

WORLD'S BEST WORK FORCE

ANNUAL PROGRAM REPORT

Every Child Has Opportunities

Charter School

2019-2020



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ECHO Charter School

Every Child Has Opportunities Charter School

Annual Report 2019-2020

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.

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: Schooling in the Era of Covid

Like every school in America, ECHO Charter School, its families, and its staff, struggled with the effects of the Pandemic and school closure. Resilience is one of our staff's collective qualities, however, and the Governor's Proclamation closing Minnesota public schools on March 18, 2020—and the follow-up proclamation, closing public schools through the end of the academic year—brought about a flurry of activity at ECS. Teachers and staff activated our distance learning plan and provided paper assignments throughout the balance of the academic year, which ended on May 21, 2020. We also established ECS as a hub for food distribution for students, which meant we delivered meals through the summer under our Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) license. A joint decision was made to delay our Commencement ceremony from May 22 to late July in hopes that the Pandemic would "ease up" in summer months, but as we all know, things only worsened. Nonetheless, we held a successful commencement on July 24 in the city park. Families were glad to participate in the drive-up ceremony and the graduates and families enjoyed themselves immensely.

General Information:

Our school serves students in grades K-12. Having embarked on our twenty-third year of operation in 2020, the school began rebuilding its student enrollment in the fall of 2019. In order to attract new students, we set about building new classes that would resonate with students, namely, CTE (Career Technical Education) and Dakota Language. The Board of Education approved the purchase of welding and other equipment and students were enthusiastic about the welding and carpentry classes. Additionally, we were able to hire a music teacher mid-year. The students were off to a strong start academically and engagement-wise, and then in January, science

students began an in-depth study of coronavirus, which soon crept into the public parlance. By mid-March, of course, everything changed.

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.

A word about our method:

We are small rural charter school without most of the bells and whistles enjoyed by larger public districts. Our lack of technology meant that we set out all paper assignments, which, unusually stated, is an equitable practice. Not knowing that CARES money would be flowing to schools sharpened our process and we found that for the most part, students did well. Teachers and paras made daily contact with students to provide support—academic, moral, and mental health. (We did mental health referrals for students as needed.)

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; 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 60%+ rate of Free/Reduced, along with a rate of about 35% special needs population.

Our Curriculum and Schedule:

In pre-K through grade 6, 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 their teaching. 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 Fall, 2021.

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.

Because there was obviously no theatre production or student activities in Spring, 2020, what follows is a description of our activities in Spring, 2019.

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. We were unable to attract a music teacher in 2017-2018, so we were unable to offer music classes. However, 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 newly re-energized 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 voluntary 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

The fall of 2019 showed declined enrollment when compared to that of 2018-2019.

| Year | 2018-2019 | | | | 2019-2020 | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| | Enrolled Oct. 1 | Enrolled after Oct.1 | Transfer after Oct.1 | Enrolled End of School | Enrolled Oct. 1 | Enrolled after Oct.1 | Transfer after Oct.1 | Enrolled End of School |
| <u>K</u> | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| <u>1</u> | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| <u>2</u> | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| <u>3</u> | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| <u>4</u> | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| <u>5</u> | 7 | 1 | 0 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| <u>6</u> | 6 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| <u>7</u> | 12 | 0 | 1 | 11 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 8 |
| <u>8</u> | 8 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| <u>9</u> | 9 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| <u>10</u> | 8 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| <u>11</u> | 6 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 5 |
| <u>12</u> | 8 | 0 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| Total | 77 | 0 | 12 | 67 | 58 | 0 | 1 | 65 |

School Enrollment

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

Following a drop in 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 district. For long-established families, ECHO Charter continued to operate as the centerpiece of their educational and academic lives. The 2021-2022 estimate, below, reflects actual enrollment at the beginning of the school year.

| Grade | 2018-2019 | 2019-2020 | 2020-2021 est. |
|-------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| K | 1 | 7 | 5 |
| 1 | 2 | 1 | 5 |
| 2 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| 3 | 4 | 2 | 4 |
| 4 | 3 | 5 | 2 |
| 5 | 7 | 2 | 5 |
| 6 | 6 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 11 | 8 | 10 |
| 8 | 8 | 7 | 10 |
| 9 | 7 | 6 | 8 |
| 10 | 4 | 8 | 8 |
| 11 | 5 | 5 | 6 |
| 12 | 5 | 6 | 3 |
| Total | 67 | 65 | 70 |

Nota bene: Education during the Pandemic has presented many challenges for students and staff. We honed our system continuously throughout the spring after schools in the state were closed by Executive Order. Teaching and support staff kept records on contacts with students so that we could monitor our outreach efforts on an ongoing basis.

Student Performance on MCAs:

Due to statewide cancellation of the 2020 MCAs, there is no MCA data to report. What follows is our data from 2019.

The next several pages are performance scores, attendance, and graduation rates for ECHO Charter School. ECHO's aggregate reading score in 2019 exceeded that of Bert Raney Elementary School, and in the aggregate also exceeded the performance of Math MCA by Yellow Medicine East middle schoolers.

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 2019-2020, we had planned to hold multi-age activities in the spring, but the closure of schools prevented that. We expect to resume programming such as this (along with sports) in fall of 2021. The following information comes from 2018-2019.

- 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-6 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 2019-2020 school year, we continued using the Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) program in grades kindergarten through grade 3 and also pre-school. (Grades 4 and 5 began using the CKLA in its entirety 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
- 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 2019-2020, in order to prepare for MCAs, 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 and their effort was a contributing factor in the increased math scores we had in spring, 2019. (MCAs were not held in 2020, but we are preparing students for the 2020 administration of the tests.)

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 2018-2019 school year, our entire teaching staff met all their classroom goals set for the year. Additionally, we met our school-wide goal with the increase in our Math MCA score.

School Governance

The chart below provides information about our school board from July 2019 to June 2020.

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 Attendance |
|------------------------|----------------|---|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| FILLED 7/20 | | | | | |
| Judy Miller | Treasurer | Community Member | 507-430-8243 | jmill@isd4026.org | 11/12 |
| Debbie Eakes | Chair | Parent | 320-522-3773 | deakes@isd4026.org | 12/12 |
| Brad Thomas | Director | 1002177 | 507-476-7390 | bthomas@echo.charter.k12.mn.us | 6/6 |
| Nikki Hildahl-Schwartz | Clerk | 491378 | 507-530-2217 | Nhildahl-schwartz@isd4026.org | 12/12 |
| FILLED 7/20 | | | | | |
| Lynn Standfuss | Director | 476680 | 612-790-8722 | lstandfuss@isd4026.org | 10/10 |

School Management & Administration

The school's management and administration is made up of several people fulfilling many of the duties. During the 2018-2019 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 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 2019-2020. We did not have any staff leave during the school year but we did lose several teachers who had secured more lucrative posts.

Teaching Staff

| NAME | FOLDER | RETURNED |
|-------------------------------|---------|----------|
| Blue-Redner, Helen | 490781 | Yes |
| Isaackson, Jody | 358239 | No |
| Reigstad, Holly | 366961 | Yes |
| Larsen, Isaac | 1002237 | Yes |
| Thomas, Brad | 1002177 | No |
| Bruns, Bailey | 1001654 | No |
| Cole, John | 505140 | Yes |
| Littlecreek-Wilbanks, Phyllis | 507063 | No |
| Schwartz, Nikki | 491378 | Yes |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

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 closed, 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 4 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 2019-2020 academic year saw a major influx of cash since an alumnus who graduated in 1940 made a donation of \$1 million. This gift enabled us to purchase welding equipment, fund Dakota language, buy textbooks for certain classes, hire a music teacher, and a host of other initiatives.

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.

| FY | Revenue | Expenditure | Revenue Over/Under | Fund Balance EOY |
|-----------|----------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 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, 2020
(with Partial Comparative Information as of June 30, 2019)

| | Governmental Activities | |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| | 2020 | 2019 |
| ASSETS | | |
| Current Assets: | | |
| Cash and Investments | \$ 802,192 | \$ 96,930 |
| Accounts Receivable | 749 | 2,955 |
| Due From State of Minnesota | 167,668 | 98,413 |
| Due From Federal Government | 50,948 | 40,196 |
| Due From Other Minnesota School Districts | 9,107 | 42,093 |
| Inventory | 4,125 | 4,346 |
| Prepaid Expenses | 9,878 | 7,781 |
| Total Current Assets | <u>1,044,667</u> | <u>292,714</u> |
| Noncurrent Assets: | | |
| Capital Assets: | | |
| Other Capital Assets, Net of Depreciation | <u>373,505</u> | <u>399,238</u> |
| TOTAL ASSETS | <u>1,418,172</u> | <u>691,952</u> |
| DEFERRED OUTFLOWS OF RESOURCES | | |
| Related to Pensions | <u>772,912</u> | <u>1,143,537</u> |
| TOTAL ASSETS AND DEFERRED OUTFLOWS OF RESOURCES | <u>\$ 2,191,084</u> | <u>\$ 1,835,489</u> |
| LIABILITIES | | |
| Current Liabilities: | | |
| Salaries Payable | \$ 49,950 | \$ 50,260 |
| Accounts Payable | 32,829 | 8,534 |
| Payroll Liabilities | 25,422 | 24,316 |
| Unearned Revenue | 353 | 476 |
| Promissory Note Payable | - | 150,000 |
| Current Portion of Long-Term Liabilities | 33,095 | - |
| Total Current Liabilities | <u>141,649</u> | <u>233,586</u> |
| Noncurrent Liabilities: | | |
| Net Pension Liability | 797,031 | 960,423 |
| Noncurrent Portion of Long-Term Liabilities | 115,410 | - |
| Total Noncurrent Liabilities | <u>912,441</u> | <u>960,423</u> |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | <u>1,054,090</u> | <u>1,194,009</u> |
| DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES | | |
| Related to Pensions | <u>1,370,524</u> | <u>1,544,737</u> |
| NET POSITION | | |
| Net Investment in Capital Assets | 373,505 | 399,238 |
| Restricted For: | | |
| Food Service | 4,125 | 4,346 |
| Other Activities | 23,064 | - |
| Unrestricted | <u>(634,224)</u> | <u>(1,306,841)</u> |
| TOTAL NET POSITION | <u>(233,530)</u> | <u>(903,257)</u> |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES, DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES, AND NET POSITION | <u>\$ 2,191,084</u> | <u>\$ 1,835,489</u> |

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, 2020

(with Partial Comparative Information for the Year Ended June 30, 2019)

| | 2020 | | | | 2019 | |
|---|------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Program Revenues | | | Net (Expense) | Net (Expense) | |
| Functions/Programs | Expenses | Charges for Services | Operating Grants and Contributions | Capital Grants and Contributions | Revenue and Changes in Net Position | Revenue and Changes in Net Position |
| Governmental Activities: | | | | | | |
| District and School Administration | \$ 62,861 | | | | \$ (62,861) | \$ (80,247) |
| District Support Services | 179,983 | | | | (179,983) | (143,104) |
| Regular Instruction | 495,378 | \$ 3,717 | \$ 1,092,542 | | 600,881 | (82,314) |
| Exceptional Instruction | 242,890 | - | 264,123 | | 21,233 | 64,245 |
| Community Education and Services | - | - | - | | - | (23,189) |
| Instructional Support Services | 5,078 | - | - | | (5,078) | (3,577) |
| Pupil Support Services | 200,921 | 8,251 | 45,618 | \$ 1,821 | (145,231) | (138,534) |
| Site, Buildings and Equipment | 265,820 | - | 91,415 | - | (174,405) | (198,367) |
| Fiscal and Other Fixed Cost Programs | 9,281 | - | - | - | (9,281) | (9,909) |
| Loss on Sale of Assets | 4,100 | - | - | - | (4,100) | (2,980) |
| Depreciation - Unallocated** | 18,617 | - | - | - | (18,617) | (18,551) |
| Total Governmental Activities | 1,484,929 | 11,968 | 1,493,698 | \$ 1,821 | 22,558 | (636,527) |
| General Revenues: | | | | | | |
| Federal and State Aid Not Restricted to Specific Purposes | | | | | 637,111 | 739,055 |
| Earnings on Investments | | | | | 826 | 276 |
| Miscellaneous Revenues | | | | | 1,495 | 4,923 |
| Total General Revenues | | | | | 639,432 | 744,254 |
| Change in Net Position | | | | | 661,990 | 107,727 |
| Net Position - Beginning of Year | | | | | (903,257) | (1,010,984) |
| Prior Period Adjustment (GASB No. 84) | | | | | 7,737 | - |
| Net Position, Beginning of Year, As Restated | | | | | (895,520) | (1,010,984) |
| Net Position - Ending | | | | | \$ (233,530) | \$ (903,257) |

** 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, 2020
(with Partial Comparative Information as of June 30, 2019)

| | Major Funds | | Total Governmental Funds | |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| | General | Food Service | 2020 | 2019 |
| ASSETS | | | | |
| Cash and Investments | \$ 819,332 | \$ - | \$ 819,332 | \$ 97,752 |
| Accounts Receivable | 672 | 77 | 749 | 2,955 |
| Due From State of Minnesota | 165,847 | 1,821 | 167,668 | 98,413 |
| Due From Federal Government | 34,179 | 16,769 | 50,948 | 40,196 |
| Due From Other Minnesota School Districts | 9,107 | - | 9,107 | 42,093 |
| Inventory | - | 4,125 | 4,125 | 4,346 |
| Prepaid Expenditures | 9,878 | - | 9,878 | 7,781 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | \$ 1,039,015 | \$ 22,792 | \$ 1,061,807 | \$ 293,536 |
| LIABILITIES | | | | |
| Checks Written in Excess of Bank Balance | \$ - | \$ 17,140 | \$ 17,140 | \$ 822 |
| Salaries Payable | 48,335 | 1,615 | 49,950 | 50,260 |
| Accounts Payable | 29,145 | 3,684 | 32,829 | 8,534 |
| Payroll Liabilities | 25,422 | - | 25,422 | 24,316 |
| Unearned Revenue | - | 353 | 353 | 476 |
| Promissory Note Payable | - | - | - | 150,000 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | 102,902 | 22,792 | 125,694 | 234,408 |
| FUND BALANCES | | | | |
| Nonspendable Fund Balances | 9,878 | 4,125 | 14,003 | 12,127 |
| Restricted Fund Balances | 23,064 | - | 23,064 | - |
| Assigned Fund Balances | 115,128 | - | 115,128 | 51,347 |
| Unassigned Fund Balances | 788,043 | (4,125) | 783,918 | (4,346) |
| TOTAL FUND BALANCES | 936,113 | - | 936,113 | 59,128 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES | \$ 1,039,015 | \$ 22,792 | \$ 1,061,807 | \$ 293,536 |

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, 2020
(with Partial Comparative Information as of June 30, 2019)**

| | <u>2020</u> | <u>2019</u> |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Total Fund Balances for Governmental Funds | \$ 936,113 | \$ 59,128 |
| 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 \$605,170 of | | |
| Accumulated Depreciation | 373,505 | 399,238 |
| 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 | 772,912 | 1,143,537 |
| Deferred Inflows of Resources Related to Pensions | (1,370,524) | (1,544,737) |
| 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 | <u>(797,031)</u> | <u>(960,423)</u> |
| Total Net Position of Governmental Activities | \$ <u>(233,530)</u> | \$ <u>(903,257)</u> |

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, 2020
(with Partial Comparative Information for the Year Ended June 30, 2019)

| | Major Funds | | Total Governmental Funds | |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| | General | Food Service | 2020 | 2019 |
| REVENUES | | | | |
| Other Local and County Revenues | \$ 1,006,426 | \$ 1,095 | \$ 1,007,521 | \$ 26,287 |
| Revenue From State Sources | 986,472 | 4,631 | 991,103 | 1,127,650 |
| Revenue From Federal Sources | 92,417 | 41,356 | 133,773 | 166,743 |
| Sales and Other Conversion of Assets | 1,078 | 9,558 | 10,636 | 12,098 |
| TOTAL REVENUES | 2,086,393 | 56,640 | 2,143,033 | 1,332,778 |
| EXPENDITURES | | | | |
| Current: | | | | |
| District and School Administration | 53,562 | - | 53,562 | 78,969 |
| District Support Services | 171,837 | - | 171,837 | 136,550 |
| Regular Instruction | 484,046 | - | 484,046 | 490,587 |
| Exceptional Instruction | 228,672 | - | 228,672 | 226,011 |
| Community Education and Services | - | - | - | 49,401 |
| Instructional Support Services | 833 | - | 833 | 896 |
| Pupil Support Services | 121,066 | 69,728 | 190,794 | 178,427 |
| Site, Buildings and Equipment | 258,738 | - | 258,738 | 295,118 |
| Fiscal and Other Fixed Cost Programs | 9,281 | - | 9,281 | 9,909 |
| Capital Outlay: | 23,019 | 1,383 | 24,402 | 23,725 |
| Debt Service: | | | | |
| Interest | 5,741 | - | 5,741 | 2,003 |
| Other Debt Service Expenditures | - | - | - | 500 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURES | 1,356,795 | 71,111 | 1,427,906 | 1,492,096 |
| EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER (UNDER) EXPENDITURES | 729,598 | (14,471) | 715,127 | (159,318) |
| OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES) | | | | |
| Proceeds from Sale of Equipment | 3,916 | 1,700 | 5,616 | 2,700 |
| Proceeds from Long-Term Debt | 148,505 | - | 148,505 | - |
| Transfer To/From Other Funds | (12,771) | 12,771 | - | - |
| TOTAL OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES) | 139,650 | 14,471 | 154,121 | 2,700 |
| EXCESS OF REVENUES AND OTHER SOURCES OVER (UNDER) EXPENDITURES AND OTHER USES | 869,248 | - | 869,248 | (156,618) |
| FUND BALANCE BEGINNING OF YEAR | 59,128 | - | 59,128 | 215,746 |
| PRIOR PERIOD ADJUSTMENT (GASB No. 84) | 7,737 | - | 7,737 | - |
| FUND BALANCE BEGINNING OF YEAR, AS RESTATED | 66,865 | - | 66,865 | 215,746 |
| FUND BALANCE END OF YEAR | \$ 936,113 | \$ - | \$ 936,113 | \$ 59,128 |

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, 2020
(with Partial Comparative Information for the Year Ended June 30, 2019)

| | <u>2020</u> | <u>2019</u> |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Total Net Change in Fund Balances - Governmental Funds | \$ 869,248 | \$ (156,618) |
| 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 | 21,304 | 18,589 |
| Depreciation Expense | (37,321) | (44,326) |
| 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. | | |
| | (9,716) | (5,680) |
| 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) | - |
| 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 | 3,886 | (40,201) |
| Pension Expense | <u>(36,906)</u> | <u>335,963</u> |
| Change in Net Position of Governmental Activities | \$ <u>661,990</u> | \$ <u>107,727</u> |

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

E.C.H.O. Charter School Board Financial Report
As of June 30, 2020

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| GENERAL CHECKING ACCOUNT | \$ 136,914.63 |
| Bank Statement as of 6/30/2020 | |

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| SAVINGS ACCOUNT | \$ 648,838.55 |
| Bank Statement as of 6/30/2020 | |

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| PAYROLL ACCOUNT | \$ 1,372.94 |
| Bank Statement as of 6/30/2020 | |

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| STUDENT ACTIVITY ACCOUNT | \$ 11,275.73 |
| Bank Statement as of 6/30/2020 | |

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT | Amount |
| None | \$ - |
| | \$ - |
| | \$ - |

| | |
|---------------|------|
| Total All CDs | \$ - |
|---------------|------|

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| SUBTOTAL CASH ASSETS & CDS | <u>\$ 798,401.85</u> |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|

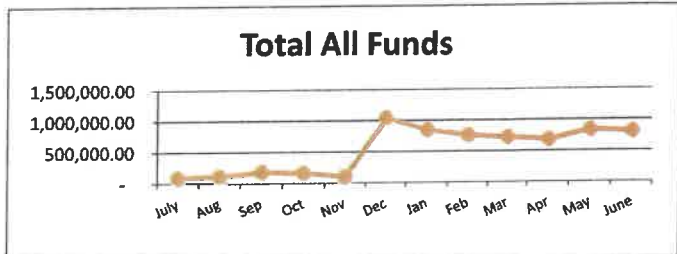
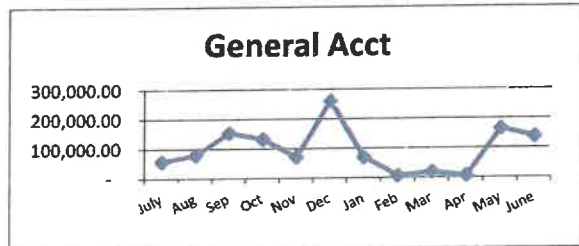
| | |
|---|-------------|
| Hildred Riley Endowment CD | |
| #1002914 1.45% Maturity (04/02/21) 24 mo | \$ 3,689.52 |

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| TOTAL CASH ASSETS & CDS | <u><u>\$ 802,091.37</u></u> |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|

E.C.H.O. Charter School
FY 2019-2020 Financial Comparison Report

Fund Balances

| | July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | June |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|--------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| General Acct | 56,071.86 | 77,934.81 | 151,687.18 | 130,626.95 | 69,809.51 | 258,483.42 | 68,038.03 | 5,135.42 | 16,732.03 | 5,155.16 | 163,800.36 | 136,914.63 |
| Savings Acct | 2.50 | 2.50 | 52.50 | 60.00 | 60.00 | 750,113.44 | 750,113.44 | 750,113.44 | 678,594.14 | 648,594.14 | 648,594.14 | 648,838.55 |
| Payroll Acct | 2,349.99 | 2,239.09 | (4,099.60) | 835.00 | 769.18 | 703.38 | 637.38 | (24,534.31) | 670.52 | 604.32 | 1,438.04 | 1,372.94 |
| CDs | 3,636.65 | 3,636.65 | 3,636.65 | 3,636.65 | 3,636.65 | 3,636.65 | 3,636.65 | 3,636.65 | 3,636.65 | 3,636.65 | 3,636.65 | 3,689.52 |
| Student Activity | 11,546.50 | 11,546.50 | 11,546.50 | 11,546.50 | 13,180.50 | 13,180.50 | 13,180.50 | 13,180.50 | 13,180.50 | 13,180.50 | 13,180.50 | 11,275.73 |
| Total All Funds | 73,607.50 | 95,359.55 | 162,823.23 | 146,705.10 | 87,455.84 | 1,026,117.39 | 835,606.00 | 747,531.70 | 712,813.84 | 671,170.77 | 830,649.69 | 802,091.37 |



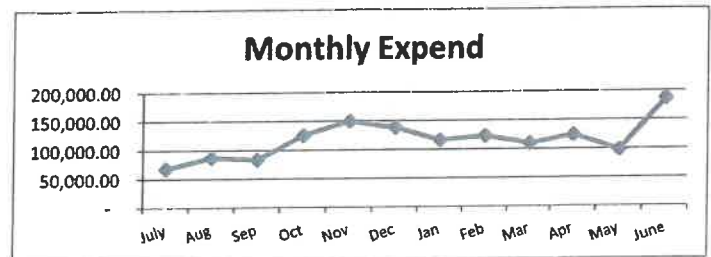
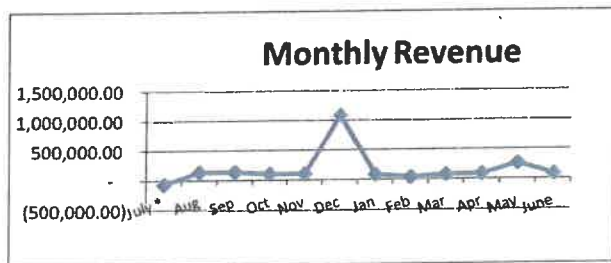
Revenues

| | July * | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | June |
|-----------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1,793,552 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Monthly Revenue | (71,324.01) | 131,997.41 | 133,735.19 | 100,942.46 | 97,340.66 | 1,076,377.13 | 76,108.70 | 34,196.96 | 73,589.29 | 81,503.47 | 254,544.02 | 80,458.71 |
| Accumulative | (71,324.01) | 60,673.40 | 194,408.59 | 295,351.05 | 392,691.71 | 1,469,068.84 | 1,545,177.54 | 1,579,374.50 | 1,652,963.79 | 1,734,467.26 | 1,989,011.28 | 2,069,469.99 |
| % of Budget | -4% | 3% | 11% | 16% | 22% | 82% | 86% | 88% | 92% | 97% | 111% | 115% |

* Subject to change due to auditor JE's

Expenditures

| | July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | June |
|----------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1,410,735 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Monthly Expend | 67,506.32 | 86,801.59 | 82,943.15 | 125,201.15 | 149,146.35 | 137,715.59 | 115,526.36 | 122,271.27 | 108,918.16 | 123,703.02 | 97,542.78 | 186,611.03 |
| Accumulative | 67,506.32 | 154,307.91 | 237,251.06 | 362,452.21 | 511,598.56 | 649,314.15 | 764,840.51 | 887,111.78 | 996,029.94 | 1,119,732.96 | 1,217,275.74 | 1,403,886.77 |
| % of Budget | 5% | 11% | 17% | 26% | 36% | 46% | 54% | 63% | 71% | 79% | 86% | 100% |



ISD #4026 ECHO Charter School

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

JUNE 30, 2020



ECHO Charter School

Every Child Has Opportunities

District Highlights

- Revenues and other financing sources exceeded expenditures and other financing uses by \$869,248 in the General Fund. This change along with an adjustment relating to GASB Statement No. 84, resulted in the total fund balance increasing to \$936,113 as of June 30, 2020. After deducting accounting standards restrictions and fund balance policy assignments, the unassigned fund balance increased from \$-0- to \$788,043 at June 30, 2020.
- The District is meeting its minimum fund balance policy of four months of expenditures in the General Fund at June 30, 2020.
- The General Fund transferred \$12,771 to the Food Service Fund to cover the current year operating deficit.

District Highlights

- The District received an unrestricted donation from an alumnus in the amount of \$1 million. This is a one-time donation.
- In May 2020 the District applied for and received \$148,505 in a Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loan through the U.S. Small Business Administration under the CARES Act.
- GASB Statement No. 84, Fiduciary Activities, was implemented in FY 2020. This establishes criteria for identifying fiduciary activities of all state and local governments. Based on the criteria, the District determined that the activity in the District's trust fund should be included in the reporting entity. Governmental activities net position and fund balance in the General Fund have both been restated to show an increase of \$7,737 in the beginning balances to account for this change.

The District's Future...

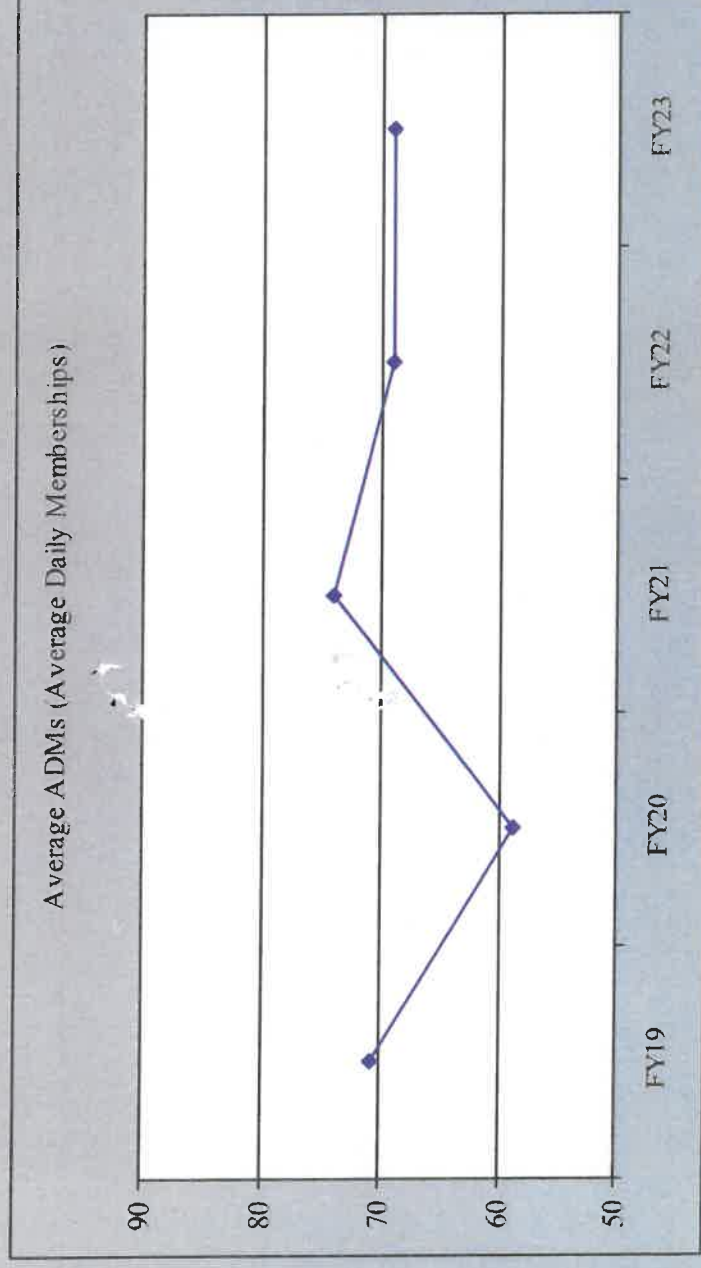
- COVID-19 will be an ongoing factor in financials. Additional revenue from the CARES Act will hopefully offset move of the additional expenditures for PPE, transportation and personnel (if any are needed).
- The District's trend for enrollment shows an overall increase in enrollment for future years. 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.

The District's Future...

- The \$1 Million donation is unrestricted in purpose and will be used to support future operations of the District as it works toward gaining students. The District is closely monitoring expenditures and are looking for new funding opportunities in order to continue to provide quality education to the community.
- There is a 2% increase in the formula for general education aid in FY21.

District Enrollment

- The District's trend for enrollment shows an increase in projected enrollment for future school years.



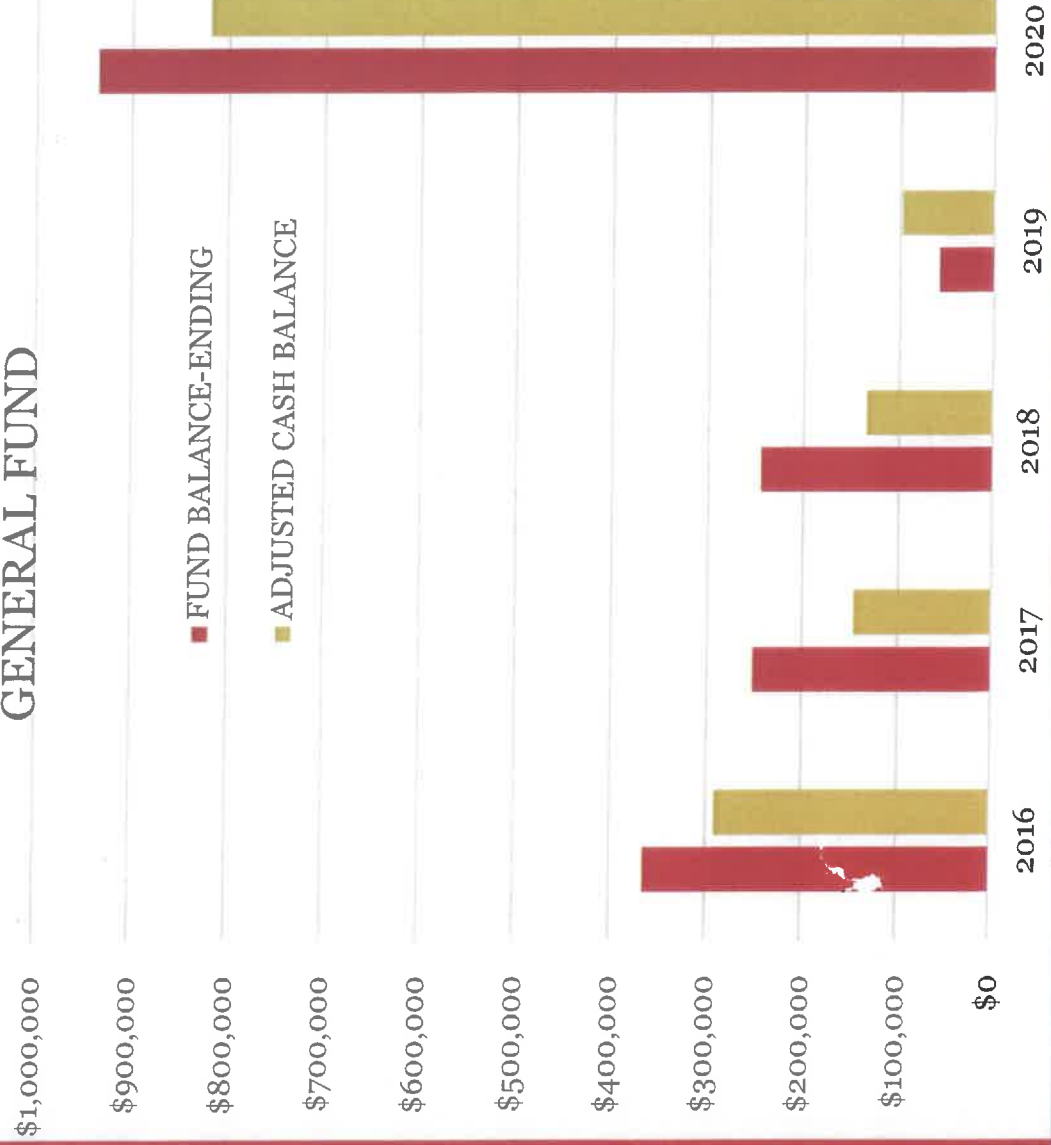
BUDGET VS ACTUAL

| | BUDGET | | | | ACTUAL | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | <u>Revenue</u> | <u>Expenditures</u> | <u>Other Financing Sources (Uses)</u> | <u>Change in Fund Balance</u> | <u>Revenue</u> | <u>Expenditures</u> | <u>Other Financing Sources (Uses)</u> | <u>Change in Fund Balance</u> |
| GENERAL FUND | 1,763,152 | 1,366,086 | 150,905 | 547,971 | 2,086,393 | 1,356,795 | 139,650 | 869,248 |
| FOOD SERVICE FUND | 27,600 | 44,649 | 400 | (16,649) | 56,640 | 71,111 | 14,471 | - |

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

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

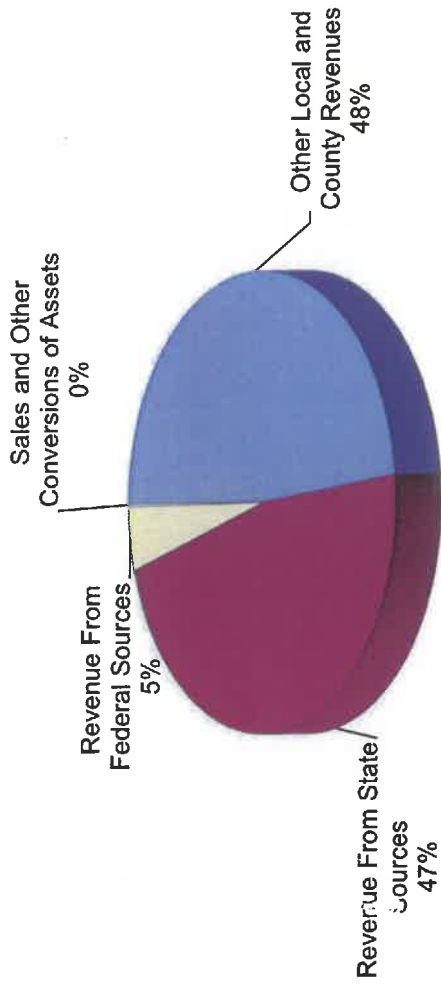
ISD #4026 - E.C.H.O. - FUND BALANCE/CASH BALANCE ANALYSIS GENERAL FUND



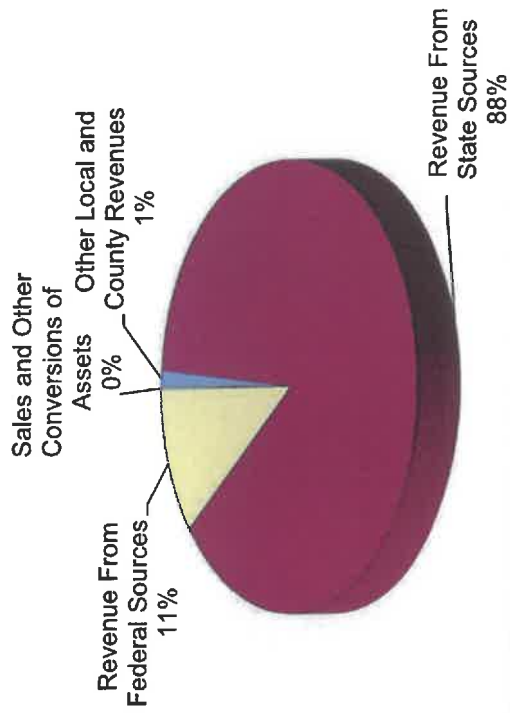
Largest source of revenue is from the state and other local and county revenues.

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

2020 GENERAL FUND REVENUES BY SOURCE



2019 GENERAL FUND REVENUES BY SOURCE



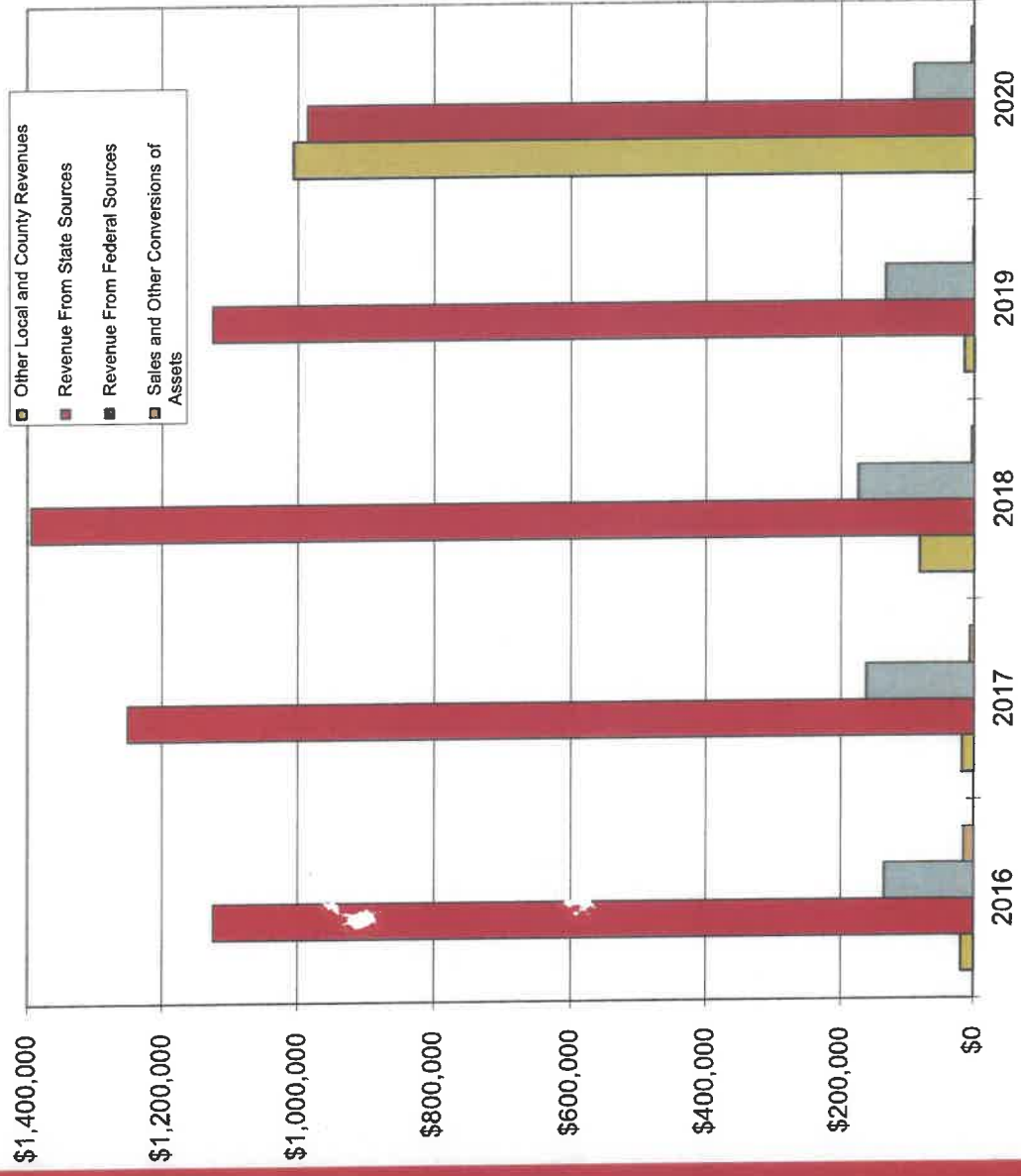
Sources of funding are fairly consistent throughout the years.

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.

Increased federal funding in 2016 - 2018 due to increased amounts for REAP and 21st Century grants and special education funds. Decrease in 2019 from decrease in special education funds and 21st Century grant ending in 2020.

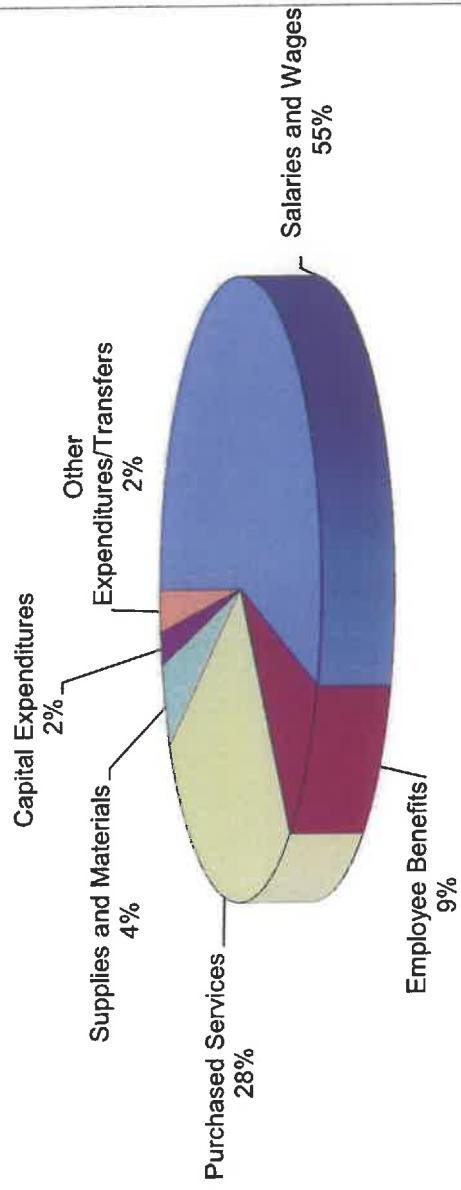
ISD #4026- E.C.H.O.- GENERAL FUND REVENUES BY SOURCE



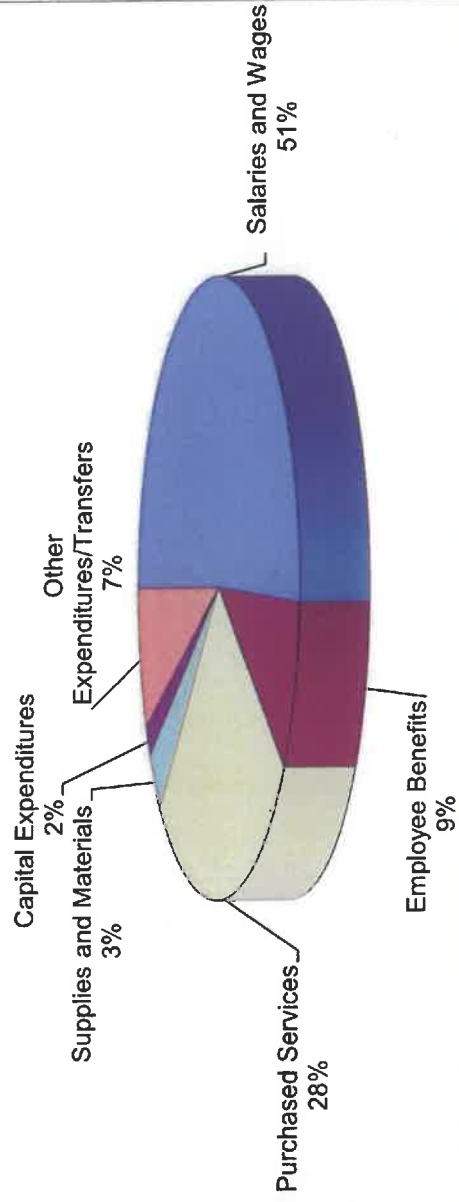
Largest use of dollars for any school district is for salaries and benefits.

Decrease in transfers due to the closure of the Community Service Fund in FY 2019.

2020 GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES BY OBJECT



2019 GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES BY OBJECT

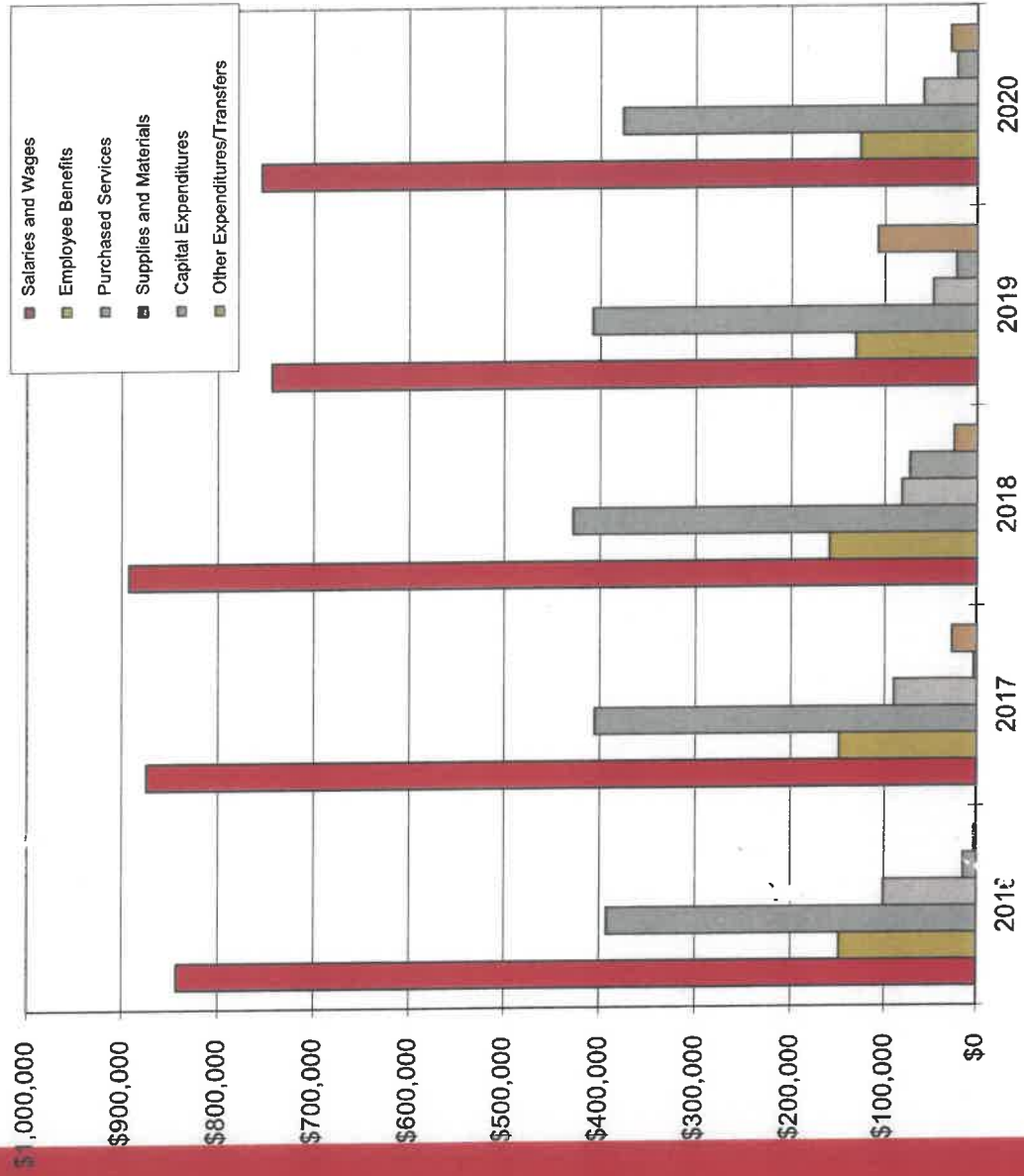


Types of expenditures are fairly consistent throughout the years.

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 bus repairs/bus lease.

ISD #4026 - GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES BY OBJECT

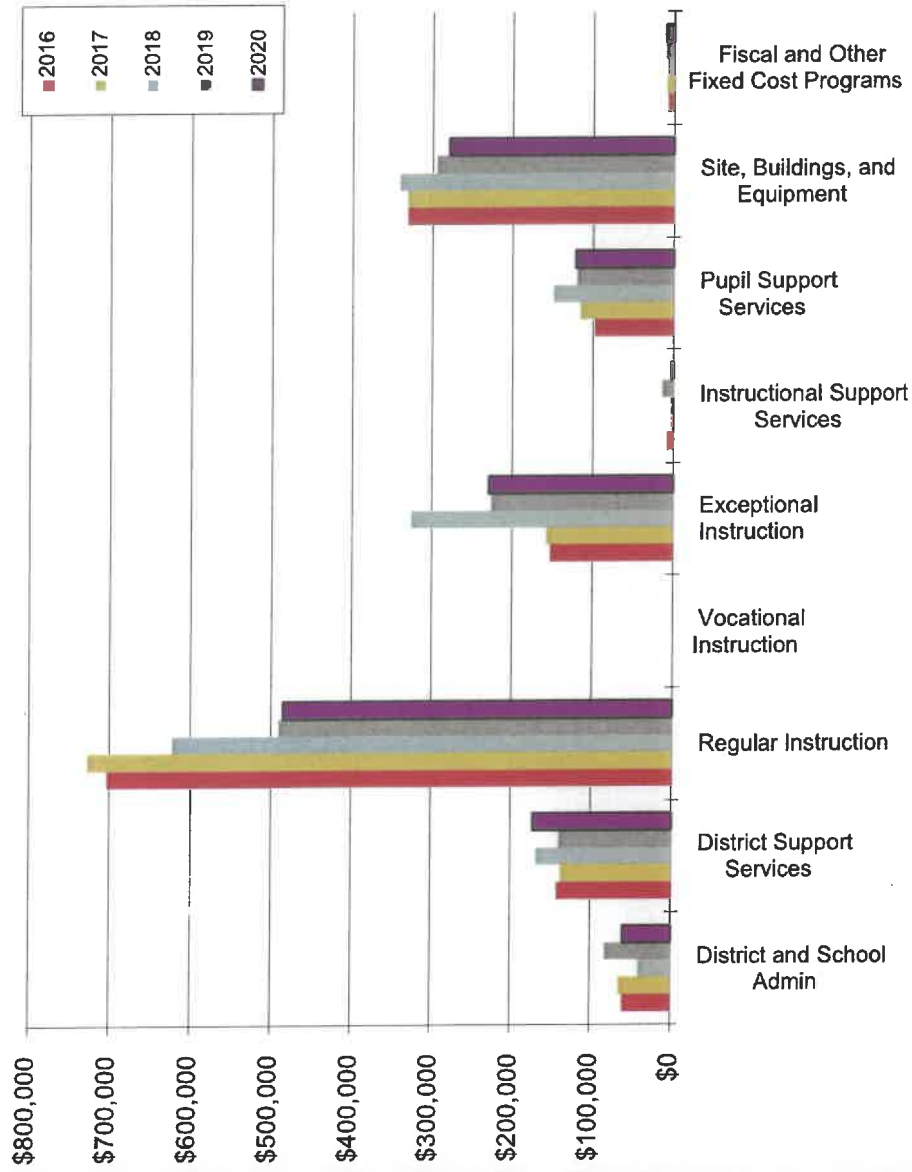


Instructional costs (both regular and exceptional) account for the majority of the District's expenditures.

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

Regular Instruction decrease in FY19/20 due to lowered student counts.

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

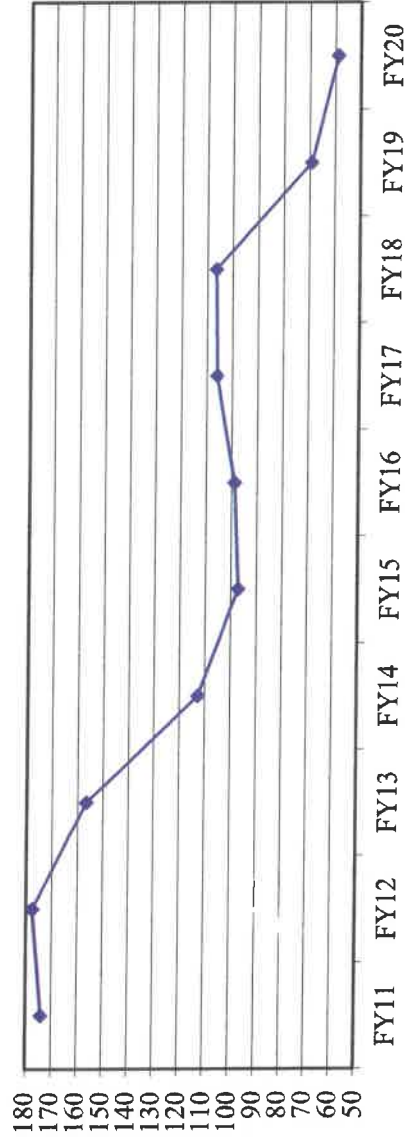


Student counts versus Excess of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures.

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

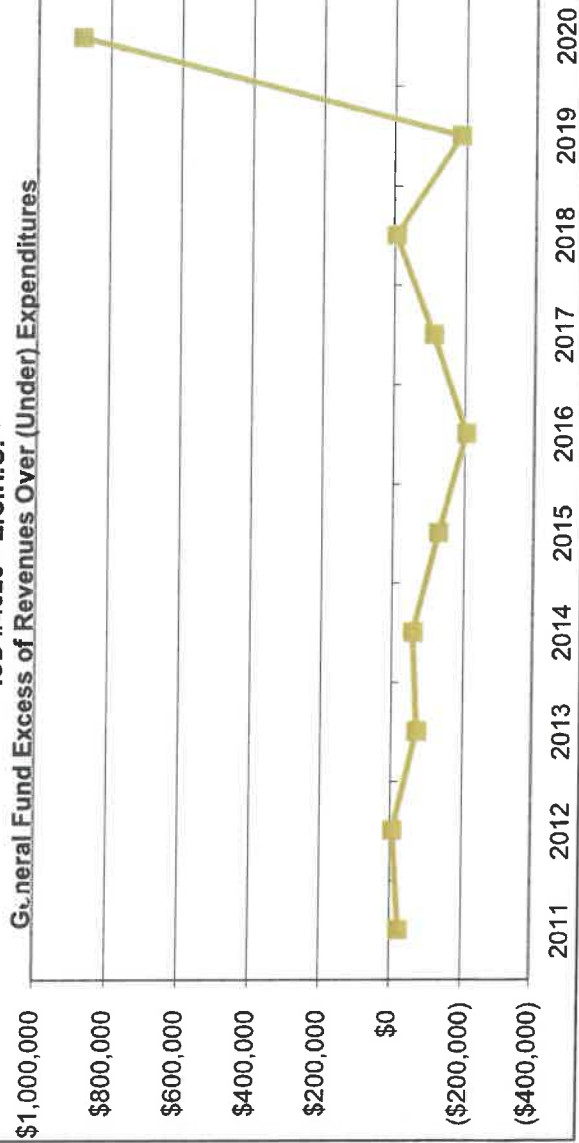
The District should continue to diligently monitor revenues and expenditures while implementing plans to increase enrollment.

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 \$12,771 to the Food Service Fund to help cover deficit operations.

Academic Program/Performance Student Achievement

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

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

| | <u>2018</u> | <u>2019</u> |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Math | 12.3% | 23.3% |
| Reading | 35.2% | 52.4% |
| Science | 27.3% | 36.8% |

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:

The demand for specialized labor has dominated the academic conversation statewide for a number of years. Labor in the areas of welding, electrical, carpentry, and other areas, has suffered a decline nationwide over many decades. To stem the tide of shortages, public and specialty schools have stepped up to offer Career Technical Education (CTE) courses, in spite of suffering from a shortage of qualified instructors.

Toward that end, ECHO Charter School has secured a qualified instructor who teaches all three of the above content areas. Already, our “little engine that could” model has attracted numerous students, and, we hope, many more to come. A sizeable financial investment has been made in our CTE infrastructure, and the school has constructed welding areas, acquired necessary safety equipment, and otherwise built a much needed foundation for this type of course offering.

We remain hopeful and are working toward finalizing additional foundation-building so that we can attract and retain students whose ardent hope it is to go into the workforce as experienced CTE employees.

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

Demographics: Who goes to this school?

| E.C.H.O. Charter School E.C.H.O. Charter School | | |
|--|-------|---------|
| 2020 Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity | | |
| 2020 Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity | | |
| Note: Data are reported by fiscal year based on October 1 enrollment for the most recent year available. The fiscal year is the year in which the school year ends (e.g., 2017 is the 2016-2017 school year). | | |
| <div>Two or more races</div> <div>Hispanic or Latino</div> <div>American Indian or Alaska Native</div> <div>Asian</div> <div>Black or African American</div> <div>Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander</div> <div>White</div> <div>Hispanic or Latino</div> <div>American Indian or Alaska Native</div> <div>Asian</div> <div>Black or African American</div> <div>Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander</div> <div>Two or more races</div> | | |
| Race/Ethnicity | Count | Percent |
| Hispanic or Latino | 5 | 8.3% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 10 | 16.7% |
| Asian | 0 | 0.0% |
| Black or African-American | 2 | 3.3% |

| Race/Ethnicity | Count | Percent |
|---|-------|---------|
| Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander | 0 | 0.0% |
| White | 37 | 61.7% |
| Two or more races | 6 | 10.0% |
| All students | 60 | 100.0% |

E.C.H.O. Charter School

District: E.C.H.O. Charter School

Grades: KG-12

Address: 101 Rocket Ave Echo, MN 56237-0158

Phone: 507 925 4143

Web: <http://echo.charter.k12.mn.us>

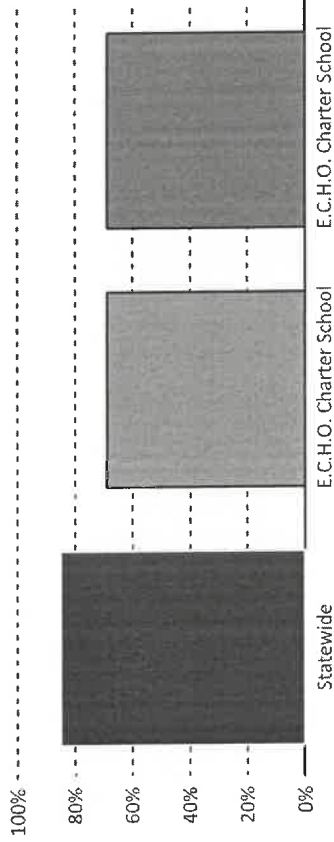
Email: hblue.redner@echo.charter.k12.mn.us

[More Detail...](#)

School: E.C.H.O. Charter School District: E.C.H.O. Charter School

The number of students attending school regularly

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.

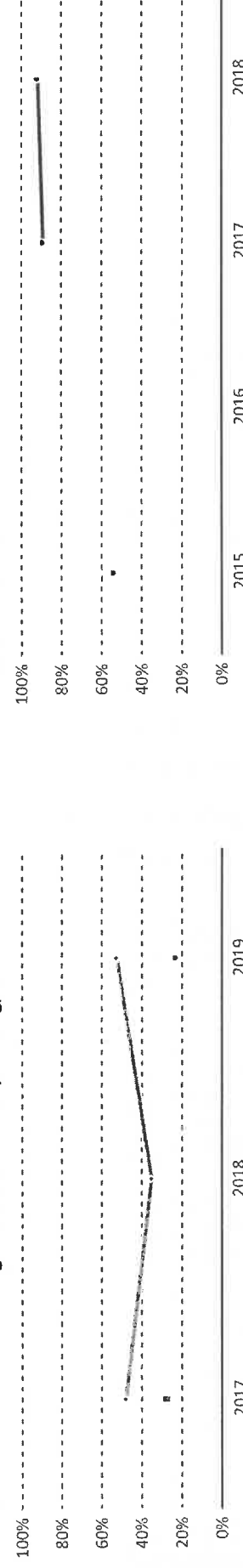


| | Statewide | E.C.H.O. Charter School | E.C.H.O. Charter School |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Consistent Attendance | 85.3% | 68.7% | 68.7% |
| Count | 678,119 | 46 | 46 |

At my school, teachers care about students

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| Teachers Care Count | NA | NA | NA | NA |

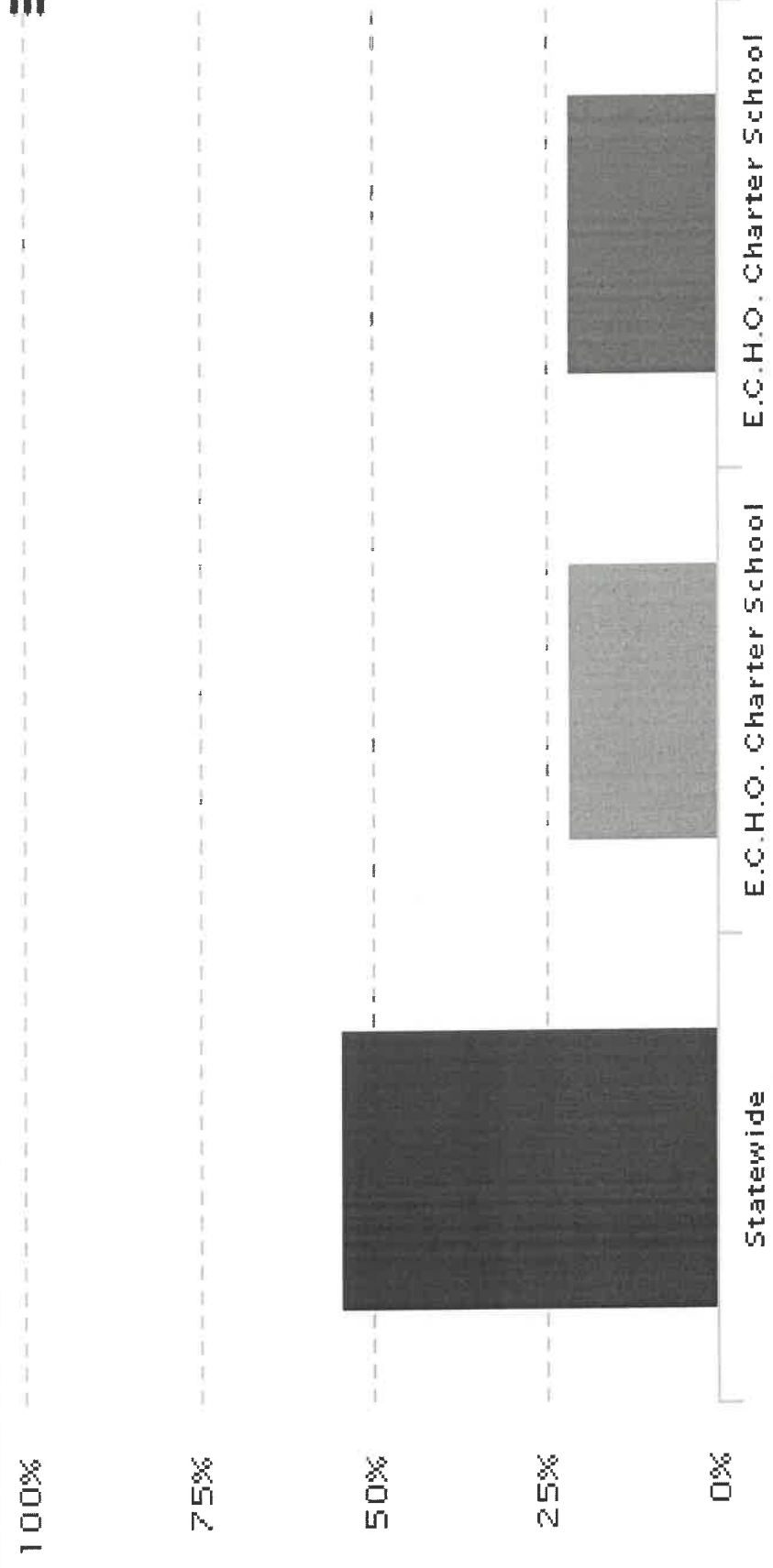
The number of students meeting standards in math, reading, and science over time



| Demographic | Year | Graduated count | Graduated % |
|--------------|------|-----------------|-------------|
| All Students | 2015 | 6 | 54.5% |
| All Students | 2016 | CTSTR | CTSTR |
| All Students | 2017 | 9 | 90.0% |
| All Students | 2018 | 13 | 92.9% |
| All Students | 2019 | CTSTR | CTSTR |



2019 Proficiency



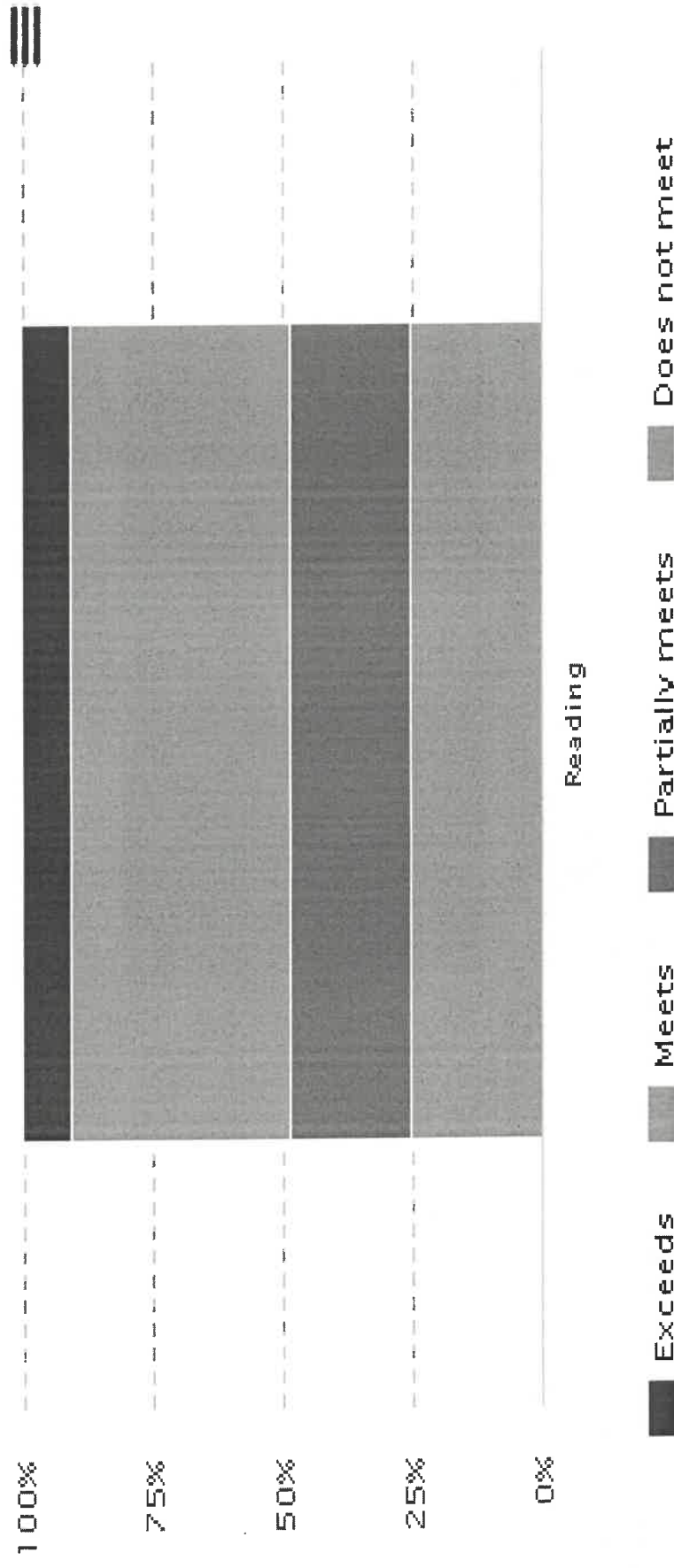
| Organization name | Percent proficient | Number proficient | Number tested |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Statewide | 54.9% | 243,108 | 442,604 |
| E.C.H.O. Charter School | 21.7% | 10 | 46 |
| E.C.H.O. Charter School | 21.7% | 10 | 46 |



2019 Student Achievement Level



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.



| Subject | Exceeds | Meets | Partially meets | Does not meet |
|---------|---------|-------|-----------------|---------------|
| Reading | 4 | 18 | 10 | 11 |
| | Count | | | |
| | Percent | 9.3% | 41.9% | 23.3% |
| | | | | 25.6% |



2019 Proficiency



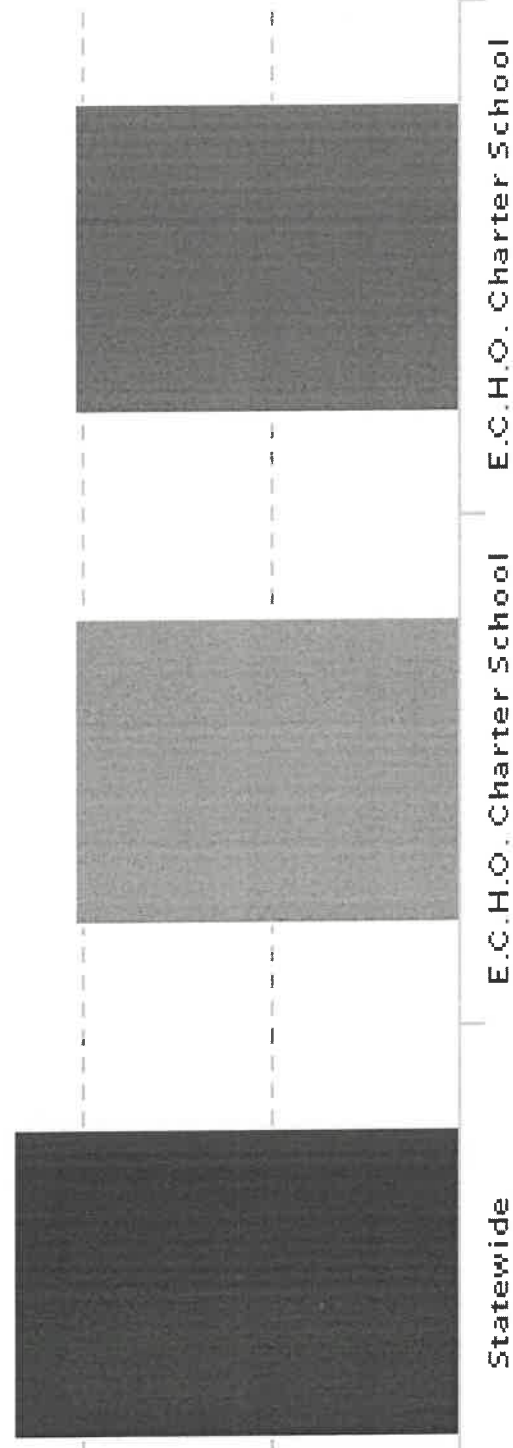
100%

75%

50%

25%

0%



| Organization name | Percent proficient | Number proficient | Number tested |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|

Statewide

448,778

E.C.H.O. Charter School

43

E.C.H.O. Charter School

43

| Category | Exceeds | Meets | Partially meets | Does not meet |
|----------|---------|-------|-----------------|---------------|
| Science | 95% | 5% | 0% | 0% |

| Subject | Exceeds | Meets | Partially meets | Does not meet |
|---------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Science | 1 Count | 6 Count | 4 Count | 8 Count |
| | 5.3% Percent | 31.6% Percent | 21.1% Percent | 42.1% Percent |



2019 Proficiency



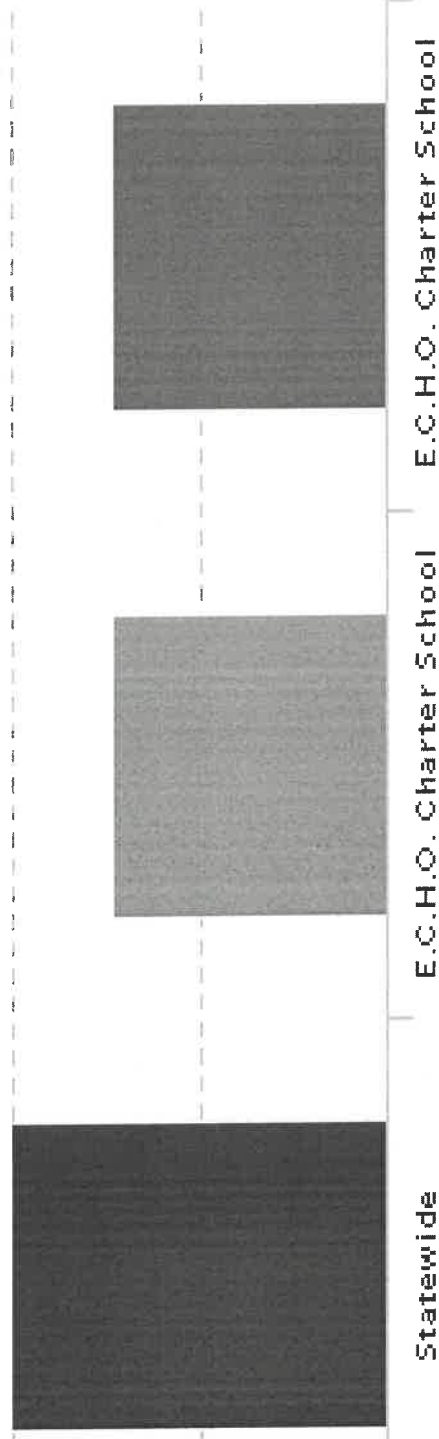
100%

75%

50%

25%

0%



| Organization name | Percent proficient | Number proficient | Number tested |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Statewide | 50.4% | 94,090 | 186,765 |
| E.C.H.O. Charter School | 36.8% | 7 | 19 |
| E.C.H.O. Charter School | 36.8% | 7 | 19 |

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 2019-2020 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 1st 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 1st who are proficient on the Math MCA will increase from 12.3% to 16%. Outcome: GOAL EXCEEDED.

World's Best Work Force Goals 2019-2020

All Students Ready for Kindergarten:

- 80% of ECHO Charter School preschool students will be ready for Kindergarten in the fall of 2019 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 not 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 11th grade students will take the ACT Plus writing on-site beginning in the spring of 2020. Outcome: GOAL EXCEEDED: 100% of students took the ACT. *This goal was met.*
- 100% of 11th grade students will take the ASVAB test. *This goal was met.*

All Students Graduate:

- 85% of ECHO Charter School seniors will graduate in 2020. Outcome: GOAL EXCEEDED. *This goal was met: 100% of seniors graduated.*
- ECHO Charter will take students on at least two college visits. Outcome: GOAL EXCEEDED: Three college visits were made in 2018-2019. *This goal was met.*

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. Any recommended meetings sponsored at Minnesota Department of Education.

Due to the global Pandemic, our typical in-person Parent and Student Surveys were not conducted. They will be resumed in 2020-2021. The following is our most recent survey from 2019.

APPENDIX A:

2019 PARENT/GUARDIAN CLIMATE AND CULTURE SURVEY

This survey was designed to glean input from parents as to potential needed areas of concentration here at ECS. Surveys were administered both at Parent Night and at Awards Day, and additional surveys were mailed to parents who had not completed one. A total of 26 parents completed the survey.

Parents also added comments to the surveys, and here is a sampling:

--"ECHO Charter School is the best thing that has ever happened to my child."

--"I love the flexibility and kindness that the staff shows to my kids."

--"The only thing I wonder is, why did I wait so long to go to ECHO?"

Responses were compiled by category for each question and illuminate some of improvement for us, in particular college preparedness; attendance at parent-teacher conferences; and volunteering at school with events and fundraisers.

1. How many children do you have attending this school?

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | 32% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | 51% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | 18% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 or more | |

2. To what extent do you feel ECS is preparing students for post-secondary education?

| | |
|--|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all | 4% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A little | 16% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some | 45% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To a great extent | 35% |

3. How likely are you to recommend ECS to a parent looking for a school for their child?

| | |
|--|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all likely | 12% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat likely | 28% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extremely likely | 60% |

4. Overall, how satisfied are you with the education your child is receiving at ECS?

| | |
|--|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very dissatisfied | 3% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat dissatisfied | 3% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat satisfied | 42% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied | 52% |

5. To what extent do you feel your voice is valued at ECS?

| | |
|--|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all | 6% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A little | 22% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some | 29% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To a great extent | 43% |

6. To what extent do you feel comfortable sharing your concerns with ECS leadership?

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all | 0% |
|-------------------------------------|----|

_____ A little 17%
_____ Some 47%
_____ To a great extent 36%

7. To what extent do you feel welcome when you enter the school?

_____ Not at all 0%
_____ A little 3%
_____ Some 31%
_____ To a great extent 66%

8. To what extent do you feel you are an important part of improving ECS?

_____ Not at all 8%
_____ A little 19%
_____ Some 34%
_____ To a great extent 39%

9. How often do you volunteer at ECS?

_____ Not at all 35%
_____ A little 18%
_____ Some 18%
_____ To a great extent 29%

10. How often do you attend parent-teacher conferences?

_____ Not at all 8%
_____ A little 19%
_____ Some 56%
_____ To a great extent 17%

11. How often do you attend scheduled school events/performances?

_____ Not at all --
_____ A little --
_____ Some 23%
_____ To a great extent 77%

12. How often do you help raise funds for the school?

_____ Not at all 7%
_____ A little 14%
_____ Some 40%
_____ To a great extent 39%

13. How often do you chaperone field trips?

_____ Not at all 39%
_____ A little 16%
_____ Some 15%
_____ To a great extent 30%

14. How often does lack of child care keep you from being involved with the school?

_____ Not at all 62%
_____ A little 9%
_____ Some 13%
_____ To a great extent 16%

15. How often does transportation keep you from being involved with the school?

| | | |
|-------|-------------------|-----|
| _____ | Not at all | 93% |
| _____ | A little | 7% |
| _____ | Some | -- |
| _____ | To a great extent | -- |

16. How often do work obligations keep you from being involved with the school?

| | | |
|-------|-------------------|-----|
| _____ | Not at all | 37% |
| _____ | A little | 11% |
| _____ | Some | 50% |
| _____ | To a great extent | 1% |

17. How often does the relevance of the school programs and events keep you from being involved with the school?

| | | |
|-------|-------------------|-----|
| _____ | Not at all | 59% |
| _____ | A little | 14% |
| _____ | Some | 27% |
| _____ | To a great extent | -- |

18. How often do attitudes of other parents keep you from being involved with the school?

| | | |
|-------|-------------------|-----|
| _____ | Not at all | 71% |
| _____ | A little | 13% |
| _____ | Some | 16% |
| _____ | To a great extent | -- |

19. For those with younger children, how often do you read to your child?

| | | |
|-------|--------------|-----|
| _____ | Never | 11% |
| _____ | Rarely | 24% |
| _____ | Occasionally | 21% |
| _____ | Usually | 19% |
| _____ | Always | 25% |

20. How often do you supervise or help your child with homework?

| | | |
|-------|--------------|-----|
| _____ | Never | 0% |
| _____ | Rarely | 12% |
| _____ | Occasionally | 35% |
| _____ | Usually | 28% |
| _____ | Always | 25% |
| _____ | N/A | |

21. How often do you talk about your child's day at school?

| | | |
|-------|--------------|-----|
| _____ | Never | -- |
| _____ | Rarely | 1% |
| _____ | Occasionally | 10% |
| _____ | Usually | 27% |
| _____ | Always | 62% |

22. Do you have access to a computer and internet at home?

| | | | |
|-------|-----|-------|----|
| _____ | Yes | _____ | No |
| 17% | | 3% | |

Appendix B: 2020 IQS Scorecard

Annual IQS Review
ECHO Charter School
FY'20

To: ECHO Charter School Board
From: Laurie Schroeder, IQS Associate Director
Date: October 1, 2020

Section 5.1 of the contract between Innovative Quality Schools (IQS) and ECHO 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 seven (7) visits and several virtual reviews of school records. IQS also sponsored two (2) teacher/leadership conferences, one (1) board training conference and numerous 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 Cadre and MLT findings in each of the above noted performance areas based upon observations and direct interactions with the school.

| Mission/Program Model | |
|--|--|
| <p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Although ECHO is a small and rural school, the programming continues to be responsive to student needs and interests. An example is the Career and Technical Education opportunities such as welding and carpentry. ➤ The school has also been responsive to student cultures and has incorporated more opportunities for students to learn about their heritage and culture. ➤ The school has professional learning communities that meet regularly and have done a significant amount of curriculum development in recent years. | <p>Opportunities for Improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The school has been fluid in the use of project-based learning with secondary students and continues to explore the most effective instructional approaches to support student learning. |

| Governance | |
|---|--|
| Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Board Chair has provided strong and stable leadership of the ECHO Board. ➤ Board meetings are conducted in an orderly process and members engage in professional and respectful dialogue about agenda topics. ➤ Conflict of Interest is a standing item on each board meeting agenda, with the statute read and each board member responding as to any conflicts. | Opportunities for Improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Board membership, documents, and activities should all be updated and easily accessible on the school's website. |
| Performance | |
| Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The school demonstrated significant improvements in reading performance on the MCA test from 2018 when 35.2% of students were proficient to 2019, when 52.4% were proficient. ➤ The culture at ECHO has a strong sense of community and parents freely communicate with the school and are viewed as a partner in their child's education. ➤ Although technology was not readily available or reliable during distance learning, the school continued to connect with students through phone calls and meal/material delivery. | Opportunities for Improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The school utilizes STAR assessments and could consider combining this data with formative assessments to provide more individualized instruction and support. |
| Finance | |
| Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The ECHO Board is committed to operating within a balanced budget. ➤ The school has a good relationship with the local service cooperative, with whom they contract for financial management services. ➤ ECHO has received the school finance award from the MDE for multiple years. | Opportunities for Improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The school should continue to strategically plan and budget to build up the fund balance, which could potentially be even more important as schools face uncertainty in school financing due to the pandemic. ➤ There have been audit findings in the past and the school has been working diligently to correct any audit findings. |
| Operations | |
| Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The school provided students with meals, learning materials, and daily interaction | Opportunities for Improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strong and stable enrollment continues to be problematic for the school. The school |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>with school staff throughout distance learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The school follows state and federal laws ➤ Required reports are completed on a timely basis. | <p>leadership is taking steps to develop a stronger public presence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The school's website could be improved to include all required forms, policies, and activities in a more accessible structure. |
|---|---|

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 | 3.0 |
| <p>School Improvement Opportunities:</p> <p>The school should continue exploring the use and effectiveness of project-based learning at the secondary level.</p> | |
| Section 2: Governance | 3.2 |
| <p>School Improvement Opportunities:</p> <p>Please ensure board membership, documents, and activities are all kept up-to-date on the school's website.</p> | |
| Section 3: Performance | 3.0 |
| <p>School Improvement Opportunities:</p> <p>The score for the performance category does not account for academic assessment data such as MCAs or nationally-normed assessments, which were unavailable during the 2019-2020 School Year. As the school experiences uncertainty in the upcoming school year due to COVID-19, it is recommended that the leadership and teachers discuss how student learning will be assessed and what related goals can be included in the FY21 ScoreCard.</p> | |
| Section 4: Finance | 3.1 |
| <p>School Improvement Opportunities:</p> <p>Continue strategic planning and budgeting that prioritizes building the fund balance.</p> | |
| Section 5: Operations | 3.1 |
| <p>School Improvement Opportunities:</p> <p>The school's organizational systems should be reviewed at least once every three years. Please ensure that the complaint and resolution procedures are in place and posted on the school's website. Enrollment continues to present difficulties.</p> | |
| Composite Score | 3.1 |

Performance Summary:

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the implementation of distance learning, the school was unable to participate in state and nationally-normed assessments. Additionally, site visits by cadre members were placed on hold beginning March, 2020 and instead, the IQS leadership team connected with school leaders to discuss and support distance learning.

ECHO continues to be a school focused on building community among the staff, students and families served. Teachers have worked diligently to develop a curriculum that aligns with the standards and focuses in improving reading and math achievement. The School Board has benefited from a stable and strong Board Chair, who has demonstrated thoughtful leadership and a collaborative relationship with the school director.

Contact Information

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www.iqsmn.org

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

January 14, 2021

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. The website will also provide you with names, phone numbers and email addresses.