



MN Guild of Public Charter Schools July 2024 Newsletter

Single-purpose authorizer of Public Charter Schools in Minnesota

Director's Update

Jim Zacchini, Executive Director



Hello Everyone,

This month, I want to give a shout-out to Skyline Math & Science Academy (SMSA) for receiving the ***Closing the Educational Opportunity Gap Grant***. This 500k grant over two years is a testament to the outstanding work SMSA does daily to close educational gaps in their school community.

We recently held a Contract Renewal Kick-off meeting for six schools, a valuable opportunity to share school successes and build community. We appreciate the entire Community School Excellence team for hosting and welcoming us at their new high school site. Special thanks to Kazoua Kong-Thao for addressing all the school leaders and sharing insights about CSE's progress over the years.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Our annual **Summer Convening** will be held virtually this year on **August 6, 2024**, beginning at 9:00 AM. Stay tuned for a formal agenda, calendar invitation, and a Zoom link shortly after Independence Day. This year's topics will include student-centered/teacher-powered practices in the pursuit of high-quality charters, annual reporting, and Google Classroom updates. Finally, I wanted to ask that you take the time to note some important dates Miss Debbie has included throughout this month's newsletter that are time-sensitive.

Wishing you all a wonderful summer. --Jim

MN Guild Bulletin Board



SAVE the DATE

FY25 Annual Summer Convening - August 6, 2024 Time: 9 am to 2 pm

Please Note:

Quarterly Billing Dates FY25

These are the dates to watch your email for your quarterly invoice from the MN Guild for your quarterly authorizer fees.

Q1: August 15, 2024

Q2: November 15, 2024

Q3: February 15, 2025

Q4: May 15, 2025



SPOTLIGHT ON SKYLINE MATH & SCIENCE ACADEMY

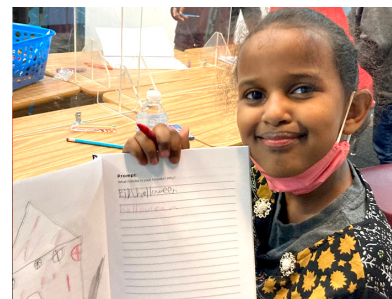
The MN Guild is proud to spotlight Skyline Math & Science Academy this month.

Congratulations to Skyline Math & Science Academy for receiving the Closing Educational Opportunity Gaps Grant Program for FY25.

Skyline Math and Science Academy, a new public charter elementary school, will put into practice the latest research on successful twenty first century schools: a rigorous curriculum, an effective cultural pedagogy, and forming solid and positive relationships with students and their parents.

Skyline represents children and families primarily from the East African, African American and Indian American communities and are located in neighborhoods of high poverty throughout the Twin Cities Metro but especially in north and northeast Minneapolis. Skyline Math and Science Academy will prepare all children, regardless of their socio-economic or cultural background, to achieve and excel in their grade level and to build the social and emotional competencies to be successful learners and positive contributors to their families, communities and the greater society. Building a strong academic program within a safe and nurturing school is the goal for Skyline Math and Science Academy. When families and the school have strong and positive relationships, students will excel and reach their full potential. Skyline Math and Science Academy believes every student can learn if the right mechanisms are in place. The school is committing to ambitious student learning and achievement goals, for growth toward proficiency in reading/language arts, math and science; as outlined below under Goals and Student Performance.

The MN Guild would like to congratulate Skyline Math & Science Academy for being the FY25 recipient of the Closing Educational Opportunity Gaps \$500,000 Grant Program. Thank you Skyline Math & Science Academy for all you do...



MN Guild Partners & Resources

Leading the way to excellence



Each section contains updates relevant to those nutrition programs. You can jump to the section you're interested in by clicking the link.

- [All Nutrition Programs](#)
- [Child and Adult Care Food Program \(CACFP\)](#)



- [School Nutrition Programs \(SNP\)](#)

Governor Walz and Lieutenant Governor Flanagan announced \$8 million to support mentorship programs for new teachers in teacher shortage areas, including special education. Grantees will work with districts and schools throughout the state to support mentoring programming for new teachers.

"Positive mentorship can be the difference between a fulfilling career and burnout," said Governor Walz. "Teachers are supporting, mentoring, and caring for our kids every day. If we are to fulfill our mission of creating the best state in the country for children, we must take care of our teachers. These grants are a step forward in filling gaps and providing necessary resources in a demanding profession."

"Investing in teachers is common sense. When they are cared for and supported, students reap the benefits," said Lieutenant Governor Flanagan. "These mentorship grants are providing that support and helping ensure the presence of high-quality, diverse teachers in the areas where they're most needed. We're building a strong teacher workforce that will have positive benefits for years to come."

Reminder: Now Open –2024 LSTA Grant Opportunity

State Library Services is pleased to announce the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) competitive grant opportunity for Federal Year 2024.

An estimated \$400,000 is available to fund grant proposals ranging from \$10,000 to \$75,000 that help to achieve Minnesota's [LSTA Five-Year Plan \(2023-2027\)](#). Grant awards will support projects that address LSTA Goals A, B and C. The overarching goals are to reduce barriers to access, promote equity, showcase libraries contributions to community, and empower Minnesota's library workforce.

Completed applications are due July 12, 2024.

Grant applications and instructions are available on the Minnesota Department of Education's [LSTA Grants website](#). If there are questions or additional information is needed, please contact [Maddie Rudawski](#), State Library Services, 651-582-8400.

Social Studies Standards Update

The [2021 K–12 Academic Standards in Social Studies](#) were adopted on March 11. The revised standards are scheduled for full implementation in the 2026–27 school year. Resources supporting implementation of the standards will be available on the [Social Studies Implementation webpage](#).

Upcoming Opportunities

Culturally Responsive Arts Curriculum Institute & Cohort

What: The Culturally Responsive Arts Curriculum Cohort is a three-day professional development opportunity to support arts educators in identifying inequities in their arts curriculum and ways to make it more culturally responsive.

Who: Educators providing arts instruction and/or providing arts curriculum oversight, development, and support.

Where: Summer Institute will be held in the Twin Cities metro area, plus three professional development days (two virtual, one in-person).

When: July 9–11; School year PD days are to be determined.

How: For more information and to register, please visit [MDE's Culturally Responsive Arts Education webpage](#).

Centering Muslim Youth Identity in Arts Education: Fostering Creativity, Identity, and Family and Community Engagement

What: This free, two-day institute will support K-12 arts educators and administrators in reimagining how arts education can meaningfully include the voices and perspectives of Muslim students, families, and communities.

Who: This is designed for K-12 arts educators and administrators serving Muslim students. Educators in all arts areas are welcome, and music educators and administrators are especially encouraged to attend.

Where: Twin Cities metro location, TBD

When: Aug. 1, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m., and Aug. 2, noon–7 p.m.

How: To register, please fill out this [Centering Muslim Youth Identity in Arts Education registration form](#). Registration is first come, first served. Registrants will receive a confirmation email. Contact [Alina Campana](#), arts specialist, if there are questions.

Accessibility, Inclusion, and Community in the Arts Classroom – Registration Open

- **August 13–15, 2024**
- **10 a.m.–4 p.m.**
- **Minnesota Department of Education, 400 Stinson Blvd NE, Minneapolis, MN**
- [Register for the Accessibility, Inclusion, and Community in the Arts Classroom Series](#)

This three-day professional development series created and delivered by Upstream Arts is designed to provide creative instruction strategies toward the goal of adding depth to teacher best practices, expanding classroom culture, and strengthening student to student, and student to educator relationships. The course will offer an immersion in Upstream Arts' proven methodology of engaging students with and without disabilities while exploring concepts and activities designed to enhance creativity and student autonomy.

Empower {MN:CS}

Who: K–12 Educators, Administrators, Counselors, Coaches

What: Empower {MN:CS}, presented by MDE, Northern Lights Collaborative for Computing Education, Raspberry Pi Foundation, CSforAll-MN, and CSTA-MN, is an in-person professional learning experience designed to provide K–12 educators with the guidance, support, and resources to create a computer science pathway in their school districts.

Where: University of Minnesota

When: Aug. 13–15

How: [Register on the Empower {MN:CS} website](#)

Important Ideas and Research

Research Highlights Reciprocity Between Reading, Writing, and Exchanging Ideas

“Writing strengthens reading and reading strengthens writing.”

– Deane & Traga Philippakos, 2024, p. 770

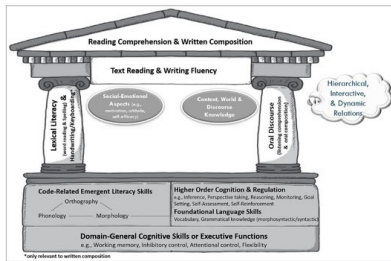
The first important concept to consider named in the introduction to the [2020 MN K–12 Academic Standards in English Language Arts \(ELA\)](#) is reciprocity between strands. Reciprocity is the idea that the three strands—1) Reading, 2) Writing, and 3) Listening, speaking, viewing and exchanging ideas (LSVEI)—are mutually beneficial and best support student learning when taught in relationship with each other. The 2020 ELA Standards Committee attended to abundant research that shows that students who learn skills through writing instruction better master aligned skills in reading instruction (2020 ELA Standards, p. 4). The takeaway is that students should have ample opportunity to write and talk about what they read, and vice versa.

Three recent articles published in *The Reading Teacher*, a journal from the International Literacy Association, discuss the important connections between reading and writing specifically.

In “Writing and Reading Connections: A Before, During, and After Experience for Critical Thinkers,” Deane and Traga Philippakos (2024) argue that connected writing and reading nurtures thinking across skills. Writing can help learners get ready for reading and reflect on what they have learned both during and after reading. Reading also plays an important role in writing. Often students write about what they have read. They also read their own writing and their classmates' writing in order to move through the revision and editing process.

Additionally, reading and writing are often connected in terms of literary elements such as author's purpose. Deane and Traga Philippakos (2024) explain that students understand written arguments better if they have had sufficient practice creating arguments of their own, and they are likely to write better arguments if they have had practice reading and responding to the arguments of others (p. 770). Identifying arguments while reading and writing to argue are both represented in the 2020 ELA Standards.

Kim and Zagata's (2024) "Enhancing Reading and Writing Skills through Systematically Integrated Instruction" discusses how reading and writing are related. The authors cite a recent meta-analysis of a large body of research, which showed that "students who are strong in word reading tend to be strong in spelling and vice versa, and similarly, students who are strong in reading comprehension tend to be strong in written composition and vice versa (Kim, Wolters, & Lee, 2024)" (p. 1). The article includes an Interactive Dynamic Literacy Model:



This model demonstrates the hierarchical, interactive, and dynamic relationship between reading and writing. The article offers three implications for this reciprocal nature of reading and writing:

1. Districts and schools should leverage assessment data in reading and writing to inform effective reading and writing instruction,
2. It is important to take not an either-or approach, but both when developing lower order skills and supporting the development of higher order skills, and
3. Reading-writing connections should be made visible to students.

The final article we share today is Mohret al.'s (2024) "Evidence-Based Practice to Enliven Integrated Reading-to-Writing Instruction." The authors highlight six evidence-based instructional practices—including details about each practice and recommendations for implementation—that support the reading-writing connection:

1. Integrated Reading and Writing via Genre Study
2. Drop Everything and Write
3. Goal Setting and Progress Feedback
4. Rubric-Guided Peer Feedback
5. Disciplinary Writing to Learn
6. Problem-Based Argumentative Writing

Each of these evidence-based practices can support the "synergistic power" (p. 6) of reading and writing taught together.

As you move through the [implementation phases of the 2020 ELA Standards](#), we hope you consider, discuss, and plan for ways for students to make connections between reading, writing, and exchanging ideas within authentic learning experiences. If you have any questions or would like more information about the reciprocal nature of the ELA standards, please contact MDE ELA Specialist [Kristin Bauck](#).



[AUTHORIZING](#)

2024 LEGISLATIVE PRIMERS - UPDATE

The 2024 Session of the Legislature enacted significant changes for public schools – including chartered public schools.

We are working on, and have published, a New Law Primer Series that is designed to:

1. Inform you of the dozens of changes in law the Legislature enacted this year

A basic element of the chartered public school model is a nonprofit corporation founded by teachers, parents and community folks is granted a "charter" or "public franchise" to operate a public school by a state approved entity known as an "Authorizer."

In Minnesota, an authorizer may be a traditional school district, a non-sectarian non-profit organization, a college or university, or a new nonprofit created for the sole purpose of authorizing schools (known as single-purpose authorizers).

Authorizer Role

The role of an authorizer is to ensure that the schools it authorizes fulfill the purposes for chartered public schools and that the agreed upon terms of the charter contract, in order to safeguard quality educational opportunities for students, and maintain public trust and confidence.

Authorizer Responsibilities

- 1] To review applications for new schools, grade and site expansions of current schools, and determine whether to approve or deny the applications based on sound criteria and need,
- 2] To negotiate and execute performance contracts with the schools it authorizes,
- 3] To conduct ongoing monitoring and oversight of the school's academic, operational and financial performance commensurate with the school's circumstance during the term of the charter contract, and
- 4] To evaluate the academic, operational and financial performance of the school as defined in the contract prior to the end of the contract term to determine the renewal status or the contract, or termination of the charter.

Authorizer Requirements

All authorizers must demonstrate to the State of Minnesota their capacity and ability to serve as an authorizer before authorizing schools. Information about the eligibility and approval process for authorizers, authorizer responsibilities, funding, and performance evaluation:

<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/chart/aures/>

Authorizer Accountability

In Minnesota, the performance of authorizers is required to be evaluated at least every five (5) years. Authorizers must also submit an Annual Performance Report, and an Annual Financial Income and Expenditure Report to the MN Department of Education.

The Association compiles and publishes an Annual Report on Authorizer Income & Expenditures based on the reports authorizers are required by law to submit to MDE.

2. Provide an overview of the requirements of the new law

The Series is not designed to provide all the specifics that may be required for implementation. Primers are published on our [website page](#) under Advocacy > MN Legislature & Laws.

Three new primers have come out this week:

- [Procurement Policy](#)
- [READ Act 2.0](#)
- [Special Education](#)

More will be coming the next couple of weeks; stay tuned.

CHARTER SCHOOL NEWS



Lincoln International High School, Minneapolis - On May 31st, Lincoln International High School celebrated its students' cultures and gifts through their annual Talent Show. This creative and student-led show has a long tradition at Lincoln. Some of this year's highlights included traditional dances from Ecuador and Somalia, juggling, rapping, a traditional Kichwa dance, K-Pop and rock'n'roll dances, poems, and a fashion show. (see images above)

CALENDAR

- August 13th – Charter School Administrators Meeting - Metro
- August 14th & 15th – [2024 MACS Crisis Response Team Training](#)
- August 14th - Charter School Administrators Meeting - Duluth
- August 15th - Charter School Administrators Meeting - Rochester
- September 26th - [Annual Meeting & Celebration](#)

Click on an event or [visit our website](#) for details, registration, and other events.



Teacher powered: noun

1. Equitable, student-centered schools that share power among students, families, and the full educator team.

With teachers leaving the classroom at record-high rates, we asked: What is retention like at teacher-powered schools? Could teacher-powered be an answer to the question of how to keep talented teachers?

Understanding Teacher Retention at Teacher-Powered Schools

Our latest report shows fewer teachers leave teacher-powered schools than they do schools nationwide.

The findings are encouraging and demand more research—but they are early proof that teacher-powered schools belong in any discourse on how to keep talented teachers.



[Read the executive summary.](#) [Download PDF](#)

[Coaching & School Partnerships](#)

For teams that would like more individual support, Teacher-Powered offers a range of options:

- Custom workshops. In addition to the [workshop series](#) we run regularly throughout the year, we can also build workshops adapted to your team.
- Coaching packages. We support your team over the course of days, weeks, or months as you address challenges or continually innovate with your school designs and leadership structures.
- Collaborative school partnerships. For those looking to go deeper, we offer extended partnerships, which often extend over the course of several years.

[Interested click here](#)

[Listen to the BLOG: Give them power and they will stay](#)

By Les Harrison • Dec 05, 2023

An educator's perspective on teacher-powered schools The vast majority of teachers go into education because they want to positively impact young people's lives.

The vast majority of teachers go into education because they want to positively impact young people's lives. This enthusiasm is often dampened by unrealistic expectations, little opportunity for growth, a lack of support, and no real opportunity for educators to be engaged in the decision-making processes that impact the daily lives of their students.

Stories and articles about teacher-powered schools and collaborative teacher leadership.

[The Hidden Truth on Post-Pandemic Teaching](#)



[NEW STATE REQUIREMENTS FOR BOARD TRAINING](#)

See below for our summation of changes, but, first, a few you need to know...

Minnesota State-Mandated Requirements for Charter School Board Training

As of August 1, 2024 new board members must complete state-mandated training before being seated as a new board member on July 1st.

[LEARN MORE](#)

The following Charter Source webinars need to be certified by quiz completion and submitted to school leadership:

- New Board Member Basics
- Practices of High-Performing Boards
- Open Meeting Law Deep Dive
- Top Pitfalls of Open Meeting Law
- Enhanced Data Privacy Practices Law

New board members are to complete the following additional sessions within 12 months of being seated. Board members are automatically ineligible to continue to serve if above is not completed.

- Charter School Budget Basics
- Understanding Charter School Financial
- Charter School Employment Law
- Managing Grievances Effectively and Efficiently
- Role of the Board in Academic Oversight
- Understanding Student Data – MCA
- Understanding Student Data – NWEA MAP



[REGISTER HERE](#)



**sharemy
lesson**

[Summer of Learning: Lesson Plans and Professional Development](#)

Summertime, synonymous with relaxation and sunshine, also serves as an excellent opportunity for educators, parents, and students to transition to the next academic year while promoting continuous learning and growth.

High-quality teaching resources, summer learning, and professional development offer many opportunities.

For educators, it's a time for growth, reflection, and preparation. Summer professional learning ensures educators stay informed and well-equipped to meet the diverse needs of today's students by reflecting on teaching practices, exploring innovative strategies, and aligning curricula with the latest standards.

For parents, these resources keep children engaged and learning, balancing fun with education to reinforce past lessons and explore new interests.

For students, summer learning resources allow exploration beyond the traditional classroom, delving into arts, science, and literature, making learning enjoyable and engaging.

The preK-12 collection of free Share My Lesson summer learning resources includes four sections: summer teaching resources for educators and parents; on-demand webinars for professional development credit; news lessons and blogs; and self-care ideas.

Whether you seek rest, professional development credit, or are teaching summer school, Share My Lesson has the resources you need to make the most out of summer.



ACRONYM OF THE MONTH: [COMPASS](#)

Collaborative Minnesota Partnerships to Advance Student Success, COMPASS, is the statewide system for continuous improvement created through a collaboration between the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and the [Minnesota Service Cooperatives](#).

COMPASS is designed to guide and support the examination and improvement of systems. We strive for equitable outcomes and by prioritizing access to strong tier 1 instruction for all Minnesota students.

COMPASS is the statewide system through which all districts, charter organizations, and schools may receive evidence-based support, all within the MnMTSS framework.

COMPASS is committed to providing cohesive supports for implementing culturally and linguistically responsive, evidence-based practices. We rely on the belief and understanding that every student can and will learn and thrive.

COMPASS and MnMTSS professional learning opportunities for the 2024-25 school year can be found within the downloadable document at the bottom of this webpage.



The MN Guild is looking for volunteers to join our board. The only requirements are to have interest in supporting the charter school community, share your time and talent and support our vision and mission. We hold a board meeting on a monthly basis (with exceptions for holidays) in person and virtually. We are looking for individuals with passion for education and support the philosophy that all children and teachers deserve a positive educational environment and opportunity.

If you are interested, please email Jim Zacchini at jim.zacchini@guildschools.org



As your authorizer we want you to know we are here to support you. If you would like to bounce ideas off someone, or need a sounding board, we are happy to be that person. Please feel free to email us whenever you need additional support, we are here to listen.

Please send an email to one of the addresses listed below:

Jim Zacchini, MN Guild Executive Director	jim.zacchini@guildschools.org
Debbie Weckman, MN Guild Administrative Assistant	debbie.weckman@guildschools.org
Buddy Ferrari, MN Guild Project Tech	buddy.ferrari@guildschools.org

Thank you and as always, we appreciate all you do.



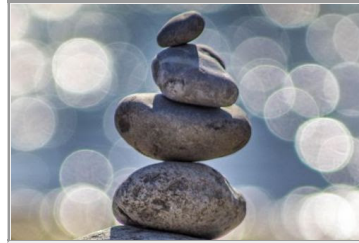
Our Vision:

The Minnesota Guild of Public Charter Schools advances positive educational outcomes for students that leads to success in life.

Our Mission:

The Guild advocates for teacher leadership, professional autonomy, and the creation of innovative schools for student engagement and the ownership of learning. The Guild strives to support students, families, and communities most affected by the achievement gap and low graduation rates.

"If you want
to go fast
go alone.
If you want
to go far
go together."
-African Proverb



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Visit our website:

<https://www.guildschools.org>

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