



# **BLUESKY ONLINE** *The School Designed for You*



# 2021-2022 Charter School Annual Report, Local World's Best Workforce Report & Annual Report on Curriculum, Instruction and Student Achievement

## Table of Contents

[About BlueSky](#)

[BlueSky School Overview](#)

[Innovative Practices & Implementation](#)

[Student Support](#)

[Flexible Scheduling](#)

[Career & College Readiness](#)

[Community Building](#)

[Student Enrollment, Attrition & Demographics](#)

[Strategic Plan](#)

[Governance & Management](#)

[BlueSky's Academic Goals & Performance](#)

[Finances](#)

[Future Plans](#)



## About BlueSky

### Mission Statement

BlueSky Charter School brings quality online education and diverse learners together.

### Vision Statement

BlueSky is defining education for the 21st century by creating an individualized, dynamic education for all students. We are committed to empowering our community by facilitating relevant learning, skills, hopes, and relationships.

### Authorizer Information

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## BlueSky School Overview



A pioneer in distance learning, BlueSky is Minnesota's most established online public charter school. Since 2000, BlueSky has provided a free, high-quality online education to Minnesota residents in grades 7-12. Starting in the 2021-22 school year BlueSky began to also serve students in 6th grade.

The key to BlueSky's success is our unique approach to student support. BlueSky offers students a world-class online education backed by unsurpassed resources and individualized attention. Every student receives a dedicated support team consisting of an advisor, a counselor, and a social worker. Students have direct access to their teachers for assistance whenever they need it. BlueSky teachers and staff also make a personal connection with students and their families.

Through the parent portal, weekly emails, phone calls, and conferences, parents are actively involved in their child's success.

Through Group Pace and My Pace classes, students are able to customize how they want to approach their coursework. BlueSky wants to make sure that each student finds the state-aligned program that meets their learning style, skill level, grade level, and credit requirements. BlueSky also offers several different enrollment options: full time, supplemental, tuition-based, and summer school. With classes and resources available online 24/7, and flexible pacing, students can learn during their most productive hours and with an academic plan tailored to work for them.

## BlueSky's Full-Time Program

As an accredited, state approved public charter school, students in grades 6-12 can take all courses needed to meet middle school requirements or to earn a high school diploma. This public school option is free to all Minnesota residents under the age of 21.

All full-time students have an assigned support team that includes an advisor, a counselor, and a social worker in addition to their classroom teachers. Our high level of individualized support and flexible scheduling sets us apart from other online programs. Students are closely monitored using a variety of technology data points as well as through one on one communications which allows early interventions to be put in place when needed.

## BlueSky's Supplemental Program

BlueSky invites students from across Minnesota to take up to half their courses online while staying enrolled in their home district. Course options include core subjects and electives that meet or exceed state standards.

BlueSky offers a high level of support to our supplemental students and works closely with enrolling districts and parents, keeping everyone in the loop regarding student progress. All courses are taught by Minnesota licensed full-time online teachers and can be adjusted for semester or trimester schedules.

I can't thank you enough! BlueSky is a school that shows how dedicated and helpful the staff and teachers are in helping students achieve their goals. Thank you, thank you, thank you! I will never forget this! -Jessica (parent)

## BlueSky's Tuition-Based Program

Although most students that are Minnesota residents can enroll for free in either our full-time or supplemental programs, some students may opt for a tuition-based enrollment.

Our tuition program uses the same high quality online classes and teachers and meets the needs of students who live outside Minnesota, are taking an overload of classes in their home district, are home-schooled, or are over 21 years old.

## BlueSky's Summer School Program

BlueSky offers a six-week summer school session for current BlueSky students and a tuition-based option for non-BlueSky students. All summer school courses are asynchronous; students work independently and at their own pace, allowing for an individualized learning experience. BlueSky offers a wide variety of summer school courses based on the needs of students.

Current BlueSky students will receive a registration email in March to register for summer school courses. Students work closely with their BlueSky counselor to register for any summer school course(s) that they need to meet BlueSky's graduation requirements. Students are allowed to take up to two credit recovery classes in the summer as long as they finish their first summer class within three weeks. Students are monitored in their classes by summer school teachers and the Dean of Students, who offer individualized support for those that need it.

Tuition based students take BlueSky's summer school classes either for credit recovery or to work ahead in a specific subject, most often in math. Tuition based students are also given individualized support by teachers and the Dean of Students.

## Innovative Practices & Implementation

BlueSky provides a personalized, online learning environment with a student support focus. Within this student centered model, BlueSky incorporates a number of innovative practices that work together to enhance student success:

**"I really like the teachers and the open communication and the flexibility to work with parents on specific needs of the student."**

### Compassionate Schools & SEL Strategies

- Ongoing staff training on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and trauma informed best practices since 2016.
- Collaboration with Regional Centers of Excellence and CAREI (Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement).
- Participation in our authorizer's NGAPS (Next Generation Assessment Portfolio System) program to develop academic alignment of Social and Emotional Learning.
- Adoption of Social and Emotional Learning standards as part of our academic program.
- Implementation of Social and Emotional Learning Evidence Based Strategy throughout entire BlueSky program (in progress):
  - Explicit Instruction
  - Embedded instruction
  - Schoolwide support
  - Teacher pedagogy
  - Assessment of skills
- Implementation of 7th-9th grade Advisory programs with integrated Social Emotional Learning curriculum; Second Step and Yale RULER evidence based programs

### Student Support

- Licensed staff to student ratio of 1:9
- Teacher to student ratio of 1:150, which breaks down to 1:25 per class.
- Counselor to student ratio of 1:120, compared to 1:743 ratio, MDE's reported state average.
- Social worker to student ratio of 1:130 with a full time special education social worker.
- Special education case manager ratio averages 1:16 with most direct services delivered in a small group or 1:1 setting.
- Special education replacement course commensurate with ability levels and aligned to State Standards and ability levels.

- Student advisor assigned to each student who acts as the first line of communication and forms positive adult relationships with students.
- Half-time 504 Coordinator to provide support to students and staff
- MTSS (Multi-Tier System of Supports) model incorporated with specific Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 interventions and referral processes.
- Own It!, a motivational and goal setting program, used as an intervention for BlueSky students demonstrating lack of engagement.
- BlueSky's Dean of Students provides student support plans and academic probation plans.
- Social worker groups offered to students needing mental health support.
- The Middle school social worker provides direct service through the synchronous advisory class.
- The Middle school counselor provides career and organizational lessons through synchronous advisory class.
- Middle School students are identified after first quarter for "Back on Track" program to help students that struggled during the first quarter
- Middle School Friday study hall to work 1:1 with students that need extra help.
- Intake risk assessment consisting of academic and behavioral readiness and support.
- Educational assistants available daily to support students with academic and behavioral needs.
- Math for Success and Reading for Success intervention courses to help build foundational skills necessary for grade level success.
- Evening math coaching to support students academically with math coursework.
- Laptops and/or hotspots provided to students in need.

## Flexible Scheduling & Curriculum

- Personalized learning options including flexible scheduling (Group Pace and my Pace Courses), PSEO options, supplemental courses, career academies, CTE (career and technical education) focused courses, college level articulated elective courses, and Honors courses.
- State approved, Cognia (formerlyAdvancED) NCA CASI accredited online program that aligns to the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) program standards.
- Incorporation of competency based instructional practices.
- Embedded social and emotional learning skills.
- State-of-the-art technology systems to support individualized flexible schedules.
- Ongoing open enrollment (when available based on capacity).
- Opportunities for onsite attendance and support.
- Supplemental program allowing students to remain in their home district and take 1-3 online classes.
- Summer school availability for students allowing recovery of credits towards their graduation requirements.

- Middle school program with focus on structured flexible scheduling, compassionate relationships, relevant and meaningful learning experiences, and lifelong success skills.

## College and Career Readiness

- Career Academies for students who demonstrate college and career readiness in one of nine concentration areas.
- Required student career/college portfolio activities to include embedded SEL and career and college readiness standards.
- Provided information on career fairs, FAFSA support and PSEO informational meeting.
- Service learning projects.
- NCAA recognition process established.
- National Honor Society chapter formed in 2019-20.
- Graduation survey conducted to receive feedback on student plans for the future and their experience at BlueSky.
- Added youth apprenticeship in manufacturing program.
- Individual meetings with each graduating senior to review future plans.
- ASVAB, Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Test, onsite testing for students and career results

## Community Building

- Academic snapshots and enhanced dashboard options for parents and students to monitor progress.
- Virtual parent teacher conferences in the fall (face to face option available pre COVID)
- Opportunities for virtual and onsite social events and field trips.
- Collaboration with other charter schools to provide 7th grade and high school teachers and content to their students
- Continual communication with students and all stakeholders through a variety of media - text, social media, email, phone calls, Newsletters, website updates, etc.
- Parent/student feedback requests and surveys
- Staff constructed, committee driven, and improvement focused collaborative culture.
- Staff presentations and participation at educational conferences.
- Social Workers offer Suicide Prevention and Mental Health course to staff for required CEUs
- In house re-licensure committee for licensed staff
- Staff development committee that provides the majority of licensure requirements through in house trainings.
- Staff participation in educational associations.
- Student volunteer and service learning opportunities (i.e. National Honor Society, through coursework within elective classes and project based assignment options).



# Student Support

How students are supported in their learning is equally important to the content and delivery of curriculum. BlueSky students benefit from teachers' individual attention and frequent contact via email, phone, text messaging, online chats and other electronic methods.

BlueSky's support teams consist of counselors, advisors, social workers, and case managers and are referred to as our student's three or four-person support team. The support teams work to create a compassionate school where all students can thrive and learn. They provide individualized resources and support for students, families, and staff related to mental health, social-emotional, attendance, and academic needs. The support teams often consult with other BlueSky staff and community professionals to help provide quality education and support for all students.

BlueSky's intervention committee has developed a multi-tiered system of support in which staff identify struggling students early on to help give these students the support they need to be successful. The committee included math and intervention specialists, advisors, teachers, and leaders of the school. The committee met weekly to review referred students and to come up with tier 2 interventions to help students succeed. BlueSky also had an attendance committee which met monthly and created individualized plans for students struggling with attendance and/or behavior concerns. Students identified for Tier 2 interventions may be placed in BlueSky's Reading or Math for Success classes where students receive personalized instruction by BlueSky's intervention specialists to support students in their areas of need.

Student academic and behavior support plans have also been implemented to include additional tiered levels of support for student success. Students are monitored and given support by their three or four-person team. If students with behavior or attendance concerns need additional support they are referred to the Dean of Students or Principals to receive a more strict support plan. This may include daily or weekly check-ins, individualized weekly schedules, and/or attendance contracts. It may also require students at risk of dropping out of school to complete the Own It! curriculum. This curriculum helps students to outline their strengths as a learner and set goals for taking ownership of their education.

BlueSky's Middle School team provides specific interventions for students at this age level. Monday through Thursday Middle School students attend an advisory class which covers a variety of topics including mental health, careers, and social emotional curriculum. Students that struggled during the first quarter are referred to a program called "Back on Track". Back on track is a daily check in with students to help them create a schedule to complete their weekly "to do" lists. Students that do not complete their to-do list during the week are strongly encouraged to attend Friday study hall where students can receive 1:1 help from their teachers.

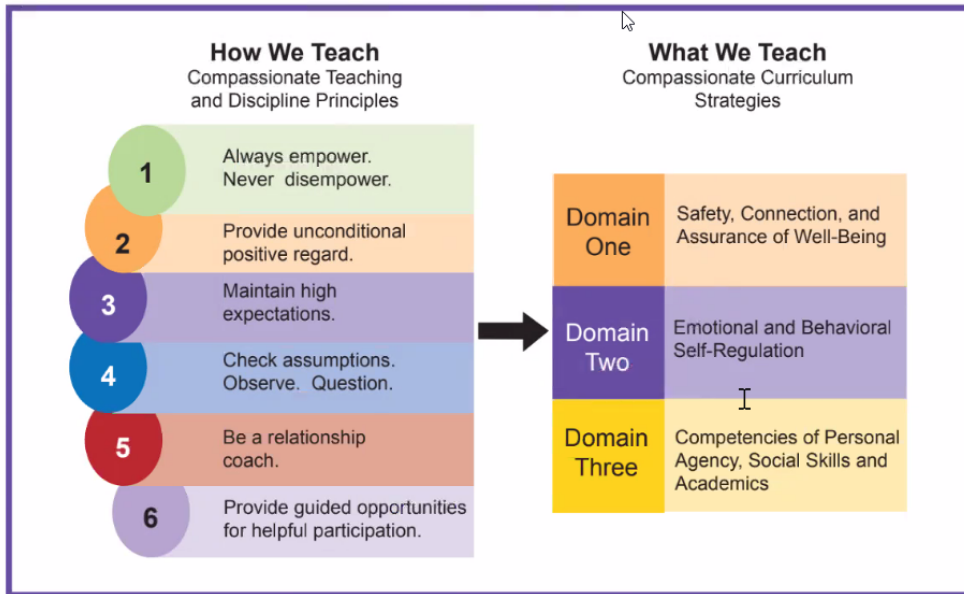
## The Heart of Learning: Compassion, Resiliency, and Academic Success

As a three year initiative starting in the 2016-17 school year the Social Work team developed a strategic plan to become a compassionate school. The first year training was implemented for our Social Work staff. In the 2017-18 school year the Social Work staff provided training to all staff in trauma awareness and intervention techniques. The 2018-19 school year phase was working directly with students and families in the classroom focusing on trauma centered approaches to learning. Social and Emotional Learning standards were reviewed and adopted for future implementation. This work was completed in conjunction with the Regional Centers of Excellence as an approved evidence based strategy to improve attendance and graduation rates. Social workers developed a compassionate schools class in Moodle to train new BlueSky staff. The social workers meet monthly with the new staff to talk about what they learned in Moodle and how it applies to BlueSky.

Compassionate Schools benefit all students who attend but focus on students chronically exposed to stress and trauma in their lives. These schools create compassionate classrooms and foster compassionate attitudes of their school staff. The goal is to keep students engaged and learning by creating and supporting a healthy climate and culture within the school where all students can learn. It is not a program; it is a process and as such is not "one size fits all." Each school and community will develop their own unique compassionate "personality."

Ten principles of a Compassionate School:

1. Focus on culture and climate in the school and community.
2. Train and support all staff regarding trauma and learning.
3. Encourage and sustain open and regular communication for all.
4. Develop a strengths based approach in working with students and peers.
5. Ensure discipline policies are both compassionate and effective (Restorative Practices).
6. Weave compassionate strategies into school improvement planning.
7. Provide tiered support for all students based on what they need.
8. Create flexible accommodations for diverse learners.
9. Provide access, voice, and ownership for staff, students and community.
10. Use data to:
  - a. Identify vulnerable students, and
  - b. Determine outcomes and strategies for continuous quality improvement.



BlueSky also offers social worker support for those students needing support within a specific area of their lives - chemical dependency, anxiety, depression, dealing with a death, personal identity, social skills, independent living, etc. These sessions address some of the mental health concerns that many students face today.

## Social Emotional Learning

Adding to our compassionate school training is the action initiative of embedding Social Emotional Learning standards into the academic curriculum as well as into our everyday interactions with students. Social Emotional Learning directly relates to the BlueSky Vision of being “committed to empowering our community by facilitating relevant learning, skills, hopes, and relationships”.

Social emotional learning (SEL) is broadly understood as a process through which people build awareness and skills in managing emotions, setting goals, establishing relationships and making responsible decisions that supports their success in school and in life.(1) SEL develops cognitive social competencies, such as self-awareness, self-management and social awareness, according to the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL). Developing such competencies in students fosters positive social skills, reduces conduct problems, diminishes emotional stress and improves academic performance.(2)

When we develop social and emotional skills, our ability to form relationships and build social awareness increases, which enhances our ability to connect with individuals of diverse perspectives, cultures, languages, histories, identities and abilities. By implementing SEL on a macro-level in schools, we create more

equitable, better-performing schools and communities. This type of systemic change creates school environments in which all students learn the skills they need to be prepared for career, college and life.

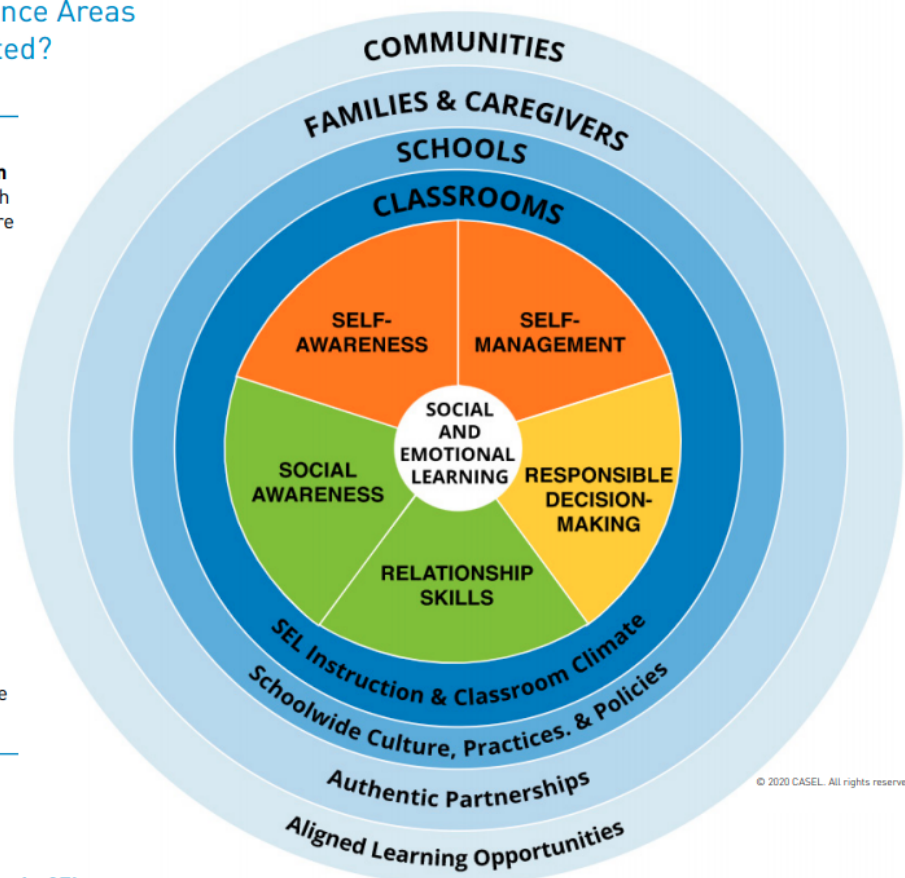
<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/safe/social/>

BlueSky uses the CASEL SEL Framework. Over the course of the past three years, BlueSky has and continues to incorporate and embed the five SEL core competency areas into curriculum. In 2020-2021 BlueSky focused on incorporating Responsible Decision Making, in 2021-2022 the focus was Self-Awareness and Self-Management, and currently in 2022-2023 the focus is Social Awareness and Relationship Skills. The process of embedding all five core areas into curriculum has come with extensive schoolwide training as well as specific work that has been done in collaboration with department teams. BlueSky has developed multiple resources to provide training, facilitate discussion, and guide the work of embedding SEL competencies across the curriculum. All departments at BlueSky have and are continuing to identify where and when the SEL competency areas and skills naturally fit into the curriculum. BlueSky has also developed SEL assessment tools in the form of rubrics for each competency area as well as a formative assessment question bank tool that can be used and adapted to various forms of assessments across curriculum.

## CASEL'S SEL FRAMEWORK: What Are the Core Competence Areas and Where Are They Promoted?

**Social and emotional learning (SEL) is an integral part of education and human development.** SEL is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

SEL advances educational equity and excellence through authentic school-family-community partnerships to establish learning environments and experiences that feature trusting and collaborative relationships, rigorous and meaningful curriculum and instruction, and ongoing evaluation. SEL can help address various forms of inequity and empower young people and adults to co-create thriving schools and contribute to safe, healthy, and just communities.



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Learn more: [www.casel.org/what-is-SEL](http://www.casel.org/what-is-SEL)

# Flexible Scheduling

## Group Pace Courses

The Group Pace courses focus on creating a highly interactive community of learners. These courses utilize frequent opportunities for collaboration and interactions between students, as well as between students and the teacher.

In Group Pace classes, students are expected to attend a live online session each week and stay on pace with their work. This ensures all the students in Group Pace class are familiar with the same content at the same time, allowing more productive discussions, collaborative projects, and other interactive learning experiences.

## My Pace Courses

My Pace courses are designed for students needing a highly flexible schedule. These courses feature self-paced, independent work. Many of these courses also offer flex scheduling with variable start and end dates, allowing for students to create a highly individualized learning experience. My Pace courses are also a great choice for students looking to catch up on credits.

BlueSky staff provide a high level of support to students taking My Pace Courses, helping them pace and structure their weekly assignment completion. My Pace courses are best designed for students who have the self-discipline to devote significant time to their school work, and who will work regularly so that they do not fall behind.

The curriculum within the Group Pace and My Pace programs consists of the following:

1. Required courses that meet or exceed state standards in each of the core subject areas (English, science, math, and social studies).
2. Core subject courses and remedial courses especially tailored to special education students, taught by special education teachers who also hold licenses in the subject area, or team-taught by regular education and special education teachers.
3. Courses in the elective areas of art, music, world languages, career and technical education, and health and physical education. (0.5 credit of art, and 0.5 credit in health/physical education are required for graduation). Many electives have a college and career readiness focus.
4. Support groups, facilitated by licensed social workers, help students acquire skills in the following areas: anxiety and depression, coping skills, independent living, social awareness, self-esteem, and other life skills.

5. College-level courses available through the statewide PSEO program.

## Career & College Readiness

BlueSky's strategic plan is updated to include career and college readiness objectives with the intent of providing our students with a successful transition after graduation. The focus on student career or college readiness begins at the moment a student enrolls.

BlueSky continues to utilize an online enrollment form as part of the counselor intake session in which each student indicates their career interests. This enables

the counselors to focus course scheduling for career and college preparation or individual post high school goals. Students are then scheduled accordingly into the World of Work career clusters for their elective classes.



All students have individual access to their assigned school counselor who guides them in making college and career decisions through a variety of career activities in their Required Career Portfolio (RCP). The counselor works with each student individually to develop a portfolio through Minnesota Career Information System (MCIS) and a specific Course Plan tailored to each student. A student's plan upon graduation incorporates resume building, post-secondary educational exploration, interest inventory, scholarship search, financial aid, and applications to schools of their choice. These portfolios remain in our MCIS site indefinitely, so the student can access their information while they attend college or are in the workforce. In addition, during the 2020-2021 school year, students met individually with their counselor to review the career plans, transcript, and post secondary actions.

BlueSky continues to encourage student participation in Career Academies to demonstrate college and career readiness in one of seven concentration areas: business, visual communication, world language, health career, fine arts career, music career, and culinary arts career. Students pursuing one of the Career Academies are required to complete a series of classes in one of these concentrated areas of study. They are also required to have a B average in the group of classes and are to have met or exceeded passing standards in MCA testing or equivalent. Seventeen students received the career academy green cord this year; four of the students had more than one career area.

In addition to the support provided by counselors, students were provided with opportunities to observe and experience various career fields as part of their classes and school activities. As part of the required career portfolio class, students are required to select and answer questions regarding careers in the virtual job shadowing program. Other activities in the past included a criminal justice tour of the Anoka County Jail and 911 Dispatch Center, a self-guided tour of Mill City Museum, as well as a career focused experience

at the Sea Life Minnesota Aquarium. Opportunities were also provided to students to attend college fairs, college visits, and complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

## National Honor Society

In 2019 BlueSky was approved to start a new chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS), the oldest and most prestigious student recognition program in the US and worldwide. Students who had been with BlueSky at least one semester and had a cumulative GPA of 3.0 were invited to submit a candidate information form documenting their experience in the four pillars of scholarship, service, leadership and character. A five-member faculty council reviewed the candidates and five students were selected and became the first inductees into BlueSky's new chapter! This fall, students with a cumulative 3.0 GPA were invited to submit candidate information forms to our faculty council and three more students were inducted into our chapter on November 17, 2020! NHS students attend chapter meetings twice per month and commit to 20 hours of service through an individual or group project each year that benefit the school and/or their home communities. They also have opportunities to develop leadership skills through NHS sponsored webinars and events.



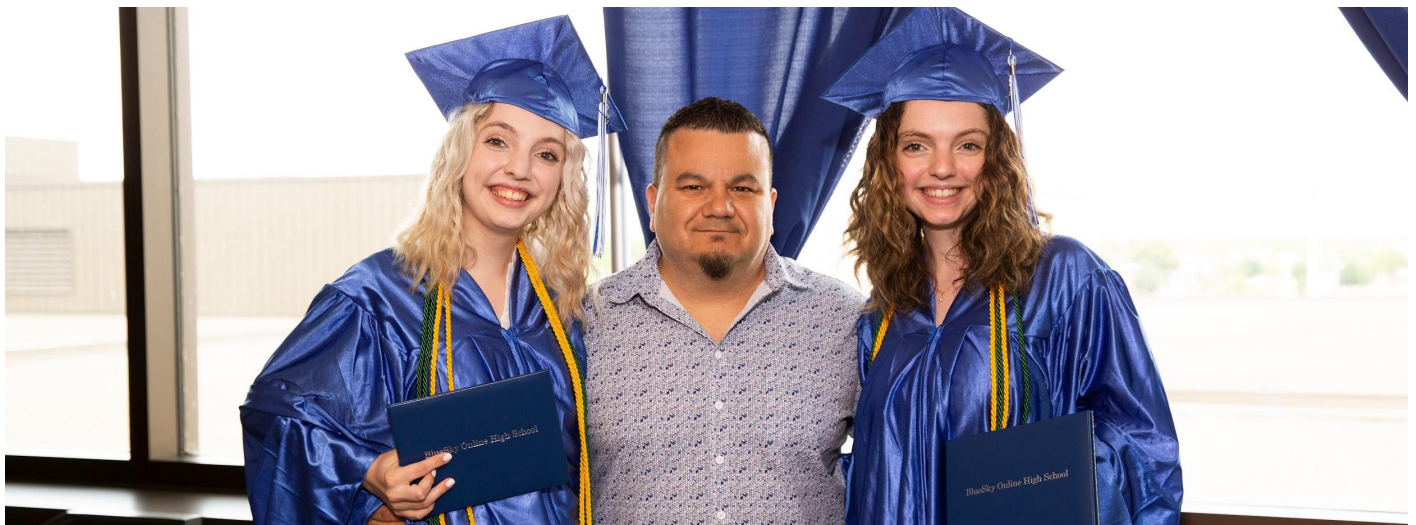
## Community Building

BlueSky strongly encourages parents to take an active role in their child's education and embrace in-home, online learning. Having the student working from home, free from classroom distractions, is a necessity for many families. Parents can easily monitor their student's progress; students and guardians have daily accessibility to staff to help with their academic and socio/emotional needs while maintaining a flexible schedule.

To strengthen family involvement, BlueSky hosts parent-teacher conferences twice a year in our campus location, once in the Fall and once in the Spring. At these conferences, parents and students can meet with teachers, counselors and administrators to discuss schedules, classes, lessons and simply meet one another face-to-face. BlueSky teachers also provide students and parents/guardians with their Renaissance STAR assessment results and discuss specific interventions for their student. The conferences at BlueSky provide families an opportunity to meet the staff, who in many cases, are offering the first truly effective learning environment for their student. Some families drive several hours to attend these conferences and leave feeling more connected to their school. We usually combine conferences with an onsite activity such

as a college fair, CPR training, financial aid information session, or other fun event like a Comedy Sportz show.

In addition to conferences, parents have access to monitor their student's progress and connect with teachers and support staff on a daily basis. Parents can see a list of student courses and know which assignments are due during the current week as well as how students scored on assignments. Grades are updated within 48 hours of being submitted and feedback is often provided to both students and parents. Consistent communication and feedback from all BlueSky staff provides a sense of community and support for students and families.



BlueSky has provided additional social opportunities for students to participate in such as prom, onsite student activities, Student Clubs, lunch bunch, and online advisory. Field trips have also been a great way to build our BlueSky community and we aim to offer at least one event per month during the school year. These trips include Mill City Museum, ValleyFair, Sea Life Aquarium, Feed My Starving Children, and student college/career fair just to name a few.

BlueSky was also able to collaborate with two other charter schools to provide their students with online content and teachers to support their 7th grade and high school students. These collaborations directly helped support the unique needs of the students and the charter school situation.

Monthly newsletters contain important reminders, school updates, student work, and profiles. Newsletters are posted on our website and sent to families of active students as well as those in the enrollment process in an effort to build a sense of community and foster educational awareness in a strictly online environment. Weekly phone calls and emails from a variety of BlueSky staff also ensure that the family is involved with the school and their student's role therein.





Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, Discord and YouTube have also been utilized to spread information and updates to our students and their parents. We are using these tools to build a stronger sense of community and connect BlueSky students, staff, and families. We are easily able to track and monitor involvement on these sites with built-in analytics.

As a tool for measuring parent and student satisfaction with BlueSky, separate parent and student surveys are released each spring. During the 2021-22 school year, 68 parents took the time to reflect on their student's school and provide BlueSky with an analysis of their sentiments (down slightly from 97 in 20-21). Likewise, 111 students participated in the student satisfaction survey (down slightly from 146 in 20-21). This data was used, in part, as a base for comparison and goal setting for the 2022-23 school year.

BlueSky also requests feedback from our parents and students throughout the school year typically through the use of Google forms and surveys. We appreciate the input our families provide which help us in the planning process. Some of these forms include Social Emotional Needs Assessment, American Indian Education Feedback, Title 1 feedback form, satisfaction surveys, student activities requests, prom committee survey, course feedback surveys, etc.

Staff are involved in all levels of decision-making in the school – as board members, committee members, and part of subject-area groups that give input into school operations both directly and through their supervisors. We feel that staff who work directly with students and their families are in the best position to help shape policies, procedures and pedagogical approaches that work best for our students. Our improvement focused, collaborative culture allows BlueSky to seek out innovative solutions to educational challenges and implement them with fidelity.

BlueSky's Staff Development Committee is highly engaged and BlueSky is financially committed to ensuring all staff have the opportunity to participate in trainings, attend conferences, and share their knowledge with other organizations by presenting content. Our committee members approve staff requests for conferences, promote specific conferences (i.e. DLAC, MoodleMoot) and work to provide in-house trainings related to relicensure requirements. BlueSky also has its own Relicensure Committee that maintains CEU information for all teaching staff and automatically uploads CEU's for staff who attend the in-house trainings. An example of an in-house training is the Suicide Prevention and mental Health course that our social workers have developed.

BlueSky staff are encouraged to participate not only in our committees and decision making process, but also in outside educational organizations. Many of our staff participate in their content specific associations. Our IT staff participate in multiple vendor related advisory groups (Moodle, PowerSchool, MDE EdFi) and our HR Specialist is involved with SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management). Our administrative staff participate in and are members of MACS (MN Association of Charter Schools), MNOLA

(MN Online Learning Association), CAREI (Center for Applied Research and Ed. Improvement), MSBA (MN School Board Association), and MASA (MN Association of School Administrators) to name a few.

Another way BlueSky is fostering community building is through our student volunteer and service learning opportunities. These are embedded into our National Honor Society program as well as through our elective class coursework that include project based assignments.

"Excellent communication from advisors, counselors, and teachers."

"My child was in public schooling and was falling behind more everyday. My child went from F's to the A honor roll. I am so glad we chose this school. Couldn't be happier."

"I like how flexible the school is. I can do my assignments when I have time and motivation."

"I appreciate the thought that has gone into the lessons and the way they have been developed to provide a wealth of information on various topics."

"The teachers are truly there to help the children succeed. They go above and beyond to reach out to the student and parents to offer help in anyway they can if the child is struggling."

"One on one advocates that communicate weekly."

"The teachers and staff at BlueSky are nice, caring, helpful, and accommodating."

"I work all week and it's nice to work on schoolwork at night."

"The teachers are helpful and seem genuinely interested in my wellbeing."

"I enjoy having such a good selection of classes to take."

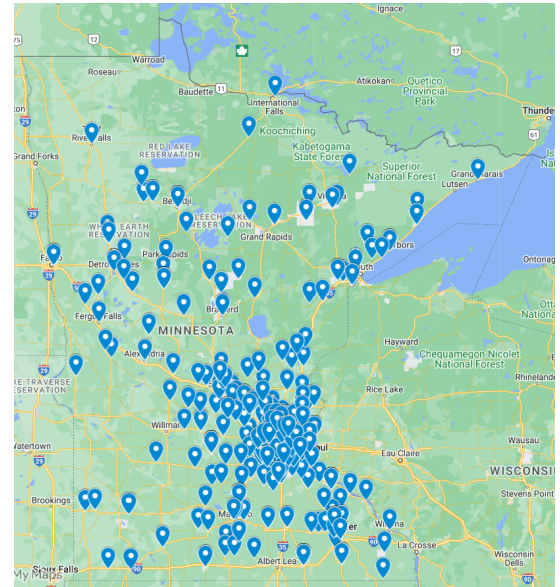
"There is no bullying. I feel welcome and appreciated."

# Student Enrollment, Attrition & Demographics

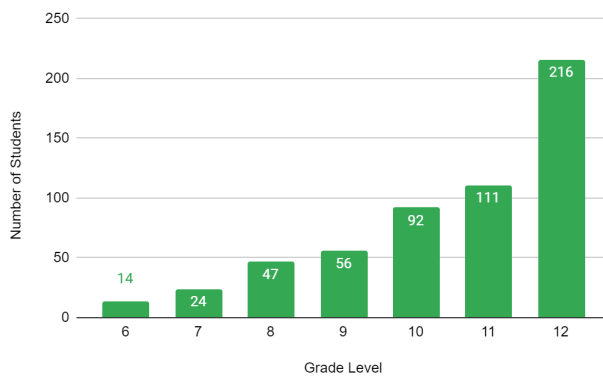
## Full Time School Enrollment

BlueSky’s enrollment on October 1, 2021 was 560 students. The average daily membership (ADM) for the 2021-22 school year was 577 students. BlueSky students come from all corners of the state with most students living in the Twin Cities metro area.

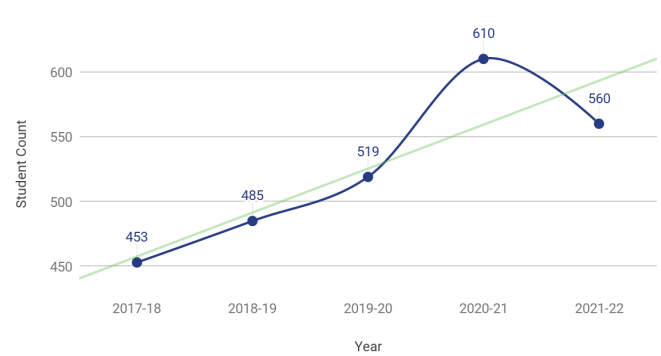
The graphs below identify the number of students enrolled as of October 1st for the following school years: 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22.



Oct. 1 Enrollment by Grade Level



BlueSky Oct. 1 Enrollment Trend

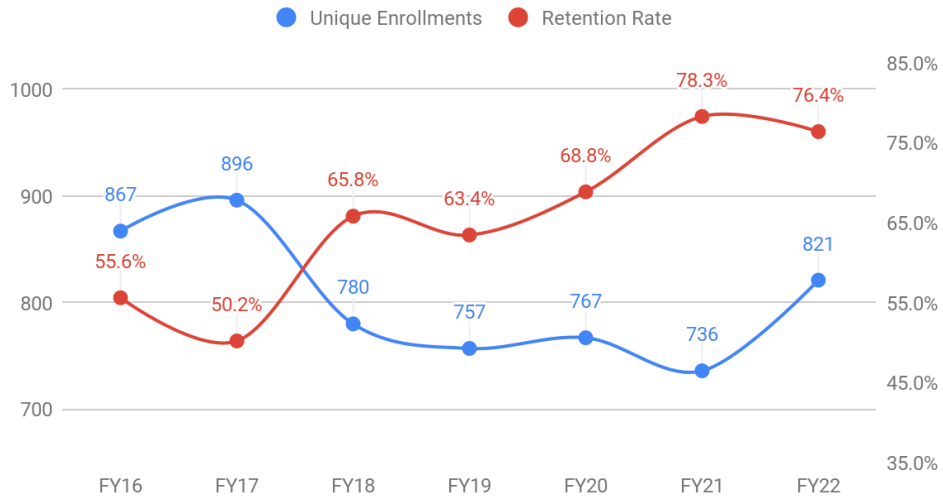


## Full Time Program Attrition

During the 2021-22 school year BlueSky had a maximum student capacity of 593. We started the year with 560 students on October 1st and ended the year with an average of 577 students (ADM). During the 2021-22 school year BlueSky enrolled a total of 821 unique students. There were 627 students that either finished the school year or graduated giving BlueSky a 76.4% retention rate. It should be noted that BlueSky gets full-time enrollments that never intend to stay at BlueSky through graduation. Often students in this category plan to enroll temporarily for a variety of reasons including health issues, family needs, pregnancy, or mental health, with the expectation of returning to their home district once they are ready to

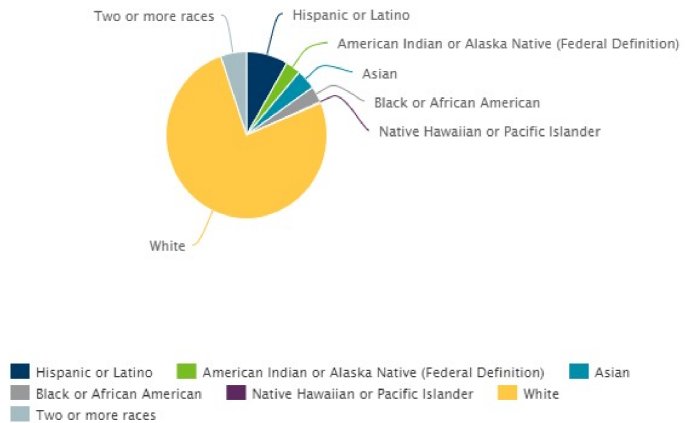
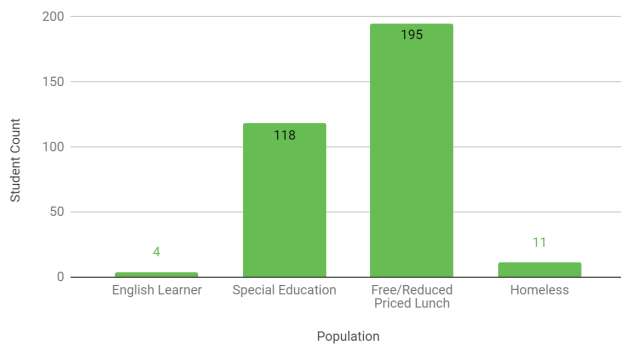
return to a brick and mortar setting. Although we certainly want students to stay with us and graduate, we have embraced our role as a transition option for some students and are happy to provide whatever support we can while they are enrolled.

### BlueSky Student Attrition Trend



## Full Time Program Demographics

BlueSky 2021-22 Special Population Counts



## Supplemental School Enrollment

BlueSky also enrolls supplemental students. These students remain enrolled at their school and typically take one to three classes at BlueSky each semester. During the 2021-2022 school year, BlueSky had 74 supplemental students for Semester 1 and 117 for Semester 2. These students came to us from 34 school districts across the state, and our supplemental team collaborated with 61 Minnesota counselors in support

of their students' success. These students were enrolled in 304.25 courses throughout the year (117.25 courses for Semester 1 and 187 courses for Semester 2), and 97% of these courses were passed.

## Summer School

BlueSky also enrolls students in summer school. In the summer of 2022 BlueSky had 78 tuition based enrollments and 80 BlueSky student enrollments. All of the 78 tuition based enrollments passed for a 100% passing rate. . Out of the 80 BlueSky student enrollments, 62 passed their classes for a 77.5% passing rate. So out of all 158 summer enrollments, 140 students passed their classes for an overall summer passing rate of 88.6% Additionally BlueSky had 6 summer school students who passed their classes and met the requirements for their MN diploma.

## Strategic Plan

### Student Success

- Develop and maintain a positive and compassionate schoolwide culture that encourages student growth in a positive learning environment.
- Promote student involvement in planning for their continuous growth and lifelong success.
- Provide opportunities for alternative pathways to learning through instructional and socio-emotional support.

### Finance and Governance

- Maintain a positive working relationship between the Board and the Administrative team by continually reviewing and revising the strategic plan, school board bylaws and policies required by law.
- Maintain fiscal responsibility by establishing and aligning a budget and healthy fund balance to carry out the school's mission and vision.

### High Performing Workforce

- Develop and maintain a positive schoolwide culture that encourages professional growth in a collaborative environment.
- Recruit, hire, and retain highly qualified staff.
- Develop staff in the evaluation, interpretation and use of data for effective decision making that aligns with curriculum, instruction, interventions, and assessment.

### Technology

- Be a global leader in technology and innovation that positively impacts student engagement, achievement, and college and career readiness.
- Continually work to identify and develop emerging technologies that facilitate, support and enhance instructional success.

### Community Partnerships

- Develop and enhance effective partnerships with all stakeholders to ensure involvement in continuous improvement processes that provides opportunities for student success.

## Governance & Management

BlueSky's vision and mission provides the focus for decision making of the school. The strategic business plan has used the vision and mission to outline five focus areas (Student Success, Finance and Governance, High Performing Workforce, Technology, and Community Partnerships) in which goal statements, objectives, and benchmarks have been developed to provide direction and priority. Through the strategic plan, the school board has allocated the resources necessary to meet the district's goals. Also, the board receives consistent progress reports related to each of the strategic plan focus areas during its monthly board meetings as well as through weekly newsletter-type communications. In addition to aligning with BlueSky's vision and mission, the strategic plan aligns with the World's Best Workforce goals as well as the goals identified by the authorizer, Innovative Quality School (IQS).

Each year, BlueSky's board of directors meet to discuss the strategic plan goal statements and review the objectives to determine if priorities need to be shifted or additional goals added. At this meeting, survey data from staff, students, and parents is used to help prioritize objectives. In addition, student performance data, results from IQS accountability reports, retention data, graduation exit survey data and other information is used to develop focus areas for improvement. Administration, along with other BlueSky stakeholders as needed, use the strategic plan as a working document throughout the year to create benchmarks that detail how each objective will be met.

BlueSky incorporates a committee structure which includes board appointed and informal committees. This structure allows for the input of teachers and other stakeholders but keeps the final decision making power with the board. This allows for board meetings to be more efficient as the committees have brought key actions and ideas forward for board approval. The board appointed committees are chaired by a board representative and include the Finance Committee, HR Committee, and Curriculum Committee. Other informal committees report to the Executive Director who provides the board with updates related to their activities. Some of these committees include Staff Development, Re-Licensure, Q-comp, Technology, Intervention, and Student Activities.

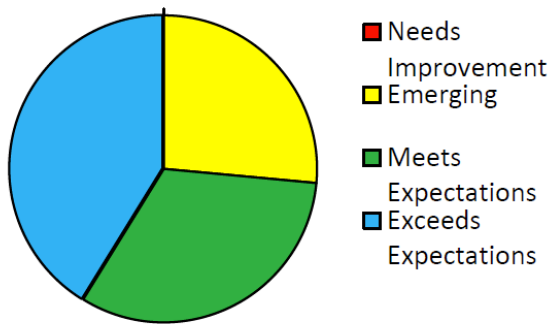
BlueSky has incorporated a Q-comp program which includes peer observations and feedback, PLC teams, professional development plans, staff portfolios and formal evaluations. The program creates the framework to allow for schoolwide goals, team goals, and personal professional goals. All goals are aligned and work together towards the academic success of all students.

BlueSky has built a culture of collaboration and support. Because of this, we have very low staff turnover, high ratings on our staff satisfaction surveys and have been named a [Top Workplace by the Star Tribune](#) for six years in a row.

In November of the 2017-18 school year, BlueSky went through the AdvancED (Cognia) accreditation renewal process. Our next renewal will be 22-23 school year. Using a set of rigorous research based standards, the accreditation process examines the whole institution - the programs, the cultural context and the



community of stakeholders - to determine how well the parts work together to meet the needs of learners. Through the AdvancED accreditation renewal process, a highly skilled and trained Engagement Review Team gathered first-hand evidence and information pertinent to evaluating BlueSky’s performance against the research-based AdvancED Performance Standards. Once all of the information was compiled and reviewed, the Engagement Review Team developed the Engagement Review Report. This document provided BlueSky with “powerful practices” and “opportunities for improvement” related to many of the standards that were evaluated as well as a rating for each standard. BlueSky’s composite score was 342.39 out of 400. A summary of the ratings of all 34 standards is depicted below.



Rating	Number of Standards
Needs Improvement	0
Emerging	9
Meets Expectations	11
Exceeds Expectations	14

The Powerful Practices identified by the AdvancED (now Cognia) review team were:

1. The school created an exceptional student-centric culture based on shared values and beliefs about student dignity, ability and potential.
2. The curriculum development and review process ensures rigorous standards-based learning opportunities for all students.
3. Leadership empowers the school community to achieve at high levels through sound operational and financial management, and the development of a collaborative and collegial environment.



During the 21-22 school year, BlueSky completed the MDE Online Learning Provider 3 Year Review self study process. Our next review will be conducted in the 24-25 school year. This review process engages stakeholders, including program administrators, teachers, parents and students in a thorough program review using the iNACOL Quality Online Program Standards as a framework. Using a multi-faceted improvement approach, representing diverse cultural perspectives, and working to support learners



socially and emotionally were identified as program strengths. Through this process BlueSky was approved to continue as a Minnesota approved online learning provider.

## Board of Directors

BlueSky Online Charter School maintains a governing board of directors made up of 7 non-majority members. BlueSky's board holds monthly public meetings in the Bloomington office and posts board minutes and schedules on the BlueSky website. All BlueSky board members are compliant with the required training related to governance, finance, and employment law and also receive additional training at least annually as required in statute. This is done through attendance at offsite conferences, webinars offered by MDE, or scheduled working sessions following or included in board meetings. In addition, BlueSky's authorizer, IQS, conducts periodic observations of board meetings and provides feedback related to board governance.

Next Board Election: May 2023

### **Jim Stocco**

Board Chair

Community Member, 2022-2024

651.235.3853

[jim.stocco@blueskyschool.org](mailto:jim.stocco@blueskyschool.org)

### **Matthew Schempp**

Vice Chair, Teacher Member, 2021-2023

651.202.2065

[matthew.schempp@blueskyschool.org](mailto:matthew.schempp@blueskyschool.org)

### **Julie Johnson**

Secretary

Teacher Member, 2022-2024

651.202.2055

[julie.johnson@blueskyschool.org](mailto:julie.johnson@blueskyschool.org)

### **Judy Pekarek**

Treasurer

Community Member, 2021-2023

612.236.4194

[judypek@hotmail.com](mailto:judypek@hotmail.com)

**Sandra Meinerts**

Parent Member, 2022-2024

612.220.7174

[sandy.meinerts@blueskyschool.org](mailto:sandy.meinerts@blueskyschool.org)**Heidi Kelbel**

Teacher Member, 2022-2024

651.202.2049

[heidi.kelbel@blueskyschool.org](mailto:heidi.kelbel@blueskyschool.org)**Dr. Bradley Wolfe**

Community Member, 2021-2023

952-393-6814

[bradley.wolfe@blueskyschool.org](mailto:bradley.wolfe@blueskyschool.org)

## Board of Directors Training Tracker

Member Name	Oversight of Financial Matters	Board Governance	Oversight of Employment Matters	Ongoing Training
Heidi Kelbel	6/20/16	6/21/16	6/14/16	Data Privacy training <i>Indigo</i> 10/5/17; MACS Board Governance Award criteria working session 1/31/18, 2/28/18, 3/21/18; OLL Institutional Standards Review 1/30/19; History of Charter School Law (Ember video) 10/30/19; Participate in Meetings Remotely MSBA training 4/7/22
Julie Johnson	10/6/12	10/6/12; 7/29/15	10/6/12; 7/29/15	Data Privacy training <i>Indigo</i> 10/5/17; MACS Board Governance Award criteria working session 1/31/18, 2/28/18, 3/21/18; OLL Institutional Standards Review 1/30/19; History of Charter School Law (Ember video) 10/30/19; Participate in Meetings Remotely MSBA training 3/25/22
Sandy Meinerts	8/18/20	11/12/19	11/20/19	"School Board & Superintendent Relationships Matter" MSBA presentation recording 6/7/22

Judy Pekarek	11/23/15	7/29/15	7/29/15	Charter School Director Evaluation Training 11/8/17; MACS Board Governance Award criteria working session 1/31/18, 2/28/18, 3/21/18; OLL Institutional Standards Review 1/30/19; IQS Board Training 7/24/19; MACS Annual Meeting 10/3/19; History of Charter School Law (Ember video) 10/30/19; IQS Board Refresher Training 8/14/20 & 8/18/20; MSBA Participate in Meetings Remotely 5/26/22
Matthew Schempp	2/19/16	7/29/15	7/29/15; 6/11/15	Data Privacy training <i>Indigo</i> 10/5/17; MACS Board Governance Award criteria working session 1/31/18, 2/28/18, 3/21/18; OLL Institutional Standards Review 1/30/19; History of Charter School Law (Ember video) 10/30/19; MSBA Charter Training Oct. 13, 20, 27 <sup>th</sup> 2020; "Conduct a Board Election" 6/2/22
Jim Stocco	11/21/13	8/1/13	8/1/13	IQS Leadership Conference 5/1/17; Ratwik School Law Conference 10/13/17; MACS Board Governance Award criteria working session 1/31/18, 2/28/18, 3/21/18; OLL Institutional Standards Review 1/30/19; History of Charter School Law (Ember video) 10/30/19; IQS Leader Training 11/6/19; Ratwik School Law Conference 11/6/20; MSBA Webinar: An Overview of the School Finance 7/2/22
Dr. Bradley Wolfe	5/23/22	8/12/22	8/12/22	



## BlueSky School Administrative Leadership

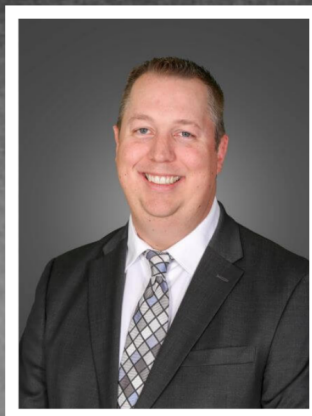
Below is information for ALL members of the school management/administrative team and staff employed by the school who did not serve as a classroom teacher (e.g. curriculum coordinators, social workers, counselors, administrative assistants, paraprofessionals, custodial, technology, librarians, etc.)

### Leadership



Amy Larsen

*Superintendent/Executive Director*



Dan Ondich

*Assistant Director/Principal*



Cathy Parker

*Director of Student Support Services*



Heidi van der Hagen

*Director of Special Education*



Elisabeth O'Connell

*Dean of Students*

### Office Staff

Emma Boyum - 504 Coordinator

Ben Haensel -Technology Infrastructure Specialist

Song Her - Student Information Specialist

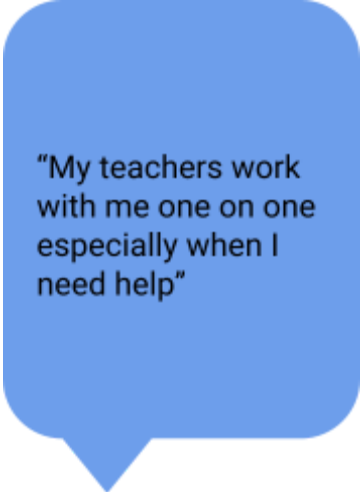
Heidi Housh - Supplemental Coordinator

John Mizeur - Registrar

Judy McMillan - Special Education Assistant  
Leslie Egner - HR Specialist  
Brenda Ritter - Technology Support Specialist  
Rachel Miller - Instructional Designer  
Sarah Miner - Administrative Assistant  
Brenda Ritter - Technology Support Specialist  
Paula Slagle - Educational Assistant  
Katie Shealy - Educational Assistant  
Alisa Snyder - Retention & Orientation Coordinator  
Chue Vang - IT Tech/ Attendance Assistant  
Melissa Vang - Testing Coordinator/Special Education Administrative Assistant  
Chelsea VanLanen - Educational Assistant  
Janette Willenbring - Supplemental Admin Assistant

## Support Staff

Jen Anderson - Counselor  
Carla Anderson-Diekmann - Counselor  
Grant Cameron - Counselor  
Amy Chicoine - Counselor  
Hanna Coleman - Advisor  
Carolyn Disch - Social Worker  
Cayla Rother - Social Worker  
Danielle Fackler - Advisor  
Casie Hammel - Social Worker  
Kelly Hanson - Advisor  
Patrick Karr - Advisor  
Karen Kraco - Advisor  
Dawn Mensing - Middle School Counselor  
Sean Miller - Advisor/Q-Comp Coordinator  
Dawn Nicol - Advisor  
Carrie Ostman - Advisor  
Lynn Riebe - Social Worker  
April Scharnberg - Social Worker  
Laura Welciek - Advisor



**"My teachers work  
with me one on one  
especially when I  
need help"**

## BlueSky Teaching Staff

Below is information for ALL teachers employed by the school or providing services contractually (e.g., special education teacher, reading specialist, speech therapist).

Carla Ahrenstorff - Science	Leasa Kulm - Spanish & Welcome and Support
Brittany Bailey - Health/PE	Gabra Lokken - Business
Eric Bakken - Social Studies	Amy Loney - 6th Grade Teacher
David Bjorklund - Science	Matthew Meuers - Special Education
Suzy Bordeau - Social Studies/ELL	Tracy Mullenbach - Special Education
Sarah Bradley - Special Education	Heather Novak - Social Studies
Gaia Buttweiler - Social Studies/ASL	Nicole Petersen - Art
Chad Claybaugh - Special Education	Chris Peterson - Business
Kyle Felder - Health&PE/Welcome & Support	Jason Prekker - Math
Emilie Canton - Special Education	Marti Prekker - Language Arts
Tamara Cowan - Health/PE	Katie Roorda - Family and Consumer Sciences
Barbara DeGrote - Language Arts	Samantha Savoie - Language Arts
Margo Hanson - Special Education & Science	Matthew Schempp - Language Arts
Jodi Helder - Special Education	Anthony Shealy - Social Studies/Special Education
Chet Johnson - Social Studies	Leah Sickmann - Science
Julie Johnson - Science	Darren Sonenstahl - Math
Bonnie Jude - Special Education	James Weiberg - Math
Patrick Karr - Special Education & Advisor	Erin Winchell - Music
Heidi Kelbel - Math	Amee Wittbrodt - Language Art
Sara Keller - Special Education	
Molly Kinnamon - Language Arts	
Karen Kraco - Science & Advisor	
Emily Kreklau - Math	

## Annual Public Meeting

BlueSky Charter School's annual public meeting and strategic plan review meeting was held on June 28, 2021 at BlueSky's office located at 2051 Killebrew Drive, Suite #500, Bloomington, MN 55425. The [agenda](#) for the Annual Strategic Planning/WBWF meeting can be found on our website.

## World's Best Workforce District Advisory Committee

BlueSky Charter School's District Advisory Committee and Curriculum Committee members for 2021-2022 were as follows.

Sandra Meinerts: Parent/Board Member  
Jim Stocco: Community/Board Member  
Bradley Wolfe: Community/Board Member  
Judy Pekarek: Community/Board Member  
Matthew Schempp: Teacher/Board Member/Curriculum Committee Chair  
Heidi Kelbel: Teacher/Board Member  
Julie Johnson: Teacher/Board Member  
Brenda Ritter: IT/Staff Development Committee Chair  
Bonnie Jude: Special Education Teacher  
Darren Sonenstahl: Math Teacher  
Carla Anderson-Diekmann: Counselor  
Gabra Lokken: Business Teacher  
Eric Bakken: Social Studies Teacher  
Karen Kraco: Teacher/Advisor  
Erin Winchell: Teacher  
Daniel Ondich: Administrator/Parent  
Rachel Miller: Instructional Designer  
Amy Larsen: Administrator  
Cayla Rother: School Social Worker  
Emily Kreklau: Middle School Teacher

## **BlueSky's Academic Goals & Performance**

During the 2021-22 school year, BlueSky established academic SMART goals to meet identified needs. These goals align with BlueSky's World's Best Workforce Plan to close the achievement gap, prepare students for college & career readiness and improve graduation rates for all students. Specific attention and focus was given to improving reading performance through BlueSky's established Q-Comp program. Through Q-Comp, professional learning communities were utilized to develop and implement reading instruction and support strategies to meet the needs of all students. Existing math and reading intervention programs were refined to provide help to students identified as needing additional support. Under Minnesota's North Star Accountability System, BlueSky was identified for comprehensive supports based on our graduation rates and continued to work with the Regional Centers of Excellence to improve student outcomes. As part of BlueSky's required school improvement efforts, a districtwide social and emotional learning strategy

was adopted to integrate SEL throughout all of BlueSky's curriculum and support services. BlueSky's academic goals and results are detailed in the following section of this report

## BlueSky Charter School Goals, 2021-2022

### Meet or Exceed State Assessment Achievement Goals

Goal	Result	Goal Status
<p><i>Exceeding Statewide MCA Proficiency Rates - All Students</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The percent of BlueSky students who meet or exceed state mathematics proficiency will increase from 9.7% to 13.7% as measured by All Accountability Tests (mathematics) using the ESSA calculation.</li> <li>The percent of BlueSky students who meet or exceed state reading proficiency will increase from 36.4% to 39.4% as measured by All Accountability Tests (reading) using the ESSA calculation.</li> </ol>	<p><b>1. Mathematics Results:</b></p> <p>BlueSky students had a 22.9% math proficiency rate during the 2021-22 school year.</p> <p><b>2. Reading Results:</b></p> <p>BlueSky students who qualify for FRL had a 48.0% reading proficiency rate during the 2021-22 school year.</p>	<p><i>Goal Met</i></p> <p><i>Goal Met</i></p>

### Close the Achievement Gap(s) Among All Groups

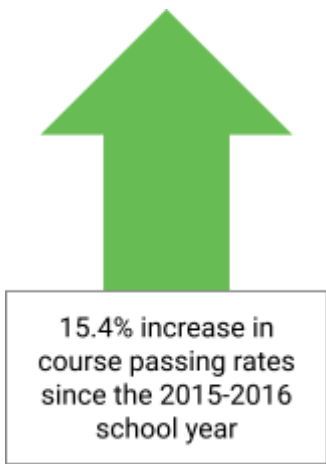
Goal	Result	Goal Status
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### All Students Ready for Career and College - Course Passing Rates

Goal	Result	Goal Status
The percentage of individual course enrollments that are completed with passing grades and demonstrating competency will exceed 77.0% during the 2021-22 school year.	During the 2021-22 school year 89.4% of all course enrollments were passed.	Goal Met



BlueSky Annual Course Passing Rate



### All Students Ready for Career and College - Personal Learning Plan

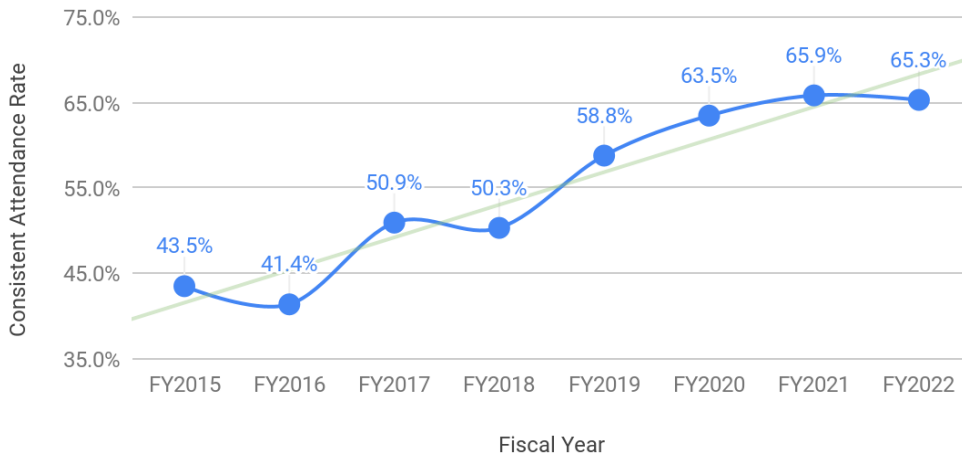
Goal	Result	Goal Status
BlueSky's number of students who graduate with a completed Personal Learning Plan (consisting of career goals, plan for future education, career assessments, and interest inventories) will be 100% or more during the 2021-22 school year.	During the 2021-22 school year 100% of all graduates had a completed Personal Learning Plan.	Goal Met

### Attendance Rate

Attendance at BlueSky is measured by assignments submitted during the course of the school week. At a minimum, a student must submit an average of 15 assignments during a 5 day school week. For every three assignments students turn in, this will count as one day in attendance for that week.

Goal	Result	Goal Status
BlueSky's consistent attendance (number of students with 90% attendance or better) will exceed 51.1% during the 2021-22 school year.	During the 2021-22 school year BlueSky's consistent attendance rate was 65.3%. (Final results may change slightly because attendance is not finalized until after this report was written)	Goal Met

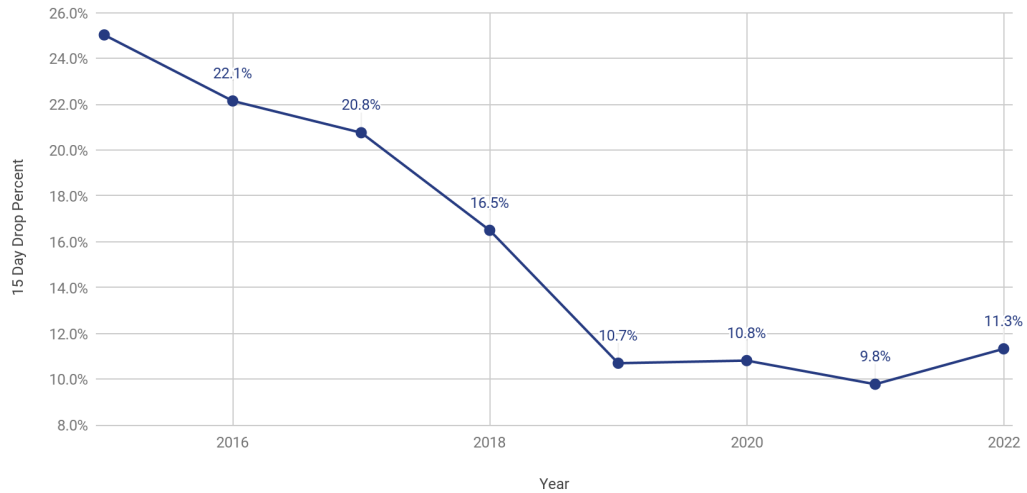
Consistent Attendance Rate by Fiscal Year



School Mobility & Retention - Reduction of 15 Day Drops

Goal	Result	Goal Status
BlueSky's drop rate due to 15 consecutive absences compared to all enrollments will be 18.5% or less during the 2021-22 school year.	During the 2021-22 school year BlueSky's 15 day drop rate was 11.3%. (Final results may change slightly because attendance is not finalized until after this report is written)	Goal Met

BlueSky 15 Day Drop Trend



### School Climate - Parent & Student Satisfaction

During 2021-22 BlueSky conducted the AdvancED student and parent survey.

Goal	Result	Goal Status
1. BlueSky's average Cognia student satisfaction score is 3.6 or higher during the 2021-22 school year.	<b>Student Results:</b> Overall Score = 4.13 (network average was 3.67)	Goal Met
2. BlueSky's average Cognia parent satisfaction score is 3.6 or more during the 2021-22 school year.	<b>Parent Results:</b> Overall Score = 4.46 (network average was 4.06)	Goal Met

**4.46/5** Average parent satisfaction survey rating for BlueSky

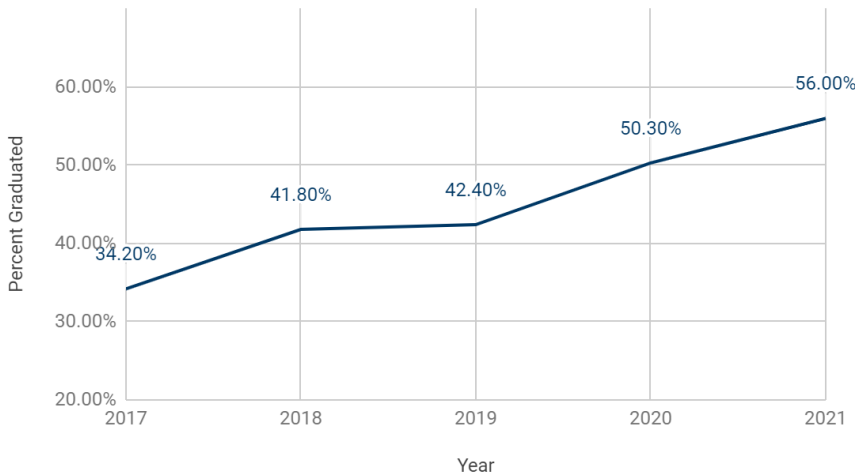
**4.13/5** Average student satisfaction survey rating for BlueSky

### All Students Graduate

Goal	Result	Goal Status
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BlueSky's 4 year graduation rate will exceed 26.9% in 2021.	BlueSky's 4 year graduation rate was 55.0% in 2021.	Goal Met
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### Graduation Rate Trend



**21.8% increase in 4 year graduation rates since the 2016-2017 school year**

## School Improvement

### Plan Priorities

Each year All IQS schools are required to create a school improvement plan based on identified areas of need for each of the score card areas which includes mission, governance, finance, performance, and operations.

BlueSky was identified as a priority needs school by the Minnesota Department of Education for a low graduation rate. We are continuing work with the Regional Centers of Excellence to implement SEL for all students. Students in grades 6-8 continued to utilize the Second Step advisory curriculum in their daily (M-Th) advisory class. New for the 2021-22 school year, all 9th grade students participated in a live advisory class twice per week utilizing the Yale RULER curriculum.

All staff continued to participate in SEL professional development as part of BlueSky's compassionate school initiative. This training included utilizing tools in Yale's RULER program and embedding SEL within our curriculum in all content areas. For the 2021-22 school year PLCs focused on embedding Responsible Decision Making, Self-Management, and Self-Awareness within their curriculum or support systems.

Leadership and staff also looked at data to improve early identification criteria in order to be more responsive and preventative to student needs. As part of this process, referral systems were streamlined and monitored.

# Finances

## 2020-21 Audit Summary

A Management Report and Financial Statements and Supplemental Information report were prepared in conjunction with MMKR's audit of BlueSky Charter School, Inc.'s financial statements for the year ending June 30, 2021. Some of the items listed in that report are as follows:

### AUDIT OPINION AND FINDINGS

Based on our audit of the School's financial statements for the year ended June, 30, 2021:

- We have issued an unmodified opinion on the School's basic financial statements.
- We reported no deficiencies in the School's internal control over financial reporting that we considered to be material weaknesses.
- The results of our testing disclosed no instances of noncompliance required to be reported under Government Auditing Standards.
- We reported no findings based on our testing of the School's compliance with Minnesota laws and regulations.

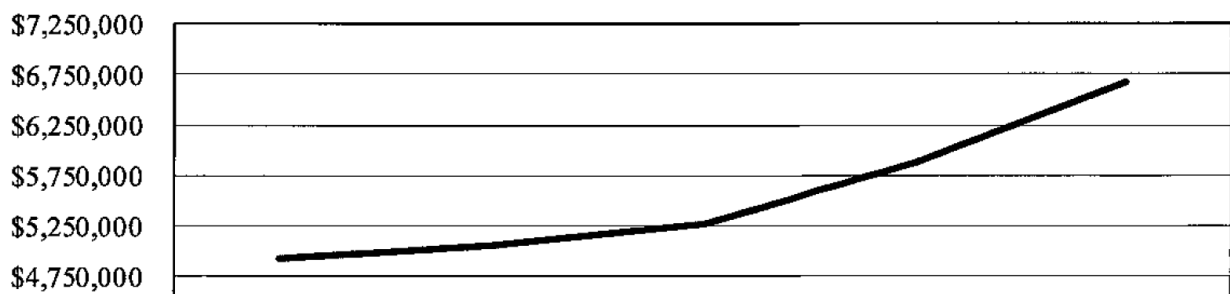
### GENERAL FUND OPERATIONS AND FINANCIAL POSITION

The total fund balance of the School's General Fund increased \$1,092,934 from the prior year, compared to a fund balance decrease of \$271,308 projected in the final budget. The General Fund cash and investments balance (net of borrowing) increased \$389,368 from the prior year.

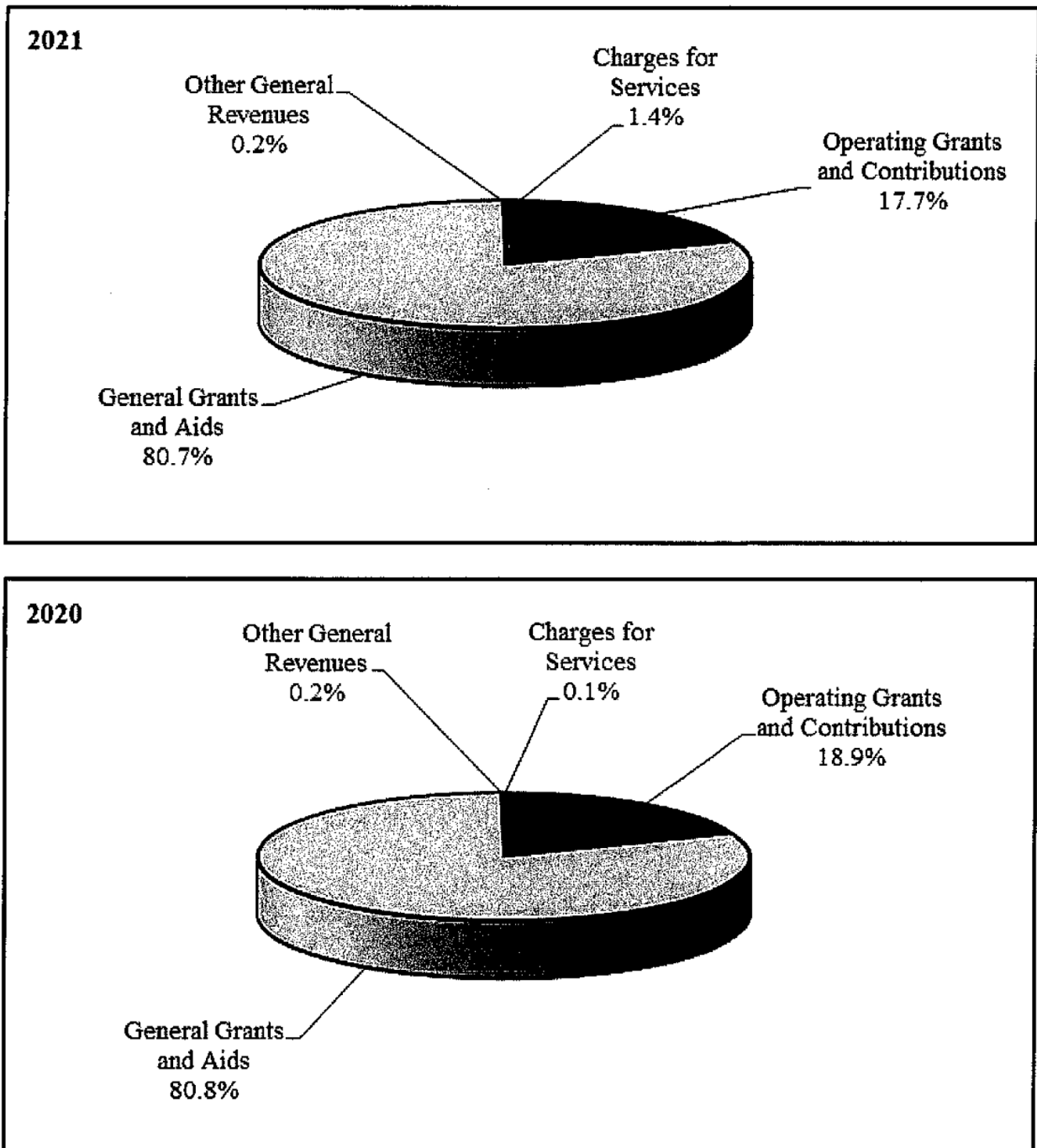
A Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan of \$870,430 obtained by the School in the current year contributed to the increases in both cash and fund balance, as shown below.

Unassigned fund balance as a percentage of expenditures is one key measure of a school's financial health. The resources represented by this fund balance are critical to a school's ability to maintain adequate cash flow throughout the year, to retain its programs, and to cushion against the impact of unexpected costs or funding shortfalls. The General Fund unassigned fund balance of \$3,105,977 represented 46.5 percent of annual expenditures based on 2021 expenditure levels. This ratio was 37.3 percent at the end of fiscal 2020.

**General Fund Financial Position  
Year Ended June 30,**



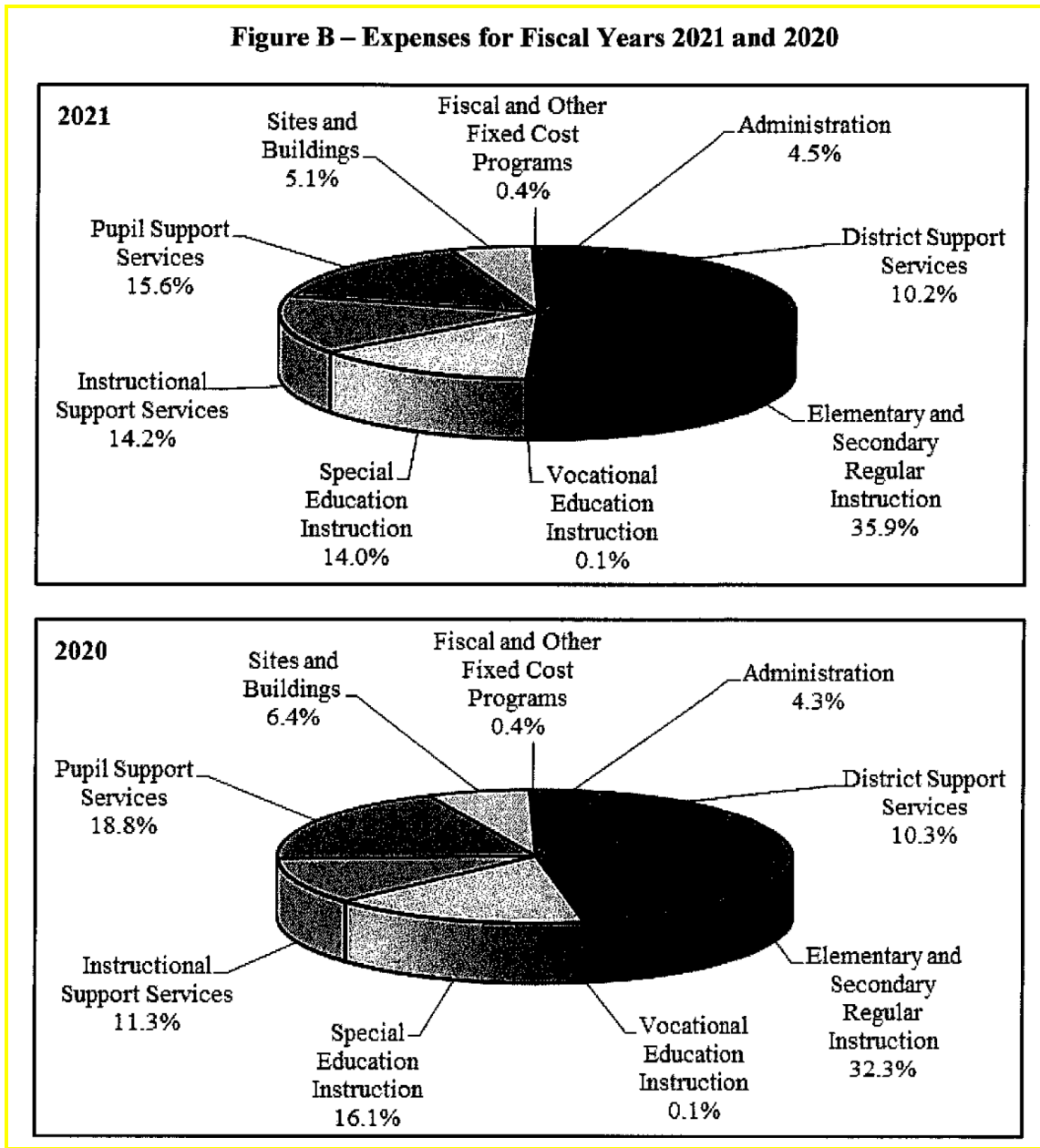
## SOURCES OF REVENUE FOR FISCAL YEARS 2021 AND 2020

**Figure A – Sources of Revenue for Fiscal Years 2021 and 2020**

The largest share of the School's revenue is received from the state, including most of the operating and general grants. This significant reliance on the state for funding has placed pressures on charter school budgets as funding increases have generally not kept pace with inflation.

Enrollment continues to be the largest influence on the School's revenue. The School's enrollment - an adjusted average daily membership (ADM) of 563 for the year was close to budgeted projections of 565 ADM, and reflected an increase of 36 ADM from the prior year. The School's total governmental activity revenues were \$6,906,603 for the year ended June 30, 2021, which is an increase of \$593,648 from the prior year. General grants and aids increased by \$470,616, as the School earning more state aid for general education, due to the increase in enrollment and enhanced funding, and received several new federal grants in fiscal 2021 related to COVID-19 relief.

**EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEARS 2021 AND 2020**





The School's expenses are predominantly related to educating students. Programs (or functions) such as regular instruction, vocational education instruction, special education instruction, and instructional support services are directly related to classroom instruction, while the rest of the programs support instruction and other necessary costs to operate the School.

The School's cost of all governmental activities for 2021 was \$7,082,368, which is an increase of \$798,207 (12.7 percent) from the prior year. The overall increase in expenses was mainly attributable to additional staffing and other costs necessary to serve the School's increased enrollment.

BlueSky has maintained the necessary resources to accomplish the mission and has appropriately planned for and expanded using sound business practices. BlueSky maintains a healthy fund balance and continues to be fiscally responsible. This is evidenced by BlueSky receiving the MDE 2021 School Finance Award as well as receiving a composite score of 4.0 out of 4 on our FY21 annual authorizer review (Innovative Quality Schools).

## Future Plans

BlueSky Charter School's strategic plan outlines five focus areas that support the vision and mission of the school; Student Success, Finance & Governance, High Performing Workforce, Technology, and Community Partnerships. BlueSky's leadership team oversees the development and implementation of goals, objectives, and benchmarks that fall under each of these focus areas. A list and description of some of those future objectives and benchmarks are listed below in order of their strategic plan focus area.

### Student Success

- Development of 5th grade curriculum and program building.
- Pilot changing grading terms to quarters from semesters.
- Implementation of middle school MCIS 360.
- Implement direct skill instruction in small groups for students in special education.
- Support more students with mental health needs through a tiered service delivery model in the social work department.
- Attend CAREI professional development as a team in an effort to develop our intervention program with a focus on MTSS.
- Continued focus on implementation of Social and Emotional Learning standards within existing curriculum.
- Continue creating assessment measures of all SEL standards to identify student proficiency.
- Continue to make improvements to processes in the supplemental program, tuition based program, and summer school program which will provide additional options for student learning.
- Continue to enhance existing intervention programs to include staff training related to Tier 1 interventions with advisors developing support plans for identified students.
- Instructional designer focus on course consistency and user accessibility
- Structured supported study hall and back on track for 9th grade students. .
- Continue to increase opportunities for students to interact socially by providing field trips, onsite days and other student activities.

- Creation of a Diversition, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.
- Development of career survey to use in restructuring the required career portfolio.
- Review and analyze graduate exit surveys to determine improvements needed in college and career readiness programming.

## High Performing Workforce

- Review HR policies related to staff benefits to identify areas of improvement.
- Continue providing in house professional development opportunities aligned to BlueSky's strategic goals and licensure requirements.
- Be more deliberate with staff training agendas allowing for asynchronous training when appropriate to reduce the number of required staff meetings.
- Compassionate School Training for Staff who have been at BlueSky for less than 3 years, facilitated by social workers.
- Aligning Q-Comp observation and coaching to compassionate schools training.
- Create opportunities to recognize staff who go above and beyond.
- Develop a substitute process for covering staff who request time off.
- Create Operations Manager position who will oversee onsite staff and processes and aid in cross training.

## Technology

- Begin implementation of BlueSky's [Technology Strategic Plan](#).
- Conduct a security review summit to identify needs and create a plan for continued improvement.
- Utilize focus groups with students and parents to develop improvements to the academic snapshot and other self monitoring tools.
- Implementation of the EdFi system for MARSS submissions.
- Continue work on the development of a Technology Crisis Management Plan.
- Continue using data and building reports that inform decisions related to student success, progress, retention data, and how to better support specific types of students (middle school, over 18, re-enrolling, part time, PSEO, etc.).
- Continue planning for universal device compatibility.
- Increased capacity to provide students laptops and hotspots.

## Community Partnerships

- Seek opportunities to collaborate with other charter schools and districts to enhance student learning i.e. provide courses not offered at the local school.
- Seek opportunities to share best practices with others by presenting at conferences.
- Continue working with IQS and the NGAPS pilot in an effort to promote alternative assessment options.
- Continue involvement with MSBA, MACS and other education related organizations to keep current with legislative activity and provide input when needed.
- Work with marketing vendors to develop content for our website, social media, and blog in an effort to share BlueSky student stories.
- Continue to collaborate with MSHSL and other school districts to support student athletics.

- Continue work with the Regional Centers of Excellence and CAREI in an effort to improve graduation rates and student intervention programs.
- Go through a continuous improvement process with Cognia to obtain accreditation renewal.

## Finance and Governance

- Maintain a healthy fund balance while providing adequate resources so the strategic plan supports BlueSky students and the school's mission.
- Build relationships with other charter schools by providing them with tuition agreement opportunities for 6-12th grade students.
- Facilitate the application and spending of CARES funding with a focus on mental health support, technology support and PPE.
- Additional revenue sources by applying for existing grants.
- Maintain budget by monitoring increased enrollment cap.

**2021-2022 Annual Report Prepared by:**

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Approved by BlueSky's Board of Directors on November 30, 2022

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