



Voyageurs Expeditionary School

Public Charter District #4107

School Year 2020-2021

World's Best Workforce and Annual Report



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School Information

Voyageurs Expeditionary School (VES) was established in 2003 as an alternative in the Bemidji community. It was modeled on the Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound instructional program to meet the needs of high school students who, for a variety of reasons, chose not to attend high school in the large local district. VES first opened at the Concordia Language Villages in the German Village and enrolled students in grades 9 and 10 only, with an expansion plan to add a grade each year to serve grades 9-12. With the addition of multiple grades, the space at Concordia



was insufficient. VES relocated into a historic building along the Mississippi River in the town of Bemidji in 2005.

In 2007, Bi-County Community Action Programs joined with VES to provide the educational portion for their YouthBuild program. In 2010, VES moved to a larger facility. This provided a more energy efficient space and also outdoor green space to allow for activities including gardening and physical education programming. In 2013, VES was given permission to start a middle school program. That fall, 17 students in grades 6-8 joined VES in a one-room classroom model. In November of 2014, VES added a new 2,000 square foot middle school, designed with five classrooms and the ability to serve up to 48 students in grades 6-8. VES currently has the capacity to serve 112 students grades 6-12 with an average class size of 16 per grade level.

Contact Information

VOYAGEURS EXPEDITIONARY SCHOOL
3724 Bemidji Ave N.
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excel@voyageursschool.org
www.voyageursschool.org

Grades Served - 6-12

Established - 2003

Mission Statement

The mission of Voyageurs is to provide students with the necessary tools to lead meaningful and productive lives through hands-on learning, service to others, and environmental stewardship.

Vision Statement

Starting at a level much deeper than just the curriculum, the design of Voyageurs addresses the origins of learning and the fundamental well-being of students. The foundation necessary to achieve the mission of our school is the establishment of a community of learners composed of students, families, teachers and staff who share the conviction that the best education takes place in an intentionally developed environment that nurtures, protects, challenges and values every member of that community.

Authorizer Information

The authorizer contract with the Audubon Center of the North Woods (ACNW) was renewed in June of 2011 for a three-year period. VES received a one-year extension from ACNW for the 2013-14 school year. VES was issued a four-year renewal by ACNW in June 2015. We completed our renewal process during the 2018-19 school year and were awarded a three year contract for



the 2019-22 school years. In January of 2020, ACNW formally changed its name to Osprey Wilds (OW). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, OW extended our contract through the 2023 school year.

The State of Minnesota recognizes charter schools as being “authorized” by organizations where the missions of both the authorizer and the charter school are consistent. All authorizers must be approved by the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education. Authorizers are charged with supporting, improving and enhancing elementary and secondary education in Minnesota.

OW continues to provide support and has open communication with the VES director and school board. We communicate regularly with Nalani McCutcheon, Charter School Liaison, through emails, phone conversations and site visits. We also complete all required reports for OW through their Epicenter Document Collection portal.

Erin Anderson, Director of Charter School Authorizing Charter School Division
Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center
1730 New Brighton Blvd.,
Suite #507, PMB 196
Minneapolis, MN 55413
P: 612-331-4181
www.ospreywilds.org

Implementation of Primary and Additional Statutory Purposes

The primary purpose of VES is to improve the achievement levels of all students. The school will share these results in the World's Best Workforce annual report. The school will work towards a project-supported model of instruction to increase academic rigor and expectations. VES will report its efforts through assessment results based upon MCA and NWEA testing as well as career/college readiness preparedness in our annual report.

We will share our results at the all-students, Native American, Special Education and free/reduced levels. Other data such as attendance, retention and graduation rates will also be made public.

An additional purpose of VES is to work towards providing both innovative and non- traditional instruction in a hands-on learning environment. VES uses a project-supported learning curriculum model to make learning meaningful and relevant to students. We provide staff development activities designed to improve instruction and support our mission. Our school continues to focus on developing the academic “grit” of our students. Many students seem to take the position of “tell me what you want me to know” as they approach their educational efforts. Our focus is to encourage students to find the tools needed when faced with problem solving tasks. We used our PLC time to train our teachers in “productive struggle” in all content areas. We introduced a new rotating schedule that included less transition time and more “in-class” time for each subject area. This also created additional preparation time for staff. Longer class periods on a rotational basis allowed for different classes to meet at different times of the day to help our morning and



afternoon learners. During Spring Distance Learning, our paraprofessional staff were involved in outreach activities to help support both the academic and social/emotional needs of our students.

Student Enrollment & Demographics

Student Enrollment

The October 1 enrollment count at VES for the 2020-21 school year was 97 students. Of those students, 80 were students who returned to VES from the 2019-20 school year.

For the 2020-21 school year, VES had a total of 101 different students enroll and attend for a portion of the school year. For the year, the Average Daily Membership (ADM) was 99 full time equivalents. The original budget was based on an ADM of 102; the ADM was adjusted, mid-year, to 100 which was more in line with actual enrollment.

Number of Students Enrolled	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 10/1/21 count
6th Grade	16	15	16
7th Grade	16	17	16
8th Grade	17	17	15
9th Grade	14	13	17
10th Grade	13	13	15
11th Grade	15	13	9
12th Grade	13	3	13
Total	104	101	101
Total ADM (Avg. Daily Membership) for year	100	97	102 projected

Student Demographics

VES demographics stayed somewhat constant when compared to 2019-20 numbers. Many of our students are referred to VES by other members of their family that attend or have attended in the past. Parents come to VES because we offer smaller class sizes and students are able to get more individualized attention.

Demographic Trends	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Total Enrollment	115	115	101
Male	45%	45%	53%
Female	55%	55%	47%
Special Education	33%	33%	39%
English Learners	0%	0%	0%
Free/Reduced Priced Lunch	81%	81%	62%
Black, not of Hispanic Origin	0%	1%	2%
Hispanic/Latino	0%	0%	1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	72%	68%	70%



White, not of Hispanic Origin	28%	31%	39%
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Student Attendance, Attrition, & Mobility

Student Attendance

The 2020-21 average daily attendance rate decreased despite the increased efforts to engage students during hybrid and distance learning models. We attribute this decrease to the number of learning models used throughout the school year. We know our students need consistency. When compared to the 2019-20 school year, the number of students earning ninety percent or better increased. We were surprised by this data, as we had expected a decrease due to COVID. Additionally, we had one student who was dropped after 15 days for non-attendance. Ultimately the goal continues to be to create a welcoming environment where students want to attend school daily.

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Students Earning 90% Attendance or Greater	52%	40%	44%
Students Earning 100% (Perfect) Attendance	0	1	0

Student Attrition

We maintained similar percentage levels when compared to the previous year. Some of the youth who did not return either moved out of the area or moved back to their home districts.

Percentage of students* who were continuously enrolled between October 1 of the 2019-20 school year and October 1 of the 2020-21 school year.	72.3%
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Percentage of students* who continued enrollment in the school from Spring 2020 to October 1, 2020.	73.7%
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Student Mobility

During the 2020-21 school year, 44% of our students attended more than 90% of our school year. This was a 4% increase over the previous year. Due to Covid-19 and the number of learning model changes throughout the year, our attendance numbers have been impacted. This is a focal point of one of our Board goals as well as the new Comprehensive School Improvement plan but again was hampered by our National Health news.



	Summer Transfers In	Number of students on Oct. 1	Mid-year Transfers In	Mid-year Transfers Out	Total Mid-year Transfers	Mobility Index* (as a percent)
2017-18	15	105	18	20	38	33%
2018-19	8	105	12	15	27	25%
2019-20	9	102	10	8	18	17%
2020-21	22	97	12	13	25	26%

* Total mid-year transfers divided by number of students on October 1.

Percentage of students who were enrolled for 95% or more of the 2020-21 school year.	75%
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We do see a trend of lower mobility and a more stable student population due to clearer definitions of expectations as well as greater levels of student/staff/guardian engagement.

Educational Approach & Curriculum

VES was started in 2003 by a group of parents and educators from the community who were looking for an alternative to the large mainstream high school located in our resident district. VES started with a small group of students in grades 9 and 10 and was located at the Concordia Language Villages for the first two years. VES partnered with the Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound organization in its first few years to train staff and guide the school on its vision and mission of providing a hands-on, non-traditional, student-involved curriculum. In 2009, after a reorganization, and with the approval from our authorizer, the school adopted the use of Student Directed Project-Based Learning as the main instructional model. For the past several years, there has been more of a focused effort to identify the overall understanding of what project-based learning is due to several new staff and the different levels of interpretations. We feel we are currently more of a project-supported school and have undertaken steps with professional development activities to find a common understanding. With these efforts, more cross-curricular projects/activities are being planned and implemented. This supports the hands-on learning from our mission statement and the challenging environment from our vision statement.

We continue to strive to get students out of the building and into their communities. In 2020-2021, we set aside five calendar days as expeditionary days. However, with Covid, we were very limited in the accessibility and travel opportunities. We were able to take students ice fishing, provide a variety of community service opportunities, and brought the 11th and 12th grade students to Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center for two nights in April, 2021. We believe that the authentic, real-world learning student experiences on these expeditions are life changing.

In general, our curriculum is teacher-developed and aligned with state standards. While we do not have a formal curriculum review cycle, like many larger schools do, teachers spend time together during the summer working on curriculum development and standards alignment. This time includes the development of interdisciplinary projects that are used in the classroom throughout the year.



For the past several years, seniors have spent the first 12 weeks of the year immersed in an interdisciplinary project (math, science and industrial technology) learning about green energy and construction. Students have culminated the project with the building of a scale model house constructed with green materials and powered/heated via green energy methods such as wind, water and geothermal heat sources. The ninth grade students worked on CO2 car projects. All VES seniors complete a personalized project for graduation.

Our Special Education program focuses on meeting the needs of all of our learners with identified disabilities. We provide both inclusion and resource room programming as needed. We hold Child Find meetings as necessary for staff to identify students who are struggling to make progress in the classrooms.

We staff our Special Education program with 3.0 FTE teachers and 4.5 FTE para professionals. We contract with Indigo for our Special Education Director and have long standing agreements with providers from our community for our School Psychologist, speech provider and occupational therapy. As necessary, we reach out to other community providers for mental health support and other specialists.

At this time, Voyageurs does not have any students enrolled in the ELL program.

All curriculum is teacher developed/directed to align with the MN academic standards for all subject areas. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate community-based learning opportunities into all classes, either by bringing in experts or taking students out into the community to learn, firsthand, from the experts at their places of work. All students have access to a Chromebook or laptop and technology is integrated into all courses. In addition to our regularly scheduled classes, we have several expeditionary days throughout the school year, culminating with a week-long expedition that allows for travel along with authentic learning opportunities for students. These trips have a positive effect on our school culture and student retention. Unfortunately we were not able to offer these opportunities this year due to COVID travel restrictions.

The leadership and staffing model is as follows: We currently have a six member school board (two teachers; two parents; two community members). Our current director is licensed as a K-12 Principal and oversees all operations of the school with support from an Administrative Assistant and an Operations Manager.

We've completed our fifth year of utilizing a more formal mentoring program by having one instructor in each program (HS and MS) function as more of a "lead" teacher for that level. The goal of moving towards a more teacher led instructional model is to standardize practices across all levels, increase collaboration and strengthen our teacher developed/directed project-supported learning model. We continue to work together to deliver truly integrated content and projects across all areas which are engaging and meaningful for students.

We recognize the need to meet the levels of our wide variety of learners. Many students who come to us are deficient in the areas of reading and math, based on the standardized assessment data available. These students are placed in remediation and support classes.



We also have students who are academically accelerated and need to be challenged. For these students, teachers differentiate instruction and provide more rigorous assignments. We continue to redesign the course schedule to allow for ability grouping in math and reading. Additionally, we encourage our juniors and seniors, who are at the top of their classes, to take PSEO classes through Bemidji State University and/or Northwestern Technical College.

We continued to offer two additional opportunities for our juniors and seniors: Mechatronics classes at Northwest Technical College and Online College in the High School (OCHS), a program run by Distance Minnesota.

Summer school looked a bit different this year, due to the COVID pandemic. The extended school year (ESY) program was offered to twelve middle school students. There were three who chose to participate. Three students attended ESY in person. High school students needing to make up credits from fourth quarter were invited to attend summer school. There were twenty one students who chose to participate and all completed the session and earned credit. Additionally, credit recovery was offered as an option for high school students throughout the school year utilizing an online credit recovery program called Northern Star Online.

Graduation Requirements:

In order to graduate from VES, students need to earn a total of 24 credits in the following areas:

- 4 Credits of Math
- 3.5 Credits of Science
- 4 Credits of Social Studies
- 4 Credits of English Language Arts
- 1 Credit of Fine Arts
- .5 Credit of Senior Project
- 7 Credits of Elective

A credit is equal to approximately 120-149 hours of instruction.

2020-2021 Daily Schedule

- 8:30-9:00 Advisory
- 9:00-10:00 Period 1
- 10:00-11:00 Period 2
- 11:00-12:00 Period 3
- 12:00-12:30 MS Lunch/HS Book Club
- 12:30-1:00 HS Lunch/MS Book Club
- 1:00-2:00 Period 5
- 2:00-3:00 Period 6

2020-2021 School Calendar



Voyageurs Expeditionary School																																																							
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Innovative Practices & Implementation

We implemented the award-winning Ramp-Up to Readiness program for grades 6-12 in the 2014-15 school year and continue to use it each year. All seniors enrolled in October 2020 completed at least one college application, although the majority had completed two or more. Seniors who received their diplomas in June of 2021 were either accepted into at least one college or had an alternative post-secondary plan.



VES continues to build partnerships with organizations in the community. VES has had an established partnership with Bemidji State University and Northwest Technical and Community College for students to participate in PSEO courses. We have strengthened that partnership and continue to support practicum students and student teachers on our campus. We've maintained our partnerships with Evergreen Community Services (mental health services), North Homes, Inc. (mental health services), Boys & Girls Club of Bemidji (Career Launch program) and the United Way of Bemidji (Backpack Buddy program). We also continue to work with local organizations for community service projects and classroom presentations.

Travel and expeditions are always a big part of our program. We planned to offer five Expeditionary Days to our students. Expeditionary Days give students and staff the opportunity to move out of the building to learn firsthand, while giving back to our community. Unfortunately, due to COVID restrictions, we were only able to complete two expeditionary days.

One group of students spent several days at the Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center, learning from their environmental experts. **This was our first "trip" since COVID started.**

Academic Performance: Goals & Benchmarks

Progress on OW Contractual Academic Goals & WBWF Alignment

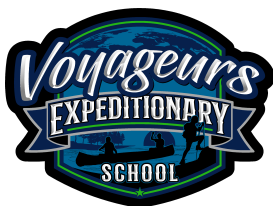
In February of 2019, VES was awarded a new 3 year contract, with an option of an additional two years if goals are met, with the authorizer, Osprey Wilds. OW has been the authorizer since VES was established in 2003. Over the years, VES students have struggled with academic progress. Assessment data simply does not tell the entire story about VES or our students. Over the past three years MCA scores have shown improvement. Reading scores have shown growth, science scores have remained steady and VES has an opportunity to work with a Comprehensive School Improvement (CSI) team to help gain improvements in math scores. This alignment with the Regional Center of Excellence to help develop evidence-based practices and establish goals in Mathematics/Attendance and "productive struggles" will continue for the next two years. **Due to COVID restrictions the contract was extended until the 2023 SY.**

World's Best Workforce (WBWF) Goal Areas:

- **Ready for Kindergarten [R4K]:** All students are ready for kindergarten.
- **Reading Well by 3rd Grade [RG3]:** All students in third grade achieve grade-level literacy.
- **Achievement Gap Closure [AGC]:** All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.
- **Career and College Ready [CCR]:** All students are career and college-ready before graduating from high school.
- **Graduate from High School [GRAD]:** All students graduate from high school.

Indicator 1: Mission Related Outcomes

Goal: Over the period of the contract, students at VES will demonstrate learning consistent with the school's mission focus of hands-on learning and service to others.



Results: **This goal was affected by the COVID pandemic. Results were limited.**

Since we were in distance learning for a good portion of the year and places to perform service being shut down, our results are not what we expected. Many places we volunteer with were not accepting volunteers during the school year. 45% of our students met the goal of 20 hours of community service during the school year.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Readiness

Key Measures & Results for this Goal: This goal was affected by the COVID pandemic. Results were limited.

According to teacher documentation and syllabi, 100% of our high school students completed two projects throughout the school year. In middle school, 90% of the students completed two projects. Teachers are working to embed projects more deeply into their curriculum. The teachers are realizing that they see much deeper engagement and fewer behavioral issues when students are involved in a hands-on project. We expanded service learning opportunities into all of our expeditionary days.

Indicator 2: English Language Learners-Not applicable

We did not have any students who met this criteria during the 2020-2021 school year.

Indicator 3: Reading Growth

Goal: **This goal was affected by the COVID pandemic.** Over the period of the contract, students at VES will demonstrate growth in reading as measured by state accountability tests and nationally normed assessments. We were unable to conduct NWEA or MCA testing in the spring of 2020. Also, due to multiple learning models utilized, only students in hybrid or in-person models were able to be tested. The following data compares Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 Reading NWEA scores:

NWEA - MAP Reading Test			
Grade	Students tested	Students who met projected growth goal	% of students who met projected growth goal
6	13	6	46%
7	13	2	15%
8	8	5	63%
9	12	5	42%
10	2	0	0
11	6	1	17%



ALL	54	19	35%
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The following data is a summary of the 2021 MCA Reading test

MCA Reading Test					
Grade	Students tested	# of "Does Not Meet"	# of "Partially Meets"	# of "Meets"	# of "Exceeds"
6	16	9	3	3	1
7	16	10	5	1	
8	11	5	2	4	
10	5	1	2	1	1

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Achievement Gap Closure

Indicator 4: Math Growth

Goal: This goal was affected by the COVID pandemic. Over the period of the contract, students at VES will demonstrate growth in math as measured by state accountability tests and nationally normed assessments. We were unable to conduct NWEA or MCA testing in the spring of 2020. Also, due to multiple learning models utilized, only students in hybrid or in-person models were able to be tested. The following data compares Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 Math NWEA scores:

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Achievement Gap Closure

NWEA - MAP Math Test			
Grade	Students tested	Students who met projected growth goal	% of students who met projected growth goal
6	14	2	14%
7	14	1	7%
8	9	5	56%
9	12	5	42%
10	2	1	50%
11	7	3	43%
ALL	58	17	29%



The following data is a summary of the 2021 MCA Math test:

MCA Math Test					
Grade	Students tested	# of "Does Not Meet"	# of "Partially Meets"	# of "Meets"	# of "Exceeds"
6	16	14	2		0
7	16	15	1		
8	11	9	1	1	
11	7	6	1		

Indicator 5: Reading Proficiency

Goal: Over the period of the contract, students at VES will demonstrate proficiency in reading as measured by state accountability tests.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Achievement Gap Closure/Career and College Readiness

Indicator 6: Math Proficiency

Goal: Over the period of the contract, students at VES will demonstrate proficiency in math as measured by state accountability tests.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Achievement Gap Closure/Career and College Readiness

Indicator 7: Science Proficiency (and Growth)

Goal: Over the period of the contract students at VES will demonstrate proficiency in science as measured by state accountability tests. This goal was affected by the COVID pandemic. We were unable to conduct NWEA or MCA testing in the spring of 2020. Also, due to multiple learning models utilized, only 8th and 10th grade students in hybrid or in-person models were able to be tested. The following data compares Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 Science NWEA scores:

NWEA - MAP Science Test			
Grade	Students tested	Students who met projected growth goal	% of students who met projected growth goal



8	8	3	38%
10	3	2	67%
Total	11	5	45%

The following data is a summary of the 2021 MCA Science test

MCA Science Test					
Grade	Students tested	# of "Does Not Meet"	# of "Partially Meets"	# of "Meets"	# of "Exceeds"
8	11	5	3	3	
10	5	2	3		

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Achievement Gap Closure/Career and College Readiness

Indicator 8: Proficiency or Growth in Other Curricular Areas or Educational Programs

Goal: N/A – No goal in this area.

Indicator 9: Post Secondary Readiness

Goal: Over the period of the contract, students at VES will demonstrate readiness for postsecondary success. This goal was affected by the COVID pandemic. Due to multiple learning models utilized, only students in hybrid or in-person models were able to be tested.

ACT Test		
Grade	Students tested	Average Composite Score
11	2	15

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Readiness

Indicator 10: Attendance

Goal: From FY15 to FY18, the average of the school's annual attendance rates will be at least 88.0%.

Average Daily Attendance for the 2020-21 School year was 84%



WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Readiness

Key Measures & Results for this Goal: Attendance decreased during the 2020-21 school year. We know attendance was directly affected by COVID restrictions and the number of learning model changes throughout the year. We had 14 families (21 students) who participated in distance-learning only for the entire school year.

Indicator A: Federal and State Accountability – World’s Best Workforce

Because of our small school size and schedule design all students have the same opportunities to work with staff of various experience levels. Our current schedule allows us to provide opportunities for all students to have equal access. Our graduation rate for 2020 was 46%. The number was lower due to dealing with issues related to Covid-19. Three more students from 2020 finished up during the next school year, which means that 69% of the 2020 senior class received their high school diploma from VES. We have been identified as a Comprehensive School Improvement school and we are receiving support from the Northern Sky Regional Center of Excellence.

Indicator B: Teacher Equity

Our School’s Administrative team reviewed the data and concluded that due to our unique configuration and size that all students have equal access to our teaching staff. Our revolving schedule provides this opportunity as well in both required and elective courses. During the 2020-21 school year, 29% of our teaching staff held Master’s degrees, 50% had 3 or more years of experience and 62% were properly licensed(tier 2,3 and 4) for the areas they taught.

Educational Effectiveness: Assessment & Evaluation

The main focus of the school's efforts for academic success during the 2020-21 school year was to create an environment conducive to learning. Consistent behavior expectations and higher academic rigor led to positive results by the end of the school year. We simply worked hard to define the kind of school we wanted to be and the methods we needed to use to get there.

Weekly grade checks were scheduled during advisory to monitor student progress. Students of higher concern levels were discussed during Child Find meetings and additional intervention strategies were developed.

Schoolwide data was reviewed, but not specifically broken down into sub-groups. We were able to devise a new schedule for the 2020-21 school year that provided more support for individual students who struggled with remedial skills. Extended day and extended school year programming was offered to provide additional support. Credit recovery was provided after school and during the summer months to help students catch up.



VES adopted a school calendar that divides the year into four grading periods. A non-student day is scheduled after each grading period to allow time for instructional staff to adapt/create curriculum to meet students' needs.

Each teacher created a Professional Development Plan at the beginning of the year based on Charlotte Danielson's strategies. Teachers received informal evaluations during the 20-21 school year. No formal evaluations were completed due to distance learning. Formal written reviews were completed at the end of the year using a formula of goals accomplished.

Staff inservice days in 2020-21 included a workshop conducted by staff from Osprey Wilds. This training was focused on using realia in teaching. Staff participated in a training about including Native American teachings in our classes. Our staff also spent numerous hours working together to implement distance learning.

Two lead teachers offered support and mentoring sessions during inservice days. All classroom staff developed websites to not only guide course content but also serve as a resource for students/families.

Student & /Guardian Satisfaction

Parent Survey Observations:

For the current contract, we revised our parent satisfaction survey to provide more accurate and timely data. Results indicated a high level of satisfaction with almost every aspect of the school and its operation. Even going through all of the challenges with Covid-19, the survey data showed that our parents/guardians were satisfied with their students' experience at Voyageurs. The only students to indicate they were not returning were the graduating seniors.

Parents chose Voyageurs for the hands-on learning and small classes sizes. Some opportunities included taking college classes and traveling. Some challenges included: no sports for students to participate in and staying on task while completing schoolwork.

See Attachment A

Student Survey Observations:

The student survey was administered at the end of May 2021. There were 69 respondents - 30 from the High School and 39 from the Middle School.

When asked the three things needed to be successful at VES, responses included:

- Be Here!
- Positive Attitude
- Do my work

When asked what changes they would make to our program if they had a magic wand, responses included:

- Better lunches



No more online learning
More Expeditionary Days

See Attachment B

Environmental Education

The mission of Voyageurs Expeditionary School's authorizer, the Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center, is to instill a connection and commitment to the environment in which people of all communities through experiential learning. OW defines environmental education as the implementation of values and strategies that foster learning and create environmentally literate citizens who engage in creating healthy outcomes for individuals, communities, and the Earth. The overarching goal of environmental education is an environmentally literate citizen. The test of environmental literacy is the capacity of an individual to work individually and collectively toward sustaining a healthy, natural environment. This requires sufficient awareness, knowledge, skills, and attitudes in order to create a healthy planet where all people live in balance with the Earth.

VES takes a proactive approach towards Environmental Education (EE). We have a staff that is invested in teaching our students how to be environmentally literate citizens. Our staff models environmental stewardship at school and at home.

We reviewed the current EE Performance Evaluation framework and made changes to the program based upon the eight indicators. The formation of an internal EE committee was helpful in the planning of our school wide expeditionary days.

We became more intentional in creating evidence pieces that align more with the indicators. We also continued a back-to-school activity that introduced all students to our composting, vermiculture and recycling programs. Our school will continue its financial and organizational support to carry out and meet our environmental education goals. We maintained our Environmental Education (EE) time blocks on Wednesday mornings during our Advisory times.

To align with our higher academic expectations, we expanded the senior project course, requiring a deeper level of student responsibility for creating a proposal and completing necessary research. Projects included a community apple piece and an in-depth, final presentation. EE was a tremendous resource for topics and school/community improvements.

During distance learning, we continued to complete environmental education activities in advisory. Middle school students were engaged in building bird houses out of "garbage". Earth Day activities were created by a student for her senior project and all students participated.

Governance & Management

Includes Annual Board Training & Administrator Professional Development Report(s)

Board of Directors

Board member recruitment and retention has been somewhat of an issue over the past few years. Beginning with the April 2019 elections, there does appear to be a "settling in" of individuals who



are dedicated to the direction/guidance of the school. The current board has been receptive to training opportunities and has set specific goals for the Director/staff to follow. Spring 2020 board elections included enough interested individuals to have a true election. This new board has done several team building activities and the board chair ensures that all members are participating and that their opinions are valued. Board members completed the required training assignments during the allotted time.

Board Training and Development

The composition of the VES board was changed several years ago. Members are elected for a two-year term in April of each year and seated in July at the start of the new fiscal year. Three new members are elected one year, with three the following year. The school's director, business manager and administrative assistant serve as non-voting members. The board officers are elected by the board members. In August of 2019, a board retreat was held so the board could discuss programming, direction and other operational concerns. The board also continued its board member agreements and created an action calendar to ensure school deadlines/activities are being addressed. Beginning with the newly seated board members in July of 2017, an oath of office was also administered. Board training with the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools took place on site in October of 2019. Board members also participated in the following trainings:

Board Self Evaluation
Teacher Licensing Update
Succession Planning
OW Sounding Board Handouts
Review 501C3 Reporting requirements
Board Development Surveys
MACS Transparency and Accountability Statement
Review Voyageurs reporting requirements

During the August 2020 Board retreat, the following goals were established:

- Continue to implement tasks that promote reasoning and problem solving
- Support productive struggle
- Increase parental involvement throughout the year through parent meetings, conferences, and family activities as measured by percentage of participation increase.
- Review attendance policy, goals, and expectations to lead our attendance to an ultimate goal of 90% or higher. We will assess our increase in attendance with the state management system to improve at a minimum growth of 5% over 2019.
- Evaluate the current graduation rate and strategize ways to develop better communication in proactively driving a goal of 100% as defined by VES.

Board Roster

Name	Position	Role	Elected	Seated	End Date	Phone	Meetings 7/19-6/20	Email
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Shana Torgeson		P	5/18	5/18	6/22	444-3130	10/11	shana@voyageursschool.org
Becky Reinarz	Secretary	T	8/19	8/19	6/22	444-3130	11/11	becky@voyageursschool.org
Cindy Tesar		P	10/19	10/19	6/21	444-3130	8/9	cindy@voyageursschool.org
John Eggers		C	10/19	10/19	6/21	766-9007	8/9	john@voaygeursschool.org
Kari Olson	Treas	T	4/17	7/17	6/19	444-3130	10/12	kari@voyageursschool.org
Amanda Willis-Martin	Chair	C	1/20	1/20	6/22	444-3130	6/6	amanda@voyageursschool.org

Annual Training

Name	Finance Audit 11/19	Board's Role	Employment Policies	Financial Management	Background check
Becky Reinarz	X	10/19	2/20	10/19	9/09
Kari Olson	X	11/17	11/17	9/18	8/14
Amanda Willis-Martin	X	8/20	8/20	8/20	1/20
Shana Torgeson	X	10/19	5/19	10/19	8/19
John Eggers	X	10/19	4/19	10/19	10/19
Cindy Tesar	X	10/20	2/20	10/20	10/19

VES currently considers its management team to consist of the director, business manager and administrative assistant. This staff meets weekly to manage both day to day operations and long range planning. Familiarity of tasks/timelines within the team provides short and long range succession options.

List of Administrators/Qualifications

Director Scott Anderson is fully licensed as a K-12 Principal (FFN 304008). He has been in a position of Educational Leadership for over 26 years with 20 of those years working as a Charter School Director. He has also served on the Board of Directors for the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools. Director Anderson stays current with Educational trends by participating in Regional Charter School Director meetings. He also meets several times a year with other school leaders associated with the Northwest Service Cooperative.



Staffing

Four teachers were added for the 2020-21 school year. Three staff members in this group were provisionally licensed.

2020-21 Staffing

2020-21 Licensed Teaching Staff				
Name	File #	License and Assignment (subject/grades)	2021-22 Status*	Comments
Thomas Lichty	512315	HS Lang Arts	NR	Moved
Shannon Reyes	512229	MS Math	NR	
Becky Reinarz	409901	HS Science	R	
Tyann Smith	485300	Special Education	NR	Special Ed waiver
Deb Risberg	352193	Special Education	R	Special Ed waiver
Kari Olson	452074	MS Lang Arts	R	
Joel Johannsen	1002239	HS Math	R	
Heather Lucas	483043	HS Social	R	
Jessica Theroux	455907	Special Education	R	Special Ed waiver
Alison Glade	513193	MS Science	R	
Joseph Gould	463866	MS Social	NR	
Cameron Koenen	376545	Music	R	
Austin Claseman	514292	Industrial Tech	R	

* R = Returning, NR = Not Returning

2020-21 Teacher Professional Development Activities:

- Environmental Education
- Cultural Curriculum Inclusion
- Distance learning - staff development

In addition to the school wide professional development opportunities each teacher again selected a goal based upon the Danielson evaluation model. These selections were reviewed by the Director and used as part of their overall evaluation process.

Teacher Retention:

Percentage of Licensed Teachers from 2020-21 not returning in 2021-22 (non-returning teachers/total teachers from 2020-21 x 100)	30%
	4 out of 13

2020-21 Other Licensed (non-teaching) Staff			
Name	License and Assignment	2020-21 Status*	Comments
Kelly Marcum	474215 School Counselor	R	
Sydney Lichty	510385 Speech Consultant	NR	
Geneva Bartels	1005656 School Psych	R	
Jodie Olson	286778 DCD Consult	R	



Mark Larson	438274 Sped Director	R	
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* R = Returning, NR = Not Returning

2020-21 Non-Licensed Staff			
Name	Assignment	2020-21 Status*	Comments
Theresa Knapper Smith	Administrative Asst	R	
Kathy Skinner	Operations Manager	R	
Ruth Webb	Special Ed Para	R	
Parker Korpi	Special Ed Para	NR	
Robbie Kreuth	Special Ed Para	NR	
Brenda Gersich	Special Ed Para	R	

* R = Returning, NR = Not Returning

2020-21 Licensed Teaching Staff			
Name	File #	License and Assignment (subject/grades)	2020-21 Status*
Thomas Lichty	512315	HS Lang Arts	NR
Shannon Reyes	512229	MS Math	NR
Becky Reinartz	409901	HS Science	R
Tyann Smith	485300	Special Education	NR
Deb Risberg	352193	Special Education	R
Kari Olson	452074	MS Lang Arts	R
Joel Johannsen	1002239	HS Math	R
Heather Lucas	483043	HS Social	R
Jessica Theroux	455907	Special Education	R
Alison Glade	513193	MS Science	R
Joseph Gould	463866	MS Social	NR
Cameron Koenen	376545	Music	R

Operational Performance

All teachers and the administrator at VES are fully licensed or have a permission to teach waiver. The school board conducts annual evaluations of the director.

All Special Education staff received Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) training in August of 2020. Additional work with our “push-in” model as well as bi-monthly meetings with the entire special education staff were planned to ensure open communications.

We continued connections with two local mental health organizations to provide services to students who qualified for therapy through our referral process. The School Linked Mental Health Grant helps to cover therapy costs for students who are not covered by insurance, or whose co-payments would cause hardship.



We had a student apply for the QuestBridge National College Match. This is a college admission and scholarship process through which high-achieving, low-income students can be admitted early with full four-year scholarships to QuestBridge college partners. Our student was selected as a finalist, but was not matched to a ranked college.

Expeditions continue to be a part of the school during the 2020-21 school year. We planned 4 expeditionary Fridays for students participating in experiences in and out of the building. Our expeditionary days were cut short due to COVID-19 but we did manage to have two days of hands-on learning. In February we took 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th graders to 2 different lakes near Bemidji to collect lake data and teach them to ice fish. We also had a project that made holiday cards for elder care home residents. Our students made 300 cards to distribute. Middle school elective teachers had a service component to their classes during spring quarter. High School had a service day and went into the community to help several community organizations.

VES practiced regular fire and emergency lock down drills as per requirements.

We continue to utilize the local district to provide transportation for our students.

We continued our school lunch program partnership with Lutheran Social Services (LSS), the supplier of meals for the local Senior Center. Due to LSS staff turnover, and food inconsistencies, the decision was made to end the partnership at the end of the 2020-21 school year.

Finances

VES was awarded the School Finance Award from the MN Department of Education for the 2019-20 school year. Through careful financial management the school has maintained and grown its overall fund balance over the last several years. The administration prepares budgets and controls expenditures to ensure that this process continues. A Finance Committee has been formed for the 2020-21 school year to help with financial oversight; it includes a Board member who also serves as the Board Treasurer.

For questions regarding school finances and for complete financials for 2020-21 and/or an organizational budget for 2021-22, contact:

Name: Ryan Haasch
Position: Executive Director
Phone: 218-444-3130
Email: ryan@voyageursschool.org

Miller/McDonald provides accounting services for VES.

Information presented below is derived from preliminary audit figures. The full financial audit will be completed and presented to the Minnesota Department of Education and Osprey Wilds no later than December 31, 2021.

See Attachment C



Future Plans

Expansion plans:

Tentative plans for a gymnasium expansion were explored for possible future growth. Plans at this time have been put on hold due to the recent COVID-19 restrictions and possible let down in state funding for the 2021-2022 school year.

Technology updates:

VES invested in a number of new chromebooks to maintain our current one-to-one philosophy. Several staff received new computers as well. Additionally, in response to the transition to distance learning, we purchased wireless headsets, and overhead projectors to assist teachers with curriculum delivery.

School Interest/Enrollment Procedures

VES is a free public charter school. Students who are in grades 6-12 may apply for enrollment online at www.voyageursschool.org or complete an enrollment inquiry available from the school office at 3724 Bemidji Avenue North in Bemidji. New students are accepted prior to the start of the school year and at the start of each term through the 2nd day of the term, if that grade level is not already at the maximum enrollment. In the case of a class being full, your child's name will be placed on the waiting list in the order the inquiry was received. In the spring of each year, all families on the waiting list will be contacted to find out if they wish to have their child's name placed in the lottery for any open slots for the next school year. The lottery will be held towards the end of the regular school year. Students who move into the geographic area may enroll at VES at the time they move into the area if the school has openings in the necessary grade level. Per state law, all students must have all required immunizations before starting school. Please ask the office if you are unsure of what is required.

See Attachment D

Distance Learning Plan Description

Like all school districts across the state, we were challenged with the task of creating a reopening plan. In March of 2020, we formed a Design Team that consisted of two middle school teachers, two high school teachers, one special education teacher and four administrative staff. This group met several times during the summer of 2020 to create the reopening plan. We prepared three different learning models that were utilized during the school year, based on the Minnesota Department of Education requirements. These models consisted of in-person learning, hybrid learning, and online learning. A normal school day schedule of 8:30 am to 3:00 pm was utilized by each model. Attendance and participation was expected for all students in all classes as per school policy unless prior arrangements have been made. Below is a brief description of each model:



Traditional In-Person Model

- Students attend school, following enhanced safety precautions, including face coverings, cleaning, and other precautions as mandated by state officials.
- Students would attend school with normal hours and classroom settings.

Hybrid Learning Model

- Students will be divided into two groups. Students in Group A will attend school in the school building one week while students in Group B will be attending school online. The next week the groups will switch and Group B will be in the building while Group A will be learning online.
- Students will attend school during normal hours on the online platform or in person per the assigned week.

At-Home (Online) Learning Model

- All academic lessons will be taught via online by VES teachers and all academic work is to be completed at home.
- Students will attend school virtually during normal hours.

Families were able to choose the option of at-home (online) learning for the academic school year. In the event that they wanted to change models, they were allowed to do so at quarter breaks.

Adjustments were made throughout the school year, including the addition of "Working Wednesday." This was initiated to allow teachers and staff to work with small groups or individual students needing additional support. Also, during fourth quarter, we utilized the program Edmentum for our full time, distance learning students. This change was made to eliminate the dual platform teaching that was occurring in our teaching models.

In addition to the reopening plan, the design team created the 2020-21 Health and Safety Policies and Procedures manual. This included our health screening, social distancing, face covering and enhanced cleaning measures that were implemented due to COVID.

Attachment A - Parent/Guardian Survey Results



Parent Survey 2020-21

15 responses

Statement	Average score on a 5 point scale 1=disagree strongly; 5=agree strongly
Generally, my child feels safe at VES.	4.6
Generally, my child feels respected at VES.	4.6
Generally, my child feels welcome in the school by other students at VES.	4.67
Generally, my child feels welcomed by the staff at VES.	4.87
Generally, my child feels good about his/her academic performance at Voyageurs.	3.53
Generally, my child gets the assistance he/she needs in their academic schoolwork.	4.2
Generally, my child understands the expectations of behavior outlined in the VES Student/Family handbook.	4.73
Generally, my child's advisor is available to me when I have questions or need to talk to them.	4.8
Generally, my child's teachers are available to me when I have questions or need to talk to them.	4.73
Generally, the office staff and Director are available to me when I have questions or need to talk to them.	4.33
Generally, my child is in school _____ days per week.	4.2
Generally, my child earns a "C" or above in their classes.	3.47

Will your student be returning? Yes 47 Maybe 4 5 responded NO Graduating

Why did you choose Voyageurs?

Hands on learning
Small classes
More one on one

Opportunities at Voyageurs:

Taking College Classes
Travel
Small class size, not just a number
Community Service

Challenges at Voyageurs:

Same challenges as at other schools, staying on task
No sports

Attachment B - Student Survey Results

The 2020-21 student survey was administered over a 4-day period at the end of May 2021.



There were 69 respondents out of 97 enrolled students. Of the 69 respondents, 30 indicated they were in high school and 39 indicated they were in middle school.

Students were asked to rate the following statements on a scale of 1 (no) to 5 (yes). The following table includes the results from the 2020-21 surveys.

	2020-21 (64 respondents) 65%
I like school	3.14
I generally do well in school	3.41
I plan to go to college	3.07
I know I could do better in school	3.87
I feel hope when I think about my future	3.42
I like my teachers	3.88
School is interesting	3.10
I feel challenged at school	3.32
My friends do well in school	3.28
My parents want me to do well in school	4.75
I will probably drop out of school	1.96
I know what credits I need to earn to graduate from Voyageurs	3.58
I want to graduate from high school	4.45
My teachers care about me	3.80
I feel safe at school	3.75
My advisor is someone I can talk to about problems I am having at school	3.68



VOYAGEURS EXPEDITIONARY SCHOOL
MINNESOTA CHARTER SCHOOL NO. 4107
BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2020

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE SCHOOL AS A WHOLE
(SCHOOL-WIDE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS) (Continued)

The net cost of governmental activities is the total costs less program revenues applicable to each category. Total and net costs for the year ended June 30, 2020 and 2019 are as follows:

	<u>Cost of Services - 2020</u>		<u>Cost of Services - 2019</u>	
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Net</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Net</u>
Expenses:				
Administration	\$ 114,530	\$ 114,530	\$ 67,346	\$ 67,346
District Support Services	177,209	177,209	160,327	160,327
Regular Instruction	803,610	743,214	476,801	416,270
Special Education Instruction	439,536	42,682	367,463	(22,032)
Instructional Support Services	4,371	4,371	2,977	2,977
Pupil Support Services	76,691	43,479	91,940	43,647
Site and Buildings	245,444	73,373	247,593	77,107
Fiscal and Other Fixed Costs	10,901	10,901	10,581	10,581
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 1,872,292</u>	<u>\$ 1,209,759</u>	<u>\$ 1,425,028</u>	<u>\$ 756,223</u>

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE SCHOOL'S FUNDS
(FUND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS)

Fund Balances

The financial performance of the School as a whole is reflected in its governmental funds as well. As the School completed the year, its governmental funds reported a combined fund balance of \$729,788. This was an increase of \$48,323 from \$681,465 at the end of the prior year. The General Fund reported an excess of revenues over expenditures before transfer of \$57,040. The Food Service Fund reported an excess of expenditures over revenues before transfer in the amount of \$8,717.



VOYAGEURS EXPEDITIONARY SCHOOL
MINNESOTA CHARTER SCHOOL NO. 4107
BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2020

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE SCHOOL'S FUNDS
(FUND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS) (Continued)

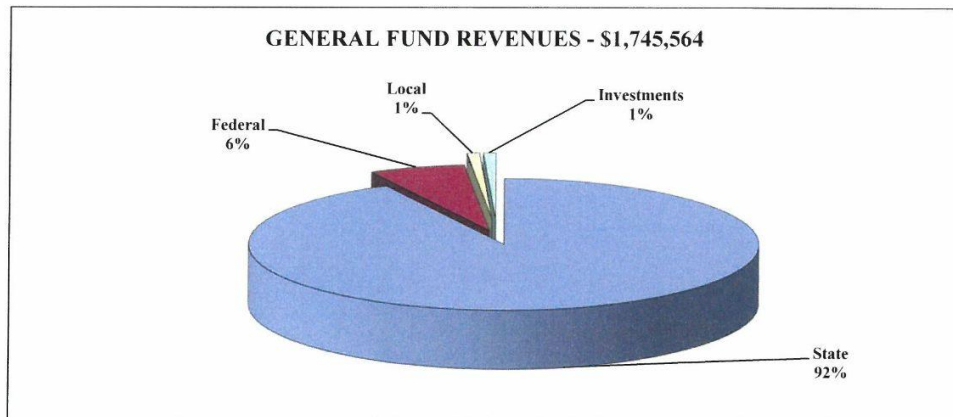
Revenues and Expenditures

Revenues of the School's governmental funds totaled \$1,778,758 while total expenditures were \$1,730,435 for the year ended June 30, 2020. A summary of the revenues and expenditures reported on the governmental fund financial statements are as follows:

2020				
	Revenues	Expenditures	Other Financing Sources (Uses)	Fund Balance Increase (Decrease)
General Fund	\$ 1,745,546	\$ 1,688,506	\$ (8,599)	\$ 48,441
Food Service Fund	33,212	41,929	8,599	(118)
Totals	<u>\$ 1,778,758</u>	<u>\$ 1,730,435</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 48,323</u>

2019				
	Revenues	Expenditures	Other Financing Sources (Uses)	Fund Balance Increase (Decrease)
General Fund	\$ 1,710,115	\$ 1,626,710	\$ (6,481)	\$ 76,924
Food Service Fund	48,293	54,774	6,481	-
Totals	<u>\$ 1,758,408</u>	<u>\$ 1,681,484</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 76,924</u>

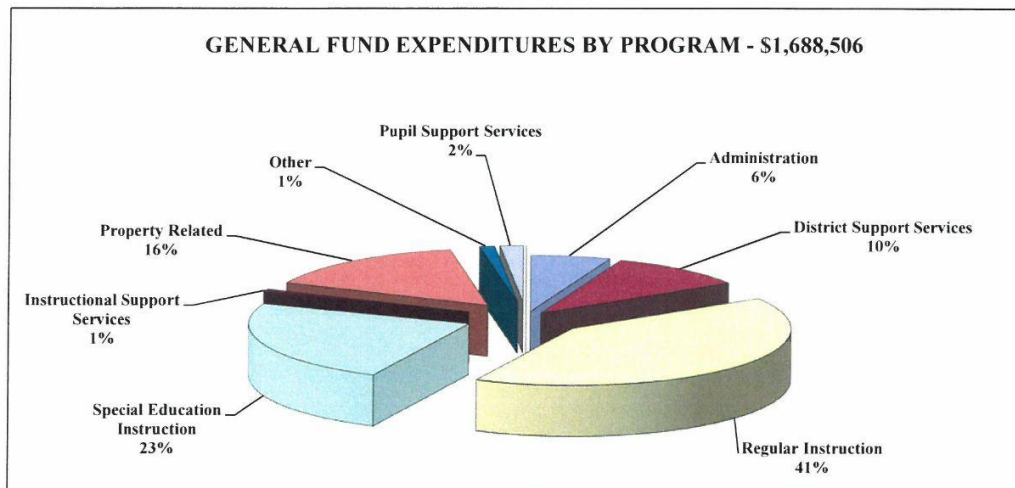
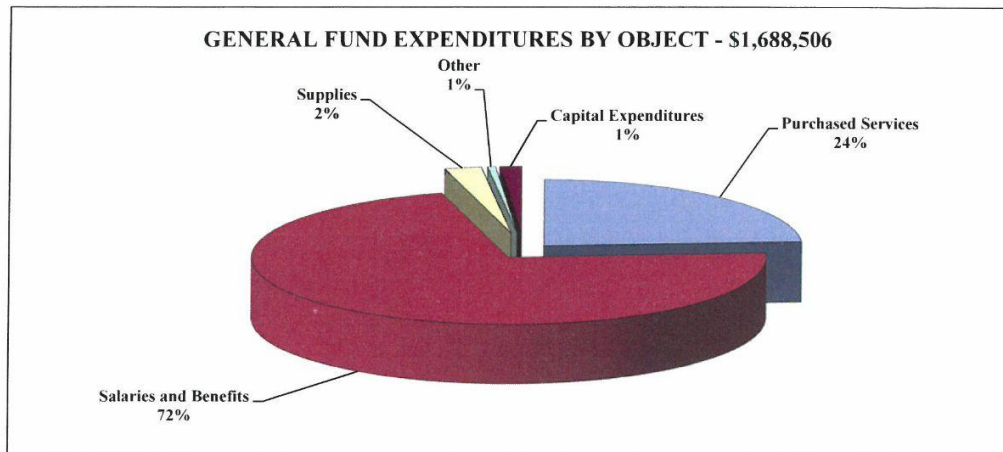
The following graphs are presented for the General Fund revenues and expenditures:





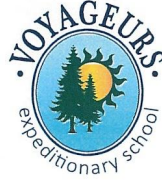
**VOYAGEURS EXPEDITIONARY SCHOOL
MINNESOTA CHARTER SCHOOL NO. 4107
BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2020**

**FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE SCHOOL'S FUNDS
(FUND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS) (Continued)**



General Fund Budgetary Highlights

During the year ended June 30, 2020, the School made a revision to its General Fund operating budget. In accordance with *Minnesota Statutes*, an expenditure budget must be in place prior to the beginning of the fiscal year in order to spend funds. Prior to July 1, the school board approves the budget for the next year.



3724 Bemidji Ave N / Bemidji, MN 56601 ~ Phone: (218) 444-3130 ~ Web site: www.voyageursschool.org

The mission of Voyageurs is to provide students with the necessary tools to lead meaningful and productive lives through hands-on learning, service to others and environmental stewardship.

Student Application/ Inquiry Form

If you are interested in enrolling your child at Voyageurs Expeditionary School, please complete the following information and submit to us.

Student Name: _____

Current Grade: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent/Student Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: home: _____ cell: _____

E-mail: _____

If you wish to receive more information about the school, contact us at the phone number above.

After we receive submission of this form, you will be contacted to arrange an enrollment meeting with an Advisor.

Voyageurs Expeditionary School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions, policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.