



# EL COLEGIO CHARTER SCHOOL

Annual Report  
2022-2023

**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)

**Alul Yesak, Director**

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

# Student Enrollment & Attrition

## Historical Enrollment & Attendance Rate

School Year	Total Students Enrolled	Overall Attendance Rate
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	102	96.8%
2021-2022	112	83.7%
<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>85.57%</b>

## 2022 Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Count	Percent
Hispanic or Latino	78	94%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	1%
Asian	0	0.0%
Black or African American	2	2%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
White	2	2%
Two or More Races	0	0.0%
<b>All Students</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

MARSS Report as of October 1, 2022

## 2022 Enrollment by Special Population

Special Population	Count	Percent
English Learner	66	80%
Special Education	18	22%
Free/Reduced Priced Lunch	71	85.5%
Homeless	4	5%

MDE Report Card as of October 1, 2022

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:** 85.57%

**Budgeted ADM:** 85

**Final ADM:** 86.81

**Enrollment Oct 1, 2022:** 83

**Final 2022-2023 Enrollment:** 92

### Attrition and Mobility

Grade	Enrolled 10/1	Enrolled after 10/1	Transferred after 10/1	Enrolled at end of SY23
9	40	19	12	40
10	23	17	10	35
11	10	3	6	9
12	10	0	2	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>92</b>

*\*There were 7 students who were promoted from 9th to 10th grade for semester 2.*

*\*There were 2 students who were promoted from 10th to 11th grade for semester 2.*

# 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 2022-2023 school year, six seats were filled with five 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/Strategic Planning.

### Board of Directors Roster 2022-2023

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

**Chair**

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

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

**Vice-Chair**

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

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

**Treasurer**

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

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

**Secretary**

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

**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

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

**Member**

Assistant Professor, Urban & Feminist Geography  
Department of Geography, Environment, & Society, UofM  
414 Social Sciences Building  
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. During the 2022-2023 school year, Ms Katie focused her professional development on completing the [Minnesota Principals Academy](#), which is a two-year program offered by the University of Minnesota. She also met monthly with her mentor, Ramona Arreguin de Rosales, a social justice and charter school leader.

Other trainings Ms Katie attended include:

- [Xito Institute](#)
- [E3 Coaching](#)
- [Student Centered Learning for Equity](#) Conference 2023: *Amplifying Students, Elevating Community*
- National Charter Alliance Conference 2023
- UnidosUS National Conference 2023
- UnidosUS ChangeMaker Conference 2023
- National Leaders of Color Conference 2023
- Radical Trust Leadership Retreat, Ashanti Branch, 2023

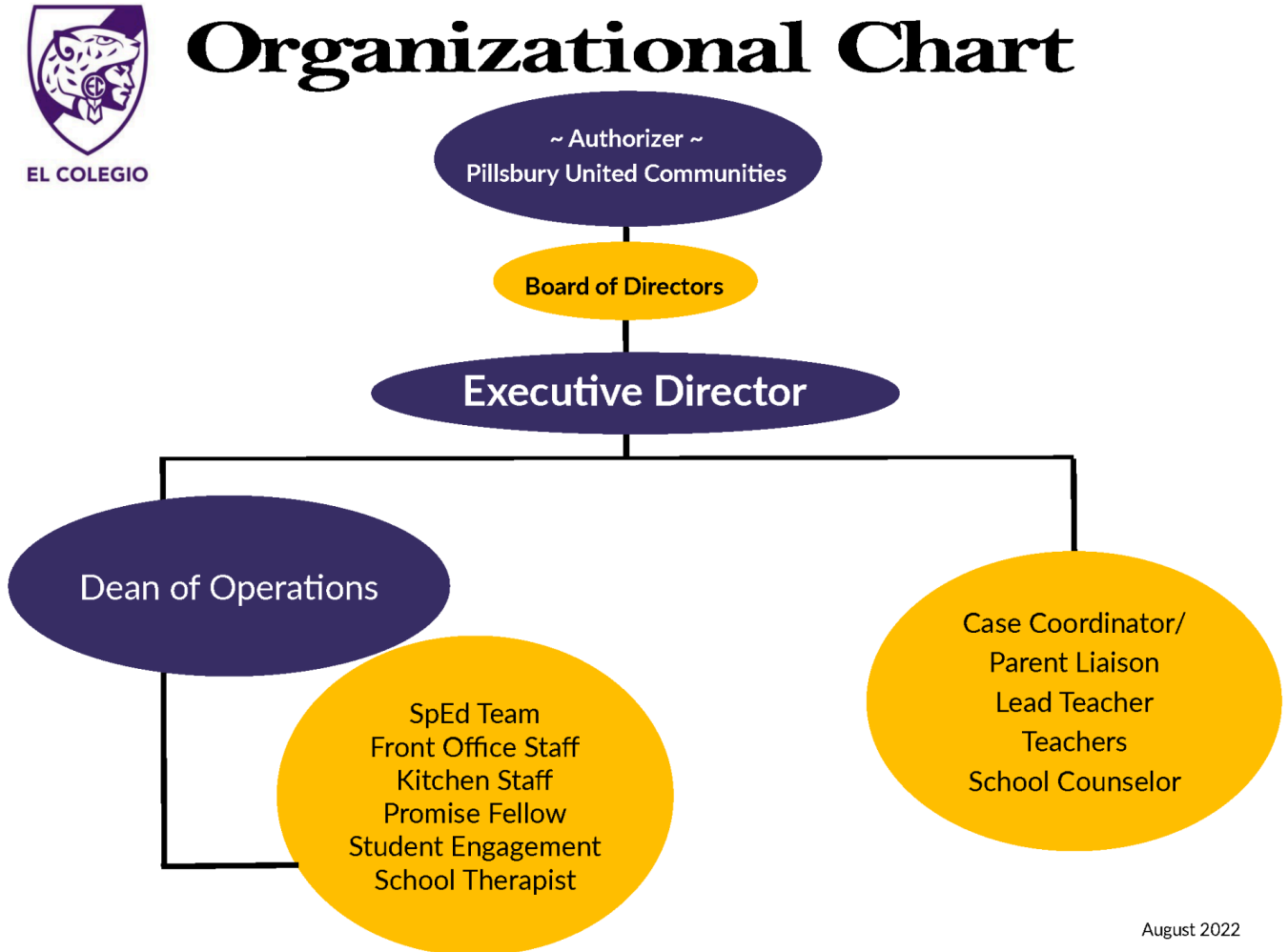
This year, the El Colegio Board of Directors shifted their performance review process for the Executive Director and didn't do an official review instead: .

- board governance worked closely with the Executive Director
- Executive Director issued supplemental updates to board chair in addition to standard Executive Director reports at each board meeting
- Ongoing qualitative review of duties and responsibilities and alignment to the job description
- The nature of the unified district's leadership after the merger
- Succession planning



## Staffing

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.



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 both local and national searches during the hiring process by connecting with organizations such as the National Charter Collaborative, Free Minds Free People, the School of Urban Education at Metropolitan State University, and multiple departments at the University of Minnesota.

## Staff Roster 2022-2023

### Non-Licensed Staff

#	Name	Position	Returned for SY23	Returning for SY24
1	Paola Ambrocio Torres	Receptionist/Program Assistant	Yes	Yes
2	Alejandra Cruz	Plus Coordinator / Parent Liaison	Yes	Yes
3	Katie Groh de Aviña	Executive Director	Yes	Yes
4	Nancy Llapa	SPED Educational Partner	New	No
5	Jessica Martinez	Student Engagement Specialist / SPED EP	Yes	No
6	Landon Nelson	Dean of Operations	Yes	Yes
7	Kaleb Pritchard	SPED Educational Partner	Yes	Yes
8	Richard Rivera	Student Engagement Specialist / SPED EP	Yes	Yes
9	Leticia Rizo	Kitchen Manager	New	Yes
10	Alexis Wall	SPED Educational Partner	Yes	Yes
11	Gilberto Viveros	Educational Partner	New	Yes

### Licensed Faculty

#	Name	Position	Folder Number	Returned SY23	Returning SY24
1	Steve Asencio	ESL	509642	Yes	Yes
2	Chad Davidson	Math	419776	Yes	Yes
3	James Derrick	Social Studies	510169	Yes	Yes
4	Joselin Navarro Cano	Social Studies	1011579	Yes	No
5	Michael Nelson	SPED	482765	Yes	Yes
6	Rosario Neri-Fuentes	SPED	500348	Yes	Yes
7	Gary Nieves	Social Studies	496506	Yes	Yes
8	Tamara Ramirez-Torres	Spanish	395014	Yes	Yes
9	Lorrie Spading	Language Arts	284280	New	Yes

## Professional Development

Date	Organization	Training	Target Audience
08/17/2022 08/18/2022	ALAS	GLAD Training at Academia Cesar Chavez	Teachers & EPs
08/19/2022	E3	E3 Training	Teachers & EPs
08/22/2022	ACC and EC	Restitution Training at Academia Cesar Chavez	Teachers & EPs
08/23/2022	Adalinda Estrada	Suicide Prevention Training	Teachers & EPs
09/16/2022	EC	How to Use JMC, JMC Office	New Staff
10/14/2022	EC	Preparing for Fall Interim	Teachers & EPs
11/04/2022	E3	E3 Training with ACC	Teachers & EPs
12/09/2022	ALAS	GLAD Training with ACC	Teachers & EPs
03/24/2023	EC	Preparing for Spring Interim	Teachers & EPs

## Professional Learning Communities

10/07/2022	Teachers & EPs
11/18/2022	Teachers & EPs
01/06/2023	Teachers & EPs
01/27/2023	Teachers & EPs
02/17/2023	Teachers & EPs
03/10/2023	Teachers & EPs
04/21/2023	Teachers & EPs
05/19/2023	Teachers & EPs

## Finances

For complete financials for 2022-2023 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.

Designs4Learning (D4L) provides accounting services for El Colegio.

The information presented below is derived from the unaudited June 2023 end-of-year financial summary. The full financial audit will be completed and presented to the Minnesota Department of Education no later than March 31, 2024, **the information below are preliminary numbers.**

## 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 2023 were \$2,339,580.89. Approximately 74.4% of revenue came from state sources and 14.3% came from federal sources. Other revenue makes up 9.3% of the rest of our overall revenue.

El Colegio saw an increase in enrollment in 2022-2023. Average Daily Membership (ADM) ended at 87.34 for Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23). This amount is an increase from 86.49 ADM in FY22. We strive to increase enrollment in the coming years and understand the need for growth for our long-term sustainability.

## Expenses

Overall expenses for FY23 were \$2,285,120.72. Approximately 82.4% of the expenses were for staff salaries and wages, benefits, and contracted services. Approximately 10.5% 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, 2023, El Colegio has a total fund balance of \$61,559 compared to \$777 as of June 30, 2022. This fund balance represents approximately 2.6% of expenditures. Based on unaudited figures, the school increased its fund balance by \$60,782.

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 2023 is unavailable. Preliminary numbers are shown in the table below:

		Division of School Finance 400 NE Stinson Blvd. Minneapolis, MN 55413		District Revenues and Expenditures Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 and FY 2024			ED-00110-46	
General Information: Minnesota Statutes 2021, section 123B.10, requires that every school board shall publish the subject data of this report.								
District Name:		El Colegio High School				District Number:		4057-07
Fund	FY 2023 Beginning Fund Balances	FY 2023 Actual Revenues and Transfers In	FY 2023 Actual Expenditures and Transfers Out	June 30, 2023 Actual Fund Balances	FY 2024 Budget Revenues and Transfers In	FY 2024 Budget Expenditures and Transfers Out	June 30, 2024 Projected Fund Balances	
General Fund/Restricted	\$ 6,445	\$ 264,255	\$ -	\$ 270,700	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 270,700	
General Fund/Other	\$ 324,059	\$ 1,987,582	\$ 2,182,458	\$ 129,183	\$ 2,152,682	\$ 2,152,464	\$ 129,401	
Food Service Fund	\$ -	\$ 83,188	\$ 83,188	\$ -	\$ 65,573	\$ 65,573	\$ -	
Community Service Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Building Construction Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Debt Service Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Trust Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Internal Service Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
* OPEB Revocable Trust Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
OPEB Irrevocable Trust Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
OPEB Debt Service Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<b>Total - All Funds</b>	<b>\$ 330,504</b>	<b>\$ 2,335,025</b>	<b>\$ 2,265,646</b>	<b>\$ 399,883</b>		<b>\$ 2,218,037</b>	<b>\$ 400,101</b>	
<b>Long-Term Debt</b>		<b>Current Statutory Operating Debt per Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.81</b>						
Outstanding July 1, 2022		Amount of General Fund Deficit, if any, in excess of 2.5% of expenditures 06/30/2023				\$	-	
Plus: New Issues	\$ -							
Less: Redeemed Issues	\$ -	<b>Cost per student - Average Daily Membership (ADM) 06/30/2023</b>						
Outstanding June 30, 2023	\$ -							
<b>Short-Term Debt</b>		Total Operating Expenditures				\$	2,265,646.47	
Certificates of Indebtedness	\$ -	FY 2023 Total ADM Served + Tuitioned Out ADM + Adjusted Extended ADM					87.35	
Other Short-Term Indebtedness	\$ 262,500.00	FY 2023 Operating Cost per ADM				\$	25,937.57	
<i>The complete budget may be inspected upon request to the superintendent.</i>								
Comments:								

# 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.

The tables below depict the NWEA Fall 2022 & Spring 2023 test results by grade level.

## NWEA MAP Fall 2022: Math

Grade Level	Total Students w/ Valid Scores	Mean RIT	Standard Deviation	Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students at or Above Norm Grade Level Mean RIT
9th	37	205.1	13.5	226.4	1
10th	17	207.5	16.5	229.1	1
11th	10	218.4	11.4	231	1
12th	9	212.6	14.2	233	0

## NWEA MAP Fall 2022: Reading

Grade Level	Total Students w/ Valid Scores	Mean RIT	Standard Deviation	Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students at or Above Norm Grade Level Mean RIT
9th	35	188.2	23	218.9	4
10th	19	189.3	25.2	221.5	2
11th	11	199.9	17.1	223.5	2
12th	8	195.4	20.7	223.8	0

## NWEA MAP Spring 2023: Math

Grade Level	Total Students w/ Valid Scores	Mean RIT	Standard Deviation	Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students at or Above Norm Grade Level Mean RIT
9th	33	208.2	13.5	230	0
10th	30	220.5	14.6	232.4	6
11th	8	220.8	17.6	234.2	1
12th	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

NA - not tested

## NWEA MAP Spring 2023: Reading

Grade Level	Total Students w/ Valid Scores	Mean RIT	Standard Deviation	Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students at or Above Norm Grade Level Mean RIT
9th	32	194.8	21.5	221.4	3
10th	29	123.3	21.5	223.5	2
11th	6	200.7	21.9	224.7	1
12th	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

NA - not tested

## NWEA MAP Growth Goals: Reading & Math

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	32	22%	7	9	33	6%	2
10	29	21%	5	10	30	0%	0
11	6	16%	1	11	8	40%	10
12	*	*	*	12	*	*	*
<b>Overall</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>Overall</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>12</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	53%	10	9	21	57%	12
10	15	67%	10	10	14	79%	11
11	*	*	*	11	5	80%	4
12	*	*	*	12	*	*	*
<b>Overall</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>Overall</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>27</b>

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.

El Colegio is utilizing the Regional Center of Excellence to help support teachers both weekly and monthly with PLCs. That being said, a more formal and thorough evaluation process is needed, and with plans of hiring an academic leader, the implementation of that process will soon take shape.

## 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.

## Future Plans

The El Colegio Board of Directors held a summer retreat, focusing on the school's strategic plan and creating the next steps to achieve the school's overall long term goals. The board held focused discussions on the needs of the facilities, and how to strengthen El Colegio's academic program, reviewing the school's previous strategic plan to guide the conversation. From these discussions, El Colegio's strategic plan includes:

1. Elevating its Heritage Language program by offering more Latin American indigenous languages.
2. Exploring the logistics for initiating a capital campaign to support the needs of the building, as well as creating environmentally sustainable features of the physical plant.
3. Strengthening and expanding community partnerships that provide our students with opportunities they would not otherwise have if they were attending a larger school, where receiving more individualized attention and guidance may be difficult.

4. Promoting 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.
5. Leveraging opportunities to build sustainability for El Colegio's academic model as well as expansion of the model to more broadly offer a student-centered, identity-affirming setting to more youth seeking a program such as ours.

In September of 2022, the Board Chair, Treasurer, and Executive Director of El Colegio participated in part of Academia Cesar Chavez's Board Retreat to have intentional conversations about the two schools' relationship working together. Both schools have shared school values and had some shared professional development together during the last two academic years. Throughout the academic year, the Fundraising Committee took on strategic planning, and met twice a month to develop approaches to meet the strategic plan goals that had emerged from the previous summer retreat. From there, the committee reflected on El Colegio's partnership with Academia Cesar Chavez, and in the Spring of 2023, the committee began conversations with Academia's Board of Directors on a potential merging of both schools as one unified district.