplemental texts. As part of HSRA's effort to continue enhancing its Language Arts program, leadership has arranged for training with a reading specialist from Hamline University, focusing on effective instructional techniques for teaching the Common Core curriculum. There was a week-long training during the summer of 2014 for all instructional staff including paraprofessionals; a follow-up training was held during the summer of 2015, with two more days scheduled during the 2015-16 school year.

- HSRA’s approach to math is through a Concentrated Math program in which all students participate. Concentrated Math is a highly individualized program of instruction designed in accordance with the Minnesota Academic Standards in Mathematics. The curriculum follows a three-year cycle with each of the three years devoted to one or more of the four mathematics content strands. At the beginning of the school year, each student is administered the NWEA MAP test in math; development of the Concentrated Math program is informed by the results of this assessment.

- Also during 2014-15 HSRA was fortunate to receive a number of grants. External support enhances particular aspects of the program, and also gives evidence of interest in our program by outside funders. In particular, HSRA would like to thank the following funders:
 - Promise Fellow grant, supporting two Promise Fellows who focused on the Check and Connect program for 2014-15
 - Global Citizens Network grant for \$46,000, awarded in the spring, to take 10 students and two staff to Kenya for volunteer work, on a health care center during 2014-15. This trip took place during the summer of 2015.
 - State Farm grant for \$12,000 that went into general funds to help support the efforts of the school.
 - The Minnesota Department of Education, and collaborating charter school Minnesota Internship Center, for a Homeless Education (McKinney-Vento) grant. For the second year, this grant provided a homeless liaison, at HSRA two days a week, and supports for homeless students attending HSRA (\$39,900 grant split between the two schools).
 - The Crutchfield Dermatology Foundation for \$2,500 for scholarships awarded to students.
 - Wilder Foundation for \$5,600.
 - Minnesota State Arts Board grant for \$146,657, to create a year-long collaboration with MacPhail Center for Music to create a CD and student performances. MacPhail music instructors came to HSRA to work with students on instrumentation and vocals for material for the cd. Also in conjunction with the Arts Board grant, local performer and recording artist J.D. Steele worked with a choir of students, from HSRA and other schools.
 - Community Creativity Cohort grant from the Bush Foundation – HSRA received a \$100,000 grant from this program which allowed sixteen arts organizations from Minnesota and the Dakotas to share ideas, best practices and challenges and for the Bush Foundation to analyze this information (see <https://www.bushfoundation.org/grants/community-creativity-cohort>). HSRA was the only school among the Community Creativity grantees.

Program Challenges

The nature of HSRA’s student population creates a number of challenges. We serve students who are highly mobile, many coming from unstable home settings. Most do not live with their parents; many are teen parents or carry out parental roles to younger siblings. Most behind academically, many are involved in the criminal-justice system, and close to half are homeless at some point during the year. Serving this population creates challenges which HSRA tries to address through a number of strategies. We employ a full time social worker who addresses issues of teen homelessness, trying to help students find stability in school and in their lives. The social worker connects students to human services resources that can help with issues of housing and medical care. HSRA also has a school nurse (via a contract for services) on-site regular hours each week, who can refer students to medical care. Starting in the fall of 2012, the social worker is being assisted on services relating to housing for homeless students, by a Homeless Liaison who is provided through a grant on which HSRA collaborated with the Minnesota Internship Center Charter School.

The below table sheds light on HSRA’s student demographics.

HSRA Student Body, 2011-2015¹³				
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Total enrollment, fall	196	187	235	278
Gender				
Male	60%	57%	52%	56%
Female	40%	43%	48%	44%
Ethnicity				
African-American	89%	82%	78%	74%
Caucasian	4%	7%	12%	9%
Hispanic	3%	3%	1%	5%
Asian or Native American	4%	8%	9%	11%
Eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch	96%	92%	90%	99%
Receiving special education services	25%	21%	23%	23%

During 2014-15, almost all of HSRA’s students were eligible for free or reduced-price school lunch; 23% had active IEP’s as of October 1. The following risk factor data was collected during the 2013-14 school year (but demographics remained similar during 2014-15):

- Of HSRA students that do live with a parent or guardian, about half of those parents/guardians struggle with addiction issues.
- Upon enrollment, 65% of students report being formally involved with the criminal justice system.

¹³ Figures here are based on October 1 figures reported by MDE.

- Upon enrollment, almost 40% of students report being kicked out or excluded from their previous schools.
- HSRA students' average age as of the beginning of the 2013-14 school year was 17.9¹⁴; about half the students in attendance are over 18.
- The average HSRA student is over a year and a half behind in credits upon enrollment.

About half of HSRA students are categorized as homeless or highly mobile at some point during the year. This figure was higher than ever early in the 2015-16 school year, with 60% of students categorized as homeless/highly mobile in October 2015. Also, per an intake survey done in the fall of 2013, 73% of incoming students had been out of school prior to enrolling, for an average of 6.47 months.

As the above data documents, HSRA's individualized program helps highly mobile students by providing a learning setting that they can leave and then return to without forfeiting whatever progress they had made, as would be the case in a school with conventional semester-long courses (HSRA does offer semester-long courses as well, but students who are engaged are able to receive partial credit if they have to leave the program). While we strongly encourage students to remain enrolled, and make sure they know consistent attendance is necessary to make steady academic progress, the circumstances of their lives sometimes force them to leave school for a time. Also, to accommodate students enrolling at different times during a term, there is an orientation program that takes several days, during which enrolling students go through organized activities to learn about the program and create an individualized learning plan. The orientation is offered multiple times during the year, not only during the first week of school.

To enhance safety, HSRA has implemented the Crisis Prevention Institute's methodology for de-escalating violent and potentially violent situations. The aim is for crisis situations to be handled more effectively, by being taken out of learning areas by a staff person, resulting in fewer disruptions of student learning. HSRA staff have been trained in the Nonviolent Crisis Intervention approach. This is a nationally-recognized training developed by the Crisis Prevention Institute (<http://www.crisisprevention.com/>) based in Brookfield, Wisconsin. HSRA's Security Director is certified as a CPI trainer, and provides training in the approach to other staff. Also, HSRA now retains off-duty police officers to support front-desk security staff; student response to this has been very positive.

Other challenges faced by HSRA during 2014-15 included:

- Serving a large special education population. HSRA serves a large proportion of students with special learning needs: Twenty-three per-cent as of October 2014, the same figure as the previous year. HSRA serves many students who have special needs which are not identified

¹⁴ Calculated based on the age of all 408 students who were enrolled at any time during the 2013-14 school year, but using their age as of the first day of school in September 2014.

immediately. The most common areas of disability are Learning-Disabled and Emotional-Behavioral Disabilities. The proportion of special education students served is typically around 30% per program staff. In serving its special-needs students, HSRA staff have found that on the one hand, African American youth are often over-identified for special learning needs in previous schools; and on the other hand, other schools are often slow to send documentation of students' IEP's. At HSRA every student has a Personal Learning Plan (PLP); for special-needs students, the PLP advances the goals of the IEP.

- The federal/state requirement that high schools be evaluated based on students' on-time (four-year) graduation rate is problematic for HSRA. By design the school serves students who are significantly behind in credits and academic skills; about half of our students are aged 18-21. When a student enrolls at age 17 or 18 with only a handful for high school credits from previous schools, it is impossible for that student to graduate "on time." Newly entering students have consistently been a year and a half behind in credits on average. State-monitored measures now include five- and six-year graduation rates (reported on above, beginning of the Academic Program Summary section) which are better, but still problematic as students who only enroll for a short time and then fail to graduate, are counted against the school in these calculations. The state's graduation measures also do not include students who graduate in their seventh year or after they turn twenty-one; HSRA had fifteen such students during 2014-15.
- Attendance continues to be a challenge. Given the chaotic nature of students' lives outside school, attending school consistently is very difficult for many. Per almost-final 2014-15 attendance data, overall percent-of-attendance was 54.3%, which is close to the figure for 2013-14. HSRA's Student Support and Engagement department makes attendance and retention of student a priority. To encourage students to remain engaged with their education and attend school regularly, HSRA has implemented a set of strategies including phone calls to students who are unexpectedly absent, home visits to targeted students, and supporting students in their efforts to access transportation, housing, healthcare, and jobs, factors which interfere with many students' ability to attend school consistently. The Check and Connect program, first implemented in 2013-14, is part of the school's ongoing effort to engage and re-engage students in learning.
- Finally, HSRA's increased student enrollment during 2014-15 led to challenges in terms of adequacy of space. Though the new facility has much more space than the previous building, there was crowding in the lunchroom space, and inadequate gym space for HSRA's basketball program, which is becoming popular as a draw for a number of students (HSRA is fortunate to have a basketball court, but it is not a full size court, and there is no space for spectators). Second-floor space for the learning program also began to be less than ideal, particularly with HSRA's move toward a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts,

and Math) focus. With renovations being undertaken at the site during 2015-16, there will be a larger gym and more learning space on the second level as well.

Innovative Practices and Implementation

As the only public high school in Minnesota that is co-located with a professional music recording studio, HSRA is a highly innovative program! HSRA also employs recognized best practices for drop-out recovery. The Reaching At-Promise Students Association (RAPSA, online at www.rapsa.org) lists the following best practices for drop-out recovery:

- Open entry / open exit enrollment
- Individualized learning pedagogies tailored to student needs and goals
- Technology and innovative modalities such as blended learning and project-based learning
- Access to and/or partnerships for wrap-around services for students

HSRA has been using these practices since its inception.

In addition to the music recording industry focus and utilization of best practices for drop-out recovery, innovative practices in place at the school during 2014-15 included the following:

- Professional Learning Communities for HSRA teaching staff: staff observe each other teaching, discuss their work and provide feedback, on a peer-to-peer basis. Also, two teaching strategies were adopted from *Teach Like a Champion: 49 Techniques that Put Students on the Path to College*, by Doug Lemov. The strategies were No Opt Out, and Cold Calling (first adopted in 2010-11, and continued since).
- HSRA's project-based focus, described elsewhere in this Report, is an innovative approach to meeting academic standards while utilizing students' own interests to power the learning process. The project-based learning focus is supported by well-equipped workspaces: each student has their own desk and computer, providing an office-like work environment.
- High-level group projects including corporate sponsorships often focusing on socially-relevant issues.
- Integration of student learning with real-world practice, e.g. by supporting public events with artistic performance, sound and technical support; and access to commercial radio exposure for public service announcements and publicity.
- The Check and Connect program, a strategy to improve student attendance and retention, is another innovative practice in place at HSRA.

- In January 2011, HSRA agreed to begin acting as the nonprofit host of the HIV/AIDS/STD Prevention and Awareness (HAS) program which had been managed by The City Inc. in Minneapolis (official name Check Yo' Self Health and Wellness Center). When The City Inc. closed, the HAS program appealed to HSRA to act as its fiscal agent and host. This program has provided prevention services to youth aged 13-24 for over 18 years, with funding through the state of Minnesota. Last spring, the Check and Connect crew from HAS won the Teenwise Minnesota Teenagers of the Year Award. HSRA benefits from the co-location of this program at its facility because this allows better accessibility for HSRA students to the STD education, prevention and testing resources HAS provides. This relationship continued since. HAS is now organizationally integrated into HSRA, and moved with HSRA to its new facility for the fall of 2013.
- Team-teaching around real-world authentic projects.
- The Visual Inclusion Program, described elsewhere in this report, which creates transitional opportunities for special education students by developing entrepreneurial skills, post-secondary options, community engagement and leadership skills.

HSRA and the Statutory Purposes of Minnesota Charter Schools

The High School for Recording Arts is meeting the primary and additional purposes of charter schools per MN Statute. The primary purpose of improving all pupil learning and all student achievement is met by providing a quality learning program and additional supports for students, as described throughout the report.

HSRA also meets the five additional purposes of charter schools:

- HSRA increases learning opportunities for all pupils by providing a unique and innovative learning program that serves students who have not done well in traditional public or alternative schools.
- HSRA employs different and innovative teaching methods: teaching staff are skilled in facilitating project-based learning, integration of learning with real-world practice, and learning in the music and video production studios.
- HSRA measures learning outcomes, and has created different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes, through its Goals and Performance Targets, which now require the school to measure its performance in five areas: Academics; Mission, Vision and

Strategies; Governance; Finance; and Operations and Leadership.

- HSRA participates in establishing new forms of accountability for schools, through its charter contract with the authorizer.
- HSRA is creating new professional opportunities for teachers, including participating in school planning through the departments and through all-school planning sessions during the summer. HSRA has established unique career-ladder opportunities for teachers with the creation of its system of Departments. Two of HSRA's four Departments, the Academic and Student Support and Engagement departments, are headed by teachers.

Future Plans

For the future, HSRA plans to continue the successful practices currently in place while continually reviewing and enhancing the program, through summer staff sessions and ongoing development activities carried out by school leadership.

Fully utilizing its new facility continues to be a major focus for HSRA. The long-term vision for HSRA's facility is to become a "Twin Cities Youth Village":

The Twin Cities Youth Village has the potential to be one of the most recognizable symbols in the Midwest. The vision that HSRA founder David "T.C." Ellis and program director Tony Simmons have had has emerged into a reality. Education is just the beginning. The Village would feature campus housing to assist our young people who need residency. A community-learning center could assist students in their schoolwork and the Open Arms Substance Abuse Prevention Program would provide a safe place for teens facing issues with addiction. The Village would help expand the project-based curriculum forward to enhance educational possibilities. All of these facets encompass amazing potential.

The new facility is envisioned as a youth-centered, 21st century learning and community center featuring Studio 4's state of the art music recording studios, gymnasium, and commercial kitchen. HSRA leadership is proud to take HSRA into its next chapter with this new facility which aims to be a beacon of hope to the youth of our community and their families. HSRA began planning to purchase its facility via the school's Building Company, a separate nonprofit corporation; planning intensified in the spring of 2015 and was successful as of October 2015, when bonds were approved for purchase of the facility by the Building Company. Purchase of the facility closed on October 9.

HSRA leadership also carried out planning for the further development of the site once ownership is transferred. Planned enhancements include building an enlarged gym on the ground-floor and constructing additional learning space on the second floor.

In planning the move to a new facility, HSRA staff initiated a process to re-imagine HSRA's operations. This process included considering revising the staffing structure to fit the new space and to streamline communications. HSRA is positioning itself for capacity building to fully take advantage of the opportunities available with this larger and high-profile space.

HSRA also plans to create a community learning resource center, specifically for engagement with the community, including parents. The resource center, which will be developed in the coming years, will include a computer lab and other resources available to the public. HSRA also has plans to work with a major financial institution to provide financial literacy related training to families and community.

HSRA is moving forward on different components of the Twin Cities Youth Village, the first of which is providing housing for students who are homeless and highly-mobile (almost half of HSRA's student body). HSRA is committed to working with community partners, individuals and organizations that share the goal of housing for our students, to make this a reality.

Finally, HSRA is committed to working with its authorizer and other committed parties such as the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) and the Reaching At-Promise Students Association (RAPSA), to identify or develop relevant, appropriate and challenging measures of success for schools serving at-risk populations. This work is informed by recent research on effective strategies for drop-out prevention and recovery: examples include the Jobs for the Future report *Reinventing Alternative Education* (online at <http://www.jff.org/sites/default/files/publications/AltEdBrief-090810.pdf>), and the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools' report on *Closing the Achievement Gap: An Innovative Accountability System for Charter Schools Serving Significant Populations of Students Under Minnesota's Graduation Incentives Law*, released January 2013. The Anecdotes Aren't Enough report, created by a NACSA working group of which Program Director Tony Simmons was a member, is available at <http://charteringquality.org/anecdotes-arent-enough/>. Mr. Simmons continues to participate in a national working group convened by NACSA to study alternative measures for alternative populations and make recommendations. HSRA is planning to gather additional data on students in anticipation of acceptance of alternative measures for schools that are serving as drop-out recovery programs.