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<td><a href="http://www.cesarchavezschool.com">www.cesarchavezschool.com</a></td>
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Welcome!

Charter schools are:

- Public schools, free and open to all students.
- Serving students from every race and a wide variety of cultures.
- On average, much smaller than district-run public schools.
- Providing free transportation.
- Well represented on the StarTribune’s “Beating the Odds” list.
- Responsible for improving student achievement.
- Required to meet the same graduation standards as other Minnesota schools.
- Responsible for following Minnesota’s school financial management rules.
- Managed by a board elected by parents, teachers, and staff at the school.
- Growing rapidly and currently serve more than 40,000 students in Minnesota.
- Named by the Minnesota Historical Society as one of the “150 People, Places, and Things that Shape our State.”

Every charter public school aims to be a safe, encouraging, excellent place to learn. Charter schools vary widely in curriculum, philosophy, and teaching strategies. When you find a school that looks interesting, please take the next step and visit their website, or call and arrange a visit, or attend an open house.

This booklet is a cooperative effort of metro area charter public schools. Each school listed pays a nominal fee to help cover printing and mailing costs. For a complete list of metro area and Minnesota charter public schools, please see online lists available at www.centerforschoolchange.org or at www.mncharterschools.org.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Academia Cesar Chavez Charter School</th>
<th>1800 Ames Avenue</th>
<th>P 651-778-2940</th>
<th>Grades K–6</th>
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</table>

Academia Cesar Chavez (ACC) is a free K-6 charter school located in St. Paul, Minnesota. ACC offers comprehensive services to students and their families. We are a community-based school that assures all students receive Language Development in both Spanish and English daily. ACC values Latino & other cultures.

ACC is committed to molding values of hard work, respect, unity, and family.
- Yearly home visits by instructional staff to build relationships with families.
- Transportation provided within St. Paul and surrounding suburbs.
- Free all day Kindergarten.
- Emphasis put on developing math, reading and writing skills.

Partnerships with community based organizations and institutions of higher education.

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<th>Academic Arts High School</th>
<th>60 E. Marie Avenue, Suite 220</th>
<th>P 651-457-7427</th>
<th>Grades 8–12</th>
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<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.academic-arts.org">www.academic-arts.org</a></td>
<td>West St. Paul, MN 55118</td>
<td>F 651-554-7611</td>
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</table>

Academic Arts High School’s nationally-accredited school for grades 8-12 provides project-based instruction (independent and teacher led projects), as well as afternoon classes in core subjects.

A strong arts-focused and academic program shows teens how to be creative, independent thinkers as they work toward their high school diploma and attending four-year colleges and beyond.

Students grow socially in a diverse population through elements of respect and honor in our safe, caring environment.

Our Performance Recording Studio attracts many high school student musicians and visual artists to Academic Arts High School.
**AFSA High School**  
**www.agacademy.com**  
**100 Vadnais Boulevard**  
**Vadnais Heights, MN 55127**  
**P 651-209-3910**  
**F 651-209-3911**  
**Grades 7–12**

AFSA High School is a public Secondary School with over 250 students in grades 7-12. Our students travel to us from over 20 different school districts around the metro area. We pride ourselves on small class sizes, a rigorous college prep curriculum, experiential learning opportunities and leadership training for our students.

AFSA High School’s curriculum focuses on five areas of science: Animal Science, Environmental Science, Engineering, Food Science, and Plant Science. Our students are prepared for post-secondary education in science, business and technology.

The AFSA community focuses on respect and building strong relationships. Our unique opportunities provide students the chance to try new experiences, build rapport with college and business representatives and become a part of the AFSA family.

Our small size allows us to know each student as an individual and provide learning experiences both in and out of the classroom that will help them build a successful future.

Tours and information available by drop in or appointment.

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**Achieve Language Academy**  
**www.achievemn.org**  
**2169 Stillwater Ave E**  
**St Paul, MN 55119**  
**P 651-738-4875**  
**F 651-738-8268**  
**Grades PK–8**

Achieve Language Academy is a community of learners in grades Pre-kindergarten through 8th grade. Achieve is built on the beliefs that good schools transform communities; that community is created by shared values and common goals; that all children can learn and achieve; and that education is essential to a fulfilling life.

**At Achieve, students:**
- WORK cooperatively with other students of various cultural backgrounds and toward personal high academic goals;
- RESPECT each individual’s uniqueness, cultural heritage and opinions and ideas;
- BELONG to a community that gives back to the larger community and are active members of a challenging learning community.

**Unique Characteristics:**
- Students have an opportunity to become literate in two languages, English and either Chinese, Hmong or Spanish.
- Each student has an individualized, continuous learning plan based on input from parents, teachers, and student.
- Extended summer programming available for all students.
- 5-day a week preschool program (4 yrs old in September).

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**Augsburg Fairview Academy**  
**www.afa.tc**  
**2504 Columbus Avenue**  
**Minneapolis MN 55404**  
**P 612-991-6953**  
**(ask for Faaria)**  
**Grades 9–12**

A SCHOOLS THAT GIVES YOU 110%
- 4 days (Mon-Thu) of college-model classes
- Intensive tutoring after school and on Fridays
- ALL students get free, unlimited GoTo passes
- Small class sizes and individual attention
- Hands-on learning through field trips

AFA is a serious college & career high school!
- We send 90% of our graduates to college
- Every student is given opportunities to explore health care careers and earn skill certifications.
- Citizenship & wellness are deep values at AFA

AFA is a special, teen-friendly place to be!
- We are Minnesota’s first Circle of Courage H.S.
- We have high standards without suspending or expelling students (zero in the past five years)

FLEXIBILITY TO FIT YOUR GOALS

College Fast Track - for students who want to graduate early and/or with college credit:
- Accelerated high school in 9th, 10th, & 11th grade; PSEO in 11th & 12th grade
- Self-Directed Learning program for students who need to recover credit before graduation

Connections Program - for students (16-20 years) who wish to work towards their diploma after being out of school for an extended period of time:
- On-line learning with teachers on hand to help when you need it
- Internet workstations available from morning to early evening to fit your schedule
- English and Math focused
Avalon School
www.avalonschool.org

700 Glendale Street
St. Paul, MN 55114
P 651-649-5495
F 651-649-5462
Grades 7–12

Avalon School opened as an independent, public charter school in September 2001. Today, the school is home to 185 students in grades 7-12. Avalon School features a curriculum built around project-based learning and active citizenship. The curriculum supports personalized learning plans, student-initiated independent projects, seminar classes, public student presentations, service projects, and partnerships with parents and community.

Avalon is committed to creating a supportive, democratic community. The school operates as a teacher partnership governance model. Teachers share all administrative duties and model democracy for the students daily. The students are also empowered to make decisions and settle disputes through the Avalon Student Congress and the Avalon Peer Mediation Program.

Strong student and adult relationships are critical to Avalon’s model where every student has an adult advocate (their advisor) and a personal learning plan. Students are placed in advisories of no more than 20 students. This small teacher/student ratio allows teachers at Avalon to get to know their students and the families well, forging a strong partnership between the families and the school.

Best Academy
www.thebestacademy.org

1300 Olson Memorial Hwy.
Minneapolis, MN 55411
P 612-381-9743
ext. 2284
F 612-374-0652
Grades K–8

Best Academy was created in 2007 to meet the unique needs of boys. Since its founding Best Academy has created 2 additional distinct educational programs: SISTER Academy and Best Academy East. SISTER Academy is an all girls 7th and 8th grade program of Best Academy. SISTER Academy stands for Sisters in Science Technology Engineering and Rx (Medicine).

Lastly, in fall of 2009 Best Academy East was developed to meet the cultural and ESL needs of the East African community.

The following are Gap Closing results of the different programs under Best Academy for 2011.
- Best Academy’s all boys program exceeded the state white average in reading (85% vs. 81%)
- Best Academy’s all boys program exceeded the state white average in math (80% vs. 65%)
- 100% of Best Academy 3rd grade boys were proficient in math
- 82% of Best Academy 8th grade boys were proficient in math
- 100% of Best Academy 8th grade boys were proficient in reading
- Statewide, Best Academy 8th graders ranked 3rd in reading and 6th in math according to Schooldigger.com

Best Academy has demonstrated that it is the most effective school in Minnesota in educating African American boys.

BlueSky Online School
www.blueskyschool.org

33 Wentworth Avenue East,
Suite 300 (offices)
West St. Paul, MN 55118
P 651-642-0888
F 651-642-0435
Grades 7–12

BlueSky Online School is a leading online public charter school that offers an alternative learning option for a wide range of students throughout Minnesota.

BlueSky’s unique personal approach to online learning is unmatched by other online high schools.

Enroll anytime to earn a Minnesota High School Diploma on your own schedule.

Contact the school at 651-642-0888, or visit the school’s Web site at www.blueskyschool.org.
Bright Water Elementary and Bright Water Montessori
www.brightwatermontessori.org

Bright Water is a Montessori school with certified Montessori teachers. We have a diverse, respectful community of students and staff.

Our mission:
Bright Water inspires passion for learning in an intentionally diverse Montessori community.

Our vision:
Bright Water seeks to be a school without an achievement gap and a model for North Minneapolis. Bright Water School is inspired by the educational philosophy of Maria Montessori and sets high expectations for all children. In partnership with parents we guide children to develop their individual gifts while preparing them for life in a cooperative community and a changing world. We nurture independence, a love of learning, cooperation, creative thinking, and respect for self, others and the environment.

College Prep Elementary
www.cpe-k6.org

College Prep Elementary (CPE) is a K-6 charter school located in St. Paul, Minnesota. We offer a specialized focus on college and career readiness. We provide a small school environment to accomplish our mission of preparing every student to succeed in college and career. CPE utilizes research-based, proven methods to promote English language development and literacy, mathematics proficiency, science mastery, and engagement in the learning process. We provide our students with a strong educational program within a learning community that builds self-confidence and awareness of diverse cultures and ideas.

To accomplish our mission, we partner with Concordia University St. Paul, University of Minnesota, the University of Saint Thomas, and with community organizations and families to ensure that our students receive ongoing support College and University preparation. Through extensive academic preparation and community collaboration, we give our students the tools to succeed. We invite you to join us in helping make a difference in the lives of our children!

Community of Peace Academy
www.cpa.charter.k12.mn.us

Founded in 1995, Community of Peace Academy serves a diverse student population in the Payne-Phalen neighborhood on St. Paul’s East Side.

At Community of Peace Academy, our vision is to educate the whole person – mind, body and will – for wholeness and fullness of life for all.

Community of Peace Academy serves 754 students in preschool through grade 12, of whom 85% qualify for free/reduced lunch and 70% speak a home language other than English. Students bring a rich mix of cultural diversity to our school community, including: Asian American – primarily Hmong – (52%); Black – African American and African immigrant – (18%); Hispanic (18%); White (11%); and American Indian (1%).

In 2011, Community of Peace Academy received a School Finance Award from the Minnesota Department of Education, for exhibiting fiscal health, sound financial management and accountability. The current graduation rate for Community of Peace Academy’s high school is 94%, and 90% of graduates from the class of 2011 are enrolled in post-secondary institutions.
Concordia Creative Learning Academy
www.cclaonline.org

Concordia Creative Learning Academy is a PK-8 neighborhood school. Our mission is to provide an education for each child to allow for success in high school and beyond. We are committed to a diverse population with high academic excellence and a solid foundation in literacy. Please stop and visit anytime between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. and discover why our families choose CCLA.

Our families and children choose CCLA because we offer
1. Safe Environment – high behavioral standards allowing for success for all students
2. Small 4K-8 Neighborhood School – 280 enrollment
3. Academic excellence – Literacy base – Science Specialist – assessment – you know the level of your child in reading and math
4. Small Class Sizes 15 to 1
5. Children First – Teaching to specific learning styles, ability grouped, gender grouped, preparing children for a life time of learning
6. Families Involved and Welcome
7. Diverse Population
8. After School Educational Activities – choir, piano lessons, dance, chess club, photography
9. Athletic/Cheerleading teams
10. Free full day kindergarten
11. Free full day 4 year old kindergarten
12. Art, Music, Phy Ed every day
13. Free before care and after school care program
14. Free breakfast and lunch program
15. Highly qualified professional staff

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School
www.cornerstone-elementary.org

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School is a world-class learning community based on the principles of Dr. Maria Montessori. Our mission is to prepare children for life by helping them to achieve at their highest potential academically, socially, and emotionally, regardless of their economic or cultural background. We believe that each child is a unique individual with a critical contribution to make to the world.

Through partnering with a diverse community of parents, non-profits, and social service agencies, the school will cultivate healthy lifestyles and nurture empathy, character, and community engagement among all its students.

Cornerstone features:
• Multi-aged classroom communities
• Individualized instruction
• Highly trained and committed teachers
• Beautifully prepared classrooms
• Programming based on Maria Montessori’s unique vision of childhood
• Rigorous academic standards
• Free bus transportation within the St. Paul Public School District boundaries

Cornerstone will serve children in Kindergarten through third grade in the 2012-2013 academic year. A grade level will be added each consecutive year through the sixth grade.

Cyber Village Academy
www.cybervillageacademy.org

Cyber Village Academy uses a powerful blend of on campus and online education in 3 effective options. Students in grades 3-12 may choose the 100% online PASCAL program, students in grades 4-12 may choose the combination of on campus and online coursework in the Fusion Program and students in grades 11 & 12 may participate in internships and take college courses through the Post Secondary Enrollment Options Program. Fusion students in grades 6-8 participate in the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme which emphasizes communication, international mindedness and higher level thinking skills across curricular areas.

Our mission is to prepare students to meet the challenge of a rapidly changing world with confidence by helping them to become inquiring, knowledgeable, caring and active citizens who value academic rigor, integrity, self reliance and compassion.

Cyber Village Academy has been serving families in the Twin Cities Metro area since 1997 and is located in the St. Paul/Highland Park area. With a 10:1 student/teacher ratio, we emphasize small classes, individualized instruction and high academic standards.
El Colegio Charter School
www.el-colegio.org

¡Hablamos español!

El Colegio celebrated 11 years in 2011! We engage a diverse group of 100+ high school students in challenging learning experiences that integrate research-based teaching with culture and art, and we provide individualized attention to each student.

Our mission is to graduate creative, culturally grounded students who excel in bilingual and bi-cultural environments and are prepared for college, employment and community leadership.

Primary learning areas include:

Effective Bilingual Communication
Strong reading, writing and speaking in Spanish and English prepares students to be active participants in their lives and critical thinkers in the community.

Culture and Creative Expression
Arts and culture help students think creatively, express themselves clearly, and see the world from multiple perspectives. They exhibit their artwork in our gallery and at local museums including the MIA.

Resourcefulness and Leadership
Active engagement in school and community prepares students to find resources to reach their goals and contribute to positive change in their communities. Our students even take college-level classes here at El Colegio and at local colleges.

We accept students year-round.

15th Ave NE
6th St NE
13th Ave NE
Washington St NE
17th Ave NE
Broadway St NE

Excell Academy For Higher Learning
www.excellacademy.org

Excell Academy is just right for you.

Picture your child attending a school where your child is cared for and expected to succeed and achieve their highest potential.

A school that embraces diversity and has an open door policy for parent communication.

Imagine your child attending a school that acknowledges, appreciates and understands the different learning styles of children. A school that develops the self-worth, self-respect and self-worthiness in each and every student.

Along with a rigorous academic curriculum, Excell offers a variety of other academic services. Excell offers Physical Education, Art, a Pre – Kindergarten Program, a Full day Kindergarten option, Before and Afterschool care, and a Full day Monday – Friday Summer School Program.

Excell Academy for Higher Learning is the school that you’ve been searching for.

We at Excell are anticipating and awaiting your child’s arrival. Thank you for viewing our school.

For more information check out our website at www.excellacademy.org and complete your search for the school for your child.

Fraser Academy
www.fraseracademy.org

Learn. Grow. Succeed! ...at Fraser Academy, a public K-5 elementary charter school located in Northeast Minneapolis. Fraser Academy is the national model of inclusive and tailored education for all children with an emphasis on small class sizes and individual attention. Through continuous instructional progress and a responsive environment, Fraser Academy cultivates a high standard of academic and personal excellence, while creating a sense of respect, responsibility and community. In session 11 months out of the year and averaging a 1:4 student/educator ratio, Fraser Academy’s mission is to provide individualized educational programs for students of all backgrounds and abilities.

Bus transportation is provided within the city of Minneapolis. Families are encouraged to take an active role in the school including through the Fraser Academy Parent Council. Interested families are invited to tour on Wednesdays at 10:00 or by calling for an appointment. Open enrollment begins in December 2011.
Friendship Academy of Fine Arts (FAFA) is a public charter school serving students in grades K-6. The program implements a proven, successful educational model. FAFA prepares its students for college by creating an effective learning environment of high expectations and standards through a rigorous curriculum that focuses on language arts, math, science, fine arts, social studies and technology. Longer school days and small class sizes, personalized education, ongoing assessments of learning effectiveness, and a highly-skilled and dedicated staff distinguish FAFA from other schools.

Join a Family where academic excellence is merged with a warm, welcoming environment. We work to create scholars that will enhance our world and strive for a better tomorrow.

Great River School offers a robust Montessori education for 280 students in an intellectually engaging community setting. All 11th and 12th graders take International Baccalaureate classes. Our interdisciplinary, multicultural curriculum fosters autonomy, critical thinking and an appreciation for diversity. The exceptional GRS faculty offers a mix of core classes, electives, Spanish language, arts and independent work designed to challenge students and prepare them equally for post secondary education, careers or other endeavors.

All students participate in experiential education and travel at the beginning and end of each year to complement their academic classroom work. Creativity, Action and Service (CAS) on Wednesday afternoons allows opportunities for artistic, imaginative and physically-oriented activities, internships and service learning.

School hours are 8:30-3. We are located on the bus line and have a hot lunch program, working garden and an active athletics and extracurricular clubs culture.

In the Fall of 2012, we intend to add two multi-grade elementary classrooms. Montessori trained teachers and assistants will guide the students in unfolding their innate sense for exploration and learning in a specially prepared developmentally appropriate environment.

In 2011 the Star Tribune recognized Harvest Preparatory School as the number one “Beating the Odds” school in Minnesota for math. Harvest Preparatory School was originally founded as a private school in 1992 to serve the needs of students in Minneapolis. Harvest Preparatory School became a charter school in 1998. Harvest Preparatory currently serves over 400 students.

Harvest Preparatory School’s formula for success is built on three basic principles: strong basic skills instruction, African culture and heritage, and in-depth involvement of parents.

The following are Gap Closing results of Harvest Preparatory School for 2011.

- Harvest outperformed every MPS school in math in the district. Including the schools overlooking the lakes!
- Harvest outperformed the state average in Reading 77% vs. 75%
- Harvest outperformed the state average in Math 82% vs. 56%
- Harvest outperformed the State White Average in Math 82% vs. 68%
- Charter School Partners rated Harvest Preparatory School as the number one gap closing school in Minnesota.

“... Harvest Prep doesn’t stop with academic excellence. At its heart is a school culture that instills moral character.” (Katherin Kersten, Star Tribune: At this school, usual excuses don’t apply. 9.24.11.)

Our Mission: To Instruct, Empower, Enable, and Guide African American Children to Achieve Superior Academic, Social, and Moral Development.
Hiawatha Academies
www.hiawathaacademies.org
3810 East 56th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55417
P 612-987-5688
F 612-825-4777
Grades K–6

Hiawatha Academies is a network of high performing, non-profit public charter schools in Minneapolis, MN. Hiawatha Academies schools are dedicated to closing the achievement gap for urban low income students in the Twin Cities.

Founded in 2007, Hiawatha Academies currently operates an elementary school, Hiawatha Leadership Academy, and a middle school, Adelante College Prep. The two schools currently serve 450 students in grades K – 5 and will continue to add a grade each year to serve students K – 12.

All Hiawatha Academies scholars will be empowered with the knowledge, character, and leadership skills to graduate from college and serve the common good.

High School for Recording Arts
www.hsra.org
550 Vandalia St.
St Paul, MN 55114
P 651-287-0890
F 651-287-0891
Grades 9–12

In 1995, David “T.C.” Ellis opened a recording studio in downtown St. Paul. Soon after, he was overrun with high school students who were either ditching class, or had already dropped out. The kids were constantly asking him questions about the business of music, and T.C. saw a need and an opportunity to use this focus to engage students who were not being served by the traditional school system.

High School for Recording Arts received its charter in 1998, and now serves over 200 students in a program that combines project-based learning with small classes, workshops, and real-world learning opportunities.

Each student’s learning plan looks different, combining projects that they design around their interests with small classes, studio time, self-selected reading, reading groups, school activities, and daily school-wide classes in Language Arts and Math. Every student’s schedule is different as well, with some time spent learning in a group setting, and some time spent working alone.

We build on our students’ creativity to create lifelong learners; in fact, 100% of our graduates are accepted into college.

Higher Ground Academy
www.hgacademy.org
1381 Marshall Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55104
P 651-645-1000
F 651-645-2100
Grades K–12


The Academy enrolls seven hundred students in its K – 12 program. Higher Ground Academy is a college preparatory school offering a rigorous curriculum. The Academy follows a Learning Year calendar thus offering students opportunity to accelerate their learning. Students who continuously participate in the Learning Year program often complete their high school requirements early and participate in PSEO courses.
### Hmong College Prep Academy

**www.hmongacademy.org**

At Hmong College Prep Academy our mission is to provide the best integrated, challenging, and well-rounded educational experience for our students.

Our families have selected HCPA because we provide:

- Free breakfast and lunch for all students
- Free busing for all with door-to-door pick-up/drop off for K-8 students (Twin Cities & select suburbs)
- 1:1 computer to student ratio on our completely wireless campus
- A passionate, caring and fully licensed instructional staff
- Low 15:1 student to teacher ratio
- Weekly academic check-ins and homework help
- Free all-day Kindergarten
- Preparing for college—campus visits, college & career fairs, AP, CIS and honors level courses

- Getting accepted into college—admissions, financial aid, scholarship application and ACT/SAT test help
- MN State High School League sanctioned sports—Girls’ Volleyball & Badminton, Boys’ Basketball & Soccer
- Clubs! Drama, Choir, Student Council, Newspaper, Yearbook, Hmong Dance, Anime, Strength & Speed, Photography and more!
- Hmong Language/culture woven into each grade’s curriculum
- Hmong-based leadership and vision within all organizational levels

The result:

Graduates who are rich in experiences, culture, knowledge & pride and ready for the challenges of college and beyond.

### HOPE Community Academy

**www.hope-school.org**

HOPE provides students in preK-8 with a rigorous academic foundation, focusing on the mastery of fundamental and higher-order thinking skills that prepare them for life-long learning, while instilling in them the finest Hmong and American values.

HOPE is an experienced and successful public charter school located on the East Side of St. Paul, serving about 450 students. HOPE is sponsored by the University of St. Thomas.

HOPE offers its students a computer enriched environment, maintains small class size, and has a longer school day and year. Students love attending HOPE because they feel cared for by the excellent and experienced teachers that help the students feel safe and happy. Students make many friends and when they graduate from HOPE, they transition successfully to other schools and learning environments.

### KIPP Stand Academy

**www.kippminnesota.org**

KIPP Stand Academy is part of the nationwide “Knowledge is Power Program”, a network of schools committed to a philosophy of no shortcuts in providing excellent education, and high expectations for students. KIPP Stand’s primary goal is to prepare all students for success in college and beyond. We ensure our students develop both the academic skills and the character necessary to help them achieve success and define what they stand for as individuals.
Laura Jeffrey Academy
www.laurajeffreyacademy.org
1550 Summit Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105
P 651-414-6000
F 651-414-6006
Grades 5–8

Laura Jeffrey Academy is the first and only girl-focused STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) focused charter school in Minnesota.

As one of few girl-focused middle schools in the United States, Laura Jeffrey Academy (LJA) is an innovative, urban charter school in St. Paul, offering a unique twelve-month education experience for grades five through eight. We are a small learning community serving a culturally and ethnically diverse student population. The girl-focused environment provides opportunities for leadership and ethical choice making. Confidence and competency in math, science, and technology is developed within a comprehensive liberal arts education. Students participate in physical fitness, health, art, drama, violin, and choir fostering their academic, emotional and social well-being.

Our promise is to provide an educational environment where students are free to learn, explore their potential, develop their intellect and discover their brilliance. We focus on scholarship and offer a best practice middle school education that includes team teaching and a low student teacher ratio to ensure individual attention. We provide a learning environment focusing on shared inquiry across disciplines, interdisciplinary hands-on curriculum and enrichment activities during breaks. LJA is committed to accelerating all students’ learning and closing the achievement gap.

Please visit our website at www.laurajeffreyacademy.org for information on tours and parent information sessions. We would love to host you for a visit.

Lionsgate Academy
www.lionsgateacademy.org
3420 Nevada Ave. N
Crystal, MN 55427
P 763-486-5359
F 763-390-0012
Grades 7–12

Lionsgate Academy is a transition-oriented school geared towards higher-functioning students on the autism spectrum. It is our mission to provide students with personalized learning programs that support their full potential, participation, and self-determination within their school, family and community.

To this end, Lionsgate Academy strives to create an environment that models best instructional practice and research-based techniques so that the graduates will—to the fullest extent possible—live independently, be involved in further education or gainful employment, and develop meaningful relationships with others.

Lionsgate also focuses on teaching community-building and social skills in an emotionally safe environment that eases the deep isolation that many students on the autism spectrum experience in traditional school district settings. Through the use of a range of instructional methodologies including direct-instruction, small classes, highly trained interdisciplinary teachers, partnerships with community organizations, therapeutic services and specialized programming, Lionsgate Academy works to help our students become fully functioning adults.

Learn more about Lionsgate at one of our monthly informational events. Details can be found on our website www.LionsgateAcademy.org.

Metro Deaf School
www.mdsmin.org
1471 Brewster Street
St. Paul, MN 55108
P 651-224-3995
Video P 651-964-1630
F 651-222-0939
Grades PK–12

Metro Deaf School promotes academic excellence in Deaf Education using an ASL/English bilingual approach.

Our primary purpose is to empower our students to develop a sense of identity and pride as Deaf persons while providing them the skills and knowledge to succeed as global citizens.
MetroTech Career Academy is a career and college focused charter school that offers an extended and stimulating academic program designed to reduce academic, personal and social barriers to education and economic stability.

We do this by providing practical business and technical experiences to students through an integration of technical thematic learning and a rigorous grades 9-12 high school core curriculum that provides students with the essential skills needed to graduate from high school, while simultaneously transitioning our students to post-secondary technical training, traditional four year college programs or gainful employment.

Minneapolis Academy offers:
- A safe and orderly learning environment that fosters achievement
- A school with strong behavioral policies and character development
- A uniform dress code and single-sex classes
- Small class size
- A rigorous, challenging curriculum
- Homework guidance provided daily
- Full day (7:30 - 4:30)
- Saturday School 9:00AM - 12:00 noon, providing students with additional Math and Reading to improve their basic skills.
- Breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack program
- Free transportation to and from school

Rigorous Academic Program
Research shows that students in programs using the Core Knowledge Sequence can meet high academic standards regardless of their socio-economic background. Since its inception in 2004, Minneapolis Academy has used the Core Knowledge Sequence, a challenging, content-rich curriculum that provides key building blocks as students progress year after year, to guide its efforts toward closing the achievement gap in an urban setting. We base our learning outcomes on the Core Knowledge framework in the following subject areas:
- Mathematics
- Physical and Earth Systems Science
- English including Language Arts and Reading
- History and Geography & U.S. Government
- Fine Arts
- Physical Education/Health Education

Minneapolis College Preparatory School (MCP) seeks to raise the student achievement and college choices for high school students in north Minneapolis.

The MCP mission and vision is focused on college preparation and success. MCP’s mission is to instill in students the scholarship, discipline, and honor necessary to succeed in college and beyond. MCP’s vision is to establish the highest performing open-enrollment high school in Minneapolis with an emphasis on serving low-income students and preparing them to graduate from college. MCP seeks to create constructive change in Minneapolis by serving up to five percent of MPS high school students at full enrollment and sharing best practices in closing the achievement gap nationwide.

Our school has a rigorous college preparatory curriculum and strong culture focused on the goal of ensuring that your child can graduate from college. This will mean a longer school day and school year for all of our students.

We will be hosting admissions information sessions for families in December 2011 and January 2012 and our application deadline will be on February 10, 2012.
Each of these programs allows students to explore career options, get some hands-on experience, and learn about the wide variety of jobs in these fields.

MTS Digital Media Career Academy
- Students have opportunities to: Write, record, edit and produce their own music. To write a screenplay, cast, edit, direct and produce five minute films. To design a website, create a video game, learn about advertising and marketing. All this while earning high school credits.

MTS Health Care Careers Academy
- Students explore careers in health care and have the opportunity to take NAR (Nursing Assistant Registered) training while earning high school credits.

MTS Community Learning Project (CLP)
- Uses learning circles as a way to offer classes that you wouldn’t find in a traditional high school.
- CLP has circles days, evenings and Saturdays in two locations (SE Minneapolis and Downtown St. Paul).
- For more information call CLP 612-362-8940.

Multicultural Indigenous Academy (MIA)
- Located in Downtown St Paul.
- Teach through culture not about culture.
- MIA focuses on Native American, Hispanic and African American cultures.
- For more information call 651-222-4900

MTS Independent Study
- Individualized program. Students come by appointment to do their required seat time.
- This program is located at the Minnehaha Mall next to the Lake Street Target and is open until 7 PM four nights a week and 9 to noon on Saturdays.
- For more information contact Mary Funk, mfunk@mtcs.org or 612-722-9013

MTS Trades & Industry Career Academy
- Provides students with entry level job skills in construction, brick laying, residential maintenance and residential management. Seniors have the opportunity for internships in local companies.

MTS has two Alternative Programs designed to fit the needs and schedules of the students. Both programs have independent study components and require 25% seat time. Full-time students who participate in these programs are eligible to participate in sports and other activities, including Commencement and Prom. Credit recovery courses can be taken outside of the student’s home school. Work experience credits are available.

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- For more information call CLP 612-362-8940.
MTS Elementary
www.mtcs.org

MTS Elementary offers a learning environment emphasizing small classes and individualized instruction, with summer learning opportunities. MTS Elementary is an award-winning school. They have been recognized as a "Beating the odds school" for the past two years.

MTS Elementary's primary focus is to provide core knowledge for all children. MTS prides itself in research-based instructional methods used to meet the student's individual needs.

The Elementary School has:
• A safe and welcoming atmosphere
• Full-day kindergarten
• Emphasis on reading, writing and math skills
• Latchkey enrichment program

MTS High Schools
www.mtcs.org

MTS High School is conveniently located in South Minneapolis just 1 block from the Midtown Light Rail Station. MTS provides school busses for 9th & 10th grade students in Minneapolis and select routes in the suburbs. It is a full service high school with core classes, top-notch technology, work experience credits, credit recovery for seniors and much more. (see MTS Career Academies).

MTS features small class sizes and summer opportunities.

MTS High Schools have great sports programs and extracurricular activities including Student Council and Prom.

MTS Middle School
www.mtcs.org

MTS Middle School offers a learning environment emphasizing small classes and individualized instruction, with summer learning opportunities. MTS Middle School is a great place for those in-between years — a small school (about 100 students) with small class sizes (average 15). The Middle School has a strong emphasis on core academics. The curriculum stresses language arts, offers hands-on science and integrates math with technology. Students are exposed to technology daily and are assigned a personal laptop upon enrollment. MTS Middle School offers extracurricular activities after school including: Tutoring, Music and Athletics.

MTS busses students from any Minneapolis address and select routes in the suburbs.
**New City Charter School**

229 13th Avenue North East  
Minneapolis, MN 55413  
P 612 623 3309  
F 612 623 3319  
Grades K–8

A small, diverse, supportive community that actively engages students to build knowledge, ask meaningful questions, design creative solutions, open their minds and become skilled, caring citizens in the world.

- Small class sizes
- Free Busing
- Integrated Arts
- Imaginative thinkers
- Discovery
- Caring community
- Challenging Activities
- Exploration
- Fun

Let Minnesota Virtual High School help you achieve your educational goals

**Minnesota Connections Academy (651-523-0888)**
- Full-time K-12 program
- Provides high quality rigorous curriculum aligned to Minnesota state standards, the innovative use of technology, and the benefits of a strong parent-teacher collaboration to ensure that students meet their highest academic potential.
- Monthly Field Trips and Group Activities
- For more information or to enroll: visit [www.connectionsacademy.com](http://www.connectionsacademy.com) or call 612-729-1090

**New Millennium Academy**

1203 Bryant Avenue North  
Minneapolis, MN 55411  
P 612-377-6260  
F 612-377-6261  
Grades K–8

New Millennium Academy is committed to creating a positive learning environment that maximizes student academic achievement, character development, lifelong learning, and Hmong culture and literacy through strong collaboration between staff, parents and community.
Odyssey Academy

Odyssey Academy is a K-8 school located in Brooklyn Center. Odyssey is committed to maintaining small class sizes, a caring community that feels like family, and a Responsive Classroom environment for all grades. We offer a well-rounded education that includes Spanish, art, music, and physical education in multi-age classrooms. As part of our environmental focus, our students in grade 1-8 take part in annual overnight educational retreats in a camp environment. Parental involvement is welcomed and encouraged in the classrooms and throughout the school.

We offer free, all-day kindergarten, busing, a latch-key program, breakfast and lunch programs, free academic enrichment after school and during the summer, and sports for students in grades 6-8.

Parnassus Preparatory School

The mission of Parnassus Preparatory School is to provide students with a K-12 classical education grounded in the classical Trivium that demands their best in intellectual achievement and character development. Parnassus’ philosophy is that all students benefit from the highest standards of academic integrity and a rigorous, content-rich, educational program that develops their intellectual capacity, personal character, and leadership skills. The school provides an environment that fosters academic excellence through the habit of discipline and thoroughness, the willingness to work, and the perseverance to complete difficult tasks.

Curriculum highlights include: Chronological study of history that includes the use of original texts and sources integrated across subject areas; Singapore Math; Direct Instruction reading; skill grouping in reading and math; Latin (beginning in third grade); Core Knowledge Science; Taekwondo for physical education; Spanish (beginning in kindergarten); and formal Logic (beginning in 5th grade).

Parnassus Preparatory School opened its doors on August 22nd, 2011 and serves over 350 students in its Schools of Grammar and Logic in grades K – 6. The school will continue to expand through grade 12.
### Partnership Academy
**www.paschool.org**

Partnership Academy is a school that focuses on the whole child through collaboration between educators, families, students, and the community. We have a literacy and math focus and we adapt our instruction to meet the individual needs of our students. We enrich our curriculum with service learning, character education, after school activities, and gifted & talented services.

### Saint Paul City School
**www.stpaulcityschool.org**

St Paul City School (formerly known as New Spirit) has been dedicated to serving the students and families within St Paul and the Frogtown community for 14 years. We continue to follow the founder’s original mission to ensure a challenging education to a diverse population through the pursuit of knowledge, character building, and service to our community.

Originally focused as a Core Knowledge program, we are now focused on providing the appropriate instructional strategies for English Language Learners and becoming known as a SIOP school, which we feel provide best practices in instruction for ALL learners.

### Saint Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists
**www.spcpa.org**

The Saint Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists provides a world-class, professionally guided academic and artistic environment to train aspiring pre-professional artists in the areas of instrumental and vocal music, theater and dance.
Seven Hills Classical Academy supports a rigorous, structured and disciplined academic program. In addition, the classical model, Singapore Math and Core Knowledge Sequence are research-based programs demonstrated to produce improved pupil learning. SHCA focuses on character education, stressing mutual respect and promoting a strong value system that embraces cooperation, assertiveness, responsibility, empathy, and self-control. The community will not compromise with its vision and is dedicated to bringing each child up to, and when possible, beyond grade level. Embedded in its academic programming, SHCA has an enrichment program designed to accommodate both remediation and gifted / talented needs.

Sojourner Truth Academy is a PreK-8 public charter school in North Minneapolis with proven academic and fiscal records. Students at Sojourner Truth Academy enjoy the benefits of small class sizes, numbering just 20-24 students. This provides our staff members with the flexibility to dedicate individual attention to each student’s academic and social needs.

Seven Hills Classical Academy supports a rigorous, structured and disciplined academic program. In addition, the classical model, Singapore Math and Core Knowledge Sequence are research-based programs demonstrated to produce improved pupil learning. SHCA focuses on character education, stressing mutual respect and promoting a strong value system that embraces cooperation, assertiveness, responsibility, empathy, and self-control. The community will not compromise with its vision and is dedicated to bringing each child up to, and when possible, beyond grade level. Embedded in its academic programming, SHCA has an enrichment program designed to accommodate both remediation and gifted / talented needs.

Sojourner Truth Academy is a PreK-8 public charter school in North Minneapolis with proven academic and fiscal records. Students at Sojourner Truth Academy enjoy the benefits of small class sizes, numbering just 20-24 students. This provides our staff members with the flexibility to dedicate individual attention to each student’s academic and social needs.

We offer free all-day kindergarten, free breakfast, art education, physical education, ESL instruction, special education instruction, free after school enrichment, a comprehensive sports program, an on-site social worker, and a new media center. Smartboards in every classroom help bring lessons to life through technology and our interdisciplinary, cooperative instruction allows us to provide a well-rounded education while maintaining a focus on reading, writing and math. We also offer monthly family events and evening and weekend programming for interested parents. Stop by to visit anytime, call, or visit our website for further information.

Stonebridge is a K-6 public charter school that offers a global curriculum that prepares students to excel academically.

Our vision is to develop motivated and principled global citizens for lifelong learning and productive citizenship.

Stonebridge is a small school community with an array of support services and strong community partnerships. Hallmarks of the school include small class sizes, full day kindergarten, extended school day, summer learning program, Spanish, art and service learning projects. We know how children learn is as important as what they learn and offer a Responsive Classroom approach throughout the school. We strive to meet individual student needs as we focus on building academic skills and excellence. Stonebridge is an IB Candidate School.
Twin Cities Academy (TCA), located in St. Paul, is a very diverse college preparatory middle school committed to developing productive citizens through academic rigor and building character in partnership with families and the community. The school’s virtues of “CRISP” are instilled into everything we do: Citizenship, Respect, Initiative, Scholarship, and Perseverance. The school opened in 1999. We are a “Core Knowledge” school serving grades 6-8.

TCA is committed to providing a rigorous academic curriculum and high expectations, both behaviorally and academically. TCA excels by providing quality instruction, designing curriculum to promote academic achievement, incorporating, and maintaining small class sizes.

Consistently, TCA Students surpass the State, St. Paul and Minneapolis school district averages on MCA assessments, named a five star rated school making AYP.

Twin Cities Academy High School (TCAHS) is a college preparatory high school (grades 9-12) committed to enhancing the capacity of young adults in developing one’s ability to lead in an ever-changing world through academic rigor, leadership development and character building. Our vision is to empower young adults to become tomorrow’s leaders, thereby making a difference in the world they live. TCAHS was established in 2006.

TCAHS is unique because of its small class sizes, all-school community projects, uniform dress code, diverse population, community volunteer requirement and rigorous academic environment. The following Advanced Placement courses are offered: Biology, Chemistry, US History, and English Literature and Composition. College in the Schools: Physics is also offered. TCAHS believes a student’s potential is best realized through challenging academic programs, high expectations and appropriate support.

Consistently, TCA Students surpass the State, St. Paul and Minneapolis school district averages on MCA assessments and making AYP. Students must have a strong work ethic, take initiative and display responsible behavior if they are to be successful in this learning environment.

The Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS) is a vibrant, growing and tuition-free K-8 charter immersion school located in the heart of St. Paul, which serves approximately 270 students in the 2011-2012 school year.

The strength, tradition and future of TCGIS include:
- Small class sizes – averaging 20 students per class – double-staffed with native German-speaking Amity interns.
- Academic rigor in a nurturing environment
- Half and full day immersion Kindergarten.
- A strong sense of community for parents as well as children – an amazing 87% of parents volunteer in some capacity at the school.

German is not necessary for enrollment in Grades K-1. Language learning skills are transferable. Immersion in any language will assist your child learn other languages later in life.
Twin Cities International Elementary School
www.twincitiesinternationalschool.org

Twin Cities International Elementary School, grades K-4 is one of only a few select schools on the Star Tribune’s “Beat the odds” list, reporting high academic student achievement for the past two years in a row. Our school provides a rigorous education in a culturally sensitive environment. Founded by educational leaders in the East African community, this public charter school ultimately seeks to prepare students for successful and productive lives as U.S. Citizens, while allowing them to retain their unique cultural heritage.

All classes are taught in English, and bilingual Educational Assistants are present in the classrooms. Our school has two computer labs and Smart Board technology in every classroom. We use the Success For All Reading Program, Harcourt Math, Zaner-Bloser Handwriting Program, Collins Writing Program, Foss Science Kits and Houghton Mifflin Social Studies Curriculums. Students take Physical Education, and media/library classes in addition to Arabic and Technology. Teachers use Responsive Classroom and ENVoY classroom management techniques as well as the SIOP Sheltered Instructional approach to teaching.

Urban Academy
www.urbanacademymn.org

Urban Academy provides a quality education for urban students in grades K-6. We believe that education plays a critical role in developing creative and responsible human beings. Children have an innate ability to learn. When nurtured and taught in an environment that respects their unique culture, abilities, resiliency, and effort, they awaken the desire to learn.

Urban Academy believes in a strong partnership with the student’s home and community in which they reside. Every student is to be understood holistically, by understanding the student’s academic abilities, social and personal life, which impacts their academics and behavior.

For All Reading Program, Harcourt Math, Zaner-Bloser Handwriting Program, Collins Writing Program, Foss Science Kits and Houghton Mifflin Social Studies Curriculums. Students take Physical Education, and media/library classes in addition to Arabic and Technology. Teachers use Responsive Classroom and ENVoY classroom management techniques as well as the SIOP Sheltered Instructional approach to teaching.

Carter G. Woodson Institute for Student Excellence (WISE)
www.wiseschool.org

WISE mission is to ensure the academic and social development of students while restoring the essence of the family and community with an emphasis on academic achievement, cultural awareness and responsible citizenship. We currently enroll just under 300 students in Kindergarten through Eighth grade. Specialized curriculum, dedicated staff, a variety of student programs, small class sizes and individualized attention are key benefits our students experience. We are a data driven school and using the principles of the Nguzo Saba we strive to achieve the goals set forth in our Mission Statement. WISE is located in North Minneapolis, which makes up a large percentage of our population, although we also welcome students from 16 other public school districts.
Yinghua Academy was founded upon the importance of preparing all children to be global citizens. Through Chinese language learning, rigorous academics (including Singapore Math, Core Knowledge, and Pre-Advanced Placement curricula), extensive arts partnerships, and service-learning, students will acquire the skills to achieve in high school and college and to make future contributions to their world.

Yinghua offers this education to students of all backgrounds and abilities (including special education students, gifted-talented students, and non-native English speakers) in a nurturing and supportive school environment. We have combined the best practices from educational research in both the United States and China to create our curriculum, which has been recognized nationally and internationally for its effectiveness, leading to biliteracy in Mandarin Chinese and English for all students. Check our website for upcoming open house details or to schedule a visit!
Charter Public School Essentials

Minnesota was the first state to adopt charter public school legislation. Forty other states plus the District of Columbia now have charter laws. Minnesota’s charter enrollment has grown from less than 100 in 1992 (when the nation’s first charter opened in St Paul, Minnesota) to more than 35,000 in 2010-2011.

The charter movement’s overall goals are to help increase student achievement and graduation rates, create more excellent schools that help students achieve their potential, provide possible models and help school districts to improve their programs. As this booklet shows, charters vary enormously in philosophy, curriculum and focus.

Key features of these schools:

- **The school is public.** It is non-sectarian. It may not charge tuition. It may not have admissions tests of any kind. It must follow state health and safety regulations.

- **The state has authorized more than one organization to start and operate a school in the community.** The local board is eligible to be a sponsor/authorizer (and to convert some or all of its existing schools to charter status, if a majority of teachers in the school vote to do this). But the sponsor of a charter school may also be a college or university, group of districts, or an approved non-profit organization.

- **Accountability is based on a performance contract.** The authorizing agency and educators who work in the school agree on student outcomes to be achieved. The continued existence of the school depends on whether these outcomes are achieved.

- **There is an up-front waiver from rules about curriculum; management and teaching.** Minnesota charter students take all statewide tests that other public schools take. But determining how the school operates should be up to the people who establish and run it.

- **The charter school is a school of choice.** Faculty, students and families actively choose it. No one is assigned to be there.

- **The school is a discrete entity.** The law allows founders to choose any organization available under general state law or may specify an organization, such as non-profit. As a legal entity, the school will have its own board. There is real site management. Teachers, have full rights to organize and bargain collectively. However, their bargaining unit is separate from any district bargaining unit.

- **The full per-pupil allocation moves with the student.** In Minnesota, this is the average state allocation per pupil. State funds for students from low-income families or with disabilities, these funds also follow the students. In Minnesota, charters may not levy taxes. They do receive some funds from the state to help pay for costs of leasing a building.

- **Participating teachers are protected and given new opportunities.** Teachers may take a leave from public school systems. They may continue to participate in Minnesota’s state retirement programs. New teachers may join state retirement programs. They may choose to be employees, or to organize a professional group under which they collectively own and operate the school.

- **Charter public schools must follow all federal legislation dealing with public schools.** This includes No Child Left Behind, Education for All Handicapped, etc.

Minnesota State Senator Ember Reichgott Junge, Ted Kolderie and Joe Nathan developed this list. For further information, contact Center for School Change, 1600 Grand Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105, (651) 696-6848, www.centerforschoolchange.org
Ten questions to consider in selecting a school (of any kind)

Regardless of school(s) you are considering (district, charter, private or parochial), we strongly encourage visiting the school before enrolling your child(ren).

Here are some questions to ask before deciding to visit a school.

1. **Student achievement** – what information can the school give you about student achievement? Are student test scores improving? Does the school measure academic growth in other ways – writing tests, opportunities for students to speak and display what they have learned?

2. **What are the special features of the school?** Does the school have a focus, like the arts, math, or science, or a special philosophy, like Core Knowledge, or Montessori, or Waldorf, or language immersion? If so, can educators explain the school’s focus, and explain what kind of young people seem to do especially well in the school?

3. **Graduate and family surveys:** Has the school surveyed its graduates, and its families? (They should) If so, what do graduates and families say are the strengths, and areas where the school should improve? What do they say about safety? How has the school used these surveys to improve?

4. **Special programs/partnerships:** Does the school have any special opportunities for learning, based on cooperation with community or business groups? How long have these programs been operating?

5. **Feedback to families:** How often do educators meet with families to share information about their students? Does the school give grades? When are conferences held (during the day? Afternoons? Evenings?)

6. **Extracurricular programs:** Does the school have music, student government, speech, debate, athletics, plays, yearbook, etc? Does it have the programs your child is especially interested in? These can be enormously valuable experiences for students. Which are available?

Here are some additional questions to consider when visiting a school.

7. **As you walk in, what does it seem that the school values?** Does it have excellent student work displayed? Does the front hall have trophies? What kind (are they all about athletic accomplishment, or are there a mix of trophies)? Is there information about student progress posted? What are the values that the school displays in the entrance hall?

8. **Faculty treatment of students:** How do adults talk with and to students in the school? There is no one best kind of approach – but you and your child should feel comfortable. Is the atmosphere strict? Harsh? Relaxed? Friendly? Does there seem to be a positive attitude toward students? How do you feel about the way people are talking about, and to students?

9. **Building condition:** How does the building look? Is it well maintained? Is it inviting? How clean is it? (These are all signs of a good school – ineffective schools often are messy).

10. **How do students treat each other? Are they friendly and respectful?**

*Center for School Change, Macalester College*
Front cover photos:  
(top) Great River School  
(middle left) College Prep Elementary 
(middle right) Sojourner Truth Academy 
(bottom) 2011 Essay Contest Ceremony at MN State Capitol

Back cover photos:  
(left) Sojourner Truth Academy 
(below) Great River School

Additional information about charter schools is available on these websites:

Center for School Change
www.centerforschoolchange.org

Minnesota Association of Charter Schools
www.mncharterschools.org