



# EL COLEGIO CHARTER SCHOOL

Annual Report  
2021-2022

**ISD #4057-07**

Katie Groh de Aviña, Executive Director  
4137 Bloomington Ave South  
Minneapolis, MN 55407  
612-728-5728  
[www.el-colegio.org](http://www.el-colegio.org)

**Authorizer**

Pillsbury United Communities  
Office of Public Charter Schools  
1701 Oak Park Ave North  
Minneapolis, MN 55411  
[pillsburyunited.org/programs/charter-schools/](http://pillsburyunited.org/programs/charter-schools/)

This report is distributed to the public digitally via El Colegio's website starting at: <http://www.el-colegio.org/board-of-directors/>. The community is notified of this report's publication via social media, our website, and through text notification via JMC. Printed copies are available for pickup at El Colegio High School.

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## **Statutory Information Regarding the Charter School Annual Report**

*In accordance with MN Statute 124E.16, Subd. 2., "A charter school must publish an annual report approved by the board of directors. The annual report must at least include information on school enrollment, student attrition, governance and management, staffing, finances, academic performance, innovative practices and implementation, and future plans."*

*The balance of this report is organized around the elements of Pillsbury United Communities' Charter School Annual Report Checklist.*

*This report can be found online starting at: <http://www.el-colegio.org/board-of-directors/>*

# Introduction

## About El Colegio

El Colegio Charter School is a public, tuition-free high school and community hub located in the vibrant and ethnically diverse Bancroft neighborhood of south Minneapolis.

Our program is comprised of two critical components. First, we offer a high school experience that builds on the cultural and linguistic strengths of our students by offering a rigorous academic curriculum, including concurrent-enrollment courses in partnership with the University of Minnesota. Second, we support our students, along with their families and other youth in the community, through a wide-ranging community engagement approach that gives the opportunity to provide academic support, leadership opportunities, and community connections.

## Mission

In community, El Colegio honors and builds upon the talents of bilingual students and their diverse families to provide the academic rigor, leadership skills, career preparation, and community connections necessary to fulfill their potential as change-makers.

## Vision

Communities worldwide are transformed by the El Colegio experience of liberation.

## Core Values

El Colegio is distinct from traditional schools in its embrace of four values that permeate all aspects of its work with youth: identity, solidarity, intellect, justice.

**Identity:** We support our youth and their families in recognizing and embracing their own unique histories, cultures, and languages.

**Solidarity:** We recognize that we all live in connection with each other; we must honor and support our youth to honor and embrace our communities.

**Intellect:** Success in life and community change requires critical thinking and a deeper level of consciousness.

**Justice:** We pursue our work not solely for the individual benefit of the youth and families we serve, but because we believe their role is critical in securing equity and opportunity for all members of society.

## Statutory Purpose

The primary statutory purpose of El Colegio is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement. The school will report its implementation of this primary purpose annually in its Annual Report. To improve all pupil learning and all student achievement El Colegio students are assessed for learning and growth through multiple Academic measures; and career and college readiness tools. Students have their formal testing through the state of Minnesota and also are tested twice a year on the NWEA assessment. An additional statutory purpose is to increase learning opportunities for pupils. We specialize in offering unique programming centered around the context of our communities: honoring, recognizing, and utilizing their histories, their cultures, and their languages.

## Authorizer Information

El Colegio Charter School is authorized by Pillsbury United Communities (PUC).

*“Pillsbury United Communities is committed to ensuring all students are prepared and ready for life. As a charter school authorizer, we work to make certain that every young person is in school, engaged and in an environment that believes in their endless potential--no matter their current circumstance.”*

PUC charter schools:

- Offer bold and innovative educational strategies
- Provide an environment that promotes respect for all students and their individual identities
- Engage students in academic and authentic learning opportunities, service learning, and personal development

### **Pillsbury United Communities**

Office of Public Charter Schools

1701 Oak Park Avenue North

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411

<https://pillsburyunited.org/programs/charter-schools/>

Office of Public Charter Schools Phone: 612-377-7000

General Agency Phone: 612-302-3414

**Larry McKenzie, Charter School Liaison**

[LarryM@pillsburyunited.org](mailto:LarryM@pillsburyunited.org)

**Samantha Diaz, Director**

[SamanthaD@pillsburyunited.org](mailto:SamanthaD@pillsburyunited.org)

# Student Enrollment & Attrition

## Historical Enrollment & Attendance Rate

School Year	Total Students Enrolled	Overall Attendance Rate
2012-2013	70	81%
2013-2014	80	85%
2014-2015	87	84%
2015-2016	99	83.5%
2016-2017	88	89.5%
2017-2018	97	81%
2018-2019	121	84%
2019-2020	95	85%
2020-2021	111	96.8%
<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>83.7%</b>

## 2021 Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Count	Percent
Hispanic or Latino	91	100%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0.0%
Asian	0	0.0%
Black or African American	0	0.0%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
White	0	0.0%
Two or More Races	0	0.0%
All Students	91	100.0%

*MDE MARSS as of October 1, 2021*

## 2021 Enrollment by Special Population

Special Population	Count	Percent
English Learner	60	66%
Special Education	22	24%
Free/Reduced Priced Lunch	75	82.4%
Homeless	6	6%

*MDE Report Card as of October 1, 2021*

Student Backgrounds tend to separate into three groups of students. Each group has special needs and opportunities El Colegio works to meet:

**True 9th-Graders:** With El Colegio all 4 years, 100% graduation rate

**New Arrivals:** Level 1 ESL, Bi-National

**Transfer Students:** Low GPA, Low Attendance, Many with Special Education IEPs, Behavioral Incidents, "Invisible" for 9th to 11th Grade, Level 5 ESL but still not fluent, Most US-born, Most previously attended other MN schools

**Attendance Goal:** 90%

**Final Attendance:** 83.77%

**Budgeted ADM:** 85

**Final ADM:** 86.81

**Enrollment Oct 1, 2021:** 91

**Final Day 2021-2022 Enrollment:** 77

### Attrition and Mobility

Grade	Enrolled Oct. 1	Enrolled after Oct. 1	Transferred after Oct. 1	Enrolled at End of School Year
9	32	11	14	29
10	23	8	13	18
11	15	4	7	12
12	21	2	5	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>77</b>

The retention rate within the 2020-2021 school year was 85%.

# Governance & Management

## El Colegio Board of Directors

El Colegio Charter School is governed by its Board of Directors. According to its bylaws, the Board of Directors may have up to thirteen members. During the 2021-2022 school year, nine seats were filled with seven community members and one teacher member for all months of the school year. Board members serve three-year terms, with elections being held at El Colegio's Annual Meeting every November.

The standing committees are: Academic, Finance, Governance, and Fundraising.

### Board of Directors Roster 2021-2022

**Tony Aarts (January 2020-Current)**

Reading Assessment Specialist  
Minnesota Department of Education  
1500 MN-36  
Roseville, MN 55113  
[taarts@el-colegio.org](mailto:taarts@el-colegio.org)  
651-582-8200

**Chair**

**Jennifer Godinez (December 2012-May 2022)**

Associate Executive Director  
Minnesota Minority Education Partnership  
Project Director, Race Equity and Excellence in Education Action Network  
c/o MMEP  
2233 University Ave. West #220  
St. Paul, MN 55114  
[jgodinez@el-colegio.org](mailto:jgodinez@el-colegio.org)  
651-645-7400 x203

**Vice-Chair**

**Kent Fordyce (December 2017-Current)**

Kent's Accounting Services, LLC  
Certified QuickBooks ProAdvisor 2005-2017  
[kfordyce@el-colegio.org](mailto:kfordyce@el-colegio.org), 612-889-2959

**Treasurer**

**Bianet Castellanos (December 2016-August 2022)**

Professor, Department of American Studies  
University of Minnesota  
19 Scott Hall  
72 Pleasant St SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55455  
[bcastellanos@el-colegio.org](mailto:bcastellanos@el-colegio.org), 612-626-7266

**Secretary**

**Tamara Ramirez-Torres (September 2016-Current)**

**Teacher**

Teacher  
El Colegio Charter School  
4137 Bloomington Ave South  
Minneapolis MN 55407  
[tramirez-torres@el-colegio.org](mailto:tramirez-torres@el-colegio.org), 612-728-5728

**Ann P Zukoski (December 2012-Current)**

**Member**

Evaluation & Research Team Supervisor  
Office of Statewide Health Improvement Initiatives (OSHII)  
Minnesota Department of Health  
2201 W 52<sup>nd</sup> St.  
Minneapolis, MN, 55419  
[azukoski@el-colegio.org](mailto:azukoski@el-colegio.org), 541-760-6630

**Dr Elizabeth Sumida Huaman (November 2020-Current)**

**Member**

Associate Professor of Comparative & International Development Education  
Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, & Development, UofM  
211C Burton Hall  
178 Pillsbury Dr SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55455  
[ehuaman@el-colegio.org](mailto:ehuaman@el-colegio.org), 612-626-5118

**Brenda Sanchez (April 2021-August 2022)**

**Member**

Children's Cabinet Coordinator  
Minnesota Management and Budget  
Office of Governor Tim Walz and Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan  
658 Cedar Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55155  
[bsanchez@el-colegio.org](mailto:bsanchez@el-colegio.org), 651-259-3636

**Dr. Madelaine Cahuas (November 2021 - Current)**

**Member**

Assistant Professor, Urban and Feminist Geography  
Department of Geography, Environment & Society, U of MN  
267 19th Ave S  
Minneapolis, MN 55455  
[mcahuas@el-colegio.org](mailto:mcahuas@el-colegio.org)  
612-625-5578

# Management

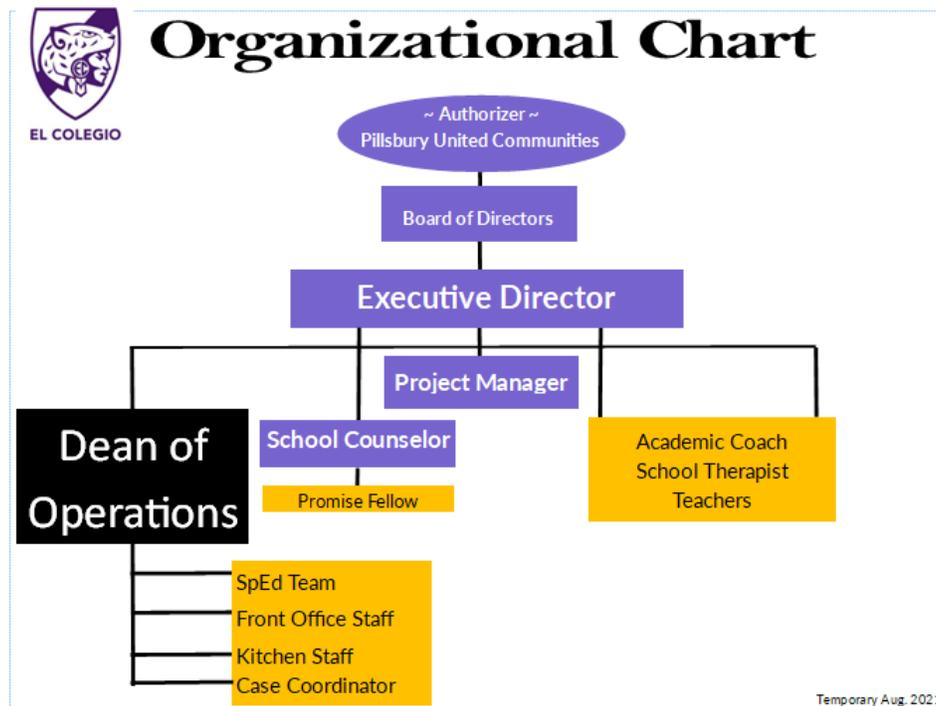
Ms Katie Groh de Aviña served her third term as El Colegio’s Executive Director. The El Colegio Board of Directors conducted their annual performance review of the Executive Director during Quarter 4 of the 2021-2022 school year. Staff, students, families and Board members filled out surveys and provided feedback on the following areas: Team leadership, Maintain and Support Community Partnerships, Student and Staff Development and Support, School Operations and Fundraising.

During the 2021-2022 school year, Ms Katie focused her professional development on attending the Principal Academy through the University of Minnesota, which is a two year program. She also met monthly with her mentor, Ramona Arreguin de Rosales, a social justice and charter school leader.

Other trainings Ms Katie attended include:

- Propel Nonprofits Financial Leadership Cohort
- Xito Institute
- PUC Staff Cohorts: Student Engagement
- E3 Coaching
- Ethnic Studies: 6 sessions with Acosta Educational Partnership
- Honoring our Differences and Shared Reality Education Evolving Conference

El Colegio’s staff are organized to effectively provide quality education and services to students and to efficiently run the school. The following organization chart diagrams the general staff accountability structure.



## Staffing

El Colegio strives to ensure its staff reflects the community in which our students are from. 64% of our staff are from the Latinx community—aligning with demographics of our student body—with 76% being staff of color. Due to the shortage of teachers of color in the state of Minnesota, this is a difficult feat to achieve. We conduct intentional searches during the hiring process by connecting with organizations such as the MN Association for Charter Schools, Free Minds Free People, the School of Urban Education at Metropolitan State University, and multiple departments at the University of Minnesota.

### Staff Roster 2021-2022

#### Non-Licensed Staff

	Name	Position	Returned FY22	Returning FY23
1	Paola Ambrocio Torres	Receptionist/Program Asst.	Yes	Yes
2	Raquel Arismendez	Project Manager	Yes	No
3	Laura Garcia	Administrative Assistant	Yes	No
4	Jennifer Duran de Macario	Case Coordinator	Yes	No
5	Adalinda Estrada	School-Based Therapist	Yes	No
6	Katie Groh de Aviña	Executive Director	Yes	Yes
7	Deborah Malaga	Head School Counselor	Yes	Yes
8	Yolanda Martinez Pineda	Academic Counselor	Yes	No
9	Landon Nelson	Dean of Operations	Yes	Yes
10	Tyra Ramsey	SPED Educational Partner	Yes	No
11	Richard Rivera	Student Engagement Specialist / SPED EP	Yes	Yes
12	Eva Shellabarger	SPED Educational Partner	Yes	Yes
13	Alexis Wall	SPED Educational Partner	Yes	Yes
14	Jessica Martinez	Student Engagement Specialist / SPED EP	New to FY22	Yes

## Licensed Faculty

	Name	Position	Folder Number	Returned FY22	Returning FY23
1	Steve Asencio	ESL	509642	Yes	Yes
2	Chad Davidson	Math	419776	Yes	Yes
3	Stephanie Degonda	Academic Coach	060219	Yes	No
4	James Derrick	Social Studies	510169	Yes	Yes
5	Cesar Montufar	English Language Arts	1000123	Yes	No
6	Michael Nelson	SPED	482765	Yes	Yes
7	Rosario Neri-Fuentes	SPED	500348	Yes	Yes
8	Gary Nieves	Social Studies	496506	Yes	Yes
9	Tamara Ramirez-Torres	Spanish	395014	Yes	Yes
10	Christina Lan Smith	Science	1002569	Yes	No
11	Joselin Navarro Cano	Social Studies	1011579	New to FY22	Yes

## Professional Development

Date	Organization	Training	Target Audience
08/11/2021	E3	Training	All Staff & ACC Staff
08/12/2021	E3	Training	All Staff & ACC Staff
08/13/2021	E3	Training	All Staff & ACC Staff
08/17/2021	Lynn Harper UnidosUS	GLAD Refresher Escalera Training	Teachers & EPs Escalera Instructors
08/18/2021	Lynn Harper UnidosUS	GLAD Training Escalera Training	New Teachers & EPs Escalera Instructors
08/19/2021	Aqui Para Ti	Opioid Training	Teachers & EPs
08/20/2021	JMC Lynn Harper JMC UnidosUS	How to use JMC GLAD Training JMC Office Escalera Training	All Staff New Teachers & EPs Non-instructional Staff Escalera Instructors
09/17/2021	Andrea Vazquez	Code Savvy Training	Teachers

05/05/2022	Acosta Educational Partnership	Ethnic Studies Part I	Educators of Color (ACC and EC)
05/12/2022	Acosta Educational Partnership	Ethnic Studies Part II	Educators of Color (ACC and EC)
05/19/2022	Acosta Educational Partnership	Ethnic Studies Part III	Educators of Color (ACC and EC)
05/26/2022	Acosta Educational Partnership	Ethnic Studies Part IV	Educators of Color (ACC and EC)
06/16/2022	Acosta Educational Partnership	Ethnic Studies - Latinx Community	Educators of Color

## Finances

For complete financials for 2021-2022 and/or an organizational budget, please contact the Executive Director, Katie Groh de Aviña, via email at [avina@el-colegio.org](mailto:avina@el-colegio.org) or by phone at 612-728-5728.

Clifton Larson Allen (CLA) provided the accounting services for El Colegio for the 2021-2022 school year. Designs for Learning took over the accounting services starting July 1, 2022; include June 2022 Financials.

The information presented below is derived from the unaudited June 2022 end-of-year financial summary. The full financial audit will be completed and presented to the Minnesota Department of Education no later than December 31, 2022.

## Revenues

El Colegio has strived to have diverse funding sources, however the majority of our revenue comes from state and federal funds. Total revenues for Fiscal Year 2022 were \$2,111,205.

Approximately 76% of revenue came from state sources and 15% came from federal sources. Other revenue makes up 9% of the rest of our overall revenue.

El Colegio saw a decrease in enrollment at the end of the 2021-2022. Average Daily Membership (ADM) ended at 86.81 for Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22). This ADM amount is a decrease from 89.08 for

FY21. We strive to increase enrollment in the coming years and understand the need for growth for our long-term sustainability.

## Expenses

Overall expenses for FY22 were \$2,096,978 based upon unaudited data. Approximately 81% of the expenses were for staff salaries and wages, benefits, and contracted services. Approximately 16% of expenses were for building lease and upkeep.

An ongoing challenge for El Colegio is to be competitive with teacher salaries. Our teaching staff is increasing in their experience. Of our total licensed faculty, the median teaching experience is 5 years with only four teachers having less than 5 years' experience. In order to keep excellent teachers and administrators, they need salaries that are competitive with other public schools. We deal with this reality by working towards managing other expenses effectively, creating growing annual fund balances, and developing a specific, fair and workable system for salaries and raises.

## Fund Balance

As of June 30, 2022, El Colegio has a total fund balance of \$15,004 compared to \$777 as of June 30, 2021. This fund balance represents approximately 0.68% of expenditures. Based on unaudited figures, the school increased its fund balance by \$14,227.

El Colegio's target fund balance over the long term is 20%, and the school will continue to grow and increase that fund balance through strategic budgeting and close fiscal monitoring in the years to come.

## Audit Findings

As of the date of preparing this report, the audit report for Fiscal Year 2022 is unavailable. Preliminary numbers are shown in the table below:

**EL COLEGIO CHARTER SCHOOL 4057**

**Balance Sheet**

**June 30, 2022**

	General Fund	Food Service Fund	Community Service Fund	Fixed Assets & Long Term Debt	Total All Funds
<b>ASSETS</b>					
<b>Current Assets</b>					
Cash	288,428	(8,551)	0	0	279,877
Due from MDE	83,700	44	0	0	83,744
Due from Federal	112,489	9,710	0	0	122,199
Due from Local Sources	79	0	0	0	79
Prepaid (Lease Deposits & Other)	6,445	0	0	0	6,445
Other	92,725	0	0	0	92,725
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>583,867</b>	<b>1,202</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>585,069</b>
<b>Other Assets</b>					
Investment in Fixed Assets	0	0	0	278,836	278,836
<b>Total Other Assets</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>278,836</b>	<b>278,836</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>583,867</b>	<b>1,202</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>697,883</b>	<b>863,905</b>
<b>LIABILITIES, EQUITY AND FUND BALANCE</b>					
<b>Current Liabilities</b>					
Payroll Liabilities	105,643	0	0	0	105,643
Accounts Payable	39,220	1,202	0	0	40,422
Short Term Debt-LOC	300,000	0	0	0	300,000
Deferred Revenue	0	0	0	0	0
Other	124,000	0	0	0	124,000
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>568,863</b>	<b>1,202</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>570,065</b>
<b>Fund Balance</b>					
* Unrestricted Fund Balance - 6/30/2021	8,559	0	0	0	8,559
* Restricted Fund Balance - 6/30/2021	6,445	0	0	278,836	285,281
Net Income-Through Current Month	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Fund Balance Summary</b>	<b>15,004</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>278,836</b>	<b>293,840</b>
<b>Total Liabilities, Equity and Fund Balance</b>	<b>583,867</b>	<b>1,202</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>697,883</b>	<b>863,905</b>

\* Balances are Preliminary

# Academic Performance

Each year, the NWEA MAP Reading and Math tests are administered in the Fall and Spring. These assessments are used by faculty to help identify target academic growth goals for each student and focus on specific areas of need.

NWEA calculates growth goals for students using RIT scores (Rasch Units). A RIT score indicates the instructional level in which a student is answering the test questions correctly about 50% of the time. This represents the student's Zone of Proximal Development, which then allows a teacher to scaffold appropriately for said student and differentiate instruction amongst the class as needed.

Depending on the grade level, an increased RIT score somewhere between 3 and 6 points represents a full grade level of academic growth in the subject. Which is why the tests are administered both in the Fall and the Spring: to demonstrate students' academic growth during that particular school year. The MAP tests have a statistical 50% probability that any student meets or exceeds their growth projection. Therefore, when a group of students shows more than 50% with growth in a year, they are exceeding expectations in that area.

The tables below depict the Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 test results by grade level.

## NWEA MAP Fall 2021: Math

Grade Level	Total Students w/ Valid Scores	Mean RIT	Standard Deviation	Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students at or Above National Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students at or Above District Grade Level Mean RIT
9th	33	200.7	21	226.7	0	21
10th	14	207.4	19.5	229.4	1	8
11th	12	212.3	20.9	232	2	5
12th	15	210.6	24.5	223	1	11

### NWEA MAP Fall 2021: Reading

Grade Level	Total Students w/ Valid Scores	Mean RIT	Standard Deviation	Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students at or Above National Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students at or Above District Grade Level Mean RIT
9th	29	181.8	22.4	219.1	1	13
10th	15	189.6	21.7	221.7	2	8
11th	13	195.2	25.7	223.7	1	8
12th	17	189.3	18.6	223.8	0	7

### NWEA MAP Spring 2022: Math

Grade Level	Total Students w/ Valid Scores	Mean RIT	Standard Deviation	Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students at or Above National Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students at or Above District Grade Level Mean RIT
9th	26	205.8	26.3	230	3	15
10th	14	220.6	15	232.4	2	7
11th	8	211.5	14.6	234.2	0	6
12th	9	209.8	14.3	234.2	0	4

### NWEA MAP Spring 2022: Reading

Grade Level	Total Students w/ Valid Scores	Mean RIT	Standard Deviation	Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students at or Above National Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students at or Above District Grade Level Mean RIT
9th	26	181.1	29.2	221.4	4	12
10th	12	189	23.4	223.5	1	5
11th	8	195.6	23.6	224.7	0	4
12th	9	191.2	18.2	224.3	0	4

With the addition of the Academic Coach position to the El Colegio team, teachers were better able to deepen their understanding behind the MAP scores and restructure lesson plans preemptively with the needs of the specific students present in a specific class in mind. Fortunately with the return to in-person learning we were able to test more students than previously.

Below are the NWEA RIT Growth Goals in both Reading and Math for the Fall to Spring MAP assessments.

NWEA % At or Above National Median - Reading				NWEA % At or Above National Median - Math			
Grade	# of Students Tested, Spring	% At or Above National Median	# At or Above National Median	Grade	# of Students Tested, Spring	% At or Above National Median	# At or Above National Median
9	26	15%	4	9	26	19%	5
10	12	8%	1	10	14	29%	4
11	8	25%	2	11	8	0%	0
12	9	0%	0	12	9	11%	1
<b>Overall</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Overall</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>10</b>

NWEA % Meeting RIT Growth Goals - Reading				NWEA % Meeting RIT Growth Goals - Math			
Grade	# of Students Tested, Fall & Spring	% Meeting Goal	# Meeting Goal	Grade	# of Students Tested, Fall & Spring	% Meeting Goal	# Meeting Goal
9	19	42%	8	9	21	86%	18
10	8	63%	5	10	9	89%	8
11	7	57%	4	11	7	43%	3
12	8	25%	2	12	7	43%	3
<b>Overall</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>Overall</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>65.25%</b>	<b>32</b>

El Colegio was only able to test 50% of students in both fall and spring for the 2021-2022 school year. Sixty percent of students tested in the spring. The year results show that the students are performing below the national average on both assessments, however, they are demonstrating growth. Meaningful growth is observed for Math skills where 65.25% of students met or exceeded their growth projections. Grades 9 and 10 made significant gains in math skills, whereas grades 11 and 12 demonstrated modest growth. Reading remains a focus area for students since only 45% met their growth projections.

## Minnesota Student Survey

El Colegio administered the Minnesota Student Survey to students in grades 9, 10, 11 and 12. We estimate that 75% of our students completed the survey but it is not possible to confirm before

the results are released since the survey platform does not share data directly with the school. Results from the survey will be available Fall 2022.

## Return to In-Person Learning

El Colegio was excited to begin the 2021-2022 school year in person and begin to rebuild the school community. There was much excitement from both staff and students and the agreement to continue safety measures was a school-wide agreement. El Colegio followed MDH and CDC guidelines and provided students the ability to join Google Meets from home if they were unable to come to school. Teachers were equipped with technology to teach those in person and also allow those online to join.

El Colegio shifted back to a 7 period plus Advisory schedule when previously during distance learning the school was on a 4 period block schedule. There were two different times during the school year where El Colegio shifted back to remote learning due to a building pipe burst emergency and again in January when COVID cases were high in the Minneapolis community. El Colegio's Executive Director and Dean of Operations who also was acting as the schools COVID Coordinator, kept an eye on bi-weekly on both the city covid cases as well as COVID cases in Minneapolis that were broken down by race/ethnicity. El Colegio understood many of our front line workers exposed, most were BIPOC workers and when deciding when to shift that information was key.

The return to in-person learning allowed us to provide students with more opportunities to participate in school events and community events.. El Colegio remains committed to providing opportunities for students to engage with the community through field trips, service-learning, participatory action research, school-hosted events and other community activities.

While we were not able to capture all of the community involvement our students are in, we were able to capture at least 50% of our students' involvement. During our Interim classes through our partnership with LEAP, 7 students participated in a course that provided them exposure to different careers and a visit to LEAP programming. During our annual Dia de los Muertos event, we had 15 students participate during the event as well as 12 students participate in creating the altares. We had 36 students participate and contribute to our annual Mira Mi Corazon event. 15 students participated in our Early Escalera night and provided presentations to their families and board members about the visions for the future. Our teachers also found summer programs for students to participate in, one being a Business camp at the University of St. Thomas. Three of our students were selected to participate.

El Colegio continued its Student & Family Wellness Team. When shifting back to an in-person schedule, students' mental health, socio-emotional needs were just as much a need as academic concerns. The team is a mix of teachers, support staff, administrators, and a school therapist. The group reviews referrals, as well as, arranges for interventions, and reviews if the interventions

were successful or if new interventions were needed and/or if a student qualified to be evaluated for special education services.

El Colegio's graduating class of 2022 was a total of 14 students, all who were accepted into post-secondary options. Some students are choosing to take a "gap" year and some have already begun their new journey's at different universities. Offering UnidosUS Escalera courses has provided intentional time for the instructor to work with students at every step in the process: applying to colleges, applying for scholarships, as well as, learning more about themselves and their own personal goals and desires.

There were five students who graduated in four years and they were students who began their journey in 9th grade with El Colegio. The other nine students, who were not 4-year graduates, were students who transferred to El Colegio during different times in their high school journey and El Colegio was able to create a plan fit for their needs. El Colegio continues to serve different groups of students who are on different pathways.

El Colegio provided a summer program for 13 days, and was also able to offer enrichment electives in the afternoon. The in-person summer learning was well received by the students. There were 46 students enrolled and 41 students retained the whole session with a 86% attendance rate, where 95% of students enrolled earned credit for one or more of their classes, and 39% earned credit in all registered classes.

This summer El Colegio also provided summer programming for 6 incoming 9th grade students to provide them an opportunity to get familiar with high school and as a way to retain students for the upcoming school year!

## Innovative Practices

We live and breathe our core values daily through:

**A decolonizing lens:** Embracing students' lived experiences and supporting them in building affirmation in their identities so that they are equipped and empowered to recognize and dismantle structural inequities— positioning them to transform society.

**Culturally-relevant pedagogy:** To connect, to relate, and to belong. Culturally-relevant pedagogy is the practice of creating an academically rigorous curriculum that resonates with students on a personal level through which they can see the clear connections between the content and their day-to-day lives.

**Trauma-informed practices:** We recognize the trauma so much of our community carries, both as a whole and as individuals. All of our staff are trained in handling traumatic topics with care and assisting students in moments of post-traumatic stress.

**E3 21st Century Skills:** We acknowledge the skills and abilities students already possessed before they joined the El Colegio community. This preexisting knowledge translates to five 21st Century skills: Innovation, Adaptability, Cross-Cultural Communication, Critical Analysis, & Teamwork.

**Heritage Language Program:** Academic success for students is the key purpose of our school. Dual language education is critical for students' academic success and personal growth, so first and second language instruction in both a student's heritage language and an additional language is a key component of our program.

**Restitution Model:** El Colegio believes that discipline is about teaching safe and successful behaviors. Restitution is about "making it right." It is an approach to discipline which recognizes that young people and teachers will make mistakes and that these situations provide opportunities for students and teachers to take responsibility, choose effective behaviors and create positive solutions. Restitution is about supporting a child or staff person to be the kind of person they want to be. It helps the person evaluate what they can do to fix their own mistakes, thereby reclaiming their self-esteem through personal effort, taking action in making reparation, and strengthening the agreed upon beliefs and values about how we treat others.

**Student-Centered Approach:** All students can succeed when they are treated as individuals and are allowed to bring their unique and innate gifts to the learning process. The small setting of El Colegio allows staff to interact with students in very individualized ways. Our advisory system and student to staff ratio of 8 to 1 create a structure that ensures that each student has at least one adult in the school with whom they connect. Advisors not only help students set goals and develop a plan for graduation, but also, they work with students and parents to track that progress.

**Community Engagement:** El Colegio is a community hub for various groups and community gatherings our families participate in. The atmosphere of the building is welcoming, safe, respectful and inclusive. Students and families from all cultures are respected and nurtured equally. Values around family and community also come to life in our school. We actively encourage family and community to be partners in our students' learning, as well as to participate in cultural and arts activities in our building. Students and families of different cultures experience and learn from each other through school curriculum, cultural celebrations, parent meetings and other activities. In addition, students go into the community to improve their learning through community service, internships, and the creation of public art. Due to these intentional relationships, we were able to serve the community as needed during the pandemic and the civil unrest.

As previously stated, El Colegio was able to continue to be innovative during the pandemic and remain student-centered around their needs during such turbulent times, as well as finding intentional times for staff to also take care of their own wellness.

# Future Plans

Based on the school's strategic plan, future plans include:

- A focus on improving communications with and for the community to highlight the positive changes that have happened at the school over recent years, as well as help the community know the strong story of success El Colegio is currently having in increasing graduation rates and college acceptance rates for our graduates.
- Efforts to earn grants and donations will be expanded.
- Existing and new community partnerships will provide our students with opportunities that they would not have if they were attending a larger school, where receiving more individualized attention and guidance may be difficult.
- El Colegio continues to partner with the Regional Center of Excellence to further refine our teacher observation process and to provide support with the Academic Coach on effective PLCs. For the 2021-2022 school year, the school was able to return back to a new routine of being in person, and while there were hardships with not being fully staffed full time with some key positions classes were able to maintain
- El Colegio's Board of Directors held a summer retreat , focusing on the school's strategic plan and with the use of a Vision/Traction Organizer set out 3 year goals and 1 year goals. The board had a rich conversation and made a commitment to change the Fundraising Committee's focus to a Strategic Planning Committee. El Colegio remains committed to begin its research to see if expanding programing to include a middle school, as well as, continuing to make building upgrades as another form of recruitment and retention of students.
- El Colegio Board Chair, Treasurer, and Executive Director also participated in part of Academia Cesar Chavez's Board Retreat to have intentional conversations about the two school's relationship working together. Both schools have shared school values and had some shared professional development together during the 2021-2022 school year and plan to increase shared professional development together for the 2022-2023 school year.