

Oklahoma Statewide Virtual Charter School Board

Annual Report of Oklahoma Connections Academy (OKCA)

Oklahoma Statewide Virtual Charter School Board

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December
2020

In an effort to provide transparency in its oversight practices, the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board (SVCSB) provides an annual report for each charter school it authorizes. This report includes the most recent information available for each component. The annual report seeks to provide virtual charter school stakeholders with a summary of key data in the areas of academic performance, organizational capacity, and financial responsibility.

The Oklahoma Charter School Act requires authorizers to provide charter school oversight based on an established Performance Framework. This annual report reflects some data for Year 1, the baseline year, and for Year 2 of the charter contract term (70 O.S. § 1-137).

Enrollment is the starting point for analysis. It puts in perspective the width and breadth with which other information is presented and analyzed.

Fall Enrollment 2018 – 2019 School Year

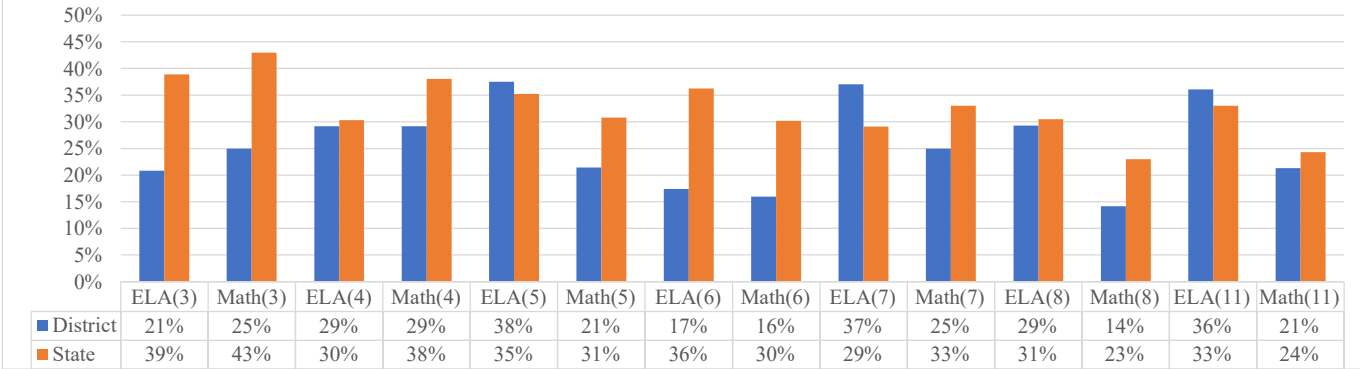
	Total	White	Black	American Indian	Asian	Two or More	Hispanic
State Total	698,586	338,631	59,248	91,888	16,942	68,546	123,331
		48.5%	8.5%	13.2%	2.4%	9.8%	17.7%
Oklahoma Connections Academy	1,280	814	77	106	17	145	121
		63.6%	6.0%	8.3%	1.3%	11.3%	9.5%
Elementary	308	180	28	19	1	45	35
		58.4%	9.1%	6.2%	0.3%	14.6%	11.4%
Middle	317	195	21	31	5	31	34
		61.5%	6.6%	9.8%	1.6%	9.8%	10.7%
High	655	439	28	56	11	69	52
		67.0%	4.3%	8.5%	1.7%	10.5%	7.9%

Academic Performance

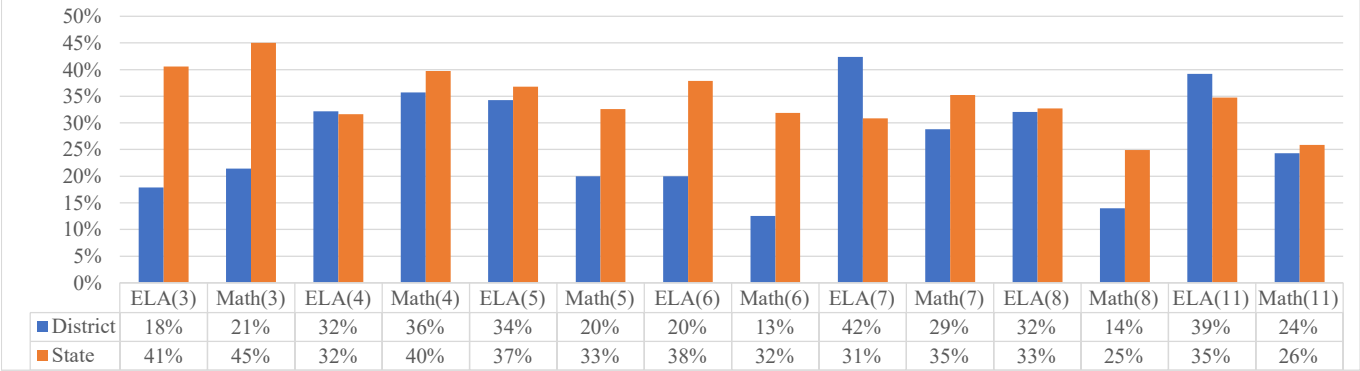
This section includes information from the Oklahoma School Testing Program assessments given to all students, students in Special Education (with an IEP), and students that are Economically Disadvantaged. For these reports, results for full academic year (FAY) and non-full academic year (NFAY) students are shown.

The charts on the following pages give information for all student results for English Language Arts (ELA) and math for grades 3 through 8 and 11 for OKCA and the state. Information for Special Education (IEP) and Economically Disadvantaged subgroups is also displayed.

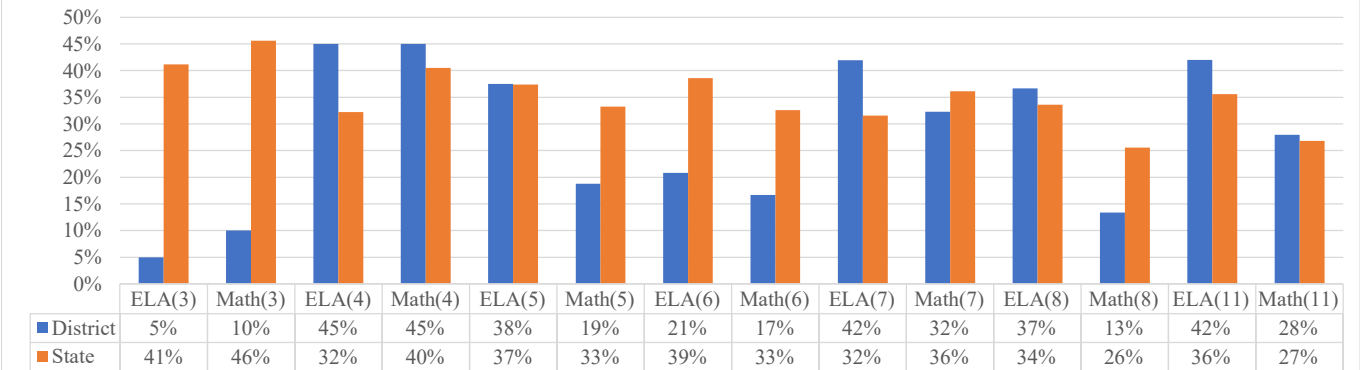
**Oklahoma Connections Academy (All Students)
Percent of Students Scoring Proficient and Above (Spring 2019)
English Language Arts (ELA) and Math**



**Oklahoma Connections Academy (All Students, Two or More Years)
Percent of Students Scoring Proficient and Above (Spring 2019)
English Language Arts (ELA) and Math**

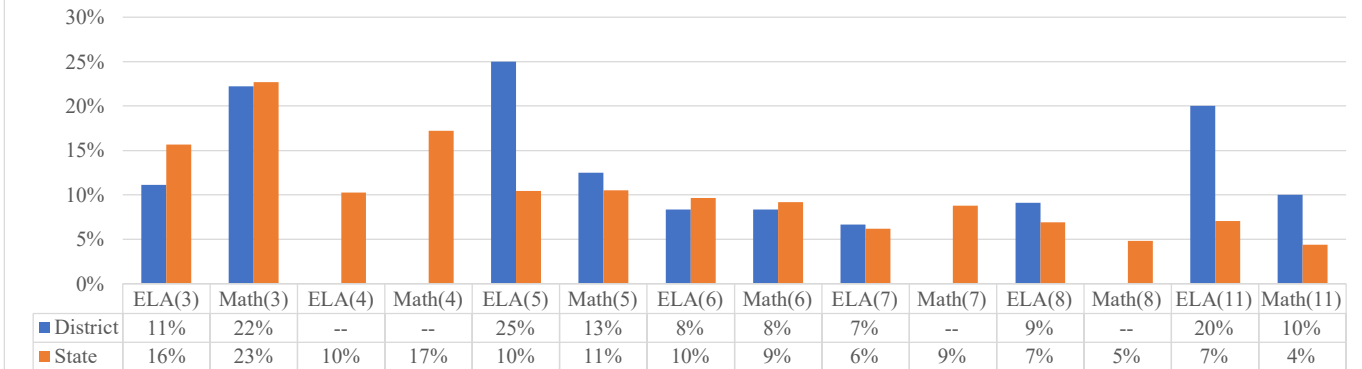


**Oklahoma Connections Academy (All Students, Three or More Years)
Percent of Students Scoring Proficient and Above (Spring 2019)
English Language Arts (ELA) and Math**

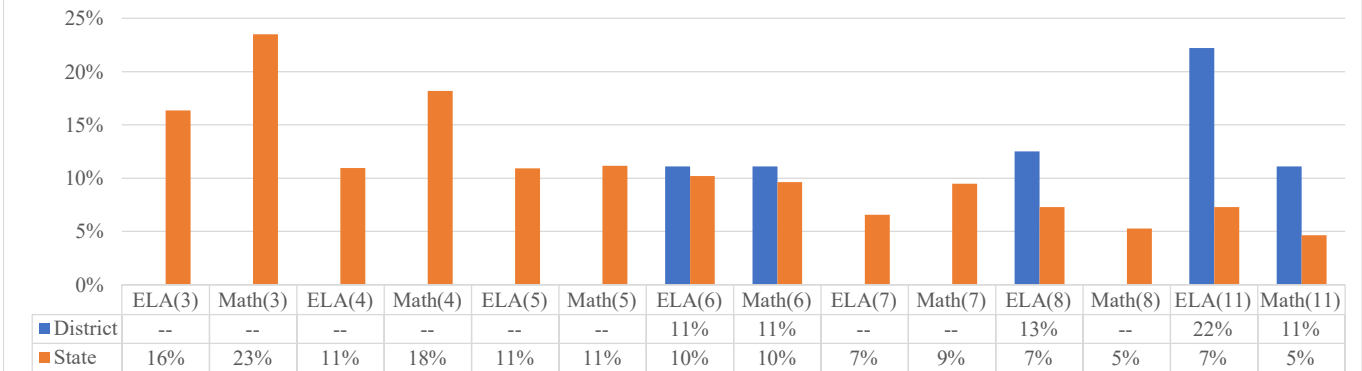


-- : No Student Tested under the Specific Category / No Data / Data Protected by Privacy Laws

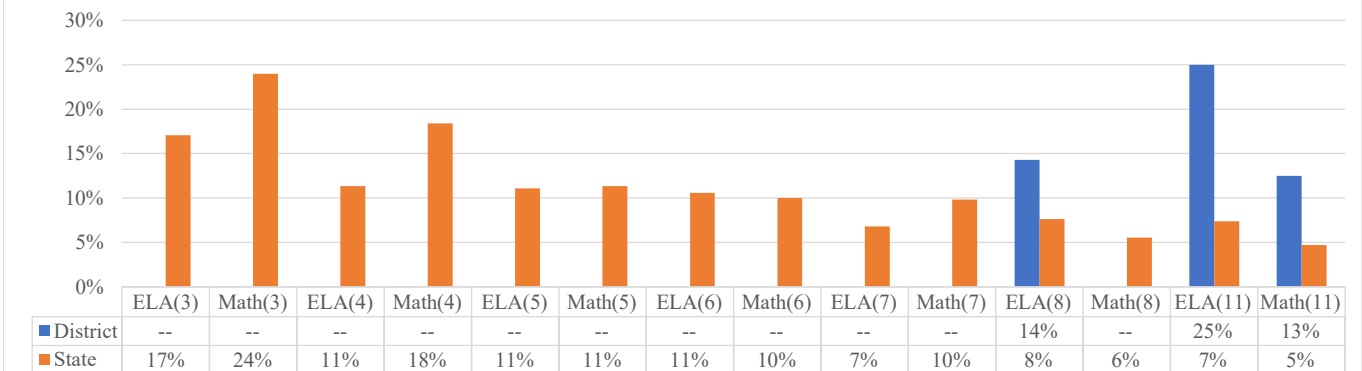
**Oklahoma Connections Academy (Special Ed)
Percent of Students Scoring Proficient and Above (Spring 2019)
English Language Arts (ELA) and Math**



**Oklahoma Connections Academy (Special Ed, Two or More Years)
Percent of Students Scoring Proficient and Above (Spring 2019)
English Language Arts (ELA) and Math**

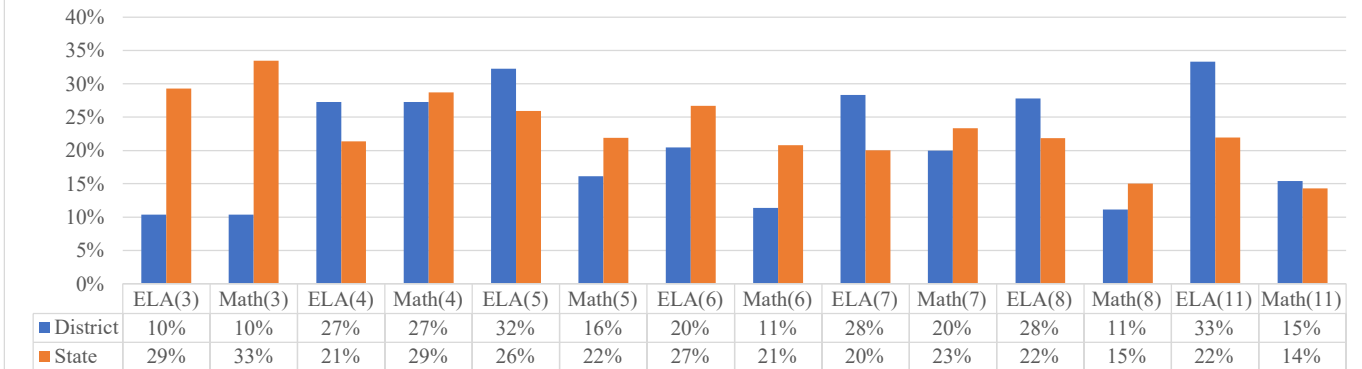


**Oklahoma Connections Academy (Special Ed, Three or More Years)
Percent of Students Scoring Proficient and Above (Spring 2019)
English Language Arts (ELA) and Math**

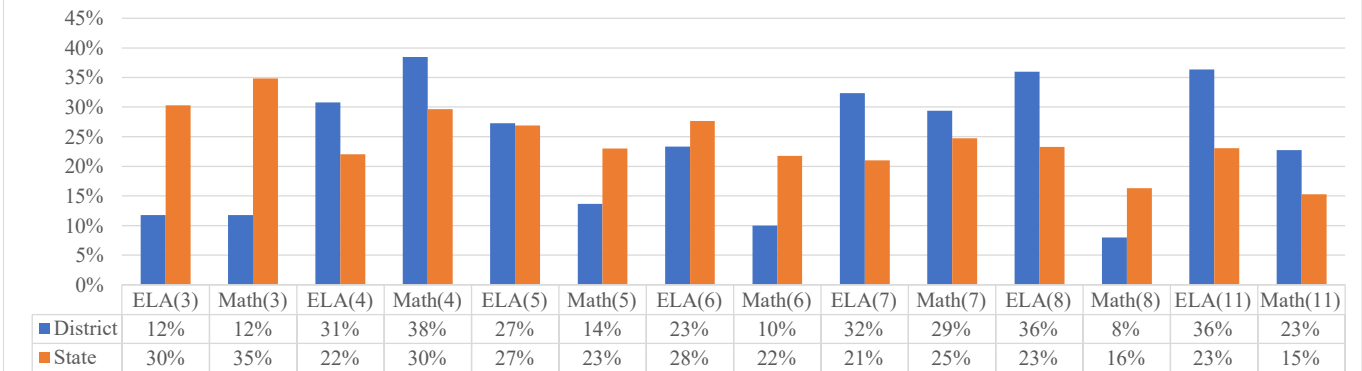


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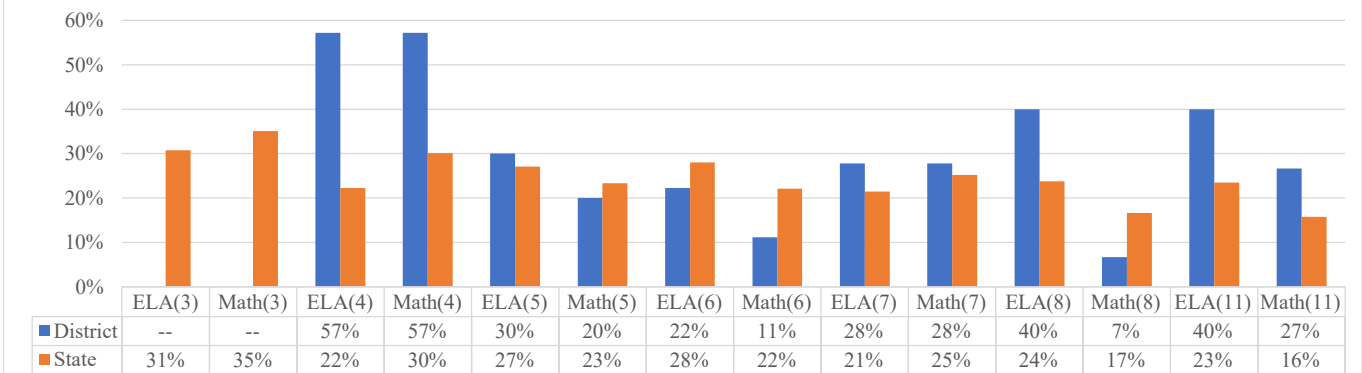
**Oklahoma Connections Academy (Economically Disadvantaged)
Percent of Students Scoring Proficient and Above (Spring 2019)
English Language Arts (ELA) and Math**



**Oklahoma Connections Academy (Economically Disadvantaged, Two or More Years)
Percent of Students Scoring Proficient and Above (Spring 2019)
English Language Arts (ELA) and Math**



**Oklahoma Connections Academy (Economically Disadvantaged, Three or More Years)
Percent of Students Scoring Proficient and Above (Spring 2019)
English Language Arts (ELA) and Math**



-- : No Student Tested under the Specific Category / No Data / Data Protected by Privacy Laws

Based on highest score, OKCA students from the Graduating Class of 2019 averaged a composite score of 18.2 on the ACT compared to a composite score of 18.9 from the Oklahoma Graduating Class of 2019 with 151 OKCA students participating.

The on-time graduation rate for the Graduating Class of 2019 for the State of Oklahoma and Oklahoma schools is not yet published. OKCA’s 2018 graduation rate was 52% compared to the Oklahoma graduation rate of 86%. In 2017, OKCA’s graduation rate was 44% compared to a state rate of 83%. In 2020, OKCA reported 90% of its eligible seniors graduated within the school year.

OKCA reported college and career readiness opportunities for the 2019-2020 school year in the following areas:

- Twenty students in Oklahoma Career Technology Centers participated in various training programs, and
- Seven students entered military commitments.

An additional indicator of academic performance and career and college readiness is the college remediation rate. The chart below indicates the three-year average remediation rate of high school graduating classes 2016 through 2018 for Oklahoma and OKCA students. This rate includes college freshmen taking at least one remedial course in math, English, science, or reading.

	Oklahoma	OKCA
Percentage taking at least one remedial course	37.5%	48.5% (47 of 97)

Organizational Performance

Organizational Structure

The mission of Oklahoma Connections Academy (OKCA) is to help each student maximize his/her potential and meet the highest academic standards through a uniquely individualized learning program, which includes a flexible schedule, high level teacher interaction, rigorous curriculum, and family involvement.

The Governing Board of OKCA, a self-selecting non-profit board of Oklahoma residents, is authorized and chartered by the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board to oversee the school. OKCA Board contracts with Pearson Online & Blended Learning for the school’s online platform, curriculum, and services.

The elements of school design align to and support the OKCA mission by incorporating 1.) a research-based pedagogical approach, 2.) a uniquely individualized virtual learning program, 3.) a high-level of teacher interaction, and 4.) family involvement.

- 1.) OKCA’s research-based pedagogical approach allows for synchronous and asynchronous learning, allowing students to demonstrate their knowledge and practice their communication skills, while also learning at their own pace unconstrained by others’ schedules.
- 2.) Our uniquely individualized virtual learning program maximizes student’s potential through the use of the Learning Triad. This instructional model succeeds through a structure of a.) highly qualified teachers, b.) supportive Learning Coaches, and c.) a high quality, standards-aligned curriculum.
- 3.) OKCA’s high-level of teacher interaction includes telephone, LiveLesson sessions, and WebMail messages that may be as frequent as several times a day or at a minimum once every two weeks.

- 4.) Family involvement is a key component to the mission of OKCA. Through formal and informal channels families have avenues to provide feedback and input. This ensures that the school is on a cycle of continuous school improvement at that all stakeholders are valued.

Appropriate policies and procedures appear to ensure student access, equity, and safety. OKCA also appears to have adhered to state and federal laws and regulations and to the terms of the charter contract over the course of the school year.

Governance

OKCA maintained stability in membership, meeting at least quarterly as required in Oklahoma statute. Compliance with the Open Meeting Act was observed in records and in meetings attended. The OKCA governing board membership is listed on page 1 of this report.

Record of Compliance

OKCA appears to have maintained records of compliance through the year with the reporting requirements of the State Department of Education (SDE) and SVCSB.

High school transcripts were examined during this annual reporting period. The records of 150 first year students in grades 10, 11 and 12 were examined on September 3, 2019. Of those 150 new enrollees, 31% of students were credit deficient and 51% were off graduation plan. No transcript errors were found.

Accreditation

OKCA received accreditation from the SDE with no findings of deficiency at the district, elementary, middle, or high school levels.

Attendance

The percentage of students considered in good attendance during the 2018-2019 school year as compared to the State percentage of 85.97%:

Elementary School	100%
Middle School	100%
High School	98.57%

Student Support

In addition to the support students receive from traditional education support services, OKCA provided the following information related to additional student support systems:

Every student at OKCA is connected to either a homeroom or advisory teacher. This single point of contact ensures the family is onboarded successfully and works with them continuously throughout the school year cycle. This point of contact oversees the entire educational picture of the student to make sure they are fulfilling all requirements to successfully advance to the next grade level or graduate.

The OKCA elementary school is set up in a looping or “team teaching” system. This gives students more than one resource to help them with learning objectives in all courses. The middle school through high school is set up on an advisory model. Each student has an advisory teacher for help with

escalation and personalized learning goals, and highly qualified teachers in every subject area for assistance mastering the Oklahoma Academic Standards. Advisors connect the students with their teachers and make sure they navigate successfully through the school year cycle, while the subject area teachers work closely with the students one on one or in small group settings to provide feedback and fill gaps in learning.

The LiveLesson platform through Adobe Connect provides a safe and highly interactive learning environment for staff and students. Teachers can use webcams, screenshare, share documents, use document cameras, and share whiteboards. Teachers can also break larger groups into breakout rooms for small group activities, giving students the opportunity to work with their peers.

The Connections Help Desk is open for students and families for technical assistance. OKCA also has resource set up for our Learning Coaches call Learning Coach Central. This website includes resources Learning Coaches need to ensure students connect with others while they learn how to navigate our system.

Performance Framework School Goals

Goal 1: Improve OSTP scores

The school's goal for all official published reading and math state test proficiency rates for the school is: .78 in Year 1, .80 in Year 2, and .82 in Year 3. The calculation is a ratio of the school's result to the state average for each tested subject – grade level. Each ratio's weighted average is computed based on the number of tests taken by students at the school and officially counted. If an official pass rate and number of student tests counted is not available for a subject-grade level test, one will be computed using data loaded into Connexus.

The 2019-2020 school year is the baseline year of the charter contract term.

OKCA is now utilizing Renaissance STAR testing to identify gaps in students learning and provide appropriate small group interventions.

Goal 2: Improve student retention

In order to improve our student retention, OKCA will offer increased opportunities for social connectedness via school events, like field trips. The school will increase these options yearly.

The 2019-2020 during school year withdrawal rate was 23.89%, down from the previous year at 25.69%.

Goal 3: Increase promotion, credit accrual, and graduation rates

Promotion rate is defined as the percent of full academic year students who promote to the next grade or earn at least $\frac{1}{4}$ of the required high school credits for a standard diploma. OKCA will maintain or increase promotion on a yearly basis with an average rate of 91% by the terms of the contract.

Graduation rate will increase using the 4 year (1 point), 5 year (.85 point), and 6 year (.5 point) formula recognized by OSDE, current year goal is 57.5% (a 2.5% increase over the previous year's performance).

2018 results show the 4-year cohort at 54.17%, 5th-year cohort at 52.91%, and 6th-year cohort at 58.85%. The new composite calculation will reflect the addition of the 5th-year cohort this year and 6th-year cohort the following year, helping our percentage considering the high number of students who are significantly off cohort when joining OKCA.

OKCA continues to focus on credit recovery, tightening systems to monitor credit accrual, ICAP requirements, documentation/record keeping, and course pass rates to increase the graduation rate.

Financial Performance

For the 2018-2019 school year, OKCA’s financial audit was conducted by Sanders, Bledsoe, and Hewett, Certified Public Accountants, L.L.P. The audit, presented to and approved by the OKCA governing board on March 25, 2020, contained a summary of auditor’s results that states, “The audit disclosed no instances of noncompliance which are material to the financial statements.”

In 2019-2020, OKCA submitted quarterly financial reports to the SVCSB. These reports are signed and verified by the school’s treasurer and indicate appropriate cash flow of the school.

Fiscal Year 2020 OKCA Funding	
State Funding	
Allocated Foundational State Aid	\$5,835,142.00
Allocated Textbooks	\$59,213.86
Allocated Reading Sufficiency Act	\$6,841.14
Total State Funding	<u>\$5,901,197.00</u>
Federal Funding	
Allocated Title I, Part A	\$273,763.51
Allocated Title IV	\$4,998.00
Supplemental School Improvement	\$50,000.00
Special Education Professional Development District	\$3,748.13
Allocated IDEA, Part B Special Education	\$188,862.57
Allocated IDEA, Part B Pre-school	\$1,825.65
CARES Act	\$153,286.09
Total Federal Funding	<u>\$676,483.95</u>

Management Company

OKCA is contracted with Connections Education LLC, a private, for-profit company, for products and services including but not limited to: education program curriculum and services; access to the management company’s Education Management System (EMS), a proprietary education software; teacher and staff training, recruitment, hiring, and supervision; school counseling and consultative services; school records repository; and computer technology for staff and students. For these provisions, Connections Education LLC invoices the school based on a complex fee schedule including percentage of revenue, per student, and annual lump sum calculations. Additionally, the management company bills the school directly for payroll and other program expense reimbursement.

The contract between the school and the management company is reviewed and approved annually by the OKCA governing board. The board most recently approved the contract on May 20, 2020.