

**WORLD'S BEST WORK FORCE**

**ANNUAL PROGRAM REPORT**

**Every Child Has Opportunities**

**Charter School**

**2020-2021**



# **ECHO Charter School**

Every Child Has Opportunities Charter School

## **Annual Report 2020-2021**

The purpose of this report is to inform the stakeholders of Every Child Has Opportunities Charter School of the successes and challenges of our school. We take very seriously the two broad responsibilities of providing a rigorous quality education and doing so with high regard for fiscal accountability. Our stakeholders are our students, their families, our staff, our community, and the state and federal taxpayers.

The following mission and vision statements were developed along with three strategic initiatives in 2015, although it bears mentioning that stakeholders and school leadership are discussing modifications in these statements to reflect the goals of lifelong learning, particularly given the challenges of the global Pandemic, which has highlighted both obstacles and adaptations as a consequence of its presence.

### **School Mission Statement:**

ECHO Charter School's Mission is to be your school of choice by preparing students to achieve to their highest potential through an innovative and uniquely flexible curriculum.

### **School Vision Statement:**

Our vision is to be the most highly respected school in Southwest Minnesota noted for caring, innovating and preparing students to succeed.

### **Strategic Initiatives**

1. Operate a school that is fiscally sound and responsibly lead.
2. Create a school climate that nurtures student learning.
3. Strengthen our programs and services to maximize student success.

## **Our School Year**

### **Introduction: Another Year of Schooling in the Era of Covid**

Like every school in America, ECHO Charter School, its families, and its staff, has continued to struggle with the effects of the Pandemic, outbreaks, and school closures. Resilience is one of our staff's collective qualities, however, and although the Pandemic has tested our staying power, our second Covid year also saw continued flexibility on our part (as well as the nation's) and we were able to employ CARES funding in a meaningful way that deepened student learning through the use of technology and our 1:1 program.

Board and administrative leadership, having brought in a local doctor in late summer 2020 who explained the Covid landscape, made an informed decision to start the year in a distance learning mode for grades 3-12; K-1-2 students remained in-person with extreme mitigation strategies in place. Part of the reason for this cautious approach was that we did not want to be pivoting into different learning modes all fall; we wanted to adopt one plan that would remain in place over an extended period of time. Following our four service area counties' per-10,000 Covid numbers, this seemed like the most sensible decision. We also solicited input from families and students, many of whom expressed fear about sending their students into a very public space every day. (In fact, several families had planned to move to online providers had we decided to convene in person.) The only thing that remained was to use the run-up to the school year to assemble technology and distribute it to our students. Having secured an IT head for the District, this process was completed so that online classes could be conducted and special efforts could be made to reach out to special needs students.

Along with conducting online classes, we also continued to deliver food to students through the distance learning period. We also operated a day care center for local families who served as front-line workers. Several outbreaks required us to follow CDC and MDH/MDE guidance and temporarily close, but we offered day care service up until the day we reconvened in person.

We learned many lessons that may not otherwise have been made so obvious to us: families felt (and continue to feel) vulnerable and in some extreme cases, experienced deep grief. In fact, one of our families lost *four* family members to Covid. They feel shaken by fear of the unknown as Covid circulates and they worry about the health and safety of their children; they also worry about their learning and many parents thus became true partners in the education of their children as we moved through our online learning months. We applaud and appreciate their efforts.

### **General Information:**

Our school serves students in grades K-12. We completed our twenty-fourth year of operation in 2021, a major milestone. While attracting and retaining students is our number one operational priority, we were encouraged by the fact that so many families flock to E.C.H.O. because they valued our flexibility and resilience where the Pandemic is concerned. We were told that larger school districts' "unforgiving" practices with their online classes made our soft touch very attractive, and we thus ended up enrolling many new students, not only replacing our 2020 graduates, but also replacing students whose families moved out of the area or state.

There has been a great deal of national dialogue about the so-called lost year for student learning and the fact that students of color are being left behind their peers at an even greater rate. We found that this was not universally true at ECHO Charter School and that many students who might have performed poorly actually did very well with distance learning. The opposite was also true: students whom we expected to stay on task and get work done, did not always live up to expectation. However, although Covid variants continue to impede our progress, we also know so much more than we did when schools in Minnesota closed in March, 2020, and these lessons learned have made us better educators.

### **Our Identity:**

The prevailing discussion about the future of the school over the years has been set in the framework of identifying school identity, history, and values. Why are we here? Whom do we serve? How do we define our identity? We realize that we are an unusual school in the sense that students have migrated here from other districts in order to fulfill a number of needs, which include inclusion, empathetic environment, small class sizes, and opportunities that are not available to them in other districts. As one grandparent put it, "Our granddaughter would not have had a speaking role in the play at her former school because she was not included in these types of events in the past. This is what we love about ECHO." Therefore, what we have come to know over the years is that we fulfill a very special mission in how students are included in the flow of the school: they are patient, inclusive, and believe in letting their fellow students "do their own thing." We have a 65%+ rate of Free/Reduced, along with a rate of about 34% special needs population.

### **Our Curriculum and Schedule:**

In pre-K through grade 8, we follow the Core Knowledge Sequence and we are a nationally recognized Core Knowledge Visitation School. In grades 7 and 8, the teachers use the Core Knowledge Sequence as a guide for teaching English and Social Studies. Grades 9-12 are taught through a combination of traditional classroom settings and Project-Based Learning (PBL). Each year we continue to improve the quality of PBL so that students can use this method as a way of facilitating deeper learning in the content of their design. Both traditional classroom learning and PBL are ways for students to enjoy the option of earning their elective credits through their design of projects.

### **Learning through travel:**

*The description that follows is one that is representative of a non-Covid year! We hope to resume student travel in Spring, 2022.*

There is no greater classroom than being exposed to people and places out of our norm. Our high school students have a wonderful opportunity to build on this thought and to enhance their education by participating in extended school travel. We have a cycle of travel to Chicago/Boston/Niagara Falls; Philadelphia/New York; Washington D.C.; and Memphis/Nashville/St. Louis. Occasionally, other regions, such as a Black Hills, are added to the rotation. Students in grades 9-12 therefore have the opportunity to travel with us on any or all of these trips to experience environments that are very diverse from their rural home setting. Our 2018 high school trip took the students to Denver, Colorado, where they attended a Rockies game, toured the Denver Mint, and had a lot of educational fun. We have had alumni of our school share with us the positive impact of these trips. It has given them the confidence to expand their career endeavors to horizons they would not have felt possible without these experiences. This is one innovative opportunity that has been very successful for our school and students.

Travel is not just for higher schoolers! Our junior high kids in grades 7-8 also go on annual field trips to places in the state, including Rochester and Duluth. This builds not only a “knowledge bank” but also inspires them to look forward to the longer field trips that the high school students enjoy.

#### **Extra- and co-curricular activities at ECHO:**

*The description that follows is representative of a non-Covid year. We plan to resume regular sports programming in Spring, 2022.*

At ECHO, our students are very lucky to be able to participate in sports programs. We offer girls volleyball, girls and boys basketball, and trap, which is coeducational. Other programs offered at ECHO are Yearbook and Student Council.

*Due to the global Pandemic, no theatre production or student activities were held in Fall, 2020, or Spring, 2021. What follows is a description of our activities in Spring, 2019. We will resume theatre programming, travel, and fundraising in Fall, 2021.*

Students in grades 5 through 12 participated in the production of “Dinner at Eight; Dead by Nine”, a hilarious melodrama that brought out the thespian not only in students, but also a few of the staff. It was performed twice during the weekend as a dinner theatre. The performances attracted nearly 150 attendees, who paid \$15 per person for their gourmet dinner and theatre experience. A Christmas concert was organized by staff and K-6 classes all sang and performed, and former choir members and interested students sang Christmas carols in an evening performance for parents, along with a community concert at the ECHO Community Center.

#### **Fall/Winter, 2019, and Spring, 2020, Activities:**

We also have many community events here at the school that our staff and students participate in or attend. Our students helped plan, set up and run our Spirit Week and National School Choice Week Events, which included daily themed events for students. Under the direction of our Fundraising Committee, we held several burger feed fundraising events at our school during our Back to School Night, Christmas concert, and spring fundraiser. In addition, at each concert, we raised funds through free will donation root beer float nights and other minor events. These events required a significant commitment of time from both teachers and community members and are truly a labor of love for the school.

Our LEADERS group, operated in cooperation with the Yellow Medicine Chemical Coalition, also served as a student advisory group for the Learning Center, in addition to doing service learning projects and encouraging healthy decision making among our youth. LEADERS representatives also learn about doing for others: they played bingo and shared social time with elders at a local nursing home and the value of those relationships was illuminated as an important part of building their leadership skills and capacity for empathy.

## Student Attrition

2019-  
2020

Enrolled Oct. 1	Enrolled after Oct.1	Transfer after Oct.1	Enrolled End of School
5	1	0	1
0	1	0	1
3	0	0	3
2	0	0	2
3	0	0	5
3	0	0	2
5	0	0	5
7	0	1	8
9	0	0	7
5	1	0	6
8	0	0	8
2	1	0	5
6	1	0	6
<b>58</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>65</b>

## 2020-2021

	Enrolled Oct. 1 Oct. 1	Enrolled after after Oct. 1	Transfer after Oct. 1	Enrolled end of year
K	4	0	0	4
1	5	1	1	5
2	1	1	1	1
3	3	1	1	3
4	3	0	1	2
5	5	0	0	5
6	3	0	0	3
7	11	2	2	11
8	10	2	0	12
9	8	1	1	8
10	8	1	1	8
11	7	2	1	8
12	2	1	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>72</b>

## School Enrollment

The demographics of our student population is a very close reflection of the demographics for our rural area.

Enrollment has been our primary task over the past three years. We had one year when numbers dropped notably, but in the two years since then, we have been stable at about 68-69 students. We would like to add another ten students to our enrollment while maintaining our current roster. However, there are a number of reasons that families enroll their students here: exclusion, no personalized attention, disciplinary issues, “falling between the cracks”, and the like. Families also like our small class sizes and the fact that any disciplinary issues are dealt with immediately.

Following a drop in our enrollment in 2018-2019, we set about to build enrollment in 2019-2020. We continued to play to our strengths so that for students who transferred, and both students and parents strongly felt they had an alternative to their former resident district. For long-established families, ECHO Charter continued to operate as the centerpiece of their educational and academic lives. The 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 numbers below are actuals.

Grade	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023 est.
K	7	2	2
1	1	3	3
2	3	6	3
3	2	2	6
4	5	3	3
5	2	1	3
6	5	3	1
7	8	3	3
8	7	7	3
9	6	11	8
10	8	11	11
11	5	10	11
12	6	7	10
Total	65	68	69

## Academic Program/Performance Student Achievement

*Due to the global Pandemic, MCAs were not conducted in Spring, 2020. The following information is from 2019 with 2021 information in the next section.*

The 2018-2019 school year showed significant improvement in MCA testing in Math, Reading, and Science, as follows:

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
<b>Math</b>	12.3%	<b>23.3%</b>	No testing
<b>Reading</b>	35.2%	<b>52.4%</b>	No testing
<b>Science</b>	27.3%	<b>36.8%</b>	No testing

This improvement in student performance on the MCAs is due to a number of factors, which mostly is credited to creating and executing a focused plan on reinforcing math vocabulary and math skills. Each afternoon, students in grades seven and eight did drills that helped them reacquire basic foundational math concepts. We saw an attendant rise in scores for those two grades, along with growth for elementary students as well, whose teachers coordinated drills and reinforcement of concepts.

As noted above, Science and Reading scores also rose in 2018; we attribute this achievement to focused teaching in both of these content areas, as well as Title assistance in the elementary grades.

Our Quality Compensation goals focused on improving reading comprehension for grades K-12 were accomplished. The Q-Comp plan for ongoing staff development and our goals were based on using research-based reading strategies across the curriculum. These strategies were presented during staff development days and then carried into the classroom. Peer coaches observed and mentored teachers in order to improve the success of our students. Classroom goals pertaining to reading were set by teachers and each teacher met his or her goal during the year; continuous dialogue concerning data mining was also part of weekly professional learning community meetings.

Reading strategies and vocabulary-building strategies were presented during staff development were part of whole class instruction and also used as part of small group and one-to-one interventions. Planning centered on instructional strategies designed to help students “deep mine” concepts and vocabulary were part of our year-long PLC meetings.

The teachers of grades K-6 have followed, and continue to follow, the Core Knowledge Sequence. This curriculum is rigorous and prevents redundancy as it spirals through the grades to enrich the topics covered in earlier grades. The Core Knowledge Language Arts program, used in grades K-5 is based on decades of cognitive science research revealing that reading is a two-lock box—a box that requires two keys to open. The first key is decoding skills, which are addressed in the Skills strand of the CKLA program. The second key is oral language, vocabulary, and background knowledge sufficient to understand what is decoded; this is found in the Listening and Learning strand.

In grade 9 through 12, the core classes are still offered in a traditional classroom setting while offering Project Based Learning as an elective credit alternative. In addition, an online math program covering a wide variety of math curricula was made available for students who either needed to recover credit for classes previously failed,

or used for students coming into the district who had various credit needs. Though this program did not serve students as expected during 2014-2015, it proved to be a valuable addition to building math capacity in 2015-2016, and again in 2016-2017.

**Future Plans:**

Our student population is heavy with Special Education students, students who live in poverty, and transient students who appear at our doorstep as “refugees” of sorts—they have not been successful in other school districts in terms of academics, social lives, and/or disciplinary actions. They appear to be highly mobile and some of them “school-hop”, depending on their circumstances. Our goal then is to help these students to develop a sense of belonging here that will enable them to be permanent within our district.

Additionally, we have learned that word of mouth has been our best aid in attracting students, so we work hard to maintain positive lines of communication with students and families so that they feel invested as stakeholders within our district. This will enable us to secure students to maintain viability as well as to meet individual students’ needs in the building.

*The following information comes from the Minnesota Department of Education Report Card.*

**2020-2021 Testing, Attendance, and Graduation Data**

**Note—Student Performance on MCAs:**

There were no MCAs offered during 2019-2020, and we were nervous about that “layoff” in time for our 2021 MCA testing. Distance/online learning posed an enormous challenge for MCA prep, and because we were in and out of session because of Covid outbreaks, performance was extremely poor. What follows are state data for our graduation, MCA results, and attendance.

***The number of students attending school regularly: E.C.H.O. Charter School***

This is a measure of students who attend school on a regular basis and are not frequently absent. A student is considered consistently attending if they attend more than 90 percent of the time the student is enrolled during the year.

\*Please note that during 2020-2021, we were in Distance/Online Learning mode, making attendance difficult to take. When students did not turn in packet work or log on, they were counted absent. Therefore, the attendance percentage below appears artificially low.

	Statewide	E.C.H.O. Charter School
<b>Consistent attendance</b>	85.3%	68.7%*
<b>Count</b>	794,846	67

\* \* \* \*

**Graduation rate over time: E.C.H.O. Charter School**

Demographic	Year	Graduated count	Graduated %
All students	2016	CTSTR	CTSTR
All students	2017	9	90.0%
All students	2018	13	92.9%
All students	2019	CTSTR	100%*
All students	2020	CTSTR	100%*

\*Samples appear on Minnesota Department of Education Minnesota Report Card page as CTSTR, meaning that there were not enough students to report. However, our own records show that we had 100% graduation rates in 2019 and 2020.



**MCA Testing: E.C.H.O. Charter School**

To comply with federal laws, changes have been made in the Minnesota report card to protect the identity of students. Data reported on less than 10 students in a category will no longer be available in the assessment reports on the Minnesota Report Card.

**Math results follow.**

Due to COVID-19, no summarized assessment data is available for 2020

Year		Exceeds	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
2019	Count	2	8	13	23
	Percent	4.3%	17.4%	28.3%	50.0%
2020	Count	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Percent	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2021	Count	0	2	4	26
	Percent	0.0%	6.3%	12.5%	81.3%

To comply with federal laws, changes have been made in the Minnesota report card to protect the identity of students. Data reported on less than 10 students in a category will no longer be available in the assessment reports on the Minnesota Report Card.

**Reading results follow.**

Due to COVID-19, no summarized assessment data is available for 2020

<b>Year</b>		<b>Exceeds</b>	<b>Meets</b>	<b>Partially meets</b>	<b>Does not meet</b>
<b>2019</b>	Count	4	18	10	11
	Percent	9.3%	41.9%	23.3%	25.6%
<b>2020</b>	Count	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Percent	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>2021</b>	Count	2	3	7	18
	Percent	6.7%	10.0%	23.3%	60.0%

**Science results follow.**

To comply with federal laws, changes have been made in the Minnesota report card to protect the identity of students. Data reported on less than 10 students in a category will no longer be available in the assessment reports on the Minnesota Report Card.

Due to COVID-19, no summarized assessment data is available for 2020

<b>Year</b>		<b>Exceeds</b>	<b>Meets</b>	<b>Partially meets</b>	<b>Does not meet</b>
<b>2019</b>	Count	1	6	4	8
	Percent	5.3%	31.6%	21.1%	42.1%
<b>2020</b>	Count	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Percent	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>2021</b>	Count	0	1	2	8
	Percent	0.0%	9.1%	18.2%	72.7%

## Purpose

ECHO Charter School has five purposes for its existence and strives to accomplish, evaluate, and improve on each of these purposes each year.

### 1) Improve pupil learning and achievement

- a. This item is covered in the section following which discusses our student achievement and School Improvement Plan.
- b. Our first through eighth grade students participate in the Accelerated Reading (AR) program. This encourages our students to read at their ability level. They are rewarded for every quarter that they meet their reading goal.
- c. Our elementary students participate in multi-age Book Clubs. This provides every student an opportunity to experience, discuss, and improve their reading at their ability level.

### 2) Increase learning opportunities.

*In 2020-2021, we had planned to hold multi-age activities in the spring, but a cycle of outbreaks at school meant that we did not hold any extra activities schoolwide. Normally we would have had a great many activities, such as sports, prom, family fun nights, track and field day, awards day, et cetera. Therefore, the following information comes from 2018-2019 and we were able to resume some of these events in Fall, 2021, but not all of them.*

- a. In the early years of our school we had many opportunities for multi-age groups to participate in various activities; each group was composed of students who represented each grade. The idea was that kids would get to know one another and younger students would look up to their older counterparts. These activities allowed students from all ages to mingle and work together while still having fun. Some of our activities included homecoming week activities, turkey bingo, holiday activities, Pep fests, and Track and Field day. We had many fun-filled afternoons along with a week of activities during National School Choice week.
- b. Since the beginning of our school we have encouraged extensive travel for our students. The travel with the most impact is the four-year cycle experienced by our students in grades 9-12, described in the “Learning through travel” section on page 4. Since our students are most comfortable in their rural, small town atmosphere, these trips afford them the opportunity to experience lifestyles and cultures to which they would not normally have access. This travel also affords the students opportunities to visit many historic sites and walk in the footprints of this country’s founding fathers and influential people in U.S. history.
- c. This year we continued to offer 9th through 12th graders the option of fulfilling their elective credits with Project Based Learning (PBL). Our students use Project Foundry to design, implement, and assess their own learning experiences in their elective classes. For example, students worked credit recovery in core areas (math, English, Social/History and Science. This stigma-free learning method begins to prepare students for a life beyond high school and post-secondary education.

### 3) Use different and innovative teaching methods

- a. In grades K-8 our teachers follow the Core Knowledge Sequence. This curriculum is rigorous, prevents redundancy and skipping, and spirals through the grades to enrich the topics covered in earlier grades. During the 2020-2021 school year, we continued using the Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) program in grades kindergarten through grade 3. (Grades 4 and 5 have been using the CKLA in its entirety beginning in the fall of 2015.) Core Knowledge Language Arts is based on decades of cognitive science research revealing that reading is a two-lock box—a box that requires two keys to open. The first key is decoding skills, which are addressed in the Skills strand of the CKLA program. The second key is oral language, vocabulary, and background knowledge sufficient to understand what is decoded.

- b. We have continued to refine our ability to offer Project-Based Learning by matching credentialed teachers with students who are either in credit-recovery mode, or who are seeking to expand their horizons through deep study in core areas of interest.
- c. We have offered cross-grade programming so that fifth and sixth graders have been included in science programming such as dissection labs and experiments.

**4) Measure learning outcomes using innovative measurement tools**

- a. During 2015-2016, we switched to STAR testing in reading and math from NWEA to shorten the length of time students spent testing. STAR testing gives the teachers useful data for showing student progress and areas of weakness. STAR testing is administered three times per year so that we can see trends for each student and it has been a very successful program for goal-setting.
- b. In the upper grades, the use of Project Foundry, the students take an active role in their evaluation of projects by determining which standards will be met by their project. Students presented their projects to their teachers and peers.
- c. We have been building profiles of each student's performance so that we have one comprehensive tracking report that shows performance over multiple years.
- d. In 2020-2021, in order to prepare for MCAs, when we had periods of in-person learning, seventh and eighth graders spent the last fifteen minutes of the day doing math drills. The math teacher, along with a group of three to four additional teachers, coached the kids through a wide variety of math concepts.

**5) Create new professional opportunities for teachers**

- a. At ECHO, teachers have always had a voice in decision making. The teachers have taken an active part in reviewing and revising the school's policy manual, planning and leading staff development and in-service days.
- b. Pursuant to charter school law, our school board makeup involves one or more teachers. At ECHO, we have a board made up of a minimum of one teacher, one parent, and one community member.
- c. Additional professional opportunities are in place because we are a Q-Comp school. Here again, teachers play a key role in establishing goals, planning professional development, and evaluating staff professional practices. These opportunities are enhanced by PLC meetings where we are involved in peer observations and coaching. At the end of the 2020-2021 school year, our entire teaching staff met all their classroom goals set for the year.

## School Governance

The chart below provides information about our school board from July 2020 to June 2021.

This board all received their initial board trainings in previous years. During the 2019-20 year, the Board concentrated on reviewing Policies so that we could update our Policy book. Additionally, Board members received their requisite 100-, 200-, and 300-level trainings.

Name	Board Position	Group (if teacher, file folder #)	Phone Number	E-Mail Address	Board Atten- dance
Eric Kester-Mabon	Director	Parent	701-317-1664	<a href="mailto:ekester-mabon@isd4026.org">ekester-mabon@isd4026.org</a>	12/12
Michell Harder	Director	Parent	320-522-1695	mharder@isd4026.org	10/12
Debbie Eakes	Chair	Parent	320-522-3773	deakes@isd4026.org	12/12
Katie Gullickson	Director	Parent	507-828-9746	<a href="mailto:kgullickson@isd4026.org">kgullickson@isd4026.org</a>	12/12
Nikki Hildahl-Schwartz	Clerk	491378	507-530-2217	Nhildahl-schwartz@isd4026.org	11/12
FILLED 7/21					
Lynn Standfuss	Director	476680	612-790-8722	lstandfuss@isd4026.org	12/12

## School Management & Administration

The school's management and administration is made up of several people fulfilling many of the duties. During the 2020-2021 academic year, the following people occupied their respective roles:

- Helen Blue-Redner, Director: Day-to-day operations of the school, finances, discipline, communication with students, stakeholders, authorizer, MDE, MDH, and MACS.
- Pam Redetzke: Business Manager/MARSS
- Kayla Trotter: transcripts, attendance, secretarial, and report cards.

This team worked together with the staff to ensure student success, to maintain a positive, caring, and accountable environment, and to continue the growth of an innovative and flexible curriculum.

## Staffing/Teaching Faculty Information

The table below lists the certified teaching staff at ECHO Charter School for 2020-2021. We did not have any staff leave during the school year but we did lose two teachers due to downsizing.

NAME	FOLDER	RETURNED
Blue-Redner, Helen	490781	Yes
Isaackson, Jody	358239	No
Reigstad, Holly	366961	Yes
Schwartz, Nikki	491378	Yes
Cole, John	505140	Yes
Lecy, Marsha	315431	Yes
Peavy, Douglas	485765	Yes
Standfuss, Lynn	1002042	Yes
Kix, Ryan	484661	No

## Parent Survey

*Face-to-face Parent Surveys are usually collected at our Spring Awards Ceremony, which is always held the last day of school. However, since we were not conducting any public events in 2020-2021, the surveys were not conducted. The following is information from the 2018-2019 school year.*

Obtaining parental input is a guiding principle for effective planning. Administration of stakeholder surveys thus is one important means of gaining this guidance. The 2018-2019 parent survey was redesigned in order to broaden the base of questions asked. The survey was administered to 26 parents. There were four areas in which the parents were asked their opinions.

In a nutshell, parents feel welcome and feel that their children are receiving a solid education at ECS. We also gained insight into parents' interactions during off-school hours with their children by asking to what extent they talk about their school day and how often they help or supervise homework. A copy of the full findings is attached as Appendix A.

## Finances

Each month during its regular meeting, the ECHO Charter Board of Education carefully reviews financial statements, approves expenditures, and plans for fiscally sound practices. Thus, we have always taken very seriously our obligation to wise and careful use of the public funds allocated for our school. In the past, our healthy fund balance protected us through difficult times. The 2020-2021 academic year saw a continued effort to safeguard our \$1 million unrestricted gift, which had been bequeathed to the school in 2020 from an alumnus who graduated in 1940.

Our audits continue show that over the past nine years, the amount of deficit spending has decreased significantly, proving that sound financial stewardship can and must be practiced.

Administration, staff, and Board worked to keep spending under control. Restructuring staff assignments and seeking alternative learning opportunities for our students are ways we in which we believe we can best utilize our staff and provide an excellent education for our students.

Below is an analysis of our general fund balance from 2016 to 2020. We continue to spread the word about ECHO Charter School in order to attract and retain new students.

<b>FY</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Revenue Over/Under</b>	<b>Fund Balance EOY</b>
FY2021	1,218,451	1,235,393	(16,942)	919,171
FY2020	2,086,393	1,356,795	139,650	869,248
FY2019	1,275,098	1,376,042	(85,385)	(186,329)
FY2018	1,780,459	1,817,490	(37,031)	207,899
FY2017	1,365,528	1,570,409	(204,881)	244,930
FY2016	1,508,477	1,629,679	(121,232)	449,811

*The following financial data come from our FY20 audit, conducted by Hoffman & Brobst.*

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4026**  
**EVERY CHILD HAS OPPORTUNITIES (ECHO) CHARTER SCHOOL**  
**ECHO, MINNESOTA**  
**STATEMENT OF NET POSITION**  
**JUNE 30, 2021**  
**(with Partial Comparative Information as of June 30, 2020)**

	<b>Governmental Activities</b>	
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Assets:</b>		
Cash and Investments	\$ 801,521	\$ 802,192
Accounts Receivable	4,162	749
Due From State of Minnesota	168,514	167,668
Due From Federal Government	23,235	50,948
Due From Other Minnesota School Districts	2,781	9,107
Inventory	1,949	4,125
Prepaid Expenses	2,486	9,878
Total Current Assets	<b>1,004,648</b>	<b>1,044,667</b>
<b>Noncurrent Assets:</b>		
Capital Assets:		
Other Capital Assets, Net of Depreciation	<b>358,713</b>	<b>373,505</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>1,363,361</b>	<b>1,418,172</b>
<b>DEFERRED OUTFLOWS OF RESOURCES</b>		
Related to Pensions	<b>416,044</b>	<b>772,912</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS AND DEFERRED OUTFLOWS OF RESOURCES</b>	<b>\$ 1,779,405</b>	<b>\$ 2,191,084</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities:</b>		
Salaries Payable	\$ 44,007	\$ 49,950
Accounts Payable	19,276	32,829
Payroll Liabilities	21,887	25,422
Due to Other Governmental Units	220	-
Unearned Revenue	86	353
Current Portion of Long-Term Liabilities	-	33,095
Total Current Liabilities	<b>85,476</b>	<b>141,649</b>
<b>Noncurrent Liabilities:</b>		
Net Pension Liability	784,605	797,031
Noncurrent Portion of Long-Term Liabilities	-	115,410
Total Noncurrent Liabilities	<b>784,605</b>	<b>912,441</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>870,081</b>	<b>1,054,090</b>
<b>DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES</b>		
Related to Pensions	<b>1,042,202</b>	<b>1,370,524</b>
<b>NET POSITION</b>		
Net Investment in Capital Assets	358,713	373,505
Restricted For:		
Food Service	2,421	4,125
Other Activities	21,460	23,064
Unrestricted	<b>(515,472)</b>	<b>(634,224)</b>
<b>TOTAL NET POSITION</b>	<b>(132,878)</b>	<b>(233,530)</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES, DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES, AND NET POSITION</b>	<b>\$ 1,779,405</b>	<b>\$ 2,191,084</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4026  
EVERY CHILD HAS OPPORTUNITIES (ECHO) CHARTER SCHOOL  
ECHO, MINNESOTA**

**STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2021**

(with Partial Comparative Information for the Year Ended June 30, 2020)

Functions/Programs	2021				2020	
	Expenses	Charges for Services	Program Revenues Operating Grants and Contributions	Capital Grants and Contributions	Net (Expense) Revenue and Changes in Net Position	Net (Expense) Revenue and Changes in Net Position
<b>Governmental Activities:</b>						
District and School Administration	\$ 60,287				\$ (60,287)	\$ (62,861)
District Support Services	133,208				(133,208)	(179,983)
Regular Instruction	322,349	1,450	127,127		(193,772)	609,862
Exceptional Instruction	218,174	-	213,687		(4,487)	21,233
Instructional Support Services	72,613	-	9,556		(63,057)	(5,078)
Pupil Support Services	156,206	2,247	63,457		(90,502)	(145,231)
Site, Buildings and Equipment	267,314	-	103,333		(163,981)	(174,405)
Fiscal and Other Fixed Cost Programs	13,556	-	-		(13,556)	(9,281)
Loss on Sale of Assets	3,658	-	-		(3,658)	(4,100)
Depreciation - Unallocated**	18,744	-	-		(18,744)	(18,617)
<b>Total Governmental Activities</b>	<b>1,266,109</b>	<b>3,697</b>	<b>517,160</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>(745,252)</b>	<b>31,539</b>
<b>General Revenues:</b>						
Federal and State Aid Not Restricted to Specific Purposes					843,813	628,130
Earnings on Investments					880	826
Miscellaneous Revenues					1,211	1,495
<b>Total General Revenues</b>					<b>845,904</b>	<b>630,451</b>
<b>Change in Net Position</b>					<b>100,652</b>	<b>661,990</b>
<b>Net Position - Beginning of Year</b>					<b>(233,530)</b>	<b>(903,257)</b>
<b>Prior Period Adjustment (GASB No. 84)</b>					<b>-</b>	<b>7,737</b>
<b>Net Position, Beginning of Year, As Restated</b>					<b>(233,530)</b>	<b>(895,520)</b>
<b>Net Position - Ending</b>					<b>\$ (132,878)</b>	<b>\$ (233,530)</b>

\*\* This line excludes direct depreciation expenses of the various programs

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4026**  
**EVERY CHILD HAS OPPORTUNITIES (ECHO) CHARTER SCHOOL**  
**ECHO, MINNESOTA**  
**BALANCE SHEET - GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS**  
**JUNE 30, 2021**  
**(with Partial Comparative Information as of June 30, 2020)**

	<u>Major Funds</u>		<u>Total Governmental Funds</u>	
	<u>General</u>	<u>Food Service</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>				
Cash and Investments	\$ 804,482	\$ -	\$ 804,482	\$ 819,332
Accounts Receivable	3,815	347	4,162	749
Due From State of Minnesota	168,514	-	168,514	167,668
Due From Federal Government	21,678	1,557	23,235	50,948
Due From Other Minnesota School Districts	2,781	-	2,781	9,107
Inventory	-	1,949	1,949	4,125
Prepaid Expenditures	2,014	472	2,486	9,878
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 1,003,284</b>	<b>\$ 4,325</b>	<b>\$ 1,007,609</b>	<b>\$ 1,061,807</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
Checks Written in Excess of Bank Balance	\$ -	\$ 2,961	\$ 2,961	\$ 17,140
Salaries Payable	42,729	1,278	44,007	49,950
Accounts Payable	19,276	-	19,276	32,829
Payroll Liabilities	21,887	-	21,887	25,422
Due to Other Governmental Units	220	-	220	-
Unearned Revenue	-	86	86	353
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>84,112</b>	<b>4,325</b>	<b>88,437</b>	<b>125,694</b>
<b>FUND BALANCES</b>				
Nonspendable Fund Balances	2,014	2,421	4,435	14,003
Restricted Fund Balances	21,460	-	21,460	23,064
Assigned Fund Balances	97,398	-	97,398	115,128
Unassigned Fund Balances	798,300	(2,421)	795,879	783,918
<b>TOTAL FUND BALANCES</b>	<b>919,172</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>919,172</b>	<b>936,113</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES</b>	<b>\$ 1,003,284</b>	<b>\$ 4,325</b>	<b>\$ 1,007,609</b>	<b>\$ 1,061,807</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4026  
EVERY CHILD HAS OPPORTUNITIES (ECHO) CHARTER SCHOOL  
ECHO, MINNESOTA  
RECONCILIATION OF THE GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS BALANCE SHEET  
TO THE STATEMENT OF NET POSITION  
JUNE 30, 2021  
(with Partial Comparative Information as of June 30, 2020)**

	<b>2021</b>		<b>2020</b>
<b>Total Fund Balances for Governmental Funds</b>	<b>\$ 919,172</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>936,113</b>
 Amounts reported for governmental activities in the Statement of Net Position are different because:			
 Capital assets used in governmental activities are not financial resources and therefore are not reported as assets in governmental funds. Those assets consist of:			
Other Capital Assets, Net of \$625,295 of			
Accumulated Depreciation	358,713		373,505
 Deferred outflows and inflows of resources related to pensions are applicable to future periods and, therefore, are not reported in the funds.			
Deferred Outflows of Resources Related to Pensions	416,044		772,912
Deferred Inflows of Resources Related to Pensions	(1,042,202)		(1,370,524)
 Long-term liabilities are not due and payable in the current period and therefore are not reported as liabilities in the governmental funds. Long-term liabilities at year-end consist of:			
Long-Term Debt	-		(148,505)
Pension Benefits Payable	(784,605)		(797,031)
<b>Total Net Position of Governmental Activities</b>	<b>\$ (132,878)</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>(233,530)</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4026**  
**EVERY CHILD HAS OPPORTUNITIES (ECHO) CHARTER SCHOOL**  
**ECHO, MINNESOTA**  
**STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES**  
**GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2021**  
**(with Partial Comparative Information for the Year Ended June 30, 2020)**

	<b>Major Funds</b>		<b>Total Governmental Funds</b>	
	<b>General</b>	<b>Food Service</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>REVENUES</b>				
Other Local and County Revenues	\$ 2,866	\$ -	\$ 2,866	\$ 1,007,521
Revenue From State Sources	1,011,829	90	1,011,919	991,103
Revenue From Federal Sources	132,437	62,899	195,336	133,773
Sales and Other Conversion of Assets	1,450	2,247	3,697	10,636
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>1,148,582</b>	<b>65,236</b>	<b>1,213,818</b>	<b>2,143,033</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>				
<b>Current:</b>				
District and School Administration	58,565	-	58,565	53,562
District Support Services	129,884	-	129,884	171,837
Regular Instruction	312,365	-	312,365	484,046
Exceptional Instruction	209,439	-	209,439	228,672
Instructional Support Services	67,416	-	67,416	833
Pupil Support Services	82,227	68,069	150,296	190,794
Site, Buildings and Equipment	252,608	-	252,608	258,738
Fiscal and Other Fixed Cost Programs	13,556	-	13,556	9,281
<b>Capital Outlay:</b>	38,555	-	38,555	24,402
<b>Debt Service:</b>				
Interest	-	-	-	5,741
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>1,164,615</b>	<b>68,069</b>	<b>1,232,684</b>	<b>1,427,906</b>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER (UNDER) EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>(16,033)</b>	<b>(2,833)</b>	<b>(18,866)</b>	<b>715,127</b>
<b>OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES)</b>				
Proceeds from Sale of Equipment	1,800	125	1,925	5,616
Proceeds from Long-Term Debt	-	-	-	148,505
Transfer To/From Other Funds	(2,708)	2,708	-	-
<b>TOTAL OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES)</b>	<b>(908)</b>	<b>2,833</b>	<b>1,925</b>	<b>154,121</b>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUES AND OTHER SOURCES OVER (UNDER) EXPENDITURES AND OTHER USES</b>	<b>(16,941)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(16,941)</b>	<b>869,248</b>
<b>FUND BALANCE BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	<b>936,113</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>936,113</b>	<b>59,128</b>
<b>PRIOR PERIOD ADJUSTMENT (GASB No. 84)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,737</b>
<b>FUND BALANCE BEGINNING OF YEAR, AS RESTATED</b>	<b>936,113</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>936,113</b>	<b>66,865</b>
<b>FUND BALANCE END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 919,172</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 919,172</b>	<b>\$ 936,113</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4026  
EVERY CHILD HAS OPPORTUNITIES (ECHO) CHARTER SCHOOL  
ECHO, MINNESOTA  
RECONCILIATION OF THE GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS STATEMENT OF  
REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES  
TO THE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2021  
(with Partial Comparative Information for the Year Ended June 30, 2020)**

	2021	2020
<b>Total Net Change in Fund Balances - Governmental Funds</b>	<b>\$ (16,941)</b>	<b>\$ 869,248</b>
 Amounts reported for governmental activities in the Statement of Activities are different because:		
 Capital outlays to purchase or construct capital assets are reported in governmental funds as expenditures. However, for governmental activities those costs are shown in the Statement of Net Position and allocated over their estimated useful lives as annual depreciation expense in the Statement of Activities. This is the amount by which depreciation expense exceeds capital outlay in the period.		
Capital Outlays	27,363	21,304
Depreciation Expense	(36,572)	(37,321)
 Proceeds from the sale of capital assets are reported in governmental funds as other financing sources without regard to any cost basis adjustment. However, for governmental activities those proceeds are adjusted for any remaining cost basis of the assets that were disposed.		
	(5,583)	(9,716)
 Long-term borrowing is reported as revenue (other financing sources) in governmental funds, but these proceeds increase long-term liabilities on the Statement of Net Position. In the current period these amounts consisted of:		
Proceeds from Long-Term Debt	-	(148,505)
 Forgiveness of loans recognized as long-term liabilities on the Statement of Net Position in prior periods is shown as revenue on the Statement of Activities in the period the liability is legally released.		
Paycheck Protection Program Loan Forgiveness	148,505	-
 Governmental funds recognized pension contributions as expenditures at the time of payment whereas the Statement of Activities factors in items related to pensions on a full accrual perspective.		
State Aid Related to Pension Expense	4,438	3,886
Pension Expense	(20,558)	(36,906)
 <b>Change in Net Position of Governmental Activities</b>	 <b>\$ 100,652</b>	 <b>\$ 661,990</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

# ISD #4026 ECHO Charter School

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

JUNE 30, 2021



## District Highlights

- Expenditures and other financing uses exceeded revenues and other financing sources by \$16,941 in the General Fund. This change resulted in the total fund balance decreasing to \$919,172 as of June 30, 2021. After deducting accounting standards restrictions and fund balance policy assignments, the unassigned fund balance increased from \$788,043 to 798,300 at June 30, 2021.
- The District is meeting its minimum fund balance policy of four months of expenditures in the General Fund at June 30, 2021.

## District Highlights

- The General Fund transferred \$2,708 to the Food Service Fund to cover the current year operating deficit.
- The District received notification in December 2020 that the full amount, \$148,505, of its Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan was forgiven.

## The District's Future...



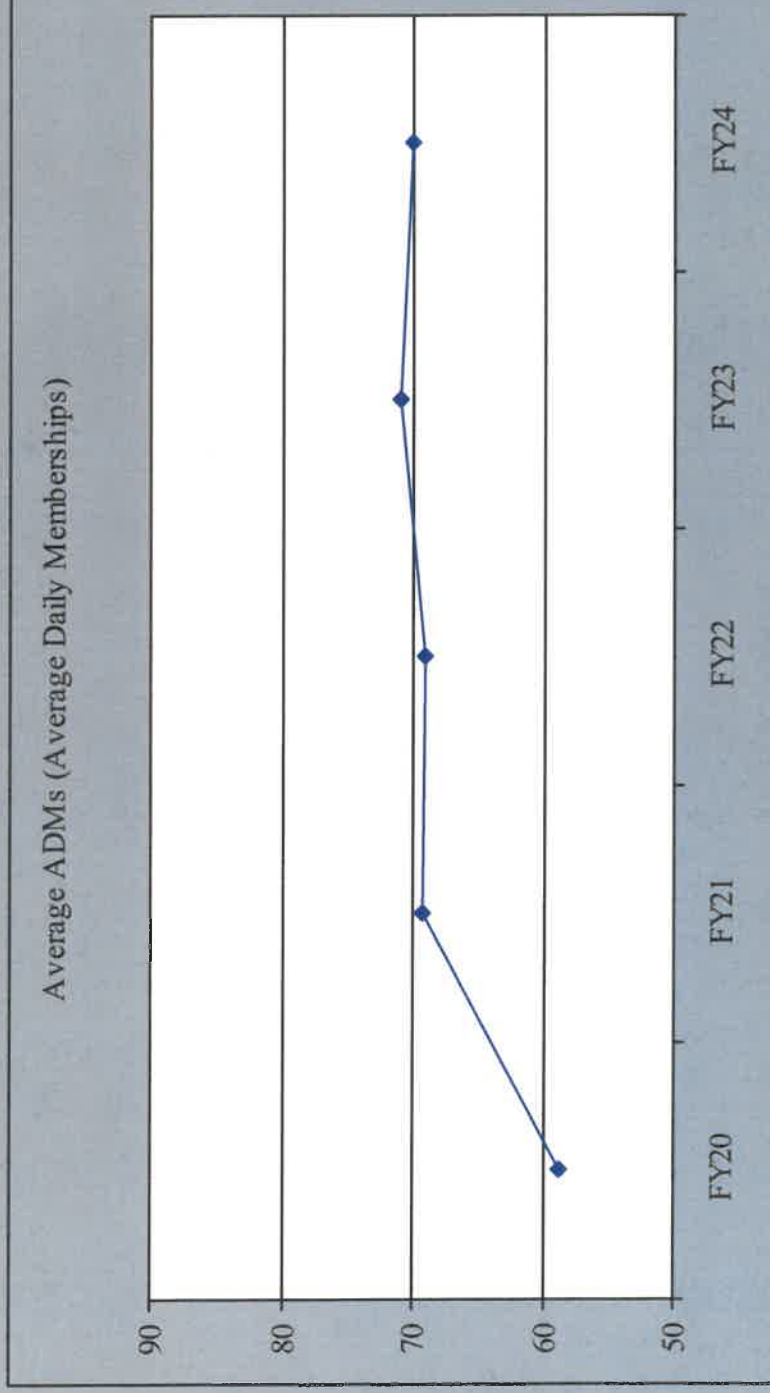
- COVID-19 will be an ongoing factor in financials. Additional revenue from the CARES Act will hopefully offset most of the additional expenditures incurred by the District in relation to the pandemic.
- There is a 2.45% increase in the formula for general education aid in FY22.
- The \$1 million donation received by the District in FY20 was unrestricted in purpose and is being used to support operations of the District as it works toward gaining students.

## The District's Future...

- The District's trend for enrollment shows an overall plateau in enrollment for future years . The larger increase in FY 2021 is due to the safety of distance learning and the District offering this from the beginning of the school year along with small class sizes. The District hopes to maintain most of these students once the distance learning period is over.
- Growing student enrollment will continue to occupy the District's highest priority.

# District Enrollment

- The District's trend for enrollment shows a plateau in projected enrollment for future school years.



# BUDGET VS ACTUAL



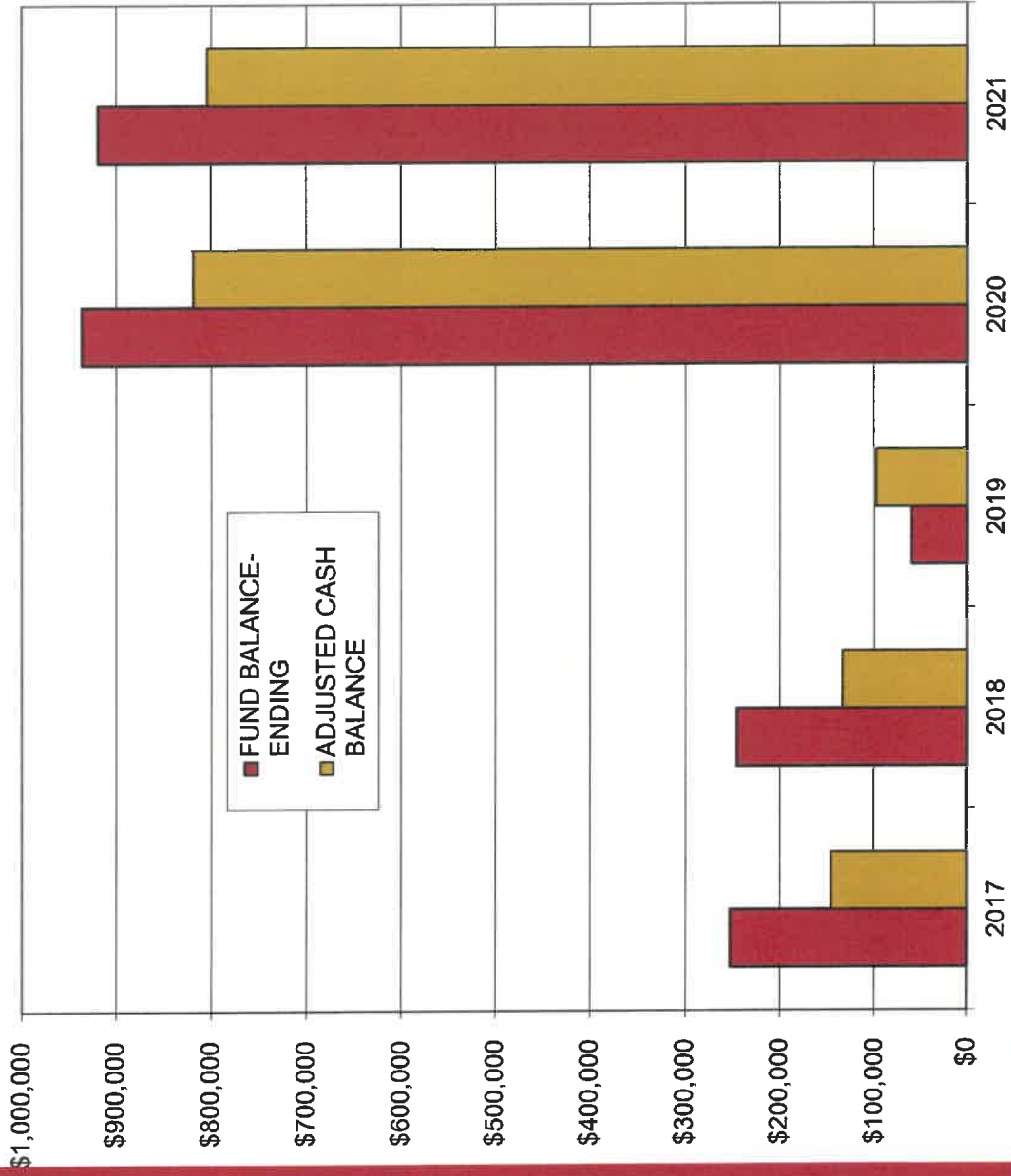
	BUDGET				ACTUAL			
	Revenue	Expenditures	Other Financing Sources (Uses)	Change in Fund Balance	Revenue	Expenditures	Other Financing Sources (Uses)	Change in Fund Balance
GENERAL FUND	1,131,753	1,154,011	2,370	(19,888)	1,148,582	1,164,615	(908)	(16,941)
FOOD SERVICE FUND	49,860	65,095	125	(15,110)	65,236	68,069	2,833	-



The fund balance in the General Fund decreased, and the District's adjusted cash balance decreased.

The 2020 increase in the fund balance and adjusted cash balance is mainly due to a \$1 million donation and proceeds from the PPP loan.

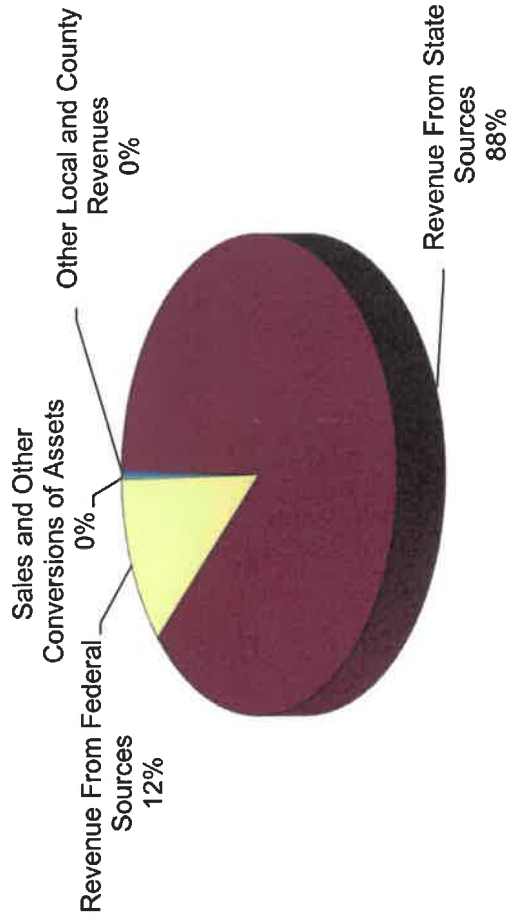
### ISD #4026 - E.C.H.O. - FUND BALANCE/CASH BALANCE ANALYSIS GENERAL FUND



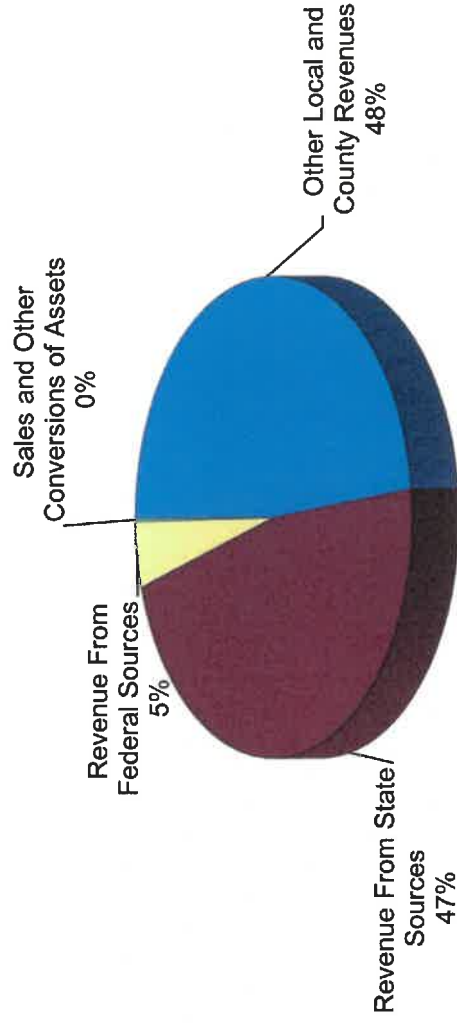
Largest source of revenue is from the state and other local and county revenues.

In 2020, the higher percentage in other local and county revenue is due to the \$1 million donation.

### 2021 GENERAL FUND REVENUES BY SOURCE

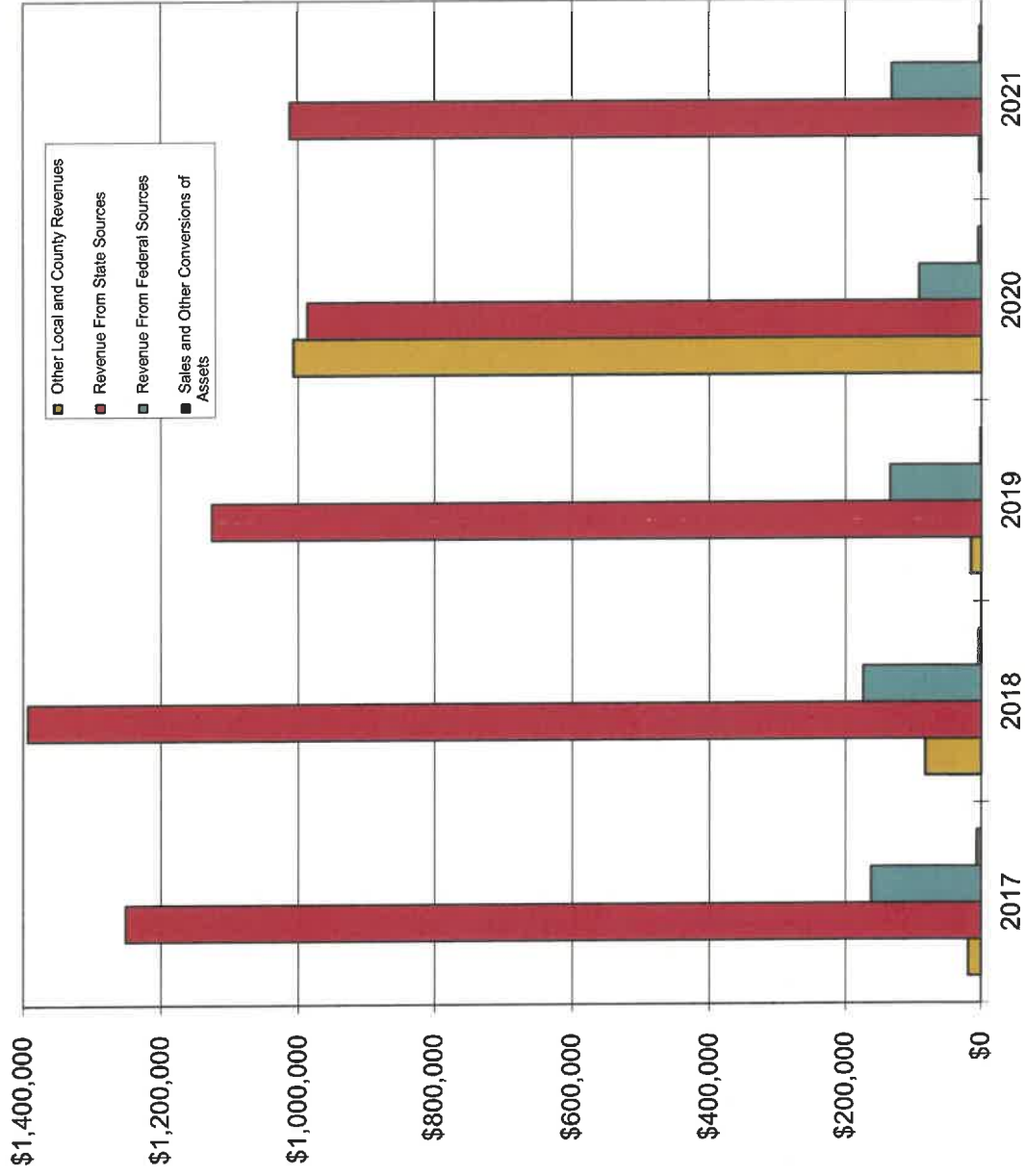


### 2020 GENERAL FUND REVENUES BY SOURCE





## ISD #4026- E.C.H.O.- GENERAL FUND REVENUES BY SOURCE



Sources of funding are fairly consistent throughout the years.

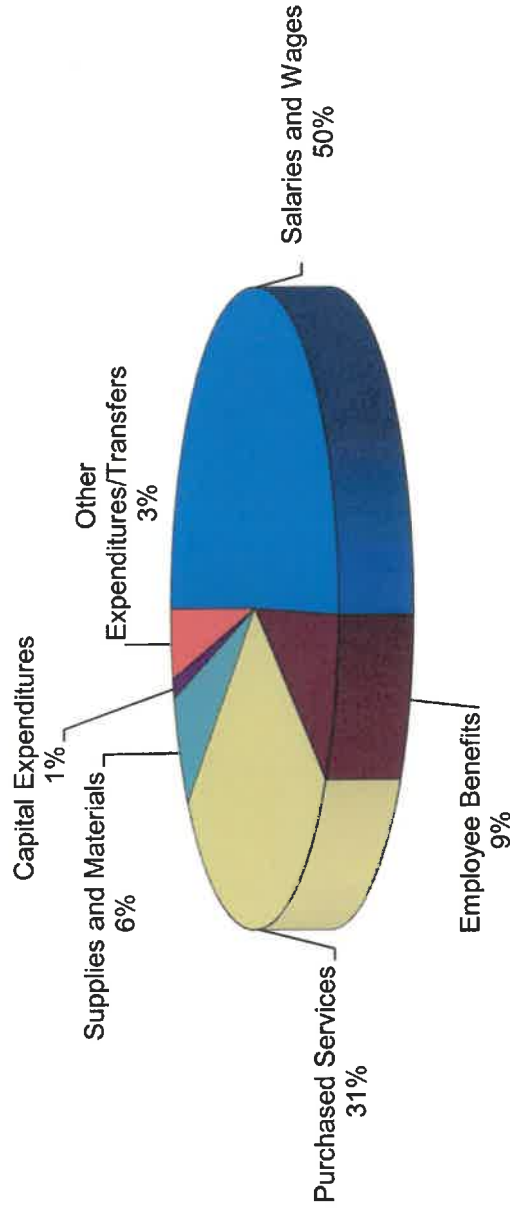
Increase in 2020 local and county funding due to \$1 Million donation.

State funding is based on student counts. Decrease in student counts in 2019 and 2020 and a slight increase in 2021.

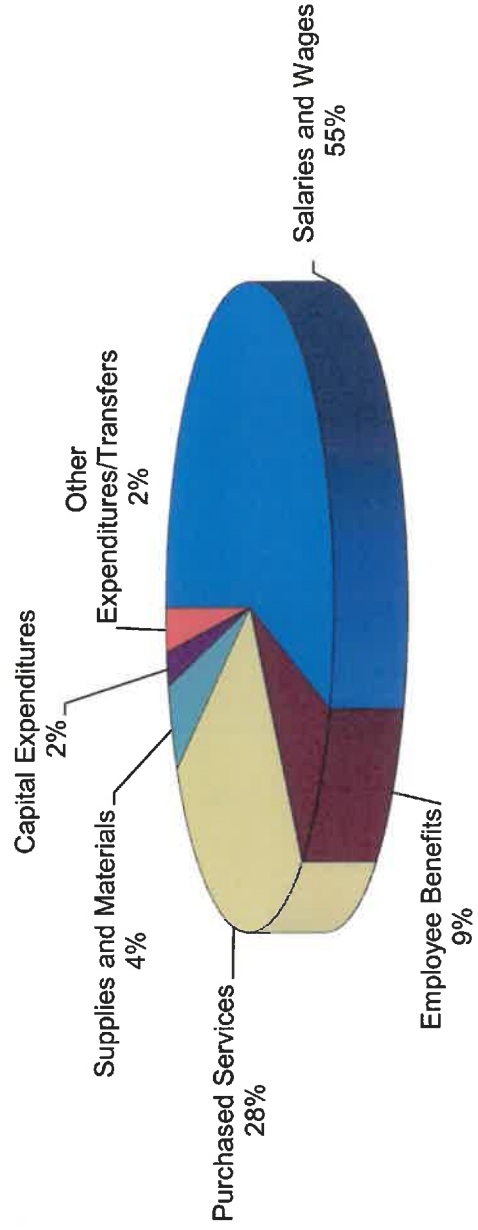
Increased federal funding in 2021 due to CARES Act Funding.

Largest use of dollars for any school district is for salaries and benefits.

### 2021 GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES BY OBJECT



### 2020 GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES BY OBJECT



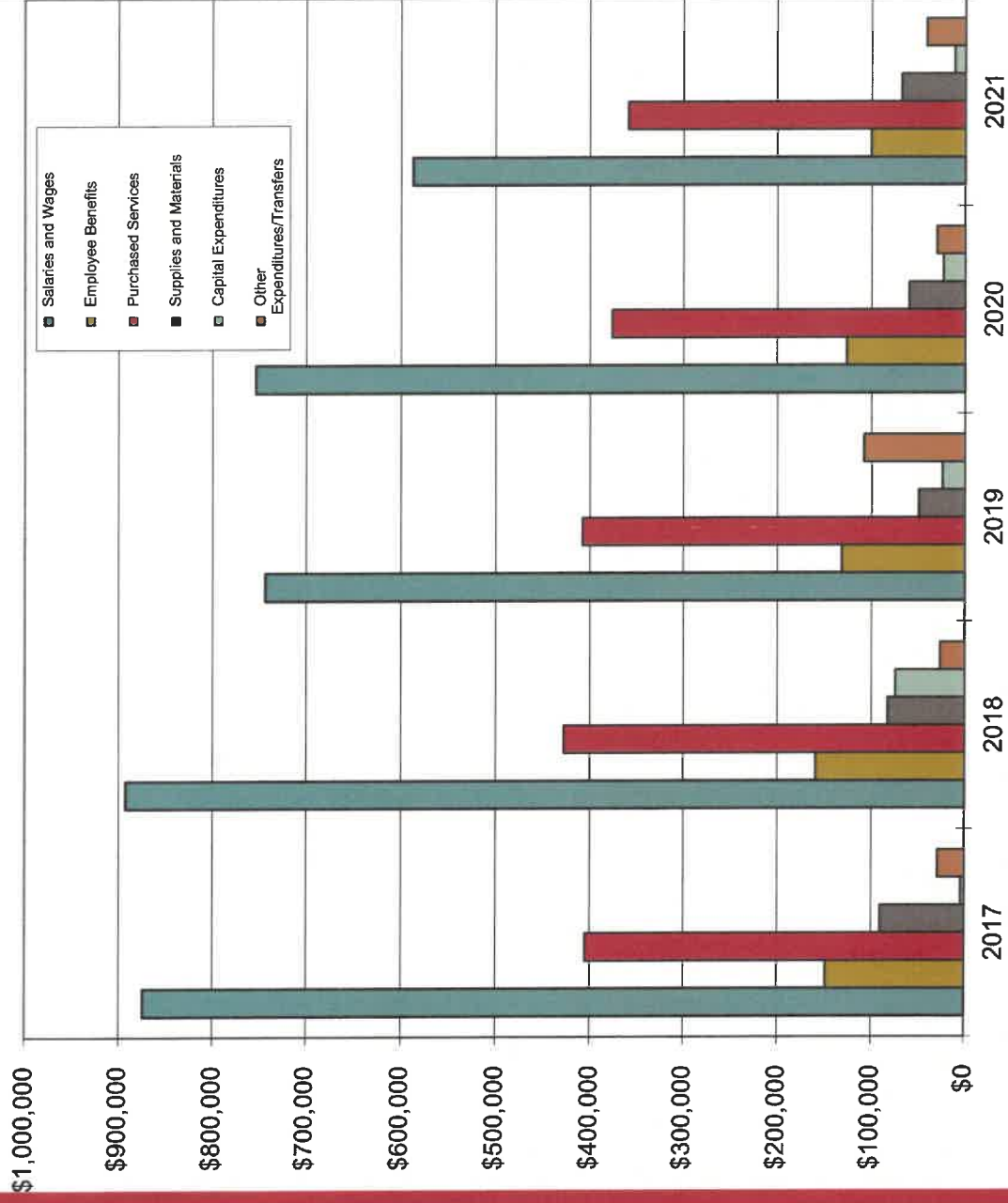


Types of expenditures are fairly consistent throughout the years.

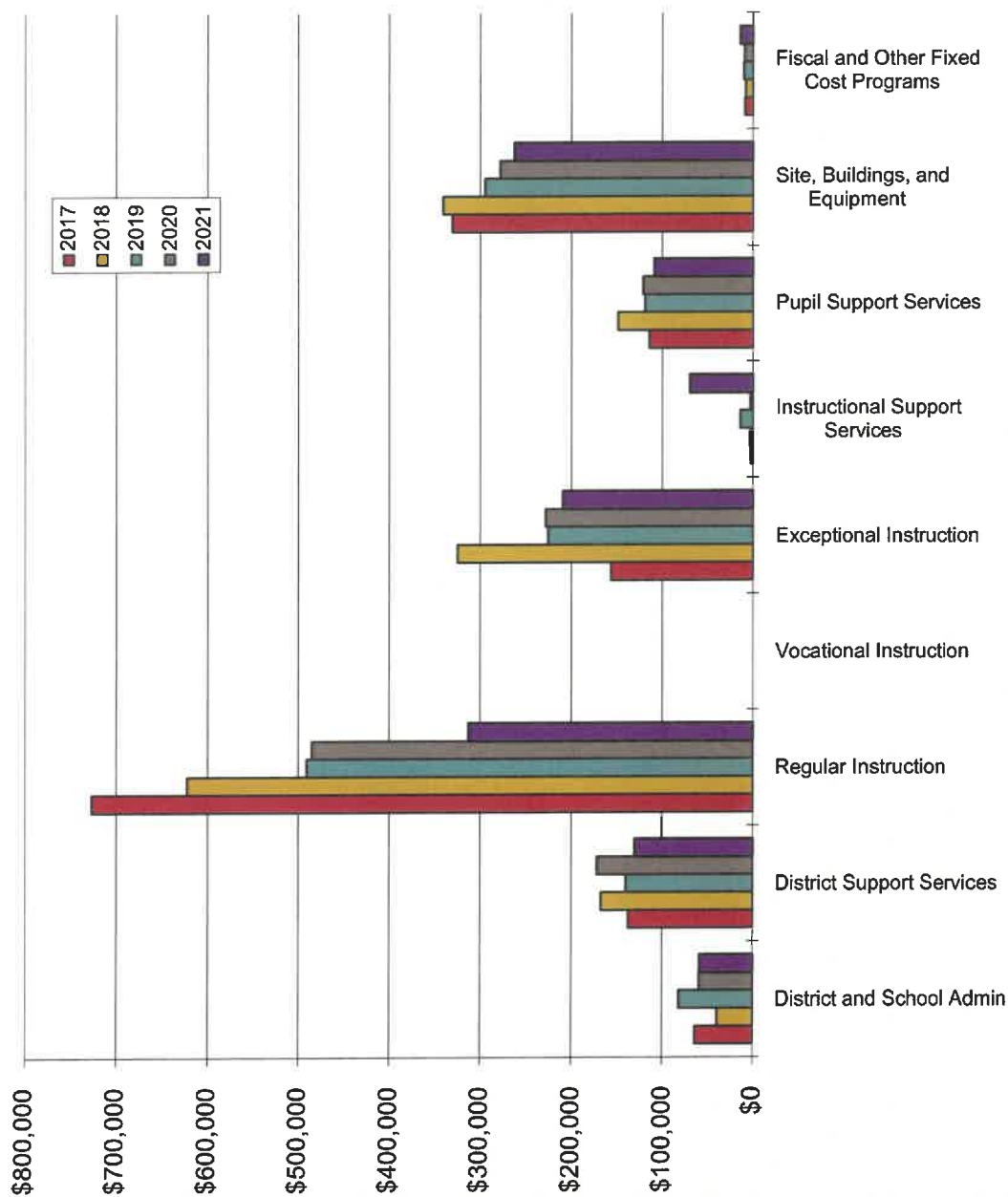
Salaries and Wages continue to be the District's largest expenditure.

Purchased services are also a large portion of the District's expenditures due to the building lease, payments to SWWC for services, utilities, and transportation.

## ISD #4026 - GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES BY OBJECT



## ISD #4026 - E.C.H.O. - GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM



Instructional costs (both regular and exceptional) account for the majority of the District's expenditures.

Regular Instruction decrease in FY21 due to position cuts with distance learning.

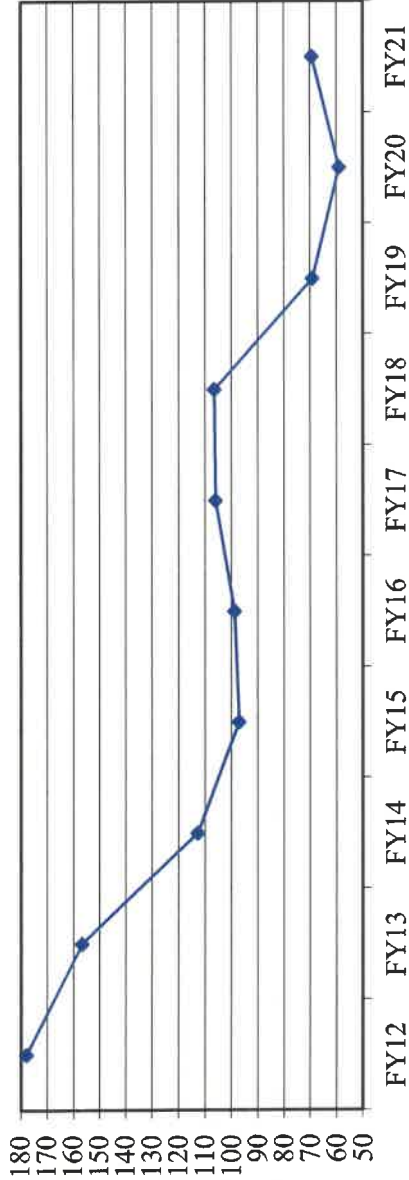
Special education needs of students increased in 2018 by almost double. In 2019 decreased funds due to decreased enrollment and need.

Student counts versus Excess of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures.

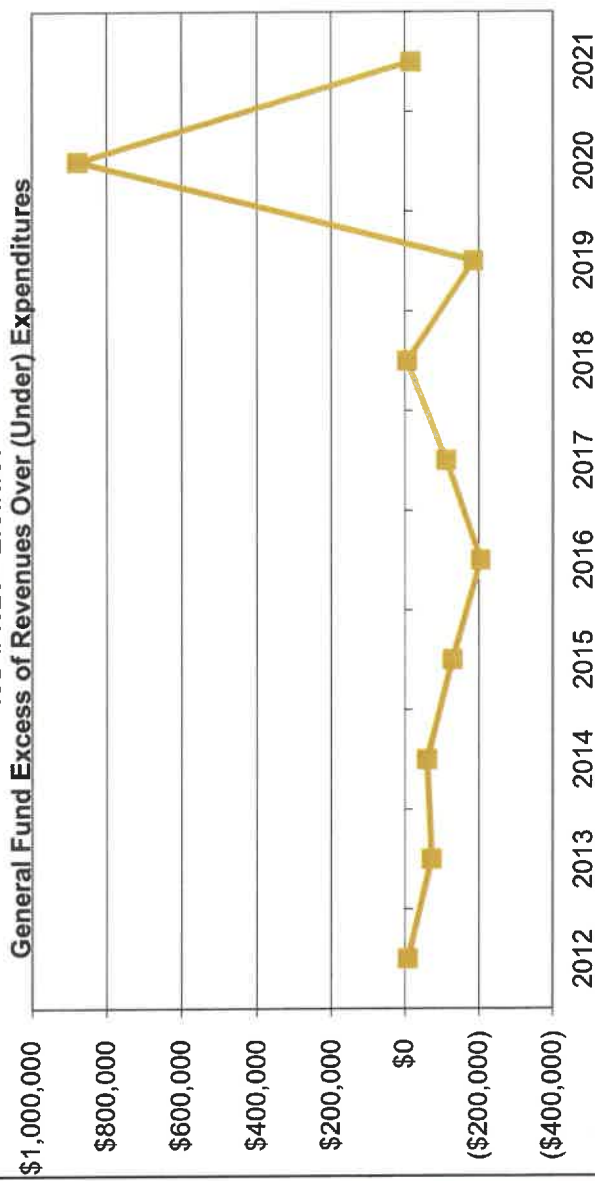
The increase in 2020 is due to the \$1 Million dollar donation

The District should continue to diligently monitor revenues and expenditures while implementing plans to increase enrollment.

Average ADMs (Average Daily Memberships)



ISD #4026 - E.C.H.O. - General Fund Excess of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures



## Fund Highlights

- Food Service Fund fund balance is \$-0-. The General Fund transferred \$2,708 to the Food Service Fund to help cover deficit operations.

## **World's Best Work Force and Title I Goals:**

*Some of our goals for 2019-2020 could not be assessed due to the global Pandemic.*

The following areas were our focus for the 2020-2021 school year:

### **Title I**

*Due to the global Pandemic, the following information pertains to 2018-2019.*

Goal 1: The percentage of all students in grades 3-8 and 10 at ECHO Charter School enrolled by October 1<sup>st</sup> who are proficient on the Reading MCA will increase from 35.2% to 40% in 2019. Outcome: GOAL EXCEEDED.

Goal 2: The percentage of all students in grades 3-8 and 11 at ECHO Charter School enrolled by October 1<sup>st</sup> who are proficient on the Math MCA will increase from 12.3% to 16%. Outcome: GOAL EXCEEDED.

## **World's Best Work Force Goals 2020-2021**

### **All Students Ready for Kindergarten:**

- 80% of ECHO Charter School preschool students will be ready for Kindergarten in the fall of 2020 as assessed and observed by the teacher. *This goal was not met.*

### **All Students in Third Grade Achieving Grade-Level Literacy:**

- 80% of ECHO Charter School third graders entering in the fall of 2018 will be reading at grade level. *This goal was met.*

### **Closing Achievement Gap(s):**

- ECHO Charter School will decrease the proficiency gap between free and reduced and non-free and reduced, by increasing the free and reduced students' proficiency on the MCA math and reading test by 3%. *This goal was not met.*

### **All Students Career- and College-Ready by Graduation:**

- 85% of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students will take the ACT Plus writing on-site beginning in the spring of 2021. Outcome: GOAL EXCEEDED: 100% of students took the ACT. *This goal was met.*
- 100% of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students will take the ASVAB test. *This goal was met.*

### **All Students Graduate:**

- 85% of ECHO Charter School seniors will graduate in 2021. Outcome: GOAL EXCEEDED. *This goal was met: 100% of seniors graduated.*

- ECHO Charter will take students on at least two college visits. Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, we did not conduct any college visits this year. Circumstances being safe in Spring, 2022, we will resume visits. *This goal was attempted.*

### **Director Professional Development Plan**

**Goal:** To become a more effective leader for the school, while attracting and retaining adequate levels of student enrollment filing required reports in a timely fashion. Concurrently, deliver the school's message effectively to the public.

**Plan:** Complete Principal Licensure. Attend trainings and webinars on various leadership and administrative topics which will help me gain more knowledge of many of the aspects that affect charter schools as well as improving my leadership skills.

**Accountability:** Include in the Director's Report at each Board meeting any information gained from training.

#### **Schedule of Trainings:**

*Plans for my training in 2020-2021 are as follows:*

1. Attend all IQS Directors' meetings, whether virtually or in person.
2. Arrange and complete Levels 100, 200, and 300 training.
3. Attend truancy meetings as part of SW/WC membership.
4. Attend Child Protection meetings in Yellow Medicine County.
5. Attend World's Best Work Force training and part of SW/WC membership.
6. Attend CARES Finance virtual training offered by MDE.
7. Attend Superintendents' Covid monitoring meetings weekly.
8. Any other recommended meetings sponsored at Minnesota Department of Education.

# Climate and Culture

## ECHO Charter School

### 2020-2021 STUDENT SURVEY

This is an anonymous survey! Please complete the questions honestly and return along with your parent/guardian survey to the school. We use this information to improve classroom teaching and school climate. Thank you!

1. Grade level:

<input type="checkbox"/> 7-9	75%
<input type="checkbox"/> 10-12	25%

2. Do you feel that ECS provides a safe environment?

<input type="checkbox"/> Rarely	0%
<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	4%
<input type="checkbox"/> Often	63%
<input type="checkbox"/> Always	33%

3. Do you feel safe from teasing/verbal abuse/exclusion?

<input type="checkbox"/> Rarely	8%
<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	17%
<input type="checkbox"/> Often	46%
<input type="checkbox"/> Always	29%

4. Do you feel welcome at ECHO Charter School?

<input type="checkbox"/> Rarely	0%
<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	8%
<input type="checkbox"/> Often	46%
<input type="checkbox"/> Always	46%

5. Do you think ECS focuses on learning and high expectations?

<input type="checkbox"/> Rarely	1%
<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	20%
<input type="checkbox"/> Often	58%
<input type="checkbox"/> Always	21%

6. Do staff members express clear/consistent expectations for disruptive student behaviors?

<input type="checkbox"/> Rarely	8%
<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	3%
<input type="checkbox"/> Often	58%
<input type="checkbox"/> Always	8%

7. Have you ever disrupted one of your classes?

Yes 50%  
 No 50%

8. Are good grades important to you?

I don't care about grades at all 8%  
 Grades are sort of important 50%  
 I always try my best to get good grades 42%

9. Are teachers friendly and approachable?

Rarely 0%  
 Sometimes 25%  
 Often 46%  
 Always 29%

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you think your teachers care about you?

Rarely 4%  
 Sometimes 13%  
 Often 58%  
 Always 25%

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Are teachers accessible when you need them?

Rarely 4%  
 Sometimes 25%  
 Often 58%  
 Always 13%

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

12. Do you think that your teachers help create a partnership with you in your education?

Rarely 12%  
 Sometimes 21%  
 Often 38%  
 Always 29%

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

13. Is the learning environment at ECS fun and stimulating?

Rarely 8%  
 Sometimes 42%  
 Often 50%

Always 0%

14. Do you access the ECS website or Facebook page?

Rarely 62%

Sometimes 25%

Often 13%

Always 0%

15. Do you think that your teachers show commitment to their students?

Rarely 4%

Sometimes 21%

Often 54%

Always 21%

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

16. What are your goals after graduating?

College 42%

Vocational school 0%

Get a job 13%

Don't know 45%

17. Do you think staff at ECS respect diversity?

Yes 92%

No 8%

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

18. Do you plan to graduate from ECS?

Yes 58%

No 4%

Unknown 38%

19. If you came to ECHO Charter from another district, what brought you here? (Check all that apply.)

I didn't do well at my other school 11 STUDENTS

My parent/guardian thought ECHO was a better setting for me 11 STUDENTS

I know someone else who goes to school here 7 STUDENTS

I needed to recover some credits (grades 9-12) 0

I like the smaller class sizes 10 STUDENTS

I fit in better here 7 STUDENTS

I was bullied at my other school 8 STUDENTS

20. I take pride in ECS
- |                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely    | 21% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes | 13% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Often     | 25% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Always    | 42% |

21. How satisfied are you with your education?
- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very dissatisfied     | 4%  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat dissatisfied | 8%  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat satisfied    | 63% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied        | 25% |

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This section asks specific questions about the **Distance Learning** period, which took place from in Fall, 2020 and periodically during quarantines. N.B.: Distance Learning was partially conducted on paper as we had inadequate technology available to students.

22. Overall, how would you rate your experience with Distance Learning?
- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Did not go well at all                              | 50% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> There were some bumps, but it went OK               | 33% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distance Learning was good                          | 8%  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I want to continue with Distance Learning this fall | 8%  |

23. About how many hours a day did you work on schoolwork?
- |                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0-1 | 21% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 | 50% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4-5 | 25% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6-7 | 4%  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8-9 | 0%  |

24. What is your opinion about the amount of work you were asked to do?
- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not enough work                | 8%  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> About the right amount of work | 67% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Too much work                  | 25% |

25. Did you feel the staff and school leadership were responsive to your needs during the Distance Learning period?
- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all            | 8%  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat              | 62% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Went above and beyond | 30% |
- Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

26. With what regularity did you hear from your teacher/s?
- |                                     |     |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all | 4%  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely     | 29% |

Sometimes 46%  
 To a great extent 21%

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

27. With what regularity did you reach out to your teacher/s when needed?

Not at all 13%  
 Rarely 26%  
 Sometimes 46%  
 To a great extent 15%

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

28. Rate your work ethic during Distance Learning; in other words, did you try your hardest?

I did little to no work at all 17%  
 I did some work most days 54%  
 I worked every day 29%

29. For Special Needs students only: With what regularity did you hear from your para?

Not at all 20%  
 Rarely 20%  
 Sometimes 60%  
 To a great extent

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

30. With what regularity did you reach out to your para when needed?

Not at all 20%  
 Rarely 20%  
 Sometimes 60%  
 To a great extent

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

31. Did you receive lunch service during the Distance Learning period?

Yes 88%  
 No 12%

Annual IQS Review

FY'21

To: E.C.H.O. School Board  
 From: Megan Schwaegerl, IQS Cadre Leadership Team Member  
 Date: July 20, 2021

Section 5.1 of the contract between Innovative Quality Schools (IQS) and E.C.H.O. Charter School outlines the criteria for the annual school review. In part, it states that IQS will evaluate whether the:

- a) school has been faithful to the terms of the agreement regarding the implementation of the school's design and the learning standards of the Commissioner. (Mission/Program Model)
- b) Board is performing its governance responsibilities. (Governance)
- c) performance of the students and the school meet the expectations as provided in the contract. (Student and School Performance)
- d) school is using its resources in compliance with the law and is planning for the future. (Finance)
- e) school is meeting the administrative requirements of the law relating to charter schools. (Operations)

In carrying out this responsibility, members of the IQS Management Leadership Team (MLT) held several meetings with members of the school leadership team to discuss issues and concerns related to school operations. Members of the IQS Cadre conducted several site visits and virtual reviews of school records. IQS also sponsored four teacher/leadership conferences, one board training conference and professional development regarding best practice in a distance learning structure; all designed to provide the school with opportunities to grow professionally in support of the school program. Below is a summary of findings in each of the above noted performance areas based upon observations and direct interactions with the school. Please note that because of the COVID-19 pandemic, schools have been offered flexibility in collecting and reporting student assessment data.

Mission/Program Model	
<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ In order to meet students where they are at, E.C.H.O. works towards being innovative through a uniquely flexible curriculum.</li> <li>➤ Detailed work on curriculum mapping resulted in MCA achievements in FY19. Looking forward, a new plan of action for science, history, social, and english will soon be set for fall of 2021.</li> <li>➤ Approved Q-Comp program consists of goal setting in math and teacher classroom goals.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunities for Improvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ It has been suggested to promote the E.C.H.O. mission statement, innovative education examples, and the uniquely flexible curriculum on the school website for stakeholders to recognize the quality education that the school provides.</li> <li>➤ Project based learning (PBL) has been difficult to apply due to COVID challenges, such as distance learning. In the past, it has been a platform at E.C.H.O., offering an opportunity to students in need of credits. It has been suggested to explore</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Professional learning communities (PLCs) continue to meet regularly while focusing on deeper learning for students.</li> </ul>	<p>what the future holds for PBL at E.C.H.O. among all students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The School Board and Director, have recently put a focus on staff development and look forward to providing more learning experiences, beginning with Google Classroom.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Governance</b></p>	
<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Board meetings are led by experienced Board Chair Eakes who values input and discussion, as well as ensures that Robert’s Rules are followed.</li> <li>➤ E.C.H.O. School Board members are up to date on training and discuss training opportunities at each board meeting.</li> <li>➤ E.C.H.O. has proven to remain accountable regarding the completion of background checks on board members.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunities for Improvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The School Board is in compliance with the minimum required number of members, but is in need of a community member.</li> <li>➤ Per Director Blue-Redner, the school website is nearing an update in which the school board membership will be current.</li> <li>➤ Diligent work was completed a year and a half ago on the bylaws. It is encouraged to review the bylaws annually, especially in consideration of providing pertinent information to new board members.</li> <li>➤ E.C.H.O. School Board is strongly encouraged to prioritize their policies. Furthermore, update the policies on the school website in an organized manner for public viewing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Performance</b></p>	
<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ When considering new student enrollment and academic growth, the school is diligent about analyzing and using student data to inform individual academic decisions.</li> <li>➤ Through the 2020-2021 School Year, the school attempted to engage students in STAR assessments as they were able to have access to in-person opportunities.</li> <li>➤ The school is utilizing a variety of assessments, including those embedded with the Core Knowledge Curriculum, which collectively provide students with the opportunity to show their learning in various ways.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunities for Improvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Although the school utilizes various formative assessments, it might be helpful to strategically align and embed assessments in curriculum documents.</li> <li>➤ The school could consider developing school specific goals to include in the contracted ScoreCard that better articulate the school’s impact on student learning.</li> </ul>

Finance	
<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Per Director Blue-Redner, E.C.H.O Charter School has a strong relationship with their financial manager, Southwest West Central Service Cooperative (SWWC). SWWC provides training sessions, assists in guiding management of school finances, and ensures that all necessary financial reporting is completed in a timely manner.</li> <li>➤ SWWC, Director Blue-Redner, and Financial Manager, Pam, do a good job planning the current budget and do work on future, long range budgets. They use previous year's actual and budget numbers to build the new and extended budgets.</li> <li>➤ Fiscal year 2020 ended in a 68% fund balance of \$936K in part to the \$1M gift from Mr. Lecy, PPP loan forgiveness, as well as the school accessing GEAR UP, CARES, and other COVID-19 related funding.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunities for Improvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Although E.C.H.O. has a high fund balance, it will be important to monitor as deficit spending has occurred in the recent past.</li> </ul>
Operations	
<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Current School Board Chair, Debbie Eakes, has been a strong leader in school board policies. As she will be leaving the position, Director Blue-Redner is hopeful that this position will be a more shared one in the future.</li> <li>➤ E.C.H.O. has switched to a new insurance carrier that has saved them money.</li> <li>➤ School registration and immunization reporting will be completed online starting in the fall of 2021.</li> <li>➤ All state reporting requirements are completed in a timely and accurate manner.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunities for Improvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ E.C.H.O. is looking into more advanced training for teachers to move up in teacher licensure tiers.</li> <li>➤ The school's transportation provider, Bennett Bus Company, has fallen through this past year. E.C.H.O. is working on alternate plans.</li> <li>➤</li> </ul>

**ScoreCard Annual Composite Score(s)**

Below are the ratings received in each of the performance categories. School Improvement opportunities identified through the oversight process are described below. The highest rating that can be achieved is a 4.0.

Section 1: School Model	3.6
School Improvement Opportunities: No ScoreCard measures were less than the target benchmark.	
Section 2: Governance	3.4
School Improvement Opportunities: 2.a: Board Organization. The Board has struggled to maintain membership aligned with statute and their bylaws. 2.f: Policy Manual. The school could benefit from developing and following a more efficient policy review cycle and database.	
Section 3: Performance	2.9
School Improvement Opportunities: Continue working to assess and monitor student learning. 3.i: Local Goals. Consider developing school-specific goals.	
Section 4: Finance	3.2
School Improvement Opportunities: No ScoreCard measures were less than the target benchmark.	
Section 5: Operations	3.3
School Improvement Opportunities: 5.b: Staff Assignments. Create a professional development committee to process CEUs. Increase teacher licensing tiers. 5.o: Organizational Systems. Job descriptions are now posted for all staff, but need to be reviewed by the school board.	
Composite Score	3.3

Performance Summary:

E.C.H.O. Charter School works hard to educate students at their level based on a flexible curriculum. Prior to the pandemic, PBL was a foundation of the school that will be revisited in the near future. Parents have been continuously appreciative of the school's efforts during this pandemic year. Staff, students, and families are looking forward to normalcy, predictability, and stability with a hopeful fresh start in the fall of 2021. Training on Google Classroom will be the beginning of more learning opportunities for staff development. The school board has recently on-boarded 3 parent members, but is looking to fill the community member position. Finances remain strong with caution to future deficits as experienced in the past. A healthy relationship with SWWC allows the school to follow routines and structures that strengthen their finances. E.C.H.O. plans on providing school registration and immunization reporting

online for the 2021-2022 school year. A plan of action for transportation will be crucial in preparing for the upcoming school year. It is evident that E.C.H.O. Charter School works hard at reaching their goals for the benefit of their community.

### School Information

School Name	ECHO Charter School
School Address/City/Zip	101 Rocket Ave, PO Box 158
School Principal/Leader Name	
School Leader Title	
School Leader Telephone	
School Leader Email	
School Board Chair	
School Board Chair Email	
Report Completed By:	
Date of this Report:	

### Scoring Criteria Definitions

<b>Intervention 0.0-1.9</b>	Evidence some requirements and key indicators are not being met. The school may have received multiple notices from IQS and/or governing agencies within the past 12 months regarding an issue, complaint, and/or deficiency that needs to be addressed. Corrective action planning is required as a part of the school's School Improvement Plan. <i>(Note: For schools in their first year of operation, it is considered to be an 'introductory' benchmark.)</i>
<b>Progressing 2.0-2.9</b>	The school is making progress toward the attainment of its target benchmark. Action plans that focus on continuing improvement will be a required component of its School Improvement Plan.
<b>Target 3.0-3.9</b>	There is evidence that the school is meeting requirements established in the charter agreement and ScoreCard.
<b>Exceeding 4.0</b>	There is evidence that the school exceeds the target benchmarks and is performing at a level of excellence

Area 1	Mission and Goals of the School and Program Model Performance Indicators:	Intervention Benchmark	Progressing Benchmark	Target Benchmark	Exceeding Target Benchmark	Place score in this Field
	Points	0.0-1.9	2.0-2.9	3.0-3.9	4.0	0.0-4.0
1.a	<b>Program Model</b>	Program model is not consistent with that described in charter application including amendments and school has received notice from governing agency noting inconsistency.	Program model is not consistent with that described in charter application including amendments.	Program model is consistent with that described in charter application including amendments.	Program model is consistent with that described in charter application including amendments and school has received accommodation from governing agency noting this accomplishment.	
1.b	<b>School Mission</b>	School program is aligned with Charter Law to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement.	School program is aligned with the primary purpose of Charter Schools and at least two other purposes cited in law.	School program is aligned with the primary purpose of Charter Schools and at least three other purposes cited in law.	School program is aligned with the primary purpose of Charter Schools and at least four other purposes cited in law.	
1.c	<b>Curriculum</b>	The school curriculum is not implemented with fidelity and is not aligned with the school's mission.	The school curriculum aligns with its mission and primary purpose but is not implemented with fidelity - or the curriculum is not aligned with the school mission but is implemented with fidelity.	The school curriculum aligns with its mission and primary program purpose and is implemented with fidelity.	The school curriculum aligns with its mission and primary program purpose in all curricular areas and is implemented with fidelity. The school has developed systems for analyzing curriculum effectiveness and making improvements accordingly.	
1.d	<b>Standards</b>	The school follows a curriculum resource and operates under the assumption that the resource is aligned with state standards.	State standards and school standards are embedded into the curriculum of the school.	State standards, school board standards, and authorizer requirements are embedded into the curriculum of the school and documented in curriculum development documents.	All state standards, school board standards, and authorizer requirements are embedded into the curriculum of the school, as documented in curriculum development documents. Individual student achievement on standards is assessed and used to inform instruction.	
1.e	<b>Staff Development</b>	Some staff development activities or initiatives evident but no evidence alignment with school improvement or strategic planning.	Staff development activities and/or initiatives have been implemented but not systemic or purposefully aligned with a strategic plan.	Staff development is ongoing, aligned with strategic plan, and ensures program fidelity.	Staff development is fact-based, on-going, and aligned with a strategic plan. Staff development is reviewed by school board and school leadership on a quarterly basis to ensure program fidelity and reported to all stakeholders.	
1.f	<b>New Student Enrollment</b>	School does not have in place processes for determining a student's academic levels of performance when they enter school.	School is developing a process for determining a student's academic levels of performance when they enter school.	Student academic achievement levels in math and reading are evaluated for each student within 3 weeks of entering school.	The school uses its evaluation process to develop an individual learning plan designed to assist teacher, parents, and student with academic growth and success.	
1.g	<b>Student Satisfaction</b>	Students' level of satisfaction with their school in the areas of safety, acceptance and learning is less than 50%.	Students' level of satisfaction with their school in the areas of safety, acceptance and learning is greater than or equal to 50% but less than 85%.	Students' level of satisfaction with their school in the areas of safety, acceptance and learning is greater than or equal to 85% but less than 90%.	Students' level of satisfaction with their school in the areas of safety, acceptance and learning is greater than or equal to 90%.	
1.h	<b>Parent Satisfaction</b>	Parents' level of satisfaction with their school in the areas of safety, acceptance and learning is less than 50%.	Parents' level of satisfaction with their school in the areas of safety, acceptance and learning is greater than or equal to 50% but less than 85%.	Parents' level of satisfaction with their school in the areas of safety, acceptance and learning is greater than or equal to 85% but less than 90%.	Parents' level of satisfaction with their school in the areas of safety, acceptance and learning is greater than or equal to 90%.	

Area 1	Mission and Goals of the School and Program Model Performance Indicators:	Intervention Benchmark	Progressing Benchmark	Target Benchmark	Exceeding Target Benchmark	Place score in this Field
	<b>Points</b>	<b>0.0-1.9</b>	<b>2.0-2.9</b>	<b>3.0-3.9</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>0.0-4.0</b>
1.i	<b>Teacher Satisfaction</b>	Teachers' level of satisfaction with the school and with their professional roles, responsibilities and professional development is less than 50%.	Teachers' level of satisfaction with the school and with their professional roles, responsibilities and professional development is greater than or equal to 50% but less than 85%.	Teachers' level of satisfaction with the school and with their professional roles, responsibilities and professional development is greater than or equal to 85% but less than 90%.	Teachers' level of satisfaction with the school and with their professional roles, responsibilities and professional development is greater than or equal to 90%.	
1.j	<b>Locally established measures consistent with school affidavit</b>	The school has successfully met up to 10% of measures.	The school has achieved more than 10% but less than 50% of measures.	The school has achieved at least 50% but less than 80% of measures.	The school has achieved more than 80% of measures.	
	<b>Insert additional measures here and add more rows as needed</b>					
<b>Average Score</b>						

Area 2	Governance of the School Performance Indicators:	Intervention Benchmark	Progressing Benchmark	Target Benchmark	Exceeding Target Benchmark	Place score in this Field
	Points	0.0-1.9	2.0-2.9	3.0-3.9	4.0	0.0-4.0
2.a	<b>Board Organization</b>	School has received multiple notices from a governing agency (state and/or authorizer) within the past 12 months indicating board organization inconsistencies with the law.	School has received a notice from a governing agency within the past 12 months indicating board organization inconsistencies with the law.	The board organization complies with the requirements in the charter school law.	Board organization exceeds legal expectations serving as a model for all Public Schools	
2.b	<b>Background Checks</b>	Criminal background checks have not been conducted on any current board members in accordance to Section 4.1 of the contract with IQS.	Criminal background checks have been conducted on some of the board members in accordance to Section 4.1 of the contract with IQS.	Criminal background checks have been conducted on each board member in accordance to Section 4.1 of the contract with IQS.	Criminal background checks have been conducted on each board member and reviewed by the School Director annually.	
2.c	<b>Conflict of Interest</b>	School has received multiple notices from a governing agency (state and/or authorizer) within the past 12 months indicating board organization inconsistencies with the law.	School has received a notice from a governing agency within the past 12 months indicating board organization inconsistencies with the law.	No board members have any conflict of interest as defined in law and statements are filed annually.	No board members have any conflict of interest as defined in law. Signed statements are filed annually and confirmed at each Board meeting.	
2.d	<b>Minnesota Open Meeting Law</b>	The authorizer and/or MDE have received multiple complaints from stakeholders related to a violation of the Minnesota Open Meeting law and has failed to address them.	The authorizer has received at least one complaint from school stakeholders but has successfully addressed the matter.	The Board complies with all provisions of the Minnesota Open Meeting Law and have not received any complaints from school stakeholders in the past 12 months.	The Board complies with all provisions of the Minnesota Open Meeting Law and have not received any complaints from school stakeholders in the past two years.	
2.e	<b>Board Bylaws</b>	Board bylaws are not in place	The Board has been cited for bylaw violation at least once in the past year.	The Board bylaws are consistent with charter school law and outline the process/procedures for changing the board's governance structure. The Board has not been cited for bylaw violation in the past year.	The bylaws are considered to be a model for charter schools organization.	
2.f	<b>Policy Manual</b>	Board policies are in place but do not meet all of the criteria required in Minnesota Statute 124E.07.	Board policies have been established in accordance to Minnesota Statute 124E.07. The school has failed to post them on its website and does not have a process in place for periodic review.	Board policies have been established in accordance with Minnesota Statute 124E.07. All policies are posted on the school website. The Board has established a process for the regular review of its policies.	Board policies have been established in accordance with Minnesota Statute 124E.07. All policies are posted on the school website. The Board has established a regular review of policies and annual training in accordance to Charter School law.	
2.g	<b>Strategic Plan</b>	There is no strategic plan in place.	A strategic plan is in place but has no measurable performance goals.	The board has in place a strategic plan that includes its vision, and goals developed to reach its mission.	The strategic plan includes a set of action plans and qualitative measurements to support the attainment of its goals.	
2.h	<b>Board Meeting Conduct</b>	Board meetings are not consistently conducted in compliance with MN statute.	Board meetings meet the requirements of MN Open Meeting and follow some aspects of Robert's Rules of Order	Board meetings are conducted in an orderly process following an agenda, appropriate posting in compliance with MN statute.	Board meetings follow Robert's Rules of Order with all board members and school leadership embracing this process.	
2.i	<b>Board Training</b>	Some or all board members have not completed board training as outlined in MN 124E.07 Subd. 7	Board conducts annual training but has not established a development plan	Board has a development plan including annual training for members and initial training for new members. Board training is included in the annual report in compliance with MN 124E.07 Subd. 7	Board development plan and training practices are replicated by other organizations	
2.j	<b>Board Expertise and Retention</b>	The Board has failed to maintain the required minimum membership as required by law or has experienced more than a 50% turnover in the past year.	The board has experienced a significant turnover in the past two years.	The Board is comprised of members consistent with its bylaws and Minnesota Charter School Law and has maintained consistent membership.	The Board is comprised of members consistent with its by-laws and Minnesota Charter School Law. It has maintained institutional knowledge through the retention of Board members over multiple years.	
<b>Average Score</b>						

Area 3	Evaluation of School /Student Performance Indicators:	Intervention Benchmark	Progressing Benchmark	Target Benchmark	Exceeding Target Benchmark	Place score in this Field
	Points	0.0-1.9	2.0-2.9	3.0-3.9	4.0	0.0-4.0
3.a	Reading Growth	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	At least 50% but less than 70% of students will maintain or improve their STAR national percentile rank in reading as measured annually from fall to spring.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	
3.b	Math Growth	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	
3.c	MCA Reading Proficiency	The trendline of the percent of students who partially, meet, or exceed on the MCA over the term of the contract has a slope less than -0.2.	The trendline of the percent of students who partially, meet, or exceed on the MCA over the term of the contract will has a slope equal to or less than zero but greater than or equal to -0.2.	The trendline of the percent of students who partially, meet, or exceed on the MCA beginning in FY21 through the term of the contract will have a positive slope.	The trendline of the percent of students who partially, meet, or exceed on the MCA over the term of the contract will have a positive slope and that exceeds that of the same grade levels of the state.	
3.d	MCA Math Proficiency	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	
3.e	Equity in Achievement	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Sped to non-sped internally is an option. Free and reduced lunch is another option. Could compare internally, to residential district, or state.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	
3.f	Reading Well by Third Grade	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Could do an early literacy assessment ~ ORF or letter sound recognition, reading benchmarking are all examples. Take a look at the goals you already have in place.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	
3.g	21st Century Skills	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	
3.h	Graduation Rate	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	The graduation rate of all eligible seniors who have attended at least 90% of their senior year, over the term of the contract will equate to at least 75% but not more than 80%.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	
3.i	College & Career Readiness	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	A minimum of three college visits and career expos will be attended bygrades 10-12.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	
3.j	Consistent Attendance	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	During FY22 through FY24 when the school offers in person learning, the school's consistent attendance rate is at least 70% but not more than 80%.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	
3.k	Social Emotional Learning	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	Life Skills Training (LST) will be offered to grades 7-8 during 2021-2022 using curriculum	Specific benchmark language will be developed during contract negotiations.	
3.l	Locally established measures consistent with school affidavit	The school has successfully met up to 10% of measures	The school has achieved more than 10% but less than 50% of measures.	The school has achieved at least 50% but less than 80% of measures	The school has achieved more than 80% of measures	
	Insert additional measures here and add more rows as needed					
<b>Average Score</b>						

Area 4	Finance	Intervention Benchmark	Progressing Benchmark	Target Benchmark	Exceeding Target Benchmark	Place score in this Field
	<b>Points</b>	<b>0.0-1.9</b>	<b>2.0-2.9</b>	<b>3.0-3.9</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>0.0-4.0</b>
4.a	<b>Budget Approval</b>	The Board fails to set a budget for the fiscal school year.	The preliminary school budget is approved by the Board after July 1st.	The school budget is approved before July 1 and revised and approved by the Board by December 15 and February 1 annually.	The school has reached the target benchmark and receives recognition for its fiscal management by the MDE	
4.b	<b>School Finance Management</b>	The school does internally manage or contract with an organization who is responsible for the financial management of the school. The school has many outstanding bills/payments.	School finances are managed internally or by a finance management company. Bills have not been consistently paid within 30 days.	School finances are managed internally or by a contracted financial manager. All bills are paid within 30 days.	School finances are managed internally or by a contracted financial manager. All bills are paid within 30 days. The school receives recognition for its fiscal management by the MDE.	
4.c	<b>School Fund Balance</b>	The school has no fund balance and is considered to be in Statutory Operating Debt (SOD)	The school's fund balance is less than 10% of operating expenditures.	The school has maintained a fund balance between 10% and 15%.	The school has maintained a fund balance in excess of 15%.	
4.d	<b>State Financial Reports</b>	Mandatory financial reports have not been filed on in a timely manner on more than one occasion.	Mandatory financial reports have not been filed on in a timely manner at least once during the contract period.	State finance reports are filed appropriately and on time.	School leadership has established and utilizes proactive processes to complete and submit mandated state and authorizer financial reports.	
4.e	<b>Payroll Management</b>	The school has received more than one notice of failure to properly submit payroll taxes in a timely manner.	The school has receive a notice of failure to properly submit payroll taxes in a timely manner.	All state/Federal taxes, pensions, insurance, etc. are paid in a timely manner and as required.	The school has not received a complaint from an employee related to the timely remuneration of compensation and/or notice from the state for delinquency in the payment state/federal payroll taxes.	
4.f	<b>School Budget Review</b>	A regular schedule for monitoring school budget has not been established.	The school budget is monitored by the board less than four (4) times annually.	The Board is provided budget information at its regular meetings. The Board approves all payment of bills at its regular meetings.	The Board has in place a treasurer and/or finance committee that reviews all expenditures prior to final Board approval. A process is in place to ensure redundancy in the review of the expenditure process.	
4.g	<b>School Audit</b>	The annual audit was not completed.	The audit report filed with MDE identifies one or more internal control findings. The School must submit a written report to the commissioner how these findings will be resolved.	The School audit information is filed as scheduled with the MDE, the audit is completed on time and the audit does not identify any internal control findings.	The school has filed two consecutive audits with the MDE that do not contain any internal control findings.	
4.h	<b>Budget Planning</b>	There is no evidence of a long-range budget expenditure plan.	A long-range budget expenditure plan is in place but has not been updated on a yearly basis.	A long-range budget expenditure plan is in place and is updated annually.	A long-range budget expenditure plan is in place and is updated twice yearly.	
4.i	<b>Budget Priorities</b>	There is no long range plan for appropriating resources that reflect mission, vision priorities.	A plan is in place that outlines budget parameters in support of school priorities, but has not been approved by the Board.	The patterns of expenditures are consistent with the mission, program, and goals of the school.	A plan for aligning budgeting practices with mission/vision is in place and reviewed by the board annually.	
<b>Average Score</b>						

Area 4	Finance	Intervention Benchmark	Progressing Benchmark	Target Benchmark	Exceeding Target Benchmark	Place score in this Field
	<b>Points</b>	<b>0.0-1.9</b>	<b>2.0-2.9</b>	<b>3.0-3.9</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>0.0-4.0</b>
4.a	<b>Budget Approval</b>	The Board fails to set a budget for the fiscal school year.	The preliminary school budget is approved by the Board after July 1st.	The school budget is approved before July 1 and revised and approved by the Board by December 15 and February 1 annually.	The school has reached the target benchmark and receives recognition for its fiscal management by the MDE	
4.b	<b>School Finance Management</b>	The school does internally manage or contract with an organization who is responsible for the financial management of the school. The school has many outstanding bills/payments.	School finances are managed internally or by a finance management company. Bills have not been consistently paid within 30 days.	School finances are managed internally or by a contracted financial manager. All bills are paid within 30 days.	School finances are managed internally or by a contracted financial manager. All bills are paid within 30 days. The school receives recognition for its fiscal management by the MDE.	
4.c	<b>School Fund Balance</b>	The school has no fund balance and is considered to be in Statutory Operating Debt (SOD)	The school's fund balance is less than 10% of operating expenditures.	The school has maintained a fund balance between 10% and 15%.	The school has maintained a fund balance in excess of 15%.	
4.d	<b>State Financial Reports</b>	Mandatory financial reports have not been filed on in a timely manner on more than one occasion.	Mandatory financial reports have not been filed on in a timely manner at least once during the contract period.	State finance reports are filed appropriately and on time.	School leadership has established and utilizes proactive processes to complete and submit mandated state and authorizer financial reports.	
4.e	<b>Payroll Management</b>	The school has received more than one notice of failure to properly submit payroll taxes in a timely manner.	The school has receive a notice of failure to properly submit payroll taxes in a timely manner.	All state/Federal taxes, pensions, insurance, etc. are paid in a timely manner and as required.	The school has not received a complaint from an employee related to the timely remuneration of compensation and/or notice from the state for delinquency in the payment state/federal payroll taxes.	
4.f	<b>School Budget Review</b>	A regular schedule for monitoring school budget has not been established.	The school budget is monitored by the board less than four (4) times annually.	The Board is provided budget information at its regular meetings. The Board approves all payment of bills at its regular meetings.	The Board has in place a treasurer and/or finance committee that reviews all expenditures prior to final Board approval. A process is in place to ensure redundancy in the review of the expenditure process.	
4.g	<b>School Audit</b>	The annual audit was not completed.	The audit report filed with MDE identifies one or more internal control findings. The School must submit a written report to the commissioner how these findings will be resolved.	The School audit information is filed as scheduled with the MDE, the audit is completed on time and the audit does not identify any internal control findings.	The school has filed two consecutive audits with the MDE that do not contain any internal control findings.	
4.h	<b>Budget Planning</b>	There is no evidence of a long-range budget expenditure plan.	A long-range budget expenditure plan is in place but has not been updated on a yearly basis.	A long-range budget expenditure plan is in place and is updated annually.	A long-range budget expenditure plan is in place and is updated twice yearly.	
4.i	<b>Budget Priorities</b>	There is no long range plan for appropriating resources that reflect mission, vision priorities.	A plan is in place that outlines budget parameters in support of school priorities, but has not been approved by the Board.	The patterns of expenditures are consistent with the mission, program, and goals of the school.	A plan for aligning budgeting practices with mission/vision is in place and reviewed by the board annually.	
<b>Average Score</b>						

Area 5	Operations of the School Performance Indicators	Intervention Benchmark	Progressing Benchmark	Target Benchmark	Exceeding Target Benchmark	Place score in this Field
	Points	0.0-1.9	2.0-2.9	3.0-3.9	4.0	0-4.0
5.a	<b>Staff Qualifications</b>	There is no evidence that any school employee required qualifications, licensure, and/or criminal background checks are compliant as required.	There is evidence that school employees' required qualifications, licensure, and/or criminal background checks have not been completed or submitted as required.	All school employees' qualifications, licensure, and criminal background checks are in compliance with state, federal and authorizer requirements.	School has onboarding processes and procedures that ensure employee qualifications, licensure, and criminal background checks have been completed and submitted as required.	
5.b	<b>Staff Assignments</b>	More than 10% of teaching staff are operating with Tier 1 or repeated use of Out-of-Field permissions from the PELSB.	Staff assignments align with areas of licensure. Less than 10% of teaching staff are operating with Tier 1 or repeated use of Out-of-Field permissions from the PELSB.	Staff assignments align with areas of licensure. At least 80% of teachers have a Tier 3 or Tier 4 license and/or the school has a professional development plan to support teachers in attaining full licensure and/or the school has a plan for attaining a fully licenced teacher the following year.	Staff assignments align with areas of licensure. All teachers have a Tier 3 or Tier 4 license and/or the school has a professional development plan to support teachers in attaining full licensure and/or the school has a plan for attaining a fully licenced teacher the following year.	
5.c	<b>Enrollment Policy</b>	Enrollment policies and procedures do not meet the requirements of Minnesota Statute 124E.11	Enrollment policies and procedures in place are consistent with Minnesota Statute 124E.11 but are not consistently followed or are not posted on the school's website.	Policies and procedures for student enrollment in the school are consistent with Minnesota Statute 124E.11.	Policies and procedures for student enrollment in the school are consistent with Minnesota Statute 124E.11, published on the school website. Over the past two (2) years, the school has been required to conduct a lottery to address growing enrollments.	
5.d	<b>Transportation</b>	Transportation system has been established, but fails to meet one or more of the requirements established in Minnesota Statute 124E.15.	Transportation system has been established. Complaints are on file related to the effectiveness and/or efficiency of the system.	A system of transportation is in place and meets all criteria as described in Minnesota Statute 124E.15	A system of transportation is in place and meets all criteria as described in Minnesota Statute 124E.15. Transportation information is published on the school website. At least semi-annually, a survey of student and parent satisfaction is conducted as a means of determining the effectiveness of the transportation system.	
5.e	<b>School Complaint and Resolution Procedures</b>	Complaint and resolution procedures have not been established.	Complaint and resolution procedures have been established but are inconsistently followed by school leadership and staff and/or are not on the school's website.	Complaint and resolution procedures have been established and are on the school's website and are consistently followed by school leadership and staff.	Resolution procedures to address key stakeholder complaints are in place and posted on the district website. Staff members can articulate the resolution procedures. If there have been any complaints in the previous two years, evidence has been presented that all complaints have been resolved through the consistent application of the procedures.	
5.f	<b>Website Compliance</b>	The school does not have a website or the website is absent of many statutory required elements.	The school has a website that is missing a few of the required elements and/or the school has required multiple corrective reminders.	The school's website has all statutory requirements and the school has not needed more than one corrective reminder during the past twelve (12) months.	The school has consistently maintained a website that meets all statutory requirements.	

Area 5	Operations of the School Performance Indicators	Intervention Benchmark	Progressing Benchmark	Target Benchmark	Exceeding Target Benchmark	Place score in this Field
	Points	0.0-1.9	2.0-2.9	3.0-3.9	4.0	0-4.0
5.g	<b>School Insurance</b>	The school does not have insurance or has insurance but the provisions in the policy do not meet either the requirements found in Minnesota Statutes chapter 466 or the provisions cited in section 4.15 of the contract between the authorizer and the school.	The school has insurance in place as required in Minnesota Statutes chapter 466 and in accordance but does not fully meet the provisions cited in section 4.15 of the contract between the authorizer and the school.	The school has insurance in place as required in Minnesota Statutes chapter 466 and in accordance with the provisions cited in section 4.15 of the contract between the authorizer and the school.	The school has insurance in place as required in Minnesota Statutes chapter 466 and in accordance with the provisions cited in section 4.15 of the contract between the authorizer and the school. The insurance policy is annually reviewed by the Board. At least once every three (3) years, the school seeks quotes from qualified insurance providers to ensure comparable coverage is obtained at the best possible price.	
5.h	<b>State and Federal Laws</b>	State and federal laws such as those related to special education, ESL, student discipline, discrimination and school food/nutrition are being followed as evidence by state and/or federal audits. However, over the past two years, more than one violation has been cited.	State and federal laws such as those related to special education, ESL, student discipline, discrimination and school food/nutrition are being followed as evidence by state and/or federal audits. However, over the past two years, one violation has been cited.	State and federal laws such as those related to special education, ESL, student discipline, discrimination and school food/nutrition are being followed as evidence by state and/or federal audits. No violations have occurred in the past year.	State and federal laws such as those related to special education, ESL, student discipline, discrimination and school food/nutrition are being followed as evidence by state and/or federal audits. No violations have occurred in the past two years.	
5.i	<b>Required Immunization</b>	Not all immunizations and or immunization records have been completed and on file for all students as required.	Processes and procedures are in place to ensure that the required immunizations for students are on file. However, the school inconsistently oversees the procedures.	Processes and procedures are in place to ensure that the required immunizations for students are on file.	Required immunizations are on file for all students. Policies and procedures for parents to 'opt out' are available on the school website. All records are kept in accordance to HIPAA requirements.	
5.j	<b>Nonsectarian Assurance</b>	School has received two or more notices from a governing agency (state, federal, or authorizer) within the past 12 months regarding nonsectarian compliances.	School has received a notice from a governing agency (state, federal, or authorizer) within the past 12 months regarding nonsectarian compliance.	The school is nonsectarian in all aspects of its operations consistent with Minnesota Statute 124E.06 and submitted annual charter school assurances in a timely manner.	The school is nonsectarian in all aspects consistent with the Minnesota Statute 124E.06, submitted annual charter school assurances in a timely manner, and has not received any notices from a governing agency within the past two years.	
5.k	<b>State Reporting Requirements</b>	The school does not have the capacity to manage all state reporting requirements.	The school has the capacity to manage all state reporting requirements. However, at least one (1) notice of non-compliance has been received within the last 12 months.	The school has the capacity to manage all state reporting requirements with submittals made on a timely basis. No notices of non-compliance have been received during the past 12 months.	The school has the capacity to manage all state reporting requirements. No notices of non-compliance have been received during the past two years.	
5.l	<b>Health and Safety</b>	The school does not adhere to all health and safety requirements in accordance with Minnesota Statutes and as cited section 4.10 in the contract between the school and the authorizer and more than one violation has been cited during the past twelve (12) months.	The school adheres to all health and safety requirements in accordance with Minnesota Statutes and as cited section 4.10 in the contract between the school and the authorizer. However, one (1) violation has been cited during the past twelve (12) months.	The school adheres to all health and safety requirements in accordance with Minnesota Statutes and as cited section 4.10 in the contract between the school and the authorizer. No notices from governing agencies have been received over the past twelve (12) months.	The school adheres to all health and safety requirements in accordance with Minnesota Statutes and as cited section 4.10 in the contract between the school and the authorizer. No notices from governing agencies have been received over the past two years.	

Area 5	Operations of the School Performance Indicators	Intervention Benchmark	Progressing Benchmark	Target Benchmark	Exceeding Target Benchmark	Place score in this Field
	<b>Points</b>	<b>0.0-1.9</b>	<b>2.0-2.9</b>	<b>3.0-3.9</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>0-4.0</b>
5.m	<b>Lease Provisions</b>	The school has entered into a lease agreement in accordance with Minnesota Statute 124E.13. The cost of operation is greater than 10% above comparable lease agreements located within the immediate area.	The school has entered into a lease agreement in accordance with Minnesota Statute 124E.13. The cost of operation is no more than 10% above comparable lease agreements located within the immediate area.	The school has entered into a lease agreement in accordance with Minnesota Statute 124E.13. Costs are comparable to similarly located schools.	The school has entered into a lease agreement in accordance with Minnesota Statute 124E.13. The agreement was competitively bid. Costs are comparable to similarly located schools. The terms of the lease reflect the stability and long-range planning of the school.	
5.n	<b>Organizational Systems</b>	There is no evidence of an organizational chart, job descriptions or performance evaluations.	There is evidence of an organizational chart, job descriptions and performance evaluations. However, they have not been reviewed by the Board within the past three years.	The school has internal operations that result in a well managed school including a management chart, position descriptions, professional performance evaluations, functioning committees etc.; reviewed by the board within the last three years.	The school has internal operations that result in a well managed school including a management chart, position descriptions, professional performance evaluations, functioning committees etc.; reviewed annually by the board.	
<b>Average Score</b>						

## **Contact Information**

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### **Authorizer:**

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This Annual Report was submitted to the ECHO Charter School Board of Education and approved on:

**January 13, 2022**

ECHO Charter School is authorized by Innovative Quality Schools, which is responsible for providing oversight of our school. For information about IQS go to [www.iqsmn.org](http://www.iqsmn.org) The website will also provide you with names, phone numbers and email addresses.