



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
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SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM
GOVERNOR

**Charter Schools Division
2023-24 Renewal Application Part A
Revised
November 7, 2023**

School Name: Explore Academy

School Address: 5100 Masthead NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110

Head Administrator: Justin Baiardo

Governing Board Chair: Patrick Molina

Business Manager: Katie Rarick

Authorized Grade Levels: K-12

Authorized Enrollment: 1700

2021-22 End of Year Enrollment: 1129

Contract Term: 2019-2024

Weighted NMCI: 18.6

Mission: Explore Academy will provide each student with a personalized educational experience through the power of student choice, allowing each student to create a unique educational pathway in preparation for a college future.

Educational Program of School as written in the contract:

- i. Per its mission, Explore Academy will offer shorter learning modules (seminars) through which students will receive concentrated instruction over a smaller subset of academic standards. At the conclusion of each term, students will take an exit exam in each seminar to determine whether students have reached the required proficiency levels for each standard assessed for that seminar.

- ii. The school's choice-based philosophy of education provides students the freedom to choose from a set of seminar-versions. Since seminars are often offered in various versions, taught by different teachers, students will have the choice in the specific theme through which they will receive the instruction over the content of those seminars. Thus, the different versions through which each seminar is offered will be unique in their focus and instructional approach, thus allowing students to choose how they want to learn the content through a set of discrete options. This extends across all core and elective (PE, art) content areas, as well as into the school's unique upper division seminars.
- iii. Explore Academy students will have daily academic flex periods, allowing them to complete homework, collaborate, attend tutoring, pursue credit recovery, attend school meetings, visit teachers (and case managers in the case of special education students in compliance with their IEP), and complete make-up work as needed.
- iv. The school's staff will be provided with time for professional collaboration, such as in professional learning communities, to function as a forum for the sharing of best practices/instructional strategies, data analysis from seminar/exit exams, creation/modification of future exit exams, analysis of student satisfaction data, creation/modification of future seminars, etc. This collaborative component will be essential in allowing teachers to work together, share their experiences, and streamline their efforts as they work to implement this innovative form of education.
- v. The school encourages parent involvement in all areas of its operation. The school is encouraging parent volunteerism, both in areas of instruction and general operation. The school will communicate with parents through its website and a monthly newsletter for the dissemination of general information, and as needed via phone and/or email for individual student cases (academic, behavioral, etc.). Parents will have the ability to monitor student progress through the parent portal component of the school's student information system.

Amendments approved in last four years:

PEC Meeting Date	Approved (Y/N)	Amendment Request
12/16/2022	Y	Change in CPO
12/16/2022	Y	Change in Business Manager
9/16/2022	Y	Change in Business Manager
9/16/2022	Y	GB Board Change
9/16/2022	Y	GB Board Change
9/16/2022	Y	GB Board Change
9/16/2022	Y	GB Board Change
3/18/2022	Y	Change in CPO
8/27/2021	Y	Change in Business Manager
2/12/2021	Y	Additional Square Footage
2/12/2021	Y	Enrollment Cap Increase: 1100 to 1700
2/12/2021	Y	Grade Level Change: Add K-5
4/17/2020	Y	School Location Within District
1/17/2020	Y	Additional Square Footage
1/17/2020	Y	Enrollment Cap Increase: 600 to 1100

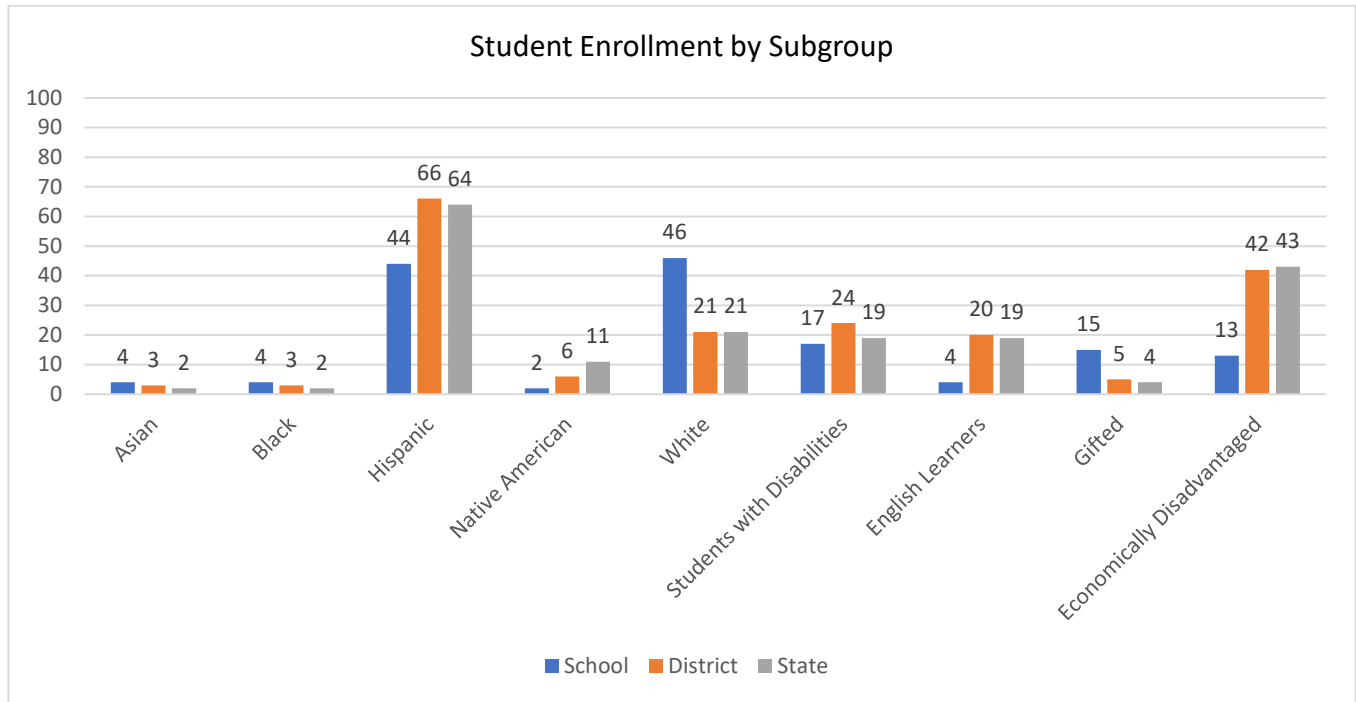
Source: Amendments and Notifications

Waivers:

Non-Discretionary Waiver	First Year of Waiver Implementation
No Waivers Claimed	

Source: CSD Internal Monitoring

Demographics as reported in STARS 2022-23 EOY:



Source: STARS > District and Location Reports > General Reports > Enrollment Subgroup Percentages with Averages

Academic Performance

Academic Performance Framework Indicators	2021-22 Score (100 points possible)
1: State Accountability System: NMVISTAS Overall Score	61
2: Subgroup Performance: high, middle, and low-performing quartiles	Not calculated by PED for 2021-22
3: School-specific Goals: if two goals, average of points on each goal	100*
Overall Academic Score: average of Indicators 1 and 3	80.5

*Note: see page 13 for Mission-Specific Goal point scale.

State Accountability System:

State and federal statute mandates accountability for all public schools. This section provides a snapshot of the school’s academic performance according to data collected by the Public Education Department (PED) for the 2022-23 school year.

The New Mexico State Accountability System ([NMVISTAS](#)) gives every public school in the state an overall score. Schools were ranked by percentile within school type, with high schools being ranked separately from elementary and middle schools because of differences in how points are calculated

(e.g., graduation factoring into high school but not elementary school accountability). Schools with an overall score that places them in the top 25% of schools in the state are awarded the Spotlight designation. Schools may also receive designations of excellence in specific areas. Schools below the 75th percentile are designated either a Traditional Support School or are given one of several designations indicating a need for greater support.

Schools were ranked by percentile within school type, with high schools being ranked separately from elementary and middle schools because of differences in how points are calculated (e.g., graduation factoring into high school but not elementary school accountability).

Explore Academy ranked above **81.3%** of high schools statewide. The school received a designation of **Spotlight school**.

Overall Standing:

Contract Year	School Year	Vistas Score	Percentile Rank	Designations
Year 1	2019-20	Not available		
Year 2	2020-21			
Year 3	2021-22	61	81.3%	Spotlight School
Year 4	2022-23	Available November 2023		

Source: NMVistas.org

Data are masked as follows in the charts shown below:

Students	Percentages Given	Data Masking
N = 0		<p>Examples:</p> <p>In a group of 17 students, if the proficiency was 3% the chart would show $\leq 20\%$ and if it was 98% it would show $\geq 80\%$.</p> <p>In a group of 59 students, if the proficiency was 3% the chart would show $\leq 5\%$ and if it was 98% the chart would show $\geq 95\%$.</p>
N < 10	*****	
N = 10-20	20% to 80%	
N= 21-40	10% to 90%	
N = 41-100	5% to 95%	
N = 101-300	2% to 98%	
N > 300	1% to 100%	

Proficiency:

Year 3 (2021-22) Proficiency Percentages			
	Reading	Math	Science
All	56%	47%	54%
Asian	68%	$\geq 80\%$	*****
Black	45%	*****	*****
Hispanic	51%	41%	47%
Native	*****	*****	*****
White	62%	52%	60%
SwD	22%	23%	*****
EL		*****	
FRL	33%	27%	32%

Source: NMVistas.org

Academic Growth: Growth rates are not available for Years 1 and 2 (2019-20 to 2020-21) as statewide assessments were not administered to all students in those years. The growth rate for Year 3 (2021-22) was calculated by using an expected growth trendline from 2018-19 to 2021-22. The growth rate for Year 4 (2022-23) will reflect growth from Year 3 to Year 4. Negative growth shown in red.

2021-22 Growth		
Improvement Percentile		
	Reading	Math
Overall	-4%	-1%
Asian	-98%	48%
Black	19%	16%
Hispanic	-4%	9%
Native	-3%	-10%
White	-3%	-14%
SwD	-3%	-6%
EL	-14%	-3%
FRL	-21%	2%

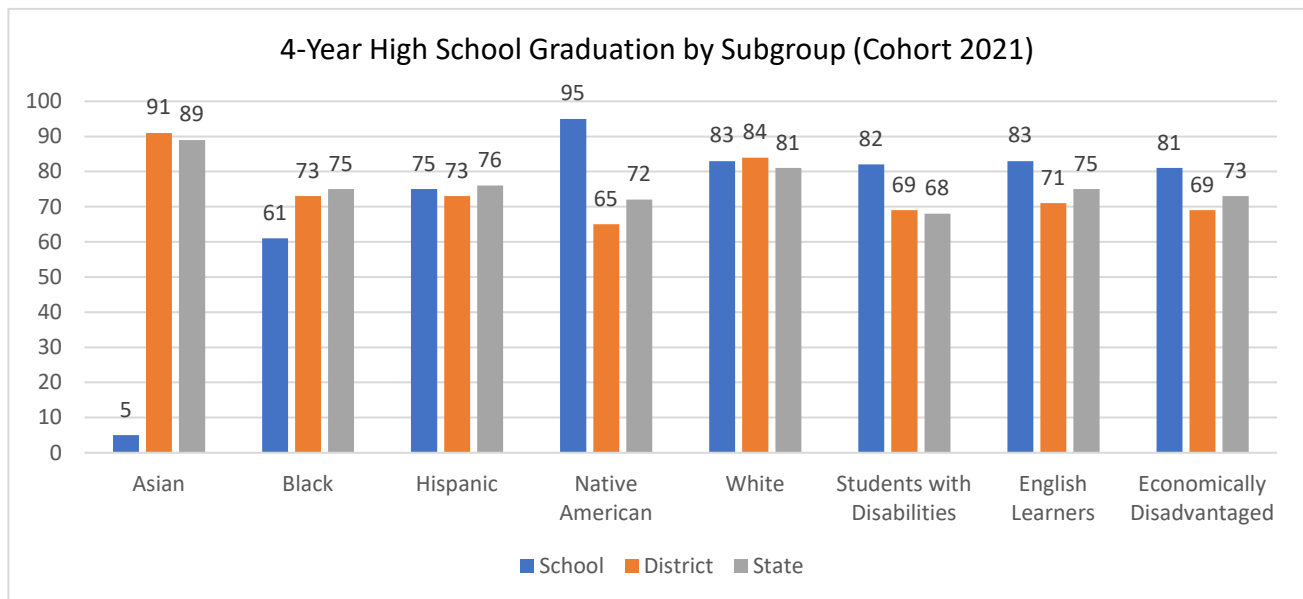
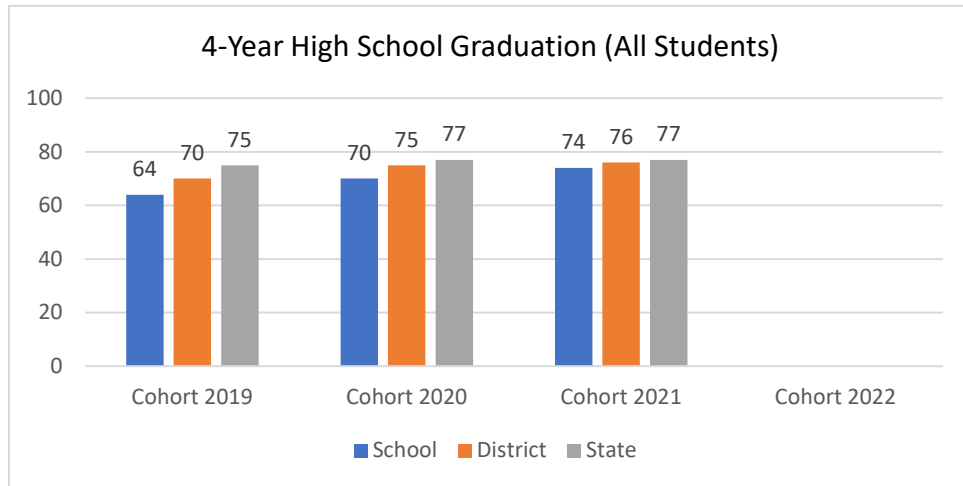
Source: NMVistas.org

English Learner Progress toward Proficiency: 10.5%

Source: NMVistas.org

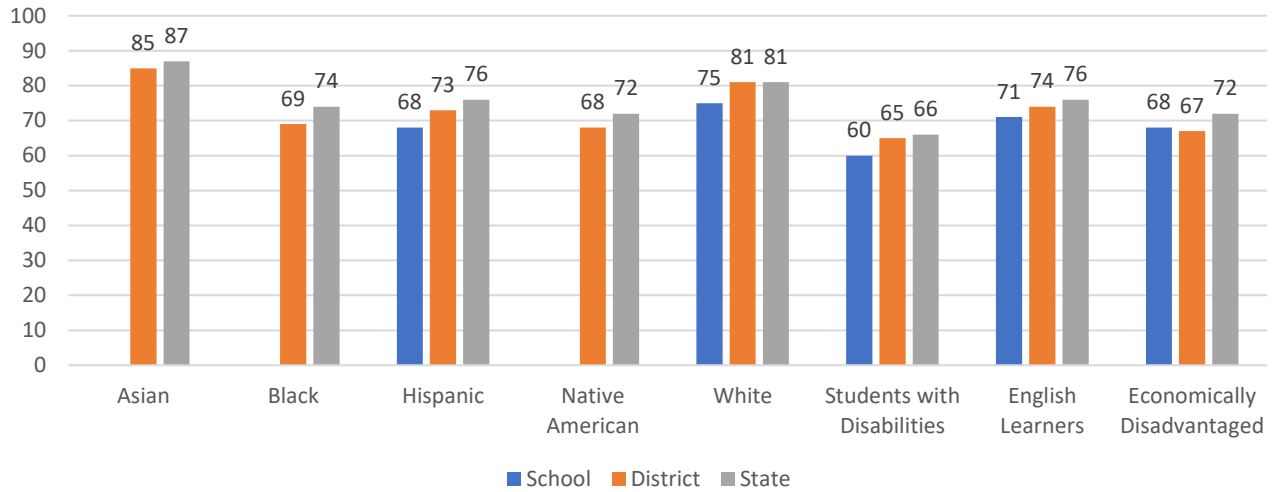
High School Graduation Rates:

The data reported each year is for the prior year’s cohort of students. Cohort 2021 is the most recent 4-year graduation data available, cohort 2020 is the most recent 5-year data, and cohort 2019 the most recent 6-year data. Data for the next cohort (2022 4-year, 2021 5-year, 2020 6-year) will be available in fall 2023.



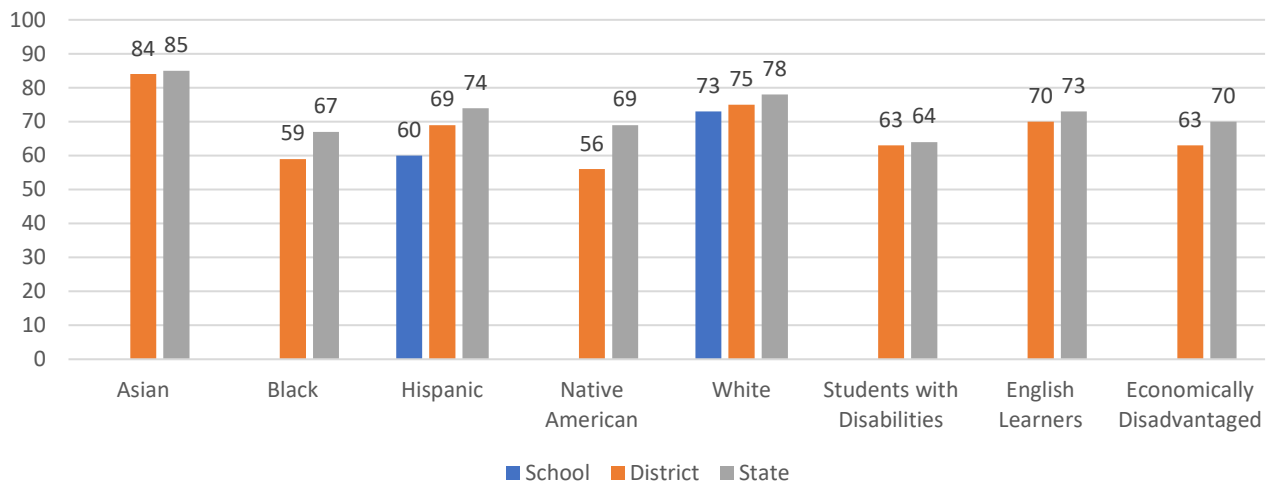
Note: The school-level percentage for the Asian category is ≤ 5 and ≥ 95 for the Native American category in order to mask data due to student population size.

4-Year High School Graduation by Subgroup (Cohort 2020)

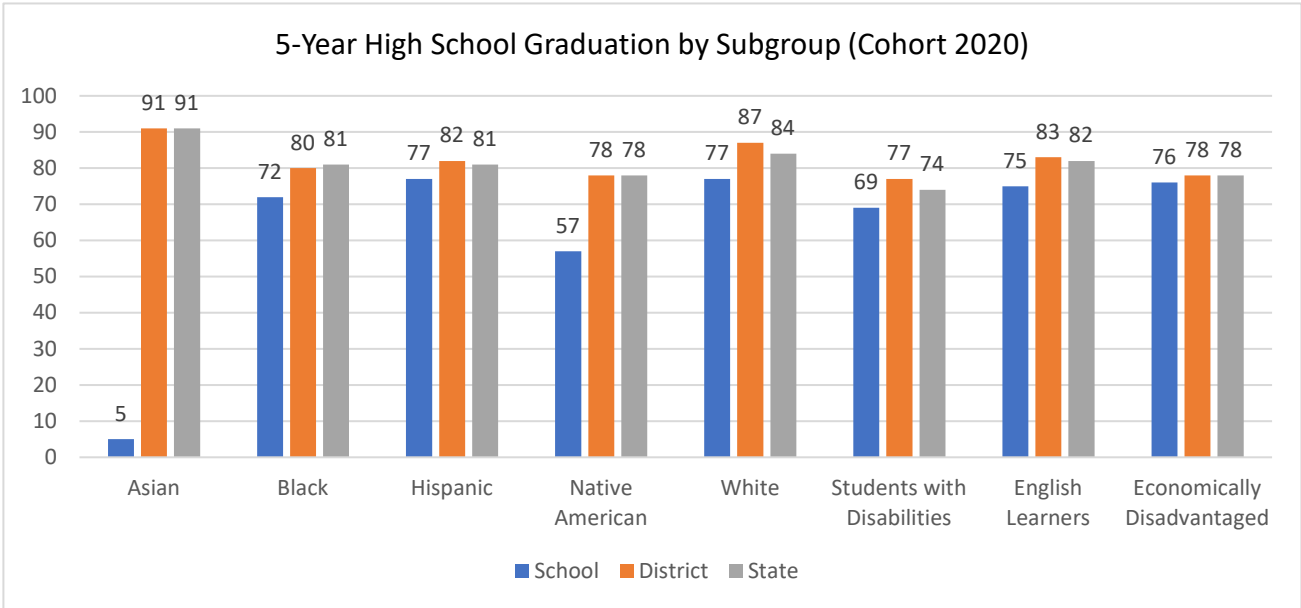
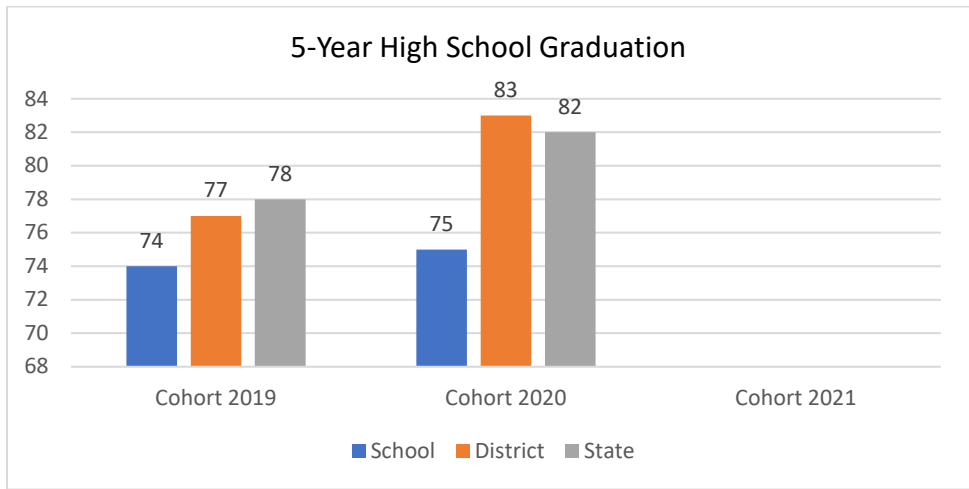


Note: The school-level percentages for the Asian and Black categories are unavailable in order to mask data due to student population size.

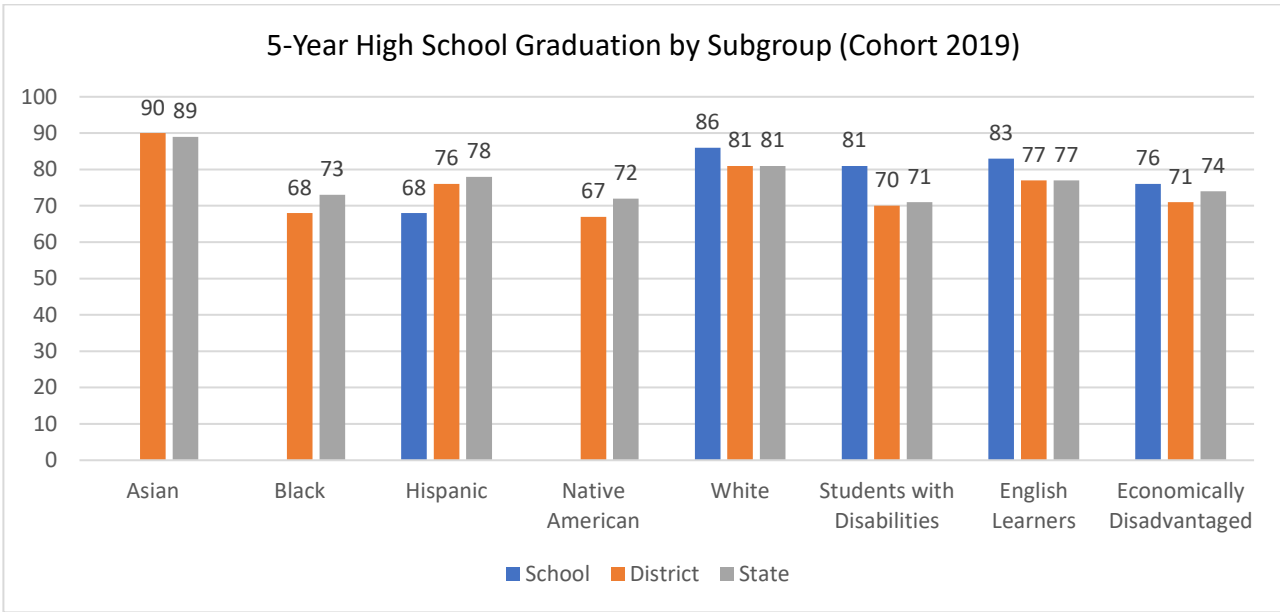
4-Year High School Graduation by Subgroup (Cohort 2019)



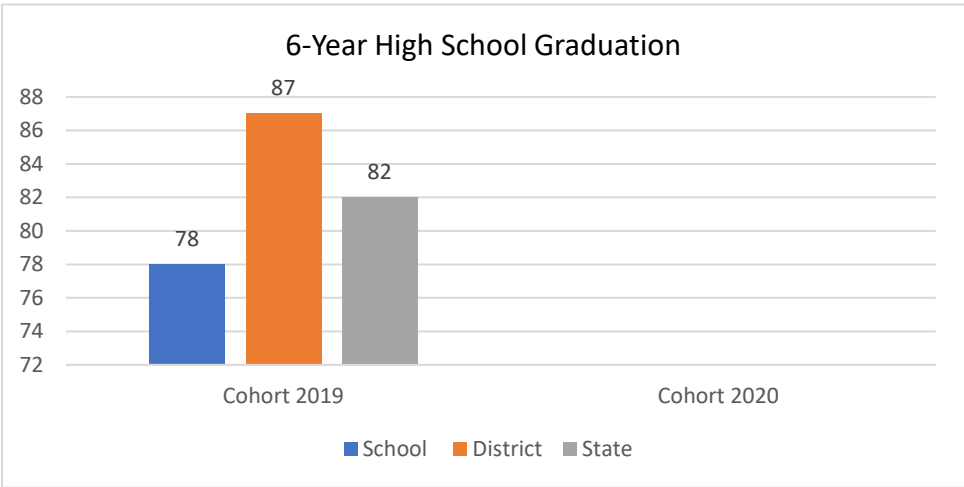
Note: The school-level percentages for most subgroups at the school level are unavailable in order to mask data due to student populations size.

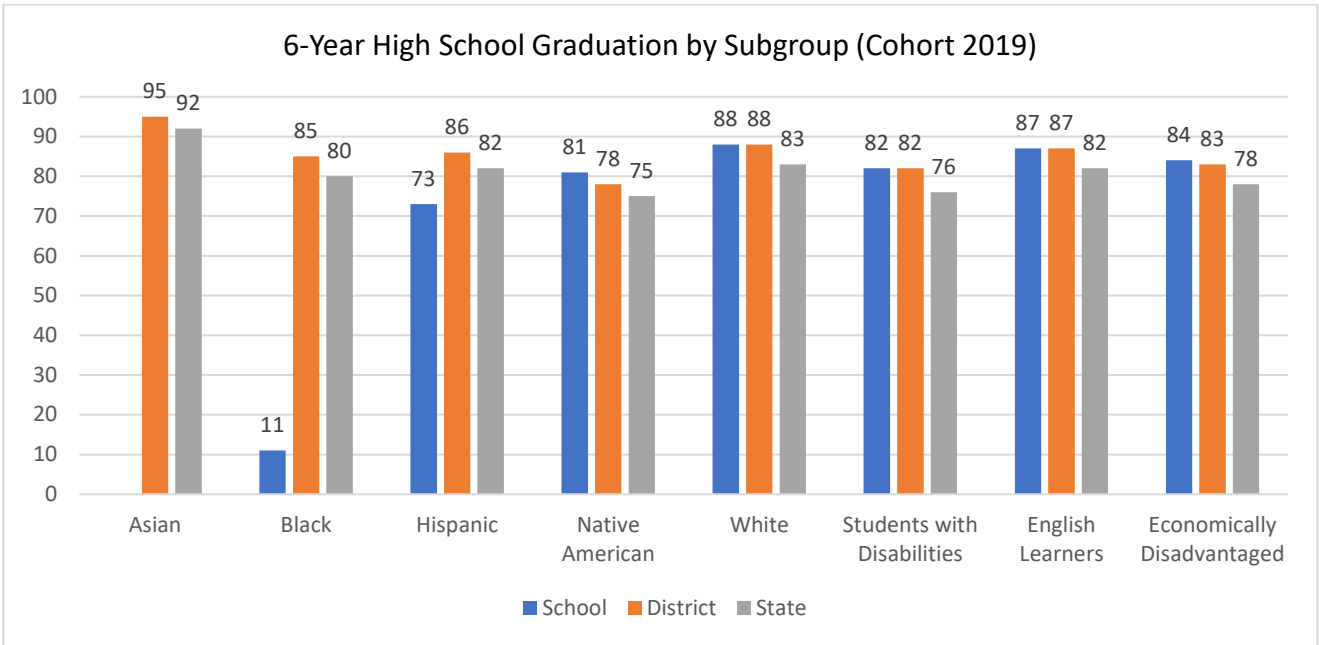


Note: The school-level percentage for the categories is ≤ 5 in order to mask data due to student population size.



Note: The school-level percentages for the Asian, Black, and Native American categories are unavailable in order to mask data due to student population size.





Note: The school-level and district-level percentage for the Asian category is unavailable and the district percentage is $\geq 95\%$, in order to mask data due to student population size.

Source: NMPED Graduation Data Site, <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/accountability/graduation/>

School-Specific or Mission-Specific Goals:

Year	Goal 1	Goal 2	Overall Rating: Academic Indicator 3
2019-20	Unable to Review (COVID)	No goal	Unable to Review (COVID)
2020-21	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard		Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
2021-22	Exceeds Standard		Exceeds Standard
2022-23	Meets Standard		Meets Standard

Source: CSD Internal Monitoring

Mission-Specific Goals

Goal 1: At the end of each term, at least 70% of students, enrolled at both the 40th and 120th day, will pass* 80% of the standards-based exit exams administered as a measure of proficiency on each seminar’s specific required standards and skills.

Performance Level	Target	Points
Exceeds Standard	At the end of each term, 81-100% of students will pass* 80% of the standards-based exit exams administered as a measure of proficiency on each seminar’s specific required standards and skills.	100
Meets Standard	At the end of each term, 70-80% of students will pass* 80% of the standards-based exit exams administered as a measure of proficiency on each seminar’s specific required standards and skills.	75
Does Not Meet Standard	At the end of each term, 50-69% of students will pass* 80% of the standards-based exit exams administered as a measure of proficiency on each seminar’s specific required standards and skills.	25
Falls Far Below Standard	At the end of each term, below 50% of students will pass* 80% of the standards-based exit exams administered as a measure of proficiency on each seminar’s specific required standards and skills.	0

*pass >= 80%, or as indicated on the IEP

Student Attendance/Retention/Recurrent:

Year	Student Attendance Target: 95%	Student Retention Target: 70%	Student Recurrent Enrollment Target: 80%
FY20	96%	76%	76%
FY21	96%	84%	81%
FY22	93%	84%	78%
FY23	89%	92%	82%

Student Attendance Source: STARS > District and Location Reports > Template Verification Reports > Student > Student Summary Attendance Summary; **Retention and Recurrent Enrollment Source:** STARS > District and Location Reports > Options for Parents > Charter School Enrollment Report

Teacher Retention Rate:

Year	Retention Rate
FY20 to FY21	78%
FY21 to FY22	86%
FY22 to FY23	60%

Source: STARS > State Reports > Staff Reports > Turnover Rates for Assignment Category (Teachers)

Financial Compliance

Enrollment Trends as reported in STARS End Of Year:

Grades Served	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
K	Added K-5 in FY22		47	61
Grade 1			46	56
Grade 2			52	62
Grade 3			45	65
Grade 4			59	59
Grade 5			60	68
Grade 6	93	167	143	153
Grade 7	84	126	155	172
Grade 8	75	104	120	158
Grade 9	59	67	89	116
Grade 10	55	46	54	79
Grade 11	51	48	43	52
Grade 12	24	32	38	28
Total	441	590	951	1129

Source: STARS > District and Location Reports > General Reports > Enrollment by District by Location by Grade

Staffing measured in Full-Time Equivalents (FTE):

Year	EAs	Non-certified Personnel	Other Personnel	Administrator, Principal	Related Service Personnel, Healthcare, Counselor, Supervisor	Reg Ed Teacher	Special Ed / Gifted Teacher	TOTAL All Funds
FY20	0	13.65	1.35	3	2.01	35.01	3.6	58.62
FY21	1	18.19	1.43	4	2.5	50.01	4.03	81.16
FY22	1	32.66	1.54	4	3.11	71.5	8.06	121.87
FY23	19	14.37	1.47	4.8	7.79	73.28	8.81	129.52

Source: STARS > State Reports > Staff > Number of Staff with FTE by District, Assignment Category, Assignment

FTE paid with operational funds:

Year	Reg Ed Teacher	SPED Teacher	Reg Ed EA	SPED EA	Principal Head Admin	Admin / Support	Support Services	TOTAL Operational
FY20	30	2	4	0	1	2	9	45
FY21	43	3	5	0	1	3	10	61
FY22	71.5	1.5	14.5	0	1	3	10	97.5
FY23	81.3	4	22.18	0	0.9	6	35.4	149.88

Source: OBMS > Reports > Budget Reports > Budget Job Class Report

Actual SEG Funding and Operational Expenses, in whole dollars, by Function Code:

Function	Function Name	FY20	%	FY21	%	FY22	%	FY23	%
1000	Direct Instruction	2,605,395	62%	3,619,963	67%	6,022,796	67%		
2100	Student Support	273,256	6%	228,363	4%	510,093	6%		
2200	Instructional Support	329	0%	158	0%	6,856	0%		
2300	Central Administration	274,142	7%	267,842	5%	195,408	2%		
2400	School Administration	360,441	9%	419,181	8%	698,758	8%		
2500	Central Services	177,207	4%	225,785	4%	457,537	5%		
2600	Maintenance and Operations	509,341	12%	634,252	12%	1,106,008	12%		
2700-5999	All Other Function Codes	8,915	0%	0	0%	5,281	0%		
Total Operational Expense Fund 11000		\$4,209,025	100%	\$5,395,544	100%	\$9,002,738	100%		
Total Operational Revenue Fund 11000		\$4,095,254		\$5,415,675		\$9,274,977			

Source: School Budget Bureau; FY23 data pending

Operational Cash Balance:

Year	Cash Amount	% Increase (Decrease)	CB Target	Days Cash on Hand
FY2020	\$50,000.00	66.67%	1.1%	4.04
FY2021	\$280,464.00	460.93%	4.9%	17.91
FY2022	\$278,778.00	-0.60%	2.9%	10.62
FY2023	\$457,660.00	64.17%	3.6%	13.28

Source: OBMS > Reports > Budget Reports > Unrestricted Cash Balance Report

Audit Findings: Audit reports are not completed until a fiscal year ends, so that schools received the FY2019 audit report during contract Year 1, and the performance ratings for Year 1 (SY 2019-20) are based on the audit report for FY2019 (SY 2018-19).

Fiscal Year	Total Findings	Repeat Findings	Material Weakness	Significant Deficiency	Disclaimed Audit
FY2019	1	0	0	0	No
FY2020	2	1	0	0	No
FY2021	2	0	0	0	No
FY2022	1	0	1	0	No

Source: NMPED Audit Report, Clifton Larson and Associates

Governing Body Performance

Board Membership and Officers: Did the board have all required officers and all required members in place during each fiscal year of the contract term, and were notifications of changes in membership submitted timely? (If there were no board vacancies during a fiscal year, the notification column will indicate N/A.)

Fiscal Year	Chair	Vice-Chair	Secretary	Full Membership	Timely Notification of Vacancies
FY2020	Jesse Pickard	No	No	Yes	No
FY2021	David Kulb	Eva Vigil	Ray Barton	Yes	Yes
FY2022	David Kulb	Eva Vigil	Patrick Molina	Yes	Yes
FY2023	Patrick Molina	Martha Barrera	Dotty McKinney	Yes	No

Source: CSD Internal Monitoring

FY20 had two untimely notifications and the CSD was not notified as to who served as their vice chair and secretary. FY23 had two untimely notifications.

Governing Board Training: Did all members of the board complete the required training hours of 8 hours per year for continuing members and 10 hours for new members? **Note:** Red font indicates that the member did not complete all required training hours. An asterisk indicates the school has a 2-hour fiscal exemption.

Board Members	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Ray Barton	Yes	Yes		
Ralph Montano	Yes			
David Kulb	Yes	Yes	Yes	
John Garletts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gloria Lueras-Kidd				
Patrick Molina			Yes	Yes
Eva Vigil		Yes	Yes	
Martha Barrera		Yes	Yes	Yes
Jesse Pickard	No			
Dotty McKinney				Yes
Dr. Richard Griffith				Yes

Source: CSD Internal Monitoring

Performance Framework Ratings

Pursuant to the [PEC Performance Framework and Accountability System \(2019\)](#), schools receive ratings of **Meets Standard**, **Working to Meet Standard**, or **Does Not Meet Standard** for individual indicators in the framework. Explanations for any rating other than Meets Standard are provided below.

The school also receives an overall rating of either **Meets Standard** or **Does Not Meet Standard** for the year. If a school receives a **Does Not Meet Standard** rating for three or more indicators, it will receive an overall rating of **Does Not Meet Standard**.

Contract Year	School Year	Overall Rating: Organization & Financial Framework
Year 1	2019-20	Meets Standard
Year 2	2020-21	Meets Standard
Year 3	2021-22	Meets Standard
Year 4	2022-23	Pending

Source: CSD Internal Monitoring

Multi-year Performance Framework Ratings

Explore Academy	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Organizational and Financial Performance				
1a Mission and Educational Program	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
1b State Assessment Requirements	Meets Standard	Not Reviewed	Meets Standard	Pending
1c Rights of Students with Disabilities	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
1d Rights of English Learners	Working to Meet Standard	Working to Meet Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
1e Meeting Program Requirements	Meets Standard	Assurances	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
1f NM DASH Plan	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2a Financial Reporting and Compliance	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Working to Meet Standard
2b Accounting Principles	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard
2c Responsive to Audit Findings	Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
2d Managing Grant Funds	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
2e Staffing for Fiscal Management	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Working to Meet Standard
2f Internal Controls	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
3a Governance Requirements	Working to Meet Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
3b Nepotism, Conflict of Interest	Working to Meet Standard	Assurances	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
3c Reporting Requirements	Meets Standard	Assurances	Meets Standard	Working to Meet Standard
4a Rights of All Students	Working to Meet Standard	Assurances	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
4b Attendance and Retention	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Working to Meet Standard
4c Staff Credentialing	Meets Standard	Working to Meet Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
4d Employee Rights	Working to Meet Standard	Assurances	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
4e Background Checks, Ethics	Meets Standard	Assurances	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
5a Facilities	Meets Standard	Assurances	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
5b Transportation	N/A	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
5c Health and Safety	Working to Meet Standard	Assurances	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
5d Handling Information	Working to Meet Standard	Assurances	Meets Standard	Meets Standard

Source: CSD Internal Monitoring

Explanation of 2022-23 Indicator Ratings:

- 2.a. Q4 report to School Budget Bureau almost a month late.
- 2.b. FY22 audit reflects one unmodified finding that is a material weakness.
- 2.e. Two business manager changes in FY23.
- 3.c. Two late governing body change notifications.
- 4.b. EOY Attendance rate was 88%; target rate is 95%.

Explanation of 2021-22 Indicator Ratings:

All indicators received a rating of Meets Standard.