

Duluth Public Schools Academy dba  
**Duluth Edison Charter Schools**

**Strategic Plan**

**2021-2026**

**Five-Year Plan**

**Approved by DPSA Board 6/22/21**

**Duluth Edison Charter Schools is dedicated to the achievement of academic and personal excellence for every student.**



## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1.1 Purpose

1.2 School District Background

1.3 Process

1.4 Strategic Plan Goal Overview

1. Goal 1

2. Goal 2

3. Goal 3

4. Goal 4

5. Goal 5

6. Goal 6

1.5 References



## **1.1 Purpose**

DECS Strategic Plan outlines the mission, vision, values, strategic directions, and goals of our charter school. The Strategic Plan is an active document which guides decision-making at the administrative and board level. The Strategic Plan drives the direction of resources, programs, and initiatives affecting the school. The Strategic Plan is derived from analysis of student, school, and district performance data, a review of previous strategic plans, state and federal legislation, recommendations from our authorizer (Innovative Quality Schools) and recommendation from our charter school stakeholders.

### **DECS Mission:**

DECS is dedicated to the achievement of academic and personal excellence for every student.

### **DECS Principles to fulfill Mission**

1. Expect a commitment of excellence from students, family, and staff.
2. Appreciate each student's diverse character, culture and interests through an active approach to curriculum, programs, and projects.
3. Provide a safe and accepting learning environment.
4. Sustain a culture of teaching and living the core values -- respect, responsibility, compassion, wisdom, courage, integrity, hope and justice.
5. Uphold the professional innovation, creativity, and collegiality of exceptional staff.
6. Require sound and responsible business and operational management practice.



## **1.2 School Background**

Duluth Edison Charter School, located in Duluth, Minnesota on the western shores of Lake Superior. Over 275 employees serve a K-8 enrollment of approximately 1,000 students. Currently, the charter school is focusing work on implementation of standards based assessments and school climate with a focus on restorative practices.. We rely on research, best practice, and applicability to our setting, as we continue this effort.

Raleigh Academy serves about 220 students in grades K-5<sup>th</sup>. Raleigh is located in western Duluth and is located in the heart of the Western Duluth community. North Star Academy serves around 850 students in grades K-8<sup>th</sup>. North Star is a large school and has created an atmosphere of “three schools within one.” The Primary Academy serves students in grades K-2<sup>nd</sup>, the Elementary Academy serves students in grades 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup>, and the Junior Academy serves students in grades 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>.

The Duluth Edison Charter School offers specialized and extracurricular programs designed to meet diverse student needs including special education, English Language Learners (ELL), behavior interventions grades K-8, academic interventions grade K-2, outdoor education, STEAM activities, play based learning, athletics, activities, clubs, and others.



### **1.3 Process**

The entire strategic plan is reviewed at least twice a year by the Instructional Leadership team and by the Board during School Board Retreats. The plan is updated at the end of each semester through Instructional Leadership notes and School Board reports for public accountability. Goal managers are required to demonstrate measurable improvement of programs over time.



## 1.4 Strategic Plan Goal Overview



### Goal 1

Increase student achievement in relation to Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) proficiency rates, MCA proficiency within comparison groups, MCA Growth, Measures of Annual Proficiency (MAP) achievement, DIBELS achievement, student attendance, and student, parent, & teacher satisfaction.



### Goal 2

Ensure curriculum, instruction, and assessment focus on rigor, student engagement, and continuous improvement.



### Goal 3

Develop and sustain a respectful, inclusive, and safe learning environment for students, staff, and parents.



### Goal 4

Provide equity and excellence in education through creating a culture of inclusiveness for all. This includes eliminating achievement gaps among all student subgroups.



### Goal 5

Ensure strong fiscal management, facility planning, and effective governance that addresses short and long term goals of the School.



### Goal 6

Provide quality business services to optimize school operations through staffing, enrollment, transportation, legal compliance, policies, insurance, management and organizational systems.

## **1.5 Goals & Objectives**

Goals are outcomes which define what the organization is hoping to accomplish. Objectives define the framework in which the district intends to accomplish the goals and objectives.

The following list identifies the goals and objectives. The remaining pages in this section describe in detail the goals, objectives and tasks.



**Goal 1**



**Increase student achievement in relation to MCA proficiency rates, MCA proficiency within comparison groups, MCA Growth, MAP achievement, DIBELS achievement, student attendance, and student, parent, & teacher satisfaction.**

Improvement of student learning is at the core of everything we do in our Schools. To accomplish this goal, we provide a curriculum aligned to Minnesota State Standards. Students are assessed based on these standards and focus on achievement of standards through reteaching, strategic focused instruction and reassessing

**Action Steps:**

- ✓ *Development and implementation of a plan for full standards based assessments and reporting to improve student learning. Full implementation of standards based report cards by 2023-24*  
[MAY 2021 DECS Plan Standards Based Reporting](#)
- ✓ Utilizing parent, student, community, and staff surveys to identify areas of concern and measure improvement of student learning, communication, and climate.
- ✓ Ongoing data analysis as district, building, grade levels and individual classrooms to shape instructional focus and practices
- ✓ Researching and utilizing “Best Practices” to improve instruction within the classroom.
- ✓ Individual, classroom, and school wide data analysis completed through bi-monthly data meetings with teachers.
- ✓ Implementation of District World’s Best Workforce plan as required by statute to include growth of at least two percent will occur in 50 percent or more of the School’s reportable subgroups in the MCAS
- ✓ Implementation of School Improvement Plan as required by our Authorizer, IQS.
- ✓ Differentiated professional development for teachers to meet the individual needs of teachers and continue to foster growth.
- ✓ Implementation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) teams to ensure interventions (academic and behavior) and differentiated instruction within the school environment.
- ✓ Create Student Achievement goals each year based on previous years student achievement data.

## **MEASURABLE OUTCOMES 2020-21**

Standards based grading implemented for all math and reading classes and underway for other subjects to come on board next year. Revised Standards Based Reporting Plan

With COVID pandemic staff and family surveys played a key role in planning, professional development has focused on instructional tools and programs purchased to enhance distance and hybrid learning and data analysis has focused on tracking both student participation and attendance. Revised end of year survey to staff, families, and students to better collect input on pandemic implications for future planning

Added standards based assessment tools -- Dreambox, Knowre, Actively Learn

Instructional lead team is creating a differentiated professional development plan for 2021-22 and beyond for teachers and other staff

### **GOAL MANAGER:**

Bonnie Jorgenson, Head of Schools

### **SUPPORTING OBJECTIVE MANAGERS:**

Tammy Rackliffe, K-5 Principal

Dr. Jennifer Fuchs, Junior Academy Principal

Steve Ondrus, Raleigh Academy Director

Rachel Komarek, Special Education Coordinator

Heather Rappana, Student Support Services Manager

## **Goal 2**



**Ensure curriculum, instruction, and assessment are designed to focus on rigor, student engagement, and continuous improvement.**

Key district and state assessment data disaggregated and provided to building leaders to inform school efforts which focus on rigor, engagement, and continuous improvement. Ongoing professional development for administrators and other teacher leaders to ensure best practices are utilized at the School

### **Action Steps**

- ✓ Continued working through standards based implementation plan. Enhance the role of curriculum coordinators in this work
- ✓ Encourage administration and offer support of strategies and programming to address the needs of our community for birth to grade three initiatives.



- ✓ Be open as DPSA Board and administration to opportunities to enhance our current programming to fill our full charter as a PreK through grade 12 school.
- ✓ Through observations, instruction and student engagement specific teacher curriculum, instruction, and assessment needs are identified with interventions and accommodations implemented as needed.
- ✓ Differentiated professional development to meet the needs of the teachers.
- ✓ Utilization of K-5 literacy coach, mentors for new teachers, and other means to ensure support to teachers in their first years in the classroom
- ✓ Continued focus on students taking ownership of their learning through self-assessment and goal setting.
- ✓ Assessment of current specialist offerings, in particular in light of Snowflake property purchase, has led to decision to offer outdoor education K-8 at North Star
- ✓ Implementation of board approved Teacher Evaluation process.
- ✓ Track by MDE subgroups eligibility for and progress in behavior, math and reading interventions. Where interventions are ineffective we will look to discover why and find workable interventions to replace those that are ineffective.

**MEASURABLE OUTCOMES: 2020-21**

- Standards Based Implementation Plan continues as outlined above
- Construction and design work on outdoor space commonly known as Snowflake occurring this summer
- Literacy coach modified her work to align with distance and hybrid learning
- Changed teacher evaluation process to Danielson's rubric for remote learning
- K-8 outdoor education at North Star in 2021-22
- Teacher evaluation task force working on plan for 2021-22
- Considering a small voluntary pre K summer program

**GOAL MANAGER:**

Bonnie Jorgenson, Head of Schools

**SUPPORTING OBJECTIVE MANAGERS:**

Tammy Rackliffe, K-5 Principal  
Dr. Jennifer Fuchs, Junior Academy Principal  
Steve Ondrus, Raleigh Academy Director



**Goal 3**



**Develop and sustain a respectful, inclusive, and safe learning environment for students, staff, and parents.**

To learn, children must feel supported and safe. A healthy, safe, and supportive learning environment enables students, staff, and parents to learn in powerful ways. This environment promotes innovation, creativity, inquiry, and risk taking. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a framework designed to help schools select and organize evidence based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum which enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all. DECS personnel were trained in and initially implemented SW-PBIS through a project of the Minnesota Department of Education during the 2012-13 school year. We continue to participate in the Sustainability Phase of the project.

**Action Steps**

- ✓ Monthly Tier One Meetings by Academy to focus on culture and climate
- ✓ Tier One Teams (Academy PBIS teams) are responsible for the coordination of programming, action-planning, monitoring fidelity of framework implementation, staff development, and annual evaluation of each Academy. Academy teams are coached by a member of the PBIS Leadership team: team members include teachers, Dean of Students, school counselors, special education representatives, and student support personnel.
- ✓ Completed information gathering from the Tiered Fidelity Inventory regarding implementation of PBIS and creation of Academy Action Plans.
- ✓ Develop a 3-5 year plan for refinement of our School Culture and Climate to include
  - Ongoing implementation of restorative practices through intentional training of key stakeholders including administrators, counselors, deans, and teachers with a focus on classroom community building circles, restorative language and conferencing.
  - a schoolwide process to create a Code of Character, Conduct and Support for DPSA. This work is based on training sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Education Supportive Discipline Community of Practice workshops.
  - Ongoing professional development related to cultural competency, understanding poverty and race and the impact on school systems, restorative practices, and needed refinement to address disproportionality in



referrals and other related concerns

Ensure the district crisis plan is updated annually, that all school staff and students are trained in procedures, that needed equipment is provided, and training is ongoing throughout the year.

- ✓ Quarterly conference options for students and parents with staff. Ongoing communication.
- ✓ Yearly student, parent, and staff satisfaction surveys given, analyzed and identification of next steps.

**MEASURABLE OUTCOMES: 2020-21**

Developing coordinated partnerships with five community agencies that provide access support and resources related to distance learning. These partnerships will remain helpful as students return to the school building.

Code of Conduct Task force work continues. Have held staff, parent, community and student meetings. Anticipate a new code of conduct by the end of 2021-22 year if not sooner.

Restorative practices working group at Raleigh moving to full implementation, additional training for staff at both schools this summer. North Star K-5 working on plan.

Ruler training and focus in Junior Academy, grades 6-8

**GOAL MANAGER:**

Heather Rappana, Student Support Services Manager

**SUPPORTING OBJECTIVE MANAGERS:**

Bonnie Jorgenson, Head of Schools

Tammy Rackliffe, K-5 Principal and Tier One Team

Dr. Jennifer Fuchs, Junior Academy Principal and Tier One Team

Steve Ondrus, Raleigh Academy Director

Marc Wickstrom,, North Star 6-8 Dean of Students

Ryan Dickinson, North Star K-5 Dean of Students.



Goal 4



**Provide equity and excellence in education through creating a culture of inclusiveness for all. This includes eliminating achievement gaps among all students.**

DECS supports sustaining healthy identities among stakeholders, the establishment of connected learning communities, and respect of cultural diversity through working with cultural competency training, diversity & inclusion, and race awareness.

**Action Steps**

- ✓ Staff professional development including racial awareness workshops and other areas related to building cultural competency
- ✓ Working with consultants via MDE to create and implement a plan related to understanding poverty and race, cultural competency and the impacts on school systems, and a plan to discover and address inequities found. This is our Code of Conduct work referenced above.
- ✓ Review the staff recruitment process and plan for further outreach to a diverse group of candidates.
- ✓ In student achievement, clear analysis of sub group needs, research on culturally sensitive teaching, and other best practices
- ✓ Prioritization of cultural liaison positions in School budget
- ✓ Staff book studies on equity
- ✓ All administrative staff will set an equity goal as part of their professional development plan.
- ✓ Movement towards restorative justice practices
- ✓ Ongoing discussion towards a plan for Indian Education with our American Indian Advisory Council
- ✓ *Incorporating questions related to inclusion and diversity in our standards based instruction*

**MEASURABLE OUTCOMES: 2020-21**

New Hiring Process created and being implemented with a focus on cultural and bias sensitivity

Code of Conduct work ongoing, anticipate new code spring 2022

Reclicensure representative working with other staff to ensure ongoing cultural competency professional development

**GOAL MANAGER:**



Bonnie Jorgenson, Head of Schools

**SUPPORTING OBJECTIVE MANAGERS:**

Tammy Rackliffe, K-5 Principal  
Dr. Jennifer Fuchs, Junior Academy Principal  
Steve Ondrus, Raleigh Academy Director  
Rachel Komarek, Special Education Coordinator  
Heather Rappana, Student Support Services Manager



**Ensure strong fiscal management, facility planning, and effective governance that addresses short and long term goals of the School.**

Develop and sustain effective and efficient use of all resources for improved fiscal responsibility including budget, finance management, fund balance, financial reports, financial audits, and payroll. The School will maintain 60 or more days of cash on hand. Periodic capital improvements to district facilities must be made to ensure educational program needs are met, and the space (s) are safe, compliant, and structural sound.

**Action Steps**

- ✓ Provide a financial and operational process that strengthens student learning.
- ✓ Provide annual audited financial statements to stakeholders including Board and MDE.
- ✓ Comply with all required reports for bond holders.
- ✓ Annually review district internal controls for federal grants and implement new guidelines to maintain federal compliance.
- ✓ Ensure compliance with state and federal statutes and reporting
- ✓ DPSA Board Development Committee to plan for ongoing Board development including mentor program
- ✓ The Board annually does a Board self-assessment and responds to needs that arise from the discussion of this assessment as part of this plan.
- ✓ Maintain financial integrity of district's operations and assets
- ✓ Maintain positive financial standings
- ✓ Monitor and implement a five year financial plan.
- ✓ Monitor legislative action and participate in legislative education related to



overall Public Charter School finance, with a particular focus on special education funding, to ensure equity in State funding and foresight in long range finance planning for the school

- ✓ Monitor and implement a five year facilities plan for the school in collaboration with Tischer Creek Duluth Building Company to include development of the Snowflake property for educational and outdoor opportunities for our students
- ✓ Explore and develop long range fundraising options for the School
- ✓ Task Force related to Snowflake property facility enhancement
- ✓ Compliance with Minnesota facilities requirements.
- ✓ *Explore initiatives to address the school's declining enrollment*

**MEASURABLE OUTCOMES: 2020-21**

- Clean audit for FY 2020
- Five Year Facilities plan reviewed and updated quarterly by administration
- Bond reports submitted on time
- Five year budget under development
- Successful management of COVID related grant options to 100 percent of possible reimbursement
- School received MDE Finance Award

**GOAL MANAGER:**

Bonnie Jorgenson, Head of Schools  
Tim Golden, Director of Business Services  
Hilary Hodgman, Board Chair

**SUPPORTING OBJECTIVE MANAGERS:**

Steve Lindberg, Facilities Manager  
Serina Modoc Halvorsen , Senior Accountant



**Provide quality business services to optimize school operations through staffing, enrollment, compliance, policies, insurance, management and organizational systems.**

DECS is committed to operating in a manner that provides for supportive and respectful support towards employees, students, and the community. The department maintains the highest ethical standards in providing a system that



ensures equal opportunities for employment and excellence in staff recruitment, selection, retention, and recognition.

**Action Steps**

- ✓ Continue to conduct reviews of the School Board's policies and eliminate, add or revise policies as appropriate by the Head of Schools in collaboration with the Board Development Committee
- ✓ Ensure implementation of a technology program for students and staff that utilizes 21st century technologies that support enhanced student achievement and classroom instruction and encourage learning and collaboration.
- ✓ Annual review of employee benefits programs and implementation of needed changes
- ✓ Recruit, select and retain highly qualified staff to increase student learning and report turnover/retention data.
- ✓ Provide ongoing training for administrators and building staff in the areas of teacher quality, HR concerns, customer service, and other legal requirements
- ✓ Work with a marketing consultant to develop a 20-21 enrollment marketing campaign with a focus on social media outreach.
- ✓ Develop a succession plan for key administrative positions at the school.

**MEASURABLE OUTCOMES: 2020**

Board policy updates ongoing through board development

Now one to one technology program for students with chromebooks

Developing blended learning pilot for JA students in 2021-22 school year

Hired new technology coordinator, plans for schools moving forward underway including addition of educational technology associate

**GOAL MANAGER:**

Bonnie Jorgenson, Head of Schools

**SUPPORTING OBJECTIVE MANAGERS:**

Karissa Hendricks, Human Resources Generalist  
Tim Golden, Director of Business Services



#### **4.1 References**

All relevant materials, organizations and individuals capable of providing further insights or detail for the requirements referenced in this document are either listed in the plan or included here. Named documents can be obtained by emailing Bonnie Jorgenson, Head of School at [bonnie.jorgenson@duluthedison.com](mailto:bonnie.jorgenson@duluthedison.com). The majority of the documents are also available on the school's website, [www.duluthedison.org](http://www.duluthedison.org)

#### **Appendix A**

Standards-based Assessments for K-8  
Five year plan  
[Sample Middle School Standards-based Report Card](#)



2017-18	Math-2 Teachers Implementing, LA-2 Teachers Developing in Assessments-1 for each grade level
2018-19	<p>JA Math-5 teachers using standards-based assessments. JA Math teachers entering standards in IC as categories for assessments.                      LA-5 teachers giving one standards-based assessment.                      All other teachers create 1 and try it for the year. Revise after administration.                      Review or Determine Essential Standards.  <a href="#">Map where would you assess essential standards assessed by month.</a> You won't have assessments developed yet and that is fine. Just think about where you want to assess them.</p> <p><b>Training on Each PD Day</b>  <a href="#">Link to October Training</a>  <a href="#">Link to November/January Training</a></p>
2019-20	<p>Teachers create one assessment per quarter based on one essential standards.                      Teachers can pilot using the standards-based gradebook. K-5 needs to decide as a grade level to pilot in May of 2018-19.                      JA Math uses the standards-based gradebook module in IC.                      Go through each section of the <a href="#">guidebook</a>.                      K-5 Math and K-8 LA plan for using standards-based gradebook guided by the <a href="#">guidebook</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>View summary of how it works in IC <a href="https://youtu.be/5ZxRPd496Vo">https://youtu.be/5ZxRPd496Vo</a></li> </ul> <p>Plan which essential standards would go on report card. This is what shows in your GB.</p>
2020-21	<p>Review the previous year's assessments as you use them and then develop one more per quarter for a total of 2 per quarter.                      K-8 Math and K-8 LA use the standards-based gradebook.                      Other teachers can pilot using the standards-based gradebook.                      Review essential standards for GB, as standards will change.</p>
2021-22	<p>Finish assessments so there is at least one per essential standard.                      All use the standards-based gradebook.                      Review essential standards for GB, as standards will change.</p>

## Appendix B

**2019-20 World's Best Workforce Goals**  
**Duluth Public Schools Academy dba**  
**Duluth Edison Charter Schools**  
**Approved by DPSA Board 11/26/19**



**All Students Ready for School**

*During 2019-20, the school will conduct early childhood screenings on all students enrolled for kindergarten in the 2020-21 school year for whom the School can receive parent/guardian permission, and that were not previously screened in another district. This data will be used to plan for needed interventions and classroom placements.*

**All Students In Third Grade Achieving Grade Level Literacy**

*The percent of third grade students enrolled on October 1 who score proficient or exceeds on the reading MCA will go from 49.4 percent in 2019 to 53 percent in 2020.*

**Close the Achievement Gap(s) Among All Groups**

*Growth of at least two percent from 2019 levels will occur in 50 percent of the school's reportable subgroups on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments.*

**All Students Career and College Ready by Graduation**

During the 2019-20 school year all grades 6-8 students (Junior Academy) will participate in Ramp Up. All students take the initial career and college readiness rubric in September and will take it again in May. The goal is that the rubric will show a gain in career and college readiness for at least 50 percent of students.

**All Students Graduate**

NA

**2019-20 DPSA World's Best Workforce Advisory Committee**

*Kathy Haldorsen, Raleigh teacher*

*Elle Holte, First Witness Child Advocacy Center*

*Bonnie Jorgenson, Head of School*

*Amber Lightfeather, Parent, DPSA Board Member, AIPAC Chair*

*Julie Ann Kubat, Parent*

*Karen Mehle College of St. Scholastica Faculty Member*

*Sean Moore, African American cultural Liaison*

*Kim Oppelt, Parent*

*Drew Steile, JA language arts teacher*

