

TRCCS Implementation Renewal Grant Narrative 2014

Executive Summary

The Tomorrow River Community Charter School (TRCCS) is developing the whole child through movement, art and nature.

Students are prepared to become stewards of the earth, graduating with the skills to create and change the world around them. TRCCS offers a collaborative and non-competitive learning environment that integrates the arts and offers hands-on experiences related to the natural environment for Pre-Kindergarten through 6th grade. TRCCS finds its home at the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station on Sunset Lake where it's growing strong, sustainable communities of creative, independent, compassionate thinkers, empowered to envision their future!

Inspired by Waldorf: Waldorf education, established in 1919, is one of the fastest growing educational philosophies in the world today. Our whole-child approach meets the children's needs as they grow and develop. Technology is de-emphasized until fourth grade in order to preserve students' imagination, and build a foundation of learning connected to their natural attraction to the wonders of nature.

Environment and Sustainability: Students form a relationship with the environment as they learn to care for the earth's plants and animals. Academic standards are infused into real-life hands-on projects like growing organic food for school lunches, as well as field experiences related to the local environment and natural resources.

Community: Companies, local colleges, organizations and individuals partner with the school to offer opportunities and experiences that help students develop skills and community values. Students learn to look at the world from a broad, holistic perspective, as innovative, community minded, and well-rounded individuals.

Learning to Love Learning

Students learn to problem-solve, think creatively and analytically, and retain more information when learning is an experience that they connect to physically and emotionally. Three to six week learning blocks allow in-depth study of core subjects through stories, music, hands-on projects, speech and drama, and the arts. Students develop a trusting relationship with their teacher, as they stay together from 1st through 6th grade, ensuring that they receive instruction that matches their learning style and personality. Added music, practical and fine arts, and foreign language lessons complete the program.

Parent Testimonial

"I choose to send my 1st grader to TRCCS because of the idea that Waldorf inspired education would allow him to learn in a way that was not only hands on, but more focused on creativity and cooperation in group learning. I also loved that the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station would provide an amazing natural classroom for play and discovery. Now, half way through the school year, my child loves going to school to spend his day with wonderful, caring teachers and friends and I am continually impressed with the dedication and enthusiasm of the teachers and staff for the students and the Waldorf model. I would recommend TRCCS to anyone seeking an alternative to the traditional classroom setting."

By Anne Hylla, parent of Oliver from Ms. Maggie's Class

The Charter School Vision for Innovation

1. *Information about your charter school:*

a) Summary of the mission and major accomplishments during the Initial Implementation phase.

The purpose of Tomorrow River Community Charter School, (TRCCS) is to enhance future environmental, sustainable and social justice practices within our community of Amherst, Wisconsin, and to strengthen and inspire the Tomorrow River Public School District's education by offering a curriculum inspired by Waldorf and Environmental Education. Through sound leadership principles, respect for ecology and an investment in the arts, the TRCCS is empowering a community of educators, parents and children to create a mindful and innovative educational environment where students learn the skills to transform the world around them. The educational philosophy is inspired by the setting at the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station (CWES), engaging students by exploring the natural world. TRCCS aims to create diverse, sustainable environments for its students by practicing social justice behaviors, while being creative in a full spectrum of techniques using arts, music, language arts and foreign language to reinforce children's' innate spirit, happiness and discovered abilities. Academic courses are experienced physically and emotionally, with storytelling and limited lecture style, giving students a lifelong knowledge and love of learning. This whole child education fosters the skill set necessary to become creative, confident and compassionate individuals. Our success lies within meeting common core standards and meeting standardized testing requirements and scores, following state mandates required in early childhood, and elementary school.

"Our highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings who are able, of themselves, to impart purpose and direction to their lives.".....Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925)

Accomplishments:

TRCCS started out strong with over 50 enrolled students. This number has fluctuated throughout the year between 49 and 54 students, with 4 more hoping to open enroll in April. As projected a large volume of students, currently 80%, are coming from outside the Tomorrow River School District. This was one of the talking points when presenting the vision of the school to the District. They are very excited to see our projections were correct. Many families have taken advantage of the Exception to the Open Enrollment Application and joined us mid-year. Our greatest outreach tool has been our TRCCS families. Our students are so incredibly happy their parents can't help but talk about TRCCS to friends and family.

Currently our greatest number of students comes from the Stevens Point area. Families from this area have organized busing. TRCCS put on its second annual Trike-A-Thon in October, raising over \$7,000. These funds are being used to offset the cost of transportation making it affordable for most families. As our numbers grow the cost per child for busing will decrease making it sustainable without the need for fundraisers. Our location could not be better for education inspired by nature, but its remote location requires transportation solutions to be a continued effort.

CWES sits on 200 acres of woods bordering glacial Sunset Lake. The partnership between the TRCCS and CWES has been strong from its roots. CWES is a field station of the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point's (UWSP) Natural Resources Program. Students from the

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Environmental Education program do ½ of their practicum here. In the past they have only had the opportunity to work with visiting schools, doing day programing. Now with the TRCCS students here every day the UWSP can do more in-depth work, having classes build on each other. TRCCS students have Nature Studies twice a week for an hour. The CWES program works closely with the classroom teachers making sure curricula are coordinated and sequential. As school budgets, are cut the number of schools visiting CWES is decreasing, thus it was perfect timing for TRCCS to find its home at this ideal location.

TRCCS and CWES are always looking to the future, planning classroom and shared space use. CWES is receiving funds from the MAC Foundation to build new cabins for summer campers and a new bath house. These are coming at an ideal time for TRCCS. The buildings have been designed to be multiuse spaces serving as classrooms for TRCCS during the school year and sleeping cabins for campers during the summer. It is the intention of TRCCS to grow one classroom per year which is the projected building rate for the cabins. To stay on track with a full incoming 1st grade class each year we will need to expand by 2 classrooms for the 2014/15 school year. TRCCS currently has 3 classrooms that are all multi-age: a PK/K, 1st/2nd and 3rd-5th. In moving forward we plan to keep the multi age upper grades classrooms but have a full 1st, Kindergarten and Prekindergarten (pending TRSD approval). Knowing that we will traditionally gain the most students coming into PK or Kindergarten this will give us student security for years to come.

Our Environmental Programing is not only coming from CWES but also the Center for Environmental Education located on the UW Stevens Point campus. They are working with our curriculum developer Dr. Mary Barr Goral and conducting trainings and curriculum support for our staff. It is the goal of TRCCS to make strong connections for students to local environmental organizations, farmers and policy makers. These connections will give them an understanding of the interconnectedness of the world and the difference they can make in it. When developing projects for the students it is the design of the curricula that from the beginning students see the whole picture. Example: Students will visit a sheep farm; they will learn about the farming techniques and watch a sheep being sheered. They will then bring the wool back to school and learn to clean it, card it, spin it, dye it and knit it into something. All of the traditional subjects are interwoven into this: science, math, language arts (everything is brought to the children via story), history, cultural studies, handwork and movement. As the children see how all of these things work together they have a deeper understanding of what they are learning, it is no longer abstract (math and science). This personal connection to the material will help students remember information for a lifetime.

TRCCS has experienced an incredible amount of family and community support. We expected this to be the case and have been pleasantly surprised by the outpouring. We ask that families volunteer 40 hours a school year for the school. This is encouraged not required. We give parents many opportunities to volunteer for field trips, festivals and classroom projects. We have some individuals that have given far and above what is expected often coming in once to twice a week to give support to the teacher, office staff or CWES grounds crew. To function as intended, we need this level of involvement. We work hard to make children's home life and school, life flow together in a harmonious fashion. This takes great communication between families and the school and we have seen this take shape. This gives students greater stability and rhythms, letting them come from a place of confidence and calm so that they can better learn while they are at school.

TRCCS has become a Trauma Sensitive School. Our faculty and Governance Board members took advantage of resources through the DPI's website and attended conferences and webinars

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on trauma and creating low stress environments for students here at TRCCS. This goal was introduced by a parent of a student who has experienced trauma and who has struggled in previous classroom environments. She is now thriving here at TRCCS and our teachers are inspired to continue to learn and develop their classrooms and teaching styles into places that will be healing for all students.

TRCCS has also created a behavior plan for the school loosely modeled after PBIS which was adopted by the Tomorrow River School District last year. Grant funds paid for one of our teachers to develop a behavior model very specific to TRCCS and its location and mission inspired by Waldorf. The faculty played a great role in its development giving them ownership and an investment into making it work. Students are embracing it as it again brings stability and order to their school days. With it we will develop a school song and mascot bringing that additional school pride which is already so strong here at TRCCS.

TRCCS worked with the Wisconsin Green School's Network to develop a promotional video for the school. We were thrilled with how it came out and see it as a wonderful tool to reach new families and people wanting to learn about our pedagogy and school culture. It is on our website, Facebook page and has been shared with all of our families, in addition to its use at events. In addition to the video TRCCS gained Sugar Maple status with the Network's Green and Healthy Schools Program, this is the highest level! With this recognition the DPI nominated us for recognition by the U.S. Department of Education's Green Ribbon Schools program. We were one of 4 schools to be nominated from WI. This is a great accomplishment in our first year of operation.

TRCCS is working in many ways to bring ourselves out into the community and the community to us. We have developed a Parent Circle who meets monthly and works to bring concerns of families to the Governance Board as well as bringing the TRCCS mission to new families. They are currently organizing monthly educational series for current and new families. Often speakers are brought in who have expertise in Waldorf education. They are also conducting family surveys and developing a family connections book and volunteer database.

Throughout the year, with the largest push in the summer, TRCCS becomes involved in community events and activities. We provide children's activities at: Amherst Festival, Waupaca Arts Fair, The Renewable Energy and Sustainable Living Fair, the Local Food Fair, etc... It is a way for TRCCS to bring its vision and pedagogy to the greater community and make those connections that are so important to sustaining the school into the future.

TRCCS has also developed our Healthy Lunch Fund. Because we are not located in or at a traditional public school site we don't have access to a traditional public school lunch program. We are working with CWES who has a food service program for their visiting schools. Hot lunch is offered to our students on days when visiting groups are not here. Beginning in April cold lunch will be offered on all of the other days. Because we are not a recognized public school lunch program our students cannot participate in the free and reduced lunch program. TRCCS held the second annual Valentine's Dinner and Fundraiser this February and raised over \$4,000 to go towards the TRCCS Healthy Lunch Fund. This fund will pay for families that would normally participate in the free and reduced lunch program to receive free lunches every day here at TRCCS. Our goal is to continue this program utilizing fundraised monies. We do not intend to certify the lunch program because we use a large quantity of products sourced locally and organically and we feel this is very important to our families and the mission and vision of the school.

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TRCCS has an onsite organic garden and we have a Garden Intern who is funded through a grant from the Foundation for Sustainability and Innovation. She is developing curriculum and teaches gardening to all of the classes for one hour a week during the spring and fall and every other week during the winter months. The food grown by the children is used in the lunch program as well as snacks for the PK/K classroom. We have many TRCCS families who are organic farmers or supporters of local organic farming and we are happy to offer this programming to our students.

We are working closely with our teachers to make sure they have the resources they need to bring their teaching to the level expected by TRCCS and the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education (we are a member organization). Scholarships have been given from Grant funds to send teachers to Waldorf teacher trainings in addition to Waldorf conferences. We are encouraging all teachers to become fully Waldorf certified within a 5 year time frame, which is in line with the requirements of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education. We are also providing Mentors through the Great Lakes Waldorf Institute. These weekly meetings give the teachers the ability to share their lesson plans and get insights into additional materials and project ideas. We will continue this program into next year. Dr. Mary Barr Goral, the author of the TRCCS curriculum, has done classroom observations and workshops throughout the year with the teachers, this will also continue into next year.

The TRCCS's Governance Board is dedicated to making sure the school is always working to achieve its mission. They put on an annual retreat with speakers from Wisconsin Innovative Schools Network and the Great Lakes Waldorf Institute. The years retreat was aligned with a daylong Waldorf conference in Pewaukee. The board sees the benefits to working together, coming to consensus on all decisions made, and making sure all voices are heard. The board has been meeting twice a month on the 1st and 3rd Monday. After the retreat strong committees were secured and meetings are now down to once a month. The board is very active and has accomplished great things over the past year. They are working extremely well together and are successfully speaking with one voice.

b) Unexpected challenges faced during Initial Implementation and how they were addressed.

The first year has been incredible and the school is a realization of the vision of its founders. But, as any first year school will tell you it is an amazing amount of work. All involved have the sentiment that there is really more to accomplish than humanly possible. It has been our goal to give the teachers the support necessary during this first year to bring the developed curriculum to the students, but another challenge has been finding out and experimenting with just what the teachers need and what support is really helpful for them to reach their goals. This will be a continuing process and will change and develop as we bring more teachers on board. It is our goal to have the resources in place to make the transition to this very new environment as easy as it can be for all incoming faculty. It is also our goal to make sure that all of the teachers voices are heard and that they are part of the process of making this school a success. We are only as strong as our faculty!

An additional challenging faced by our teachers is the fact that each classroom is a multi-age classrooms and the curriculum is very age specific. The pedagogy being used by TRCCS is developmentally appropriate and is delineated by grade. Every educational experience is organized for very specific developmental reasons on a specific continuum. With multi-age classrooms deciding what block to teach next is not as easy as teaching in a specific age setting. Knowing the students, where they are at and what will inspire them in a multi-age

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setting requires a variety of knowledge bases so as to develop lessons across age levels in a multi-age setting. It is our goal to “grow” the school to one classroom per grade which will eliminate this challenge. Until then, our teachers are doing their best to meet each student’s individual needs while also teaching and knowing the classroom as a whole.

As mentioned prior, many students are traveling to attend TRCCS. We recognized this from the onset as a challenge. We are working with families to come up with creative solutions to the transportation issue, but it has been the deciding factor for multiple families who are no longer sending their children to TRCCS. We hope to continue to meet these challenges and are stronger in knowing that the families and students loved the learning and location, it was just the ability to get here that was the issue.

TRCCS is part of the Tomorrow River School District and busing is provided by the Tomorrow River School District to our site. We are very lucky to have this transportation option for families but it does have an effect on the length of our school day. Students do not arrive until 8:20 am and need to head home at 2:30 to make it back to the TRSD in order to connect with transportation home. This shortens the day’s length by an hour. TRCCS is very aware of this and works hard to have a very structured schedule with little wasted time so that as much learning, inspiration and creativity is happening in the 6 hours the children are here.

Overall we could not have expected things to go any better. All involved are filled with a great sense of accomplishment and pride in what is happening here at TRCCS and we all look forward to it growing and becoming even stronger. We began with a very strong vision and this has kept us on track through many decisions and bumps in the road.

2. Charter School Goals

a) The measurable goals of the charter school; and

b) The means of measuring the charter school goals each year (*means of measurement follow each goal in italic*):

c) Explain the results in detail, including comparative data (following each goal):

- To develop and administer Waldorf-inspired curriculum and teaching practices. *This will be supported by professional development and will be measured by records and teacher portfolios as well as student progress and end-of-year narrative reports.*
 - TRCCS has offered extensive professional development as discussed above. We are currently developing classroom observation processes and have created a rubric. Student progress reports have been shared with families for the 1st and 2nd quarter during parent teacher conferences and these reports have a rubric based on the common core covered in each main lesson block.
- Continued support for teachers, administrators and the parent community in fostering an understanding of the pedagogy and developmental theory that are the foundation of the school. *Fulfilled through professional development, school programs and community outreach; measured by attendance.*

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- In January, February and March we offered a Parent Education Series inviting parents of currently enrolled students and new families. These workshops have covered different aspects of the TRCCS pedagogy and its alignment to Waldorf Education and human development. This series has been organized by the TRCCS Parent Circle with great participation from TRCCS families and community members and will continue into the future. We are continuing much of the professional development from this year into next year with grant funds including scholarships for the teachers to participate in Waldorf teacher training over the summer, fall and spring. Grant funds will help us have a fulfilling retreat for the faculty and Governance Board members again next year.
- Employing and retaining highly effective teachers with both formal Waldorf teacher training and certification by Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction. *Maintained with professional development and continued trainings in Waldorf and other non-traditional educational methods as well as touring other schools employing these methods; measured by attendance.*
 - All current TRCCS teachers have visited at least one Waldorf school in Wisconsin this year, and we will continue this into the future. Waldorf teacher training will be encouraged and subsidized through grants.
- All teachers maintain a professional learning plan which is overseen and supported by the school's lead teacher. *Learning plans are reviewed semi-annually by the lead teacher and periodic consultations between teachers and Lead Teacher: documentation of meeting notes and amendments to learning plans will be recorded, measured by records and teacher and student evaluations.*
 - We do not currently have a lead teacher but are overseen by the elementary Principal for the Amherst Elementary School. The District has implemented a Build Your Own Assessment tool where they set annual goals monitored by the Principal in addition to annual reviews and observations by the Principal. The TRCCS Governance Board has developed a task force to develop our own teacher review process to help with personal goals and planning professional development which will enhance the Districts Educators Effectiveness process.
- Faculty use the evaluation system adopted by the District and supported by the TRCCS. *Measured by a Principal from the public school utilizing the same evaluation system used for all teachers in the district.*
 - The district principal has evaluated all teachers at TRCCS this year and given feedback in a face to face meeting.
- Clear and transparent on-going formative assessments of student progress within an articulated framework of Waldorf standards co-aligned to recognize the common core standards at the state and federal level. *Maintain verifiable records of student progress: Student Progress Reports (Whole-Child Rubric), End of Year*

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Narrative Report and Individual Student Portfolio (Main Lesson Book Review). Files reviewed by the Lead Teacher semi-annually.

- We have just entered our fourth quarter and have had great success with our Student Progress Reports which include a narrative and rubric on the Common Core met in each block. These reports are compiled in the student's cumulative folders and shared with families at parent-teacher conferences or via mail. We do not have a lead teacher, and this process is currently being overseen by the Implementation Grant Coordinator who developed the reports with input from the TRCCS faculty.
- Commitment to developmentally appropriate high academic standards informed by the state student achievement standards. *Measured through student testing: Wisconsin State Test and NWEA MAP (or equivalent).*
 - All students have undergone standardized testing, and we will use these scores to compare with tests taken at the beginning of next year. We feel the greatest measure of student success can be measured by teacher and parent assessment of the student's growth and happiness in this learning environment. We are working to follow the curriculum inspired by Waldorf which is developmentally appropriate.
- Ongoing professional development for teachers, Governance Board and administrators in governing practices, curriculum and working toward a constant renewal of Waldorf pedagogy. *Measured by attendance, curriculum documents and minutes during Governance Board Meetings. The school's success in Waldorf pedagogy will be reviewed annually at the board retreat.*
 - It is our goal to continue to improve on our professional development offerings and are working with teachers to find out what they need from us. The annual retreat included information on developing charter school budgets, and it is the commitment of the Governance Board to continue this professional development for board members so that they can perform their duties to the school to their fullest extent. The retreat was attended by all but one staff member. Board members and teachers are also sent to conferences to continue development in governing practices, curriculum and pedagogy.
- A rigorous effort to co-align 21st century skills within the framework of the school's Waldorf-inspired curriculum. *Measured by meeting the goals set for Wisconsin State Test and NWEA MAP (or equivalent) test scores and the ease of integrating 7th through 9th grade students into the traditional public school system.*
 - We will not have test results for comparisons until next year. Please see additional information on testing in the next section.
- Academic freedom wherein curriculum can be uniquely designed by teachers in an on-going effort to meet the evolving learning needs of the students. *Measured by Student Progress Reports, End of Year Narrative Report, Individual Student Portfolio and teacher reviews and evaluations.*

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- The teachers are working tirelessly to make sure the main lessons are meeting the needs of all of their students. We are offering support through Waldorf teacher mentors and mentors from the school district. Teachers have completed student progress reports that include narratives for every main lesson block so far this year (7 of 9).
- An articulated and inclusive approach to school governance that involves teachers, administration and parents as reflected in the school policies and procedures. *Measured by Governance Board make up and attendance of board meetings by parents and teachers. Annual Governance Board member peer and personal reviews and continued adherence to the TRCCS By-laws, policies and procedures.*
 - Governance Board meetings are very well attended and all members participate fully in the governing process. We have a teacher on the governance board that regularly attend meetings and chairs a committee. All members serve on multiple committees giving unmeasurable support to the school's teachers and administration. Policies, by-laws and procedures are regularly visited, making sure they are in line with what is actually happening at TRCCS. The Parent Circle is strong and there are representatives from all classes. School festivals and programs have been attended by almost 100% of TRCCS families as well as community members and interested new families.
- A cooperative, non-competitive environment in and out of the classroom engaging the children intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically. *Satisfaction will be measured by student and parent surveys done annually, 2 parent focus groups compiled semi-annually, student interviews and student progress and end of the year narratives.*
 - The Parent Circle has conducted one survey with a low return rate. Of the five received there were only two responses about the challenges faced with sending their child to TRCCS. One was ½ days and transportation. TRCCS has decided to have no ½ days and has implemented this this year and has continued it in the calendar for the next school year. The other was concern on child's focus, a meeting was held with the family and the child is now spending the morning main lesson with the next older classroom which is bringing a greater challenge to his learning. All surveys had very positive things to say about their experience at TRCCS. The Parent Circle will conduct one more survey prior to the end of the year.
- Equal access for all. *Measured by a comparable student to community demographic*
 - We have economic diversity in our student population with 19% of our students participating in our Healthy Lunch Fund (similar to free and reduced but not recognized by the federal government, it is funded through donations). Currently 9% of our students have an ethnically diverse background.

d) A partnership between home and school giving parents the opportunity to become deeply involved in their children's education; promoting the creation of a culturally rich and meaningful life which expands to the larger community creating a healthy childhood. *Satisfaction will be measured by surveys done annually, 2 parent focus groups compiled semi-annually, and promotional materials and attendance records of community events.*

- Attendance at events and parent teacher conferences has been at extremely high, at 98%. We have regular seasonal festivals and at our Fall Festival all but one family attended, and we experienced the same thing at our Winter Program. We also have many parents volunteering for fieldtrips and other school activities.

3. Student achievement goals:

a) The measurable student achievement goals:

Measured by Student Progress Reports (Whole-Child Rubric), End of Year Narrative Report and Individual Student Portfolio (Main Lesson Book Review).

- Literacy (also measured by Wisconsin State Tests and PALS)
- Ability to communicate clearly both orally and in writing
- Ability to communicate in more than one language
- Understanding of various cultures
- Understanding of scientific process and disciplines
- Knowledge of history
- Ability to think creatively, analytically and logically
- Ability to observe, gather, organize, analyze and synthesize information
- Understanding of the mathematical process including application (also measured by Wisconsin State Tests and PALS).
- Lifelong learner who has developed competence, self-motivation, confidence and responsibility

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b) The means of measuring the student achievement goals:

Assessment Tools	Purpose for Administering	Grades Assessed	Season to be Administered	Goals for the first 5 years
Wisconsin State Tests	Measure student performance against State and National schools.	3rd-6th	Per State guidelines	A 5% increase in proficiency each year up to 97%
PALS	Assess reading skills	PK-2 nd	Fall and Spring	A 5% increase in proficiency up to 97%
First Grade Readiness Assessment	Assess students' developmental readiness for entering first grade	K-1st	Spring of K for continuing students; spring or summer before 1st grade for new students	We believe that students coming from our K will more likely be ready for 1st grade, benchmark achievements
Student Progress Reports (Whole-Child Rubric)	Assess student progress in academic, social and motor skills based on teacher observation	Pre-K through 6th	October and April	Reports will show a continued increase in depth & understanding of the student and his/her needs and accomplishments
End of Year Narrative Report	Provide teachers and parents with an annual, in depth individualized report of student progress in all areas of study, social interactions etc.	Pre-K through 6th	At the end of the school year	Reports will show a continued increase in depth & understanding of the student and his/her needs and accomplishments
Individual Student Portfolio (Main Lesson Book Review)	Provide teachers and parents with annual, individualized report of student progress based on samples of student work	Pre-k through 6 th	2 times per year as part of the Whole-Child Rubric	Reports will show a continued increase in depth & understanding of the student and his/her needs and accomplishments

Other demonstrations of student progress using rubrics:

- Oral recitations, presentations, reports, performances, exhibits and demonstrations which will take place periodically during the school year.
- Student projects: Both individual and group projects will be exhibited at school wide and/or public events which will take place periodically during the school year.
- Daily, weekly and monthly teacher monitoring and observation of students provides ongoing formative and summative assessments.

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Teachers will use this information to adapt the curriculum to their student's needs. Because teachers have the same students from 1st through 6th grade they can better understand the learning environment that works for their classroom. This long term relationship will be conducive to improving instruction and tracking achievement over time.

c) Explain in detail the results including comparative data.

Teachers have gained an incredible understanding of their student population and are continually working to better meet their needs. Students have come to TRCCS with varied educational experiences, and it did take time to come to a full understanding of each child's knowledge in all of the subject areas. The multi-age classrooms layered an additional challenge to bringing the developmentally appropriate curriculum to the classes.

At TRCCS, we are a grade and test free schooling environment except where required by state statute. We assess our students' abilities, but in a stress free whole child approach. Accepting students for who they are and celebrating their varied strengths not just measuring their abilities and test scores. Our focus is on the learning and the process and less on the measureable outcomes. When administering the WKCE test in our 3rd through 5th grade classroom we brought the material to the students in the format of research and tried to make it as stress free as possible. For some this was the first test ever taken, and you could see the effect that the anxiety had on them.

Students in the upper grades have created a strong classroom community, learning about Wisconsin and developing a classroom economy. This sense of community has been very beneficial to all students but especially those that came from school environments that were socially difficult. This class currently has five children with IEPs out of sixteen and others with very high energy that struggled in a traditional setting. Hearing from parents and reflecting back on reports from previous teachers, it is incredible to see the social and emotional growth that has occurred in the environment that we have created at TRCCS. We are working to meet the children where they are at developmentally, emotionally and academically. This gives students confidence and security in a warm and loving school environment that they have not previously experienced. Within this environment students can truly learn and become successful.

In our PK/K and 1st/2nd grade classrooms, the PALS testing system was used. The 1st/2nd grade teacher tested the 1st graders twice so far, in fall and winter; she will be testing again in spring as well. In fall, the students got an average of 55.5 out of 90 with a benchmark at 39. During the winter test they got an average of 75 out of 98 with a benchmark at 65. In the fall there was one student below the benchmark and midyear there were 2 but they were much closer. This shows significant growth in the children, and we will gain an even better perspective after the test is administered this spring.

Children in this class have also developed a deep and caring classroom environment. They have been alternating between math and language arts blocks building on previous knowledge with lessons and individualized attention to meet them at their varied academic levels. The class begins with circle time, with math, motor and memorization skills being developed. Students put on a play for the Winter Program working on language arts and memorization skills. Parents and teachers are seeing great emotional, social and academic growth in these students which can be seen in their quarterly progress reports.

The Prekindergarten and Kindergarten class has spent the year developing physical, social, and emotional skills. The students spend an extensive amount of time in outdoor free-play,

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engaging their gross motor muscles. Organized games and songs with choreographed movements help develop balance and coordination. Later in the year students were exposed to finger-knitting and braiding activities, which along with cutting and coloring promote fine motor skills.

During free play the children have practiced interacting socially with their peers and solving emotional problems. Aspects like manners and social graces are embedded throughout the day and covered extensively during ritualized snack time. Adults have modeled appropriate ways of acting and communicating, and the children have followed suit more and more as the year has gone on. All of these activities are done in ways to promote creative thinking and meet the children in an age-appropriate and imaginative way. Open-ended art projects have demonstrated this creativity in multiple ways, from a whole month of making paper puppets and putting on shows, to paper snowflakes being turned into masks and clothing items. Prekindergarten and Kindergarten students at TRCCS appear to be very happy and engaged during their time at school.

4. Nationally standardized test administered in fall of 2013 and what we will administer in spring 2014 and the Standardized Test Results Template.

Charter School Name:

Authorizer: Tomorrow River School District

Name of Nationally Standardized Test: WKCE: 3rd, 4th and 5th. PALS: PK, K and 1st.

Fall Date Administered: 10/28/13 for the WKCE and 11/6/13 for the PK/K.

Spring Date Administered: No Spring Test Date for WKCE, PALS will be in May.

Provide results of the standardized achievement test administered in reading and math. Please provide the following:

1. Mean or median scale score for the school in reading and math for each grade level.
2. Scale score at the 25th and 75th percentiles in reading and math for each grade level.

Fall 2013 – Reading Results

A	B	C	D	E
Grade	Subject	Median Scale Score	Scale Score at the 25th Percentile	Scale Score at the 75th Percentile
5th	Reading	25		
4th	Reading	468	323	509
3rd	Reading	450	428	475
1st	Reading	53	39	82
1st	Reading (mid-year)	81	60	87
K	Reading	49	33	60
PK	Reading	48	41	90

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Charter School Name: Tomorrow River Community Charter School

Fall 2013 - Math Results

A	B	C	D	E
Grade	Subject	Median Scale Score	Scale Score at the 25th Percentile	Scale Score at the 75th Percentile
5	Math	28		
4	Math	442	377	472
3	Math	426	381	452

A narrative describing the results and any significant findings or issues that arose that impacted the assessment results. What challenges were encountered that may have affected achieving more growth?

As mentioned above we have only tested our upper grades classroom once this year. In our 5th grade class there is only one student, and we have multiple students coming from a home school environment where they had never taken a test so the range was very large in the 4th grade. We have done our second PALS test for the 1st graders and there will be a third this spring. This is the only place where we have two tests to compare and you can see the immense growth that those students have experienced in just half of the school year. There was no testing done with the 2nd grade students this year. We have not yet done the second test for the PK/K students, this will happen this spring.

We know that our testing cycle will all be very different next year as the Smarter Balance Assessment is implemented. This Standardized test will have check tests three times throughout the year with the final true test taking place in the spring between March 30th and May 22nd. This testing cycle will give us a much greater understanding of our student's growth in the limited measurable areas being tested. The WKCE results were just returned to us making it very hard for the results to have any true impact on the curriculum with only 2 months of school remaining. We will have more significant data to compare next year.

5. Instructional Practices

a) What percent of the instructional day do students attend the charter school?

The Prekindergarten and Kindergarten students spend 100% of the day at the charter school. The 1st/2nd grade class and the 3rd through 5th grade class spend 100% of their day during the fall and spring at the charter school and 97% of their day during the winter months at the charter school. During the winter months the students head to the Amherst Elementary every other week for library and guidance, during the fall and spring this time is spent in gardening class.

b) How many full time equivalent teaching positions serve the charter school?

TRCCS has 4.5 full time equivalent teaching positions.

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c) How many teachers actually teach in the charter school?

TRCCS has 3 classroom teachers and a full time special education teacher. There is also part time French, Music and Art teachers. In addition to our on-site special education teacher we have a teacher come from Tomorrow River School District for speech therapy and for occupational therapy.

Governance and Autonomy

1. Names of current charter school governance board and their titles:

Tom Quinn: Chair, Kristy Stacy: Vice Chair, Lindsey Jenkins: Treasurer, Tina Giombetti: Secretary and Dan Quade: Teacher Member.

2. Governance Board meeting minutes from the last six months:

Here is a sample of our Governance Board minutes. You can find all of our past minutes at <http://tomorrowrivercommunityschool.org/about/governance-board/board-meeting-agendas/>

TRCCS Governance Board Meeting March 17th, 2014 at 6:30 pm.

a) Opening Meeting

The regular meeting of the Tomorrow River Community Charter School Board was called to order at 6:35 pm at the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station in Amherst Junction by Chair Tom Quinn. Other board members in attendance were:, Lindsey Jenkins, Tina Giombetti, Dan Quade, and Kristy Stacy.

b) Opening

- Gathering Irish Verse: Tom Quinn
- Sharing of positive memory from the past week: All

c) Business

- Agenda discussed by Tom Quinn. **Approve agenda.**
- **Approve Consent Agenda**
 - (1) Approve February 18th Meeting Minutes
 - (2) Contractor Reports
 - (3) Committee Reports
 - (4) Financial Reports
 - (5) Parent Circle Report
 - (6) Healthy Lunch Fund Report
 - (7) Next Meeting: April 7th , 2014, 6:30 pm
 - (8) Teacher Report
 - (a) Friday afternoon parent volunteer is needed seek out parents to help in classroom for 2 ½ hours every Friday
- Committees
 - (1) Committees have been established and are up and running
 - (2) Committee Chairs should begin procuring volunteers to serve on committees
 - (3) Establish meeting schedule and share with Board and Chamomile immediately
- Implementation Renewal Grant
 - (1) Discuss budget for upcoming grant cycle
 - (2) Post any desired supplies to the Google doc
 - (3) Chamomile will be writing Implementation Renewal Grant over break
- Volunteer Coordinator Position
 - (1) Discussed the duties of this potential position
 - (2) With the creation of the committees, this position may be less pertinent than it was earlier this year.

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- (3) Table until we feel this position is more necessary.
 - Volunteers
 - (1) TRSD does background checks for any volunteer who spends time in the classroom(s)
 - (2) **Board agrees to adopt TRSD volunteer background policy.**
 - Maple Syrup Curriculum
 - (1) Dave Mangin submitted proposal to develop and lead in the programming of a maple syrup curriculum
 - (2) **Board agrees to hire Dave at a maximum of 40 hours time.**
 - Calendar
 - (1) **TRCCS will have school April 21st and May 2nd**
 - (2) Drafted TRCCS calendar for 2014-2015
 - AWSNA
 - (1) TRCCS was advised to change wording in various print sources to align with their guidelines for the use of the terms “Waldorf” and “Waldorf-Inspired”
 - (2) Chamomile made suggested changes to website omitting “Waldorf” and “Waldorf-Inspired” and replacing with AWSNA’s suggestions
 - (3) Kristy will make the same suggested changes to brochure
 - Teacher Training Scholarship
 - (1) Executive Committee will develop training scholarships to not exceed 20% of Implementation Renewal Budget
- d) Events
- Mary Goral Professional Development: March 19th & 21st
 - (1) Will observe each teacher in classroom for 1/3 of day
 - (2) Will utilize Teacher Observation forms filled out by Teacher Observation and Support Committee
 - Parent Education Series: March 19th
 - CWCM Field Trip: March 20th
 - WISN Conference: March 26th-28th
 - Brain Gym Training: April 9th 3-5 pm
 - (1) Lindsey has arranged with Pamela Luedtke to facilitate a workshop with the board and staff
 - Earth Day: April 22nd (Green Ribbon Schools) Field Trip
 - Spring Festival Friday May 2nd
 - (1) Ask Chet Celenza to come May 1st to teach Maypole dances. Ask him to stay for May 2nd for the Spring Festival
 - Energy Fair: June 20th-22nd
 - WAEE Conference August 13th-15th
- e) Enter into Closed Session 11:05 pm. Discussion on staffing
- f) Return to Open Session 11:38 pm
- g) Closing
- h) Action Items Reviewed
- i) Adjourn Meeting 11:38 pm

Equal Access (Admissions and Lottery)

1. How many students with disabilities are enrolled in the charter school:

At TRCCS, we have nine students with IEPs ranging in severity from speech to behavioral disorders. We are also working with the Tomorrow River School District to identify other

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students who are showing signs of a need for additional support. We currently have one very high needs student receiving support from our Special Education Teacher.

2. What special education services are provided for these students:

At TRCCS we have a full time special education teacher working with our students that have IEPs. We have a speech therapist who travels from the District to work with five of our students receiving speech to meet their IEP. It is the goal of TRCCS to have the students fully participate in classroom activities as much as possible. For reading and math, students are pulled for additional support throughout the day. Those with behavioral disorders are fully included in the classroom. Any additional support needed comes from the district.

3. Changes to the admission policy:

No changes to policy.

4. Was a random lottery conducted for the most recent admission to the charter school:

All students who applied were accepted.

Assurances

No Changes

Budget

The following questions must be completed:

1. Describe how Initial Implementation funds were used for training or for consultants.

TRCCS feels training staff and governance board members is a very wise way to spend grant funds and will better prepare the school for its future after the grant funds are gone.

TRCCS teachers are encouraged to get their Waldorf Teacher Certification in addition to the required DPI certification required to be a teacher at the school. Money is given to the teachers in the form of scholarships to help cover the cost of this additional certification. All current teachers are working towards this.

Through our first year of operation we have continued to work with Dr. Mary Barr Goral, the author of the TRCCS curriculum, who has come to observe and train the teachers and staff. We are also contracting with Great Lakes Waldorf Institute out of Milwaukee to offer weekly mentoring services for our teachers. This has been incredibly helpful and has made the teachers feel much less isolated. We are also working with two veteran teachers from the Three Rivers Waldorf School that was located in La Crosse Wisconsin but closed last year. They are working with our Prekindergarten and Kindergarten classroom teacher and have put on one of our Parent Education Series. In turn we are working with them on the potential of reopening their school as a public Waldorf charter school. We have also brought Chet Celenza, a teacher for multiple Waldorf teacher training programs and a veteran Waldorf teacher, up to teach circle time activities and dances and wood working to our teachers. We have continued to work with Lori Barian to facilitate Waldorf School tours and our TRCCS Retreat. Funds have also gone to develop a Maple Syrup curriculum from camp director Dave Mangin.

Funds have been used to fund Circle Education in supplying TRCCS with an Implementation Grant Coordinator who will continue on with the next phase of the Implementation Renewal Grant. Chamomile Nusz has worked to establish the school culture in the vision of the school's founders. She has helped to develop a school structure, accounting systems, website and social media tools, marketing materials, student and faculty assessments, outreach events and tools, volunteer coordination, handbooks, professional development opportunities, applications, field

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trip opportunities, community relationships, fundraising events, board development and relationships (district and governance board), parent communication, enrollment materials, transportation initiatives and continued relationship development to further the schools mission. Chamomile has been working throughout these 2.5 years to get all of the necessary items in place so the school can function after the grant funds are gone.

Grant funds have also gone to French teacher Maud Mangin to work on additional professional development opportunities and a school wide behavior plan which has been implemented. She is giving teachers additional curriculum support when needed and has helped to develop the faculty observation form and plan with a Governance Board committee task force.

Funds have gone towards school visits for faculty, staff and governance board members. Six faculty and governance board members attended the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education's annual conference in California where they had the opportunity to network with other schools working to bring Waldorf education to the public sector. Ten staff and board members attended a Wisconsin Waldorf conference at Prairie Hill Waldorf School this past winter growing relationships with local Waldorf School's faculty and administration. Two participants also attended the WISN annual conference this spring gain knowledge on school leadership models and reaffirming decisions to be a school free from testing, grades and pressures to work hard only for results and not the love of learning.

TRCCS has also worked with WISN on governance board budgeting, project based learning and chrome book training. We are also working with the Wisconsin Center For Environmental Education on curriculum and professional development. We are taking advantage of CWES, working with the onsite experts on professional development in environmental educational programming.

2. Provide a list of itemized new expenditures in the Local Plan for Use of Discretionary Funds.

See the Implementation Renewal Grant Application.

3. Describe the method by which controls over expenditures and records of expenditures will be maintained if this information has changes since the previous year's application.

No changes

4. Complete the Budget Summary VI-B form.

See the Implementation Renewal Grant Application.