# State Public Charter School Authority

# Explore Knowledge Academy Middle School

# 2025-2026 School Performance Plan

**Classification: 5 Star School**

**District Approval Date:** November 30, 2024 **Public Presentation Date:** November 30, 2024

# Mission Statement

*Personalizing Education – Challenging Minds.*

# Vision

**Explore Knowledge Academy of Public Speaking is the only K-12 school in Nevada to offer Public Speaking to all students. Our public speaking program empowers students to develop leadership, creativity, and strong organizational skills.**

**We support the social, emotional, and academic needs of all students by developing strong partnerships between parents, students, teachers, and staff and through targeted school discussions and activities with our students.**

**At EKAPS, students are given the tools for success and the support of the EKAPS community to achieve it.**

# Demographics & Performance Information

**Nevada Report Card**

In compliance with federal and state law, Nevada's K-12 Accountability Portal provides detailed information about each school's student and staff demographics and school performance rating, a star-rating system based on the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF). You can find our School Rating Report at https://ekacademy.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/NSPF-Middle-FY-24.pdf

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# Comprehensive Needs Assessment

**Revised/Approved: February 15, 2025**

## Student Success

### Student Success Areas of Strength

EKA’s area of strength is in English Language Arts.  We saw the largest growth in this area and the school rate exceeds that of our sponsor, CCSD, and the state.

### Student Success Areas for Growth

EKA's area for growth would continue to be in mathematics.

### Student Success Equity Resource Supports

| Student Group | Challenge | Solution |
|---|---|---|
| **English Learners** | These students come to us with different learning levels so it is difficult to group them or to tailor learning for them. | Since all students can benefit from EL strategies, we plan to present best practices for teaching EL to all of our teaching staff. This will be done through a book study with an emphasis on designing quality learning opportunities for English Learners. |
| **Foster/Homeless** | Attendance is our greatest challenge for this group. | Our Principal, Counselor and Social Worker meet with these families to find ways to improve attendance and to try to remove barriers to on-time arrival to the school. |
| **Free and Reduced Lunch** | Support at home for the students' education. | Our counselor and social worker work with these students and families to ensure they have access to food banks and help to remove attendance barriers, so they are able to attend school daily. |

| Student Group | Challenge | Solution |
|---|---|---|
| **Migrant/Title1-C Eligible** | Support at home for the students' education. | Our counselor and social worker work with these students and families to ensure they have access to food banks and help to remove attendance barriers, so they are able to attend school daily. |
| **Racial/Ethnic Minorities** | We find that school and education is not always prioritized with this group, so we need to find ways to encourage daily attendance at school. | We use the 7 Mindsets program to build positive relationships within the school, to minimize bullying and to encourage kindness so that all students feel safe. When students feel sage, they are more willing to attend school therefore having more opportunities for learning. |
| **Students with IEPs** | These students commonly struggle with learning and are performing below the academic level of their non-IEP peers. | We individualized the learning for all elementary students by setting up the elementary program like a middle school. Students in the elementary program have different teachers for all of their classes (except kindergarten) and these classes are grouped by academic need, not necessarily grade level. This allows us to target students that need the most help, provide them with smaller class sizes and to schedule an aide to assist the teachers in small group learning. |

**Problem Statements Identifying Student Success Needs**

**Problem Statement 1 (Prioritized):** Middle school students in grades 6-8 are lagging behind the state's goal for mathematics as evidenced by the 2024 SBAC exam results.
**Critical Root Cause:** Students are struggling with math vocabulary, fact fluency and constructing written responses to complex mathematical problems. Students are missing fundamental math skills, including deficiencies with number sense.

**Problem Statement 2 (Prioritized):** Middle School Students with IEPs are behind our white students in mathematics as evidenced by the 2024 SBAC Exam results.
**Critical Root Cause:** Students with IEPs are struggling to complete mathematical problems at the same rate as their non-IEP peers.

# Adult Learning Culture

### Adult Learning Culture Areas of Strength

We have a large core of returning teachers that know our students, our curriculum and are supportive of the school's mission and vision.

### Adult Learning Culture Areas for Growth

We need to provide additional professional development to help support our teachers in the classrooms, especially those teachers new to the school.

### Adult Learning Culture Equity Resource Supports

| Student Group | Challenge | Solution |
|---|---|---|
| **English Learners** | Curricular materials usually do not arrive early enough for our teachers to adequately plan for the year. | Order tests and student curricular materials at the start of the new fiscal year so that teachers can have the materials they need to be prepared and administration can provide necessary training. |
| **Foster/Homeless** | Curricular materials usually do not arrive early enough for our teachers to adequately plan for the year. | Order tests and student curricular materials at the start of the new fiscal year so that teachers can have the materials they need to be prepared and administration can provide necessary training. |
| **Free and Reduced Lunch** | Curricular materials usually do not arrive early enough for our teachers to adequately plan for the year. | Order tests and student curricular materials at the start of the new fiscal year so that teachers can have the materials they need to be prepared and administration can provide necessary training. |
| **Migrant/Title1-C Eligible** | Curricular materials usually do not arrive early enough for our teachers to adequately plan for the year. | Order tests and student curricular materials at the start of the new fiscal year so that teachers can have the materials they need to be prepared and administration can provide necessary training. |

| Student Group | Challenge | Solution |
|---|---|---|
| **Racial/Ethnic Minorities** | Curricular materials usually do not arrive early enough for our teachers to adequately plan for the year. | Order tests and student curricular materials at the start of the new fiscal year so that teachers can have the materials they need to be prepared and administration can provide necessary training. |
| **Students with IEPs** | Curricular materials usually do not arrive early enough for our teachers to adequately plan for the year. | Order tests and student curricular materials at the start of the new fiscal year so that teachers can have the materials they need to be prepared and administration can provide necessary training. |

**Problem Statements Identifying Adult Learning Culture Needs**

**Problem Statement 1 (Prioritized):** The number of EL students has grown, as evidenced by our 2024 NSPF demographics. We feel that our teachers need additional support to help our EL students.
**Critical Root Cause:** The school has undergone a dramatic shift in demographics over the last 5 years and not all teachers have been adequately trained in ways to support EL learners.

# Connectedness

### Connectedness Areas of Strength

Our 6th grade population has rated us excellent in all areas as evidenced by our Fall 2024 NV-SCSEL survey.

### Connectedness Areas for Growth

Our students of two or more races rated us Needs Improvement for emotional safety.

### Connectedness Equity Resource Supports

| Student Group | Challenge | Solution |
|---|---|---|
| **English Learners** | EL students have more difficulty in reading and understanding the questions asked in the NV-SCSEL survey. | Have SEL classes discuss the survey, especially the vocabulary. |
| **Foster/Homeless** | Students may not understand all of the questions asked in the survey. | Have SEL classes discuss the survey, especially the vocabulary. |
| **Free and Reduced Lunch** | Students may not understand all of the questions asked in the survey. | Have SEL classes discuss the survey, especially the vocabulary. |
| **Migrant/Title1-C Eligible** | Students may not understand all of the questions asked in the survey. | Have SEL classes discuss the survey, especially the vocabulary. |
| **Racial/Ethnic Minorities** | Students may not understand all of the questions asked in the survey. | Have SEL classes discuss the survey, especially the vocabulary. |
| **Students with IEPs** | Students may not understand all of the questions asked in the survey. | Have SEL classes discuss the survey, especially the vocabulary. |

### Problem Statements Identifying Connectedness Needs

**Problem Statement 1 (Prioritized):** Our Students of two or more races rated the school Needs Improvement for emotional safety.
**Critical Root Cause:** Our students of two or more races may not feel as accepted at school as other groups and may lack confidence.

# Priority Problem Statements

**Problem Statement 1**: Middle school students in grades 6-8 are lagging behind the state's goal for mathematics as evidenced by the 2024 SBAC exam results.

**Critical Root Cause 1**: Students are struggling with math vocabulary, fact fluency and constructing written responses to complex mathematical problems. Students are missing fundamental math skills, including deficiencies with number sense.

**Problem Statement 1 Areas**: Student Success

**Problem Statement 2**: Middle School Students with IEPs are behind our white students in mathematics as evidenced by the 2024 SBAC Exam results.

**Critical Root Cause 2**: Students with IEPs are struggling to complete mathematical problems at the same rate as their non-IEP peers.

**Problem Statement 2 Areas**: Student Success

**Problem Statement 3**: The number of EL students has grown, as evidenced by our 2024 NSPF demographics. We feel that our teachers need additional support to help our EL students.

**Critical Root Cause 3**: The school has undergone a dramatic shift in demographics over the last 5 years and not all teachers have been adequately trained in ways to support EL learners.

**Problem Statement 3 Areas**: Adult Learning Culture

**Problem Statement 4**: Our Students of two or more races rated the school Needs Improvement for emotional safety.

**Critical Root Cause 4**: Our students of two or more races may not feel as accepted at school as other groups and may lack confidence.

**Problem Statement 4 Areas**: Connectedness

# Comprehensive Needs Assessment Data Documentation

The following data were used to verify the comprehensive needs assessment analysis:

**Student Success**

- Grades
- Nevada State Performance Framework (NSPF)
- Smarter Balanced (SBAC)
- Student Climate Survey, Student Voice
- WIDA ACCESS for ELLs

**Adult Learning Culture**

- Student Climate Survey
- Teacher evaluation
- Teacher retention
- Teacher/Student Ratio
- Walk-through data

**Connectedness**

- Behavior
- Perception/survey data
- Social Emotional Learning Data

# Inquiry Areas

**Revised/Approved: February 15, 2025**

**Inquiry Area 1:** Student Success

**SMART Goal 1:** Increase the percentage of middle school students proficient in mathematics from 40.7% to 45.6% in the 2025 - 2026 school year as measured by the state Spring 2026 middle school math SBAC assessment.

**Formative Measures:** NWEA MAP 3 x per year

**Aligns with District Goal**

| Improvement Strategy 1 Details | Status Checks | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Status Check | | |
| | Jan | Apr | May |
| **Improvement Strategy 1:** Teach and assess students on common math test vocabulary. Require teachers to assign and review word problems to prepare students for SBAC type questions, Daily practice to strengthen math fluency. Place an aide/paraprofessional in math classes with FRL students to perform small group or targeted math intervention.<br>**Action Steps:** Math teachers will assign constructive response problems, teach problem-solving strategies, create school-wide expectations for written responses, and review word problems.<br>**Position Responsible:** Administration<br>**Resources Needed:** Time to meet with staff. Additional professional development offered by the math text publisher.<br><br>**Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Title I Elements:**<br>2.4<br>**Problem Statements/Critical Root Cause:** Student Success 1<br>**Resources and Funding Needed:** Paraprofessionals / Aides - Title I, Pt. A - $50,400 | No review | No review | No review |

**SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements:**

| Student Success |
|---|
| **Problem Statement 1**: Middle school students in grades 6-8 are lagging behind the state's goal for mathematics as evidenced by the 2024 SBAC exam results. **Critical Root Cause**: Students are struggling with math vocabulary, fact fluency and constructing written responses to complex mathematical problems. Students are missing fundamental math skills, including deficiencies with number sense. |

**Inquiry Area 1:** Student Success

**SMART Goal 2:** Increase the percentage of middle school students with IEPs proficient in mathematics from 27.7% to 45.6% in the FY25 - 26 school year, as measured by the state Spring 2026 middle school math SBAC Assessment.

**Formative Measures:** NWEA MAP 3 x per year, IEP Goals, Progress Reports. SPP Indicators - Assessment: (3B) Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade-level academic achievement standards.

**Aligns with District Goal**

| Improvement Strategy 1 Details | Status Checks | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Status Check | | |
| | Jan | Apr | May |
| **Improvement Strategy 1:** Teach and assess students on common math test vocabulary. Require teachers to assign and review word problems to prepare students for SBAC type questions. Daily practice to strengthen math fluency.<br>**Action Steps:** Math teachers will assign constructive response problems, teach problem-solving strategies, create school-wide expectations for written responses, and review word problems.<br>**Position Responsible:** Administration<br>**Resources Needed:** Time to meet with staff. Additional professional development offered by the math text publisher. Assistance from SEIF on best practices for teaching math to students with IEPs.<br><br>**Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Title I Elements:**<br>2.4<br>**Problem Statements/Critical Root Cause:** Student Success 2<br>**Resources and Funding Needed:** Special Education Staff - IDEA-B - $135,000 | No review | No review | No review |

## SMART Goal 2 Problem Statements:

| Student Success |
|---|
| **Problem Statement 2**: Middle School Students with IEPs are behind our white students in mathematics as evidenced by the 2024 SBAC Exam results. **Critical Root Cause**: Students with IEPs are struggling to complete mathematical problems at the same rate as their non-IEP peers. |

**Inquiry Area 2:** Adult Learning Culture

**SMART Goal 1:** By the end of the 2025 - 2026 school year, all current teachers will have participated in a book study and 75% of classroom observations will show evidence of learning opportunities designed to support English Language Learners as measured by classroom walkthrough data.

**Formative Measures:** Classroom Walk Throughs

**Aligns with District Goal**

| Improvement Strategy 1 Details | Status Checks | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Status Check | | |
| | Jan | Apr | May |
| **Improvement Strategy 1:** Implement book study groups for teachers using professional resources designed to support student language development in all content areas.<br>**Action Steps:** Develop book study plan and schedule.<br>**Position Responsible:** Administration<br>**Resources Needed:** Book/Novel Sets for Teachers<br><br>**Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Title I Elements:**<br>2.4<br>**Problem Statements/Critical Root Cause:** Adult Learning Culture 1 | No review | No review | No review |

## SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements:

| Adult Learning Culture |
|---|
| **Problem Statement 1**: The number of EL students has grown, as evidenced by our 2024 NSPF demographics. We feel that our teachers need additional support to help our EL students. **Critical Root Cause**: The school has undergone a dramatic shift in demographics over the last 5 years and not all teachers have been adequately trained in ways to support EL learners. |

**Inquiry Area 3:** Connectedness

**SMART Goal 1:** Increase the percent of middle school students who feel safe at school from 67% to 82% in the FY 25-26 school year as measured by the 2026 NV-SCSEL survey.

**Formative Measures:** Informal surveys and class discussion in the SEL classes.

**Aligns with District Goal**

| Improvement Strategy 1 Details | Status Checks | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Status Check | | |
| | Jan | Apr | May |
| **Improvement Strategy 1:** Students will be enrolled in a daily Social Emotional Learning class. Cross grade-level pairings will be created to help students feel connected and cultivate constructive relationships with other students on campus. Administration and social worker will meet with SEL classes to help guide school wide agendas.<br>**Action Steps:** Schedule students in SEL classes. Hold PD for all teachers on 7 Mindsets programming. Create cross grade-level pairings to foster connections between students of all grade levels. Administrative/Social Worker observations and participation in SEL classes.<br>**Position Responsible:** Administration<br>**Resources Needed:** 7 Mindsets Program for all students and teachers.<br><br>**Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Title I Elements:**<br>2.4<br>**Problem Statements/Critical Root Cause:** Connectedness 1<br>**Resources and Funding Needed:** 7 Mindsets Program - General Funds - $3,307.50 | No review | No review | No review |

**SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements:**

| Connectedness |
|---|
| **Problem Statement 1**: Our Students of two or more races rated the school Needs Improvement for emotional safety. **Critical Root Cause**: Our students of two or more races may not feel as accepted at school as other groups and may lack confidence. |

# Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Title I Elements

## 1.1: Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Our comprehensive needs assessment is performed yearly after the receipt of our SBAC/NSPF data in September. Our Continuing Improvement Committee and Community Council groups meet to review data and to develop our needs for the upcoming school year. Our plan is developed over a series of 3 meetings plus editing.

## 2.1: School Performance Plan (SPP) developed with appropriate stakeholders

Our Continuing Improvement and Community Council groups include staff, students, parents, as well as board members. The initial meeting occurs after the release of the SBAC/ NSPF data and then we meet approximately three additional times to write and edit the plan.

## 2.2: Regular monitoring and revision

We hold status checks quarterly with the Continuing Improvement Team. School administration is responsible for monitoring each strategy and documenting the lessons learned and next steps in Plan4Learning.

## 2.3: Available to parents and community in an understandable format and language

The plan will be posted on our school website in English and Spanish, as well as put in our weekly newsletter. We will have copies available for our families as well.

## 2.4: Opportunities for all children to meet State standards

Our major funded initiative is to put more adults in the middle school math classes so that we can do more small group and targeted intervention for our students. We intend to hire additional paraprofessionals/aides that can assist our students with this level of math so that we reduce the ratio of students per adult in these critical classes.

## 2.5: Increased learning time and well-rounded education

With this initiative, students will have more opportunity for increased learning time because there will be more adult time available to assist them. Math has consistently been an area of struggle for our students and by giving them the additional support in mathematics, we expect that this will help them to be more successful overall in school.

## 2.6: Address needs of all students, particularly at-risk

For our at risk students, the paraprofessional/aide can do targeted intervention. These students can be pulled into small groups or individually to perform checks for understanding, reteaching, or whatever other needs the students have.

## 3.1: Annually evaluate the schoolwide plan

Our School Performance Plan is evaluated by our Continuing Improvement Committee and our Community Council. Several times each year, the school's progress at meeting its goals is evaluated using available data like NWEA MAP or formative assessments. The plan is then adjusted as the school's needs change.

## 4.1: Develop and distribute Parent Involvement and Family Engagement Policy

The Parent Involvement and Family Engagement Policy will be developed by the Strategic Planning Committee.  This committee includes staff, students, board members and families. This Committee will write the plan and it will be available to our stakeholders on our website, placed in our weekly newsletter and available upon request in our offices.

## 4.2: Offer flexible number of parent involvement meetings

We hold parent involvement meetings on varying days of the week and at different times so that more of our families can attend. When possible, we will hold virtual meetings so that families can attend from any location.

# Title I Personnel

| Name | Position | Program | FTE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dawn Gustafson | Principal | | 1 |

# School Continuous Improvement (CI) Team

| Team Role | Name | Position |
|---|---|---|
| Support Personnel | Lori Rogers | Finance Manager |
| Paraprofessional | Natalie Rodriguez | Paraprofessional |
| Specialized Instructional Support Personnel | Stephanie Estores | RBG3 Coordinator |
| Specialized Instructional Support Personnel | Joanne Sanders | Student Services |
| Teacher | Kailene Krukowski | Teacher |
| Teacher | Meggan Fowler | Teacher |
| Teacher | Kate Smith | Teacher |
| Support Personnel | Hope Luna | HR/Payroll |
| Teacher | Patrick Quinn | Teacher |
| Board Member | Matt Fitzgerald | Board Member |
| Board Member | Elisabeth Nyang Coleman | Board Member |
| Student | Alleigh Fletcher | Student |
| Parent | Corinne Fletcher | Parent |
| Teacher | Anthony Quan Williams | Teacher |
| Administrator | Donna Childers | Assistant Principal |
| Administrator | Dawn Gustafson | Principal |
| Teacher | Kara Donnelly | Teacher |

# Community Outreach Activities

| Activity | Date | Lesson Learned |
|---|---|---|
| Community Council | 11/4/24 | Everyone agrees that math should be our focus. |

# School Funding Summary

| General Funds | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Inquiry Area** | **SMART Goal** | **Improvement Strategy** | **Resources Needed** | **Account Code** | **Amount** |
| 3 | 1 | 1 | 7 Mindsets Program | | $3,307.50 |
| | | | | **Sub-Total** | $3,307.50 |
| | | | | **Budgeted Fund Source Amount** | $1,935,328.00 |
| | | | | **+/- Difference** | $1,932,020.50 |

| IDEA-B | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Inquiry Area** | **SMART Goal** | **Improvement Strategy** | **Resources Needed** | **Account Code** | **Amount** |
| 1 | 2 | 1 | Special Education Staff | | $135,000.00 |
| | | | | **Sub-Total** | $135,000.00 |
| | | | | **Budgeted Fund Source Amount** | $135,000.00 |
| | | | | **+/- Difference** | $0.00 |

| Title I, Pt. A | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Inquiry Area** | **SMART Goal** | **Improvement Strategy** | **Resources Needed** | **Account Code** | **Amount** |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | Paraprofessionals / Aides | | $50,400.00 |
| | | | | **Sub-Total** | $50,400.00 |
| | | | | **Budgeted Fund Source Amount** | $50,400.00 |
| | | | | **+/- Difference** | $0.00 |
| | | | | **Grand Total Budgeted** | $2,120,728.00 |
| | | | | **Grand Total Spent** | $188,707.50 |
| | | | | **+/- Difference** | $1,932,020.50 |