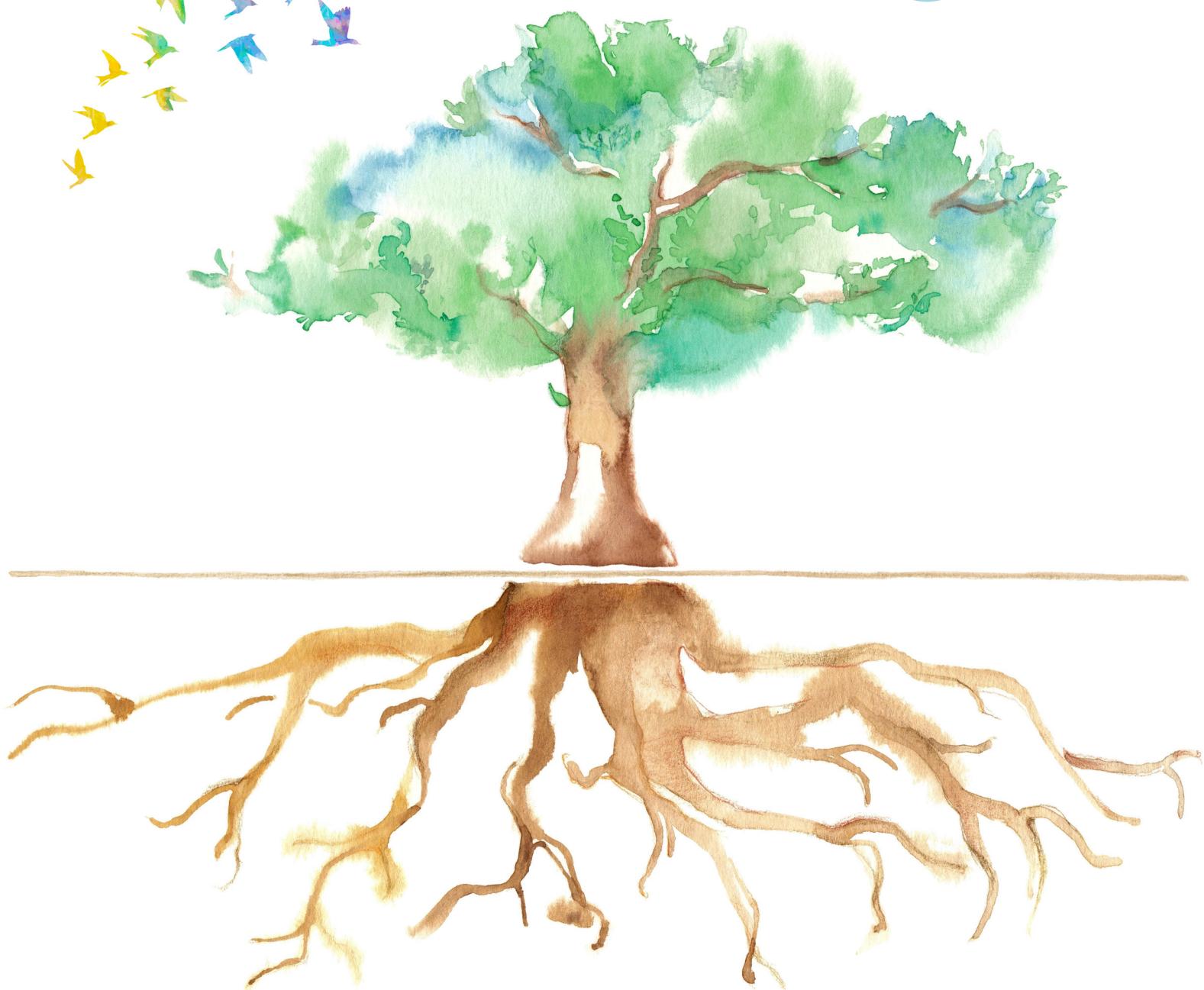


# roots and wings



WACO MONTESSORI SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2028



The greatest  
gifts we can give  
our children  
are the roots of  
responsibility  
and the wings of  
independence.

-Dr. Maria Montessori

# Roots and Wings

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Waco Montessori School (WMS) stands distinctive in the greater Waco community because of our commitment to the Montessori Method pioneered by Dr. Maria Montessori nearly a century ago. Rooted in research-based practices, the Montessori Method fosters rigorous, self-motivated growth for children and adolescents in all areas of their development — cognitive, emotional, social, and physical.

As we embark on a six year strategic plan for WMS, we will deepen our roots in the Montessori Method to inspire the next generation of innovative leaders and independent thinkers who will transform the world.

When children discover their joy of learning, the academic outcomes are limitless. Montessori students grow wings of independence that take them to achievements beyond those afforded through other pedagogies, proving Waco Montessori School the best environment for early childhood to sixth grade education in our community.

To this end, we are committed to cultivating five areas of growth for our school as we prepare to celebrate 50 years of distinguished Montessori education at Waco Montessori School:

## I: Roots of Responsibility

We are committed to having a community united in purpose that has consistent clear communication.

## II: Wings of Learning

We are committed to creating a culture where each member is expected to contribute to our common goal of creating an exceptional Montessori educational journey for all.

## III: Roots of Connectivity

We are committed to creating a community that seeks to encourage one another.

## IV: Wings of Independence

We are committed to ensuring the long-term health of the school.

## V: Roots of Community

We are committed to being a proactive force in our local community.

# I: Roots of Responsibility

We are committed to having a community united in purpose that has consistent clear communication.

At Waco Montessori School, we use the language of respect to define expectations for how we interact with the child and how the child should interact with their environment. To further cultivate a culture of respect within our community, we must have fidelity of purpose through transparent, open, and consistent communication. From the Board of Trustees to the administration, teachers, parents, and students, all members of our community are responsible for and worthy of respectful interactions that bring order, manage expectations, and acknowledge the value of each individual.



MILESTONE	MEASUREMENT	2023 PROGRESS	2024 PROGRESS	2025 PROGRESS
Transparent evaluation and development processes established for each level of governance, inclusive of Board and governance of HOS	Annual HOS evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weekly meeting with HOS and Board president</li> <li>- No evaluation during interim HOS year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weekly meeting w/ HOS and Board president</li> <li>- Development of a clear and measurable HOS evaluation based on HOS job description with input from HOS and the Board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weekly meeting w/ HOS and Board president</li> <li>- Development of a clear and measurable HOS evaluation based on HOS job description with input from HOS and the Board</li> </ul>
Train incoming Board members and strengthen Board governance and processes based on research-based best practices in board operations	Annual Plan for Incoming Board members, returning members, and Exec Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New member orientation conducted by President and Vice President</li> <li>- Presentation by Felicia Goodman of the Cooper Foundation: Board Governance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New member orientation conducted by President and Vice President</li> <li>- Monthly presentation at each Board meeting by COT over research-based best practices in Board operations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New member orientation conducted by President and Vice President</li> <li>- Board governance training by the Cooper Foundation with incoming Board Members</li> </ul>
Annual statement of community-wide goals published, and communication plan to report progress toward goals	Annual statement of goals published to full school community; yearly update on progress against strategic plan published to full school community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Statement of goals published in January 2023 from BOT presidents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Statement of goals published in January 2024 from BOT president</li> <li>- Progress on Strategic Plan published in May 2024 - at end of Board Year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Statement of goals published in January 2025 from BOT president</li> <li>- Progress on Strategic Plan published in May 2025 - at end of Board Year</li> </ul>
Clear, consistent and documented processes for all student plans, inclusive of behavior, academic and/or health exceptionalities	All programs utilize Transparent Classroom	LE began using Transparent Classroom	Updated Parent Handbook	<p>On-going</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Administration is tracking all students</li> <li>- Template developed for Parent Conferences</li> <li>- Procedures were developed for Reading Intervention program</li> </ul>
MILESTONE	MEASUREMENT	2026 PROGRESS	2027 PROGRESS	2028 PROGRESS

## II: Wings of Learning

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We are committed to creating a culture where each member is expected to contribute to our common goal of creating an exceptional Montessori educational journey for all.

Fidelity to the Montessori Method is paramount to maintaining distinction within the educational landscape of the Waco community. The American Montessori Society recognizes five components as critical to high-fidelity implementation of the Montessori Method — trained Montessori teachers, the multi-age classroom, using Montessori materials, child-directed work, and uninterrupted work periods. When guided in a truly Montessori learning environment, students soar “as confident, enthusiastic, and self-directed learners and citizens, accountable to both themselves and their community. They think critically, work collaboratively, and act boldly and with integrity.”<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> American Montessori Society; <https://amshq.org/About-Montessori/What-Is-Montessori>

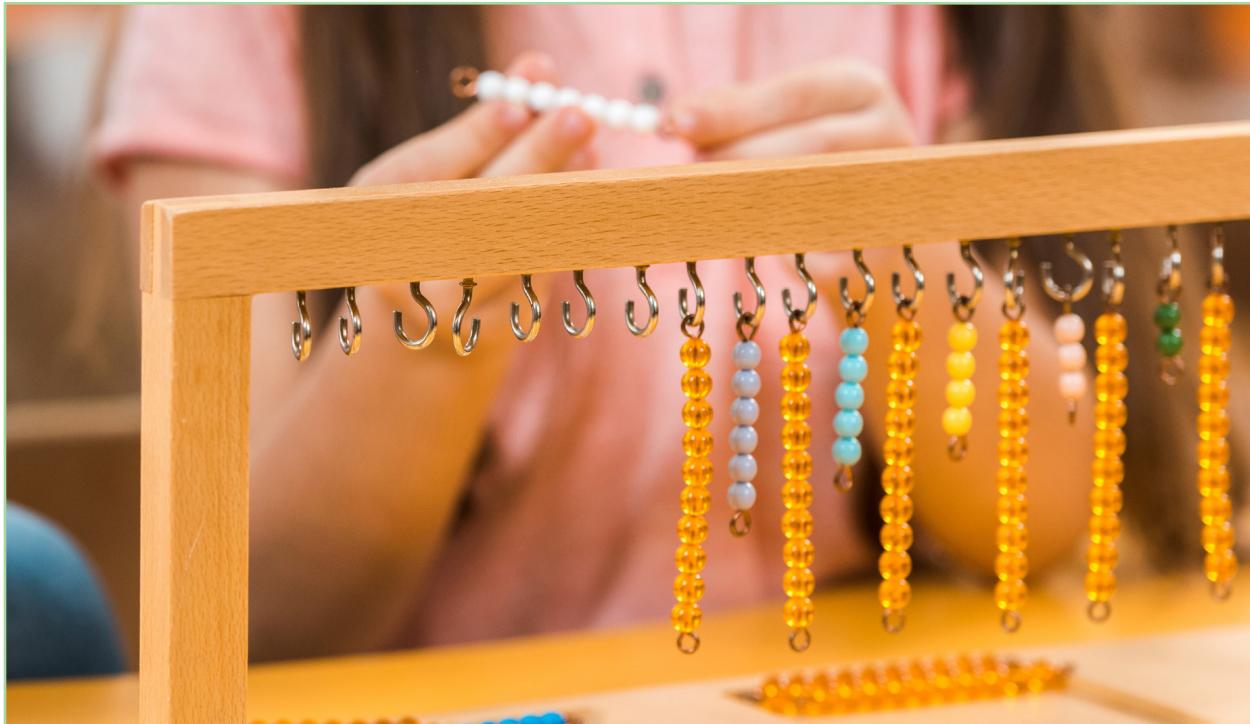
MILESTONE	MEASUREMENT	2023 PROGRESS	2024 PROGRESS	2025 PROGRESS
Achieve American Montessori Society accreditation	Accreditation by 2029	Submitted application for AMS Verified School	AMS Verified School	- Accreditation Candidate - Self Study started
Clear vision on WMS approach to learning exceptionailities defined: Who we are and who and how we serve, with communication plan	Document developed with consensus from administration and teachers	HOS and BOT reviewed recommendations from two outside Montessori Consultants	Work in progress	Document developed for reading intervention procedures and communicated in Parent Handbook
Defined plan for living out the Montessori value allowing children to develop at their own pace by following their own, unique set of interests	Adults look at all children from a strength's based perspective	Work in progress	Training planned for August 2024	- Staff Development in August 2024 and January 2025 - Use of transparent classroom
All lead teachers Montessori certified (assistant, specials, and enrichment teachers Montessori trained) with documented opportunities for professional development throughout their tenure	All lead teachers Montessori Certified or enrolled in a certification program	Five teachers started a certification program and one completed	- All lead teachers certified or in a certification program as of February 2024 - Two teachers completed LE certification, one completed EC - HOS in a Master's in Montessori Leadership program	- All lead teachers are certified or in a certification program as of May 2025 - Two Toddlers teachers completed Montessori Certification - HOS completed Master's in Montessori Leadership program
All children grades 1-6 achieving significant academic growth over the three-year cycle, making meaningful progress toward closing gaps with or surpassing grade level work	Teacher observations Stafford Scores Reading Scores	Achieved	Work in Progress	Progress is tracked through Teacher observations, Transparent Classroom, Acadience, Stafford and OLSAT testing, and Renaissance scores
MILESTONE	MEASUREMENT	2026 PROGRESS	2027 PROGRESS	2028 PROGRESS

## III: Roots of Connectivity

We are committed to creating a community that seeks to encourage one another.

The language of Montessori incorporates the term “grace and courtesy” where children are formally instructed in social skills they will use throughout their lives. These skills are first observed in the home and then are modeled by the classroom guides. Grace and courtesy are cornerstones to a successful Montessori journey.

As we pursue and require deeper, more meaningful connections within our school through various engagement opportunities in and outside of the school learning environment, we will create a foundation of mutual respect built from the grace and courtesy we extend to one another.

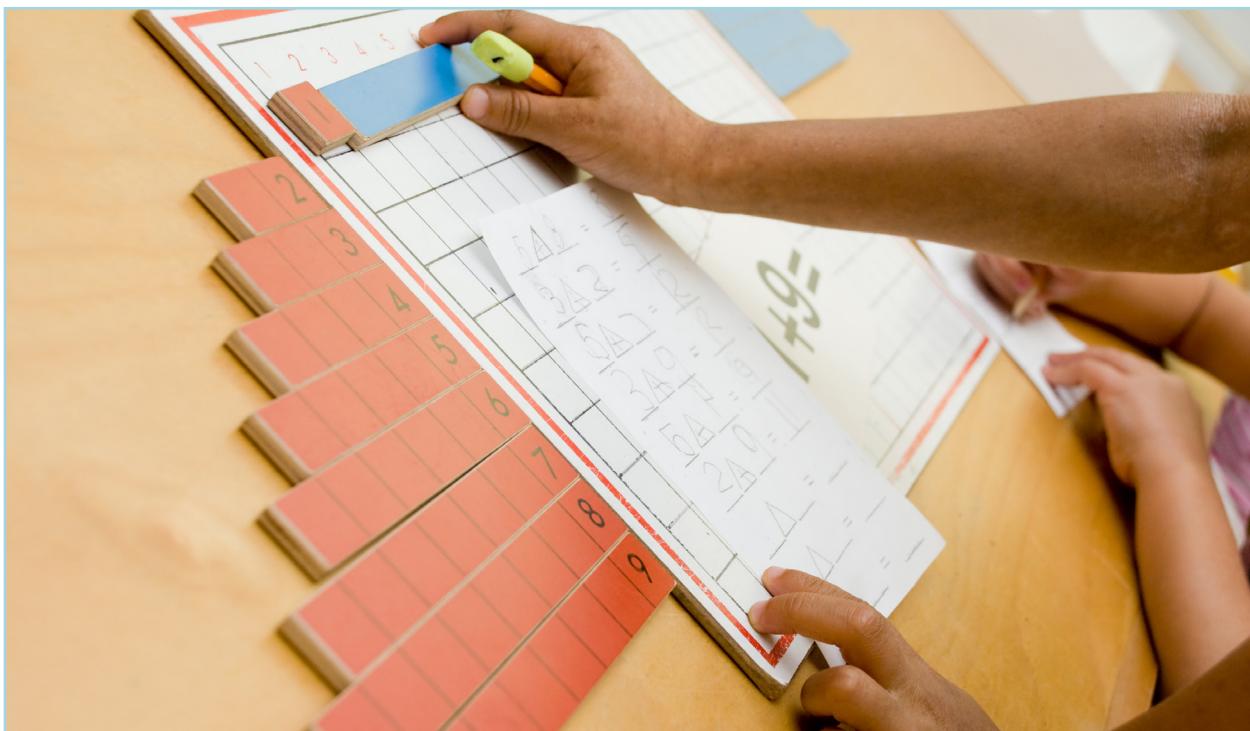


MILESTONE	MEASUREMENT	2023 PROGRESS	2024 PROGRESS	2025 PROGRESS
Develop and execute a plan for family engagement, supporting parents in creating a home environment conducive to Montessori practice, and communication of expectations	Parents attend parent education sessions	Work in progress	Three parent education sessions offered and well attended	Five parent education sessions offered and well attended
Identify methods for collecting and incorporating staff and community ideas for school improvement; create an annual system of review and accountability for implementation	Annual Employee feedback survey  HOS to input other comments	Received feedback from staff via Employee Survey in spring	Employee feedback presented to BOT and School Life committee, along with recommended improvements for administration for BOT to implement	Employee feedback presented to BOT and School Life committee, along with recommended improvements for administration for BOT to implement
Cultivate a culture of grace and courtesy through establishment of community expectations and accountability for interactions within the WMS community	Observations Surveys	Shared commitment for Grace and Courtesy Document created	Staff and Parent education on Montessori Grace and Courtesy conducted by AIM	On-going
Create a facility enrichment plan in the spirit of Montessori fidelity that is child-centric and promotes lively and purposeful engagement in both indoor and outdoor settings	Written maintenance plan developed  Enhancement of current facility	Campus security improved Gardens maintained Playground clean up	Greenhouse added	- Transformation of 1818 building to hold specials - Campus security improved with added cameras - Playground clean up days
MILESTONE	MEASUREMENT	2026 PROGRESS	2027 PROGRESS	2028 PROGRESS

## IV: Wings of Independence

We are committed to ensuring the long-term health of the school.

For nearly 50 years, Waco Montessori School has educated children in our community, and we look forward to more years to come. To ensure WMS continues to thrive, we must set forth an ambitious financial plan to secure the future of the school. We will define expectations for giving and ask the Waco Montessori School community to give even more generously of their time, resources, and talents so that the school can soar to new operational heights.



MILESTONE	MEASUREMENT	2023 PROGRESS	2024 PROGRESS	2025 PROGRESS
Transition operating budget to be fully funded by earned revenue (not fundraising)	Conduct quarterly assessment tracking with progress to goal, with BOT discussion	No change in reliance on fundraising, as Board prioritized increases to teacher compensation	No change in reliance on fundraising, in response to lower than expected enrollment	Decreased reliance on fundraising, increased enrollment
Define capital campaign plan, setting the groundwork for a robust fundraising effort incorporating the celebration of the school's 50th anniversary in 2027	IAC, HOS, Staff development lead, and Capital Campaign chair determined and work through campaign planning phase, silent phase, and public phase	Postponed during search for new HOS  Pre-work progress made in compiling list of historical giving	Postponed while focusing on current fundraising needs, and pending appointment of a development lead on staff to begin capital campaign planning phase	Development Director hired July 2025
Develop plan to significantly increase volunteerism throughout the year and measure growth of active WMS community engaging through PTO, classrooms and campaigns	Volunteer interest forms distributed and reviewed	Increase in parent volunteers in the classrooms, Chess Club started, parents attending PTO meetings	On-going	Achieved
Continue closing out each year with financial solvency, and growing services and/or staff compensation whenever possible based on earned revenues	Conduct quarterly assessment tracking progress to goal, with BOT discussion	Achieved as of 7/31/23, with substantial increases to teacher compensation approved	Not achieved due to addition of new toddler classroom and expansion to 1818 building	On track to be achieved for 2024-2025 fiscal year ending July 31, 2025
MILESTONE	MEASUREMENT	2026 PROGRESS	2027 PROGRESS	2028 PROGRESS

## V: Roots of Community

We are committed to being a proactive force in our local community.

Maria Montessori urged us to give children a “vision of the universe” to help them discover how all of its parts are interconnected and interdependent and to help them understand their place in society and the world. A Montessori education has the power to transform a student and inspire them to act for the greater good in their local community and throughout the globe.

Waco Montessori School is rooted in uptown Waco, positioning the school to live out this commitment of transformation and inclusion in practical ways throughout our neighborhood and the entire Central Texas community.



MILESTONE	MEASUREMENT	2023 PROGRESS	2024 PROGRESS	2025 PROGRESS
Maintain NAEYC accreditation and good standing in child care licensure	Annual accreditation through NAEYC and good standing with CCL	NAEYC accreditation in place - final year of term  In good standing with CCL	NAEYC re-accreditation secured through March 1, 2029  In good standing with CCL	Achieved
Define plan to build community service into our program and culture	IAC to input	Food Drive Letters to Veterans Toy Drive	Achieved	Achieved Activities include: - Food Drive - Campus Clean Up - Toy Drive - Supporting students in lower grades
Lay the groundwork for a tuition scholarship program or "Giving back" citizenship component to 50th anniversary celebrations and capital campaign	HOS to input		HOS worked with Waco Foundation Endowment	HOS working with IA and Development Director
MILESTONE	MEASUREMENT	2026 PROGRESS	2027 PROGRESS	2028 PROGRESS

