

# Venture Academy 2014-15 Annual Report to Innovative Quality Schools

## School Information

School name:	Venture Academy
Address:	315 27 <sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414
Name of contact person:	Jon Bacal
Phone number:	(612) 345-9040
Website:	<a href="http://www.ventureacademies.org">www.ventureacademies.org</a>
Grades served:	6-8
Number of Students over the past three years: (Oct. 1 count + 11/30/15 count)	2013-2014: 118 2014-2015: 185 2015-2016: 185 11/30/15: 205
School demographics (11/30/15):	92% Eligible for Free/Reduced Price meals; Ethnicity: 46% Hispanic, 35% Black, 10% American Indian, 6% White, 2% Asian; 26% receiving Special Education services; 28% English Learners

## Authorizer Information

Year school charter was granted:	2013
Authorizer:	Innovative Quality Schools
Authorizer contact information:	P.O. Box 40219 St. Paul, MN 55104 <a href="http://www.iqsmn.org">www.iqsmn.org</a>

## Board of Directors

Name	Group Represented	Role on Board	Years of Term
Eric Herron	Community	Chair	3 (2016)
Brian Peterson	Community	Treasurer	3 (2016)
Betsy Ohrn	Community	Secretary	3 (2016)
Jason Davis	Community	Member	2 (2016)
Adam Carter	Community	Member	3 (2016)
Bethany Franz	Teachers	Member	2 (2016)
Lorena Silva Martinez	Parents	Member	2 (2016)
Jeffrey Robbins	Community	Member	3 (2016)
Wendy Swanson- Choi	Community	Member	3 (2016)
Bre Vollrath	Teachers	Member	2 (2016)

## Staff

Name	Position
Jon Bacal	Chief Entrepreneurship Officer/Founder
Kerry Muse	School Leader/Chief Learning Officer
Elise Wehrman	Operations Manager
Bre Vollrath	Humanities Teacher/Reading Lead
Mike Warner	Dean of Culture
Corinn Butler	Special Education Coordinator/Teacher

Bethany Franz	Social Studies Teacher/8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Lead
Margaret Holland	Art Teacher/Enrichment Lead
Stephanie Tofte	English Language Learning Lead
Brittany Boegel	STEM Teacher/6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Lead
Jonathan Filzen	Humanities Teacher
Jessica Loper	STEM Teacher
C.J. Boran	Phy-Ed/Health Teacher
Eric Nelson	Makerspace Teacher
LaTwanna Williams	Performing Arts Teacher
Anne Molitor	Special Education Teacher
Peter Swanson	Humanities Teacher
Derek Rotegard	Special Education Team
Travis Heidelberg	Special Education Team
Carlos Rivera	Special Education Team
Desmond Brooks	Special Education Team
Noely Romano	Special Education Team
Michelle Harris	Special Education Team
Tera Meerkins	Special Education Team
Cory George	Special Education Team
Marcus Heidelberg	Special Education Team
Alex Mingus	Special Education Team
Luis Rodriguez	Family Liaison

### Charter School Purposes

(The purposes the school said it was going to fulfill in original application and IQS contract)

Purpose	How the purpose is being carried out
Improving student learning and achievement	Venture is focused on accelerating student learning growth through innovative and effective teaching and learning. Over Venture's second year, our students achieved significantly above average growth in reading and math compared to their peers nationally as measured by NWEA-MAP, and significantly above average academic growth compared to other Minneapolis students serving demographically similar students as measured by Minnesota's MMR growth rating.
Increasing student learning opportunities	Venture is the first 6-8 school in the Twin Cities with a daily emphasis on self-paced, personalized blended digital learning, and the first with a focus on building entrepreneurship skills. As Venture expands into high school, it will become the first Minneapolis high school to provide most of its students with early post-secondary credit attainment prior to high school graduation. Venture's Makerspace program is also locally unique.
Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods	As indicated above, Venture is offering a program that features innovative teaching

	methods to address student learning needs. Venture utilizes high quality digital content platforms that provide students with immediate feedback, provide teachers with easy to use data regarding student performance and create the opportunity for self-direction and responsive teaching.
Measuring learning outcomes and create different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes	Beginning in 2015-16, Venture is measuring the growth of student and staff entrepreneurship through surveys and teacher input on students. In addition, Venture utilizes multiple forms of standard and authentic assessments to gauge student mastery and understanding.
Establishing new forms of accountability for schools	See row immediately above.
Creating new professional opportunities for teachers	Venture is led by a team that includes teachers with major leadership roles.

### School Description

Mission	The mission of Venture Academy is to build entrepreneurs by developing the independence, scholarship and leadership of young people.
Vision	The vision of Venture Academy is for all young people to become entrepreneurial leaders who improve the world around them.
Description of the school including extra and co-curricular activities:	Venture Academy provides a rigorous 6 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> -grade academic program that blends teacher-guided project-based learning developing high-level career and college readiness skills, self-paced personalized digital learning developing core academic skills, and hands-on enrichment experiences in art, Makerspace (game design, coding, robotics and mechanical arts), entrepreneurship and leadership. Venture's academic program is based on the Personalized Learning Platform developed by Summit Public Schools in California. Venture was chosen one of the first 19 national Summit Basecamp partners in 2015. Venture's extracurricular activities include EMERGE, a daily afterschool enrichment program; Beyond Walls, a squash and tutoring program based at the nearby University of Minnesota Athletic Center; boys and girls

	<p>soccer, basketball and track/cross-country teams; and participation in Youth in Government Model Assembly and Model United Nations, a statewide YMCA program. In 2015, 13 Venture students were chosen to participate in Breakthrough Minneapolis, a highly selective multi-year summer school and college preparation program for urban youth.</p>
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**Highlights**

<p>Highlights of the school during the past year:</p>	<p>During our second year of 2014-15, Venture Academy celebrated the following highlights:</p> <p>Venture Academy students demonstrated significant academic growth in 2014-15:</p> <p>-In 2015, Venture as a whole ranked second in academic growth out of 23 Minneapolis charter and district schools serving at least 60% low-income 6th-8th-graders, as measured by the Growth Rating on the Minnesota Multiple Measures Rating (MMR). Venture ranked fourth out of the 23 schools in 2015 on the overall MMR rating, which includes academic proficiency and statewide achievement gap reduction as well as academic growth. Among the seven low-income Minneapolis schools that only serve 6th-8th-graders, Venture ranked first in both categories. The MMR is determined by student performance on annual reading and math MCA assessments. See chart on pages 5 and 6 below.</p> <p>-Venture students achieved on average fall-spring growth of 227% in reading and 217% in math compared to their peers nationally (NWEA-MAP assessment). 100% = average growth nationwide.</p> <p>-In 2015, Venture Academy was one of only 19 schools in the nation--and the only school in the Midwest--selected for the Summit Public Schools Basecamp partnership. Summit Basecamp provides partner schools with the state-of-the-art Summit Personalized Learning Platform and related training and on-site coaching.</p>
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-Venture achieved a year-end positive fund balance of 10%.

**School Performance**

Test scores:	<p>Overall, Venture students in 2015 demonstrated strong growth in reading and math on the national MAP growth measure and also on the state MMR growth measure, which is based on the MCA state tests. See pages 5-6 below. On MCA proficiency, Venture students schoolwide grew significantly from their performance in 2014, but remained well below the level of their same grade peers statewide.</p> <p>Growth: NWEA-MAP (national): On average, Venture students achieved fall-spring growth of 227% in reading and 217% in math compared to their peers nationally (NWEA-MAP test).</p> <p>Proficiency: MCA (MN): 23% in reading and 23% in math in 2015, compared to 16% in reading and 18% in math in 2014 (students enrolled Oct. 1 only).</p> <p>MMR Rating (based on MCA): 36.80% in 2015, compared with 26.13% in 2014.</p>
Awards received:	<p>Venture was named one of 19 national recipients of the Summit Public Schools Basecamp partnership, receiving over \$100,000 in in-kind curriculum, software, training and coaching support.</p> <p>Venture was awarded a competitive Federal CSP start-up grant of \$225,000 in April 2015.</p> <p>Venture received the MDE School Finance Award in 2015.</p>
Graduation rates:	n/a

**Multiple Measures Rating (MMR)\* Rankings of 23 Minneapolis Public Schools in 2015**

Schools Serving Grades 6-8**	2015 MMR Rating	2015 MMR Rank	2015 MMR Growth Points	2015 MMR Growth Rank	% Receiving Free/Reduced Price Lunch
MN Int'l Middle (charter 5-8)	47.20%	1	13.79	1	97
<b>Venture Academy (charter 6-8)</b>	<b>36.80%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13.49</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>90</b>
New Millennium (charter K-8)	43.94%	2	13.07	3	85
Sanford (MPS 6-8)	34.60%	5	11.41	4	62
Green Central (MPS K-8)	31.54%	7	11.11	5	94
Olson (MPS 6-8)	33.90%	6	10.04	6	93
Cedar Riverside (charter K-8)	29.02%	10	9.87	7	96

Hiawatha (charter 5-8)	43.90%	3	9.42	8	96
Sullivan (MPS K-8)	29.36%	9	9.33	9	91
Anwatin (MPS 6-8)	30.30%	8	9.07	10	82
Nellie Stone Johnson (MPS K-8)	23.19%	11	7.89	11	98
Folwell (MPS K-8)	22.82%	12	7.85	12	85
Learning for L'ship (charter K-12)	22.09%	13	7.73	13	87
MN Transitions (charter 6-8)	17.82%	19	7.61	14	95
Lucy Laney (MPS K-8)	19.34%	16	6.79	15	98
Andersen (MPS K-8)	18.66%	17	6.65	16	94
Jefferson (MPS K-8)	18.33%	18	6.34	17	95
Anishinabe (MPS K-8)	19.60%	14	6.17	18	98
Sojourner Truth (charter K-8)	13.96%	22	6.12	19	96
Northeast (MPS 6-8)	19.40%	15	5.05	20	82
KIPP (charter 5-8)	15.38%	21	4.85	21	92
Aurora Middle (charter 6-8)	17.32%	20	1.81	22	97
Mpls. Academy (charter 5-8)	12.15%	23	0	23	87

*\*Minnesota's MMR (Multiple Measures Rating) rates schools annually on student academic growth, proficiency and achievement gap reduction based on state MCA reading and math test results; one-third of the MMR is based on Growth, one-third is based on Proficiency, and one-third is based on Achievement Gap Reduction (relative to statewide results). The MMR rating is comprised of points earned on each of these three components.*

*\*\*District and charter public schools in Minneapolis that served grades 6-8 and where at least 60% of students qualified for free or reduced-priced lunch in the 2014-15 year. Source: Minnesota Dept. of Education website.*

*Note: Green Central, Nellie Stone Johnson, and Lucy Laney schools no longer serve grades 6-8.*

## Innovation

Innovations implemented	Results
Venture continued to implement self-paced, personalized digital learning in reading and math in 2014-15 as part of its learning program.	On average, Venture students achieved fall-spring growth of 227% in reading and 217% in math compared to their peers nationally (NWEA-MAP test), and Venture students ranked #2 out of 23 similar Minneapolis schools on the MMR Growth Rating.

**Financial Performance**

For the past three years:

	FY15	FY14	FY13
Total revenue	\$2,945,377	\$2,220,314	\$402,326
Expenditures	\$2,906,981	\$2,075,400	\$299,244
Fund balance and percent	\$277,415 (10%)	\$247,995 (11%)	\$103,082 (26%)
Audit findings	No material weaknesses. No major findings.	No material weaknesses. No findings.	No material weaknesses. No major findings.

**Future Plans**

Expansion of grades:	Venture will expand to grade 9 in 2016-17, 10 in 2017-18, 11 in 2018-19 and 12 in 2019-20.
Adding other locations:	Venture has no current plans to expand to other locations.
New facility:	Venture has no plans for a new facility.
Digital platform expansion:	n/a

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**World’s Best Workforce Plan (School Improvement Plan)**

**Performance Measures**

Measures used to determine school progress towards (a) closing achievement gaps, (b) all students ready for kindergarten, (c) all students in third grade achieving grade level literacy, (d) career and college readiness before graduation HS, (e) all students graduation from HS. Must include:

- i. Student performance on NAEP
- ii. Size of academic achievement gap by student subgroup
- iii. Student performance on MCA
- iv. High school graduation rates
- v. Career and college readiness
- vi. Other relevant local standardized assessments

Description of performance measures used:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Size of academic achievement gap by student subgroup (MCA)</li> <li>2. Student performance on MCA</li> <li>3. Student performance on NWEA-MAP</li> </ol>

**District Plan Components and Activities:**

School goals and benchmarks for instruction and student achievement for all subgroups:	
How are goals determined?	Minnesota schools have one of the largest achievement gaps in the nation. Minnesota

	<p>currently has a waiver from <i>No Child Left Behind</i> (NCLB) legislation that targets lowering the achievement gap by 50% by 2017. Venture Academy is committed to increasing the growth of traditionally lower-performing student groups in order to reduce the achievement gap and help all students reach their full potential for college and life success.</p> <p>With this aim in mind, Venture Academy's goals have been determined by its stakeholders, including input from teachers and parents, and adopted by its Board of Directors.</p>
<p>What are the goals? (written in SMART format and address (a)-(e) above)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The percent of all students in all grades tested who earn achievement levels of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on the Reading MCA will increase from 23% in 2015 to 40% in 2016.</li> <li>2) The percent of all students in all grades tested who earn achievement levels of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on the Math MCA will increase from 23% in 2014 to 40% in 2016.</li> <li>3) Venture will achieve positive average z-score growth at all grade levels in both reading and math as measured by 2015 MMR data, indicating that students are making higher than anticipated growth</li> <li>4) The percent of students in each of the following subgroups (eligible for free or reduced price meals, students receiving special education services, students receiving limited English proficiency services, Hispanic students, black students, and American Indian students) in all grades tested earning achievement levels of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on the Reading MCA will be higher than the statewide percent for each subgroup earning these levels.</li> <li>5) The percent of students in each of the following subgroups (eligible for free or reduced price meals, students receiving special education services,</li> </ol>

	<p>students receiving English learning services, Hispanic students, black students, and American Indian students) in all grades tested earning achievement levels of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on the Math MCA will be higher than the statewide percent for each subgroup earning these achievement levels.</p> <p>6) The average annual growth on the Reading MAP school-wide (100%=national average for national cohort), which was 227% in Spring 2015, will be at least 150% in Spring 2016.</p> <p>7) The average annual Fall-Spring growth on the Math MAP school-wide (100%=national average for national cohort), which was 217% in Spring 2015, will be at least 150% in Spring 2016.</p>
<p>Description of needs assessment conducted:</p>	<p>In Fall 2014, Venture Academy’s leadership team conducted a comprehensive needs assessment to identify the root cause behind Venture’s academic performance during the 2013-14 year. This needs assessment identified the lack of comprehensive formative assessment practices as the underlying root cause. Based on our analysis of Venture’s 2015 student performance data, Venture believes that this root cause remains valid.</p>
<p>Data disaggregated by student groups: White, Hispanic, Black, Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Free/Reduced Price Lunch, Special Education, Limited English Proficiency</p>	<p>MCA 2015 (not including students entering after Oct. 1):</p> <p>White: n/a (too small to report)</p> <p>Hispanic: Reading: 23%; Math: 26%</p> <p>Black: Reading: 16%; Math: 10%</p> <p>Asian: Reading and Math: (too small to report)</p> <p>American Indian: Reading: 22%; Math: 17%</p> <p>Free/Reduced Price Lunch: Reading: 20%; Math: 22%</p> <p>Special Education: Reading: 13%; Math: 10%</p> <p>Limited English Proficiency: Reading: 6%; Math: 13%</p>
<p>Analysis of current practices and effectiveness of core instruction for all student groups, especially those not meeting grade level objectives:</p>	<p>Despite significant progress, the effectiveness of Venture’s core instructional practices in school-wide in both reading and math in 2014-15 continued to be limited by the early stage of the implementation of comprehensive formative assessment practices.</p>

Analysis of current practices that have demonstrated success/data leading to improved results for groups of students:	Training and coaching in formative assessment practices, including peer support provided by content area professional learning communities.
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Specific process for assessing/evaluating each student’s progress toward meeting state/local standards; identifying strengths and weaknesses in instruction affecting student progress toward career/college readiness:

What process is used for assessing and evaluating student progress toward meeting state and local academic standards?	Formative assessment practices that include ongoing checks for understanding, ongoing feedback on cognitive skills, standards-aligned, mastery-based content assessments, and quarterly benchmark assessments, with results reviewed and analyzed by individual teachers, by content area professional learning communities and the school leadership team.
How are strengths and weaknesses of instruction assessed with respect to students’ progress and growth towards career and college readiness?	Through the observation, feedback and coaching cycle described above, and also by student progress on Venture’s core values of vision, tenacity and adaptability, measured quarterly by teacher grades.
Description of system for ensuring curriculum, instruction, and assessment is aligned with state and local standards:	Venture’s curriculum, instruction and assessment system has been developed by Summit Public Schools and aligned with Minnesota standards by school leadership and teachers. Curriculum, instructional plans and assessments have been developed in and selected for their alignment with these standards. These include quarterly ELA and math benchmark assessments. Each teacher is operating with Minnesota State Standards-aligned long-term plans with pre planned assessments and benchmarks for understanding.
Professional development that ensures all educators utilize standards-based education system:	Venture’s professional development aims to ensure that all educators teach the standards through staff-wide and content area training, coaching and support tied to long-term teaching and professional growth plans, including daily observations, weekly content professional learning communities and regular training sessions.
In each of the following areas, describe measures used to evaluate student progress toward standards, timelines and process for reviewing data and identifying strengths and weaknesses: a. All students ready for kindergarten	A) Measures used to evaluate student progress toward standards: 1) Pervasive checks for understanding 2) Standards-aligned, mastery based content assessments 3) Weekly standards-based quizzes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Closing the achievement gap</li> <li>c. All students in third grade achieving grade level literacy</li> <li>d. All students attaining career and college readiness before graduation from HS</li> <li>e. All students graduating from HS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4) Quarterly benchmark assessments</li> <li>5) End of year proficiency and growth data</li> <li>6) Fall and Spring MAP data</li> </ul> <p>B) Timelines and Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Beginning of year: teacher content teams and school leadership team review end of year proficiency and growth data to identify strengths and weaknesses</li> <li>2) Teachers continually adjust instruction to better meet student needs, based upon daily and weekly data, and with the support of teacher content teams and observation and coaching from school leadership.</li> <li>3) Teacher content teams and school leadership team reviews progress weekly, monthly, and quarterly, and adjusts instruction and professional development accordingly</li> </ul>
<p>Student progress monitoring process for assessing strengths/weaknesses of instruction and adjusting instruction as needed:</p>	<p>The progress monitoring process above is Venture's process for assessing strengths/weaknesses of instruction and adjusting instruction as needed.</p>

<p>Description of system to periodically evaluate effectiveness of all instruction and curriculum (address how system takes into account strategies/best practices, student outcomes, school principal evaluations, and teacher evaluations):</p>	
<p>How are strategies and best practices used to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and alignment to the curriculum?</p>	<p>Venture's school leadership team and teacher teams incorporate proven strategies and best practice to evaluate and improve instruction and curriculum alignment. The leading example of this process in the 2015-16 year is Venture's continued focus on implementation of comprehensive formative assessment practices (understanding standards, unpacking standards into objectives, feedback, an instructional framework that releases responsibility for learning to the student, and assessments and using them to help teachers and students set goals and track progress). Venture receives extensive coaching and support from the Minnesota Centers for Excellence in this area.</p> <p>The school leadership team and teacher content teams periodically review and evaluate the effectiveness of Venture's instruction and curriculum through a continuous improvement process that includes</p>

	reflection, research, adjustment, monitoring and evaluation.
How is curriculum aligned to state and local standards? How is it ensured that instruction reflects that alignment?	Venture's curriculum, instruction and assessment system was developed and selected by school leadership and teachers, who reviewed Minnesota standards carefully. School leadership and teacher content teams ensure that instruction reflects standards alignment through observation (leader and peer), review of lesson plans, teacher professional learning communities, analysis of weekly and interim student assessment results, and professional development that reflects current needs for standards support.
How are student outcomes used to periodically review and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and curriculum?	<p>Venture uses student outcomes to periodically review and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and curriculum by analyzing the following student outcome measures and then regularly adjusting instruction and curriculum accordingly.</p> <p>Student Outcome Measures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Pervasive checks for understanding</li> <li>2) Standards-aligned, mastery-based content assessments</li> <li>3) Quarterly benchmark assessments</li> <li>4) End of year proficiency and growth data</li> <li>5) Fall and Spring MAP data</li> </ol> <p>Review and Evaluation Process</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Beginning of year: teacher content teams and school leadership team review end of year proficiency and growth data to identify instructional and curriculum strengths and weaknesses</li> <li>2) Teachers continually adjust instruction and curriculum to better meet student instructional needs, based upon daily and weekly data, and with the support of teacher content teams and observation and coaching from school leadership.</li> <li>3) Teacher content teams and school leadership team reviews progress weekly, monthly, and quarterly, and adjusts instruction</li> </ol>

	and curriculum accordingly
How are principal and educator evaluation systems linked to effectiveness of instruction and curriculum?	<p>Teacher Evaluation</p> <p>Venture conducts at least two formal evaluations of teachers and provides weekly informal feedback to teachers, with the goal to articulate expectations, assess instructional performance, and support the development of teachers who are highly effective at supporting student progress towards standards mastery and college readiness. The evaluation and feedback process improves the effectiveness of instruction and curriculum through personalized feedback and coaching, self-assessment and reflection, individual and PLC goal setting, and school leader and peer observations. Evaluation is based on multiple methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. student achievement data</li> <li>b. portfolio of planning</li> <li>c. video of teaching</li> <li>d. self-assessment and reflection</li> <li>e. meeting of goals, set collaboratively in individual development plan</li> <li>f. informal observation</li> <li>g. formal evaluation</li> <li>h. lead coach input</li> <li>i. student and parent surveys</li> </ul> <p>School Leadership Evaluation</p> <p>Venture has a comprehensive school leadership evaluation system designed to evaluate its Administrative Leadership Team (CEO, School Leader, Dean of Culture, Special Education Coordinator and Operations Manager) in multiple domains. School leadership evaluations are based on school performance data, state level and school performance measures, and 360 degree feedback from staff and parents. The evaluation involves school leadership self-reflection, goal setting, and a professional growth plan.</p>
How are results of evaluations used to inform professional development and ongoing	Venture uses the results of teacher and leadership evaluations to guide professional

coaching?	development and coaching by analyzing the evaluation results and creating/adjusting/ implementing professional development and coaching plans to address key areas of growth.
Forms of teacher collaboration (such as PLCs) that use data to regularly review and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and curriculum and alignment with standards	Venture’s teacher collaboration system regularly uses data to review and evaluate instructional and curriculum effectiveness and alignment. It includes weekly reading and math content professional learning communities, weekly teacher leadership team problem-solving meetings and daily informal peer collaboration.
Teacher evaluation system that includes a rubric defining effective instruction	Venture’s teacher evaluation system and rubric is adapted from The New Teacher Project’s (TNP) Fast Start process, focusing on four essential areas including: 1. Delivering lessons clearly 2. Maintaining high academic expectations 3. Maintaining high behavioral expectations 4. Maximizing instructional time
Description of system for feedback on instruction from trained summative evaluators provided on regular basis and tied to student outcomes	Venture’s system for providing teachers regular instructional feedback from Venture school leader Kerry Muse, an experienced master teacher who services as Venture’s lead instructional coach, includes the following components: 1. Weekly walk-through, informal observations with brief written feedback provided to teachers 2. Quarterly formal evaluations with 1-on-1 follow-up meetings that tie to individual development plans and student outcomes for all teachers

<b>Strategies for improving instruction, curriculum, and student achievement:</b>	
What are the targeted strategies for improving instruction, curriculum, and student achievement?	Venture’s main targeted strategy for improving instruction, curriculum and student achievement is the high fidelity implementation of comprehensive formative assessment practices, including developing understanding of standards, unpacking standards into objectives, feedback, an instructional framework that releases responsibility for learning to the student, and aligned assessments that are used to drive decisions based on student outcome and adult intervention data.

<p>How are plans for professional development informed by student outcome data and implementation data (assessments of effort and quality)?</p>	<p>Venture’s professional development plans are informed by student outcome data and implementation data in the following ways:          -Analysis of summative and interim data by Venture’s leadership team and teacher teams          -Formation and ongoing adjustment of professional development plans based on these data. For example, Venture’s leadership team conducted a root cause analysis in Fall 2014 to identify the underlying reason for insufficient student progress on summative standards-based assessments. This analysis resulted in the determination that Venture’s team would benefit by a deeper understanding of standards in reading, and by the implementation of a training to improve staff understanding of reading standards.</p>
<p>Describe comprehensive PD plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Clearly outlines selection criteria and essential functions expected of staff</li> <li>b. Ensures professional growth opportunities are specific to content required to meet SMART goals and benchmarks</li> <li>c. Outlines opportunities for ongoing coaching to ensure effective implementation of instructional practices and curriculum aligned to standards</li> <li>d. Ensures staff provide instruction to meet (a)-(e) WBWF priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Selection criteria and essential functions expected of staff:              Venture’s staff selection, training and coaching is designed to achieve the goal that all Venture staff members are both high skill and high will. This includes the following:               Staff members have high academic expectations for all students               Staff members appreciate working collaboratively with colleagues to build systems of student support and high achievement               Staff members value relationships with students and use students’ backgrounds and experiences as a bridge to high academic success               Staff members who respect the culture of their students and collaborate to become responsive to students’ specific needs               Staff members have a high level of skill in classroom management and create a positive learning environment               Staff members reflect on the quality and effectiveness of their instructional strategies</li> </ul>

	<p>Staff members believe that learning for all is the only acceptable outcome</p> <p>Staff members embody Venture's three core values: vision, tenacity and adaptability</p> <p>b. Professional growth opportunities specific to required content: At Venture, staff professional growth opportunities are intentionally focused on supporting student academic progress in the core areas of English language arts, English language learning and math.</p> <p>c. Opportunities for ongoing coaching to support effective implementation of instructional practices and curriculum: Venture's school leader and instructional coach Kerry Muse provides Venture teachers weekly coaching to support implementation of Venture's instructional practices and curriculum across content areas. Venture's content leads also provide instructional coaching to teachers in their content areas.</p> <p>d. Supporting staff provision of instruction in World's Best Workforce content areas: See below: a) All students ready for kindergarten</p> <p>Not applicable b) Closing the achievement gap</p> <p>The primary aim of Venture's overall professional development planning is to support its staff in ensuring that all students attain career and college readiness before graduation from high school, including closing the achievement gap. Venture's 2014-15 focus on high-fidelity implementation of formative assessment practices to build career and college readiness and closing the</p>
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	<p>achievement gap in reading begins with building the capacity of Venture team members for this implementation.</p> <p>c) All students in third grade achieving grade level literacy</p> <p>Not applicable</p> <p>d) All students attaining career and college readiness before graduation from HS</p> <p>See above</p> <p>e) All students graduating from HS</p> <p>Not currently applicable (Venture currently serves grades 6-8)</p>
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Description of education effectiveness practices (that integrate high-quality instruction, rigorous curriculum, collaborative professional culture that develops teacher quality, performance, and effectiveness):	
Describe system that aligns curriculum, instruction, and assessment to standards:	Venture’s curriculum, instruction and assessment system was developed and selected through a process closely informed by Minnesota standards. School leadership and teacher content teams ensure that instruction reflects standards alignment through observation (leader and peer), review of lesson plans, teacher professional learning communities, analysis of weekly and interim student assessment results, and professional development that reflects current needs for standards support.
What processes are in place for review of instructional practices in the classroom?	<p>Venture Academy implements the following process to review the effectiveness of instructional practices in the classroom:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Frequent daily walk-throughs by Venture school leader/instructional coach, providing informal observations of each classroom over the course of a week. The observations are guided by an instructional observation rubric that includes monitoring the implementation of priority formative assessment practices.</li> <li>2. Regular walk-throughs by Venture’s</li> </ol>

	<p>content leads, providing informal observations in content areas.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Observational data and feedback, along with student outcome data, are shared and discussed with the teacher, weekly content-specific professional learning communities and the school leadership team, with the goal of evaluating and improving instructional effectiveness.</li> <li>4. Observational and student content data highlights are periodically reviewed and analyzed and discussed by the school leadership team and are used to determine priorities for professional development and coaching and overall school improvement.</li> </ol>
<p>How does the district ensure that instructional technology is utilized effectively to develop students' skills?</p>	<p>Venture Academy uses high-quality digital instructional programs on an up to daily basis in reading and math to support student growth towards mastery through self-paced practice. These programs include Khan Academy and I-Ready in math and Achieve3000 in reading. Teachers receiving initial training and ongoing support from school leadership to enable each student to effectively utilize each program, and the programs provide teachers and students daily data to monitor progress and make adjustments as needed.</p>
<p>What forms of educator collaboration are in place to ensure teachers and principals engage in professional reflective practice?</p>	<p>Venture's educator collaboration ensures that teachers and school leadership regularly engage in professional reflective practice, through the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Daily opportunities for informal peer collaboration through daily common planning time</li> <li>-Frequent 1-on-1 meetings between school leadership and teachers to support professional growth</li> <li>-Weekly content area professional learning communities to review instruction, curriculum and student outcome data</li> <li>-Weekly instructional leadership team meetings focused on school improvement priorities. The team includes teacher leaders and school leaders</li> <li>-Day-long professional development opportunities that include training, coaching and other activities related to school improvement priorities</li> <li>-Monthly book clubs to enable team members to deepen their understanding of proven and</li> </ul>

	<p>promising practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Extensive training, coaching and other activities in the weeks prior to the beginning of the school year.</li> </ul>
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**Surveys of constituencies about connection to and satisfaction with school**

<p>Constituents surveyed (students, parents, community members, school staff, etc)?</p>	<p>Students: Venture conducts an online student survey three times per year.</p> <p>Families: Venture conducts a survey twice annually.</p> <p>Staff: Venture conducts a staff survey three times per year.</p>
<p>Are assessments of satisfaction geared specifically to the intended audience and modified as needed (e.g., language translated, accessible format)?</p>	<p>Yes. Venture and Panorama have tailored these surveys for their audiences, including a Spanish language version for Spanish-speaking parents.</p>
<p>Procedure for constituents to review survey items for relevance and clarity prior to distribution of survey:</p>	<p>Venture’s parent leadership team has the opportunity to review the parent survey prior to its distribution.</p>
<p>Efforts made to gather input from representative stakeholders (including those difficult to contact):</p>	<p>Venture seeks the high parent participation in its survey by gathering survey data over multiple events and activities, including all-school parent meetings, parent conferences, beginning and end of day student drop-off/pick-ups and other opportunities.</p>
<p>Process of broadly disseminating results of satisfaction surveys:</p>	<p>Venture shares the results of its surveys with all of its stakeholders. Methods include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Staff: Staff meeting and email</li> <li>-Students: Advisory period</li> <li>-Board: Board meeting and email</li> <li>-Parents: Parent Association meetings and newsletter</li> <li>-Community: Website</li> </ul>
<p>Process for using survey results to inform celebration of strengths, challenges, and resulting actions including educational improvements:</p>	<p>After survey data has been collected, school leadership and Venture’s governing board of directors review and analyze survey data to identify strengths and concerns, and identify and monitor the implementation of priorities for action.</p>

**Annual budget for sustaining implementation of the district plan:**

<p>The budget for sustaining implementation of Venture’s school improvement plan is fully embedded into the entire school budget. The daily work of school leadership, teacher leadership, teachers and other team members is focused on the improvement practices described above.</p>
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