



**HIAWATHA**  
**ACADEMIES**

# **Hiawatha Academies: Annual Report**

**2014-2015**

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## **Organizational Overview**

Hiawatha Academies is a network of open-enrollment college-preparatory charter schools dedicated to closing the achievement gap and inspiring broader systemic change in Minneapolis. Founded in 2007, Hiawatha Academies has grown to three schools, Hiawatha Leadership Academy-Morris Park (Elementary), Hiawatha Leadership Academy-Northrop (Elementary), and Hiawatha College Prep (Middle), located within South Minneapolis. In the 2014-15 school year, the Hiawatha Academies Network served approximately 860 students in grades K-8. Hiawatha Academies' Board of Directors recently voted to accelerate the opening of Hiawatha's high school, Hiawatha Collegiate High School, to open in the fall of 2015 with 9<sup>th</sup> grade students. With its continued success, Hiawatha Academies has set a bold vision of expanding to 5 schools by 2018.

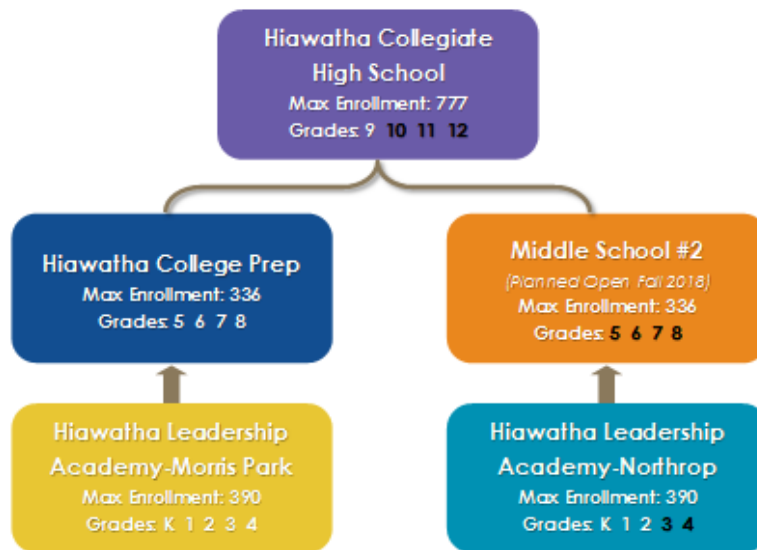
At Hiawatha Academies, our mission is that all scholars will be empowered with the knowledge, character and leadership skills to graduate from college and serve the common good. With a student population that is 98% students of color and 95% free or reduced lunch eligible, Hiawatha is proving that closing the achievement gap is indeed possible. These are significant outcomes in an environment where Minnesota has the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest opportunity gap in the country and less than half of students of color and low-income students in Minneapolis Public Schools are graduating from high school on time.

## **Our Vision – 5 Schools by 2018**

The state of Minnesota and specifically the city of Minneapolis currently face one of the largest opportunity gaps in the nation. Minnesota now has the nation's worst high school graduation rate for Latino students, and the third worst graduation rate for black students and low-income students. These are alarming statistics given that our state's population growth for the next two decades is projected to come from minority populations. To address this crisis, Hiawatha Academies has set a bold vision of expanding to 5 schools by 2018.

The elementary, middle, and high school model is projected to serve over 2,000 Hiawatha scholars in South Minneapolis and over 5% of all Minneapolis students. Reaching this tipping point, Hiawatha seeks to inspire larger systemic change for all Minneapolis students so that race or zip code no longer determine a child's educational future.

Hiawatha's 5 school model is focused solely on south Minneapolis, serves one of the highest needs, fastest growing student populations and provides a demonstrated and replicable model to scale to additional students and to affect larger systemic change across all Minneapolis schools.



## Academic Program and Innovation

Hiawatha Academies' scholars achieve these results through a rigorous, college-preparatory and character-focused education. Hiawatha's innovative practices include:

### **1) Set high expectations**

We aim to prepare all of our scholars for college, for leadership, and to reach their full potential as individuals.

### **2) Expand learning time**

Our scholars receive 40% more learning time than a traditional public school provides, allowing more opportunities to engage students in high-quality instruction through a well-rounded curriculum.

### **3) Support effective teaching; people matter**

Great teachers are critical to students' success. We design observation, feedback, and professional development opportunities for teachers to continuously improve their craft.

#### **4) Focus on results and accountability**

Hiawatha Academies relies on standardized tests, six-week interim benchmark exams, and portfolio project-based work to continually assess scholar's readiness for college and leadership.

#### **5) Build character and leadership skills**

Focusing on character helps develop traits, habits of mind and behaviors that are not only critical for success in school but also help young people grow into active citizens and community leaders.

#### **6) Engage parents as partners**

Hiawatha Academies believes that a quality education results from a partnership between parents, scholars, and the school; our vision for each scholar cannot be fulfilled without parental involvement.

## **Governance and Management**

### **Charter School Authorizer**

Since Hiawatha Academies' founding in 2007, Augsburg College has served as authorizer for the growing network of schools. Augsburg College has served as an authorizer since 1992 and currently authorizes four charter schools in the Minneapolis community. Augsburg's core authorizing mission is to promote schools that serve low-income students and promote college readiness.

Augsburg College will no longer be authorizing schools effective June 30, 2016. Currently, Hiawatha Academies is in the process of applying to a new charter school authorizer. Although the search is still ongoing, HA is in the final stages of the application process with several authorizing organizations. It anticipates that a new authorizer will be secured by early 2016.

**Authorizing Contact:** Catherine Bishop, Education Faculty, 612-330-1024, [bishopc@augzburg.edu](mailto:bishopc@augzburg.edu)

### **Hiawatha Academies Board of Directors**

The Hiawatha Academies board is a diverse group of Minneapolis professionals that bring an array of expertise. Board members represent a variety of sectors including education, consulting, business, law and non-profit. Two teachers and two parents also sit on the board as representatives of the organization's key

stakeholders. All board members have completed the state required board trainings necessary of public charter school boards. In 2013 Hiawatha's board also received training from The High Bar on board governance and has since instituted The High Bar's best in class online governance tool, BoardOnTrack.

<b>Board Terms and Training Information (CURRENT Board as of November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014)</b>				
<b>Name</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Term (Start-End Dates)</b>	<b>Dates of Training</b>	
			<b>Initial</b>	<b>Most Recent Annual</b>
Bob Josephson	Community	June 2013 - June 2016	RR: 12/8/12 EPP: 12/8/12 FM: 12/8/12	10/15/2014
John Erickson	Community	June 2014 - June 2017	RR: 12/12/10 EPP: 12/12/10 FM: 12/12/10	10/15/2014
Linda Yang	Parent	June 2015 - June 2018	RR: 12/8/12 EPP: 12/8/12 FM: 12/8/12	10/15/2014
Joe Dixon	Community	June 2013 - June 2016	RR: 4/20/13 EPP: 4/20/13 FM: 4/20/13	10/15/2014
Matt Spanjers	Community	June 2013 - June 2016	RR: 12/8/12 EPP: 12/8/12 FM: 12/8/12	10/15/2014
John Wodele	Community	June 2013 - June 2016	RR: 3/25/12 EPP: 3/25/12 FM: 3/25/12	10/15/2014
Emily Loh	Teacher	June 2014 - June 2016	RR: 10/15/14 EPP: 10/15/14 FM: 10/15/14	4/18/2015
Whitney McKinley	Teacher	June 2014 - June 2016	RR: 10/15/14 EPP: 10/15/14 FM: 10/15/14	10/15/2014
Jerry Alcazar	Community	June 2015 - June 2018	RR: 4/18/15 EPP: 4/18/15 FM: 4/18/15	4/18/2015
Eric Throldahl	Community	June 2015 - June 2018	RR: 4/18/15 EPP: 4/18/15 FM: 4/18/15	4/18/2015
Margarita Dimas Cultu	Community	June 2015 - June 2018	RR: 4/18/15 EPP: 4/18/15 FM: 4/18/15	4/18/2015
Penny Leporte	Community	June 2015 - June 2018	Forthcoming	Forthcoming
Norma Gaona	Parent	June 2015 - June 2018	Forthcoming	Forthcoming

\*RR: Board's Roles and Responsibilities, EPP: Employment Policies and Practices, FM: Financial Management

## **Senior Leadership Team**

The senior leadership team also brings a diverse array of expertise to the management of Hiawatha Academies. The team has a combined over 30+ years of experience working in schools with low-income minority populations and has an array of experience in non-profit management, instructional leadership, curriculum design, bilingual communication, community engagement, school operations, and business management. As the organization grows, Hiawatha Academies continues to establish a diverse pipeline of future leaders that can continue to positively impact student success. All instructional leadership and administrators attend professional development sessions every Friday afternoon throughout the school year. Further, 16 full days are allotted for professional development prior to the school year starting and throughout the year. Leaders also have the opportunity to visit other high performing charter school networks to observe and collaborate around best practices.

### **Eli Kramer** – Executive Director

Eli Kramer is the Executive Director of Hiawatha Academies. Prior to assuming the ED role, he served as an instructional coach with Hiawatha Academies. Prior to joining Hiawatha, Eli was a founding Dean of Curriculum and Instruction with Uncommon Schools. He taught for six years in New York City at the elementary and middle school level. Eli was a 2003 Teach for America corps member in the Bronx, NY. He holds a B.A. in government from Harvard, a Master's in Education from Bank Street College, and a Master's in Educational Leadership from Brooklyn College.

### **Sean Elder** – Chief Operating Officer

Sean Elder is the Chief Operating Officer of Hiawatha Academies. Sean joined Hiawatha in June 2011 and leads development activities and the non-academic operations of the academies. Prior to joining Hiawatha, Sean was the Minnesota Area Manager for Skyhawks Sports Academy, the nation's largest provider of youth sports programs. From 2004-2006, he served as an Undergraduate Admissions Counselor at the University of Minnesota. Recently, Sean completed a summer fellowship in Chicago with Education Pioneers where he conducted marketing and business development work for Lighthouse Academies, a national charter management organization. An active community member, Sean currently sits on the Education Committee for the Greater Twin Cities United Way. He holds a B.A. in Sociology – Law, Criminology,

and Deviance from the University of Minnesota and an M.B.A. from the University of St. Thomas.

**Stephen Courchane** – Senior Director of Operations

Stephen is a homegrown Minnesotan, serving as the Senior Director of Operations for Hiawatha Academies. Prior to joining Hiawatha Academies in 2012, Stephen taught 3rd grade in Jacksonville, Florida and worked as a School Operations Manager at Teach For America's 2011 Summer Institute. Stephen earned his B.A. in English at the University of Minnesota and is currently completing his MBA at the University of St. Thomas.

**Sara Boedecker-Johnston** – Senior Director of People and Program

Sara Boedecker-Johnston is the Senior Director of People and Program at Hiawatha Academies. Prior to joining Hiawatha, Sara worked for 10 years as a teacher and principal at a Lutheran Pre-K – 8 school on the south side of Chicago. Sara grew up in Michigan and attended Valparaiso University, where she completed her undergraduate degree in Psychology and Sociology and Master's of Education degree in an alternative licensure program.

**Ambar Hanson** – Senior Director of Community Engagement

Ambar Cristina Hanson, MPA, is the director of community engagement at Hiawatha Academies. Since moving to the U.S. from the Dominican Republic 18 years ago, Ambar has been dedicated to advocating for immigrant communities and communities of color to have equal opportunity and access to higher education, jobs that provide livable wages, health, housing and safety. Over the past ten years, Ambar advocated for domestic violence and sexual assault survivors through several roles at Casa de Esperanza and National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities. Currently, Ambar oversees the recruitment, marketing, parent engagement and community collaborations for the Hiawatha Academies network. Recently, Ambar received the Mano Amiga Award from the Minnesota Latino Economic Development Center for her commitment and generous contribution of time and work in behalf of the Latino community



## Staffing

In the 14-15 school year, Hiawatha Academies' staff grew by 36% from the previous school year. Staffing breakdown by campus is illustrated below:

<b>Hiawatha College Prep</b>	Campus Leadership	3
	Instructional	16
	Operations	3
	Student Support	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Hiawatha Collegiate High School</b>	Campus Leadership	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Hiawatha Leadership Academy - Morris Park</b>	Campus Leadership	4
	Instructional	21
	Operations	5
	Student Support	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Hiawatha Leadership Academy - Northrop</b>	Campus Leadership	1
	Instructional	9
	Operations	3
	Student Support	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Network Support Team</b>	Network Support Team	12
	<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>94</b>

### **Professional Development for Non-Licensed Administrators**

For staff serving in leadership roles who are not licensed as administrators, Hiawatha Academies provides ongoing professional development throughout the year. Approximately once per month, leadership cohorts engage in targeted training around instructional coaching. Specific topics include, but are not limited to: observing instruction, providing feedback, using data to drive instruction, performance management, and leading adult teams.

Quarterly, leadership cohorts analyze network-wide performance results, and action-plan around those results in facilitated teams.

## Student Enrollment

Since its first academic year in 2007-2008, Hiawatha Academies has added a grade per year, and starting in 2013-14 with the opening of its second elementary schools, the network started adding two grades per year. In the 2014-2015 academic year, the network served 836 scholars. In 2015-16 Hiawatha Academies will serve over 1,000 scholars in grades K-9 across four schools, Hiawatha Leadership Academy-Morris Park (K-4), Hiawatha Leadership Academy-Northrop (K-2), Hiawatha College Prep (5-8), and Hiawatha Collegiate High School (grade 9).

Throughout its growth, Hiawatha Academies has been dedicated to serving a high-needs student population. In 2014-15, 98% of Hiawatha Academies scholars were students of color, 89% Latino, 8% African American, 1% Native American, and 2% White. 95% of Hiawatha scholars qualified for free or reduced lunch and 74% of all Hiawatha scholars were English Language Learners. With a traditionally highly mobile student population, Hiawatha has consistently had low attrition and in 2014-15 retained 93% of its student body going into the 2015-16 school year.

## Academic Performance – Proficiency

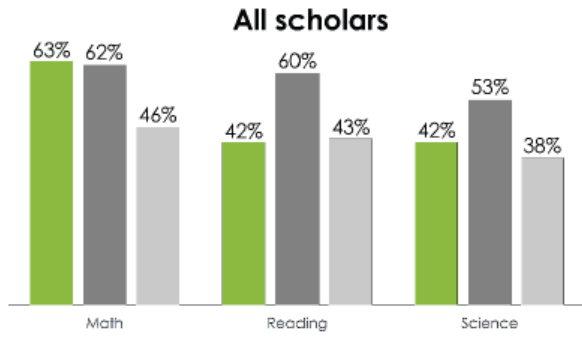
Hiawatha Academies has achieved significant outcomes for a community of scholars that is 98% students of color and 95% free/reduced lunch eligible. Hiawatha Academies was featured again in the Star Tribune for "Beating the Odds" as one of the top urban schools for academic results in the Twin Cities metro area for the 2014-2015 school year. Hiawatha's high need populations (English language learners and free and reduced price lunch) **outperformed their peers in Minneapolis** in all grade levels and all subjects.

Hiawatha Academies continues to outperform neighborhood schools serving similar student populations. Hiawatha Academies is proving that closing the achievement gap—a task some say is impossible—is indeed possible.

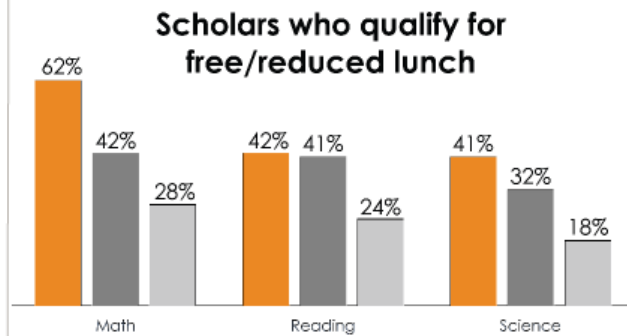
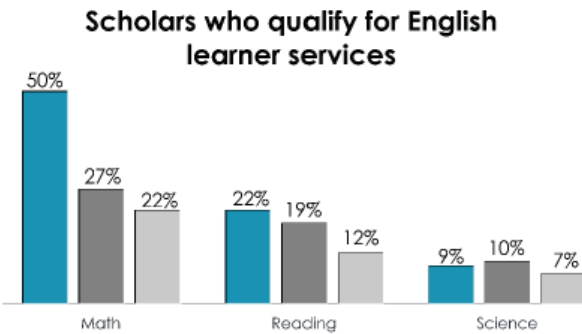
## 2014-2015 Minnesota Grade-Level Standards

*These bar graphs show the share of students who meet or exceed Minnesota grade-level standards as measured by the 2014-15 MCA and MTAS tests.*

■ = Hiawatha ■ = State ■ = MPS



**Hiawatha scholars in state-tested grades outperformed their peers** across Minnesota in math—in some grades and subjects by more than 10 percentage points. Hiawatha scholars continue to prove that with access to excellent schools, all Minnesota children can achieve at high levels, regardless of race, zip code or socioeconomic status.



## Academic Performance – Growth

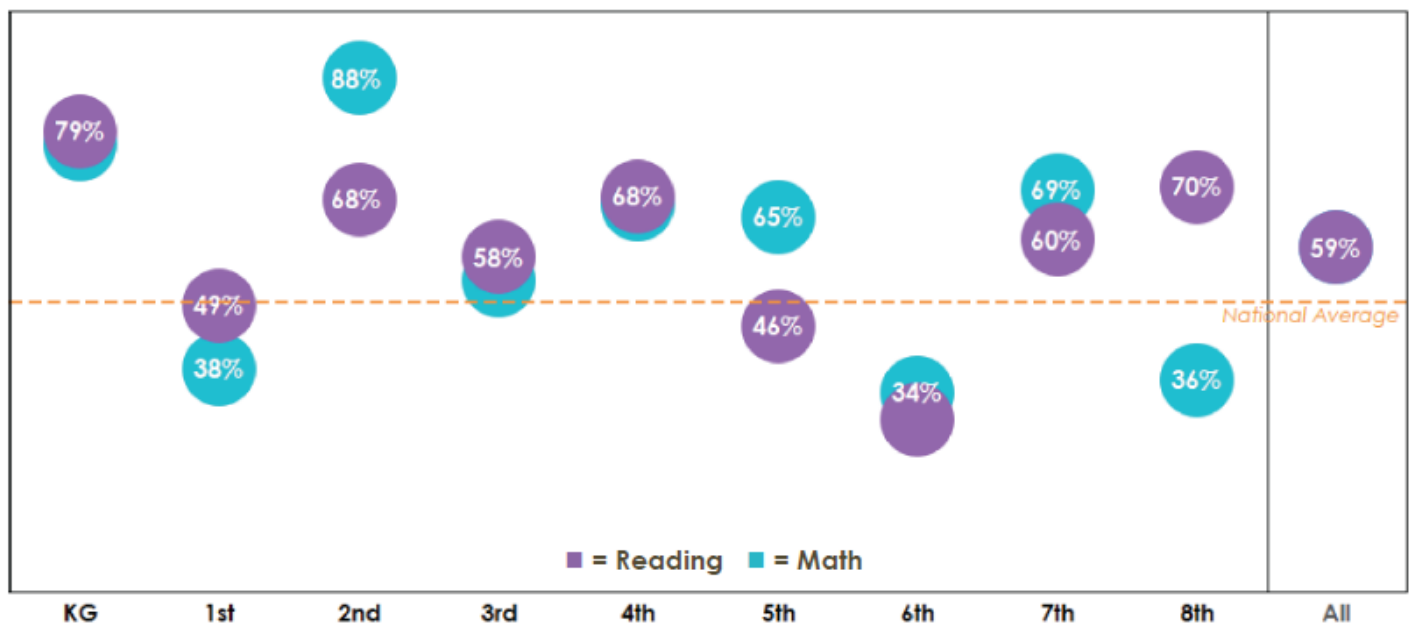
In addition to proficiency results, 2014-15 NWEA MAP assessment results indicate that scholars in the network grew more than the national average.

### 2014-2015 NWEA MAP Growth

#### Scholars meeting growth targets

Relative to peers nationally, the majority of Hiawatha Academies scholars successfully accelerated their learning. They outperformed national averages for student growth across most grades and subjects.

*This chart shows the share of Hiawatha scholars meeting expected growth targets as measured by NWEA MAP tests in 2014-15.*



## Operational and Financial Performance

**HIAWATHA ACADEMIES  
BALANCE SHEET  
6/30/2015**

Cash - Unrestricted	\$ 1,763,344
Cash - Restricted	250,002
Miscellaneous Accounts Receivable	800
State Aids Receivable	985,888
Due from Federal	267,670
Deposits	177,124
Prepaid Expenditures	<u>67,979</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b><u><u>\$ 3,512,808</u></u></b>
Accounts Payable	370,153
Payroll Payable	313,909
Deferred Revenue	<u>443,210</u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b><u>\$ 1,127,272</u></b>
Net Income (Loss)	204,325
6-30-14 Fund Balance	<u>2,181,212</u>
<b>Total Fund Balance</b>	<b><u>2,385,537</u></b>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Fund Balance</b>	<b><u><u>\$ 3,512,808</u></u></b>

*\*preliminary, unaudited balance sheet*



HIAWATHA ACADEMIES  
SUMMARY  
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES  
For The Twelve Months Ending June 30, 2014

	<b>13-14</b>		<b>Current</b>
	<b>Adopted</b>	<b>Year-to-Date</b>	<b>Year</b>
<u>REVENUES</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Budget</u>
			<u>Earned</u>
State Aid	3,718,140	3,799,213	102%
Compensatory	1,392,206	1,414,787	102%
Lease Aid	761,436	754,661	99%
LEP	410,400	367,403	90%
State Sped	277,966	477,582	172%
<b>Total State Aids</b>	<b>6,560,148</b>	<b>6,813,646</b>	<b>104%</b>
Federal Titles and Special Ed	329,006	352,251	107%
Walton Start-up Grants	333,000	250,000	75%
Donations/Gifts	500,000	708,413	142%
Donations/Gifts - Prior Year Release	250,000	125,000	50%
Misc Revenue	21,500	52,440	244%
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	<b>1,433,506</b>	<b>1,488,104</b>	<b>104%</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>7,993,654</b>	<b>8,301,749</b>	<b>104%</b>
<b>Expense by Program Series</b>			
Salaries and Benefits	4,830,183	4,941,464	102%
Operations	876,027	1,052,488	120%
Leases	868,718	856,740	99%
Transportation	555,291	589,802	106%
Special Education-Contract Services & Supplies	124,325	205,377	165%
Supplies, Materials and Equipment	357,940	348,988	97%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>7,612,484</b>	<b>7,994,859</b>	<b>105%</b>
<b>Change in General Fund Balance</b>	<b>381,170</b>	<b>306,890</b>	
Fund Balance 06.30.13	1,845,748	1,845,748	
Current YTD Fund Balance	2,226,918	2,152,638	
% Fund Balance to total GF Expense	29%	28%	
<b>Food Service Fund</b>			
Food Service Revenue	474,145	531,971	112%
Food Service Expense	628,069	503,398	80%
<b>Change in Food Fund Balance</b>	<b>(153,924)</b>	<b>28,573</b>	
Combined Projected Change in Fund Balance	227,246	335,463	
Combined YTD Fund Balance		<u>2,181,211</u>	