



River Valley Charter School

RVCS April Accountability Committee Meeting

Published on April 24, 2026 at 5:22 PM EDT

Date and Time

Monday April 27, 2026 at 7:00 PM EDT

Location

River Valley Charter School
2 Perry Way
Newburyport, MA 01950

River Valley Charter School welcomes your participation at Board meetings. The purpose of a public meeting of the Board of Trustees (“Board”) is to conduct the affairs of the organization in public. Your participation assures us of continuing community interest in our school and assists the Board in making the best decisions for our school. To assist you in the ease of speaking/participating in our meetings, guidelines are provided at the bottom of this agenda. All materials for all board and committee meetings, are available on our Board on track public portal found at rivervalleycharter.org.

Agenda

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
I. Opening Items			7:00 PM
A. Record Attendance			2 m
In person:			

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
RVCS 2 Perry Way Newburyport, MA 01950			
B. Call the Meeting to Order		Albert Ting	1 m
C. Approve February 2026 Minutes	Approve Minutes	Albert Ting	5 m
D. Internal Assessments Data Overview	Discuss	Karen Kuse	30 m
Discussion: Updated/ continued review regarding math and reading screeners administered in Fall 2025 with trend and desegregated data included.			
E. RVCS Internal Audit 2025-2026	Discuss	Karen Kuse	30 m
Discussion: Review of RVCS Internal Audit			
F. Accountability Plan Updates	Discuss	Achala Matthew Godino	20 m
Discussion: Caregiver Survey - Review of survey by non-parent accountability committee members.			
General updates from Admin on progress towards the Accountability Plan school year to date.			

II. Other Business

III. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting	Vote
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THE ORDER OF BUSINESS MAY BE CHANGED WITHOUT NOTICE Notice is hereby given that the order of consideration of matters on this agenda may be changed without prior notice.

REASONABLE LIMITATIONS MAY BE PLACED ON PUBLIC TESTIMONY The Board Chair reserves the right to impose reasonable time limits on public testimony to ensure that the agenda is completed.

Coversheet

Approve February 2026 Minutes

Section: I. Opening Items
Item: C. Approve February 2026 Minutes
Purpose: Approve Minutes
Submitted by:
Related Material:
Minutes for RVCS Accountability Committee Meeting on February 10, 2026
2026_02_10_rvcs_accountability_committee_meeting_minutes.pdf

DRAFT



River Valley Charter School

Minutes

RVCS Accountability Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Tuesday February 10, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Location

By video conference

River Valley Charter School welcomes your participation at Board meetings. The purpose of a public meeting of the Board of Trustees ("Board") is to conduct the affairs of the organization in public. Your participation assures us of continuing community interest in our school and assists the Board in making the best decisions for our school. To assist you in the ease of speaking/participating in our meetings, guidelines are provided at the bottom of this agenda. All materials for all board and committee meetings, are available on our Board on track public portal found at rivervalleycharter.org.

Committee Members Present

A. Salerno (remote), A. Thoele (remote), A. Ting (remote), C. Irose (remote), K. Kuse (remote), P. Ganley (remote)

Committee Members Absent

A. Godino, D. Herrera, J. Patterson, M. Mitchell-Daniels

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B.

Call the Meeting to Order

A. Ting called a meeting of the Accountability Committee of River Valley Charter School to order on Tuesday Feb 10, 2026 at 6:08 PM.

C. Approve January 2026 Minutes

A. Ting made a motion to approve the minutes from January Accountability Meeting on 01-20-26.

P. Ganley seconded the motion.

The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

D. Fall Screener Review

Jane P. was unavailable. Karen presented Jane's presentation that gave an overview of the Fall screeners administered in Fall 2025 for both Math and English (Accadience and Dibels).

A key takeaway was math performance, especially in at E2 level.

The committee suggested that the data for the screeners would be much more helpful if they could be compared to historical data, for easier trend observations.

In the past, there has also been inconsistencies in the administration of the screeners from classroom to classroom at the same levels.

Committee suggested that screeners going forward should be administered, as per the vendor instructions (timed), so that the outcomes have validity.

Committee suggested that a flowchart to outline responsibilities from the data gleaned from the screener can be used effectively. Who is responsible for consistent data collection, data analysis, interventions if needed, tracking progress by students, etc.?

Committee suggested that the Fall screener review to be updated with trend and desegregated data at the next Accountability Committee meeting.

E. Accountability Plan Updates

Caregiver survey updates:

-Caregiver survey will close on February 13th, Admin to send out one more reminder to the community to participate in the survey.

-Timeline for report out of survey results will be similar to last year - with a summary published The Current, as well as presented to Accountability and Full BoT.

-Open response questions on the survey will be reviewed by non-parent audit committee members and reported back to the Accountability Committee.

Internal audit updates:

- On track, Colin Vanderberg will assist in preparation of the Audit
- Karen will create the policy(s) for English Language Learners (requirement from DESE). DESE has been helpful in helping RVCS to create one.
- In person visits by DESE representatives to be scheduled.

II. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:04 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
A. Ting

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DRAFT



River Valley Charter School

Minutes

RVCS Accountability Committee Meeting

Date and Time

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Coversheet

Internal Assessments Data Overview

Section: I. Opening Items
Item: D. Internal Assessments Data Overview
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: RVCS Fall Data Overview from 2025-26.pdf



Internal Assessments Data Overview

(2025-2026)

Accountability Committee Meeting

April 27th, 2026

Acadience Math K-6

Acadience Math is comprised of measures of early numeracy, computation, and problem-solving that function as indicators of the essential skills that every child must master in order to become proficient in mathematics.

Dibels Reading K-6

Dibels (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) is used as a reading screener to identify students at risk for reading difficulties, monitor their progress, and inform instructional decisions by assessing foundational literacy skills.

	Above Benchmark
	At Benchmark
	Below Benchmark (Needs strategic, small group support)
	Far Below Benchmark (Needs intensive intervention)

Middle School

In contrast to our K-6 program, Middle School students are regularly assessed with tests and quizzes, therefore teachers have extensive data to track student progress. Middle School Math packets and Language Arts work, completed over the summer, enable teachers to group students according to ability.

Data Review

Fall and Spring Internal Assessment Data is reviewed each year by teachers and members of the Student Support team. Data is reviewed by:

- Class
- Grade Level
- Gender
- Race
- Special Education Qualification (IEP, 504)

After the review, teachers followed the actions steps:

- IF **yellow** or **red** (and not currently on IEP or 504):
 - Untimed retest
 - Test with materials
 - Gather other evidence of work (observation/work samples)
- IF still concerns, THEN:
 - Send to team meeting for intervention/ brainstorming/progress monitoring

Fall 2025 Notes/Interventions

- Untimed retest
 - Many students who took the Acadience test untimed significantly raised their scores. This enabled teachers to target the few who performed similarly to timed, in order to send those students to SST.
- Small group interventions
 - Small group/differentiated lessons for students in yellow or red
 - Lesson review (slower pace to allow for deeper understanding and practice)
 - Referral to SST if needed
- Tier 2 Intervention Teacher
 - We recently hired an additional staff member to help with Tier 2 interventions in the elementary classrooms.

DIBELS BoY-MoY (Fall '25-Winter '26) All Grades Composite

Grade	Beginning	Middle
K	<p>n=31 9 (29%) 7 (23%) 5 (16%) 10 (32%)</p>	<p>n=31 1 (3%) 6 (19%) 9 (29%) 15 (48%)</p>
1st	<p>n=28 1 (4%) 2 (7%) 13 (46%) 12 (43%)</p>	<p>n=31 5 (16%) 1 (3%) 12 (39%) 13 (42%)</p>
2nd	<p>n=32 4 (13%) 4 (13%) 9 (28%) 15 (47%)</p>	<p>n=31 5 (16%) 4 (13%) 6 (19%) 16 (52%)</p>
3rd	<p>n=33 2 (6%) 3 (9%) 11 (33%) 17 (52%)</p>	<p>n=33 3 (9%) 4 (12%) 12 (36%) 14 (42%)</p>
4th	<p>n=32 2 (6%) 6 (19%) 13 (41%) 11 (34%)</p>	<p>n=24 5 (21%) 1 (4%) 4 (17%) 14 (58%)</p>
5th	<p>n=32 2 (6%) 2 (6%) 8 (25%) 20 (63%)</p>	<p>n=24 2 (8%) 1 (4%) 8 (33%) 13 (54%)</p>
6th	<p>n=31 1 (3%) 8 (26%) 7 (23%) 15 (48%)</p>	<p>n=23 2 (9%) 1 (4%) 11 (48%) 9 (39%)</p>
7th	<p>n=30 0 (0%) 2 (7%) 11 (37%) 17 (57%)</p>	No students with data.
8th	<p>n=33 4 (12%) 4 (12%) 5 (15%) 20 (61%)</p>	<p>n=1 0 (0%) 1 (100%) 0 (0%) 0 (0%)</p>
All	<p>n=282 25 (9%) 38 (13%) 82 (29%) 137 (49%)</p>	<p>n=198 23 (12%) 19 (10%) 62 (31%) 94 (47%)</p>

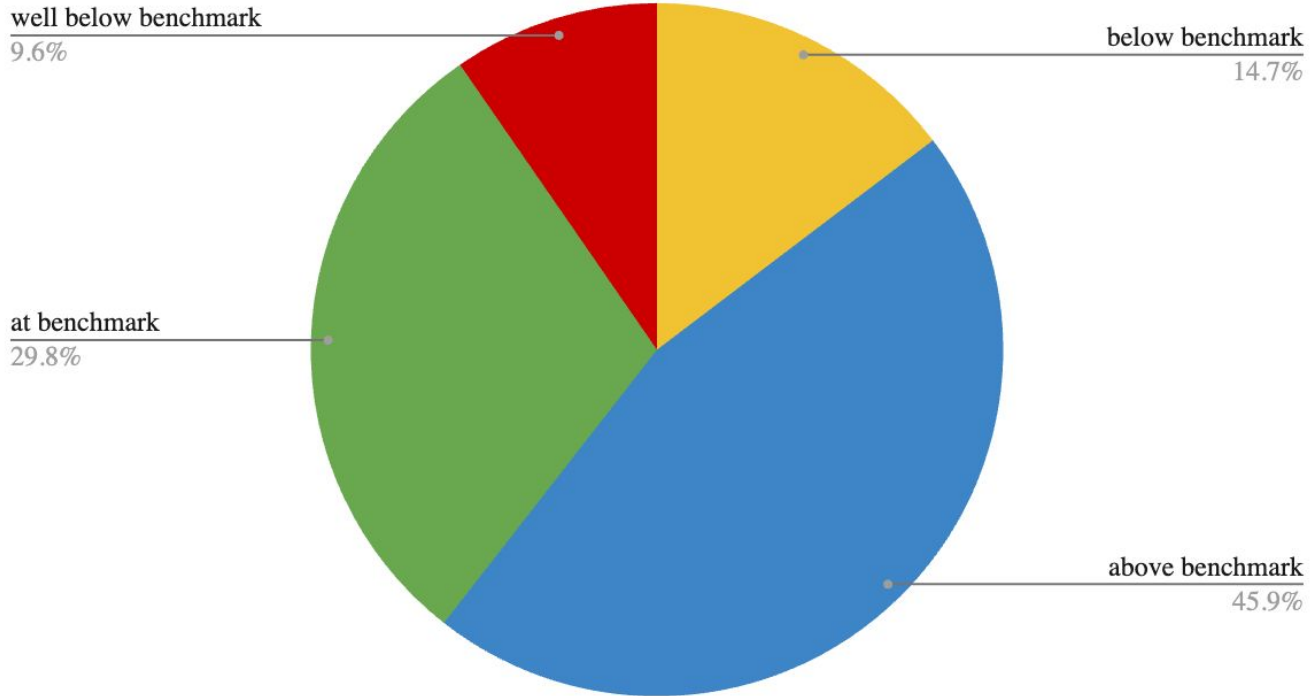
Legend n = Number of Students Intensive Support Strategic Support Core Support Core^ Support

Results Based On DIBELS 8 Composite Score

Powered by BoardOnTrack

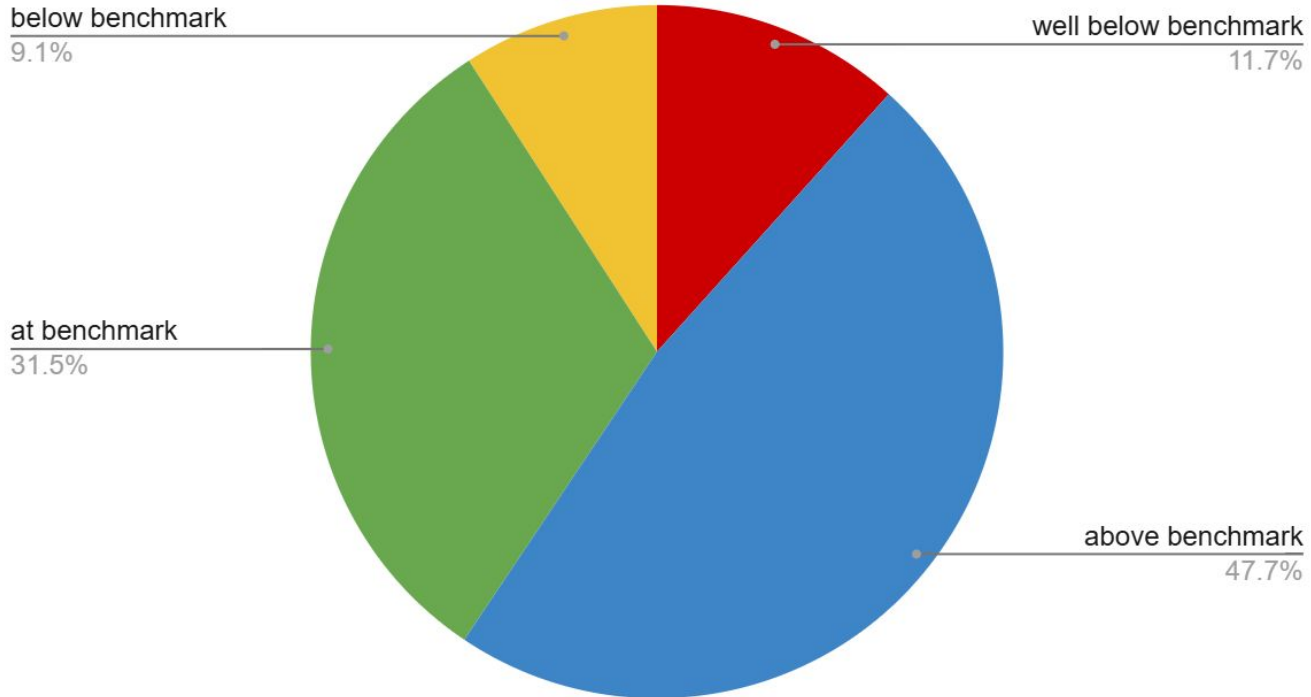
K-6 Dibels - All (Fall 2025)

K-6 Dibels - Fall 2025



K-6 Dibels - All (Winter 2026)

K-6 Dibels - Spring 2026



DIBELS Fall to Winter Progress: At or Above Benchmark

	Fall '25	Winter '26	+/-
Kindergarten	48%	77%	+29%
1st Grade	89%	81%	-8%
2nd Grade	75%	71%	-4%
3rd Grade	85%	78%	-7%
4th Grade	75%	75%	No Change
5th Grade	88%	87%	-1%
6th Grade	71%	87%	+16%

Dibels National Comparison: Winter 2026

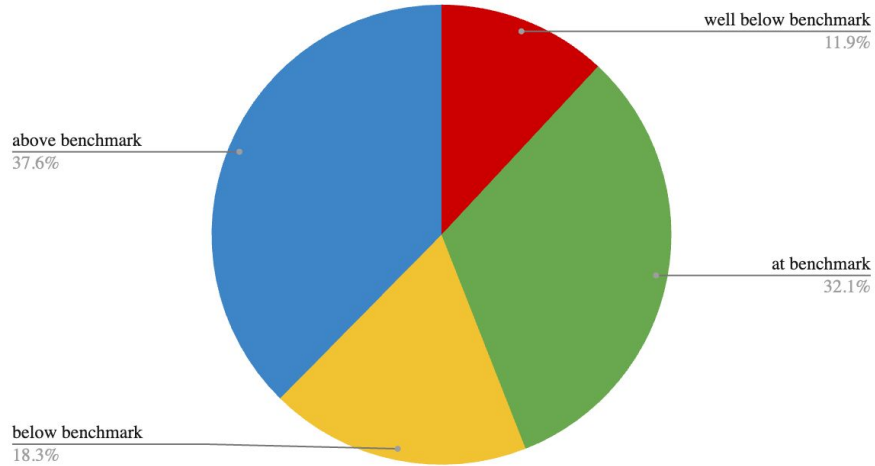
Grade	% at or Above Benchmark	Strong National Target	% Well Below (High Risk)	Our Status
KH	77%	65-75%	3%	On Track
1st	81%	70-80%	16%	On Track
2nd	71%	75-85%	16%	Slightly Below
3rd	78%	80-90%	9%	Slightly Below
4th	75%	80-90%	21%	Slightly Below
5th	87%	85-95%	8%	On Track
6th	87%	85-95%	9%	On Track

DIBELS Historical Data Comparison: At or Above Benchmark at Winter (Mid Year)

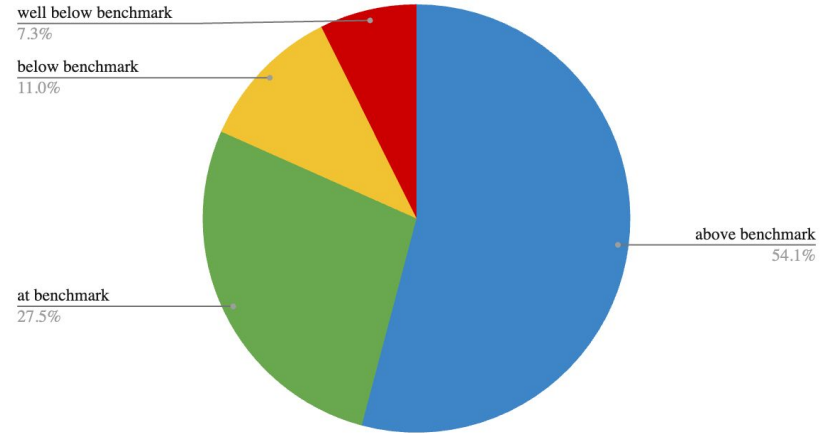
	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
Kindhaus	90%	85%	85%	77%
1st Grade	71%	73%	91%	81%
2nd Grade	84%	78%	77%	71%
3rd Grade	87%	81%	84%	78%
4th Grade	94%	96%	83%	75%
5th Grade	80%	73%	80%	87%
6th Grade	73%	74%	72%	87%

K-6 DIBELS Fall 2025 (Gender)

K-6 Dibels - Female (Fall 2025)

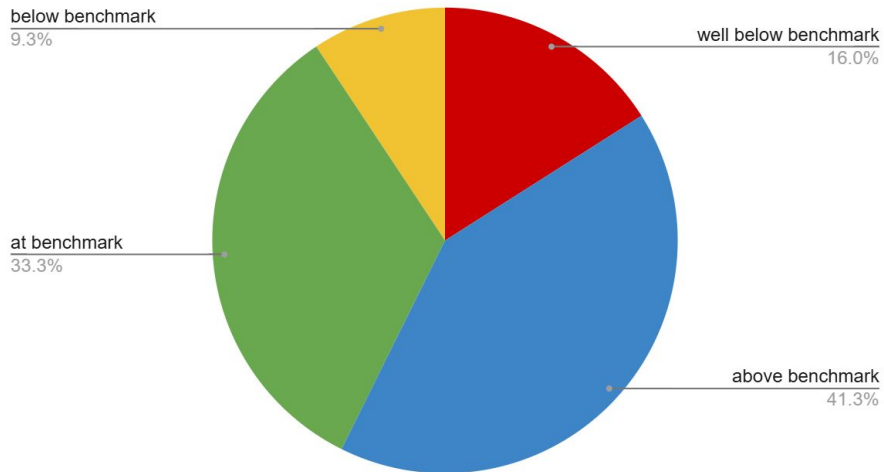


K-6 Dibels - Male (Fall 2025)

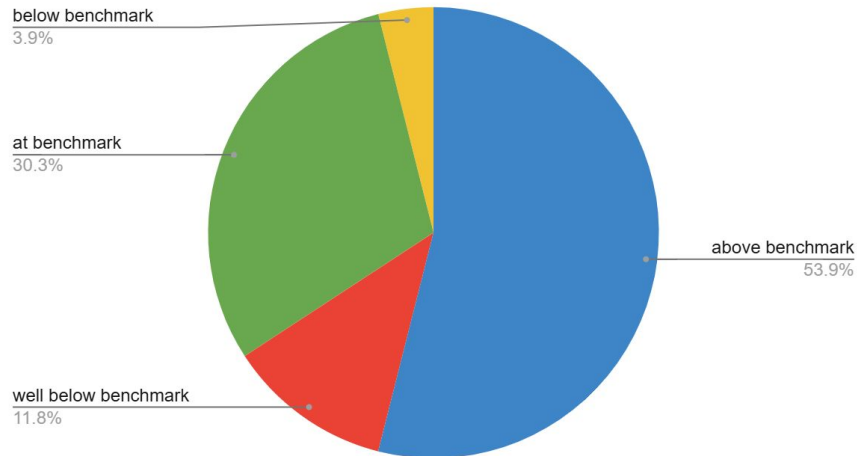


K-6 DIBELS Winter 2026 (Gender)

K-6 Dibels - Female (Winter 2026)

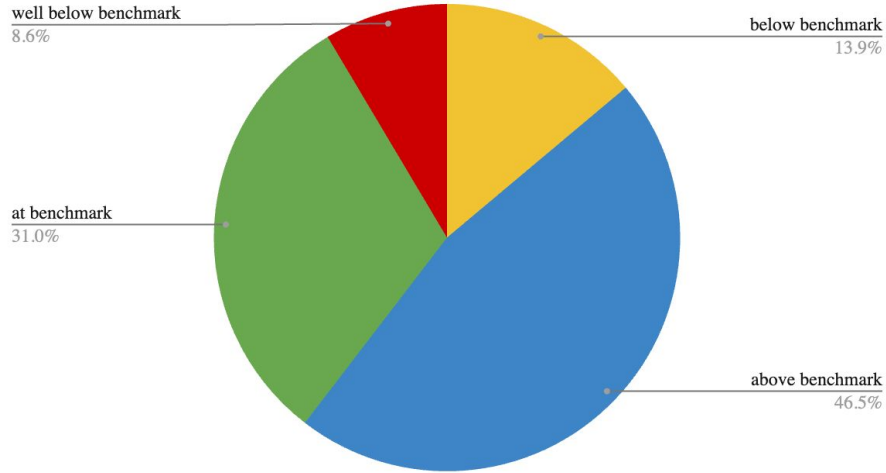


K-6 Dibels - Male (Winter 2026)

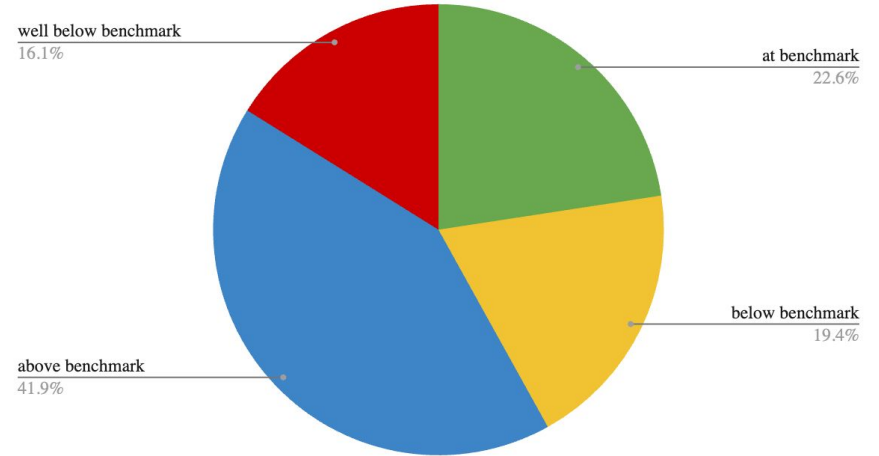


K-6 DIBELS Fall 2025 (Race)

K-6 Dibels - White (Fall 2025)

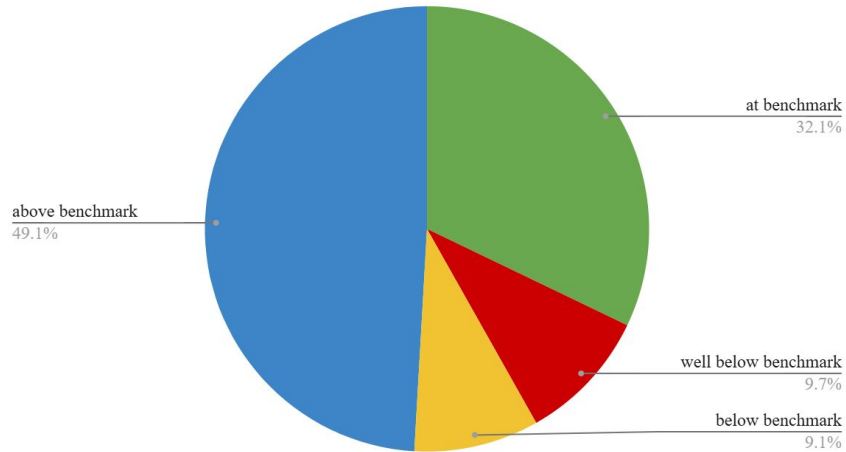


K-6 Dibels - Global Majority (Fall 2025)

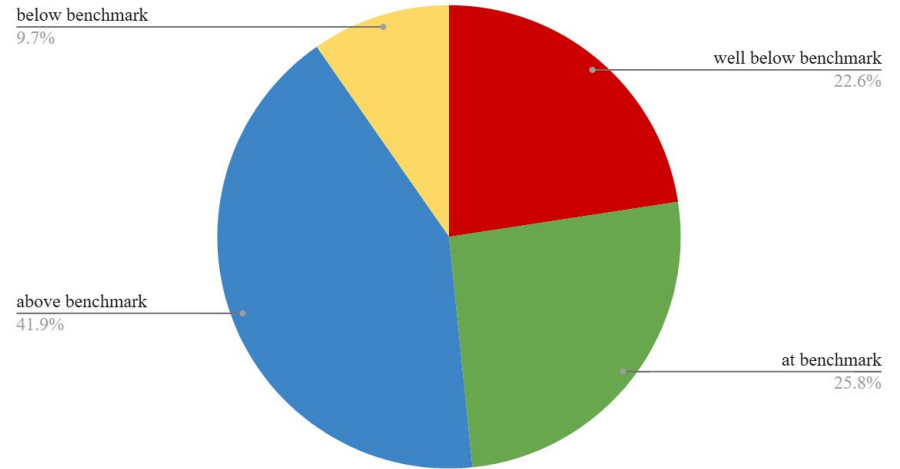


K-6 DIBELS Winter 2026 (Race)

K-6 Dibels - White (Winter 2026)

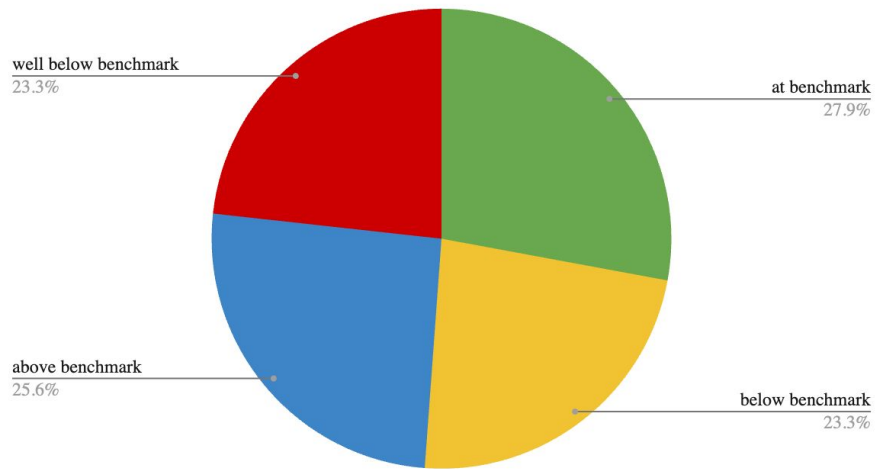


K-6 Dibels - Other Races (Winter 2026)

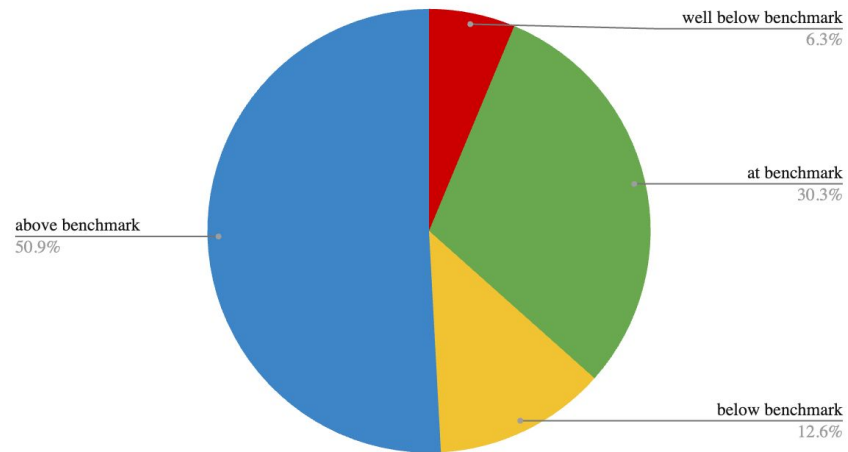


K-6 DIBELS Fall 2025 (IEP)

K-6 Dibels - IEP (Fall 2025)

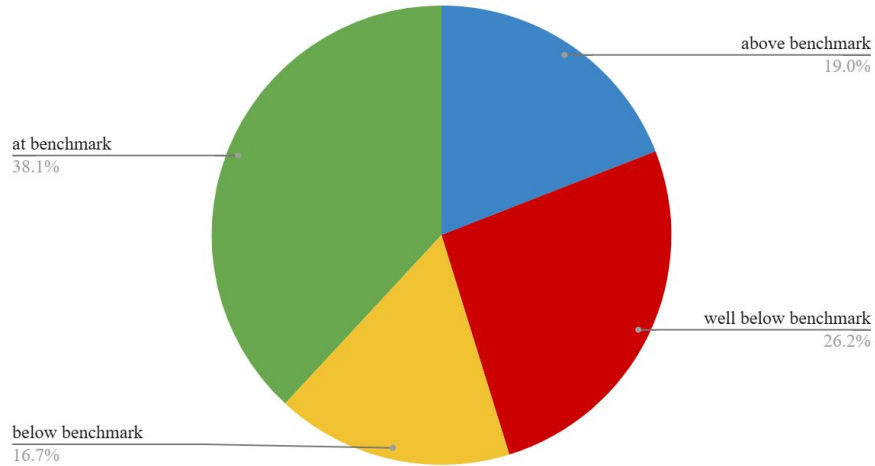


K-6 Dibels - None (Fall 2025)

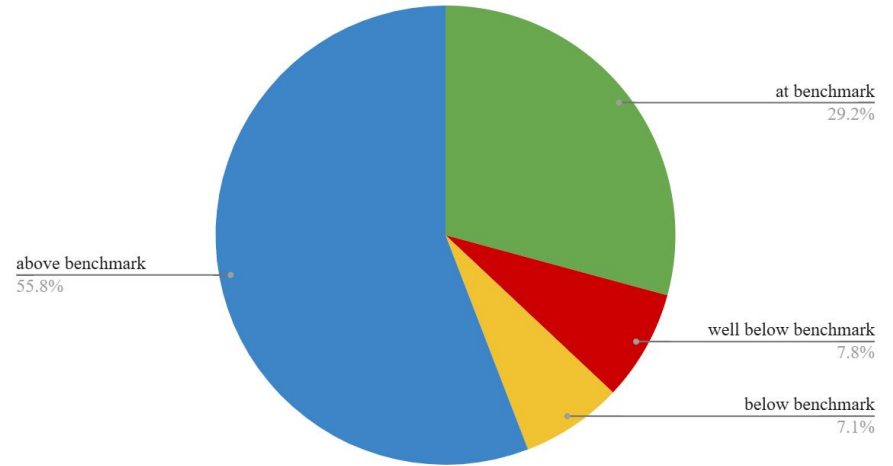


K-6 DIBELS Winter 2026 (IEP)

K-6 Dibels - IEP (Winter 2026)



K-6 Dibels - None (Winter 2026)

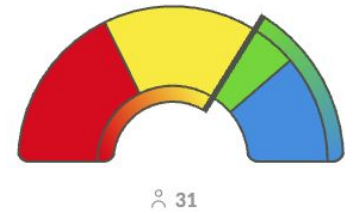
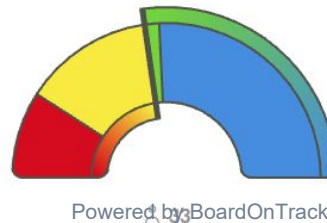
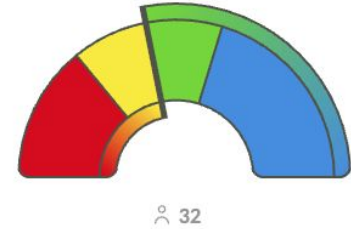
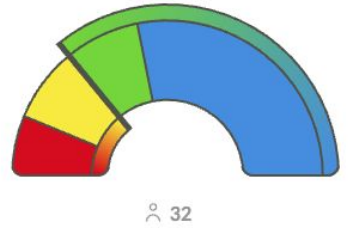
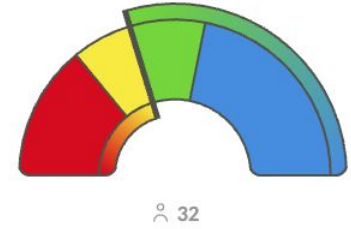
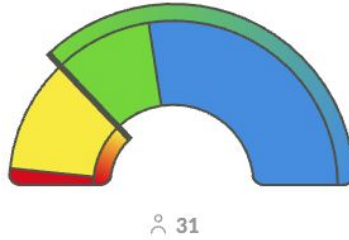
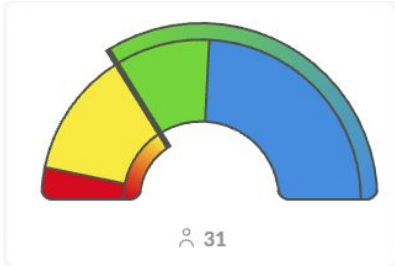


Acadience Fall 2025 K-6 Composite

Kinder

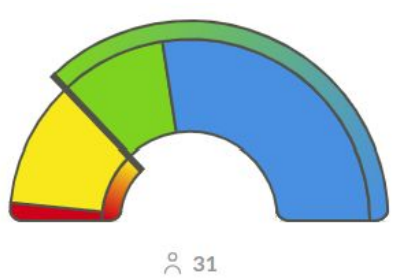
E1

E2

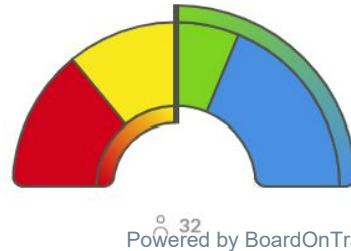
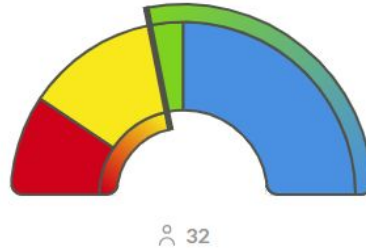
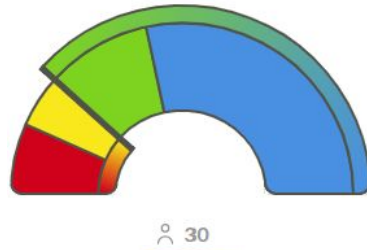


Acadience Winter 2026 K-6 Composite

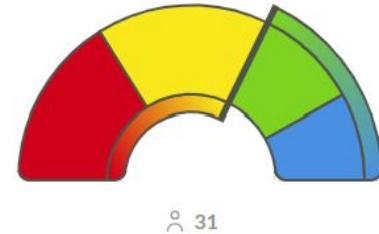
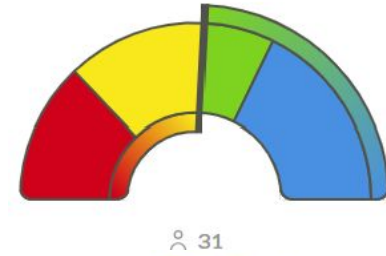
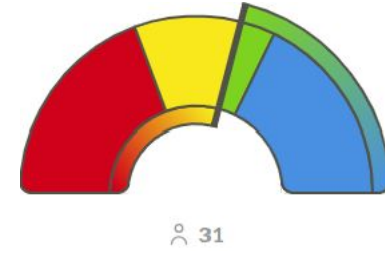
Kinder



E1

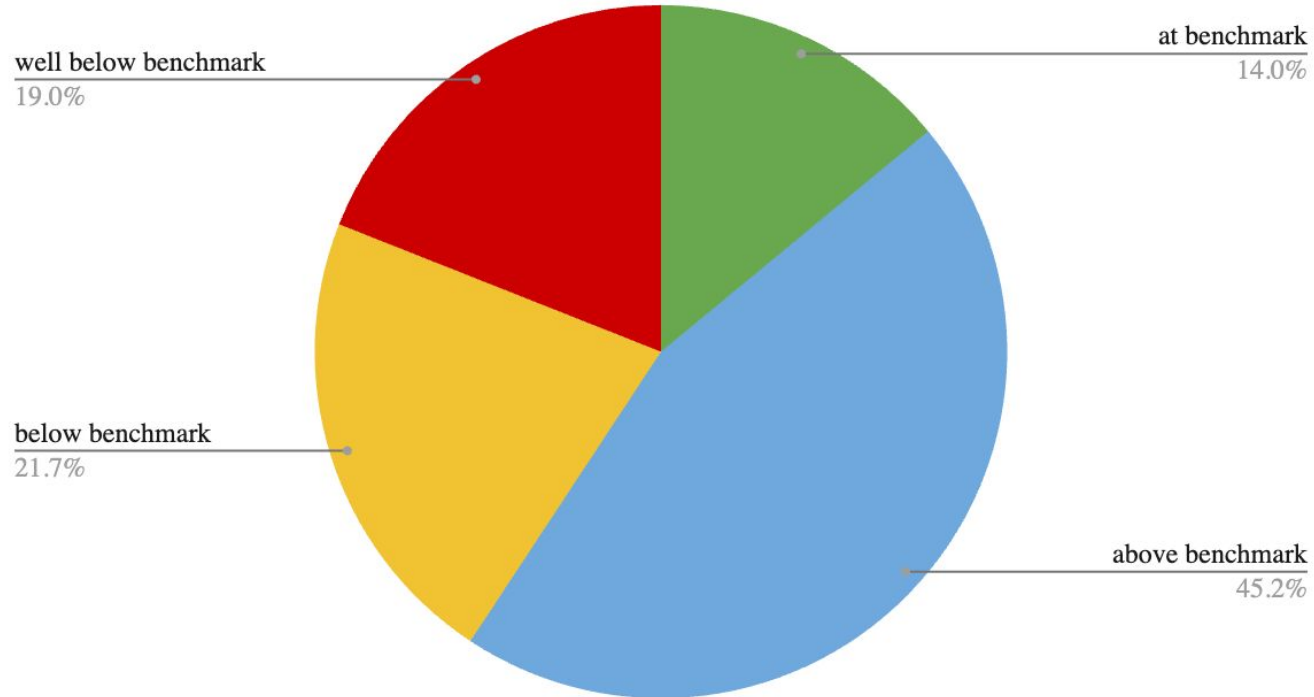


E2



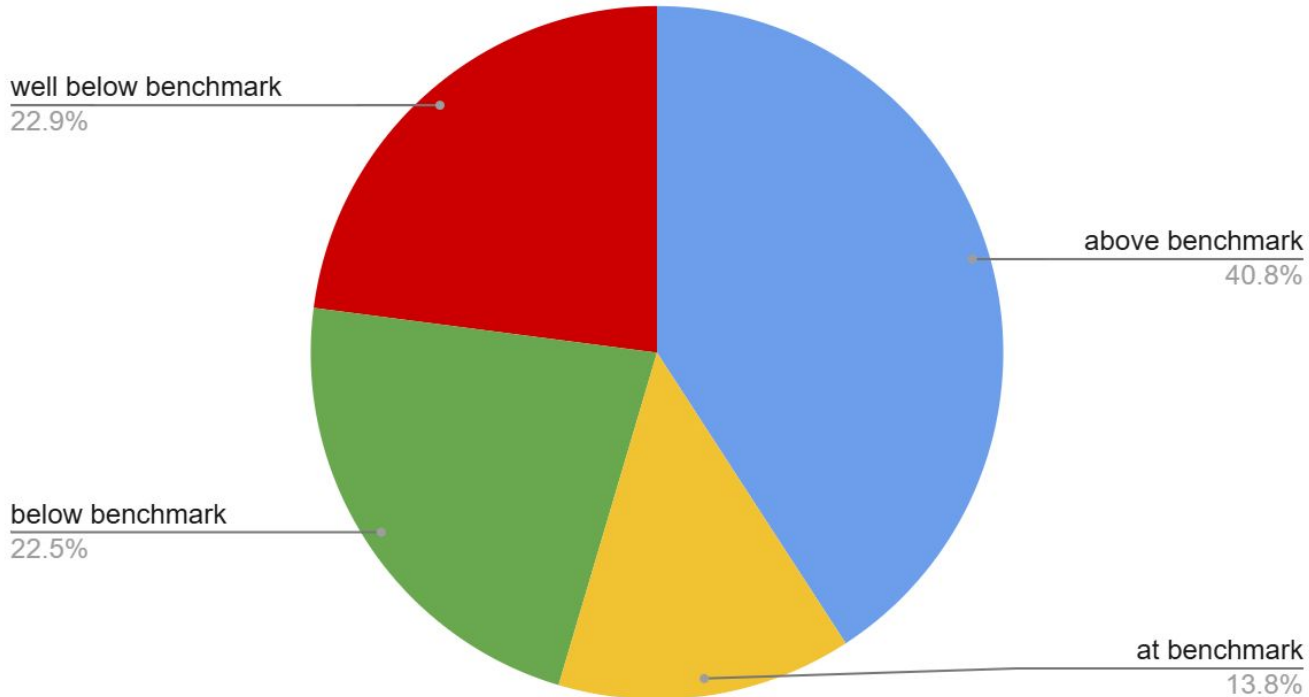
K-6 Acadience - All (Fall 2025)

K-6 Acadience - Fall 2025



K-6 Acadience - All (Winter 2026)

K-6 Acadience - Winter 2026



Acadience Fall to Winter Progress: At or Above Benchmark

	Fall '25	Winter '26	+/-
Kindergarten	67%	74%	+7%
1st Grade	74%	77%	+3%
2nd Grade	72%	56%	-16%
3rd Grade	55%	50%	-5%
4th Grade	60%	41%	-19%
5th Grade	57%	48%	-9%
6th Grade	33%	35%	+2%

Acadience National Comparison: Winter 2026

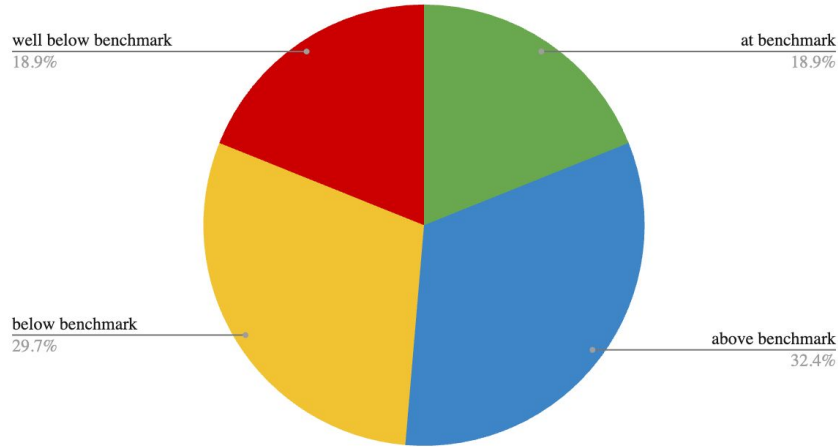
Grade	% at or Above Benchmark	Strong National Target	% Well Below (High Risk)	Our Status
Kinder	74%	65-75%	3%	On Track
1st	77%	70-80%	13%	On Track
2nd	56%	75-85%	19%	Off Track
3rd	50%	80-90%	28%	Off Track
4th	41%	80-90%	39%	Off Track
5th	48%	85-95%	26%	Off Track
6th	35%	85-95%	32%	Off Track

Acadience Historical Data Comparison: At or Above Benchmark at Winter (Mid-Year)

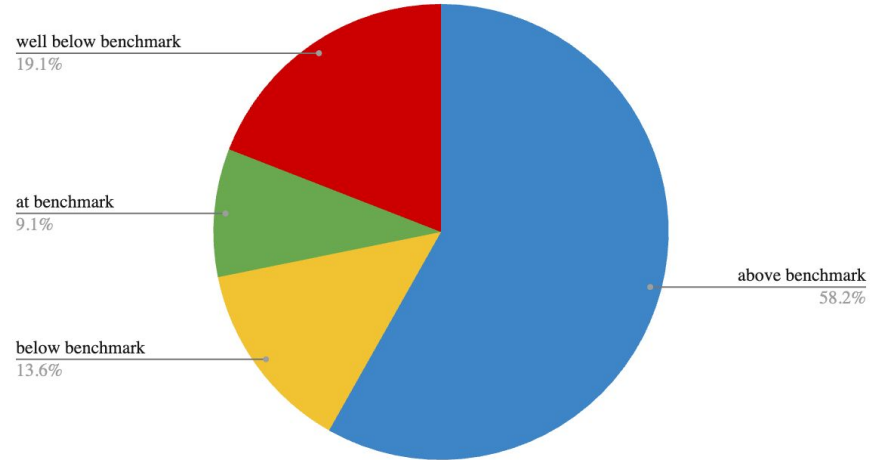
	23-24	24-25	25-26
Kindergarten	n/a (n=1)	78%	74%
1st Grade	74%	81%	77%
2nd Grade	72%	68%	56%
3rd Grade	61%	78%	50%
4th Grade	55%	67%	41%
5th Grade	42%	39%	48%
6th Grade	34%	56%	35%

K-6 Acadience Fall 2025 (Gender)

K-6 Acadience - Female (Fall 2025)

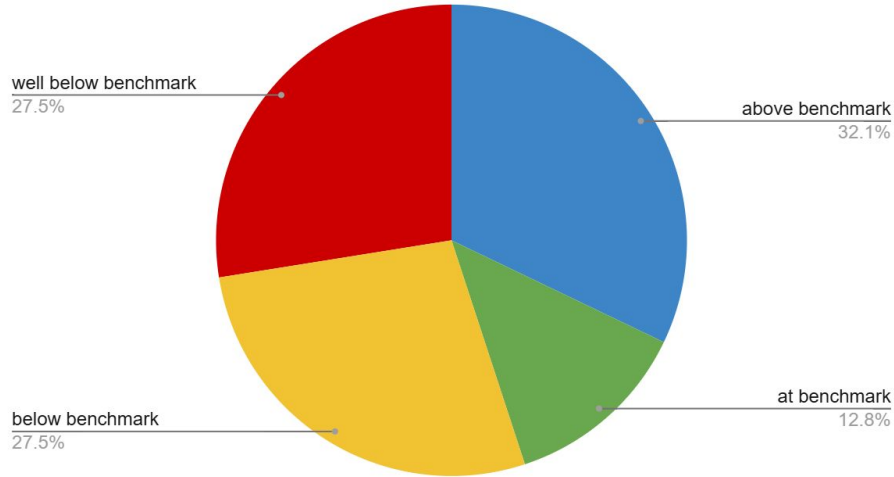


K-6 Acadience - Male (Fall 2025)

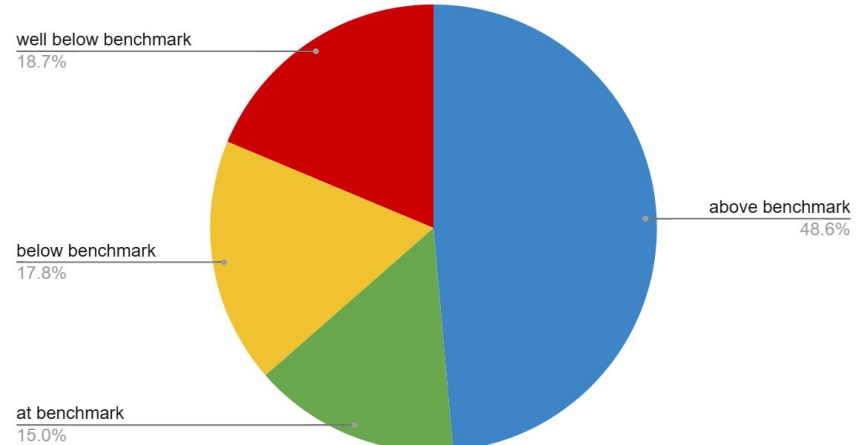


K-6 Acadience Winter 2026 (Gender)

K-6 Acadience - Female (Winter 2026)

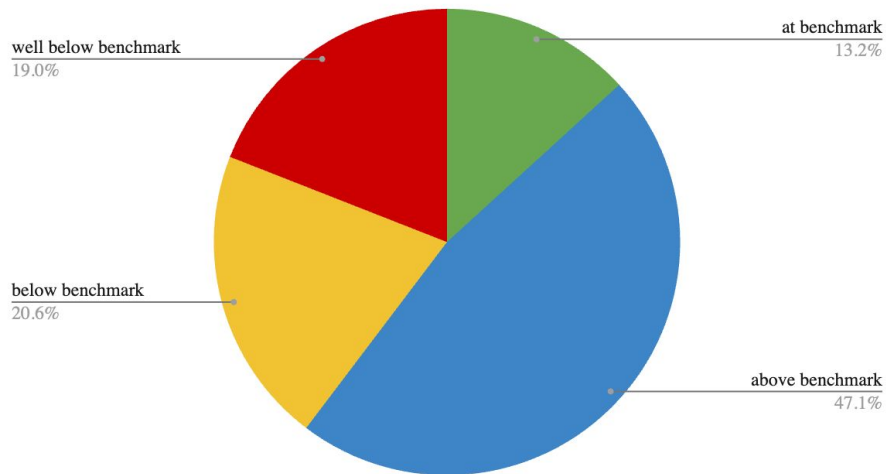


K-6 Acadience - Male (Winter 2026)

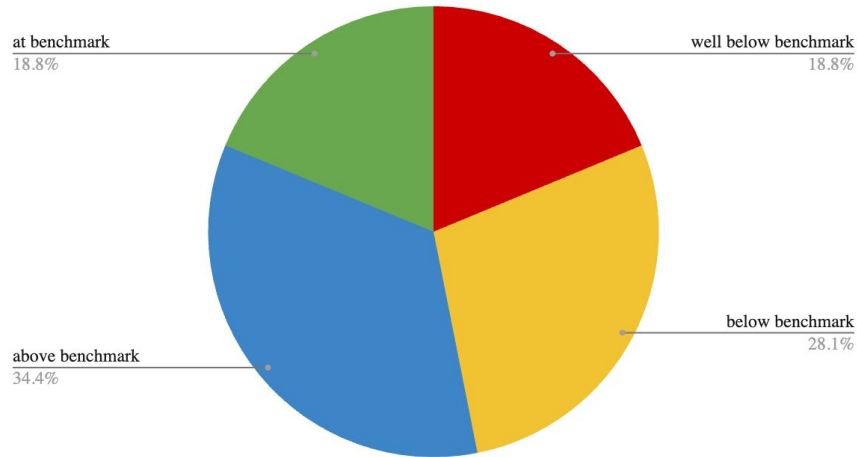


K-6 Acadience Fall 2025 (Race)

K-6 Acadience - White (Fall 2025)

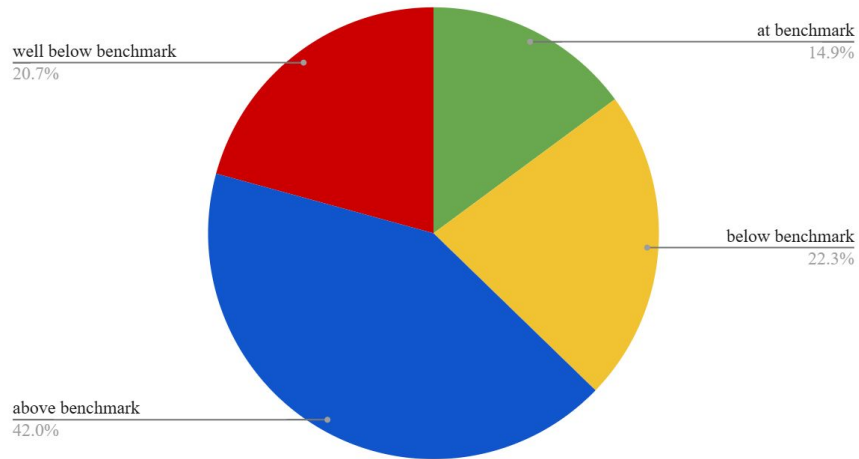


K-6 Acadience - Global Majority (Fall 2025)

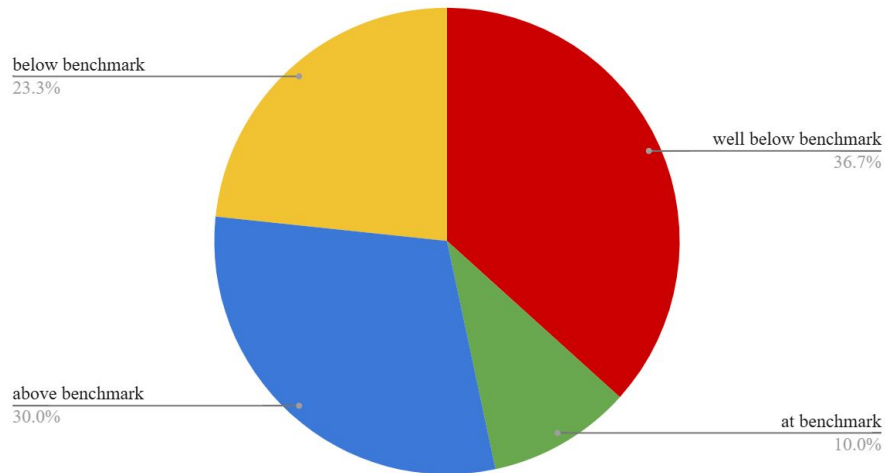


K-6 Acadience Winter 2026 (Race)

K-6 Acadience - White (Spring 2026)

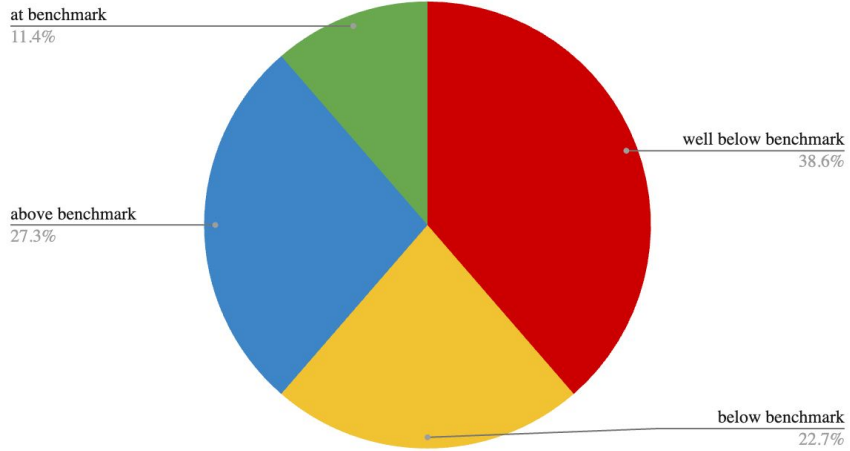


K-6 Acadience - Other Races (Spring 2026)

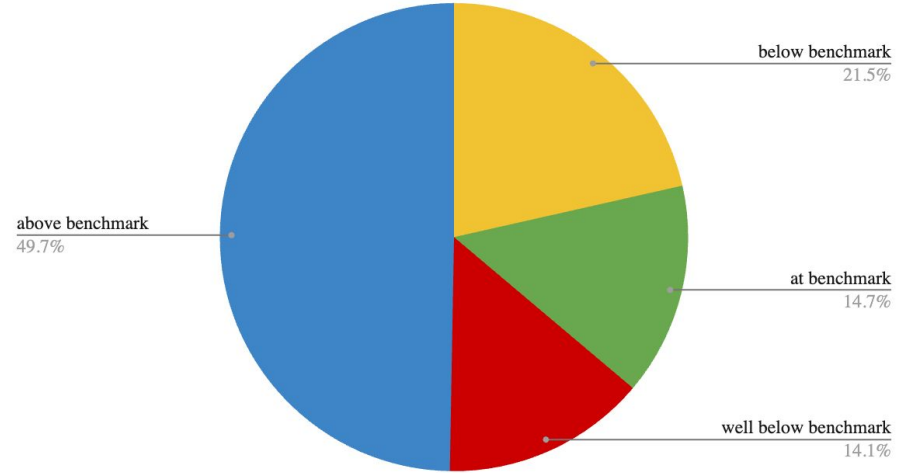


K-6 Acadience Fall 2025 (IEP)

K-6 Acadience - IEP (Fall 2025)

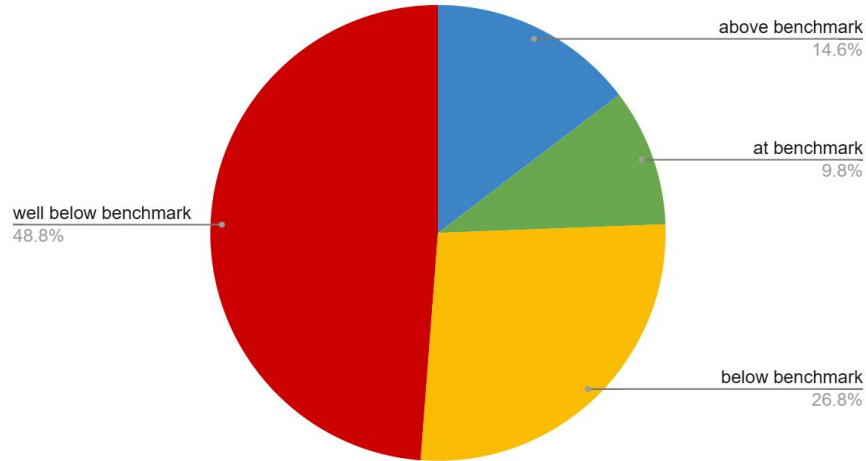


K-6 Acadience - None (Fall 2025)

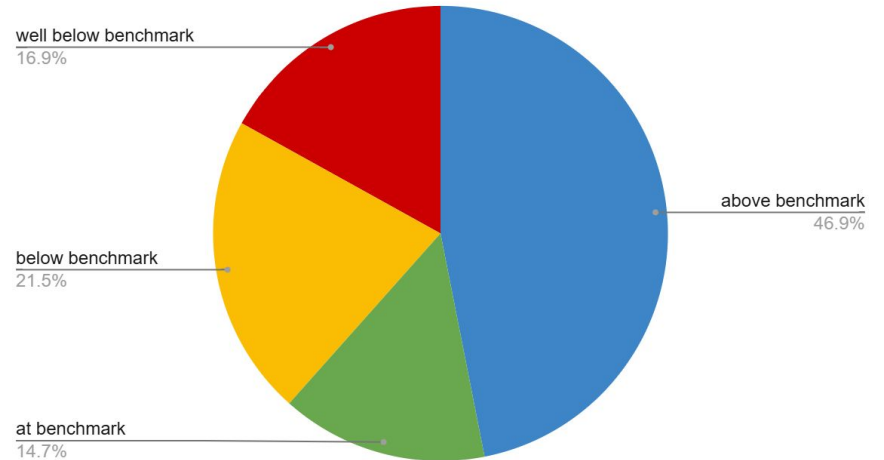


K-6 Acadience Winter 2026 (IEP)

K-6 Acadience - IEP (Winter 2026)



K-6 Acadience - None (Winter 2026)



Next Steps Spring 2026

- Spring Dibels & Acadience K-6 due May 8
- Small group, targeted instruction (and progress monitoring if needed) continues for students in **Yellow** or **Red**
- Recent hire of a Tier 2 teacher to assist with instruction and interventions
- Teachers will review student progress right after the spring break to determine who is improving and who needs to continue with what interventions.

Coversheet

RVCS Internal Audit 2025-2026

Section: I. Opening Items
Item: E. RVCS Internal Audit 2025-2026
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: River Valley Charter School FY26 Internal Audit.pdf

RIVER VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

montessori made public

FY26 Internal Audit

Prepared by:

Karen Kuse, Executive Director

Executive Summary

River Valley Charter School (RVCS) continues to demonstrate many of the core strengths of a high-quality public Montessori program. The school's mission-driven culture, strong relationships, and commitment to whole-child development are evident across classrooms and stakeholder groups. Students are engaged, demonstrate independence, and develop strong habits of learning, and families consistently describe the school as caring, welcoming, and community-oriented.

At the same time, findings from classroom observations, staff interviews, focus groups, caregiver survey data, and student performance data indicate that RVCS is at an important point of transition.

Key Strengths

- Strong student experience, including engagement, independence, and ownership of learning
- Deep alignment to Montessori philosophy and whole-child development
- Strong relationships and sense of community among students, staff, and families
- Presence of internal Montessori expertise among staff

Key Findings

Across all domains, several consistent challenges emerged:

- Inconsistent implementation of Montessori practices across classrooms and levels
- An opportunity to further clarify and align the instructional model, as current expectations and practices vary across classrooms
- Under-leveraged internal expertise, with limited structures for coaching and shared practice
- Fragmentation in adult culture and leadership alignment, including communication and transparency challenges
- Underdeveloped systems and structures that impact consistency and instructional time
- Uneven academic outcomes, particularly in math and across grade levels, reflecting variability in instruction

Overall Assessment

RVCS remains a strong program with a positive student experience and a deeply committed community. However:

The school's success is currently driven more by strong culture and individual teacher practice than by a coherent, aligned instructional and organizational system.

The school has the expertise and foundation needed to strengthen implementation. The next phase of work requires greater clarity, alignment, and consistency across the organization.

Priority Recommendations

To strengthen both fidelity and sustainability, RVCS should prioritize:

- Defining and aligning the instructional model, including clear non-negotiables for Montessori practice
- Leveraging internal expertise more intentionally through coaching, model classrooms, and aligned professional development
- Increasing consistency across classrooms and levels, including stronger vertical alignment in literacy and math
- Strengthening leadership alignment and communication, with greater clarity and transparency
- Simplifying and strengthening systems, including scheduling and protection of instructional time

Looking Ahead

River Valley Charter School is well-positioned to build on its strong foundation. With focused attention on coherence and alignment, the school can move toward:

Having a consistent, high-quality Montessori implementation for every student in every classroom.

Introduction

In SY25-26, an internal audit of River Valley Charter School (RVCS) was performed by:

Karen Kuse, Executive Director
Jane Patterson, Assistant Director
Colin Vandenburg, Middle School Coordinator

This report provides a description and analysis of the performance of River Valley Charter School as measured by standards and indicators of quality Montessori practice in the public sector.

The reflections and recommendations shared here are based on:

- Classroom observations (including structured work engagement observations)
- Interviews and focus groups with faculty and staff
- Review of student progress reports and outcomes
- Review of staffing credentials and Montessori training
- Comparison to the NCMPS Essential Elements framework

As in prior years, this report highlights both assets to leverage and areas for continued development, with a focus on strengthening both Montessori fidelity and organizational sustainability.

What follows is a discussion of the school's current strengths in providing a Montessori program of high-fidelity as well as recommendations for improvements in the future.

Assets to Leverage

RVCS continues to demonstrate strong foundational elements of a high-quality public Montessori program:

- Strong, mission-aligned culture
 - Deep commitment to whole-child development, independence, and respect for students
- Positive student engagement
 - Students consistently demonstrate strong engagement and habits of learning across grade levels
- High levels of student engagement and independence
 - Students across classrooms show ownership of learning, curiosity, and intrinsic motivation
- Authentic Montessori elements present
 - Multi-age groupings, choice, movement, and hands-on materials are evident
- Strong relationships
 - Positive relationships between students, staff, and families
- Collaborative team culture (within levels)
 - Teams demonstrate trust, support, and shared commitment

The Essential Elements for Public Montessori

The audit continues to assess performance across five domains:

1. Adults
2. Montessori Learning Environment
3. Family Partnership
4. Leadership & Organizational Development
5. Assessment

The first two domains reflect the fidelity of Montessori implementation, while the latter three domains provide insight into the level of a school's sustainability. Relatedly, each domain of the Essential Elements Implementation Rubric consists of a series of standards of practice (the "essential elements") that are described across a spectrum of indicators of implementation.

Indicator headings of the rubric's implementation standards are as follows:

- Exemplary Implementation
- Strong Implementation
- Partial Implementation
- Limited Implementation

Domain 1: Adults

2025 RVCS Admin Rating: Strong to Partial | 2026 RVCS Admin Rating: Partial

Reflections

RVCS benefits from a strong foundation of Montessori expertise among its instructional staff, particularly at the lead teacher level. Many lead teachers hold Montessori credentials and bring deep experience in implementing Montessori practices in the class room.

In addition, the school has internal capacity to support ongoing development of Montessori practice, including experienced educators and leaders who can serve as models and coaches.

However, this expertise is not yet being leveraged consistently across the school. There is an opportunity to further develop a shared, operational definition of what high -quality Montessori practice looks like at RVCS, and expectations for implementation vary across classrooms and levels. As a result, students experience differences in instructional approach, and staff report varying interpretations of key elements of Montessori practice.

This inconsistency is not due to a lack of expertise, but rather to a lack of alignment, clarity, and systems to ensure that expertise is shared and enacted consistently.

Commendations

- Staff demonstrate strong commitment to students and school mission
- Presence of experienced educators capable of supporting others
- Respectful, developmentally appropriate interactions between adults and students
- Strong collaboration within teams and commitment to students
- Clear alignment to Montessori values at the philosophical level

Recommendations

Define "Montessori at RVCS"

- Establish a clear, shared vision of high-quality Montessori practice
- Identify non-negotiables across classrooms (ex: work cycle, materials, instructional approach)

Leverage internal expertise more intentionally

- Identify and formalize roles for instructional leaders or model classrooms
- Create structures for peer observation, coaching, and shared practice

Increase consistency across classrooms

- Align expectations for instructional practices, materials, and student experience
- Ensure that all classrooms meet a common standard of implementation

Strengthen onboarding and ongoing development

- Ensure new staff are trained in the school's Montessori expectations
- Provide ongoing, aligned professional learning tied to the instructional vision

Domain 2: Montessori Learning Environment

2025 RVCS Admin Rating: Strong | 2026 RVCS Admin Rating: Strong to Partial

Reflections

Classrooms continue to reflect many core Montessori elements, including student choice, independence, and hands-on learning.

At the same time, there is some variability across classrooms in:

- Materials
- Instructional practices
- Work cycle integrity

Work engagement observations show variability across classrooms:

- Some classrooms demonstrate high levels of focused engagement
- Others show higher levels of wandering or heavy reliance on teacher direction

In some classrooms, non-Montessori materials and worksheets are increasingly present.

Commendations

- Students are generally engaged in meaningful work
- Classrooms reflect positive emotional climates
- Multi-age groupings remain intact
- Montessori materials are present in many classrooms

Recommendations

- Implement clear expectations for the prepared environment across all classrooms
- Reduce reliance on non-Montessori materials and worksheets
- Ensure all classrooms have a full complement of Montessori materials
- Protect and strengthen uninterrupted work cycles
- Increase consistency in instructional practices across classrooms

Domain 3: Family Partnership

2025 RVCS Admin Rating: Strong | 2026 RVCS Admin Rating: Strong

Reflections

RVCS continues to maintain strong relationships with families and a high level of community connection. Caregiver survey data indicates that families overwhelmingly experience the school as caring, safe, and supportive, and report that their children feel known, engaged, and happy at school.

Open-ended responses consistently highlight the school's strongest assets as:

- A close-knit and supportive community
- Dedicated and caring teachers
- A child-centered, individualized approach to learning

At the same time, caregiver survey data indicates a theme regarding communication and transparency from leadership.

Across responses, families expressed a desire for:

- More consistent and proactive communication
- Greater transparency around decision-making (ex: program changes, staffing, PBE)
- Clearer understanding of how and why key decisions are made

In several cases, feedback also reflects growing concern about:

- Leadership alignment
- Staff morale and retention
- Overall direction of the school

Overall, while family partnership remains a strength, there are emerging signals that communication challenges, particularly at the leadership level may impact trust and confidence among caregivers.

Commendations

- Strong sense of community and belonging among families
- High levels of caregiver satisfaction with student experience
- Families feel welcomed, respected, and connected to the school
- Caregivers report strong relationships with teachers and staff
- High likelihood of recommending the school to others

Recommendations

Strengthen communication systems with caregivers

- Provide consistent, proactive updates on key decisions and changes
- Ensure communication is clear, timely, and transparent

Increase transparency in leadership decision-making

- Clearly communicate the “why” behind major decisions
- Share context, trade-offs, and next steps

Rebuild and maintain caregiver trust

- Acknowledge concerns directly
- Create structured opportunities for caregiver voice and feedback
- Close the loop visibly (what was heard versus what is changing)

Clarify opportunities for family engagement

- Provide clearer pathways for involvement that are accessible to all families
- Improve communication about committees, events, and participation options

Domain 4: Leadership & Organizational Development

2025 RVCS Admin Rating: Strong | 2026 RVCS Admin Rating: Partial

Reflections

While leadership has historically supported the success of the school, there is potential need for:

- Clearer structures
- Stronger alignment
- More consistent communication

Staff feedback indicates:

- Opportunities to strengthen clarity in roles and decision-making
- Inconsistent communication
- Need for stronger leadership alignment

Commendations

- Leadership demonstrates commitment to school mission
- History of strong coaching and professional development
- High level of trust and autonomy for staff

Recommendations

- Clarify leadership roles and responsibilities
- Establish clear communication structures and decision-making processes
- Increase leadership alignment and consistency of messaging
- Rebuild trust through transparency and follow-through
- Strengthen organizational systems to support staff

Domain 5: Assessment

2025 RVCS Admin Rating: Strong | 2026 RVCS Admin Rating: Strong to Partial

Reflections

Student outcomes at RVCS remain a relative strength, particularly in student engagement, independence, and development of habits of learning.

Internal literacy data (DIBELS) indicates that a majority of students are meeting or exceeding benchmark expectations, with several grade levels performing at or near national targets. At the same time, performance varies across grade levels, with some grades falling slightly below benchmark expectations.

Math data (Acadience) shows greater variability and indicates areas where additional support may be needed, particularly in upper elementary grades, where a substantial percentage of students are below benchmark.

Across both literacy and math, there is clear evidence of growth for many students over time. However, results vary across classrooms or grade levels.

Overall, student outcomes are positive but uneven. This variability may reflect differences in instructional practices, alignment, and systems across the school.

Commendations

- Students demonstrate strong habits of learning, including independence, persistence, and engagement
- A majority of students meet or exceed benchmark expectations in literacy
- Evidence of student growth over time, particularly in early grades
- Systems are in place to review data and identify students in need of support

Recommendations

- Increase consistency in instructional practices aligned to assessment expectations, particularly in literacy and math
- Strengthen vertical alignment to ensure clear progression of skills across grade levels
- Develop a more cohesive approach to math instruction, with targeted focus on upper elementary
- Continue to refine intervention systems (ex: Tier 2 supports) to ensure timely and effective response to student needs
- Ensure assessment data is consistently used to inform instructional decisions across all classrooms

Conclusion

River Valley Charter School continues to provide a strong student experience rooted in Montessori philosophy and a deeply caring community.

However, the audit findings indicate that:

The school's success is currently being supported strongly by culture and individual teacher practice, with an opportunity to further strengthen coherence and alignment across systems.

To sustain and strengthen the program, RVCS must prioritize:

- Building a shared instructional vision
- Increasing Montessori expertise across staff
- Strengthening leadership alignment and organizational systems
- Ensuring consistency across classrooms and levels

With focused attention in these areas, RVCS is well-positioned to move from partial implementation toward strong and exemplary implementation across all domains.