

2024-2025

ANNUAL REPORT



**CHAIN
EXPLORATION
CENTER**



N3160 Silver Lake Drive Waupaca



715.258.4151



www.chainexplorationcenter.org



www.Facebook.com/CECwaupaca

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Our Story



Chain Exploration Center is a 4K-8th grade project-based learning school which sits on 25 acres with hiking trails, Chain Community Garden, and Silver Lake access. Chain Exploration Center's mission is to provide a place where children explore their passions and gain a strong educational foundation through project-based learning in a collaborative community.

Our first through fourth grade classrooms are grade banded and students participate in multi-age learning opportunities during science and social studies. Our fifth-eighth grade students spend the majority of their day in learning activities designed to meet the needs of each student. Our older students mentor their younger peers during recess and as book buddies and project pals. All CEC advisors use project-based learning methodology in their planning and use feedback during the reflection phase to adjust and revise their project cycles. Passion and pop up projects happen throughout the year and are student driven. While learning happens daily, a culmination of project work is showcased three times each year during Project Nights.

Students in third-fifth grade receive Suzuki instruction twice weekly from Aber Suzuki Center instructors. Suzuki participation in sixth-eighth grade is optional. Students can choose between the violin, viola, bass, and cello. Demonstration of talent takes place during winter and spring concerts. Our students in grades 5-8 participate in electives personalized by the talents and interests of both staff and students. Elective class offerings during this school year included Creative Writing, Newscasting, Exploring Music, Performing Arts Kids (PAK), Art Exploration, The Newsroom, Guitar, and Shark Tank.

Finally, dedication to service and relationships are two ways in which our Governance Council members, staff, students, and their families are building a community of passionate educators and learners. Our Governance Council members are advocates who ensure the mission of our school is upheld by the actions of each person associated with CEC. CEC family members, staff, and Council members can be found weeding, planting, or harvesting in Chain Community Garden. They donate time and talent assisting at school and community events. Our older students serve as leaders in a various capacities including serving on the Rotary Youth Connections Committee and as Peer Leaders for Sources of Strength campaigns. All of this and so much more encompasses who we are and what we strive to achieve each day at Chain Exploration Center.

The work of many passionate and dedicated individuals guides our continuous drive for excellence and we are grateful for their intention to provide choice in the School District of Waupaca. We are so very proud to have completed our 7th year as a choice school in the School District of Waupaca. Thank you to the School District of Waupaca Board of Education for the continued opportunity to go boldly and explore our passions!

Governance Council

This dedicated team of volunteers and ambassadors contribute their expertise, passion, and collaboration to drive our success. Their goal is to uphold the mission of Chain Exploration Center. They look to the mission of the school to guide decisions, consider impact, and seek out mutually beneficial community partnerships, to create a sustainable future for the school.

Sandra Robinson, President

Background: Former School Board Member, Finance, & Education
Member since 2021

Autumn Beese, Treasurer

Background: Small Business Owner
Member since 2020

Nick Burington

Background: Finance
Member since 2024

Wayne Netzler

Background: Communications
Member since 2024

Rebecca Thieme

Background: Elementary Education & Business
Member since 2024



Not Pictured: Nick Burington

Thank You

to outgoing founding member, **Becky Lange** for sharing her time, talent, and wisdom with us for 8 years

to outgoing member, **Ben Warren** for sharing his time, talent, and wisdom with us for 3 years.

Chain Exploration Center

Governance Council Report

A Charter Contract Exploration of Growth and Accomplishments in 2024-2025

CEC Mission

The mission of the Chain Exploration Center is to provide a place where children can explore their passions and gain a strong educational foundation through project-based learning in a collaborative community.

Purpose of the Governance Council

As a team of volunteers and ambassadors, we look to the mission of the school to guide our decisions, consider impact, and seek out mutually beneficial community partnerships, to create a sustainable future for the school.

Executive Summary

The Chain Exploration Center (CEC) Governance Council respectfully submits this 2024-2025 report to the School District of Waupaca Board of Education. The document provides evidence that the CEC has fulfilled commitments outlined in its charter contract ("monitoring edition") and complements information contained in the 2024-2025 Annual Report. Evidence is presented in charter-contract order and is drawn from monitoring schedules, monthly Advisor and Administrator reports, and committee documentation.

Key Accomplishments

- Alignment of Governance Council goals with charter commitments and budget priorities.
- Ongoing refinement of project-based learning (PBL) and multi-age instructional practices.
- Strengthened community engagement through events and partnerships.
- Collaborative hiring of a new CEC Administrator for 2025-2026.

Opportunities include refining report timelines, resuming formal evaluation cycles, and scheduling the annual joint contract review prior to the April Board session.

Chain Exploration Center

Governance Council Report

Monitoring Schedules & Reports

The CEC Governance Council (CECGC), in collaboration with the CEC Administrator, developed monitoring schedules for monthly Advisor and Administrator reports.

2024-2025 CEC Governance Council Goals

Soon after each school year ends, the Governance Council adopts board and committee goals aligned with the mission and charter contract. These goals guide initiative development and budget planning. The Council reviews goals throughout the year to note accomplishments, revisions, and emerging ideas for the future.

Evidence of Charter Contract Fulfillment

Section 3.3 – Description of Educational Programs

Advisors: April 2025 Report

Administrator: 2024-2025 Annual Report Document

Section 3.4 – Methods Used to Enable Pupils to Attain Educational Goals (Wis. Stat. § 118.01)

<u>Subsection</u>	<u>Focus Area</u>	<u>Evidence Source</u>
3.4-A	Project-Based Learning (PBL)	Advisors: Feb 2025; Administrator: Feb 2025
3.4-B	Multi-Age	Advisors: Jan 2025 & May 2025
3.4-C	Social Development	Advisors: Nov 2024 & Jan 2025; Administrator: Jan & Apr 2025
3.4-D	21st Century Skills	Advisors: Nov 2024
3.4-E	Community Engagement	Advisors: Mar & Jun 2025
3.4-F	Digital Portfolio	Advisors: May 2025

Chain Exploration Center

Governance Council Report

Section 3.5 – Methods for Measuring Pupil Progress

<u>Subsection</u>	<u>Focus Area</u>	<u>Evidence Source</u>
3.5-C	Annual Report & School Report Card	Administrator: Aug 2024 & Dec 2024
3.5-C-1	Grade Level Preparedness	Administrator: Sep 2024
3.5-C-2	Standardized Assessment Growth	Administrator: Nov 2024 & Jun 2025
3.5-C-3	Methodology	Administrator: Oct 2024
3.5-C-4	Sustainability	Advisors: Mar 2025; Administrator: Sep 2024

Section 3.6 – Governance Structure & Parental Involvement

- [2024-2025 CEC Handbook](#) – Ensures parental involvement.
- 2024-2025 [Culture & Values Survey](#): captures perceptions of the CEC's culture and values
- Community Events: Family & Friends Cookout and monthly Coffee Talks (see Cultivating Connections Committee report).
- Governance Council: Five members, all residing within the School District of Waupaca. Meetings: Twelve regular monthly meetings, one annual meeting, and additional special sessions.
- See monitoring schedules linked above.

Section 3.7 – Qualifications for Charter School Employees

The hiring of the new CEC Administrator followed the collaborative process outlined in the charter contract. The hiring committee included Governance Council members, District Administration, and CEC staff, students, and caregivers. This process culminated in the successful hiring of a new CEC Administrator prior to the start of the 2025-2026 school year.

Chain Exploration Center

Governance Council Report

Section 3.9 – Racial and Ethnic Balance

Demographic information is included in the Annual Report.

Enrollment Preference Groups

- Staff: One child of a CEC staff member received enrollment preference in 2024-2025. Eight total students of staff members were enrolled (seven returning or sibling students).
- Governance Council: No children of Governance Council members received preferential placement. Ten total students of GC members attended CEC; all were enrolled before their parent joined the Council.
- Returning students retain enrollment, and siblings of enrolled students continue to receive standard sibling preference.

Opportunities for Growth

Contract Section	Topic	Notes for Growth
3.5-C	Annual Report Timeline	2024-2025 Annual Report presented in October 2025 (beyond August timeline).
3.7-E	Evaluation Summaries	No advisor evaluation summaries requested or received; administrator evaluation deferred due to leadership transition.
Article Ten (10.1-A)	Annual Contract Review	Formal April review not held; regular meetings ensured transparency and strong collaboration.

Chain Exploration Center

Governance Council Report

Respected Statewide

At the invitation of the Wisconsin State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the CEC Council President served on the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) State Superintendent's Advisory Council for Charter Schools (SSACCS). The DPI uses the SSACCS to advise their charter school programs and initiatives that seek to promote student achievement and develop high-quality educational options for families and students.

Representatives of our District and the CEC presented at a workshop offered during the 2025 Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) Convention. The session, A Charter School Conundrum: How do you ensure a quality charter contract is in place?, showcased the collaborative approach that Waupaca used to develop our 2024-2028 charter contract. The session was organized and facilitated by the Wisconsin Resources Center for Charter Schools (WRCCS). Speakers: Betty Manion, Board Member – School District of Waupaca (SDW), Sandy Robinson – CEC Governance Council President, SDW Administration (Craig Gerlach & Mark Flaten), and WRCCS Assistant Director Tim Scottberg and Director Sarah Hackett.

Acknowledgment

The CEC Governance Council extends sincere appreciation to the School District of Waupaca Board of Education and District Administration for their continued partnership and support throughout 2024-2025. Together, we are sustaining and strengthening a learning community where students explore their passions and grow through collaboration, creativity, and care.

Together We Thrive: 2024-2025 Community Impact Report

The mission of the Chain Exploration Center is to provide a place where children explore their passions and gain a strong educational foundation through project-based learning in a collaborative community.

Thank you to our generous grantors, sponsors, donors, and community partners who made possible—and participated in—the CEC's unique events, programs, and opportunities in 2024–2025. Heartfelt thanks to the students, families and caregivers, staff, and Governance Council of the CEC; to everyone who volunteers in our classrooms, community garden, and Governance Council committees; and to the School District of Waupaca's Board of Education, District Administration and Departments, and colleagues at each of our district schools. You are the collaborative community at the heart of the CEC's mission statement!

Grantors (with program support noted)

Community Vision Fund within the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region [Sources of Strength] • Ride for Ty [Sources of Strength] • Rotary Club of Waupaca [Youth Connections Grant] • ThedaCare [Sources of Strength] • Waupaca Area Community Foundation Fund within the Waupaca Area Community Foundation, an affiliate of the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region [Sources of Strength] • Waupaca Nomads [CEC Robotics Club & Sources of Strength]

Community Partners

Adventure Outfitters, LLC • CESA 6 • Chain Exploration Center PTG • Culver's of Waupaca • Dale Feldt • Christa Hemmila • Scott Janssen – Janssen Accounting & Tax Service, Inc. • Todd Mallasch – Carpe Diem Video Productions • Mary Kaye Ristow • Sources of Strength • Sundown Irrigation • ThedaCare • Turners Fresh Market • Waupaca Area Public Library • Waupaca Area Triathlon • Chris Much and students in the Waupaca High School Technology Education Program • Waupaca High School PAC • Waupaca High School Strings Club • Waupaca Towing & Service, Inc. • Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction • Wisconsin Food Hub Cooperative • Wisconsin Resource Center for Charter Schools

Together We Thrive: 2024-2025 Community Impact Report

Donors

INNOVATORS: \$5,000–\$9,999

Anonymous Community Member – Supporting youth mental health and Sources of Strength

TRAILBLAZERS: \$1,000–\$4,999

Steve Shambeau Memorial [CEC all-school volunteer day at the Central Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery] • The Chuck & Linda Cloninger Charitable Fund [book vending machine support] • Walk of Strength [Sources of Strength] • Waupaca Women Who Care [Chain Community Garden]

PATHFINDERS: \$200–\$999

Anonymous cash donations • Culver's of Waupaca Culver's Cares Fundraiser • Steve & Carol Klismet Family • Waupaca Area Triathlon [Student Government] • Wisconsin Food Hub Cooperative

DISCOVERERS: \$5–\$199

Cash donations made at the CEC Friends & Family Cookout / Halloween on Main / Spring Fling [Student Government] • Kyle & Trisha Everson Giving Fund

Together We Thrive: 2024-2025 Community Impact Report

TRAILBLAZERS SPOTLIGHT: Collaborative Giving in Action

This year's Trailblazer donors exemplify the extraordinary impact of well-planned collaboration:

Waupaca Women Who Care – 55 members collectively contributed \$4,700 to support the CEC's Chain Community Garden. Their generosity—and help from local partners—made the Garden's new shade structure possible.

Walk of Strength – Hosted by Sources of Strength Peer Leaders and Adult Advisors, this all-school walk-a-thon raised over \$3,000 for future youth mental health campaigns.

Steve Shambeau Memorial Fund – Family and friends contributed \$1,055 to honor Steve's military and school board service. Their gifts support the annual CEC volunteer trips to the Central Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery, where students, staff, and volunteers help retrieve flags after Memorial Day.

Book Vending Machine – A community donation, combined with support from the CEC's PTG, funded a new book vending machine—delivered just in time for use in 2025-26!

These stories highlight the extraordinary impact of collaboration—and the generosity that fuels it.



School Dynamics

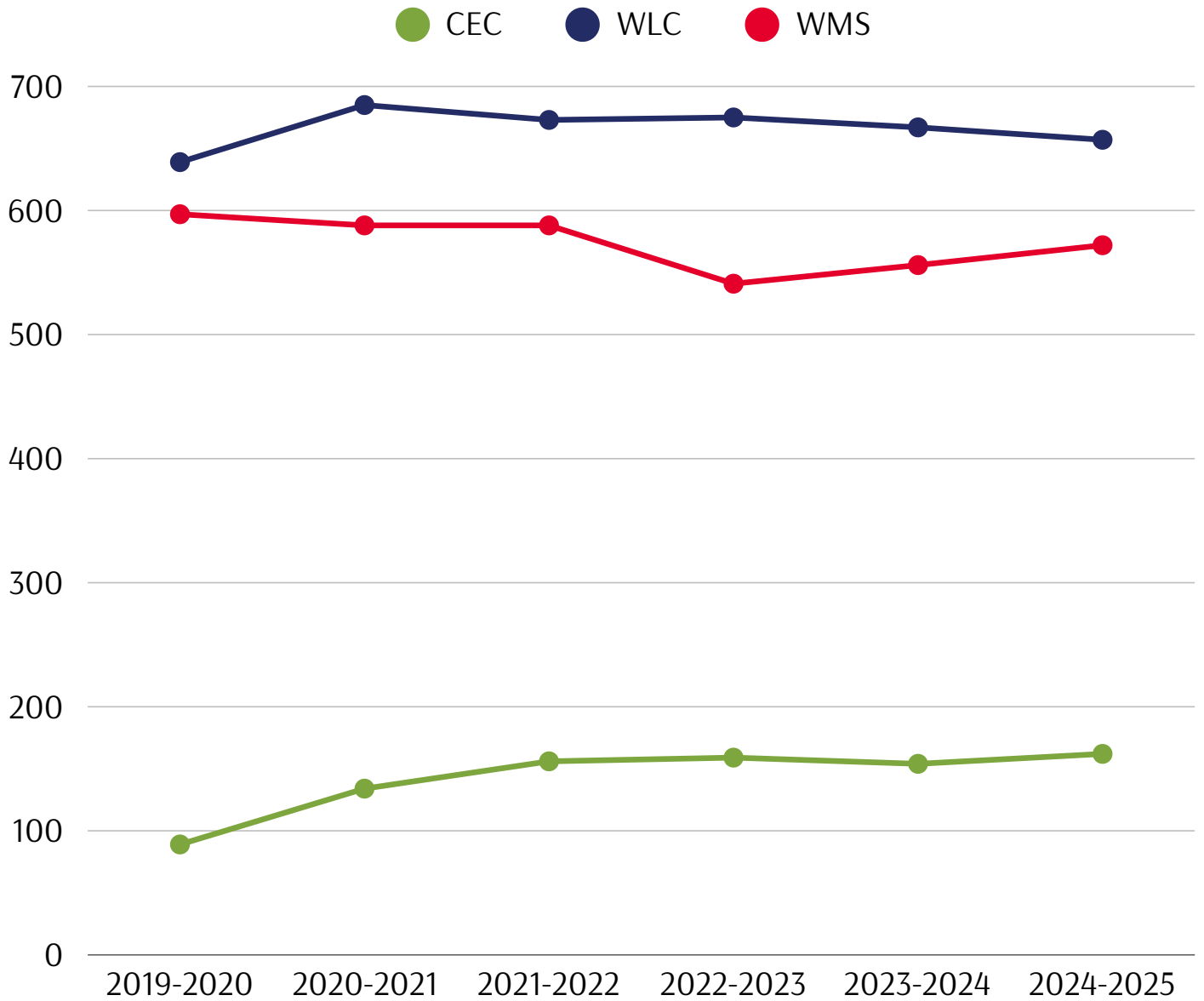


We started the year as a CEC family with 109 households and 160 students 4K-8th grade. During the school year, 3 families with 4 students left CEC to either homeschool their child or return to WMS. 1 family with 2 students moved into the district and joined CEC but moved out of the district a couple of months later. Of the 156 students enrolled in CEC at the end of the school year, 149 (95%) will be returning to CEC in fall 2025. For those families not returning, 2 have moved out of the district, 1 is choosing to homeschool, and 5 students are transferring to WLC or WMS. We are excited to welcome 18 students into our 4K class, 6 of whom have a sibling currently attending CEC.

Participation in Suzuki is an expectation in grades 3-5 with choice starting in grade 6. We had 70 students in grades 3-8 participating in Suzuki. Of those 70, 66% are in grades 3-5 and 34% in grades 6-8. 73% of our students in grades 6-8 continued Suzuki instruction from the year prior.

Students in grades 5-8 have the opportunity to participate in electives taught by our 5-8 advisors and art and music specialists. Electives include Choir, Creative Writing, Culinary Curiosity, For the Love of Art I + II, Guitar/Songwriting, Newscasting, Performing Arts Kids, Outdoor Exploration, and Shark Tank.

Enrollment



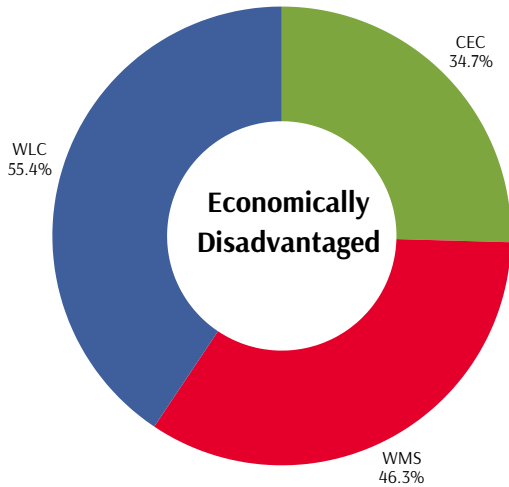
CEC's 4K-8th grade maximum enrollment is 190 students.
 In 2024-2025 we were at 85% capacity.

Student Demographics

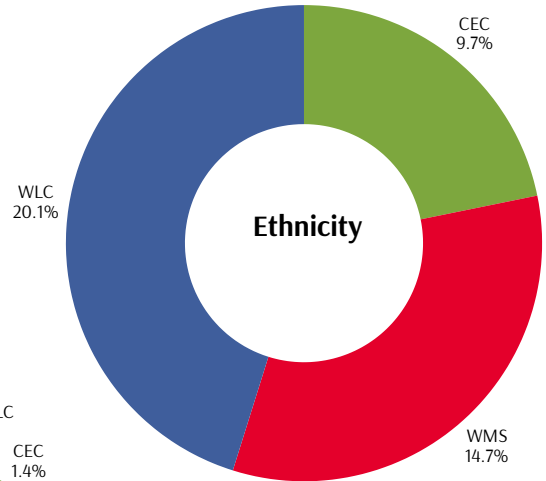
Data obtained from WISEdash 06.30.25. Data does not include 4K student data for CEC and WLC.



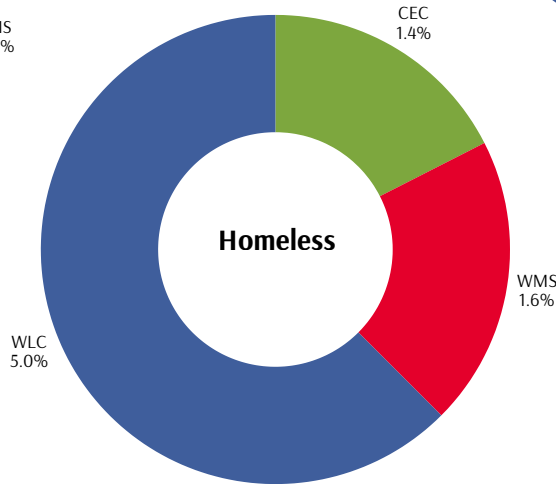
● CEC ● WMS ● WLC



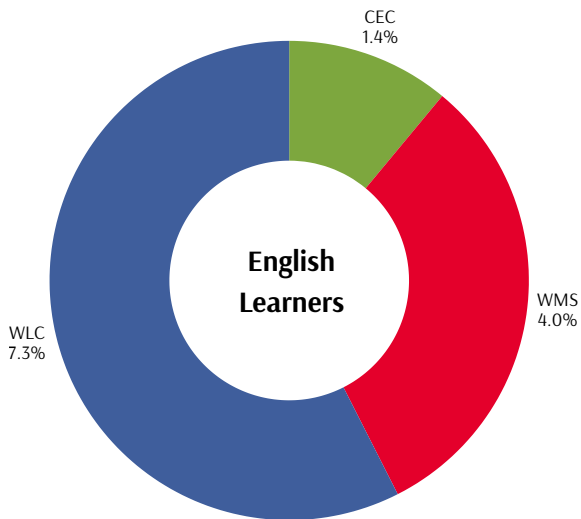
● CEC ● WMS ● WLC



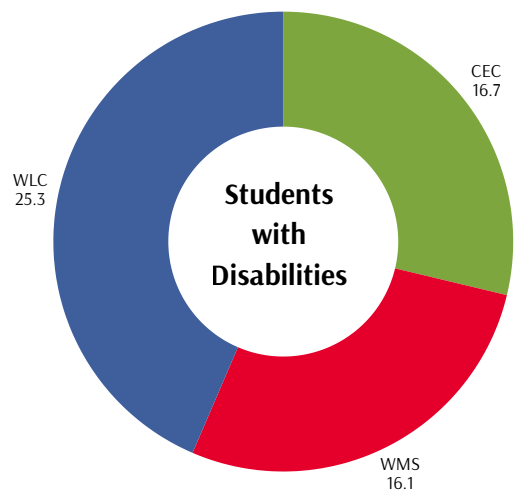
● CEC ● WMS ● WLC



● CEC ● WMS ● WLC



● CEC ● WMS ● WLC



2024-2025 Staff

ADVISORS

Discoverers: 4K and Kindergarten
Amber Koski, Katelyn Pauling

Pathfinders: First Grade and Second Grade
Kristin Doscher, Lori Wolff

Trailblazers: Third Grade and Fourth Grade
Catherine Seifert, Holly Olsen

Innovators: Fifth Grade and Sixth Grade
Brianna Hass, Mackenzie Loken

Voyageurs: Seventh Grade and Eighth Grade
Ty Natzke

SPECIALISTS

Art: Mackenzie Burns

Counselor: Susan Dolski

Fitness: Cory Scott

Instructional Coaches: Tricia Nevala, Wendy VandenBush

Interventionist: Karen Koehler

Library/Media Specialist: Sarah Hanneman

Music: Emma Ives

Psychologist: Jennifer Gross

Social Worker: Anne Collins-Reed

Special Education: Devon Feldt

Speech/Language Therapist: Michelle Guay

SUPPORT STAFF

Administrative Assistant: Brenda Plum

Custodians: Kaycee Cook, Sarah Woolsey

Educational Assistants: Lauren Halstead, Barb Rusch, Lauren Schultz, Kerry Schultz

Food Service: Nichole Garcia, Talia Saarinen-Barr

Health Aide: Keri Tyler

Makerspace Coordinator: Norbert Witkowski

Media Center Assistant: Becca Bauer

A Thank You to Carrie

With heartfelt appreciation, we thank Carrie Naparalla for the five years she dedicated to leading the Chain Exploration Center. Her steadfast commitment to the CEC's mission—and her gift for bringing out the best in others—have left a lasting impact on our students, staff, and community.

For all that you are
For all that you do

Thank You



Professional Development



The following classes, webinars, podcasts, and conferences are a small portion of the professional development CEC staff participated in during the 2024-2025 school year: CESA 6 Cultural Responsiveness, Bias, and Microaggression Training during early release Wednesday's, Meeting the Needs of all Students in a Multiage Math Classroom With All Learners, Moving Beyond Memorization by Developing Fact Fluency, American Indian Studies: Implementing Act 31, PBL Works Power Up Series/Real Talk - Standards & PBL, Tech Camp, Keys to Literacy, Math Hands-On Workshop (Mix and Math), Building Thinking Classrooms Workshop, Math Interventions that Get Results (Grades 3-5) & Math Interventions that Get Results (Grades 6-8), Sources of Strength Coaches Training, Reflective Consultation Monthly Cohort, Fires in Grading Episodes, AWSA Legal & Communication Webinar, Early Literacy Assessment Overview for Administrators, Leadership Network: the Power of 1:1 Meetings, Wisconsin's 4K Leadership Forum, Putting the Pieces Together: Innovations in Trauma, Mental Wellness, and Education, Suicide Prevention Peer to Peer Quarterly Connection, and Raising Wisconsin's Children 2025 Conference.

Just as we work to differentiate for the needs of each student, professional development looks differently for each staff member. Our goal is continuous self improvement while sharing newly acquired knowledge with our teams. We value relationships, growth, instructional risk-taking, inclusion, and resilience. These values encourage collaboration and a strong sense of teacher efficacy, which we believe are essential for long term success.



Academic Data: ELA

ELA- aimswebPLUS Fall Baseline to Spring Results				
	# of Students	75th - 99th %ile	26th - 74th %ile	0-25th %ile
Grade K	18	11% to 6%	61% to 61%	28% to 33%
Grade 1	18	28% to 33%	22% to 50%	50% to 17%
Grade 2	17/18	35% to 39%	35% to 44%	29% to 17%
Grade 3	18	6% to 17%	67% to 72%	28% to 11%

With the introduction of ACT 20 there was a new ELA assessment administered for students in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade. The aimswebPlus is now delivering new data that will allow us to monitor student progress and group students performance by quartile within their grade rather than grade level. This assessment will extend to include 4th grade students next year. Great growth was shown as many students moved out of the bottom quartile into the 26th-75th percentile range while some students even moved into the top quartile.

ELA- iReady Fall Baseline to Spring Results				
	# of Students	At or Above Grade Level	One Grade Level Below	Two + Grades Below
Grade 4	19	47% to 53%	32% to 42%	23% to 5%
Grade 5	18	22% to 72%	39% to 11%	39% to 17%
Grade 6	13/14	23% to 62%	46% to 15%	31% to 23%
Grade 7	4	75% to 100%	0% to 0%	25% to 0%
Grade 8	11	64% to 91%	9% to 9%	27% to 0%

Academic Data: Math

Math- iReady Fall Baseline to Spring Results				
	# of Students	At or Above Grade Level	One Grade Level Below	Two + Grades Below
Kindergarten	18	23% to 83%	78% to 17%	--
Grade 1	18	22% to 78%	78% to 22%	--
Grade 2	17/18	35% to 77%	65% to 24%	0% to 0%
Grade 3	18	28% to 72%	44% to 28%	28% to 0%
Grade 4	19	26% to 58%	47% to 37%	26% to 5%
Grade 5	18	28% to 55%	33% to 33%	39% to 12%
Grade 6	13/14	46% to 85%	46% to 15%	8% to 0%
Grade 7	4	0% to 50%	75% to 50%	25% to 0%
Grade 8	11	45% to 73%	45% to 18%	9% to 9%

In the 24-25 school year students in grades 4-8 continued with the iReady assessment in ELA and demonstrated significant growth with many students moving out of the two or more grade levels behind category and the majority of students reaching the at or above grade level designation.

Similar strong results were shown in math where there was a substantial decrease in the number of students two or more grade levels below and the majority of students reaching at or above grade level designation. In both math and ELA many grades more than doubled the amount of students at or above grade level and others saw more than 25% increases in final assessment outcomes.

CEC Inc Financial Reports

CEC INC. Balance Sheet cash basis

As of June 30, 2025

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings

Bank Accounts

Farmers State Bank checking 52,797.93

Total Bank Accounts 52,797.93

Total Checking/Savings 52,797.93

Other Current Assets

Petty Cash

PAK PETTY CASH 1.50

MENARDS Gift Cards 5.36

MENARDS Merch Credit Check 1.56

Total Petty Cash 8.42

Total Other Current Assets 8.42

Total Current Assets 52,806.35

TOTAL ASSETS 52,806.35

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Equity

Unrestricted Net Assets 32,427.80

Net Income 20,378.55

Total Equity 52,806.35

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY 52,806.35

CEC In. Financial Report

CEC INC. FUNDRAISING

Organization	Support For	Amount
Grant Funds Received in 2024-2025		
Ride for Ty	Youth Mental Health & Suicide Prevention	\$1,000.00
Mental Health America of Wisconsin*	Youth Mental Health & Suicide Prevention	\$5,000.00
Waupaca Area Community Foundation Fund within the Waupaca Area Community Foundation, an affiliate of the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region**	Sources of Strength Youth Mental Health and Peer-to-Peer Suicide Prevention Program	\$5,000.00
Waupaca Nomads	Sources of Strength programming & CEC Robotics Club	\$2,500.00
Rotary Club of Waupaca	Youth Connections Grant to provide students with an experience in making community donations	\$800.00
Subtotal Grants Received in 2024-2025		\$14,300.00

* Grant expenses were incurred in 2023-2024 and reimbursed in 2024-2025.

** Grant was awarded in 2024-2025 and will be spent in 2025-2026.

Donations, Fundraisers, & Program Income Received in 2024-2025		
Cash Donations	CEC Inc Initiatives & Operations / Book Vending Machine / Billboard	\$2,647.00
Donations from Community Members	Mental Health / Sources of Strength	\$6,200.00
In-Kind Donated Goods	Wisconsin Food Hub Cooperative - food for pop-up luncheons	\$597.40
Subtotal Donations Received in 2024-2025		\$9,444.40

Fundraisers		
Waupaca Women Who Care	Chain Community Garden [shade structure, outdoor tables]	\$4,700.00
Steve Shambeau Memorial	CEC removal of flags at King Veterans Cemetery after Memorial Day	\$1,055.00
Culver's Cares	CEC Inc. Initiatives & Operations	\$628.87
RaiseRight (formerly SCRIP)	CEC Inc Initiatives & Operations	\$199.62
CEC Walk of Strength	Sources of Strength campaigns & projects	\$2,892.00
Subtotal Fundraiser Revenue in 2024-2025		\$9,475.49

Student Programs		
CEC Student Programs	Current- and future-year operations & initiatives of CEC PAK (Performing Arts Kids), school store, student government, Suzuki	\$5,090.66
Subtotal Student Program Funds Raised in 2024-2025		\$5,090.66

TOTAL 2024-2025 FUNDRAISING		\$38,310.55
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All transactions were recorded in the 2024-2025 fiscal year

CEC Inc Financial Report

CEC INC. Income & Expense July 2024 through June 2025

	TEMP RESTRICT	UNRESTRICTED	TOTAL
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
Direct Public Support	31,727.00	1,348.27	33,075.27
Other Types of Income	0.00	0.00	0.00
Program Income	5,035.66	199.62	5,235.28
Total Income	36,762.66	1,547.89	38,310.55
Expense			
Business Expenses	8.03	85.52	93.55
Contract Services	2,691.00	0.00	2,691.00
Facilities and Equipment	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
Operations	6,485.70	2,778.46	9,264.16
Other Types of Expenses	0.00	597.40	597.40
Programs	4,235.89	0.00	4,235.89
Travel and Meetings	50.00	0.00	50.00
UNASSIGNED EXPENSE	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Expense	14,470.62	3,461.38	17,932.00
Net Ordinary Income	22,292.04	(1,913.49)	20,378.55
Net Income	22,292.04	(1,913.49)	20,378.55
		Prior Year Carryover	37,427.80
		Mental Health of America - WI Grant spent in 23-24 & reimbursed in 24-25	(5,000.00)
		Balance Sheet 6/30/2025 CEC Inc. total current assets	52,806.35

Temporarily Restricted: Funds given or raised, and used, for a specific purpose.

Unrestricted: Funds given or raised with no restrictions as to use.

INCOME

- Direct Public Support: grants / donations / in-kind donations (goods)
- Program Income: fundraising / RaiseRight-SCRIP / student program-generated operating income.

EXPENSE

- Business Expenses: WI DOG raffle license fees / WI Annual Report filing fees / sales tax.
- Contract Services: Sources of Strength [grant-supported promotional videography & 2 SoS Adult Advisor Leaders]
- Facilities & Equipment: support for purchase of book vending machine (with CEC PTG)
- Operations: celebrations (e.g., Family Cookout) / Sources of Strength elementary curriculum / marketing / supplies (including construction materials for Chain Community Garden shade structure)
- Other Types of Expenses: in-kind expenses (goods)
- Programs: expenses related to student programs [CEC Clubs & Activities / PAK (Performing Arts Kids) / school store / student government / Sources of Strength & Mental Health / Memorial Day flag pick-up at King Veterans Home Cemetery / Suzuki Instruments]
- Conference, Convention, Meeting: Elementary grade Sources of Strength training

CEC Inc.'s 6/30/2025 total current assets equal \$52,806.35. \$41,273.93 is temporarily restricted, and \$11,532.42 is unrestricted.

Cultivating Connections Committee Summary

Cultivating Connections Committee Summary

The Cultivating Connections Committee continues to foster meaningful relationships across the CEC, the School District of Waupaca, and the broader community. Through intentional programs and welcoming events, the committee creates opportunities that strengthen connections among students, families, staff, district leaders, and community partners.

Highlights from 2024-2025:

- **Community Events:** Hosted signature annual gatherings including the Family & Friends Cookout, Corn Roast, student and family Movie Night, Holiday Luncheon, and Game Night – all designed to bring people together in celebration and connection.
- **Coffee Talks (NEW):** Launched monthly morning Coffee Talks, where Governance Council members welcomed families and staff with coffee, donuts, and conversation. Guiding questions provided valuable insight while the relaxed format encouraged authentic dialogue. Impact: Stronger relationships, new ideas for Council decisions, and a tradition people look forward to.
- **Student Engagement:** Supported Student Project Nights by providing healthy snacks, which created a warm and appreciative atmosphere while sparking conversations with students, families, and community guests.
- **Mental Health Initiatives:** Partnered with SDW Student Services to explore and implement Sources of Strength (SOS), a nationally recognized program focused on building resilience and mental well-being. A planning group was formed, and successful grant applications now provide multi-year support for this initiative. Impact: Expanded opportunities for mental health support for students and staff while deepening partnerships with local organizations.
- **Future-Focused Marketing:** Researched successful charter school marketing strategies, paving the way for a professional videography project in 2024–2025. These tools will showcase the unique culture of the CEC and highlight SOS programming to families and the community.

Looking Ahead:

The committee remains committed to cultivating a culture of connection, wellness, and growth. With a strong foundation of events, new mental health programming, and future marketing initiatives, we are excited to continue building bridges between the CEC and the community it serves.

Fundraising and Finance Committee

Mission: The CEC Fundraising and Finance Committee bridges the gap between the School District of Waupaca's financial support and what the CEC needs to fulfill its mission of providing a place where children explore their passions within a collaborative community.

Chair: Ben Warren (through February 2025). Committee Members: Autumn Beese, Wayne Netzler, Sandy Robinson

Fundraising

The Governance Council chose not to host a major fundraiser in 2024–2025. The committee explored the possibility of holding an outdoor fundraising event toward the end of the school year or in the summer, but tabled the discussion until 2025–2026 due to time constraints.

Activity in RaiseRight/SCRIP was minimal this year. However, the CEC Governance Council partnered with Culver's of Waupaca to host a successful Culver's Cares Fundraiser in May.

A major fundraising focus was the development of grant proposals to:

- Support Sources of Strength (SoS) programming – three successful proposals
- developed by the CEC SoS Planning Group.
- Improve the Chain Community Garden – one successful proposal developed by the Garden Committee.
- Purchase playground equipment – proposal not funded.

Additionally, the Waupaca Nomads contributed funds to support the CEC Robotics Club.

IMPACT: Funds raised in prior years continued to sustain CEC Inc. operations and initiatives, including the Cultivating Connections Committee and Chain Community Garden. Newly awarded grants and community donations ensured that SoS programming for both 2024–2025 and 2025–2026 would be fully funded. The Chain Community Garden received \$4,700 from Waupaca Women Who Care, primarily used to construct a much-needed shade structure. Clear communication continued regarding how CEC Inc. funds are used.

Fundraising and Financing Committee

Finance

The committee renewed Wisconsin Raffle A and B licenses, filed the annual Form 990, and issued 1099s as required by law. It also created organizational and committee budgets for the fiscal year and provided financial reports at monthly Governance Council meetings and in the Annual Report to the School District of Waupaca Board of Education.

IMPACT: By following best practices and legal requirements, CEC Inc. maintained its 501(c)(3) designation and safeguarded both the CEC and the district.

The committee also provided sponsorship and bookkeeping support for self-supporting school programs, including Student Government, School Store, PAK (Performing Arts Kids), Clubs & Activities (e.g., Robotics Club), Student Art, and Sources of Strength student-led campaigns.

IMPACT: Students and staff had timely, accurate financial information to manage their programs successfully.

Facilities and Grounds

The committee oversaw several upgrades to the Chain Community Garden, including:

- Purchasing and installing new deer fencing
- Selling the existing chicken coop to create additional garden space
- Purchasing materials for the new shade structure funded by Waupaca Women Who Care

IMPACT: Garden crops are now better protected from wildlife. The removal of the chicken coop created space for new plantings and the shade structure, which now provides shelter for gardeners and an outdoor learning area.

The committee also led efforts to gather proposals and budgets for CEC grounds improvements, focusing on playground upgrades, in consultation with the District Buildings and Grounds Supervisor.

IMPACT: The CEC continues to benefit from the support and collaboration of district maintenance and building & grounds personnel, whose work keeps facilities safe and welcoming.

Evolving Excellence

Committee Summary



Mission: The mission of the Evolving Excellence Committee is to uphold the mission of the Chain Exploration Center and the Governance Council through the continuous exploration, recommendation, and implementation of governance best practices and policy-making; while cultivating positive relationships with our authorizer, our district, and the community at large.

Chair: Sandy Robinson

Committee Members: Nick Burington / Ben Warren / Wayne Netzler

2024-2025 Accomplishments:

Evolving Excellence developed and presented for Governance Council review and approval:

- (1) Updated monitoring schedules for the CEC Administrator and CEC Advisors based on the CEC-SDW Charter Contract.
- (2) Additional goals related to professional development and sustainability of the GC.
- (3) Proposal to amend the Charter Contract Section 3.3-A-3: Project-based Art to include the word music in any instance where the Contract states “art”.

Community Garden: Summer 2024

Mission: Our mission is to create and manage a place and space to provide fresh produce and agricultural opportunities to students and the community of Waupaca.

Chair: Mary Kaye Ristow / **Committee Members:** Ryan Anderson, Sandy Robinson, Catherine Seifert, Kelli Turner, Lori Wolff

2024-2025 Accomplishments:

- **Planning:** 10 donation plots, 6 CEC plots, 15 community plots, 2 strawberry plots, 4-6 raspberry plants, Chain Community Garden Committee meetings
- **Planting:** Seeds (tomato, pepper, broccoli, kale, flower) started by volunteers. / 4K planted sunflower seeds on the south side of the garden in late May. / Kindergarten students planted flowers using seeds, plants and bulbs. / First and Second graders planted 3 varieties of green beans, carrots, kale, along with herbs: basil, sage and rosemary. / Third and fourth graders investigated a cut flowers entrepreneur project. / Summer school students(Wolff and Seifert classes) planted seeds and plants: tomato, cucumber, squash, green bean, and strawberry. / Strawberry plants added to the two plots that were started. / Bee Lawn seeds broadcasted in early June in eastern area that is not gardened. / Raspberry plants replanted on west side of the chicken coop.
- **Maintenance:**
 - New Fencing: purchased by CECGC, with anchored wooden kickboards installed by School District of Waupaca (SDW) maintenance department. / WATER: Lines blown out in early spring by SDW maintenance department and water turned on. Irrigation system would not turn on. Several attempts to have outside consultant come out and look at it failed. Plots were watered by hand or using sprinklers. Fall request for School District of Waupaca to winterize irrigation.
 - Weeding: June 2024 Summer School students, CEC students and Advisors, Volunteers from Camp Young Judaea and Volunteers(Seniors and plot owners) who met on Tuesday mornings.
 - Tilling: Each plot owner tilled their plot using garden electric rototillers.
 - Mowing/Weed Whacking: Mowed between plot rows and around chicken coop. Work done by volunteers, using new electric lawn mower.
 - Compost Bins: moved to the north side of the chicken coop.
 - Tools/Shed: New combination lock and keyed locks purchased by school district. No problem with vandalism this year!

Community Garden: Summer 2024

- **Harvesting:** Began July 8 -October 2, 2024. / Food taken to the Waupaca Senior Center twice a week. Once a week delivery to: , Foundations for Living, Bread Basket, Little Free Library. One time donation to Waupaca High School Family and Consumer Science classes./ Total pounds donated: 917.17 pounds
- **Community Partners:**
 - Turners Fresh Market donated corn seed, flower plants and tomato, pepper, cauliflower, cabbage, broccoli plants. (Two flats)
 - Sue Furstenberg of Purslane Farms donated 30-40 strawberry plants.
 - Carrie Esch of Fountain Lake Flowers mentored 3/4 students with flower project.
 - Stein's Garden Center donated vegetable and flower seeds.
 - Camp Young Judaea volunteers(20 and 22) visited July 2 and July 28th.
 - CAHOOTS Adult Day Service planted a plot.
 - CEC Summer School Classes.
 - Waupaca High School Culinary Arts classes used our produce to create salads in September.
 - Volunteers: Community plot gardeners (15), Senior Center volunteers (4-6), S.T.E.P. volunteers(2) during Summer School.
 - CEC advisors, parents, and students,
 - Garden Board Members (CEC Governance Council member, 2 CEC Advisors, Community Business Owner, Community Farm Produce Owner, Retired CEC teacher)
- **Publicity:** Facebook – Mary Kaye posted photos and updates on the [Chain Community Garden Facebook page](#) / Turners Fresh Market, Waupaca Senior Center, Waupaca Park & Rec reposted or created a post on their FB pages.

Future Ideas: Community harvest dinner using produce from the garden. Early to mid-August would have the freshest produce./ Publicity – Waupaca County Post. / Work with Waupaca Arts Hub / Donate to newly established Women's Shelter / Reconnect with Waupaca Public Library to plan an event / Hold event at Turners Fresh Market / Plant a plot for Waupaca High School Culinary Arts classes / Present at February 3, 2025 Waupaca Women Who Care group with possibility to receive \$4,000-7,000

CEC Events

SUZUKI PERFORMANCE



HALLOWEEN

on Main



