



The Exploris School

The Exploris School Board Regular Monthly Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday July 23, 2026 at 4:30 PM EDT

Location

The Exploris School, Elementary Campus
17 S. Swain St.
Raleigh, NC 27601

Agenda

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
I. Opening Items			4:30 PM
A. Record Attendance			1 m
B. Call the Meeting to Order		Eric Grunden	1 m
C. Approve Minutes	Approve Minutes		2 m
Approve minutes for The Exploris School Board Regular Monthly Meeting on May 28, 2026			
D. Public Comment		Eric Grunden	15 m

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
Fifteen minutes will be allocated on the agenda for public input at each meeting. Additional time may be added at the discretion of the Chair.			
Public comment may be oral, in person, or in written form to be read by the Chair. Public comment is limited to no more than 3 minutes per person. It is recommended that public comment be written out and provided to the board following the three minutes to ensure the entire message is heard by the board.			
Each speaker will clearly state their full name and county of residence.			
All public comment should be factual and should not include personally identifiable information of students or personnel in order to maintain confidentiality. Speakers should avoid using names of students or staff and maintain confidentiality and privacy standards.			
All public comments will be taken under advisement by the Board, but will not elicit an immediate written or spoken response. The names of persons providing public comment and a brief summary of topics or input will be included in the meeting minutes published.			
A response will be provided to the stakeholder within seven (7) days. Those providing public comment are asked to provide in writing (either in person or via email to board@exploris.org) their contact information including name, County of residence, and address (either email or postal, whichever is preferred).			
Specific issues about a particular student or teacher should be addressed to the elementary or middle school director, rather than the Board of Directors.			

II. Board Business4:49 PM

A. Votes & Upcoming Events	Vote	Deborah Brown	10 m
• Accept resignation of Ethan Burton • Approve interim appointment of Leah Ruto for the 2026-2027 school year to the role of Elementary School Director • Board Retreat • Dates requested for back-to-school workweek: come meet the staff!			

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
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III. Committee Reports 4:59 PM

A.	Governance	Vote	Deborah Brown	20 m
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Updates, discussion and votes on several policy and Board membership updates

1. Vote on proposed amendments to the original Exploris charter, as listed in the attached document
2. Public Comment Guideline recommended updates
3. Changes in Teacher Leader voting status to comply with NC Charter School statutes
4. Request to approve updated handbooks for Personnel and Family & Students
5. Thank you to outgoing member Lauren Collins
6. Vote on Board candidacy for Grace Whittemore

B.	Educational Excellence	Discuss	Eric Grunden	15 m
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- Annual Report to the Board

C.	Facilities	FYI	Josh Corbat	10 m
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D.	Finance Committee	Discuss	Alannah Rodriguez	10 m
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E.	Director Support & Evaluation	Discuss	Eric Grunden	5 m
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Annual Review Process & next steps

IV. Director's Report 5:59 PM

- The Director Team will make a report to the Board. Please note the report is submitted in writing and only high points or questions are discussed at the meeting.
- Teacher Working Conditions Survey Report

A.	Documents	Discuss	Deborah Brown	5 m
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V. Community Reports 6:04 PM

A.	Kaizen Report	Discuss	Shawna Scipione	5 m
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Kaizen leads will make a report to the Board.

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
B. PTO Report	Discuss	PTO President	5 m
The PTO President or their designee will make a report to the Board			
C. Foundation Report	Discuss	Richard Averitte	5 m
The Exploris Foundation will make a report to the Board			

VI. Closed Session

Discussion of salaries, HR, and contract items

VII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting	Vote
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Coversheet

Approve Minutes

Section: I. Opening Items
Item: C. Approve Minutes
Purpose: Approve Minutes

Submitted by:

Related Material:

Minutes for The Exploris School Board Regular Monthly Meeting on May 28, 2026

APPROVED



The Exploris School

Minutes

The Exploris School Board Regular Monthly Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday May 28, 2026 at 4:30 PM

Location

The Exploris School: Elementary Campus
17 S Swain St, Raleigh, NC 27601, USA
5th Grade Classroom

Directors Present

A. Rodriguez, E. Grunden, M. Nelson, M. Perry, R. Averitte, S. Graham

Directors Absent

L. Collins, P. President, S. Scipione

Ex Officio Members Present

D. Brown, E. Burton, J. Corbat

Non Voting Members Present

D. Brown, E. Burton, J. Corbat

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B.

Call the Meeting to Order

E. Grunden called a meeting of the board of directors of The Exploris School to order on Thursday May 28, 2026 at 4:35 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

E. Grunden made a motion to approve the minutes from The Exploris School Board Regular Monthly Meeting on 04-23-26.

A. Rodriguez seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

D. Public Comment

II. Committee Reports

A. Governance

- Deb gave updates from the Governance Committee
 - Recent legislation that pertains to Charter Schools
 - The committee is working on annual updates to our handbooks
 - Lauren has identified a Board candidate to take her place as a governance-forward Board member
- Alannah brought up that Board Bylaws need to be updated and submitted to DPI occasionally. Deb agreed and highlighted an upcoming touch point with DPI through our Charter Renewal process.

B. Educational Excellence

- Ethan gave updates about our use of IXL as a benchmarking and diagnostic tool.
 - Teachers provided feedback about IXL and how we use it to formatively assess students
- Meredith highlighted an area from the recent Teacher Working Conditions Survey (TWCS) that needs attention: Behavior systems and processes.
 - Ethan mentioned that our Code of Conduct is unique and is often difficult to communicate; something we can work on.
 - Deb highlighted disconnects between the prior state Student Information System (SIS) and the new Infinite Campus system. We have plans to improve how tracking works going into the new school year.
 - Eric agreed with these issues and mentioned that there can be nuance to how discipline is handled at the school level.
 - Ethan pointed out that many items in our Code of Conduct offer a large number of consequences, which can sometimes add complexity to navigating.

- The Board suggests two conversations: Internal among the Board and Teachers/Staff, and external as a Town Hall or similar input mechanism with our family community.
- The Board continued to refine the idea of gathering input about discipline, reviewing the Code of Conduct (and our policies overall), and leading changes to both providing information about discipline and the overall policies and practices in place.

C. Facilities

- Josh gave updates, centered around the uploaded update slide deck.\
- The Elementary is getting a dumpster! (We need it.)

D. Finance Committee

- Alannah gave updates from the finance committee.
 - Spending is winding down for the school year.
 - Our 990s are now submitted.
 - The state has not yet passed a budget (and will not pass one for FY2026).
 - We've drafted a budget revision that will serve as the basis for a FY27 continuation budget, to be approved by the Board.

A. Rodriguez made a motion to approve FY26 budget revision.

S. Graham seconded the motion.

- The committee members explained that this revision is very close to FY26 actuals.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

A. Rodriguez made a motion to adopt the FY27 continuation budget.

M. Nelson seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

III. Director's Report

A. May 2026 Report to the Board

- The Leadership team gave enrollment and other updates.
- The Board discussed marketing tactics. A new ad set is currently running to encourage 6th- and 7th-grade applications.

E. Grunden made a motion to approve the two recommended hires.

S. Graham seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Teacher Working Conditions Survey Report

IV. Community Reports

A. Kaizen Report

- Thank you, Shawna! Shawna Scipione is rolling off from the Kaizen Lead role.
- Welcome, Emily! Emily Felker, 5th-grade teacher, is the new Elementary Kaizen Lead!
- Kaizen is exploring multiple datasets that constitute feedback from multiple stakeholder groups that contribute to school improvement work, including the TWCS and the FAM-S.
 - There is some good growth in the TWCS, but some areas of concern when compared to the state.

B. PTO Report

- The PTO held their latest meeting last week, mostly centered around end-of-year.
- A HUGE shoutout and thank-you go to Carrie Kressman, who has stewarded our events over the past nearly decade! She, alongside Emily McIntyre (and so many more, including Chad McIntyre!), has grown our events into something truly amazing. This year's Middle School Dance had over 70% of the students in attendance.

C. Foundation Report

- The Foundation is working on the next Annual Report.

V. Board Business

A. Cease and Desist Letter

- The Board recently served a Cease and Desist letter to a parent who has exhibited a pattern of unacceptable behavior.

VI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 6:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
J. Corbat

Coversheet

Governance

Section:	III. Committee Reports
Item:	A. Governance
Purpose:	Vote
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	Whittemore_Resume2025 (1) (1).pdf Charter Amendments Requested for The Exploris School LEA 92B.pdf

Grace Whittemore

Raleigh, NC, 27607

EDUCATION

Campbell University School of Law

Raleigh, NC

Juris Doctor Candidate

May 2027

GPA: 90.1 (Top 15%)

Honors:

Book award in Civil Procedure

Write-On Competition Highest Comment Score, *Campbell Law Review, Volume 48*

KilPatrick Townsend 1L Mock Trial Competition Best Advocate (x2)

Activities:

Associate Editor, *Campbell Law Review, Volume 48*

Research Assistant for Professor Matthew Sawchak

Civil Procedure Scholar for Professor Luke Smith Morgan;

Secretary, *Campbell Law Pro Bono Executive Board*

2L Representative, *Student Bar Association*

University of North Carolina Chapel Hill

Chapel Hill, NC

Bachelor of Arts, Political Science, highest honors

May 2024

Bachelor of Arts in Education, Human Development and Family Science

Honors:

Dean's List (6/6 eligible semesters)

Susan Maureen Bieber Memorial Scholarship

Activities:

Social Chair and Team Captain, *UNC Mock Trial*

Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity

EXPERIENCE

ABA Antitrust Law Journal

Raleigh, NC

Student Editor

May 2025- Present

- Navigate unfamiliar bodies of economic law to ensure accuracy of assertions & adequacy of authority
- Perform above-the-line and below-the-line edits to conform with Blue Book and ALJ specifications

North Carolina Department of Justice, Education Section

Raleigh, NC

Legal Intern

May 2025- August 2025

- Conducted legal research on a variety of state and federal law claims to support ongoing cases
- Drafted litigation material, including research memos, dispositive motions, trial briefs, and appellate briefs, for both civil and criminal matters

The Daily Tar Heel

City and State Desk Writer

Chapel Hill, NC

May 2023- May 2024

- Produced engaging and factual accurate articles about local and state issues for publication under tight deadlines each week.
- Communicated regularly with community leaders and governmental organizations to provide readers the most interesting and up-to-date stories.

UNC School of Education

Education Policy Intern

Chapel Hill, NC

August 2023- January 2024

- Created informative policy aids for members of the North Carolina Association of Colleges for Teacher Education to use in advocacy at their respective institutions of higher education.
- Researched education policy related to teacher education and accreditation affecting specific UNC School of Education programs.



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Charter Amendments Requested for The Exploris School LEA 92B

Length of School Day and/or Academic Year

Proposed Amendment Language:

Replace original section with the following language:

The school operates on a modified calendar that includes:

- 185 instructional days
- 3 trimesters
- A one week fall break in early October
- A two week break at the end of December
- A one week break in mid spring
- 4-6 teacher workdays at the school's discretion
- 3-4 parent conference days at the school's discretion
- School Holidays as listed on the annual school calendar and including days such as Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day, MLK Day, Easter, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, and the 4th of July

Application

The school operates on a modified calendar with 180 instructional days. The calendar includes:

- *Four quarters (approx. July 29-October 1, October 16-December 19, January 5-March 11, March 30-June 4)*
- *Three 2-week intercessions*
- *One 6-week intercession*
- *Four teacher work days at the school's discretion*

Current Practice

Current Exploris practice is that the school follows a more conventional August–June schedule with breaks and workdays rather than three 2-week and one 6-week intercession.

Current academic year structure

- Recent official calendars (e.g., 2023–24 and 2024–25) show school starting in August and ending in late May or June, with standard breaks such as Thanksgiving, winter break, spring break, and single-day holidays like



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- *School Holidays: Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day, MLK Day, Easter, Memorial Day*

The application describes a block schedule with "large blocks of time" that allow flexible use of time within the day, but does not list exact hours-per-dayX

Labor Day, Veterans Day, MLK Day, and Presidents Day.

- The year is still built around the state-required minimum of 180 instructional days, supplemented with teacher workdays and conference days, but those days are distributed across the year rather than concentrated in long intersessions

Current Length of School Day is 7 hours for grades 6-8 at the Middle school campus beginning at 8:15 and ending at, 3:15 6 hours, 45 minutes for grades k-5 at the Elementary school campus beginning at 8:30 and ending at 3:15.

X

☐ Amendment Needed

Curriculum

Proposed Proposed Amendment Language:

Replace original section with the following language:

The integrated curriculum focuses on global education principles and is organized around central themes such as change, choice, interdependence, justice, and conflict. The curriculum includes:

- *Project-based, inquiry-based learning*
- *Integration of content across STEM subjects*
- *Active, hands-on activities and cooperative learning*
- *Assessment includes portfolios, authentic assessments, real-life task demonstrations, and state benchmarks such as EOG exams*



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- *Teaching space extends beyond the classroom to include multiple community resources such as museums and parks, state level historic sites, national historic sites, and international exchanges*
- *Block schedule with large blocks of time for team-based instruction with flexibility for longer and shorter learning periods*
- *Exploris's K–8 curriculum centers on global education and project-based learning through a Common Core/NC Essential Standards–aligned program*
- *Each grade level team designs interdisciplinary expeditions built around compelling, real-world topics that weave together literacy, social studies, science, and math, so students are regularly reading complex texts, conducting research, analyzing data, and creating products that address authentic questions and audiences.*
- *On a day-to-day basis, classrooms use active, hands-on, and discussion-based structures to make this curriculum come alive. Students move between whole-group mini-lessons, small-group workshops, and collaborative project work rather than spending long stretches in teacher lectures.*
- *Science and social studies are taught through investigations and case studies embedded in expeditions*
- *Global arts, world language exposure, technology, and design challenges are scheduled weekly, so students routinely apply and extend core content through art, media, coding, and performance rather than treating these areas as isolated specials.*

Application	Current Practice
<i>The integrated curriculum focuses on global education principles and is organized around central themes such as change, choice, interdependence, justice, and conflict. The curriculum includes:</i> • <i>At least three foreign languages</i> • <i>Project-based, inquiry-based learning</i> • <i>Integration of content across STEM subjects</i> • <i>Active, hands-on activities and cooperative learning</i> • <i>Assessment includes portfolios, authentic assessments, and real-life task demonstrations</i>	• Foreign language is offered at grades 6, 7, and 8 through interactive software with access to over 40 global languages • Project-based and inquiry-based learning is central to the curriculum • Active, hands on learning happens daily k-8 • Assessment still includes student led portfolios, authentic assessments and real-life task demonstrations • Teaching spaces extend beyond classroom walls to multiple community partners such as parks, museums, and libraries • Flexible block schedules are used k-8



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- *Teaching space extends beyond the classroom to include the Exploris museum, community resources, and the world*
- *Block schedule with large blocks of time for team-based instruction with flexibility for longer and shorter learning periods*
- *Teacher teams remain with groups of students throughout the middle school years (school-within-a-school philosophy)*

- Global Arts teacher teams remain with students throughout their k-5 and 6-8 years

Exploris's current K–8 curriculum continues to center on global education and project-based learning, but it does so through a Common Core/NC Essential Standards–aligned program that is broader and more integrated than the original middle school–only design. Each grade level team designs interdisciplinary expeditions built around compelling, real-world topics (such as watershed health, immigration and identity, or sustainable cities) that weave together literacy, social studies, science, and math, so students are regularly reading complex texts, conducting research, analyzing data, and creating products that address authentic questions and audiences. Standards are mapped across the year, but planning starts with a driving question and global or community issue, and then teachers backward-plan lessons and assessments that build knowledge and skills toward a culminating performance task or public exhibition.

On a day-to-day basis, classrooms use active, hands-on, and discussion-based structures to make this curriculum come alive. Students move between whole-group mini-lessons, small-group workshops, and collaborative project work rather than spending long stretches in teacher lectures. Science and social studies are taught through investigations and case studies embedded in expeditions—for example, collecting and graphing local data for a science unit, or comparing primary and secondary sources in a history case study—while math lessons are frequently tied to the quantitative demands of the current expedition (like analyzing survey results, modeling



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growth, or calculating impact). Global arts, world language exposure, technology, and design challenges are scheduled weekly, so students routinely apply and extend core content through art, media, coding, and performance rather than treating these areas as isolated specials.

Assessment practices reflect the original commitment to authentic, performance-based measures but are now blended with state and national benchmarks. Teachers still use portfolios, project rubrics, and public exhibitions to assess how well students can apply learning in real contexts, and students lead conferences using work samples to explain their growth in both academic standards and Exploris's Habits of Scholarship. At the same time, the school administers required state EOGs and uses tools like NWEA MAP, mClass, NC Check ins, and common unit assessments to monitor progress, form flexible groups, and plan re-teaching or extension during WIN/intervention blocks. In daily practice, this means students receive feedback on drafts of writing and products, revise multiple times before final presentations, track their own goals, and see test data used to adjust their math and literacy groupings rather than only as end-of-year snapshots.

While Exploris no longer operates from a physical museum space, the curriculum still "extends beyond the classroom" through sustained community partnerships, frequent fieldwork, and service learning tied to each expedition. Teachers regularly schedule walking trips into downtown Raleigh to collect data, interview experts, and visit partner organizations such



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as museums, farms, environmental centers, local nonprofits, and government offices that connect directly to current units. Weekly or recurring service-learning experiences—such as supporting programming at local elementary schools, volunteering with environmental organizations, or contributing at community farms—are embedded as expected parts of the curriculum, giving students structured time to apply academic learning to real community needs. These partnerships and trips are planned into units from the outset, so students prepare in class, engage in fieldwork, and then return to analyze and use what they learned in their projects.

The school still uses team structures and common planning time to support a “school-within-a-school” feel, but the model has been adapted to a full K–8 program. Grade-level and band teams (for example, 5–6 or 7–8) share groups of students, plan expeditions together, and coordinate schedules so students experience a coherent set of themes and expectations as they move through the grades. Within a typical 7-hour day, students begin in crew (advisory) with a consistent teacher and peer group, rotate through integrated humanities and STEM blocks, and have scheduled time for global arts, world language exposure, and explorations or service, giving them both the sustained blocks envisioned in the original charter and access to a wider set of experiences.

X

☐ **Amendment Needed:** Foreign Language is only offered at the middle school level, and



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students self-select from multiple language options through guided in class use of programs like Duo-lingo.

School Transportation Plan

Proposed Proposed Amendment Language:

Replace original section with the following language:

- Transportation is through family carpools, walking, biking, or public buses. Exploris student support team and PTO helps to coordinate and problem solve to reduce transportation barriers to attendance.

Application

Transportation, food services, and space rental services are arranged through Wake County Public School System

Current Practice

- Transportation is through family carpools, walking, biking, or public buses, not through Wake County Public Schools. Exploris student support team and PTO helps to coordinate and problem solve so that transportation is not a barrier to attendance.

X

☐ Amendment Needed

Coversheet

Educational Excellence

Section:	III. Committee Reports
Item:	B. Educational Excellence
Purpose:	Discuss
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	Educational Excellence Summary June 2026.pdf

Educational Excellence Report

— The Exploris School —
July 2026

What's the Headline for Excellence at Exploris This Year?

- ***"Stay the Course."*** Continued use of data and targeted interventions, plus wrap around support services and deep learning through hands on, experiential lessons is providing steady growth
- ***New Tools:***
 - Use of NC Check ins helped guide staff on progress towards standards
 - Retesting "bubble" kids in EOGs led to increased scores and proficiency ratings, letting kids "show what they know" apart from a single high-stakes test day
- Despite some staffing challenges, ***staffing support*** helped provide teachers with the resources to provide quality, impactful instruction



How to Review this Report

For details on how Exploris measures Educational Excellence and for more context, details, links, and background on items contained in this report, please review the [How Do We Measure Educational Excellence at Exploris?](#) presentation.

We have separated the annual report from the framework in order to provide a more concise way to view the information each year, and we will link to the framework separately to provide that context for those who would like it available.

Who Are the Exploris Students? 2026



Student Support Services Information

	Attendance & Behavior Data	Free and Reduced Lunch Population	Intervention Services	504 Services	Exceptional Children's Services
	95% Days Present	35% of Full School	71% of Full School (includes Tier 2 & 3)	9% of Full School	22% of Full School
Elementary (K-5) 202 Students	95% Days Present for ES Students *ISS & OSS: 14 Instances	Exploris provides lunch for 39% of Elementary (78/202 students)	<u>Literacy</u> : 46% of ES Students (92/202) (Tier 2: 61/202/Tier 3: 31/202) <u>Math</u> : 41% of ES Students (83/202) (Tier 2: 60/202/Tier 3: 23/202)	3% of ES students have a 504 Plan (6/202)	19% of ES students have an IEP (39/202)
Middle (6-8) 215 Students	94% Days Present for MS Students *ISS & OSS: 32 Instances	Exploris provides lunch for 31% of Middle (66/215 students)	<u>Literacy</u> : 13% of MS Students (28/215) (Tier 2: 16/215/Tier 3: 12/215) <u>Math</u> : 43% of MS Students (92/215) (Tier 2: 58/215/Tier 3: 34/215)	14% of MS students have a 504 Plan (31/215)	24% of MS students have an IEP (51/215)

*ISS: In School Suspension and OSS: Out of School Suspension

Powered by BoardOnTrack

Reflections on Exploris Demographics

- Our efforts to diversify our student population has increased the number of students who arrive at school each day from a household designated as economically disadvantaged.
- Over one third of our students receive some sort of accommodations or specially designed instruction under a 504 plan or an IEP
 - Specific grade-levels have higher concentrations of students who qualify for special services
 - Proficiency and other measures can be impacted due to the small sample size of our Crews
- Twenty percent of our students receive academic interventions
- These are significant changes from our pre-pandemic numbers and prior to implementation of our weighted lottery

Story of a Student: The Exploris System



- **A kid walks in our door...**
 - What do we know? Records, fall benchmarks, observations
 - What do they need?
 - Not proficient?
 - Interventions (Behavior, SEL, attendance, academic)
 - Referral for EC?
 - Proficient?
 - Core curriculum
 - Adaptive programs
 - Above grade level?
 - Expeditions challenges
 - AIG approach
- **Throughout the year**
 - Progress monitoring
 - iXL benchmarking
 - NC Check-Ins in Grades 3-8
 - PLC meetings
 - Data review and adjusted/adaptive instruction

How Does Exploris Measure Educational Excellence?

— Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships —

Measures of Educational Excellence

<u>Rigor</u> • Students engage in tasks that are active, interactive, and appropriately challenging • Models of excellence, critique, and multiple drafts support all students to produce work of exceptional quality and craftsmanship • Curriculum, instruction, and assessments are integrated and aligned with standards and foster growth for all students • Teachers design innovative projects and tasks that encourage divergent thinking, creativity, ideation, and risk-taking	<u>Relevance</u> • Assessment practices position students as leaders of their own learning through reflection and goal setting • Students have opportunities to have a voice and leadership across the school • High quality teachers are committed to global education, the Exploris vision, and our hallmark instructional practices • Students engage in tasks that are purposeful, empower students to change their world, and are connected to student interests, global issues, and the local community	<u>Relationships</u> • Adults nurture belonging, significance, and emotional safety • Teachers, staff, and students intentionally foster a culture of respect, inclusivity, collaboration, and communication within the school and in the broader the community. • Teachers prioritize social and emotional learning including daily, intentional crew meetings • We equip students to work both independently and interdependently
<u>Possible Data Sources for Rigor</u> • Artifacts from showcases and presentations of student work • Disaggregated growth, proficiency, progress monitoring, and diagnostic data (MAP, EOG, EVAAS, mClass, Fountas & Pinnell) • JumpRope Reporting • Instructional rounds data • Professional development plan • Teacher Growth Process • Expedition Snapshots	<u>Possible Data Sources for Relevance</u> • Artifacts from student portfolios • Expedition Overviews • Artifacts from service learning activities • Participation in ambassadors, international experiences, clubs, and other activities • Survey data • Student presentations in community outlets (conferences, newspapers, television, radio, etc) • Teacher leadership: conference presentations, workshop leading, after school clubs and competitions	<u>Possible Data Sources for Relationships</u> • Artifacts from Morning Meeting and Community Circle • Attendance and behavior records • Communication records (Weekly What's Up, grade level blogs, Executive Director's monthly newsletter) • Teacher Working Conditions Survey • Survey data • School sponsored events (Meet & Greet, Parent University, Curriculum Night etc.) • Demographic data

Rigor

Measures of Educational Rigor at The Exploris School



Definition & Application

Curriculum, instruction, and assessments are integrated and aligned with standards and foster growth for all students

- Students engage in tasks that are active, interactive, and appropriately challenging
- Models of excellence, critique, and multiple drafts support all students to produce work of exceptional quality and craftsmanship
- Teachers design innovative projects and tasks that encourage divergent thinking, creativity, ideation, and risk-taking

How do we know what's working at Exploris?

Whole child data used at Exploris

- Demographic Data (includes F&R, EC, 504)
- Academic Assessments used at Exploris

Curriculum & Instruction Data: Core, Intervention

- Academic
- Behavior
- Attendance
- Social-Emotional

State Comparison: EVAAS data from EOGs/EOCs

EVAAS scores from 2023-2024 (received in January of 2025) show “meets” or “exceeds” growth in 4 out of 5 grade-levels in mathematics and 3 out of 5 grade-levels in reading.

8th grade met expected growth in science and 5th grade did not.

The value added scores for the 2025-2026 school year are expected in January 2027.

Data Lag

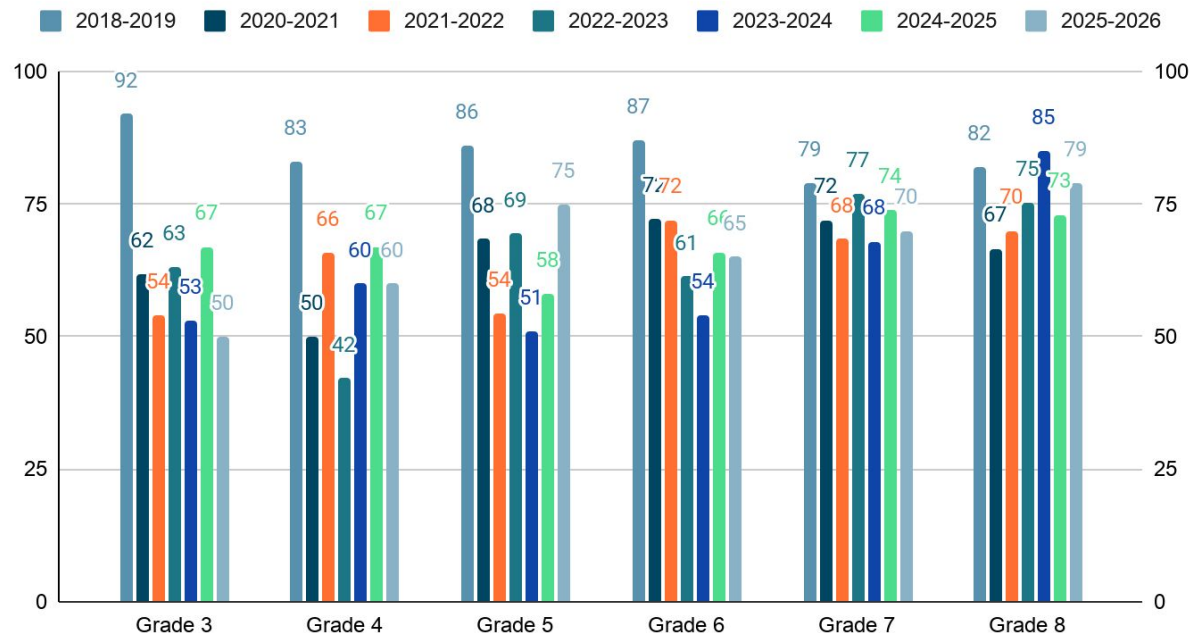
While individual scores are reported to schools and families very quickly, it is usually months before we see the comparisons with the rest of the state and with our county schools.

The following data will help show trends over time, in some cases back to 2018.

We expect to receive School Report Card scores in the fall.

End-of-Grade Test Proficiency in Reading

End-of-Grade Test Proficiency in Reading



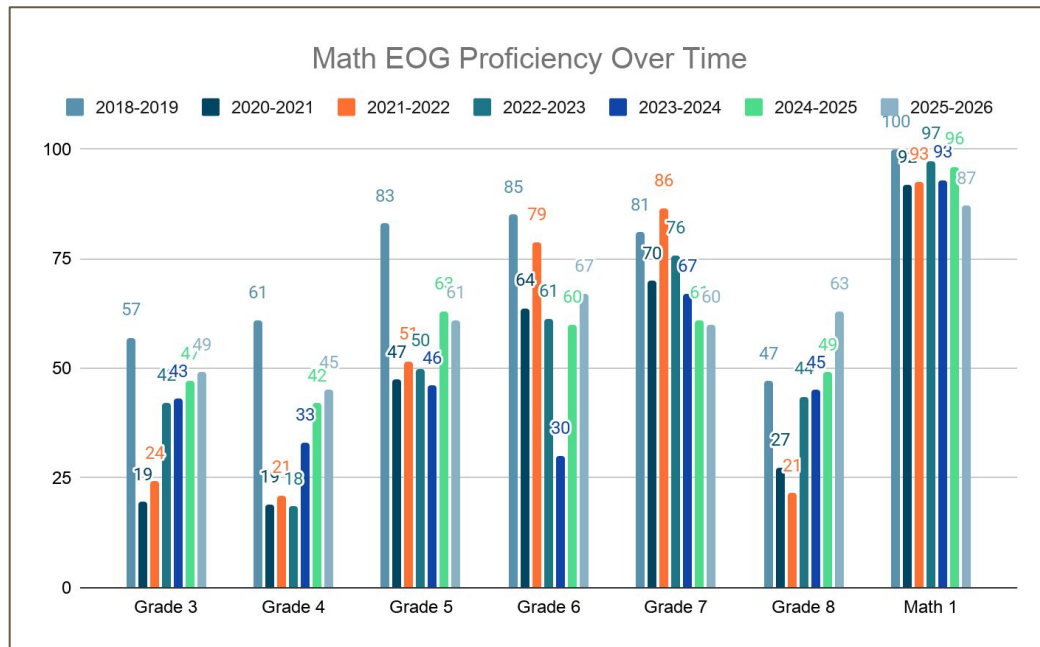
End-of-Grade (EOG) testing starts in 3rd grade.

Schoolwide, EOG proficiency in reading stayed steady at 67% in 25-26 SY and is the same in the 24-25 SY.

In 2 of 6 grade-levels, EOG reading proficiency improved in 2025-2026. Fifth grade proficiency grew by 17 percent.

While 4 grade-levels did not improve proficiency, the decrease was minimal and off-set by the high growth in 5th grade.

End-of-Grade Test Proficiency in Mathematics



Students proficiency grew 2%, to 61% schoolwide in math.

In 4 of 6 grade-levels, Exploris scores increased in EOG/EOC math proficiency. Eighth grade proficiency grew by 14%.

Over the last 7 years, Math I has shown the highest level of proficiency of any course in the school. The Math I course is an accelerated class that can lead to high school credit for students.

While lower grades may not show full levels of proficiency, the overall arc for an Exploris student is to grow annually and increase proficiency as they move towards high school.

End-of-Year Proficiency in Literacy K-3

2025-2026 MCLASS Proficiency in Literacy			
	Fall	Winter	Spring
Kindergarten			
At or Above	40%	68%	79%
Below Benchmark	30%	11%	7%
Well Below Benchmark	30%	21%	14%
First Grade			
At or Above	58%	58%	58%
Below Benchmark	23%	31%	21%
Well Below Benchmark	19%	11%	21%
Second Grade			
At or Above	45%	55%	68%
Below Benchmark	23%	24%	16%
Well Below Benchmark	32%	21%	16%
Third Grade			
At or Above	82%	72%	80%
Below Benchmark	0%	15%	12%
Well Below Benchmark	18%	13%	8%

Exploris maintained high proficiency scores on the [mClass early literacy assessment](#) this year.

In the 25-26 SY, **72% (96/133) of our K-3 students are reading at-or-above grade-level.** Only 19 students flagged as well below (14%).

See below for a year-over-year comparison:

- 2021-2022 SY: 69% at or above grade, 19% well below
- 2022-2023 SY: 77% at or above grade, 11% well below
- 2023-2024 SY: 78% at or above grade, 13% well below
- 2024-2025 SY: 77% at or above grade, 12% well below
- 2025-2026 SY: 72% at or above grade, 14% well below

End-of-Year Proficiency in Mathematics K-1

This is the 5th year using [NCENSI as the math screener](#) for early elementary. Students continue to demonstrate they are prepared for grade-level content.

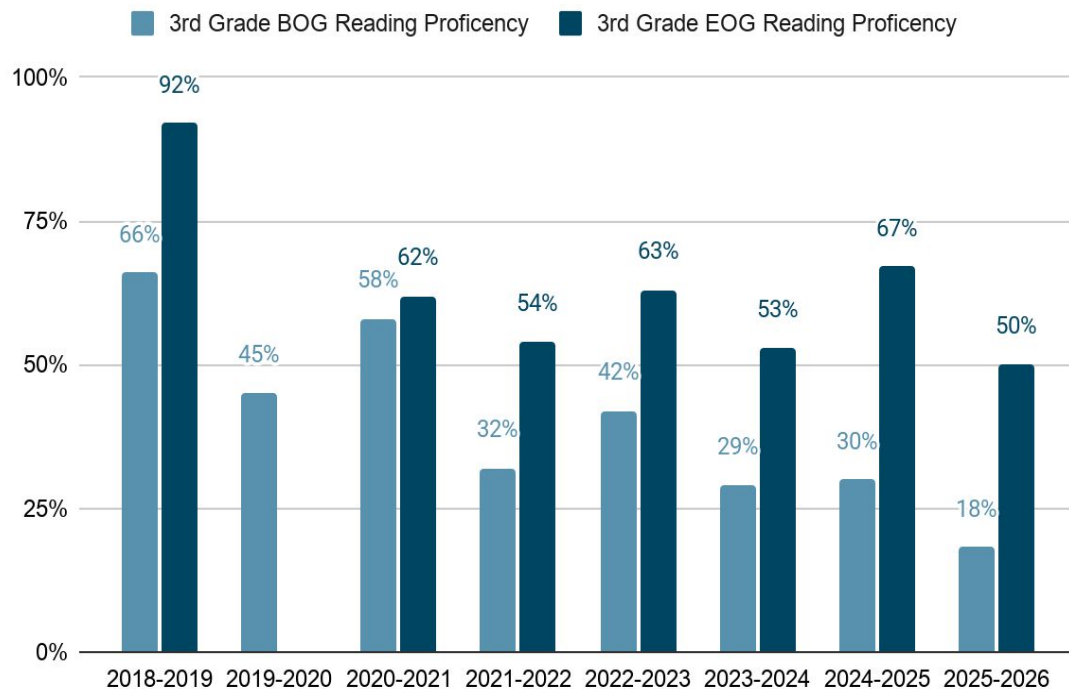
In the 25-26 SY, the overall pass rate on the screener is **93%** and students flagged as high needs is **2% (1 student)**.

Below is the year-over-year comparison:

2025-2026 NCENSI Proficiency in Math	Fall	Winter	Spring
Kindergarten			
Likely to respond high quality core	na	90%	96%
Moderate need for increased math opportunities	na	0%	0%
High need for increased math opportunities	na	10%	4%
First Grade			
Likely to respond high quality core	91%	78%	91%
Moderate need for increased math opportunities	9%	16%	6%
High need for increased math opportunities	0%	6%	1 student absent

- 2021-2022 SY:
 - 74% proficient
 - 9% high needs
- 2022-2023 SY:
 - 88% proficient
 - 3% high needs
- 2023-2024 SY:
 - 95% proficient
 - 3% high needs
- 2024-2025 SY:
 - 89% proficient
 - 0% high needs
- 2025-2026 SY:
 - 93% proficient
 - 2% high needs

Change in BOG Reading Proficiency



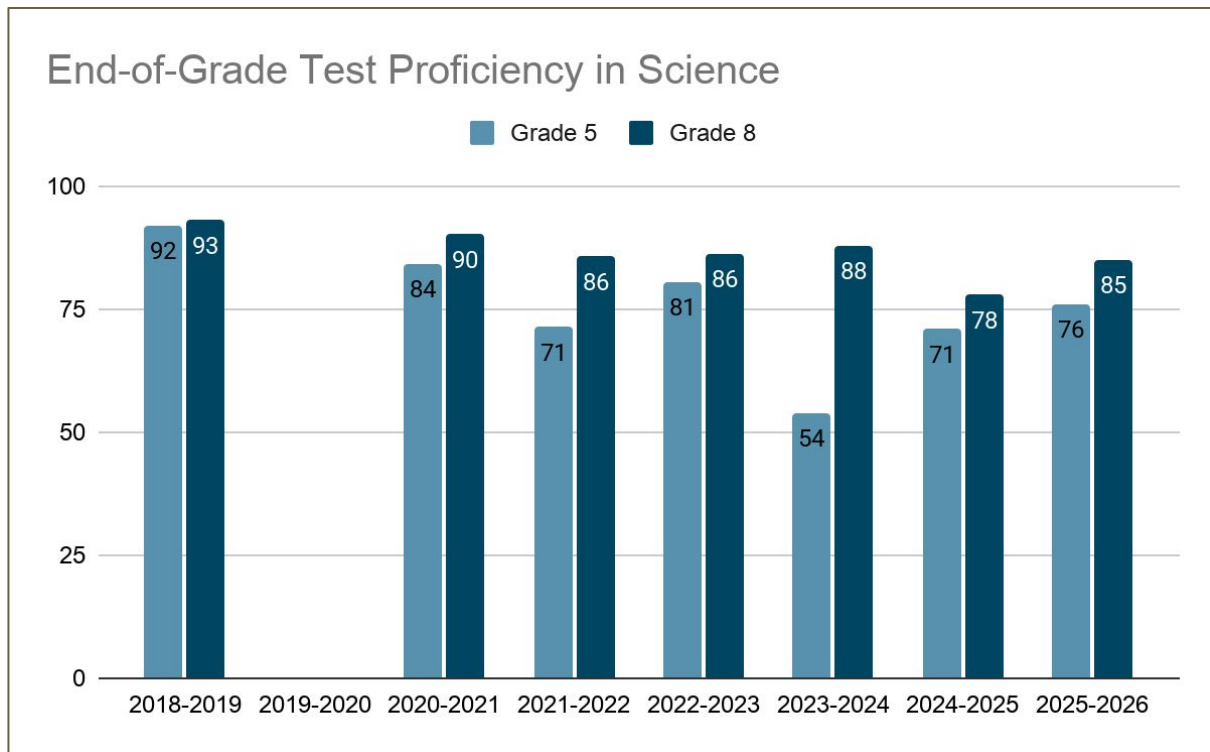
The entry point for standardized testing is the 3rd grade Beginning-of-Grade (BOG).

Since 2018, **Exploris' 3rd grade reading proficiency averages 24 percent growth** from the BOG to EOG.

This year, **proficiency grew 32 percent** from the BOG to the EOG. However, the BOG proficiency started at 18%.

To improve 3rd Grade EOG proficiency scores, Exploris will need to support reading comprehension and test-taking skills in earlier grades and strengthen staff ability to deliver core content and interventions.

End-of-Grade Test Proficiency in Science (5th/8th Only)



Exploris continues to show proficiency in End-of-Grade Science (EOG) scores, especially when compared to students across the state.

One subset of students at Exploris who did particularly well is Economically -Disadvantaged (EDS).

Seventy-four percent (20/27) of EDS in 5th and 8th grade showed proficiency on the science EOG.

Only 5th and 8th grade students sit for an EOG in science.

Social Emotional Data

CASEL SEL Competencies



SEL: Grade 3-5 Fall 2025

Social skills Score	SS Level	Self-Awareness	Self-Management	Social Awareness	Relationship Skills	Responsible Decision Making	Stress Management Score	SMS Level	Resilient behaviors index	I-EBC	I-EBC Level	E-EBC	E-EBC Level	Stress Indicators Score	SI Level	Recommended Follow-up
42.7254902	Competent	8.18627451	7.509803922	9.039215686	8.764705882	9.225490196	9.058823529	Competent	8 Emerging 19 Developing 57 Competent 18 Advanced	3.37254902	No Concern	2.666666667	No Concern	7.166666667	Moderate Stress	No = 62 Yes = 40
0-60 scale							0-15 Scale		Calculated with both Social Skill and Stress Management Skill levels	0-15 Scale		0-15 Scale		0-15 Scale		
0-24	Emerging						0-5			0-6	No Concern	0-6	No Concern	0-6	Low Stress	
25-34	Developing						6-11			7-8	Possible Concern	7-8	Possible Concern	7-8	Moderate Stress	
34-49	Competent						12-15			9-15	Concern	9-15	Concern	9-15	High Stress	
50-60	Advanced															

Exploris students in grades 3rd-8th grade took a screener 2x this year to measure SEL competencies.

Teachers and the Student Services Team (SST) collaborate on BOY data to gain a picture of the whole child.

SEL data informs core instruction; curriculum for crew lessons and student service support. For more information on SEL domains- [click here](#).

SEL: Grade 3-5 Spring 2026

SS Raw Score	SS Level	Self-Awareness	Self-Management	Social Awareness	Relationship Skills	Responsible Decision Making	Stress Management Skills Score	SMS Level	Resilient behaviors index	I-EBC	I-EBC Level	E-EBC	E-EBC Level	Stress Indicators Score	SI Level	Recommended Follow-up
42.43877551	Competent	8.37755102	7.030612245	9.091836735	8.602409639	9.228915663	8.951807229	Competent	Emerging 5 Developing 19 Competent 60 Advanced 14	4.34939759	No Concern	3.084337349	No Concern	7.674698795	Moderate Stress	Yes 48 No 49
0-60 scale							0-15 Scale		Calculated with both Social Skill and Stress Management Skill levels	0-15 Scale		0-15 Scale		0-15 Scale		
0-24	Emerging						0-5			0-6	No Concern	0-6	No Concern	0-6	Low Stress	
25-34	Developing						6-11			7-8	Possible Concern	7-8	Possible Concern	7-8	Moderate Stress	
34-49	Competent						12-15			9-15	Concern	9-15	Concern	9-15	High Stress	

The scores show that “Internalizing Behaviors” slightly increased from Fall to Spring. Overall, however, most domains remained consistent.

SEL: Grade 6-8 Fall 2025

Social skills Score	SS Level	Self-Awareness	Self-Management	Social Awareness	Relationship Skills	Responsible Decision Making	Stress Management Score	SMS Level	Resilient behaviors index	I-EBC	I-EBC Level	E-EBC	E-EBC Level	Stress Indicators Score	SI Level	Recommended Follow up
40.975	Competent	7.815	6.93	8.675	8.435	9.12	8.49	Competent	18 Emerging 40 Developing 117 Competent 26 Advanced	3.155	No Concern	2.565	No Concern	6.665	Moderate Stress	Yes 78 No 122
0-60 scale							0-15 Scale		Calculated with both Social Skill and Stress Management Skill levels	0-15 Scale		0-15 Scale		0-15 Scale		
0-24	Emerging						0-5			0-6	No Concern	0-6	No Concern	0-6	Low Stress	
25-34	Developing						6-11			7-8	Possible Concern	7-8	Possible Concern	7-8	Moderate Stress	
34-49	Competent						12-15			9-15	Concern	9-15	Concern	9-15	High Stress	

SEL: Grade 6-8 Spring 2026

SS Raw Score	SS Level	Self-Awareness	Self-Management	Social Awareness	Relationship Skills	Responsible Decision Making	Stress Management Skills Score	SMS Level	Resilient behaviors index	I-EBC	I-EBC Level	E-EBC	E-EBC Level	Stress Indicators Score	SI Level	Recommended Follow-up
43.0109	Competent	8.3913	7.40761	9.11413	8.77174	9.32609	9.02717	Competent	Emerging 9 Developing 40 Competent 101 Advanced 34	2.84239	No Concern	2.71196	No Concern	6.22826	Low Stress	Yes 67 No 117
0-60 scale							0-15 Scale		Calculated with both Social Skill and Stress Management Skill Levels	0-15 Scale		0-15 Scale		0-15 Scale		
0-24	Emerging						0-5		9	0-6	No Concern	0-6	No Concern	0-6	Low Stress	
25-34	Developing						6-11		40	7-8	Possible Concern	7-8	Possible Concern	7-8	Moderate Stress	
34-49	Competent						12-15		101	9-15	Concern	9-15	Concern	9-15	High Stress	

We see a slight positive change in social skills and resilient behaviors from Fall to Spring. However, it should be noted that there was higher survey participation numbers in the Fall. The other domains remained consistent.

Student Services Data 25-26 School Year

- Suicide Risk Screening Assessments: 18
- Threat assessments conducted: 12
- Referrals to outside counseling: 25
- Reports through *Say Something*: 10
- Reports through Gaggle (Google Suite): 72 (Approx. $\frac{1}{3}$ of Gaggle reports required additional student support)
- Alerts through Go Guardian (Internet Activity only on school issued computers): 54 alerts (Approx. 25% required additional student support)
- Bark Alerts: 32 Severe Alerts (requires review and possible interview)

Student Services Data 25-26 School Year

Each year we talk with students grades K-8 about what a counselor does and how to request assistance.

Grades K-2: Students let their teacher know they would like to see the counselor or the teacher and/or parent makes a request.

Grades 3-5: Students can fill out a paper form to request a counselor.

Grades 6-8: Students can submit an electronic referral form.

Relationships

Measures of Educational Relationships at The Exploris School



Definition & Application

Teachers, staff, and students intentionally foster a culture of respect, inclusivity, collaboration, and communication within the school and in the broader the community.

- Adults nurture belonging, significance, and emotional safety
- Teachers prioritize social and emotional learning, including daily, intentional crew meetings
- Discipline is viewed through a teaching and restorative justice lens
- The school values families as key —partners in education

Relationships

- Admin reached out to incoming families through phone calls and emails to welcome them to Exploris
- Daily crew time following the Responsive Classroom formula for morning meeting: Greeting, Sharing, Group Activity, Morning Message
- Explorations each trimester at Elementary & Middle School Campuses
- Peer Advocates - Middle School Campus
- NC State/Exploris Mentoring Program - Elementary School Campus
- Family Events included:
 - High School Information Night
 - Fall Festival & Spring Family Day
 - Family Dinner Dialogues & Coffee with Counselors
 - Roller Skating Night
 - Spring Fling
 - Fields of Fun (Elementary Field Day)
 - New Events for '25-'26 included: Elementary Math Night and Admin Connection Sessions (Aug/Sept)

Relevance

Measures of Educational Relevance at The Exploris School



Definition & Application

Experiential learning that is purposeful, empower students to change their world, and are connected to student interests, global issues, and the local community

- Students have opportunities to have a voice and leadership across the school
- High quality teachers are committed to global education, the Exploris vision, and our hallmark instructional practices

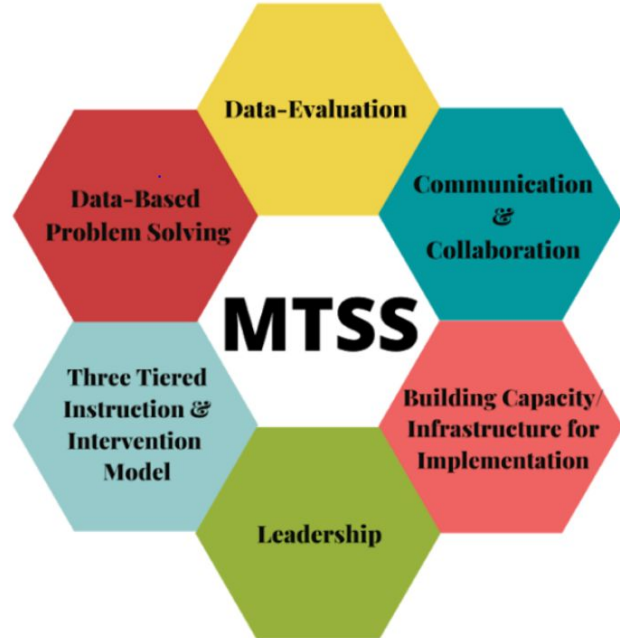
Highlights of Relevance

Exploris Cultural Exchange Project Blog

- Students participated in over 90 documented curriculum-based Field Experiences k-8. (This does not include daily outings to local parks and more casual daily events)
- Our Exchange programs to Japan and Germany were active
 - Japanese University pre-teachers and professors visited in early fall
 - Japanese teachers and students from Shinonome visited in August
 - German teachers & students are in planning stages and will visit in March 2027
 - Exploris students & teachers traveled to Japan in March
 - Exploris students and teachers will travel to Germany in June 2027
- Elementary offered over 100 Explorations and middle school students were offered over 70 unique opportunities

Improvement Plan

A Multi-Tiered System of Supports



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN At-A-Glance – Fall 2024-Spring 2028

The Exploris School is a diverse learning community that engages students in a challenging, relevant, relationship-based education. Through experiential, project-based learning we empower students to foster a just and sustainable world.



Our Strategic Vision is to improve these outcomes:

Strategic Vision: Our school improvement plan will reduce barriers to success such as socio-economic factors so that:

- Students are empowered to be lifelong learners
- Disparities in student outcomes are eliminated among subgroups
- Students are safe and socially, emotionally, and physically healthy
- Students are engaged in their learning and school community

We will attain these outcomes by shifting our practices around these school improvement areas:

School Improvement Plan

Target #1

Improve quality and relevance of academic experiences

Target #2

Create safe, engaging, and inclusive school environments

Target #3

Transition to a permanent location for a K-8 program

Target #4

Increase stakeholder satisfaction with school communications and engagement opportunities

Which will result in measurable progress toward these objectives.

Key Indicators for School Improvement Plan

1. Improve EOG Reading Proficiency by at least 5% in each grade-level ([Historical EOG Data](#))
 2. Exceed expected student growth on the EOG in math as a school according to EVASS. ([23-24 Growth Data](#))
 3. Track [Field Experiences](#) (for connection & relevancy)
1. Finalize and promote the [Exploris Equity Statement](#)
 2. Grow staff capacity to productively resolve conflict through Peaceful Schools training and Crucial Conversations Study Teams.
 3. Establish the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee.
1. Establish and strengthen systems for maintenance of our existing facilities. Communicate the progress of the New Facility Project at least monthly to all stakeholders.
 2. Build a 3-year student and family recruitment plan in preparation for expanding the elementary school with the opening of the new facility in the 26/27 SY.
1. Develop and conduct stakeholder surveys and create action steps based on results
 2. Review and communicate/share communications pathways and opportunities for engagement

Exploris School Improvement Plan 2024-2028

School Improvement Plan Summary

Target #1 Improve quality and relevance of academic experiences	1. Improve EOG Reading Proficiency by at least 5% in each grade-level (Historical EOG Data) 2. Exceed expected student growth on the EOG in math as a school according to EVASS. (EVASS Growth Data) 3. Track Field Experiences (for connection & relevancy)
Target #2 Create safe, engaging, and inclusive school environments	1. Finalize and promote the Exploris Equity Statement 2. Grow staff capacity to productively resolve conflict through Peaceful Schools training and Crucial Conversations Study Teams. 3. Establish the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee.
Target #3 Transition to a permanent location for a K-8 program	1. Establish and strengthen systems for maintenance of our existing facilities. 2. Communicate the progress of the New Facility Project at least monthly to all stakeholders. 3. Build a 3-year student and family recruitment plan in preparation for expanding the elementary school with the opening of the new facility in the 26/27 SY.
Target #4 Increase stakeholder satisfaction with school communications and engagement opportunities	1. Develop and conduct stakeholder surveys and create action steps based on results 2. Review and communicate/share communications pathways and opportunities for engagement

Conclusion: *What did learning look like at Exploris in 2025-2026?*

- [Peaceful Schools NC](#) restorative practices and [Crucial Conversations training](#) were a focus for professional development, based on data from a 3rd party equity audit and our internal trust survey
- Data driven decision making using universal metrics helped guide and adjust core instruction; overall implementation of MTSS improved
- Use of iXL as a diagnostic and as part of the MTSS process help identify targeted needs and adjustments to core curriculum
- Students were deeply connected to service learning, cross curricular exploration of topics, and relevant, hands-on learning experiences
- Growth continues, and needs in our changing demographics and classroom stability continue to make proficiency a challenge

Respectfully submitted,

**The Education Excellence
Committee, with**

Eric Grunden, Meredith Nelson, Ethan Burton,
Michelle Duncan, Deb Brown, Jessica Roberts

Coversheet

Facilities

Section:	III. Committee Reports
Item:	C. Facilities
Purpose:	FYI
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	July_2026_BOARD_Exploris_Facilities_Update.pdf



Exploris Facilities Update

July 23, 2026 | Board Update

Outline

- Monthly Updates
- Looking Ahead
 - Forever Home Project at 120 Kindley Street





Monthly Updates

Monthly Updates

- Work has already begun on the following:
 - Revising timelines and budgets to reflect the next phases of work.
 - Coordination for upcoming Administrative Site Review (ASR) and Site Plan Review (SPR), key design and site plan review stages required to obtain a building permit.
 - Moseley Architects have completed their pre-design narrative and delivered it to Cooper Tacia for pricing on March 25. Cooper Tacia delivered their conceptual estimate on April 16; the full design team conducted a detailed line-by-line review on April 23. Cooper Tacia issued a revised Conceptual Design Cost Study on April 27. The team is now in active value engineering mode to bring construction costs in line with the project budget. *Moseley circulated the Schematic Design Kickoff memorandum on June 17, along with potential dates for community engagement.*
- Due Diligence items (ALTA, Civil, Geotech, Environmental) are being coordinated by Rosewood. These will lead us into the design and financing phases of our project.
 - Rosewood has made recommendations for firms for due diligence items that are under review.
 - Geotech: Terracon drilling complete. Preliminary guidance received April 10 recommends shallow foundations on aggregate piers with 5,000 psf allowable bearing capacity. Formal report deferred until grading plans advance, saving cost. *Underground components have since been removed from the conceptual design and grading plan; the ALTA survey is complete, and the geotech report is finalizing pending grading-plan clarifications.*
- CCUD/Metcon Soil Stockpile License Agreement executed (effective March 17). Allows temporary soil stockpiling on the Exploris lot during adjacent Lot 4 construction. Exploris likely gains access to Lot 3 as laydown space during our future construction.
- An information sharing agreement with CCUD is in place, and a draft MOU is in progress to formalize coordination on height relief, cross-access easements, and shared stormwater planning. Design teams are sharing 3D models of the broader site; additional paperwork is being finalized to formalize coordination on site access, drainage, and design. An information sharing agreement with CCUD was executed on May 7.





Looking Ahead

Planned work on the Unified Campus Project

Site Review and Value
Engineering (Forever Home at
120 Kindley Street)

- Rosewood is coordinating with a local engineering firm to supply us with pro bono and reduced-cost work to begin the Administrative Site Review (ASR) and Site Plan Review (SPR) processes.
- Next steps:
 - Architect engaged (Moseley Architects).
 - Pre-design narrative (~40 pages) completed and handed off to Cooper Tacia for pricing on March 25. Conceptual estimate delivered April 16; the full design team conducted a line-by-line review on April 23. Cooper Tacia issued a revised Conceptual Design Cost Study on April 27. Value engineering is actively underway: Cooper Tacia and Moseley are evaluating options including structural systems, glazing, and millwork. Updated pricing received; base construction reduced to \$24M (\$429/sq ft) through value engineering. Accepted VE items include Hardy panels over masonry, load-bearing metal studs in lieu of structural steel, and casework moved to FF&E. Schematic design phase kicking off immediately.
 - GC engaged (Cooper Tacia). Actively providing pre-construction services. Parallel pricing underway for building with and without below-grade parking. Initial conceptual estimate places base construction around \$38M (roughly \$500/sqft), with a \$5-6M alternate for underground parking, 12% contingency, and a \$250K unforeseen allowance. Team is actively researching off-site parking options to potentially eliminate the underground parking scope. *The underground parking option has been officially set aside; the project is moving forward with a 4-story above-grade plan.*
- *Began exploring a long-term FF&E (furniture, fixtures & equipment) partnership with a firm to furnish the new building, including modular, movable furniture and a possible pilot classroom to test furniture with students and teachers ahead of a 2028-29 opening.*

Planned work on the Unified Campus Project

Budget and Financing

- Next steps (cont.)
 - Revising the project budget (including value engineering)
 - New 5-year Projections and Programming document created to support this.
 - Current Total Project Budget estimated at ~\$27M (before New Markets Tax Credit offsets). Cooper Tacia's initial conceptual estimate (delivered April 16) came in higher than the March budget assumption. The value-engineering review was conducted April 23; Cooper Tacia issued a revised cost study on April 27. The team is in active value engineering mode. *An updated predevelopment financing memo, circulated in mid-July, puts total project financing at roughly \$37MM, essentially flat versus recent estimates. NMTC financing is proving harder to secure than expected, as funders increasingly favor projects serving a higher share of low-income families; Rosewood is pursuing alternative strategies to close that gap.*
 - Pre-development costs estimated at \$2.7M (approx. 8% of total budget).
 - Team is analyzing debt capacity for both traditional and tax-exempt bond structures.
 - Implemented live pro-forma model tying project budget, loans (pre-dev, bridge, bond), and operating cash flow to determine equity contribution requirements.
 - Developing a financing strategy
 - Bond counsel confirmed \$14M debt target is reasonable and within reach. Banking transition to Pinnacle Financial underway. Pinnacle accounts opened and active as of April 22, offering significantly higher interest rates on reserves; system migration is in progress. *Predevelopment financing outreach is underway with charter-school lenders. The transition to Pinnacle Financial is expected to be complete by the end of August.*
 - *Began drafting a lender-facing marketing plan addressing family retention, new-family recruitment, and the case for our downtown-to-downtown relocation. Also agreed with Rosewood to benchmark budget-vs-actual performance against original annual budgets rather than mid-year revisions, supporting a conservative narrative for lenders, and met with North Carolina's NC Grow grant administrator about funding for non-capital expenses.*

Planned work on the Unified Campus Project

Due Diligence and Design
(Forever Home - Target Opening
Fall 2028)

- Design is officially underway.
 - Pre-design page turn completed March 25. Cooper Tacia conceptual estimate delivered April 16; line-by-line design-team review conducted April 23. Revised Conceptual Design Cost Study issued April 27; value engineering underway.
- We will work with our Architect to craft a plan for public input from our school community.
 - Community Engagement Sessions: Targeted for Q2 2026 to gather input before schematic design begins. Schematic Design Kickoff with Moseley Architects underway as of June 4. The team has officially set aside the underground parking option, moving forward with a cleaner 4-story above-grade design, which simplifies the geotech and grading scope. *We have since defined the engagement scope: the whole school community is invited, with a virtual session in July and an in-person session planned for August. Our first virtual workshop is set for Thursday, July 30, covering predesign floor plans, materiality palettes, and early concept elevations.*
- Goal: Site approvals and building permit by Q2/Q3 2027.
 - Construction timeline projected at 14 months (12-18 month range).
 - Construction financing closing targeted for Q3 2027. Construction targeted Q3 2027, completion Q3 2028. *Predevelopment financing closing is now targeted for September/October 2026, keeping us on track for construction to start around August/September 2027 and a target opening for school year 2028.*
- Strategic Risk Management
 - Contingency Planning: Modeling a 'Phased Approach' (450 students initially vs. 670 full capacity) to ensure project remains within debt capacity if costs escalate. *Financial projections now also include further scenarios to strengthen affordability.*
 - Height/Entitlement Risk: Settlement caps height at 50 feet with parapet; Design team pursuing relief from CCUD for 5 stories (~75 feet including covered roof terrace). Height relief remains on the table. A new information sharing agreement with CCUD positions us to advance that conversation. Draft MOU underway covering cross-access easements and coordinated stormwater planning.

Additional Information



Committee Member Bios

Committee Member Bios

Steve Edmundson:

Corporate Technology leader for 32 years. Certified Executive Project Manager (managed large, complex projects and contracts). Retired 2013.

Post retirement, Tech Director at Research Triangle High School. STEM focused Charter high school. Helped RTHS through construction and transition into their new facilities in 2016. After RTHS, I took on Tech support at Longleaf School of the Arts 2018-mid-2021. An arts focused Charter high school. I had planned to retire after RTHS but Longleaf needed help so I took on another school challenge. Planning to retire in 1-2 years, I ended up staying with Longleaf through COVID to help them through the tech challenges of remote instruction. Fully retired in June 2021.

Special interests include: Scouting. Scout leader for 15 years. St. Baldrick's Foundation, a non-profit focused on funding pediatric cancer research. Helping friends and neighbors with tech and house maintenance challenges.

My wife, Cindy, and I live in North Raleigh near Wake Forest. Cindy is a retired teacher. My kids both attended Charter schools.

I grew up in Kinston and Cary, NC. Graduated from Cary High School and NC State University, BSEE.



Committee Member Bios

Ryan Wehmann:

Who you are and how you're connected to Exploris: **My daughters-Natalie (2nd grade), & Elizabeth (Kindergarten) attend Exploris.**

Your profession: **Real Estate Development Program Manager**

Which skills do you have that you believe will lend most directly to our shared work on the Facilities Committee: **Real Estate entitlements, planning, design development, contract negotiations & contract management, construction management.**

Anything fun or interesting you think we should know about you: **I am a Raleigh native. I attended Douglas, Poe, & Powell Elementary, Carnage Middle, and Enloe High School. I was one of the first drivers of the Trolley Pub in Downtown Raleigh.**

Brent Francese:

1. Parent to 3 kids at Exploris (2 middle, 1 elementary) + spouse to teacher Jessie Francese (10 years at the school).

2. Creative Director, Carpenter Development Group, a small commercial and residential development company in downtown Raleigh.

3. Degree in architecture with experience in master planning and project management and design.

4. I once owned a running store, Runologie, that was underneath the middle school at 401 Hillsborough Street.



Committee Member Bios

Adam Cook

Who you are and how you're connected to Exploris: **I am a parent of an Exploris student. My son Calvin is in 3rd Grade**

Your profession: **I am a Planner for Wake County. A portion of my work entails reviewing new subdivision and development proposals for compliance with Wake County development requirements.**

Which skills do you have that you believe will lend most directly to our shared work on the Facilities Committee: **Experience working with the development community for projects in Wake County's planning jurisdiction**

Anything fun or interesting you think we should know about you: **I grew up in Kinston, went to College in Greenville (Go Pirates!) and worked for the City of Rocky Mount prior to working for Wake County**

Paul Dudzinski

Who you are and how you're connected to Exploris: **I'm a parent to three girls. My oldest daughter - Lilly is in 2nd grade at Exploris. My middle daughter Hazel will be in Kindergarten next year with my youngest Ella not too far behind.**

Your profession: **I work as a Risk Management Consultant / Forensic Accountant.**

Which skills do you have that you believe will lend most directly to our shared work on the Facilities Committee: **Background in risk management, accounting, finance and legal issues. I have previously investigated cases of fraud and corruption involving large construction projects, as well as legal disputes -- hopefully that'll be a useless skill! Also, a bit of a handyman and willing to get my hands dirty to help keep the facilities up and running.**

Anything fun or interesting you think we should know about you: **I'm originally from Wisconsin (go Packers) but have lived in many places. Had a couple years of high school in Wake Country at Athens Drive High School. Went to UNC Chapel Hill (go Tar Heels) and have lived in Atlanta, DC and Raleigh since then. My wife Annie is a school psychologist and avid Exploris volunteer. We're currently downtown Raleigh residents and you may see me biking Lilly home from school with one or more little sisters in tow!**



Keeping up with Requests

Shared Facilities Tracker

- Work is ongoing for this system.
- Using a Google Sheet to track requests and completed work.
- Shared amongst volunteers and staff members who can attend to specific tasks.

Example Tracker

Table2 										
1	Timestamp	Name or Email	Brief description of repair or improvement needed:	Campus:	Location:	Detailed description (optional):	Priority	Picture or other file:	Approx. Cost	Responsibility
2		Josh	Replace carpeting throughout both buildings	Middle Campus	Throughout		High			
3		Josh	Full Mold Testing	Middle Campus	Whole building	Professional mold testing needs to be done over the summer.	High			
4		Josh	Roof leak repairs	Middle Campus	Roof	We still have leaks nearly every time it rains. These need to be repaired.	High			York
5		Josh	Duct cleaning	Middle Campus	HVAC	York has told us that ductwork is cleaned regularly. We're going to verify this definitively OR get them cleaned.	High			
6		Josh	Bathroom repairs and beautification	Middle Campus	Bathrooms	Our bathrooms need some major attention.	High			Exploris
7		Josh	Water bottle filler on 1st floor	Middle Campus	1st floor		High		\$3,000.00	Exploris
8		Alexandra	White board for 8S	Middle Campus	8S	*one of the giant whiteboards in the back of 8S was removed. We would really appreciate it if the other one could be removed. These boards do not work--the markers do not erase. We need a real white board in the back of the 8S classroom. 2.5 yards wide by as large as possible height would be awesome.*				Exploris



Current Leases

Staying put for the duration of
our development project

- Our Elementary landlord has indicated that they are enthusiastic about us staying put until we can move into our new building.
 - I have reached out to secure a 3-year lease renewal, if the landlord is amenable to that.
 - Our Middle landlord is increasing our rents considerably for the next 3 years. We were able to negotiate the lowest possible rent for the next 3 and have executed the lease renewal.
-



The Work of the Committee

What does the Facilities Committee do?

More than just find our new
home!

- Maintain and improve our current facilities
 - Coordination work
 - On-the-ground improvement tasks
 - Fundraising efforts
- Shepherding our Unified Campus Project
 - Dreaming big, staying grounded
 - LOTS of moving parts, so staying engaged with communication (i.e., emails and possibly chats) is imperative



Rosewood's Role in our Unified Campus Project

Recognizing the Need & Finding the Right Partner

Closing the Skills Gap

- **Facing Project Complexity:** Initial efforts revealed the challenges of large-scale development in Raleigh's market.
- **Acknowledging a Skills Gap:** Real estate development requires specialized expertise beyond our internal capacity.
- **Securing Essential Expertise:** Rosewood provides the experienced representation needed to navigate this complex project effectively (since March 2023).
 - They work with urban non-profits, a niche market in the Development space.
- **Sharpening Our Focus:** This partnership allows school leadership to focus more of their attention on education, while Rosewood expertly manages the campus project.

Rosewood in Action

Driving Tangible Progress

- **Driving Kindley Street Due Diligence:** Rosewood managed complex site evaluations, traffic studies (TIA/TDM), and City coordination.
- **Strategic Site Selection:** Assessed 27 sites, recommending Kindley Street as the optimal location for our goals.
- **Proactive Coordination & Negotiation:** Coordinated with adjacent developer (CCUD) to improve our site position (height, shared plans, shared use potential).
- **Initiating Key Financial Benefits (NMTC):** Started the complex New Markets Tax Credit process to significantly reduce the project's long-term cost to the school.

Securing Our Future Campus

Rosewood's Planned Leadership

- **Comprehensive Financial Management:** Overseeing all project financing: underwriting, funding acquisition, budgeting, and updates.
- **Expert NMTC Leadership:** Leading the full NMTC process to secure tax credits and maximize financial benefits for Exploris.
- **Detailed Schedule & Project Oversight:** Developing and managing project schedules for due diligence and closing to keep us on track.
- **Optional Construction Phase Leadership:** Offers continued expert support through construction for seamless project completion, if needed.
- **Focused on Our Goal:** All efforts are dedicated to successfully delivering our Unified Campus.

Typical Costs of Development Representation

Development Firm	Monthly Cost	Cost Structure
Rosewood	\$12,000	Fixed rate, not tied to overall project budget.
Rosewood (without Exploris discount)	\$18,000	Fixed rate, not tied to overall project budget.
Previous Firm engaged by Exploris	~\$37,000	Fee tied to overall project budget. Higher rate; not charged up front. Some upfront costs would be absorbed by the firm and charged on the backend.





The use of the Capital Fund for Pre-development Work

Our Strategic Foundation

The 2017 Capital Fund

- **Building Our Foundation (2017):** A successful Capital Campaign, boosted by school contributions, created a dedicated fund of approximately \$590k.
- **A Dedicated Resource:** These funds were restricted, meaning they could only be used for costs tied directly to our Unified Campus Project.
- **Planning for Our Future Home:** This foresight provided essential capital specifically intended for finding and preparing our future school site.

Putting Funds to Work for Kindley Street

Prudent Stewardship of Funds

- **Targeted Pre-Development Spending:** Funds were carefully spent only on allowable expenses crucial for searching for and evaluating potential campus sites near Downtown.
- **Essential Groundwork:** Key investments included:
 - Development Support (site identification/assessment, NMTC start-up, sourcing expert help)
 - Traffic Site Analysis & Approval
 - Property Taxes
 - Legal Fees & Feasibility Study
- **Focusing on Our Chosen Site:** These necessary expenditures allowed us to perform vital due diligence and prepare the Kindley Street property.

Paving the Way Forward

The Impact of Our Investment

- **Critical Funding for Progress:** This Capital Account was absolutely essential, enabling us to secure, assess, and move forward with the Kindley Street lot.
- **Protecting School Resources:** Using these dedicated funds strategically meant we avoided draining daily operating budgets or taking on early project debt.
- **Strengthening Our Financial Position:** This approach preserved operational funds and put us in a stronger position for the upcoming major Bond Financing phase.
- **A Clear Path to Our Goal:** The prudent use of these 2017 funds successfully laid the necessary groundwork, creating the path forward to our unified "forever home."

Capital Fund Expenditures

- **Legal:** \$3,681.50 (the School paid all of the legal costs of the litigation and settlement for Kindley Street)
- **Traffic Site Analysis and Approval:** \$66,869.60
- **Development Support:** \$397,534.05. This includes:
 - Site identification and assessment
 - New Markets Tax Credit initiation and startup
 - Sourcing pro bono and reduced-cost pre-development engineering support (e.g., test fits and site plans)
 - Rosewood's portion over two years: \$297,200.00
- **Property Taxes:** \$74,713.21
- **Capital Campaign Feasibility Study:** \$28,000



Coversheet

Finance Committee

Section:	III. Committee Reports
Item:	D. Finance Committee
Purpose:	Discuss
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	03. Board Report 2026.06 - Exploris.pdf 05. Income Statement 2026.06 - The Exploris School.pdf 06. Balance Sheet 2026.06 - The Exploris School.pdf Bank Account Balances 2026.06 - Exploris.pdf

THE EXPLORIS SCHOOL						
Budget Analysis Report						
Fiscal Year: 2026 - June						
almost 100% of the year						
Account	Budget	Period Activity	YTD Activity	Remaining Budget	% Used	EOY Forecast
001. STATE REVENUE TOTAL	3,527,025.25	0.00	3,527,025.25	0.00		3,527,025.25
002. LOCAL REVENUE TOTAL	1,866,208.30	294,086.35	1,793,404.38	72,803.96		1,993,129.34
003. FEDERAL REVENUE TOTAL	167,736.00	(291.37)	176,400.63	(8,664.63)		176,400.63
004. FOUNDATION REVENUE TOTAL	79,125.19	0.00	249,945.24	(170,820.55)		74,317.46
005. B&A CARE REVENUE TOTAL	65,000.00	4,000.00	51,733.59	13,266.41		55,000.00
006. REVENUE - ACTIVITIES TOTAL	0.00	1,055.02	129,263.49	(129,263.51)		131,739.49
REVENUES TOTAL	5,705,094.74	298,850.00	5,927,772.58	(222,678.32)		5,957,612.17
01. SALARIES AND BONUSES TOTAL	(3,191,732.00)	(267,675.50)	(3,182,561.30)	(9,170.92)		3,182,561.30
02. BENEFITS TOTAL	(666,250.00)	(51,259.38)	(639,791.45)	(26,458.42)		639,791.45
03. BOOKS AND SUPPLIES TOTAL	(49,637.53)	(152.60)	(39,714.32)	(9,923.21)		46,190.85
04. TECHNOLOGY TOTAL	(111,108.30)	(4,457.21)	(80,624.04)	(30,484.30)		89,032.70
05. NON-CAP EQUIPMENT & LEASES TOTAL	(17,000.00)	(981.00)	(16,758.76)	(241.26)		16,758.76
06. CONTRACTED STUDENT SERVICES TOTAL	(256,956.60)	(23,004.50)	(239,249.00)	(17,707.56)		239,946.50
07. FIELD TRIPS/ACTIVITIES TOTAL	(7,700.00)	(189.40)	(141,835.11)	134,135.15		141,917.51
09. ADMIN SERVICES TOTAL	(281,580.49)	(13,171.74)	(194,327.17)	(87,253.26)		275,315.06
10. INSURANCES TOTAL	(52,536.00)	(351.00)	(52,852.66)	316.66		52,501.66
11. FACILITIES TOTAL	(990,156.00)	(20,859.99)	(945,723.91)	(44,431.93)		951,208.46
14. B&A CARE TOTAL	(55,325.00)	(7,460.51)	(52,428.22)	(2,896.74)		52,512.93
21. CLUBS TOTAL	(2,873.82)	(196.00)	(1,254.95)	(1,618.87)		2,873.82
EXPENSES TOTAL	(5,682,855.74)	(389,758.83)	(5,587,120.89)	(95,734.66)		5,690,611.00
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	22,239.00	(90,908.83)	340,651.69	(318,412.98)		267,001.17
	0.39%					4.69%

07/08/2026
12:15 PM

Page 1 of 1

THE EXPLORIS SCHOOL**Income Statement****Fiscal Year: 2026 Month: June****Include Fund(s): 1X, 2X, 5X**

Fund	Beg. Balance	MTD Actual	MTD Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Fund 1X					
Revenue Total:	3,527,025.25	0.00	293,918.77	3,527,025.25	3,527,025.25
Expense Total:	3,514,027.25	12,998.00	444,520.99	3,527,025.25	5,334,252.52
Change in Fund 1X Balance:	12,998.00	(12,998.00)	(150,602.22)	0.00	(1,807,227.27)
Fund 2X					
Revenue Total:	1,863,747.63	294,963.32	160,392.71	2,158,710.95	1,924,712.28
Expense Total:	1,461,546.17	369,564.01	9,739.82	1,831,110.18	116,877.53
Change in Fund 2X Balance:	402,201.46	(74,600.69)	150,652.89	327,600.77	1,807,834.75
Fund 5X					
Revenue Total:	61,457.39	4,178.05	6,413.05	65,635.44	76,956.58
Expense Total:	45,096.80	7,488.23	4,610.42	52,585.03	55,325.00
Change in Fund 5X Balance:	16,360.59	(3,310.18)	1,802.63	13,050.41	21,631.58

Fund 1X - State Funds

Fund 2X - Local Funds

Fund 3X - Federal Funds

Fund 5X - Multiple Enterprise Fund (Before & After School Program)

THE EXPLORIS SCHOOL**Balance Sheet****Fiscal Year: 2026 | Fiscal Month: June**
Include Funds: All

Assets		
2X.10100.0000.00000.00000.000.0 0.000.00000	Cash OP FCIT 6528	279,493.07
2X.10110.0000.00000.00000.000.0 0.000.00000	Cash - Reserve 3637	(10.00)
2X.10120.0000.00000.00000.000.0 0.000.00000	Cash Pinnacle 6688 OP	100,250.05
2X.10230.0000.00000.00000.000.0 0.000.00000	Cash MM Pinnacle 6704	2,245,274.69
2X.16100.0000.00000.00000.000.0 0.000.00000	Prepaid Expenses	59,386.67
2X.16110.0000.00000.00000.000.0 0.000.00000	Security Deposit	15,658.00
5X.10100.0000.00000.00000.000.0 0.000.00000	Cash OP FCIT 6528	519,330.09
5X.16100.0000.00000.00000.000.0 0.000.00000	Prepaid Expenses	120.00
	TOTAL Assets:	3,219,502.57
Liabilities		
2X.22820.0000.00000.00000.000.0 0.000.00000	EEs' Flex Spending Deductions	(12,002.87)
	TOTAL Liabilities:	(12,002.87)
Reserves and Equity		
2X.29600.0000.00000.00000.000.0 0.000.00000	Fund Equity	2,384,454.58
5X.29600.0000.00000.00000.000.0 0.000.00000	Fund Equity	506,399.68
	TOTAL Reserves and Equity:	2,890,854.26
	NET GAIN (LOSS):	340,651.18
	TOTAL LIABILITIES / RESERVES / INCOME:	3,219,502.57

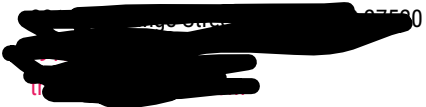
Fund 1X - State Funds
Fund 2X - Local Funds
Fund 3X - Federal Funds
Fund 5X - Multiple Enterprise Fund (Before & After School Program)

6/30/2026 Account Balances		
Bank	Bank Account	Balance
First Citizens	The Exploris School Checking	\$929,599.36
Pinnacle	The Exploris School Checking	\$100,250.05
Pinnacle	The Exploris School Reserves	\$2,245,274.69
First Citizens	The Exploris School Foundation-Annual Fund	\$152,387.51

Coversheet

Documents

Section:	IV. Director's Report
Item:	A. Documents
Purpose:	Discuss
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	ResumeBrittneyBivins (2).pdf 1 ResumeNaomiWright (1) (1).pdf 1ResumeKelseaAnderson (1) (1).pdf July 2026 Exploris Leadership Team Board Report (1).pdf



BRITTNEY BIVINS

SKILLS

Communication, strong knowledge of technology-based programs including Microsoft and Google

EXPERIENCE

Triangle Math and Science Academy – *Middle Grades Educator*

2022–Current

- Created project based learning for 7th and 6th grade students
- Collaborated with colleagues to plan for vertical alignment and determine student academic achievement
- Maintained strong communication with colleagues and families regarding student behavior, learning and well-being via Schoology, Parent Square and Powerschool Platforms
- Strong knowledge and use in technology based programs such as Google, Schoology, Microsoft, and various other online platforms
- Collaborated with the school social worker to create Personalized Education Plans for students at risk.
- Collaborated with a Special Programs teacher to create and modify IEPs.
- Monitored student performance and behavior via classroom interactions and academic assignments
- Served as Grade Level Chair, SIP team member, member of the Lighthouse Committee for Leader In Me.

Wake County Public Schools – *Middle Grades Educator*

2012–2021

- Collaborated with colleagues to analyze data, plan lessons, and determine student academic achievement
- Maintained strong communication with colleagues, families and community members regarding student behavior, learning and well-being
- Strong knowledge and use in technology based programs such as Google and Microsoft
- Collaborated with student support teams (guidance counselors) to create grade level learning opportunities.
- Monitored student performance and behavior via classroom interactions and academic assignments
- Maintained membership in the Family Engagement Committee which planned events for parents
- Department Chair for English Language Arts-ran department meetings, ordered materials for the department, worked in partnership with other department chairs in and outside of the school.
- Committee membership in the School Improvement Team-planned and collaborated with other school leaders to make decisions on the school's mission, vision, values.

The ARC of the Triangle–*Job Coach*

2020–2022

- Assisted client with Autism and IDD in achieving vocational goals and job development.
- Communicated with the client's employer to determine skills and behavioral requirements to be successful in the bagger position.
- Maintained communication with client's case manager and parents to ensure client's goals are appropriate for the client
- Maintained notes on client's behaviors in an online charting system

Durham Public Schools – *Middle Grades Educator*

2007–2012

- Prepared reports and documents regarding student behavior.
- Maintained confidentiality while creating and implementing student education plans.
- Collaborated with colleagues to analyze student data to determine student progress
- Engaged community members to serve as support systems to help tutor kids or as guest speakers

- Communicated with students daily on academic or social successes/needs

EDUCATION

Walden University-*School Counseling*

In progress

- Course work includes College and Career Counseling, Group Processing, Child and Adolescent development, Child and Adolescent Counseling, Leadership, Advocacy, and Consultation in the School.

Wake Tech Community College-*Substance Abuse Certificate*

In progress

- Course work includes Methods in Group Therapy, Intake and Assessment, Addictive Processes, Issues in Client Services, Addiction & Recovery Counseling, and Group Techniques/Therapy

North Carolina State University – *School Counselor Certificate*

2017

- Course work included career counseling, theories in counseling, and multicultural counseling.

North Carolina State University – *Middle School Education Bachelor of Science*

2004

CERTIFICATIONS AND LICENSES

Certificate in Counselor Education, Licensed in Middle Grades Education- Language Arts and Social Studies

Elementary Education License Add-on

In progress-Graduate school for School Counseling. Finishing in Spring 2027.

LEADERSHIP

Team Lead, Department Chair, Member of school Leadership Team, Member of School Improvement Team

VOLUNTEER

Point Church of Fuquay-Varina, Fuquay-Varina, NC - Central Prison Card Ministry, Nursery attendant, and Check-in Services

July 2021-Current

NAOMI WRIGHT

MAGNET EDUCATOR

CONTACT



[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

MAGNET EDUCATOR PROFILE

A WCPSS middle school educator with experience teaching Social Studies and English Language Arts.

As the International Baccalaureate (IB) School Improvement Plan Chair: I have led meaningful professional development, supported magnet initiatives, and guided the implementation of service learning projects. I am passionate about integrating literacy, research, and student inquiry to cultivate engaging, student centered learning environments that promote both academic growth and collective teacher efficacy.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2022- Present

Teacher | WCPSS

East Garner Magnet Middle School

- Teach 6th Grade ELA and 8th Grade Social Studies using inquiry-based and literacy-rich instruction
- Design lessons aligned with IB principles and NC standards
- Integrate reading, writing, and research skills across content areas

IB & Magnet Leadership

- IB School Improvement Plan Chair (2025-2026)
- Active SIP Committee Member (2022-Present)
- Spearheaded professional development (PD) on IB initiatives and literacy practices
- Led reimplementation of the IB Year 3 Community Project (2024-2025)
- Developed mentor and student resource guides

Contributions

- Co-Organized annual Hispanic Heritage Month programming
- Sponsor for annual Arts Department Met Gala event
- Co-lead weekly Dungeons & Dragons/Board Game Club
- Sunshine Committee member- build workplace culture

2021-2022

Substitute Teacher | WCPSS

Schools served: Lufkin Road MS, Carroll Magnet MS, River Oaks MS, East Garner Magnet MS, Enloe Magnet HS, South Garner HS

- Provided instruction in middle and high schools across the district
- Delivered scripted literacy instruction during track-out sessions
- Built classroom management experience across diverse school settings

IB TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Approaches to Learning (ATL) Training | Certificate of Completion
- FLIBS MYP Unit Planner Training | Certificate of Completion
- **Received PD:** No Nonsense Nurturer | Trauma Informed Teaching | International Baccalaureate | Magnet Programs | Ron Clark Academy | AVID | PLC+ | Second Step

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Editorial Intern | Shanon Media

- Wrote and edited articles for regional publications
- Conducted research and fact-checking
- Managed digital content platforms

Office Coordinator | Live Raleigh

- Wrote and edited articles for regional publications
- Conducted research and fact-checking
- Managed digital content platforms

Benefits Associate | Fidelity Investments

- Delivered employee education sessions and training support
- Provided subject matter expertise in HR and retirement systems
- Supported onboarding and training for new employees

EDUCATION

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

BA Humanities – Literature & Historical Perspectives
Summa Cum Laude

SKILLS

Inquiry-Based Learning | Literacy Integration | Project-Based Learning | Professional Development Curriculum Design | Adult Facilitation | Relationship Building | Curriculum Writing | Student Engagement | Collaboration | Canvas

Kelsea M. Anderson

Raleigh, NC



Professional Summary

Dedicated and results-driven educator with experience supporting and leading instruction across Kindergarten through 5th grade, seeking an elementary or middle school teaching position. Holds a Bachelor's degree in History with a concentration in International Studies and brings a strong foundation in literacy, historical thinking, and critical analysis. Proven ability to drive student achievement, including top 20% statewide performance in Reading EOG, while creating engaging, student-centered learning environments. Skilled in designing standards-aligned instruction across content areas, with particular strengths in Social Studies and English Language Arts, using data to inform teaching and foster critical thinking and inquiry-based learning.

Professional Experience

5th Grade Teacher

Powell Elementary School, Raleigh, NC

2023 - Present

- Design and implement standards-aligned instruction in ELA, Math, and Science, incorporating cross-curricular connections with an emphasis on Social Studies and English Language Arts
- Use data-driven strategies to differentiate instruction and support student growth
- Facilitate small group instruction and whole-class discussions that promote critical thinking and inquiry-based learning
- Strengthen student literacy and comprehension through integration of informational texts, writing, and discussion across content areas
- Foster a positive and structured classroom environment through effective classroom management strategies
- Collaborate with grade-level team to plan instruction and analyze student performance
- Maintain consistent communication with families to support student success
- Achieved top 20% performance in the state on the 2024 Reading EOG

Instructional Assistant (K-2)

Wake County Public School System, NC

2017 - 2023

- Supported classroom instruction across Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grade
- Led small group interventions in reading and math to strengthen foundational skills
- Assisted with classroom management and behavior support
- Adapted instructional materials to meet diverse student needs
- Collaborated with teachers to monitor progress and implement interventions

Guest Experience Host

Marbles Kids Museum, Raleigh, NC

2015 - 2016

- Delivered engaging, customer-focused experiences for diverse groups
- Demonstrated strong communication and problem-solving in a fast-paced environment
- Built positive relationships to enhance guest engagement and satisfaction

Teacher's Assistant (Work Study)

Meredith College, Raleigh, NC

2013 - 2015

- Supported faculty with administrative and instructional tasks
- Organized materials, communications, and departmental projects

Computer Lab Monitor / Supervisor

Wake Technical Community College, Raleigh, NC

2009 - 2013

- Provided instructional support to students using technology
- Managed lab operations and assisted with Microsoft Office tools

Education & Licensure

Alternative Licensure Program (In Progress)

Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) & edTPA

Bachelor of Arts in History (International Studies)

Meredith College, Raleigh, NC

Associate of Arts

Wake Technical Community College, Raleigh, NC

Skills

- Classroom Management
- Differentiated Instruction
- Data-Driven Instruction
- Small Group Instruction & Intervention
- Literacy Instruction (Reading & Writing)
- Inquiry-Based Learning
- Cross-Curricular Instruction (ELA & Social Studies)
- Google Classroom & Educational Technology
- Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- Communication & Collaboration



The Exploris School

Directors Report

To: Board Members

From: Ethan, Josh, & Deb

Re: Monthly Board Report

Date: July 23, 2026

The following information is provided to the Board of Directors:

Enrollment

Grade Level	Number for Full Enrollment	Target Crew Sizes	2026-2027 Applications as of 7/21/26	Remaining on Waitlist	Offered Seats (Open/Accepted)
Kindergarten	34	17	198	80	35 (1/34)
1 st Grade	36	18	48	2	9 (1/8)
2 nd Grade	38	19	50	28	4 (0/4)
3 rd Grade	38	19	56	22	10 (0/10)
4 th Grade	38	19	38	23	4 (0/4)
5 th Grade	38	19	54	39	3 (0/3)
6 th Grade	76	19	118	0	47 (5/42)
7 th Grade	76	19	48	0	20 (13/7)
8 th Grade	76	19	24	2	7 (0/7)
Total	450		634	196	139 (20/119)

Note: Although we are underenrolled, we do not plan to enroll additional students for the remainder of the year. In the best interest of the school, we will consider enrollment opportunities as they arise.

Student Support Team Report

Month	In School Suspension # students / # days	Out of School Suspension # students / # days	Major referrals that did not result in suspension # students / # referrals	Minor Behavior Referrals # students / # referrals
August				
September				
October				
November				
December				
January				
February				
March				
April				
May				

June				
TOTALS				

Campus Updates:

- Completed end-of-year closure for both campuses, including June 5 last day for students, 8th grade graduation, and June 8–9 teacher workdays focused on reflection and instructional planning for 26–27.
- Elementary and middle school teams held post-EOG data reviews to analyze proficiency, growth, and subgroup trends and to identify priority focus areas for Tier 1 instruction and intervention planning for 26–27.
- Summer work has focused on refining master schedules for both campuses, including ongoing middle school discussion of a schedule swap to place 6th grade core academics earlier in the day and 8th grade core classes later, aligned with adolescent circadian rhythms and teacher feedback.
- Leadership and student support teams have continued visioning around SST restructuring for 26–27 in response to Michelle Duncan’s move, mapping workflows across counseling, behavior support, and intervention roles to better align with emerging student needs.
- Summer weeks are being used to update and refresh all school technology, with Lenny reimaging and repairing student laptops and Deb completing the required Remote Learning Plan and Digital Learning and Media Inventory report for the state.
- Leadership has been using the feedback from last year and the TWC to envision the needs and goals for our professional development program for 26–27, including supporting beginning teachers, new teams, and veteran teachers.
- Hiring for 26–27 has moved from late-spring interviews into summer onboarding, with key positions in middle grades ELA, math, art, and elementary grades now filled or in final offer stages, and remaining openings prioritized based on enrollment and MTSS needs
- Annual review and updates of all handbooks continue as summer work, including the Personnel Handbook, the Family & Student Handbook, and the Crisis Manual.
- Summer operations work has included coordinated facilities, technology, and logistics projects at both campuses (room moves, furniture and storage planning, testing space mapping, and small repairs) to prepare for the return of staff and students.
- Leadership has begun transition and visioning conversations connected to Ethan’s resignation and Leah’s interim role
 - longer-term strategic moves (staffing model, potential new roles such as intervention partner or behavior coach, and future building plans) will be researched and considered
 - using structured agendas to surface priorities and trade-offs
 - inviting interested stakeholders to be a part of the process
 - anticipate a task force team with family members as well for the ongoing reflection on our leadership structures
- The middle grades math team continued its review of placement criteria for Math 1 and Math 2, using achievement data, classroom performance, and equity considerations to refine pathways and communication for families.
- The middle grades schedule options for 26–27 are being studied for downstream impacts on global arts, crew, services time, and shared staff across Elementary/Middle, with teacher feedback gathered before a final recommendation is brought to the board
- Team Ops is reviewing our before- and after-care programs to adjust preventive strategies, after-school expectations, and restorative practices heading into the new year.

Community Connections:

- Continued strong collaboration with PTO following spring events (Spring Market, Fun Run, Madagascar Jr.), with planning underway for early-fall family events that support enrollment, community building, and fundraising at both campuses.
- Follow-up communications with families around Intent to Return and enrollment have extended into July, with staff troubleshooting access issues and using updated numbers to manage offers from the waitlist and plan crew sizes.
- Deborah Brown's recognition as 2026 NC Charter School Principal of the Year has remained a key relationship-building point, leading to a trip to the International ISTE conference earlier this summer in Orlando and an invitation to emcee and give a keynote address for the state charter school conference.
- Ongoing engagement with state and charter sector partners (NCAPCS, NC Coalition for Public Charters, Raleigh Charter, RISE) continues through summer check-ins, grant-readiness work for future charter expansion/STEM funding, and shared professional learning.
- Community partnership opportunities identified in the spring (e.g., RISE lunch program, Carolina Courage "Changemakers," Nash Square renovation project, local arts and museum partners) are being explored for scale-up or replication in 26–27 across both campuses.
- Families will be sent a summer newsletter in late July with key updates, and throughout the summer, social media has been updated for calendar highlights (Juneteenth holiday, summer break dates for 11- and 12-month staff, board meetings) and preparations for the new school year.

Human Resources Update

Staff Departures

Name	Position	Notes
Margie Fowler	8th Humanities	Retired
Chris Duncan	ES EC	moving to Indiana
Michelle Duncan	Student Services Coordinator/ MS Counselor	moving to Indiana
Stacey Kaufman	6th math/sci	opening her own private school
Lauren Yusician	7th Humanities	resigned/ programmatic fit
Shawna Scipione	1st grade	resigned/moving to WCPSS
Jessie Francese	8th Humanities	will be working with Cori Greer-Banks at Carolina k-12
Vikki Hilliard	2nd grade	position assigned to a diff. team member; not returning

New Hires for Approval

Name	Position	Notes
Naomi Wright	7th Humanities	
Kelsea Anderson	6th HUmanities	
Brittney Bivins	8th Humanities	
Sheri Bragg	ES Teaching Partner	long-time Exploris sub, both short and long term

Internal Position Changes

Position	Notes
Nikki Parker	moving from TP to 4th grade completed her degree & licensure req.
Desmond Lanclos	moving from TP to ES Movement
Leah Ruto	moving from Inst. Coach to Interim ES Director

Tom Simmons	moving from 4th to 1st grade
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Staffing Needs for 26-27

Position	Status	Notes
1 Middle EC Teaching Partner	offer in progress	
1 Elementary EC Teacher	posted; collecting resumes	Original candidate declined due to family health issues
2 Elem. teaching partners	offers in progress	
1 Middle ELA/Crew Teacher		Hiring was paused earlier this summer and has now resumed

Important Dates (Board Attendance Welcome/Requested)

- Teacher Workweek Welcome Breakfast Wed. Aug. 5th 8:30-9:30 at ES Campus
- Meet the Teacher Night Monday Aug. 10th drop-in 4:00-6:00 on both Campuses