

LAURA JEFFREY ACADEMY

2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT & WORLD'S BEST WORKFORCE REPORT



Practicing Mutual Responsibility and Individual Accountability

Searching for Truths

Building Empathy

Developing Generosity of Spirit

Becoming Competent

Acknowledging Paradox and Dilemma

Recognizing Strength in Vulnerability



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SCHOOL INFORMATION

YEAR OPENED: 2008

GRADES SERVED: 5 – 8

OUR PROMISE –*To provide an environment in which students are free – to explore their potential, discover their brilliance, and develop their intellect.*

OUR MISSION –*Empowering STEM scholars to be creators, thinkers, and problem solvers with an inclusive, girl-focused education.*

OUR MOTTO – *Asking questions, making choices.*



Laura Jeffrey Academy (LJA) is named after Laura Jeffrey, a long-time Minnesota resident whose life exemplified the love of learning and service to community, the goals of our school. Ms. Jeffrey came of age when there were few career choices available to women and African-Americans. Despite the limitations imposed on her, Ms. Jeffrey was an honors graduate of Macalester College and the only African-American in her class. After she earned a master's degree in library science in night school, she became one of the first African-American librarians in the St. Paul library system, and eventually rose to branch librarian. Ms. Jeffrey built a life that exemplified personal strength, intelligence and a passion for her beliefs.

LJA is a Twin Cities tuition free charter school offering a unique STEM-focused, girl-focused educational experience, grades five through eight. Students learn through rigorous study, by asking questions, solving problems, and participating in the community. LJA's interdisciplinary learning and teaching model provides students with the experiences and skills that result in academic and personal success - students who are critical thinkers and leaders.

Our School Framework is based on a holistic approach to education, addressing teaching and learning, resiliency, school climate, and organizational effectiveness. We provide a stimulating learning environment with clear expectations and opportunities to celebrate student learning. LJA's curriculum development and assessment process ensure that personal, school, state and federal standards are achieved.

LJA is run through an educator-led model. The leadership team is responsible for the executive functioning of the school in a way that is best aligned with the mission and vision for Laura Jeffrey Academy. As part of the educator-led model, all LJA staff serve on one of three committees: Curriculum and Instruction, School Culture, or Family and Community Relations. The curriculum & instruction committee oversees and supports the development and leading of weekly ongoing professional development, our teacher mentorship program, and peer review. The school culture committee focuses advisory curriculum, monthly themes and lessons related to LJA principles or

celebrations, and onboarding students within LJA's culture. The family & community relations committee develop and maintain lines of communication with families, and strengthen our presence in the community.

LJA incorporates interdisciplinary learning in Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM), and Language Arts and Social Studies (LASS). The STEM focus is arts and wellness-infused with courses offered in Visual Arts, Music, Physical Education, and Health. Academic success is supported through an inclusive special education program, social workers, behavioral staff, educational assistants, educational specialists, and math and literacy specialists.

Starting Middle School in 5th Grade

Laura Jeffrey Academy's founders created our school by taking into account what works best for kids, rather than simply replicating the traditional model.

When students begin at LJA in their fifth grade year, they enter developmentally as children, and when they graduate after the 8th grade, they leave as teenagers. The early adolescent, "tween" years, ages 10 to 14, are a time of major changes. These changes require all children to learn new ways of relating to peers and adults, and adapt to a continuously changing self. Bodies and brains are developing at a rapid pace and peer relationships generally become highly influential. At times, academic focus can be overshadowed as students become focused on who they are and how they fit in the world.

In traditional co-ed school settings, early adolescents (particularly young girls) can lose interest in academics, particularly in math, science, technology and physical activity. Research shows that this loss of interest begins right around the age of nine or ten, and this is what compelled the school's founders to begin our middle school in 5th grade. Starting in fifth grade ensures time for staff to get to know each individual scholar and their family before the rate of developmental change and challenge increases in sixth grade. Learning about every student's unique interests, strengths, hopes, and dreams beginning in fifth grade creates an enhanced opportunity to develop authentic relationships and assess each individual student's needs and interests as they move through their middle school years. In fifth grade, a child is developing a sense of belonging to a larger community and opportunities for contributing at Laura Jeffrey Academy begin as students create their social contract together. Teacher Emily Barnes comments, "Each year I see students come from all around the city, from a wide variety of prior learning experiences, to create a new and outstanding fifth grade class. Students quickly form friendships, and I hear them say over and over again that they've found their people here. Students and parents tell me that they see a new sense of confidence in their child, as well as a new or increased love of learning. 'My child is actually excited to go to school now!' is a common report from parents of fifth graders over the years. This positivity and energy is carried into our classrooms and enhances the learning experience for the entire class."

Sixth grade is a challenging year for most students, as they begin to mature physically and gain an emerging sense of sexuality, at the same time the role of friends becomes increasingly more important as they figure out their interests and their own sense of agency and power as an adolescent. Even the most resilient child may struggle with this time in their educational experience. Though this can be a

challenging time for both caregivers and students -starting 5th grade with a supportive learning environment can help your child move through this critical phase of development, where they can explore their potential, develop their intellect, and discover their brilliance.

We look back at our years of quantitative and qualitative data and conclude that students who begin LJA in 5th grade and graduate in 8th grade make significant gains in academic, social, and emotional development. When comparing students who have been with LJA since 5th grade and graduate in 8th grade to others in local urban districts, LJA students outperform in math, reading, and science. Teachers who teach LJA alum, as well as LJA alum caregivers, and alumnae themselves share stories describing LJA graduates as articulate, thoughtful and critical thinkers, conscientious citizens, and eager participants in their own learning and growth.

OUR PRINCIPLES - our guides for habits of mind as we develop in and out of the classroom.

Practicing Mutual Responsibility and Individual Accountability

- *We work together to solve problems and are accountable for our own choices, our impact on the community, and the environment as a whole.*
- *We know we are all responsible for solving problems as a team.*
- *We each do our part to solve problems and create a strong community.*
- *We follow through with our responsibilities.*

Searching for Truths

- *We build communities of inquiry capable of supporting free and open conversation on the most important issues.*
- *We always look for new important things to think about.*
- *We ask questions to gain understanding and we encourage others to do the same. .*

Building Empathy

- *We try to be aware of situations and experiences of others so we can act in ways that are sensitive to the way they see the world.*
- *We understand that people experience life differently.*
- *We try to learn more about the ways other people experience things.*

Developing Generosity of Spirit

- *We assume each of us tries to do what we believe is right and just.*
- *We recognize it is difficult to have consistency between what we value and how we practice those values.*
- *We try to help each other build the skills to practice our values.*

Becoming Competent

- *We help each other become increasingly able to bring about the results we each desire.*
- *We believe effort creates competence and competence helps build confidence.*
- *We help each other to be better.*
- *We know everyone can improve.*

Acknowledging Paradox and Dilemma

- *We make progress at LJA by opening our minds to complexity while continuing to take action in response to paradox or dilemma.*
- *Difficult or challenging ideas do not frustrate us. We know life (especially important things) can be complex.*
- *We are persistent: we don't give up when things are hard and/or complicated.*

Recognizing Strength in Vulnerability

- *We value help from others to see our shortcomings and potential as we continue to evolve and grow.*
- *We remember everyone is a work in progress and improves all the time.*
- *We try to be honest with ourselves and others about the help we need.*
- *We know asking for help is a sign of strength.*

OUR AUTHORIZER

Laura Jeffrey Academy was originally sponsored by Audubon Center of the North Woods in 2007 and we have been partnering with them ever since. Many Laura Jeffrey Academy students, board members, and staff have participated in environmental activities over the years at Audubon Center of the North Woods. We are in our first year of our current three year renewal.

The authorizing mission of the Audubon Center of the North Woods (ACNW) Charter School Division is to ensure quality academic and environmental literacy outcomes for students in Minnesota by conducting effective oversight and evaluation of its authorized schools, providing strategic support to schools, and making informed and merit-based decisions about its portfolio of charter schools.

The authorizing vision of ACNW is to authorize a portfolio of high performing charter schools that instill a connection and commitment to the environment in their school communities, while working towards a healthy planet where all people live in balance with the Earth.

Erin Anderson, Director of Charter School
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School administration posts this report on the official website (www.laurajeffreyacademy.org) and distributes this report and incorporated information to LJA's authorizer, school employees, parents

and legal guardians of students, and stakeholders. This annual report serves to satisfy Minnesota Statute 124E.16, subd. 2: Annual public reports. (a) A charter school must publish an annual report approved by the board of directors. The annual report must at least include information on school enrollment, student attrition, governance and management, staffing, finances, academic performance, innovative practices and implementation, and future plans. A charter school may combine this report with the reporting required under section 120B.11. A charter school must post the annual report on the school's official Website. A charter school must also distribute the annual report by publication, mail, or electronic means to its authorizer, school employees, and parents and legal guardians of students enrolled in the charter school. The reports are public data under chapter 13.

IMPLEMENTATION OF PRIMARY AND ADDITIONAL STATUTORY PURPOSES

The primary purpose of Laura Jeffrey Academy is to improve pupil learning and student achievement. In the following pages of this annual report, we will outline in detail how we implement, measure, and report these processes and outcomes.

This report will report on the additional statutory purpose of Laura Jeffrey Academy: to increase learning opportunities for all pupils; and to encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods. This report will outline methods used to achieve these additional purposes, including afterschool programming, J-term, participation in environmental activities, and partnerships that enhance student engagement and opportunities.

This report will provide examples of the actions taken by Laura Jeffrey Academy that show how LJA improves all student learning and student achievement including increasing learning opportunities for all students through small classroom settings, help for students with specialized learning needs, and systematic structure of academic curriculum. Teachers at LJA use innovative curriculum and instruction methods to deliver relevant and standards-based instruction. Small class sizes, individualized interventions, and inquiry-based learning are but a few of the ways we support student success. The report will show in more detail ways we are striving for the best education for students, what our data shows, and our plans for future success.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHICS

Chartered in 2008 as the first and only Minnesota school with a girl-focused curriculum – and one of few public schools with a curricular gender focus in the United States, Laura Jeffrey Academy is an innovative, urban charter school in St. Paul, Minnesota, offering a unique education experience for grades 5-8. Learning from the best parochial and private schools, we chartered to expand opportunities for ALL students and provide access to families who would not



otherwise be able to afford the available private options. We are committed to serving a diverse group of families from different socio-economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds.

Student Enrollment

In the 2018-19 school year, Laura Jeffrey Academy enrolled a total of 95 students. As we have seen in the past few years, the 5th grade enrollment is lower than our capacity and is related to St. Paul Public Schools elementary model shift from grades K-6 to K-5. We will continue to offer 5th grade, as research shows that girls decrease their academic motivation in science, math, and technology around the age of 10 and our mission calls us to help reduce the gender gap in STEM-related fields. In grades 6-8, we have settled into an enrollment level allowing us to focus on creating well-supported, strong classroom experiences with low student to teacher ratios for instruction.

	2017-8	2018-19	2019-20 <i>(current #'s)</i>
<i>5th Grade</i>	17	15	9
<i>6th Grade</i>	23	27	24
<i>7th Grade</i>	28	29	28
<i>8th Grade</i>	31	24	21
<i>Total</i>	98	95	82

Although student enrollment is lower than in previous years, we are able to maintain the same number of teachers and staff. Our staffing structure is designed to remain stable while other factors may shift. This is largely due to our special education inclusion model that allows teachers who have unscheduled class periods to be in their peers’ classrooms assisting in academic support and behavioral management. Students benefit from smaller class sizes, more individualized attention, and the opportunity to develop relationships with staff in varied settings.

Student Demographics

Our goal is to maintain a diverse community serving a population consisting of approximately 50% free and reduced meal recipients, and 50% of students who identify as being from an ethnic/racial background other than white. This is intentional to create a learning environment where we can hear multiple perspectives and learn from one another’s experiences and viewpoints.

	<i>2017-2018</i>	<i>2018-2019</i>	<i>2019-20 (est)</i>
<i>Total Enrollment</i>	98	95	82
<i>Male</i>	2	1	4
<i>Female</i>	95	94	78
<i>Special Education</i>	19	16	16
<i>LEP</i>	0	0	0
<i>African American</i>	37	37	32
<i>Latino</i>	8	8	8
<i>Asian/PI</i>	9	6	7
<i>American Indian</i>	7	5	5
<i>White</i>	43	40	33
<i>F/R Lunch</i>	45	48	34

**2018-19 Special Education numbers do not include incoming students who have not yet been assessed.*

STUDENT ATTENDANCE, ATTRITION & MOBILITY

Student Attendance

At Laura Jeffrey Academy, an Attendance Team meets bi-weekly to discuss student needs around attendance. This team’s function is to review attendance issues and determine the level of action that is necessary. This can be a conversation with a student, a review of our process, or meeting with the family to talk about how to resolve the issue. Our team makes efforts to ensure that all students and families have an understanding about state laws regarding school attendance and how those laws shape our attendance policy at LJA. Team members also meet with specific students and families to guide them to the necessary resources to get their students to school regularly and on time.

We have developed a relationship with Ramsey County staff, our legal truancy authority for most of our students, to work together both about our process and for specific students.

We work hard as a community to ensure that our school is a safe and engaging environment where students look forward to learning and building friendships.

	<i>2015-16</i>	<i>2016-17</i>	<i>2017-18</i>	<i>2018-19</i>
<i>Overall Attendance Rate</i>	<i>97%</i>	<i>93.7%</i>	<i>92.4%</i>	<i>94.1%</i>

Student Attrition

With the goal of orienting new families to our school culture, Laura Jeffrey Academy provides a series of new family events that create relationships with both the students and their families. Students are scheduled for a fun learning activity with a teacher and other new students, while parents/caregivers meet with one of the administrative team to learn about our academics (curriculum/grading/schedules, etc), understanding “T(w)een” Development and Social-Emotional Learning, and Culture and Discipline at LJA.

LJA works diligently to build relationships with families and students. At the beginning of each year, advisory teachers make home visits to get to know the student and family, answer any questions, ease concerns, and talk about expectations for the upcoming year. This is maintained throughout the year through quarterly check-ins with families around academics as well as any social/emotional needs of each individual.

Some of the key factors we see around attrition are:

- Students looking at high school options. Placement into a school at the end of their middle grades years ensures placement for high school grades.

- Our extended year calendar differs from other schools in the area. It can become a scheduling issue when siblings are attending other schools. Additionally, attendance rates decrease noticeably in June. As we move to a traditional calendar this year, we expect this to improve.
- We offer sports on a competitive, but recreational level. We welcome all students to participate and do not have travelling or higher level teams.
- Expectations of the family are not aligned with the vision or mission of the school.

Percentage of students who maintained enrollment from Spring 2018 to October 2018 (omits graduating 8th graders)	75%
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Student Mobility

Transfers can be attributed to a few key factors: families moving, transportation issues, dissatisfaction either at another school or within LJA.

	# students on October 1	Mid-year Transfers In	Mid-year Transfers Out	Total Mid-year Transfers	Mobility Index (%)*
2016-17	123	5	9	14	11%
2017-18	98	11	13	24	24%
2018-19	95	5	12	17	17%

* Total mid-year transfers divided by Number of students on Oct. 1.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Percentage of students who were enrolled for 95% or more of the school year.	88%	76%	72%

EDUCATIONAL APPROACH & CURRICULUM

Laura Jeffrey Academy is the first and only STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) middle school in Minnesota, with a comprehensive girl-focused liberal arts curriculum.

In June 2019, LJA graduated its ninth class of 8th graders and students transitioned to 10 different district, charter, and private high schools. Alumni are confident in their experiences in high school, involved in extracurricular activities, and enrolled in challenging honors and AP courses.

Curriculum and Instruction: Subordinating Teaching to Learning

Teachers create quarterly units of instruction using the Understanding by Design (UbD) format. Units include learning targets which are based in the Minnesota State Standards and the Common Core standards for English/Language Arts. Units explicitly articulate the processes, skills, concepts, and knowledge that students must understand for proficiency.

Learning Targets: outline skills and dispositions that help develop career and college ready students and all learning targets are based on MN State standards or Common Core standards for English/Language Arts. Students work towards mastery of learning targets rather than an overall class grade. This allows students, teachers, and families to gauge learning based on specific skills and/or concept. Work towards mastery is reported to scholars and families with the following system: Beginning (1), Developing (2), Secure (3), and Exemplary (4).

Student Ownership: students know their year long and quarter learning targets and are graded based on their mastery of each learning target. Embedded in Units are formative and summative assessments.

Critical Literacy: Learning to critique texts and deconstruct raced, classed, and gendered cultural expectations leads to increased competence, and thus, confidence in learning. Students identify multiple viewpoints when confronted with issues and identify different perspectives for the factors that impact those perspectives.

Relevant and Rigorous Classroom Time: In LJA's inquiry-based learning environments, scholars solve complex problems that have no obvious answer by making inferences, supporting arguments with evidence, conducting research, interpreting results, and analyzing conflicting explanations. Papers must be well reasoned, well organized, and well documented from credible sources. Teachers encourage discussion, dialogue, and critical thinking as defined by the MN State standards.

Peer conferences: Teachers use information from one-to-one conferences to pair students for learning from each other during peer conferences.

Real-world learning: Students engage in many relevant world topics through both their core subject areas and their elective courses. Specifically our LASS curriculum focuses on the rights of a girl, globally and the transformation of women's rights overall. The STEM and Math curriculum focuses on how students can use evidence and facts to impact decisions and choices in their everyday lives. How they can use their knowledge to create a better tomorrow. A concrete example is through the exploration of creating our own home. Scholars use their understanding of surface area, cost, calculating Rf-Values with the application of the 13 principles of sustainable design, to address ways they could be creators of sustainable living. Scholars worked to install rain gutters and rain barrels to support LJA's courtyard. Scholars made a mobile School Store so they could easily create ways for their peers to access items they may want or need.



Showcase Learning: Students have a variety of opportunities to prepare and perform during class time, practicing and developing their editing, speaking, listening, and collaborative competencies. Students showcase learning at the end of each quarter. Community members, families, and students share in the progress and learning through an assembly of performances and/or a gallery walk through classrooms. Students have the opportunity to shine.

Teaching and Learning

Social Constructivism and Experiential Education with Equity in Mind

Laura Jeffrey Academy was started to create access to a learning environment for students who wouldn't otherwise have such an opportunity. Therefore, the teachers of LJA tackle important topics while pushing all students further in their learning. LJA is constructed with social, experiential learning, with equity in the forefront. Because of this; learning is a collaborative, social, and cultural experience. Teaching and learning at LJA is evaluated in a variety of ways. The educators of LJA use data from state and FastBridge testing, along with rubrics, classroom performance, and teacher evaluation process. Teachers are evaluated at LJA using the model provided by the state of Minnesota. Because we are a Q-comp school, teachers are evaluated on performance rubrics three times each year. Teachers work with their Curriculum and Instruction Peer Coaches to create performance goals to support individual practice. Teachers at LJA also receive professional development in the areas of classroom management (needs based approach to student discipline), the creation of effective UbD units, utilization of Assessment for Learning standards-based grading, and team teaching.

Standards-based, Interdisciplinary, Multi-Age Learning

Laura Jeffrey Academy applies the principles of interdisciplinary learning where students explore a question from several different perspectives. This enables students to develop a broader and more complex understanding of the subject. Classes are structured as multi-age with 7th and 8th grade combined and 5th and 6th grade combined groups in all subjects except Math. Multi-age classrooms allow for peer mentoring, individual differences to arise and be celebrated, with student leadership nurtured. LJA's two year curriculum cycle is structured with state standards that are combined with the grade levels to allow for scholars to meet all academic standards, without repeating content.

Pedagogy, Assessment and Curriculum

Laura Jeffrey Academy is committed to assess learning and develop an increasingly precise planning, assessment and instructional process. Teaching is subordinated to learning at LJA, where teachers use formative assessment including student self-assessment, rubrics, teacher made assessment and careful observation. Teachers write curricula using the UbD, planning methodology to explicitly articulate standard based learning targets and assessments. Students "own" their learning at LJA and work toward mastery of concepts, knowledge, and skills.

Learning targets are made explicit to students and learning is carefully scaffolded for student understanding. Students showcase their learning at the end of each quarter through a performance, project, or portfolio piece. As students work toward mastery they have the opportunity to revise their work for improved grades.

Remediation and Acceleration Practices or Programming

Laura Jeffrey Academy was again awarded an ADSIS grant for the 2018-19 school year and has continued to perfect our specific reading and math, evidence based interventions. Students were assigned interventions based on teacher observations/feedback, Fastbridge and MCA Data. The interventions occurred during the midday classes (classes met three/week in 40 minute class periods).

Our partnership with St. Kate's has continued, as 12 tutors from the University of St. Catherine worked with students on math two days a week during intervention time.

Data was reviewed regularly and students were shifted into other interventions or accelerations as needed. Specific interventions included: Mathletics, Do the Math Now and Math Projects

Teachers and staff were trained in the interventions and implementation as well as making data driven decisions. An ADSIS team met monthly to analyze student data, develop processes and support teacher learning. A reading and math team met bi-monthly to develop reading/math interventions,

progress-monitoring systems and to analyze the data. Additionally, a student support team met monthly to review student support as referred by the school teacher/support staff.

LASS classes give a variety of assessments guiding teachers to work individually with students to develop skills and competencies. Assessments include Words their Way, Dibbels, Easy CBM, DAZE, MAZE, HELPS progress monitoring, and Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI). Our literacy specialist also works with students one-on-one based on the outcomes of these assessments.

Special Education: Inclusion

The special education program is an inclusion model, with limited pull out support for the related services of Speech/Language, Developmental Adaptive Physical Education, Vision, Orientation/Mobility, and Occupational Therapy. Special education students receive the general education curriculum with modifications/accommodations as indicated in each student's IEP. Special education staff works with special education students in the classroom individually or in small groups along with general education students to provide support as indicated in the student's IEP.

All special education students are also supported with paraprofessionals or with educational specialists in all classrooms, including elective classes. Educational Specialists (ES) are licensed teachers who are performing traditional paraprofessional roles in the classroom. This is a new practice and was done to support full time teacher contracts in situations where teachers had open blocks in their schedule. Upon review of this practice, teacher learning of special education needs was enhanced as well as student learning and relationships built between students and teachers.

In an attempt to support paraprofessional development, all paraprofessional staff was invited to all in-service learning. In addition, para support staff was also required to attend weekly trainings with Special Education Coordinator to address the needs of scholars and classroom learning.

English Learner (EL)

We did not have EL students so did not have an EL program. Students who may need EL services are screened in the LJA enrollment paperwork. Teachers also observe and make recommendations for support as needed. If there was an identified student need, the student would be screened using the traditional home/family interview and would be given the ACCESS assessment tool. Individual student support plans would then be developed to support learning English.

Staffing to Match our Mission

We intentionally aim to hire a diverse staff with race, class, and gender/gender identity backgrounds that are representative of our school demographics as well as the world around us.

Our staffing pattern reflects what is needed to accommodate the special education inclusion model - with push-in special education teachers and additional paraprofessional staff. During the 2018-19 school year, we had two special education teachers. In addition, we had a school social worker to

support special education students IEP goals around socio-emotional/behavioral needs, lead midday socio-emotional interventions and facilitate 504 plans. We had a total of five paraprofessionals and two ES (teacher Educational Specialists) who worked with special education students based on IEP needs.

School Calendar and Daily Schedule

2018-19 was the last year of our longer school calendar. Our school calendar began in the middle of August and ended at the end of June. The number of instructional days is similar to other districts, but our schedule allows for extended breaks in between each quarter. Students and staff have come to appreciate how the calendar allows regular breaks to refresh our minds while shortening the time in the summer when much of our scholars' learning loss occurs. However, we needed to change the schedule to accommodate switching to the use of St. Paul busing, and so LJA will be following a more traditional school calendar in 2019-20.

Each student's schedule consists of the following classes: STEM, LASS (Language Arts and Social Studies), Math, Wellness (Health and Physical Education), Art (for half the year), and Music (for half of the year). Seventy-five minute learning blocks increase time for inquiry-based instruction, experiential lab work, and increases opportunities for students to showcase, perform and reflect on their learning.

Intervention and accelerated classes took place on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays during midday. Clubs took place on Tuesdays and Thursdays during midday. Midday classes were 40 minutes in length.



INNOVATIVE PRACTICES & IMPLEMENTATION

LASS (Language Arts, Social Studies)

Language Arts and Social Studies (LASS) are co-taught, interdisciplinary, 75 minute blocks with grades 5/6 together, and grades 7/8 together. Language Arts and Social Studies teachers write curriculum that integrates language arts and social studies content and standards to increase relevancy and exploring meaning across subjects. Co-teaching in 7th and 8th grade enables teachers to meet frequently with students in individualized reading and writing conferences and plan for differentiated instruction. Curriculum has a two-year cycle, enabling students to engage with rigorous content in heterogeneous groups. An emphasis is placed on cooperative learning, listening and speaking skills, and becoming critically literate.

Math

Math is the only course at LJA that is not a mixed grade level. It is co-taught course for 75 minutes and focuses on making connections and solving real world problems. LJA is committed to preparing students to be leaders and citizens who are empowered with the language and processes of mathematics. We seek to inspire students to question the world through a critical lens, one which is always seeking to find solutions to problems that are efficient, elegant, and powerful. To this end, when we teach mathematics, we:

1. Learn cooperatively. We learn best when we problem-solve together and where everyone's talents are recognized. We work together not only to achieve the best possible outcome, but also to encourage our brains to be flexible in seeing a problem from multiple perspectives.
2. Reflect on our process through discussion and writing. We don't simply solve problems in order to get the right answer. We problem-solve so that we can learn new strategies and approaches. It is only through deep reflection that we can apply a strategy from one area to the next.
3. Honor mistakes as a tool for reflection and growth. Mistakes are proof that you are trying. Without making mistakes, we cannot differentiate between successful and unsuccessful lines of thinking.
4. Construct knowledge through investigation. We best understand that which we come to believe through experience. When we investigate and come to our own conclusions, we gain deeper understanding and are empowered to adapt our worldview to incorporate this new understanding.
5. Approach mathematics as a tool that opens doors to a myriad of life choices. Not every student will grow up to be a mathematician, but we hope that every student has the opportunity to apply the mindsets learned in mathematics to their particular goals.

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)

Fifth and sixth grade students enroll in a science class that is infused with introductory engineering content to increase motivation and engagement. Math courses are 75 minutes and focused on making connections and solving problems. Every classroom is equipped with advanced technology - each having a Smart Board to aid instructional effectiveness.

Seventh and eighth grade STEM prepares our students for rigorous choices in high school. In STEM, they are provided with a foundation of competency and confidence to excel in college and in fields where women are traditionally underrepresented. Additionally, STEM classes focus on scientific literacy and student understanding of how to analyze and interpret information they receive about the world.

Guiding STEM Principles

- Nurturing curiosity and wonderment
- Developing the critical thinking skills of identifying, analyzing and using evidence to inform knowledge
- Becoming resilient problem solvers and innovative thinkers
- Applying STEM thinking in and out of the classroom

Principles in Practice

Though Laura Jeffrey Academy students have 75 minutes of STEM class every day, the STEM principles are infused throughout our school. As these principles make clear, we believe being a STEM-focused school is more than strong science content and lots of technology (though we believe that is and can be part of it too). When these principles are put into practice, students develop a mindset, skills, and habits that give them the tools for success in STEM fields and beyond, while having experiences that allow them to see how it all can apply to life outside of LJA.

Nurturing curiosity and wonderment

Laura Jeffrey Academy is an environment where inquiry and curiosity are encouraged. We hope to foster these mindsets, with the hope that each scholar who comes through our doors will :

- Pay attention to immediate, local, and global environments
- Constantly ask questions about their world
- Seek out new experiences and ideas different than one's own.
- Make connections between topics
- Find connections between topics and their own life
- Love to learn new things
- Enjoy complexity and unanswered questions.

Developing the critical thinking skills of identifying, analyzing and using evidence to inform knowledge

Laura Jeffrey Academy challenges students to think critically as they analyze the world around them. Scholars immersed in LJA's curriculum should continually be developing the following skills in all their classes:

- Gathering evidence/data from multiple sources & perspectives
- Distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant evidence/data
- Evaluating evidence/data for reliability, credibility and validity
- Accurately interpreting evidence and explain possible implications
- Analyzing evidence for patterns, differences, similarities and trends.
- Making valid inferences based on the evidence and reason.
- Identifying potential assumptions and/or bias in sources.
- Identifying potential assumptions and/or bias in own collection of evidence
- Synthesizing information to meet intended purpose

Becoming resilient problem solvers and innovative thinkers

Laura Jeffrey Academy scholars apply their knowledge to solve problems and answer questions about their world. As they do, they will be developing important habits of scholarship:

- Defining purpose and target audience
- Taking responsible risks
- Evaluating multiple solutions and ideas to select best approach/product
- Revising based on feedback from peers, mentors and trials
- Learning from failure
- Looking for new questions or new information that may inform problem solving
- Resiliency in group work
- Taking Responsibility toward group success (mutual responsibility) and for individual contributions (individual accountability)

Applying STEM thinking in and out of the classroom

In order to explore their potential, build competence and confidence, and enjoy the success of tackling complex problems, we want LJA scholars have a variety hands-on experiences throughout their time here.

- Midday clubs: All students have the opportunity to pursue various interests.
Examples: SciGirls Code with Twin Cities PBS, Fab Fems, Technovation MN, Design Team with the Minnesota Science Museum, LJA Reports, Student Leadership Club, Debate, Book Buddies, Yearbook and Drama Club
- Intersessions: Hands-on classes and experiences with a range of partnerships and service learning opportunities.
Examples: Wilderness Inquiry, Eagle Bluff, Audubon of the Northwoods, University of Minnesota, Appetite for Change, iMatter, Great River Greening, Girls Inc, MidWest Food Connection, SheRock SheRock, Stepping Stones Theatre, Saint Paul Public Library and Weisman Art Museum

- Field Trips: LJA commits to getting students out into the community and the natural world.
Examples: History Center, The O’Shaughnessy, Fort Snelling State Park, and Buck Hill
- Experts & guest speakers: LJA works find individuals who can show how the curriculum is relevant to the “real world”
Examples: Fab Fems, University of MN Teaching candidates, Ramsey Conservation District, College of Saint Catherine’s PA Nursing Students, Emily Program, Family Tree, Women’s Advocates, MN Teen Challenge, MN Teen Health, Cliffs Mining Environmental Manager
- Curricular Enhancements:
Examples: History Day with MN Historical Society, Makerspace with the Science Museum of MN, Adopt-A-Drain with the City of Saint Paul, Capital Regional Watershed, Ximedica

Girl-Focused

Deconstruction of race, class, and gender in all classes provides students with rigorous topics for discussion and develops critical literacy. Focus on student voice and power throughout curriculum choices supports equity for all students while building 21st century skills of innovation and problem solving. The girl-focused curriculum assures students access to histories and viewpoints that are often left out or ignored in traditional curricula. We believe that our pedagogy, curriculum, and teaching practices are beneficial to any child, regardless of gender identity. At Laura Jeffrey Academy, girl-focused means to ensure all students (no matter who they are) are challenged to think critically, learn a feminist perspective (which calls for equality for all persons), seek out injustice, working for a solution, and will hear stories and see examples of role models who are or have worked to dismantle gender stereotypes and glass ceilings. We welcome any student regardless of gender or gender expression. While doing this, we cannot deny the fact that we also want to reduce the gender gap in STEM-related fields. We work to increase students’ competence and confidence in math and science. A focus on the whole child is expected from all staff and supported by a school social worker and our advisory curriculum. Comprehensive sexuality education in grades 5 – 8 is designed to give students sufficient information to make healthy choices that impact their long term success.

“Asking Questions, Making Choices”, LJA’s motto, supports an environment where students are encouraged to research, think about, and ask questions to make informed and well thought out choices for their futures.

"As I look back over my years at LJA, I realized that I have something that other girls have not had the chance to receive. I know what it means to be a girl in the world. I know my place as a strong woman and I don't let anyone tell me different.

I really wish I could tell every girl at my school about what it means to be a girl and how they can be engineers and doctors and scientists or anything else they set their heart to.... They haven't found their strong LJA scholar, and that makes me think about what I could do to help."

Annalee M., LJA Grad

Critical Literacy

One of the key pieces of our instructional framework is critical literacy. Through critical literacy, we live out our motto of Asking Questions, Making Choices.

Critical literacy is an approach that encourages the reader to actively analyze and deconstruct the texts they encounter in and out of the classroom. In this approach, literacy is about more than the ability to decode or "sound out" the words on the page, or the ability to summarize the main points of a story or article. Critically literate students see any text, whether it is a novel, picture book, textbook, song on the radio, or advertisement, as something that was created by a person or people with their own particular perspective in society, and are able to analyze those texts and reflect on their layers of meaning. Paulo Friere, the educator, philosopher, and author of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, said that critical literacy was a vehicle for students and their teachers to learn to "read the world."

"LJA is an incredibly unique school, but I didn't realize just how special until I started my first year as a high school student."

At LJA, you will see classrooms in which:

- teachers guide students in encounters with multiple viewpoints rather than presenting one voice as definitive or authoritative.

- students and teachers ask and discuss questions such as: Who created this text? What is this text about and how do we know? Who is allowed to speak, and what are their perspectives on the world? Who benefits from the text? Who or what has been left out from this text?
- when textbooks are used in the classroom, they are not presented as the ultimate authority on a topic, but rather as another text to be analyzed and deconstructed with a critical lens. Texts are not considered to be universal or unbiased.
- students see themselves in the curriculum. In language arts, students see characters with whom they can identify in the stories and books they read; in science and math, students explore how these disciplines relate to their experiences and communities, and in social studies, students learn about the “people’s history,” not just the history from the point of view of the powerful.
- teachers regularly consider questions together such as: How are members of the learning community participating in the cycle of making meaning? How does knowledge work in both democratic and undemocratic ways (to liberate or dominate)? To what extent does the study in question have value beyond the classroom and how will students take this learning and own it beyond the walls of LJA?
- the learning community is engaged in work that aims to learn about and act on social inequalities and injustice.

Critical literacy enriches our inquiry-based learning environment, in which challenging problems are posed and challenging questions are asked on a daily basis in every classroom. This kind of higher order thinking is interdisciplinary in nature, experiential, and the kind of highly rigorous work that helps students prepare for their future education in high school and college. Critical literacy prepares students to become engaged, critical, and justice-oriented participants in our democratic society, and empowers the marginalized and oppressed by building critical consciousness, including the ability to name, act on, and transform injustice in our communities.

J-Term and June Term

Laura Jeffrey Academy is committed to making middle school the most valuable time of a child’s education, as it can be deeply transformative and set the stage for future success. J-term is a two and a half week period in January where classes are modified to enhance experience and inquiry in interdisciplinary classes. Originally designed to address the post-winter-break restless energy of students, it has become an energizing and highly rigorous platform to deepen connections with the more traditional content and standards. The power of J-Term had been so fruitful, we included another round, known as June-Term, to engaged scholars during their peers’ “summer” break. During 2019-20, with a traditional school calendar, we will no longer have June term, but will still have J-term during January.

Experiential education particularly engages students in STEM fields, equipping them with the tools and knowledge to allow experimentation, collaboration, play, and creativity to thrive.



2. 5 hour long block classes allow for special topics to be covered in depth and special opportunities like field trips to be more feasible.

J-term class offerings in the 2018-2019 school year included Knitting & Design, Creative Coding, Urban Planning & Papier Mache, Outdoor Winter Survival, and Origami & Geometry. June-Term class offerings included Media Literacy, SPARCS@MAC (makerspace course), Theatrics, Open Studio Art, and Revolutionary Self-Care.

Collaborations and Non-Profit Partnerships

Laura Jeffrey Academy continues to draw interest from post-secondary educational volunteers and tutors. Our tutors help address the needs of working towards reducing the achievement gap in math and reading and encourage our students' interest in STEM activities. Twice a week, college tutors arrive during midday to work directly with students identified as needing additional academic instruction. The college tutors come from: St. Catherine's University, Macalester College, the University of Minnesota, Carleton College, North Central University, and Hamline University.

Many of these college tutors are studying to become elementary education teachers. LJA tutors serve as positive role models and provide opportunity for LJA students to learn about higher education through the eyes of young adults currently working towards a college degree.

LJA partnered with Girls Scouts of MN & WI River Valleys, MN Alliance for Youth, Technovation MN, AmeriCorps, Macalester College, Women's Environmental Institute, YWCA, Girlz Rock, Great River Greening, and the Kitty Andersen Youth Science Center to provide enhanced learning experiences through mid-day clubs, intersession classes, and courses offered during J-Term and June Term.

Augsburg College Urban Debate League has supported LJA's Debate teams for the past 5 years. Through their mentorship they have provided the resources to support a competitive academic debate team.

LJA partnered with the Science Museum of MN's Making Space Project. As one of five schools chosen within the state, LJA was and is providing a space for scholars to explore through hands-on, real-work application.

LJA also began a partnership with 3M in 2018-19. 3M sent various "visiting wizards" to LJA during our club time, and began the visioning process with students about our Maker Space.

Hamline University, and several groups of international leaders working in the area of women's rights, sponsored by the US State Department, tour LJA annually to learn about our innovative practices and create ways to approach interdisciplinary learning.

Organizational Development

Laura Jeffrey Academy's framework is based on extensive theory and research. Philosophical underpinnings of each theory align to create an approach to learning that accelerates student learning, promotes critical literacy and analysis of content, while focusing on closing the opportunity gap. This is a tall order and over the past seven years we have been testing our practices that work best for our demographics. Every day staff and teachers implement theory to practice engaging in action research and discussion to improve their practices and thus student outcomes.

We continue to build on innovations we have implemented and hone best practices that have helped us close achievement gaps and accelerate all learners at LJA. In meeting the needs of our scholars, LJA started exploring the idea of transitioning into an educator-led school. With the support of an Ignition grant through Teacher Powered Schools, a design team was created to begin the research, evaluation and development of becoming an educator-led school. The design team began its work with a thorough assessment of LJAs strengths, weaknesses and opportunities. From there, we identified which areas of autonomy educators would take on and build capacity in. Three educator-led committees were developed for the 2018-19, including Curriculum and Instruction, Family and Community Relations, and School Culture. It is clear that an educator-led school aligns well with mission and foundational philosophies of Laura Jeffrey and also provides students with a model of shared leadership and collaboration.

Extended Year Calendar

Laura Jeffrey Academy's extended year calendar is designed to prevent learning loss in the summer, offer mental breaks throughout the school year for both staff and students, as well as, provide enrichment activities between quarters. Students begin the year in August and attend school through the end of June.

Although our calendar extends into a time when many summer programs have already begun, we have the flexibility to accommodate educational camps that have been pre-approved by our Leadership Team. Specifically, we have developed and maintained a partnership with YWCA Girls Inc. Eureka!, who have accepted several LJA students into their 5 year college readiness program. As we anticipated moving away from our extended year calendar in 2019-20, we began to develop more partnerships to offer more summer opportunities in the future, including with Project Scientist (5 students receive scholarships for summer program) and with Freedom School.

Enrichment, Extra Curricular, and Events

Laura Jeffrey Academy offers a robust curriculum during each of our intersession breaks. Specifically, it is a week-long enrichment course that focuses on STEM, arts, literacy, or environmental studies.

Intersessions at LJA:

In the fall, University of MN English postbacs (20 teacher candidates) taught Literacy-based courses including, for example, “Hogwarts, Wakanda & the Death Star,” created stories about their own fully realized worlds/universes; “Superheroes, hip hop and modern mythology”, where students critically analyzed lyrics to rap music and connected them to ideas in our culture around superheroes; and “The Mystery at LJA” where students spent the week solving and participating in, a mystery..

The theme of our winter intersession was “Music & Wellness”- Students spent four fun days experiencing classes like leadership & team building, calming strategies, musicals, beat making, and improv. On the final day of the week, students took a special ice skating field trip to the TRIA skating rink in downtown St. Paul.

Spring intersession was spent at Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center for the rest of the week. This overnight trip is a great way for students to experience nature and try out new activities: farming life, high ropes courses, stargazing, and scat explorations.



Extra Curricular:

TechnovationMN, is a worldwide App building and entrepreneurial competition, offered to Laura Jeffrey Academy scholars as an after school experience. In our fifth year of participation, LJA students developed, designed, and pitched three apps to investors on locating and describing dangerous bugs in a user’s area to investors, through the global competition. These apps were: iDrug, Informing people about drug overdose and where to get help; Loco Bugs, finding bugs in your area/travel area and what to do if you get bitten; and Stand Up!, how to identify a bully and what to do/who to go to if you or someone else is being bullied.

Midday clubs, which are 40 minutes classes offered twice a week, are supported by LJA staff and community partnerships. They have included classes such as Dance, Debate, Girls In Action, Girl Scouts Connectz, Harry Potter, iMatter, Knitting, Mindful Coloring, Musicals, Preschool Buddies, SlamBeatz, Yearbook, and Yoga.

Two LJA basketball teams, two soccer teams, and two volleyball teams played in the St. Paul Parks and Rec league or the LIST (League of Independent School Teams). In 2018-19, LJA added Girls on the Run and had a GoTR team (5th grade) and a Heart & Sole team (6th-8th grade) participate in both the fall and spring seasons of Girls on The Run

Events:

Chili Cook-off: LJA had its 7th annual Chili Cook off in October of 2018. This is always one of our most attended community building events. Families bring in chili to share and enter the dishes in various categories.

Black History Celebration: Students from the High School for Recording Arts came and discussed their *Rondo* film, which students watched that day during advisory. Students also attended short thematic classes, then ended the day with a performance from *Soul Beautiful*.

Earth Day at LJA: Scholars and community came together to show their support for Mother Earth. The focus of the event was a rummage sale, with a plant based food truck, musical performances from our 5th grade music classes, natural tie-dyeing, and lots of environmental learning stations hosted by the 7/8 grade scholars.

Women in Engineering Play: 20 Women from [Engineering System Inc](#) spent the morning at LJA illuminating the different kinds of work they do on a day-to-day basis. The engineers shared their academic and career pathways to becoming engineers within a multitude of STEM fields. Scholars were exposed to the ins and outs of Biomechanics, investigating explosions, and civil, structural engineering. Scholars explored alongside professionals; allowing our scholars the opportunity to see themselves in their shoes, knowing that they belong anywhere they desire.

Challenges

Laura Jeffrey Academy's Instructional Framework is complex, intensive and an innovative approach of addressing the intersectionality within a healthy and vibrant learning environment. Teachers use Understanding by Design to create rigorous, integrated and differentiated instructional units that scaffold assessment for learning methods and strategies from introduction to summative assessment. Shared inquiry lessons (Great Books methodology) anchor key understandings within the unit. Teachers are held to the expectation of knowing each student's zone of proximal development and to deliver instruction crafted to best fit each student's learning needs. Teachers are also expected to provide culturally relevant curriculum that shares a commitment to environmental and social justice education. LJA staff is constantly reflecting and using data to inform decisions to better improve our scholars learning.

LJA Leadership is currently transitioning to an educator-led school and a challenge we face is finding time to create pathways and systems for all voices to be heard. We are working to create space for both the development of the organizational structure while tending to the daily operations of LJA. It was specifically a challenge for some of the new committees to find enough time to meet in order to fulfill their particular duties. We have already made plans to address this particular challenge in FY20.

LJA is always working on supporting teachers and staff in all the various ways we are asking them to be creative and innovative. Finding appropriate and useful staff development to best fit the individual growth areas for each staff member, making time to plan curriculum collaboratively by creating

authentic connections, and allowing time to effectively process on our reflections and data to create real time changes are some of the most evident challenges we worked to address in the 2018-19 school year.

Math instruction has been a challenge for several years, but particularly in 2018-19. The math team met with leadership, families and students on multiple occasions to help revise math instruction to meet the needs of students, particularly in 7th & 8th grade. The result was several adjustments, but particularly splitting into two smaller classes to help provide more individualized instruction. After these changes were made teachers and scholars felt much better about their learning environments and the instruction being provided.

The complexity of our commitment to inclusion in special education is another challenge. Figuring out how to provide the best situation for each student, while maintaining compliance and what is best for all students, is a delicate balance, especially in a small system. We had to contract out our special education coordination rather than have someone in-house, and this provided communication challenges. We will have an in-house special education coordinator in FY20.

The continuation of weekly Peer Learning Communities (PLC's) allowed individual teachers to work towards their own growth goals, while also supporting their peers to provide them embedded supports within the system.

We hope these changes address the challenges of creating sustainable systems that uphold the best practices of the framework and give teachers ample time to write curriculum and develop a sense of efficacy.

It will take a few years to completely refine our professional development so that all staff members understand and are competent at implementing LJA's framework with fidelity.



Highlights of the Strategic Plan

LJA completed the final year of its previous strategic plan at the end of the 2017-2018 school year. Given the school's transition to a teacher-led model during the 2018-2019 school-year, the Board and Leadership team realized they most focus their strategic efforts on guiding that transition as effectively as possible, and were unable to create a new strategic plan. The Board and Leadership team

will convene in the coming months to work towards developing LJA's next strategic plan and set goals for the next five years.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: GOALS & BENCHMARKS

Progress on ACNW Contractual Academic Goals & World's Best Workforce Alignment

World's Best Workforce (WBWF) Goal Areas:

- Ready for Kindergarten [R4K]: All students are ready for kindergarten.
- Reading Well by 3rd Grade [RG3]: All students in third grade achieve grade-level literacy.
- Achievement Gap Closure [AGC]: All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.
- Career and College Ready [CCR]: All students are career- and college-ready before graduating from high school.
- Graduate from High School [GRAD]: All students graduate from high school.

Indicator 1: Mission Related Outcomes

Goal: 1.1 From FY20 to FY21, the average rating for Laura Jeffrey Academy teachers on a 5-question mission-related subset on the MDE Student Perception of Student Engagement Survey will be 3.75 out of a 5 point scale.

1.2 From FY20 to FY21, 75% of students will receive a "Secure" (3 points out of 4) or higher on Scientific Thinking Rubric.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Readiness [CCR]

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

This was not measured during FY19, but will be measured starting in FY20

Indicator 2: English Language Learners

***Goal:* 2.1 From FY20 to FY22, the aggregate percentage of English Learners meeting target on the ACCESS test grades 5-8 will be equal to or greater than that of the state percentage of English Learners meeting target.**

Goal: 2.2

From FY20 to FY22, the average progress toward target for English Learners grades 5-8 on the ACCESS test will be equal to or greater than the state average progress toward target.

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

This was not measured during FY19, as LJA had no EL students, but is available LJA have EL students in the future.

Indicator 3: Reading Growth

Goal:

- 3.1 From FY19 to FY21, the average growth z-score for all students on state accountability tests will be equal to or greater than 0.00.**

- 3.2 From FY19 to FY21, the aggregate percentage of students who achieve a positive z-score on state accountability tests will be greater than 50.0%.**

- 3.3 For FY19-FY21, the average growth percentile from fall start score of students in grades 5-8 enrolled in LJA for both the fall and spring FAST aReading will be greater than 50%.**

- 3.4 For FY19-FY21, greater than 50% of students in grades 5-8 enrolled in LJA for both the fall and spring FAST aReading will have a growth percentile from fall start score of greater than 50%.**

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Readiness [CCR]

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

Entering the first year of this goal, LJA is on track to approach, but not meet, measure 3.1, with a z-score of -.011. Likewise, LJA is on track to approach measure 3.2, with 41.6% of students having a positive z-score in FY19. The average growth percentile of students on the Fastbridge aReading, was 38.2 in FY19, meaning LJA is currently not on track to meet this goal. The percentage of students who had a growth percentile in FY19 was 41.4%, putting LJA currently on the path to approach but not meet on measure 3.4.

Indicator 4: Math Growth

Goals: 2016

- 4.1 From FY19 to FY21, the average growth z-score for all students on state accountability tests will be equal to or greater than 0.00.**

4.2 From FY19 to FY21, the aggregate percentage of students who achieve a positive z-score on state accountability tests will be greater than 50.0%.

4.3 For FY19-FY21, the average growth percentile from fall start score of students in grades 5-8 enrolled in LJA for both the fall and spring FAST aReading will be greater than 50%.

4.4 For FY19-FY21, greater than 50% of students in grades 5-8 enrolled in LJA for both the fall and spring FAST aReading will have a growth percentile from fall start score of greater than 50%.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready [CCR]

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

Entering the first year of this goal, LJA is on track to approach but not meet for goals 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3. All these goals are relatively close to being met, however. The average z-score in FY19 was -.08 (4.1), with 48.1% having a positive z-score (4.2). The average growth percentile on the Fastbridge aMath was 47.5. On measure 4.4, however, LJA is currently on track to meet its goal. 52% of students had a positive z-score on the aMath.

Indicator 5: Reading Proficiency

Goals: 2016

5.1 -From FY19 to FY21, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in grades 5-8 will increase by at least 3.0 points from the baseline proficiency index score (FY15-FY18 baseline -69.0) OR will be greater than that of the state for the same grades (5-8).

5.2 From FY19 to FY21, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in grades 5-8 will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – Saint Paul School District) for the same grades (5-8).

5.3 From FY19 to FY21, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch subgroup will be greater than that of the state for the same subgroup and the same grades (5-8).

5.4 From FY19 to FY21, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch subgroup will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – Saint Paul School District) for the same subgroup and the same grades (5-8).

5.5 From FY19 to FY21, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for American Indian and students of color¹ will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – Saint Paul School District) for the same subgroup and the same grades (5-8).

5.6 From FY19 to FY21, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for American Indian and students of color¹ will increase by at least 10.0 points from the baseline proficiency index score (FY18 baseline –60.0) OR will be equal to or greater than white students at the school for the same grades (5-8).

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready [CCR]

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

Entering the first year of this goal, LJA is currently on pace to approach measure 5.1. The FY19 proficiency index of 68.95 is the 3.05 short of meeting our growth related goal and 2.1 short of meeting the state average. However, on measure 5.2, LJA is on pace to exceed the goal. The FY19 proficiency index of 68.95 was more than 10 points above St. Paul District’s proficiency index of 51.6. There is a similar pattern for measures 5.3 and 5.4. On 5.3, LJA’s proficiency index of 53.9 for students receiving free/reduced lunch, 0.35 points short of the state average for similar students in grades 5-8 (therefore approaching the goal) but 13.6 points above the average for similar students in grades 5-8 in the St. Paul District. On measure 5.5, LJA’s proficiency index of 52.2 put them 8.5 points above St. Paul district’s students of color in grades 5-8, meaning LJA is on pace to meet this target, but not on pace to meet measure 5.6, which would require a proficiency index of 70.0.

Indicator 6: Math Proficiency

Goals:

6.1 From FY19 to FY21, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in grades 5-8 will increase by at least 8 points from the baseline proficiency index score (FY15-FY18 baseline – 53.5) OR will be greater than that of the state for the same grades (5-8).

¹For data purposes, the proficiency of American Indian and students of color will be calculated by subtracting the results of white students from the results of all students. In other words, American Indian and students of color will be defined as “non-white” students.

6.2 From FY19 to FY21, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in grades 5-8 will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – Saint Paul School District) for the same grades (5-8).

6.3 From FY19 to FY21, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch subgroup will be greater than that of the state for the same subgroup and the same grades (5-8).

6.4 From FY19 to FY21, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch subgroup will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – Saint Paul School District) for the same subgroup and the same grades (5-8).

6.5 From FY19 to FY21, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for American Indian and students of color¹ will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – Saint Paul School District) for the same subgroup and the same grades (5-8).

6.6 From FY19 to FY21, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for American Indian and students of color¹ will increase by at least 10.0 points from the baseline proficiency index score (FY15-FY18 baseline –44.6) OR will be equal to or greater than white students at the school for the same grades (5-8).

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready [CCR]

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

LJA had a proficiency index of 50.6 for all students in FY19. This result puts the school on pace to fall short on measure 6.1 (61.5 is the mark to hit for growth) but on pace to meet measure 6.2 (9.2 points above St. Paul district measure for comparable grades). For measures 6.3 and 6.4, the relevant result was a proficiency index of 33.3 for students receiving Free/Reduced lunch. This was more than ten points below the state result, meaning the school is not on pace to meet the 6.3, but is 2.3 points above the comparable students in the St. Paul district, putting the school on pace to meet measure 6.4. Finally, for measures 6.5 & 6.6, the relevant result is a proficiency index of 32.3 for students of color. This is 1.9 points below the St. Paul district and 22.3 below the growth goal, meaning the school is on pace to approach measure 6.5 but not meet measure 6.6.

Indicator 7: Science Proficiency (and Growth)
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Goals: 2016

- 7.1 From FY19 to FY21, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in grades 5 and 8 will increase by at least 8 points from the baseline proficiency index score (FY15-FY18 baseline -- 57.3) OR will be greater than that of the state for the same grades (5 and 8).**
- 7.2 From FY19 to FY21, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in grades 5 and 8 will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – Saint Paul School District) for the same grades (5 and 8).**
- 7.3 From FY19 to FY21, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for American Indian and students of color¹ will be greater than that of the resident district (ISD 625 – Saint Paul School District) for the same subgroup and the same grades (5-8).**
- 7.4 From FY19 to FY21, the aggregate proficiency rate of students continuously enrolled for three or more years will be greater than the state for students for the same grade (8).**
- 7.5 From FY19 to FY21, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for American Indian and students of color¹ will increase by at least 10.0 points from the baseline proficiency index score (FY15-FY18 baseline –42.0) OR will be equal to or greater than white students at the school for the same grades (5-8).**

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready [CCR]

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

LJA had a proficiency index of 54.1 for all students. This was within 10 points of state, meaning LJA was on track to approach this goal. This same result puts LJA on track to exceed measure 7.2, as it is 15.5 points above St. Paul’s result for comparable students. On measure 7.3 LJA is on track to approach the goal. The proficiency index of 28.1 for students of color is just 0.9 below the state average. LJA is not on track to meet for 7.4 or 7.5. The 35.7 proficiency rate is 7.3 below the state. The proficiency index of 28.1 for students of color is 23.9 below the growth goal.

Indicator 8: Proficiency or Growth in Other Curricular Areas or Educational Programs

Goal: N/A

Indicator 9: Post Secondary Readiness

Goal: N/A

Indicator 10: Attendance

Goal: From FY19 to FY21 the average of the school's annual consistent attendance rates will be equal to or greater than the state.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready [CCR]

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

LJA is not on pace to meet this goal at this time. LJA's consistent attendance average was 76.34 in FY19, the state average was 85.35.

Indicator A: Federal and State Accountability

According to the Minnesota North Star Accountability Report in 2018, Laura Jeffrey Academy has not been identified for extra support. This means that all subgroups are performing above necessary levels to qualify for extra support. No schools were newly identified for support in 2019. All 2018 identifications remain in effect until 2021.

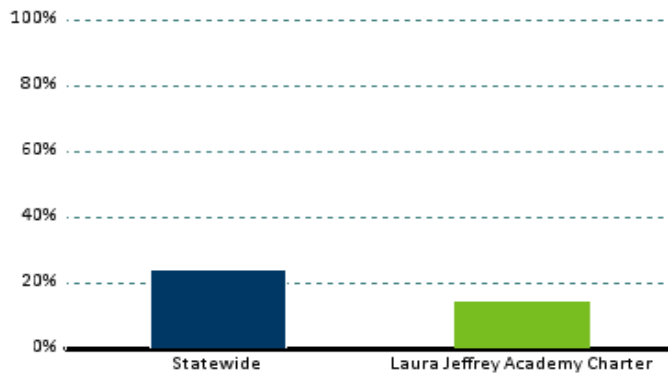
Additional Academic Data

Performance in Math:

Upon evaluating our contractual goals, LJA had weaker proficiency results than reading, but stronger growth results. As in the past, LJA performed above our resident district, St. Paul, both overall and for the Free-Reduced Lunch student population subgroup. However, LJA is underperforming in relationship to state-wide trends in both these areas. Additionally, LJA fell just short of St. Paul's proficiency index for students of color. Below is the LJA's proficiency rate for Black/African-American students (the school's largest subgroup of students of color) compared to the state.

Summary Proficiency

2019 Math All Accountability Tests Grade 05, 06, 07, 08
Black/African American



Organization	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
Statewide	24.3%	28,951
Laura Jeffrey Academy Charter	14.3%	28

LJA is continues to work on improving on all aspects of math including our curriculum, instruction and systems of remediation and acceleration, transitioning midday interventions in the 2018-2019 school year to be exclusively math based. Some of this work can be seen in the growth results provided by MDE. Precisely two-thirds of non-proficient students had medium to high growth.

Growth level	Proficient Students		Non-Proficient Students	
	Count	Percentage of Total	Count	Percentage of Total
Low	8	10.4%	16	20.8%
Medium	6	7.8%	22	28.6%
High	15	19.5%	10	13.0%

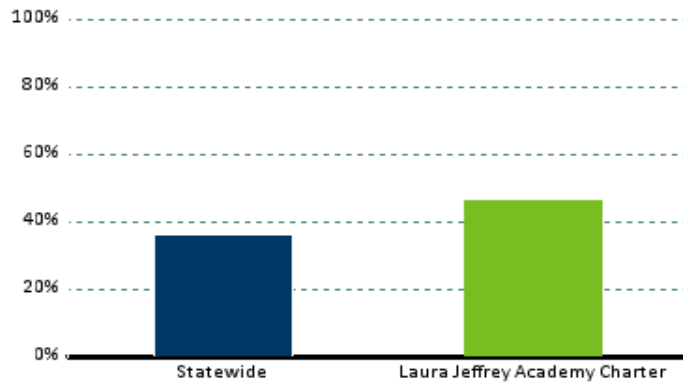
Performance in Reading:

LJA has consistently achieved at or above the state average on the MCA test for reading proficiency. Significantly, we have also made great strides in the past three years. We attribute this success to the improvement in our interventions and the support of a literacy specialist.

Additionally, we have shown great strides in several subgroups. For the third straight year black/African-American students were proficient at a rate more than 10 percentage points above state average

Summary Proficiency

2019 Reading All Accountability Tests Grade 05, 06, 07, 08
Black/African American

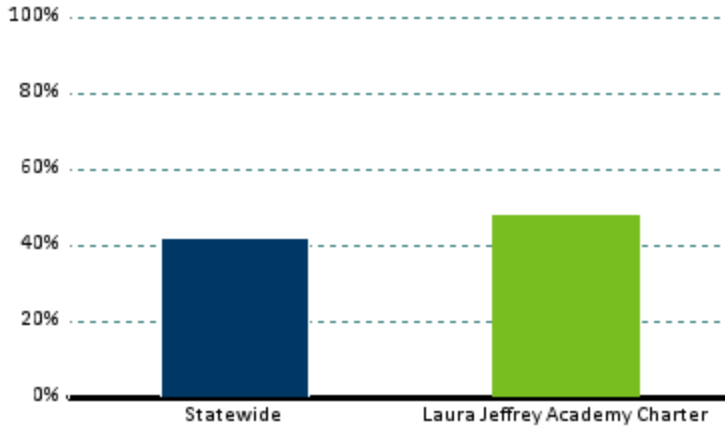


<u>Organization</u>	<u>Percent Proficient</u>	<u>Number Tested</u>
Statewide	36.4%	29,023
Laura Jeffrey Academy Charter	46.4%	28

Likewise, our proficiency rate with the Free/Reduced lunch was above the state average for the third straight year.

Summary Proficiency

2019 Reading All Accountability Tests Grade 05, 06, 07, 08
Free/Reduced-Price Meals

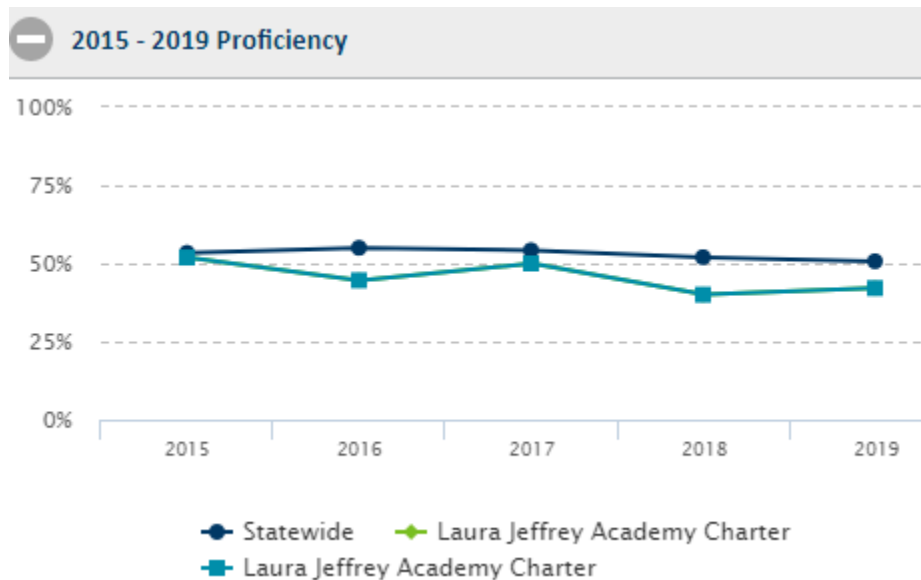


<u>Organization</u>	<u>Percent Proficient</u>	<u>Number Tested</u>
Statewide	42.0%	100,674
Laura Jeffrey Academy Charter	47.7%	44

There are trends to be watchful of however, LJA’s result on the Reading Growth related goals were poor in FY19, falling short of the pace set in previous years. A likely cause of this can be seen in the growth results provided by MDE in 2019. 48% of non-proficient students had low growth during the course of the year, a result that must improve. It is possible that in further shifting the school’s focus on Math intervention, reading growth was taking for granted, and the school has already made adjustments for the 2019-2020 school year.

Growth level	Proficient Students		Non-Proficient Students	
	Count	Percentage of Total	Count	Percentage of Total
Low	13	16.9%	13	16.9%
Medium	20	26.0%	8	10.4%
High	17	22.1%	6	7.8%

Performance in Science:



There were mixed results among the Science MCA data for FY2019. Once again LJA’s proficiency index was well above our resident district of St. Paul (15.5 points). We also improved our proficiency rate compared to the state (see graph above), but still fell short of the state average.

EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS: ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

Laura Jeffrey Academy Staff constantly evaluate student progress towards academic standards through PLCs that teachers participate in weekly. In PLCs, teachers evaluate the four guiding questions to ensure rigorous curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The four questions are:

1. What is it we expect our students to learn?
2. How will we know when they have learned it?
3. How will we respond when some students do not learn?
4. How will we respond when some students already know it?

Through these guiding questions and collaborative work, teachers and staff are continually pushing ourselves through a growth mind-set to ensure students are learning and progressing.

Additionally, students who are not meeting learning expectations, after various classroom strategies are implemented, they are referred to SST (Student Support Team) for further investigation and intervention. The SST at LJA meets every-other week to explore student concerns and evaluate interventions. In the 2018-2019 school year, teachers met weekly in grade-level teams to evaluate student success and progress.

Assessments

Fastbridge tests were administered three times a year in math (aMath), and reading (aReading). Results were shared with the students; students monitor and record their performance and set goals for the next cycle; and, results and goals were shared with caregivers and guardians.

MCA (Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments) were taken once per year.

Mid-day interventions and tutoring courses are created to align with the data, and instructional units designed by staff incorporate the needs identified by data.

In addition, classroom formative and summative assessments document student learning.

Grading is standards based. Grading software, JMC, enables parents to access grades online and teachers comment on student dispositional skill development as well as academic performance.

Educational Effectiveness: Assessment & Evaluation

At Laura Jeffrey Academy, we believe that students learn best when given opportunities to ask questions, explore diverse viewpoints, and work together to create knowledge. To this end, teachers work collaboratively to create rigorous curriculum units each quarter that meet Minnesota state standards in each of the respective content areas. Curriculum plans and instructional units are reviewed to ensure inquiry methods and robust questioning for student learning. Each quarter curriculum units are peer reviewed, reviewed by the curriculum teacher leaders, and then shared with LJA's students, families, and community members.

Laura Jeffrey Academy teachers also included student data from FastBridge tests to get a clear picture of each student's performance level and growth throughout the school year. Students took the Fastbridge test in Math and Reading three times a year. The data was used to better inform instruction, create intentional classroom groupings, and identify scholars who need more intensive supports through LJA's tutoring and intervention program. The data did not only identify scholars performing below grade level but those above grade level to ensure differentiated instruction to support learning for students at all levels. Teachers monitor progress weekly for each student in all classes and reach out to parents to create learning plans when students are falling behind in meeting classroom learning targets.

LJA's teacher-leader team continued to support teachers by addressing and implementing best practices to increase effective instruction, useful assessments and increase rigor within curriculum design. The team consisted of three Educational Leads; UbD coach, assessment coach, and data analysis coach. The team participated in teacher observations, walk-throughs, and curriculum supports. Through the collection of classroom data and teacher reflections, the Educational Team and each educator set personal growth goals. As LJA participates in the state model for teacher evaluation and growth, all teachers at LJA receive three formal observations, two formal evaluation

cycles, and several walk-throughs each school year. Teachers create growth goals and plans for student success through the observation process.

The school is committed to equitable access to effective and diverse teachers. We are a charter school with its own district so there can be no disparity among schools, the only challenge is the continual one of recruiting and retaining high quality teachers that match the diversity of our students. In 2018-19, 69% of classroom teachers had more than three years of experience; 77% had a tier 3 or 4 license in the area they were teaching and 100% had a Tier 1, 2, 3 or 4 license; and 85% had an advanced degree.

STUDENT & PARENT SATISFACTION

Student Engagement and Supports

- Home visits to every family at the beginning of the year helps to build relationships between the family and Peer Community Network (PCN) teacher, determine student interests and goals, and develop a family/school relationship.
- Quarterly showcases: LJA students showcase their learning, 3 times a year. At LJA's showcases students are able to share learning and quarter assessments with peers, families and community members. Students do so with performances (musical ensembles, spoken word, technology presentations, and plays) and gallery walks through classrooms. Students have the opportunity to shine as an individual and through the power of a collective of scholars.
- Schoolwide Social Contract: Each year students work together to create LJA's yearly social contract. Scholars turn the contractual agreements into personal goals they set for themselves to be their best self and meet the social contract agreements. Students then hang their individual goals in LJA's hallways to remind themselves of the agreements they made.



The 2018-19 social contract:

Find joy in all situations; celebrate success.

Make an effort to advocate for yourself and your learning.

Treat others the way THEY want to be treated - no matter their beliefs and/or culture.

We are ALL responsible for keeping LJA clean.

Take responsibility for your actions.

Family & Caregiver Involvement: creating a community and climate of learning

LJA gave out a parent survey in the Spring of 2019. We used this survey to find out the interests, needs, and concerns of our families. We had a return rate of 35% of families who responded.

- 88% of respondents feel they have enough information to support their student's academic success at home and 96% of respondents said their student had received the support they need at school so far.
- 86% of respondents said the LJA daily schedule works well for them.
- 83% of respondents said the LJA uniform policy works well for them.
- 93% of respondents said that their student has adjusted well to LJA this year
- 93% of respondents said their student feels safe at school.
- Of respondents, very few (13%) listed challenges they encountered as a parent at LJA, with no challenges being listed more than once.

LJA also gave out a student survey in the Spring of 2019. We used this survey to find out the interests, needs, and concerns of our students. We had a return rate of 76% of students who responded. Some highlights from the student survey:

- 78% of students said they received the support at school this year.
- 91% of students were moderately or highly satisfied with the academics at the school
- 81% of students were moderately or highly satisfied with the daily schedule
- 55% of students would like to revise/update/change the uniform policy
- Most common challenges discussed in comments were related to math class.
- Most common successes discussed in comments were related to public speaking/confidence and teachers.

Quotes taken from LJA's 2019-2020 Family Survey:

"[My Student] has had a really great experience here so far - nice kids, excellent teachers who really understand her and are helping her to excel

I brag about LJA often and shine a light on the small, supportive environment that challenges and holds students accountable. Great teachers and staff.

Wonderfully supportive environment, learning study, life skills that will prepare for high school and beyond.

"Sending her here is the best decision I've made for any of my children."

Special Education

Each year the special education director holds a SEAC meeting, in which all special education parents are invited to learn more about the special education program (general program information, data around special education academic success and future directions/program goals) as well as providing an arena for face-to-face feedback about special education student needs.

This school year, parents expressed interest in continuing the inclusion model. They enjoy the level of communication from their student's general education staff around homework completion and general daily performance.

Parents asked for more specific information from case managers around types of intervention that were put into place at school for student goal areas as well as more information on what parents can do to support learning at home.

In general, parents expressed satisfaction with the inclusion model and level of staff support (student to staff ratio).

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

The mission of *Laura Jeffrey Academy's* authorizer, the Audubon Center of the North Woods, is to instill a connection and commitment to the environment in people of all communities through experiential learning. ACNW defines environmental education as the implementation of values and strategies that foster learning and create environmentally literate citizens who engage in creating healthy outcomes for individuals, communities, and the Earth. The overarching goal of environmental education is an environmentally literate citizenry. The test of environmental literacy is the capacity of an individual to work individually and collectively toward sustaining a healthy natural environment. This requires sufficient awareness, knowledge, skills, and attitudes in order to create a healthy planet where all people live in balance with the Earth.

Laura Jeffrey Academy believes that environmental education is a key component in supporting our scholars to be well rounded individuals. Through explorations in our natural world, scholars are meeting and superseding school-wide goals. Scholars are exploring the needs of their community, gathering information from others, and creating change based on what they find. Environmental education through the exploration of our natural world is used as a vehicle to address a variety of issues. These issues range from daily choices on energy use, to evaluating our choices which increases our scholar's outcomes, both academically and socially. Laura Jeffrey Academy strives to give scholars a plethora of opportunities to embody the work they learn about by extending it outside of our school walls. Through experiences scholars are able to see the change they desire for their world. Through the use of their voice and personal experiences, scholars gain the confidences and sense of power to create for their environment and future world.

Students at LJA embark in environmental learning both in and out of the classroom throughout the year. In the 2018-19 school year, the 7/8th grade STEM classes explored Urban Gardening and Genetics. Students learned about the value of plant and animal diversity in their neighborhoods and ways they can support this diversity needed. Scholars hosted mini-sessions at LJA's Earth Day event showing off ways others can also support to improve our ecosystem and also taught mini-lessons to the daycare students that share our building. Scholars designed and built their own "urban garden" that were installed in their own personal spaces. The gardens ranged from window boxes and potters all the way to raised beds.

Students in 5th and 6th grade explored ecosystems by learning about inputs and outputs within an environment and different interactions that occur as a result. Scholars enjoyed playing Oh Deer! where they learned about the three main components deer need to survive (food, water, shelter) relating this game to other organisms they both observed and know exist in the outside world. The scholars were then put to the test to create an environment (a terrarium) for a plant to grow in. Scholars were responsible for experimenting and figuring out what it would take to survive. They were then able to compare this to a real world scenario and try to figure out that if this was occurring in nature what the human impact would/could be.

Environmental learning does not stop in the classroom. Our 7/8 STEM teacher has created a sustainable relationship with Great River Greening and takes two annual field trips. Students learn about sustainability and enact stewardship. Through the act of doing scholars share they feel more comfortable transferring these acts on their own. Scholars visited and engaged in a handful of activities that highlighted the need for diversity within our trees and native species while also showing the impact humans can have on our waterways.

LJA scholars visited Audubon of the Northwoods Environmental Learning Center where they had the opportunity to learn about the natural habitats, the animals and wildlife present in different biomes, and how to maintain clean and healthy waterways in our state. After this trip, scholars expressed the desire to create LJA's own ORT system and have demonstrated an understanding of how their personal choices impact the environment, both for the positive and negative.



LJA's 6th grade advisory provided Environmental learning opportunities with our larger, school-related community at the Earth Day event. Twenty-seven LJA scholars created mini-lessons on rain barrels, rain chains, and intriguing ways to use and recycle plastics. The session was held on a Saturday to provide access for more families and community members to attend. LJA scholars were working towards providing opportunities to pass forward to their families the ideas and skills they've learned towards their responsibility with their environment.

Chili Cook-Off- LJA provided an evening community event for 150 parents and guardians related to hosting a zero-waste event. For families who want to donate a chili for the cook-off, scholars provide mini-lessons for families to promote a zero-waste dish. Promotion of composting, and reducing waste from our kitchens is available for families looking to make behavior changes within their own homes.

LJA believes that it is also important to teach students how to enjoy the outdoors in all types of weather. As part of our J-Term classes, students can choose an "Outdoor Winter Survival" course. Students in this class explored how to make quinzhees for shelter in the snow, start fires, cook food, and snowshoe. The whole school also participates in a tubing field trip. This began as an effort to get students to be willing to be outside in the cold Minnesota winter.

Challenges

Challenges in implementing our environmental education program include monetary resources. We are working to find funds for proper recycling bins to support scholars in dispensing waste in appropriate ways. Encourage students to clean up after ourselves and leave spaces cleaner than we found them; responsibility for trash, tending to others waste if noticed, and finding appropriate waste bins is a yearly focus, but last year it was extra hard to support scholars with behavior change in this specific area. We have applied for grants to help secure appropriate bins, but as we wait for finances, teachers are being creative in classroom spaces to support scholars.

A second area we would like to grow is in regard to the reduction of food waste. We are finding it challenging to follow state guidelines that require students to take certain foods even if they don't want it resulting in food waste.

Lastly, we've had more students join the school in 7th & 8th grade, thus not spending 5th or 6th grade with us. We've found these students were often a little louder about distaste with the outdoors, and we haven't had as much time to foster a love of nature with these students.

GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Board of Directors

The Laura Jeffrey Academy (LJA) Board and staff are well-versed in board governance. All LJA Board members have received training on board governance via MDE standards. Our Board continues to expand their passion for LJA's work by attending events, meeting parents and teachers, and becoming more involved in school activities.

2018-19 Board Roster

Member Name	Board Position	Affiliation	Date Elected	Date Seated	Term End Date	Phone Number	Email Address
Anna Veit-Carter	co-Chair	Community Member	Nov 2016	Jan 2017	Dec 2019	612-222-0605	anna.veitcarter@gmail.com
Devavani Chatterjea	Co-Chair	Parent	June 2015	July 2015	June 2018	651-696-6621	chatterjead@macalester.edu
Anna Robinson	Member (Ex-Officio beginning Jan 2019)	Teacher	May 2016	June 2016	Dec 2018	347-757-0390	annar@laurajeffreyacademy.org
Gaye Fisher	Member	Teacher	June 2019	Jan 2019	Jan 2022	512-689-6579	gayef@laurajeffreyacademy.org
Danielle Jones-Glaser	Member	Community Member	March 2016	June 2016	June 2019	773-230-1534	Danielle_jones2002@yahoo.com
Jason Fritts	Member	Community Member	April 2016	June 2016	June 2019	612-253-6692	jfritts@eidebailly.com
Annie Hotop	Member	Community Member	June 2015	July 2015	June 2018	651-308-9043	amhotop@gmail.com
Janet Gracia	Member	Parent	May 2016	June 2016	July 2019	612-600-1800	janet.gracia@girlscoutsrv.org
Mimi Mohamud	Member	Community Member	June 2018	August 2018	June 2021	942-994-	mimmi.mohamud@yahoo.com

						4637	
Bryant Noice	Member	Parent	June 2018	August 2018	June 2021	612-532-9403	bnoice@gmail.com
Angi Faiks	Member	Community Member	June 2018	August 2018	June 2021	651-696-6208	angifaiks@gmail.com
Fahima Aziz	Member	Community Member	June 2018	August 2018	June 2021	651-428-7710	fahimaaz@gmail.com
George Sand	Ex-Officio	Interim Executive Director	August 2017	Sept 2017	Jan 2019	651-402-9689	georges@laurajeffreyacademy.org

Together, the Board and school leaders have tremendous leadership capacity, stemming from their demonstrated commitment to Laura Jeffrey Academy’s mission and vision and from their experience in board governance, fiscal management, education, curriculum and instruction, and school and nonprofit management.

Board Training and Development

Laura Jeffrey Academy - Initial Board Training			
Board Member Name	Date	Training Title	Presenter or Trainer
Devavani Chatterjea	Dec 2015	Board Training	St Thomas
Annie Hotop	Aug 2015	Board Training	St Thomas
Janet Gracia	Dec 2016	Board Training	St Thomas
Jason Fritts	Dec 2016	Board Training	St Thomas
Anna Robinson	Dec 2016	Board Training	St Thomas
Danielle Jones-Glaser	Aug 2016	Board Training	St Thomas
Mimi Mohamud	Nov 2018	Board Training	MN Assoc of Charter Schools (MACS)
Bryant Noice	Nov 2018	Board Training	MACS
Angi Faiks	Nov 2018	Board Training	MACS
Fahima Aziz	Nov 2018	Board Training	MACS

Ongoing Board Training 2018-2019

Board Member	Training #1 Board Retreat: Orientation to board policies, strategic plan Laurie Hamre September 2018	Training #2 Financial Management Robert Procacini September 2018
Devavani Chatterjea	x	x
Anna Veit-Carter	x	x
Annie Hotop	x	x
Janet Gracia	x	x
Jason Fritts	x	x
Anna Robinson	x	x
Danielle Jones-Glaser	x	x
Mimi Mohamud	x	x
Bryant Noice	x	x
Angi Faiks	x	x
Fahima Aziz	x	x

Management

During the 2017-18 school year, leadership and management of the school underwent a transition. George Sand was brought on as Interim Executive Director to work in conjunction with the Leadership Team which was put in place due to their leadership experience in and commitment to Laura Jeffrey Academy. Throughout the year and with the development of the design team, it became clear that having an educator-led school would be in the best interest of the school as it is a fiscally sound model and aligns well with the mission and foundational philosophy of Laura Jeffrey. In 2018-19, LJA made that transition to an educator-led school. In January 2019, George phased out as interim director, and was fully replaced in his duties by the leadership team.

List of Administrators/Qualifications

George Sand, Interim Executive Director

George Sand has worked in charter schools since 1997. He was a founder and Director of El Colegio Charter School and served as Director or Interim Director for the Minnesota Internship Center, LoveWorks Academy, and Laura Jeffrey Academy. He also worked as a charter school specialist for the Minnesota Department of Education Regional Centers of Excellence; working with a variety of charter

schools in Minneapolis and St. Paul. His leadership training has come from St. Thomas University and Harvard University School of Education.

Laura Jeffrey Academy's Leadership Team

Consisted of five additional staff members: Anna Robinson, Jacob Bonde, Lizzie Forshee, Terrence Thigpen and Cassandra Quam.

Major Responsibilities (Carried out by Interim Executive Director Through December 2018 and then Leadership Team beginning January 2019):

Leadership and Strategy

- Responsible for leading LJA in a manner that supports and guides the organization's mission;
- Create a welcoming climate and culture in LJA for all students, including students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and LGBTQ students;
- Work with staff to ensure that the LJA mission is carried out through educational programs and community outreach;
- Maintains high standards and expectations for student conduct and enforces discipline and/or utilizes restorative practices as necessary;
- Responsible for communicating with the Board of Directors and providing all information necessary for the Board to make informed decisions;
- Work with the Board to implement strategic plan for LJA to ensure growth and longevity, including reorganization of LJA's administrative and support roles and workflows;

Operations Management/Supervision

- Supervise day-to-day operations of the school;
- Responsible for securing and maintaining contractual relationships with vendors, including payroll, transportation, food service, and facilities;
- Manage LJA's hiring process; ensure process leads to the hiring and retention of a diverse and quality staff;
- Develop employment policies and procedures;
- Supervise administrative staff, including the Education Director;
- Responsible for preparation of annual performance audit;
- Ensure compliance with reporting and other statutory obligations;

Fiscal Management

- Develop annual fiscal budget for Board approval;
- Prepare monthly financial statements that accurately reflect the financial condition of LJA for Board review;
- Make budgetary recommendations to and work with Board of Directors to set economic objectives;
- Develop additional resources to ensure the financial health of the organization;
- Provide financial reports to governmental agencies as mandated by law;
- Arrange for annual audit with an outside independent auditor as required by statute;

Communications and Marketing

- Draft communications to scholars and families on school-wide issues;

- Serve as main point of contact for concerns and questions from scholars' families, and is responsive to parents and community;
- Oversees recruitment and enrollment;
- Responsible for promoting and marketing the school in the community to increase enrollment;
- Responsible for promoting LJA by being active and visible in the community and by developing partnerships with other professional, civic, and private organizations;

Professional Development:

Leadership

- ACNW Leadership Retreat - Nov 2017
- (Anna only): Teacher Powered Schools National Conference, November 30-December 2, 2018

Community Building

- Restorative Practices by Alexis Goffee & Hanaa Arafat, August 8, 2018 & Nov 12 2018
- (Terrence) Restorative Practices by Alexis Goffee & Hanaa Arafat, Nov 13, Nov 20, Dec 4, Dec 11, Dec 18

Administrative

- (Cassandra) JMC Regional Conference 8/2/18
- (Cassandra) Emergency Medical Responder Initial Course by Allied Medical Training on 8/5/18
- Trauma Informed Care by Tyler Small, August 6, 2018
- Understanding Student IEPs & Support by Lakisha Witter, August 8, 2018
- Blood Borne Pathogens & Medical Distribution by Carly Smitkowski on 8/7/18
- Child Study by George Sand, 10.5.18
- Cultural Competency by Susan Samaha, August 9, 2018, March 22, 2019 and May 31, 2019
- (Lizzie & Jacob): SpEd 101 Training, by MDE, December 11 & 12, 2018
- Mandated Reporter Training, 1.18.19 by Jesse Frank CPS Ramsey County
- Understanding EBD by Tammy Pulver on 3/22/19
- (Lizzie & Anna): Leading the Way Together: Honoring all students for who they are, how they learn and where they want to go, by Bush Foundation, Education Evolving, School Leadership Project and Events by Lady K, May 3, 2019

STAFFING

Laura Jeffrey Academy's plan for staffing is to be a #1 employer in Minnesota that includes a competitive salary and benefits package, and a collaborative and engaging workplace. Our goal is to

maintain highly qualified, passionate leaders who are aligned with our mission and contribute to the growth of all students.

LJA provided ongoing professional development in academic, discipline, and social/emotional areas. Additionally, our professional development is supplemented by all-staff and smaller group meetings to delve more deeply into each topic, allowing the voices of our community and staff to deepen our understandings of multiple perspectives.

Our inclusive model of Special Education provides a number of educational support in all classrooms. This model fits with our overall mission and vision for ensuring that all students have access to a rich and rigorous curriculum. You will find multiple adults in classrooms, understanding the needs of each individual student and supporting both academically and behaviorally.

In August, all LJA staff jointly engaged in a 10 day intensive professional development experience that allows staff to bond, have shared language, and co-create a cohesive plan for the upcoming school year. As an on-going result of this collaborative process, weekly and monthly professional development sessions incurred as an integrated team.

2018-19 Licensed Teaching Staff

Name	File #	License /Assignment	2018-19 Status*
<i>Asiya Ali</i>	<i>503509</i>	<i>Special Education (ABS)</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Eileen Lindstrom</i>	<i>483404</i>	<i>Mathematics</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Emily Barnes</i>	<i>420766</i>	<i>Literacy Specialist</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Jean Fawver</i>	<i>490557</i>	<i>Special Education (EBD)/ART</i>	<i>NR</i>
<i>Jacob Bonde</i>	<i>447966</i>	<i>Peer Coach</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Peggy Palumbo</i>	<i>311264</i>	<i>Physical Education & Health</i>	<i>NR</i>
<i>Gaye Fisher</i>	<i>485689</i>	<i>General Music</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Elizabeth Forshee</i>	<i>440010</i>	<i>Science</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Annie Lien</i>	<i>462995</i>	<i>Elementary Ed/LASS & Math</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Morgan Williams</i>	<i>489767</i>	<i>Science</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Hyangmee Oh</i>	<i>504261</i>	<i>Mathematics</i>	<i>NR</i>
<i>Anna Robinson</i>	<i>403851</i>	<i>Social Studies</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Jennifer Ryg</i>	<i>439410</i>	<i>Communication Arts/ Literature</i>	<i>R</i>

* R = Return, NR = Not Return, C = Changed Roles

2018-19 Teacher and Educational Assistant Professional Development Activities

Laura Jeffrey Academy staff received training in the following areas during our initial professional development days - which was also addressed as the year unfolded: behavioral intervention training, Understanding by Design, Learning Targets, Development Designs refreshers, Shared Inquiry methodology, sensory needs of students in relationship to the physical spaces of classrooms, staff/teacher growth professional goals, equity training, LJA's framework/principle, and restorative measures, due process, compliance, student support systems, and time/effort.

Special Education teachers and LASS teachers were training in specific reading interventions such as HELPS, DIBBELS, and REWARDS.

Special Education teachers and Educational Support staff were trained by LJA Special Education Director specific to their own areas of growth, identified by EParaLink.

2018-19 Licensed Non-Teaching Staff

<i>Name</i>	<i>File #</i>	<i>License /Assignment</i>	<i>2018-19 Status*</i>
<i>Madeline McAndrews</i>	<i>507361</i>	<i>School Social Worker</i>	<i>NR</i>

* R = Return, NR = Not Return, C = Changed Roles

2018-19 Non-Licensed Staff

<i>Name</i>	<i>Assignment</i>	<i>2018-19 Status*</i>
<i>Emma Welter</i>	<i>Special Education Educational Assistant</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Mariah Peterson</i>	<i>Special Education Educational Assistant</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Alma Hernandez</i>	<i>Food Service/Office Assistant</i>	<i>NR</i>
<i>Jeannie Amado</i>	<i>Special Education Education Assistant</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Cassandra Quam</i>	<i>Operations Coordinator</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Jennifer Steines-Hosea</i>	<i>Food Service</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Maggie Solnitzky</i>	<i>Special Education Educational Assistant</i>	<i>NR</i>
<i>Terrence Thigpen</i>	<i>Cultural Liaison</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Acelia Lavall</i>	<i>Special Education Educational Assistant</i>	<i>NR</i>
<i>Geonia Jackson</i>	<i>Special Education Educational Assistant</i>	<i>NR</i>

* R = Return, NR = Not Return

Teacher Retention:

We have a large cohort of experienced teachers who are dedicated to the LJA mission. As we continue to refine our program, we look closely at what works well and where we could enhance our learning program. We have a growth mindset at LJA and with that we continue to strive to hire and maintain master teachers for our system.

<i>Percentage of Licensed Teachers returning for the 2019-2020 school year</i>	<i>75%</i>
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Special Education:

We have the following related service providers:

- Lakisha Witter, Special Education Director & coordinator, contracted through HOPE International
- Melissa Londono-OT, contracted with On the Move Therapy Services
- JuliAnne Hanson, School Psychologist, private practice
- Laura Hanlon-Speech/Language, who is contract through By Word of Mouth
- Carly Smitkowski, school nurse, who is contract through Hennepin County Medical

The providers set their own schedule around the designated IEP needs. They have a space in the building to do their service and students rotate in to them.

OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Laura Jeffrey Academy continues to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the Audubon Center of the Northwoods charter contract, including, but not limited to the following:

Transportation

Laura Jeffrey Academy provides school busing to students within the St. Paul boundaries and to a community stop in Minneapolis. Additionally, public transportation tokens are provided to those who express a financial need for assistance.

Health and Safety

Laura Jeffrey Academy tracks and monitors health histories, concerns and incidents. A contracted school nurse is responsible for reporting health records of each student. Incident record histories are created and filed with each occurrence within our student data system. Safety drill procedures are practiced throughout the year in regard to fire, bus, lockdowns, and severe weather. Students that need to take medicine during the school day are asked to provide a doctor’s note and have the medicine in the original pharmacy container. Medicine is stored in a locked cabinet in the school

office and administered as directed by office staff. Each time a medicine is administered the name of the medication, the time, and the dose given is logged by the administering staff member. A vision and hearing screening are offered to grades 5 and 6 once per year in the fall of the school year. Some students require daily/weekly support for medical plans and these are carried out by the health assistants in the office and supervised by the contracted school nurse.

Food Service

Staff is trained on food safety and follows guidelines as set forth by the City of St. Paul Food Inspector and MDE. Breakfast and lunch are provided and available to all students.

Hiring Practices

All teachers must have a current license in the State of Minnesota within the subject matter they are hired to teach. The process of hiring begins by publicly posting the job description in multiple places including, but not limited to, LJA's website, EdPost, St. Catherine's Katie Click, Indeed, and MACS. Once a sufficient number of applicants have submitted required resume, references and cover letter, the Leadership Team, including the interim executive director, create a team to interview the applicants.

When possible, teachers are required to also create and present mock lesson plans. A similar process is followed with non-teacher staff in regard to gaining applicants. These applicants interview with a team relevant to the respective position. Background checks are done on all new staff, board members, and volunteers who work with students.

DUE PROCESS - student discipline data

Expulsion: 0

Out of School Suspension: 4

During the 2018-19 school year, there were 4 total OSS instances:

4 one-day OSS incidents, 0 two-day incidents, and 1 three-day OSS incidents.

This accounted for a total of 4 students receiving OSS during the year.

The overall out of school instances went down from 9 OSS incidents and 7 students receiving OSS in the 2018-2019 school year. This year we had a lack of available staff members who could supervise ISS students, so the increase in OSS incidents may be due to situations where students had to be removed from class for the safety of the community and had to stay home, because we did not have anyone available to supervise them in ISS at school.

In School Suspension: 2

During the 2018-19 school year, there were two instances of ISS for two students. This is up from 1 instance of ISS with 1 different student during the 2018-19 school year.

The total number of suspensions (including in and out of school) has decreased from 10 in the 2017-2018 school year to 6 in the 2018 -2019 school year, indicating success in our Restorative Practices approach, which has helped us be proactive rather than reactive in regards to behavior, and focused our efforts to resolve discipline issues without resorting to punitive measures when possible.

LJA continued to refresh returning teachers and training new staff - in house - in developmental designs and discussing the overall needs of scholars. LJA's training addressed our overall framework to teach and support student socio/emotional/behavioral skill development while also treating scholars as individuals and creating plans with families to best support each child. LJA additionally started implementing Restorative Practices to address scholar behaviors. We provided ongoing staff support to ensure fidelity to this framework throughout the school year.

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the charter contract relating to:

- relevant compliance and reporting requirements to the authorizer, state education agency, and/or federal authorities, including but not limited to:
 - * State reporting and applications, including but not limited to: MARSS, STARS, UFARS, EDRS, Q Comp, DIRS, lease aid;
 - * TRA/PERA;
 - * School website is compliant with statutory and authorizer expectations;
 - * Insurance coverage;
- the school facilities, grounds and transportation, including but not limited to:
 - * Fire inspections and related records;
 - * Viable certificate of occupancy or other required building use authorization;
 - * Physical space provides a safe, positive learning environment for students;
 - * Appropriate and safe student transportation practices;
 - * health and safety, including but not limited to:
 - Nursing services and dispensing of pharmaceuticals;
 - Food service;
 - Emergency management plan;
- admission and enrollment rights of students, including but not limited to policies and practices related to admissions, lottery, waiting lists, fair and open recruitment;
- due process and privacy rights of students, including but not limited to:
 - * Due process protections, privacy, civil rights and students liberties requirements, including First Amendment protections and the Establishment Clause restrictions prohibiting public schools from engaging in religious instruction;
 - * Conduct of discipline pursuant to the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act;
 - * Maintain the security of and provide access to students records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and other applicable authorities;
 - * Transfer of student records;
- employment including transparent hiring, evaluation and dismissal policies and practices;
- required background checks for all school employees

FINANCES

Questions regarding school finances for 2018-2019 and/or an organizational budget for 2019-20 contact the Leadership Team, 651-414-6000, leadershipteam@laurajeffreyacademy.org

Financials were provided by Dieci School Finance.
Contact: Robert Procaccini, President and Financial
Manager Phone: 651-251-6983
Email: robert@diecisf.com

Information presented below is derived from preliminary audit figures. The full financial audit will be completed and presented to Minnesota Department of Education and Audubon Center of the North Woods no later than December 31, 2019.

<i>2018-2019 Projected Finances</i>	<i>Fund 1</i>	<i>Fund 2</i>	<i>Fund 4</i>
<i>Total Revenues</i>	\$2,008,674	\$50,986	\$10,680
<i>Total Expenditures</i>	\$2,076,360	\$50,986	\$9,744
<i>Total Board Assigned Expenditures</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Net Income</i>	\$(67,686)	\$0	\$936
<i>Total Fund Balance</i>	\$24,115	\$0	\$1,865

Overview

In FY19, despite very conservative spending, LJA fell several ADM short of its enrollment goal, resulting in a net loss for the year. The largest lost by far was related to transportation. As a result, leadership recommended and the board approved a change to using St. Paul Public Schools for transportation. This change, which saves nearly \$200,000, with a still conservative ADM estimate for FY20, puts the school on a path to begin growing its fund balance back after multiple years of decline.

Revenues

The school's main sources of income are from state aids relating to ADM, special education funding, federal grants, as well as local grants and donations from the community.

Expenses

The main expenditures the school incurs are related to staffing/benefits, facility rental, and expenses to serve their special education population. The school is a STEM school and tries to spend as much money on related expenditures as the budget allows.

Net Income and Fund Balance

In FY20, the school is projected to have a negative net income of \$(33,087) which is mainly the result of agreeing to write-off \$74,880 that was due from LJA Building Company from years past. The school's estimated FY20 fund balance is \$(6,185) which is estimated to be (.30)%. Budget projections for FY21 & FY22 make plans to increase this fund balance incrementally, up to 6.1% by FY22

World's Best Workforce Annual Budget

The school continues to improve their STEM program by working with partners within the community and maintaining a strong curriculum. The school's budget continues to include expenditures to meet student needs with a focus on academics.

Future Plans

Enrollment & Marketing

In FY19, and continuing into FY20, The board & leadership team have been working together to devise strategies for increasing enrollment. In order to meet budget numbers, we need to stabilize and begin to incrementally increase our enrollment. Our FY20 goal is to maintain ADM of 90, and then increase enrollment by five ADM each in FY21 & FY22.

New Calendar & Daily Schedule

As part of our budget stabilization, we will move to using St. Paul busing in FY20. This requires an adjustment in both our daily schedule and our school calendar. Part of LJA's future plans is to make sure that this adjustment does not impact our ability to fulfill our mission and purpose. With the support of after school busing (which LJA has never been able to provide), we are developing strong and varied after school offerings in order to replace the midday interventions and clubs that we have offered in the past. Likewise, the shift in the calendar will eliminate our intersession programming, so we are devising ways to offer some of this unique programming in other ways, including during the traditional school year. Additionally, since we will be ending our school year in the beginning of June, rather than the end, we have already developed partnerships with Project Scientist and Freedom School that will allow us to offer our students summer programming.

MakerSpace

In 2018, LJA received a grant from the Science Museum of MN, providing funding and professional development for LJA staff to start the process of creating a MakerSpace. The grant in part funded training our teachers on experiential curriculum building which will be used to enhance all classroom

teaching throughout the year. We have found students have increased attendance, decreased behaviors that require interventions, and allow students to explore and understand concepts to supplement the learning within our regular schedule. LJA has now partnered with 3M to help design and create this Makerspace. 3M held vision sessions with students in 2018-19, and have begun drafting construction plans to overhaul the space currently being used.



LJA's 2018-2019 8th Grade Scholars

Approved by Laura Jeffrey Academy Board on October 15, 2019