



SciTech Academy

Annual Report 2020

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Minnesota Guild

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SciTech Academy, Minnesota Charter School District #4261, is located in Richfield, Minnesota, just south of Minneapolis. SciTech Academy has completed its second year of operations and is pleased to present this annual report, to our Authorizer, stakeholders and the general public!

Mission: SciTech Academy will deliver all-inclusive Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) curriculum to engage, empower and educate inner city students including immigrant children to better prepare future American generations. SciTech Academy will prepare students for a competitive global economy through STEM, so students can achieve successful academic goals. SciTech Academy will provide all students with the opportunity to attain successful careers and fulfilling lives by preparing them for high school, college and careers in an ever changing, highly competitive, global community and by developing their sense of social responsibility to support and serve others.

Vision: SciTech Academy's vision is to equip all students with knowledge, character and skills they will need to meet the demands of a competitive global economy as well as career and College readiness. Our vision for SciTech Academy is to create a school environment in which students are engaged, supported, and challenged to achieve their full potential in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

We envision a school environment in which students, parents, teachers, and school leadership work collaboratively to meet students' academic, social and emotional needs, strengthen students' knowledge and skills, and reduce and resolve peer conflicts.

We plan to nourish this collaborative relationship through the use of innovative instructional strategies that, different than traditional 'one-size fits all' instructional models, requires personalized student learning outcomes, the use of culturally relevant pedagogy, and ensuring effective communication among all concerned parties..

This report addresses the Annual Report elements required by statute:

Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.16, Subdivision 2: "A charter school must publish an annual report approved by the board of directors. The annual report must at least include information on:

1. School enrollment,
2. Student attrition,
3. Governance and management (includes Board training),
4. Staffing,
5. Finances,
6. Academic performance,
7. Innovative practices and implementation, and
8. Future plans."

This report also addresses the World's Best Workforce.

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Introduction

SciTech Academy is committed to empower and educate students to achieve academic success through Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics so they can compete effectively in a global economy. SciTech Academy will provide all students with the opportunity to attain successful careers and fulfilling lives by preparing them for high school, college and careers.

SciTech Academy's core program includes a complete STEM curriculum supported by the top Science Education Centers in the nation and supplemented with a STEM literacy series. The learning program incorporates units of study designed to support early career and college readiness, in the elementary and middle school grades. SciTech Academy opened with grades K-6 in 2018-19, served K-7 during 2019-20, and have added grade 8 for 2020-21. Research has shown that every dollar invested in Kindergarten will have seven dollars as a return on investment back to society. SciTech invests heavily in STEM, plus College Readiness programs. This will create a successful story for the next generation. The SciTech Academy educational philosophy is to build a framework for global study through literacy, high level vocabulary, and nonfiction texts with culminating projects in math and science that can be differentiated by grade and ability levels. Our model of project-based learning holds students and teachers accountable by using rubrics from the best K-8 STEM Curriculum models from STEM support centers, such as the University of Minnesota STEM and Science program. SciTech Academy is seeking STEM partners, to help the school provide opportunities for students to deepen their STEM knowledge and practice 21st Century skills by working in collaborative teams on real-world problems.

SciTech Academy believes that learners acquire genuine self-esteem through the challenge of academic accomplishment. The school has the expectation that all its students will obtain the knowledge and skills they need for success in their further education and careers.

The school follows a rigorous curriculum that is a systemic, progressive program with mastery of specific knowledge and skills at each grade level. The program is designed to be challenging, but not too difficult for average students.

With a focus on mastery of core knowledge and skills, teaching methods provide appropriate support and challenge for all students. At present, SciTech Academy teachers utilize a standard curriculum with supplemental materials addressing STEM topics incorporated into instruction. Homework complements and supplements classwork. Assessment is integrated into teaching to confirm student progress and identify the need for intervention or further improvement. Timely and complete communication with parents establishes a partnership that promotes an environment most likely to achieve success for all students.

In order to provide students with a dependable, least restrictive learning experience, students with special learning needs remain in the classroom with their peers to the greatest extent practicable.

SciTech Academy, like all public schools in Minnesota, was required to shift its educational program to a distance-learning mode in March 2020. In response to the spread of COVID-19 Governor Tim Walz ordered schools to be closed by March 18, and gave schools from March 18-27 to plan for distance/e-learning in case of a need for a longer school shut down due to the pandemic. During this time, SciTech Academy created its Distance Learning Plan. Staff worked together to generate a plan that addressed the shift to distance learning, care of students of emergency workers, and food programming for families. By the end of March, teachers at SciTech Academy were sending homework packets for students and assigning online learning through two digital curricula.

SciTech Academy's Distance Learning Plan included:

- Weekly Instructional Packets, delivered to students' homes on Fridays
- Teachers held online sessions daily and were available to students through their emails, Google Chat, or IXL Chat during student hours, from 9am - 3pm
- Two digital curricula which were already in place for E-Learning: MobyMax (www.mobymax.com) and IXL (www.ixl.com).
- Students were expected to do assignments from 9am - 3pm
- Teachers were expected to be available from 8am - 4pm Monday through Friday on scheduled school days

For fall 2020, SciTech Academy initially resumed serving K-3 students mainly on-site – at the school Monday through Thursday – while a hybrid-learning model was established for grades 4-8. The younger students were at the school four days a week with recommended safety measures in place, with grades four and up on-site every-other day, with alternative “A / B” schedule Monday through Thursday, and all students off-site on Fridays. However, in November, due to concerns over rising COVID-19 rates in Hennepin County, SciTech Academy made the decision to move to a distance-learning-only model.

The purpose of this report is to summarize the progress and achievements of SciTech Academy during the 2019-20 school year, our second year of operations. This annual report serves to meet the requirements of the Minnesota Department of Education as they pertain to charter schools, as well as those of SciTech Academy's contract with its authorizer, the Minnesota Guild of Public Charter Schools.

The annual report will be posted on the school’s website once approved by the board of directors. A copy of the report will be charter with the Minnesota Guild once approved and will also be made available to staff and to parents of students enrolled at the school.

School Governance and Management

SciTech Academy is governed by a five-person board of directors. The Board of directors guides the school’s mission, vision and philosophy. The board sets policies regarding finances, enrollment, program evaluation, and other operational aspects. The board’s policies have two purposes: to provide direction to the school staff in implementing the school’s goals, and to ensure the school meets legal requirements and obligations of the charter contract.

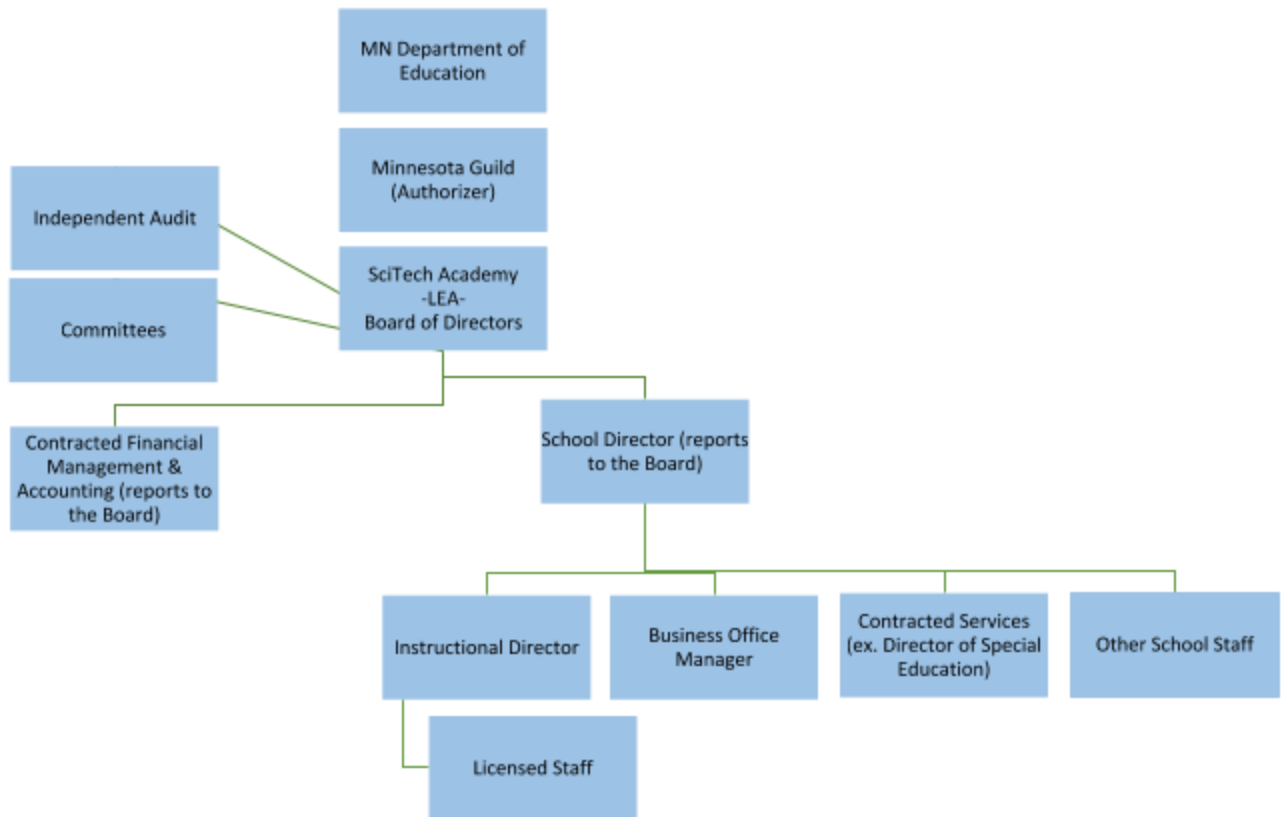
The board generally meets the third Friday of the month. Board information is available to school stakeholders and the public from the Board page on the school’s website, <https://scitechacademymn.org/about-us/board-of-directors/>. During 2019-20 all members were serving three-year terms which began July 2018. In February Abdiwahab Omar left the Board; the Board’s intent was to replace him with a parent member, but efforts to do this were interrupted due to the COVID-19 epidemic. Board secretary Fadumo Yusuf resigned at the end of the school year. Both members were replaced by October 2020. An election will be held and the initial Board transition an elected board, by the conclusion of SciTech Academy’s third year of operation, in the spring of 2021.

The table below lists all members who served on the SciTech Academy board during 2019-20.

Member Name	Role	Start Date	Current Term Exp.	Email Address
Abdirashid Abdi	Community; Treasurer	July 2018	June 2021	abdirashid.abdi@scitechacademymn.org
Mohamed Mohamoud	Community; Director	July 2018	June 2021	mohamed.mohamoud@scitechacademymn.org
Abdiwahab Omar	Community; Director	July 2018	February 2020 (resigned)	N / A
Dr. Abdirizak Warfa	Community; Chair	July 2018	June 2021	abdirizak.warfa@scitechacademymn.org
Fadumo Yusuf	Community; Secretary	July 2018	July 2020 (resigned)	N / A

SciTech Academy is led by its Director and Principal, Abdisallam Abdulle. The administrative team also includes Educational Coach and Instructional Leader Laura Ferguson and Business

Office Manager Ayan Ibrahim. The administrative team meets weekly and as needed to manage the day-to-day operations of the school. See the below Organization Chart.



Faculty

The following staff were employed at SciTech Academy during 2019-20.

Name	File Folder Number	Assignment	Not returning 2020-21
Abdisallam Abdulle	494734	Director / Principal	
Ayan Abi		Food Manager	
Ahmed M. Ahmed	1002496	Arabic teacher	
Leila Ahmed (Hassan)	509445	Middle School Teacher	
Nimaan Ahmed	1002537	Somali teacher	
Keith Balke	509822	Teacher, 4 th Grade	
Stephanie Carlson	474472	Teacher, 3 rd Grade	

Shelby Christianson	507073	Teacher, Kindergarten	
Linsey Codner	511838	Teacher, 1 st Grade	
Nicole Cvetich	1000569	Teacher, 3 rd Grade	
Sara Lynn Dorn	505570	Teacher, 2 nd Grade	
Laura L. Ferguson	383050	Instructional Coach	
Nasrin Haji		Health Manager / Academic and Technical Assistant	
Zamzam Hashi		Intervention	
Sherehan Hassan	512033	Teacher, Special Education	
Brenda Heil	507969	Teacher, Kindergarten	X
Sumeiya Hussein		ELL / Multi-lingual Support	
Ayan Ibrahim		Operations Manager	
Jamie (Eickmeier) Terry	507404	Teacher, 2 nd Grade	
Jonathan Vopat	1001152	Teacher, 6 th & 7 th Grades	X
Tyekeela Xiong	497411	Teacher, 5 th Grade	
Bashir Yusuf		Dean of Students	

SciTech Academy's retention of teachers from 2019-20 to 2020-21 was quite good, with all but two teachers returning for the new school year.

For 2020-21 SciTech Academy added four teaching positions, three in the Middle School and one to be a second fourth-grade teacher. Keith Balke moved to the Middle School to teach math, and two new Middle School teachers were added to teach social studies and English/Language Arts were added to the staff, as well as teachers for fourth grade.

SciTech Academy provided two weeks of professional development and planning days for teachers in August, before school started (to be reduced for fall 2020 to one week for all staff plus an additional three days for new teachers). In addition to the training days in August, the school's operational calendar includes a number of Professional Development days and early-release days, to ensure that the staff has the proper training to implement our selected curricular resources, utilize the best instructional practices defined above and the interpret student data to refine and reform instructional pedagogy. Two Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) were formed, one for the lower and one for the upper grades, which met every-other-week.

Topics addressed through professional development during 2019-20 included the following:

- Positive classroom culture through *Teach Like a Champion* by Doug Lemov
- Classroom management support, utilizing the *Enhancing Professional Practice* framework (Charlotte Danielson)
- Project-based learning, led by the Instructional Coach
- Literacy program training, provided by a literacy coach (external consultant)
- Math program training (Bridges in Mathematics, training provided by an external consultant)
- Student learning styles, taking into account school climate and cross-cultural issues
- STEM topics, addressed through webinars
- Cultural Competencies (addressed diversity training)
- Social Emotional Learning, provided by the Executive Director who was and remains licensed as a school counselor
- Crisis Intervention training, addressing emergency management, safety and security (external consultant)

Student Information, Enrollment and Attrition

SciTech Academy served grades K-7 during 2019-20, enrolling 227 students as of October 1. This number remained stable and increased somewhat as the year continued. The school ended the year with an Average Daily Membership of 237.34 (enrollment had been higher but declined somewhat in the spring). The school expanded as planned to serve all grades K-8 in the fall of 2020, and increased enrollment by approximately 100 students as shown in the table below.

Enrollment and Attrition Trends					
School Year	Day 1 Child Count	October 1 Child Count	End of Year Child Count	Attrition from Oct 1 - EoY	Percentage from Oct 1 – EoY
2018-19	144	147	170	+23	+16%
2019-20	190	227	239	+12	+5%
2020-21	298	324			

One hundred per-cent of our students were ethnically categorized as Black or African American. Over 90% were eligible for Free or Reduced Price school meals, and over 90% were identified as English Learners. Seven percent received special education services.

Data based on Day 1, October 1 and End of Year enrollment as reported to Minnesota Department of Education.

Grade Level Enrollment (Oct. 1)										
School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
2018-19	45	21	24	16	19	10	12	-	0	147
2019-20	36	41	32	31	25	24	15	23	0	227
2020-21	40	46	38	42	45	28	21	25	20	305

School Goals & Academic Performance

SciTech Program and Instructional Model

SciTech Academy’s program and instructional model are a research-based curriculum incorporating a STEM emphasis and with elements of project-based learning for all students. The instructional approach and school environment are designed to enhance students' skills and prepare them to pursue college and careers in STEM fields. Educators at SciTech Academy implement best practices instruction, employing a variety of methods to support and ensure high academic expectations and indicators for student performance. SciTech Academy implements a STEM based curriculum that integrates the four disciplines through thematic and Inquiry-Based learning where students gain foundational knowledge and 21st century skills including critical thinking, problem solving and creativity.

Teachers will offer students: 1) Use of collaborative instruction; 2) Inquiry based approach to learning and STEM focused instruction; 3) Use of STEM approaches to help students identify connections between academic learning and the “real world.”

- Collaborative instruction: SciTech Academy ensures all students are receiving personalized learning and seeks to nurture collaboration among our professional educators. Teachers employ a constructivist approach in designing learning processes to ensure that students are experiencing learning and attaining deep understanding. This teaching approach will be tailored to address each student’s unique learning needs, with student work samples that focus on and document the development of the student’s skills in core academic subject areas.
- Inquiry Based Projects: Students participate in problem solving tasks, hands-on experiments, and other student-led service-learning projects.
- Integrating STEM disciplines to help students identify the connections between academic learning and its application to the “real world.”

SciTech Academy's elementary grades program is built around the core classes of Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies and includes Somali and Arabic as world languages. The math program utilizes the Bridges curriculum (<https://www.mathlearningcenter.org/bridges>) and the literacy program teaches reading and writing through the Units of Study program (<http://www.unitsofstudy.com>, used in all grades). Technology supports include Series 6000 SMART Boards, iPads for grades K-2 and Chromebooks for grades 3 and up.

SciTech Academy's middle school program aims to foster an environment where all middle-level students excel academically, socially, and emotionally through the collaborative efforts of the community, school personnel, and students. The middle school team works together to help every student realize their full potential to become model citizens and lifelong learners.

SciTech Academy's contract with our authorizer provides that:

The School shall evaluate students' work based on the assessment strategies identified in its Application.

The Guild will monitor student academic performance and the academic culture, which provides the basis for high academic performance. The Guild will monitor academic achievement by reviewing student testing and achievement. School students will take the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment tests and any other testing required by Applicable Law.

SciTech Academy's Application (Goals and Student Performance section) specified the following:

SciTech Academy will comply with the Minnesota education and student assessments/testing programs, as well as Federal education accountability. SciTech Academy will use a school improvement program that combines successful, standards-based instructional practices with school created assessments, MAP assessments and State Mandated Assessments. The assessment tools are used to analyze student performance on state and district assessments and to create school-based interim reports that are aligned to benchmarks within the Standard Course of Study. The result is a balanced approach to assessment that combines the benefits of state, district and school-wide assessments with the instructional value of day-to-day classroom assessments and assignments.

SciTech Academy will implement a continuous model to measure academic progress and to measure instructional effectiveness and teacher capacity. The data-driven assessment, analysis, and action, which is indispensable for increasing student

achievement, is deeply embedded in the school's culture and will be a top priority for school-wide improvement.

Performance and Assessment Goals

The Performance and Assessment section of SciTech Academy's contract with the authorizer specifies seven goals. The goals are stated below, along with a summary of progress to date. The first four goals refer to the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA's), which were canceled for spring 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and shift to distance learning in March. The fifth goal relates to student attendance, and the last two call for measuring levels of satisfaction and confidence of teachers and of parents.

Goal No. 1: Academic Growth

The School will show positive student growth measured by state accountability measures; the School will show a Growth Z Score of '0' at the end of the first year and post a positive Z Score in all subsequent years during the contract period.

Not applicable for 2019-20 due to cancellation of MCA's, spring 2020.

Goal No. 2: Academic Achievement - Reading Proficiency

Students who are continuously enrolled (1 October) will exceed MCA Reading proficiency rates in reference to comparable schools. Year 1: same%; Year 2: 3%; Year 3: 5%; Year 4: 7%; Year 5: 9%.

Not applicable for 2019-20.

Goal No. 3: Academic Achievement - Mathematics Proficiency

Students who are continuously enrolled (1 October) will exceed MCA Mathematics proficiency rates in reference to comparable schools. Year 1: same%; Year 2: 3%; Year 3: 5%; Year 4: 7%; Year 5: 9%.

Not applicable for 2019-20.

Goal No. 4: Academic Achievement- Proficiency, Science

Students who are continuously enrolled (1 October) will exceed MCA Science proficiency rates in reference to comparable schools. Year 1: same%; Year 2: 2%; Year 3: 4%; Year 4: 6%; Year 5: 8%.

Not applicable for 2019-20.

Goal No. 5: Attendance

Students attending SciTech will have a consistent Average Daily Attendance rate of 90% or higher.

Progress to date: SciTech Academy is exceeding this target for 2019-20: the school's Attendance Totals report shows Average Daily Attendance of 98.28% for 2019-20. This is a slight increase from the previous year when ADA was 96.88%. After the shift to distance learning, SciTech Academy counted students in attendance if they responded to teachers indicating engagement in schoolwork, e.g. through Seesaw or Google Classroom.

Goal No. 6: Teacher Satisfaction and Confidence

Annually, 90% of teachers will indicate that they are "satisfied" or "highly satisfied" (using a Likert scale survey model) with their involvement in the design, selection, delivery, and relevancy of professional development. Surveys will be conducted bi-annually in November and June.

Progress to date: Teachers were not surveyed during 2019-2020; a survey was planned for spring 2020 but not carried out after the shift to distance learning in March. However, the retention of teachers speaks well of their satisfaction with the program: none of SciTech Academy's teachers quit during our first year of operation, and except for two who relocated away from the Twin Cities, all returned for year two.

Goal No. 7: Parent/Guardian Satisfaction and Confidence

Annually, 90% of parents will consider SciTech to be safe and secure environments for their student. Annually, 90% of parents will indicate 'strong communication' between SciTech and home regarding the student's achievement and well being. Surveys are to be conducted bi-annually in November and June.

Progress to date: Parents were not surveyed in 2019-20 to obtain measurable evidence addressing Goal No. 7; however most parents chose to keep their students at SciTech Academy, as is shown by the school's increasing numbers.

Finances

For questions regarding school finances and for complete financials for 2019-20 and/or an organizational budget for 2020-21, contact:

Joe Aliperto
Dieci School Finance
2151 Hamline Ave N, Suite 212; Roseville, MN 55113
651-285-7676 / joe@diecisf.com

Information presented below is derived from final audit figures. The full financial audit will be completed and presented to Minnesota Department of Education and the Minnesota Guild no later than December 31, 2020 (audit report was presented to the SciTech Academy board in November).

FY 20 Finances		
	General Fund	Food Service Fund
Total Revenues	\$3,688,034	\$273,989
Total Expenditures	\$3,459,024	\$273,989
Net Income	\$229,010	\$0
Total Fund Balance	\$203,265	

Overview

SciTech Academy's budget for Fiscal 2020, its second year of operation, totaled almost \$3.7 million. The school's General Fund ended Fiscal Year 2020 with a total fund balance of \$203,265.

Revenues

General Fund revenues were over budget by \$313,911, largely due to the PPP Loan that was received of \$246,700. This loan is anticipated to be forgiven in FY21 and treated as a grant for school operations.

Expenses

General Fund expenditures for FY2020 were \$3,459,024 which was \$119,864. SciTech Academy incurred more purchased services spending for transportation than expected in the final budget. Also, Food Service expenditures exceeded revenues by \$70,220. This shortfall was better than the anticipated budgeted shortfall of \$78,860.

Salaries and benefits totaled \$1,580,418 in the general fund (45.6% of the total), compared to the \$1,567,016 planned in the budget, a variance of about .08%.

Net Income and Fund Balance

Considering the variances in revenues, expenditures and transfers out, total fund balance increased \$229,010, as compared to a budgeted increase of \$34,962.

Unassigned fund balance as a percentage of expenditures is one key measure of a school's financial health. The resources represented by this fund balance are critical to a school's ability to maintain adequate cash flow throughout the year, to retain its programs, and to cushion against the impact of unexpected costs or funding shortfalls. For SciTech Academy, unassigned fund balance in the General Fund was a positive \$203,265 at the end of FY2020, which means that the school has no restrictions on the use of these funds. This fund balance represents 5.8% of annual expenditures. It is the goal of the Academy to achieve and maintain an unassigned fund balance in the General Fund equal to 20% of expenditures by the end of FY25.

Innovative Practices

SciTech Academy aims to prepare students to be problem-solvers, border crossers, self-reliant, and logical thinkers. This calls for an instructional approach that, unlike conventional methods, requires student engagement, hands-on experiences, and an educationally challenging environment.

To this end, innovative practices in place at SciTech Academy include three approaches for improving pupil learning and student achievement: 1) Use of collaborative instruction; 2) Inquiry based approach to learning and STEM focused instruction; 3) Integrating engineering design processes into education, particularly in math and science. Though the SciTech program ends with 8th grade, these approaches will put students on track for career and college readiness.

To meet the challenge of closing achievement gaps, SciTech Academy strives to identify and use curriculum materials that address required state standards but are tailored to the needs and the abilities of our students. Strategies for ensuring alignment of the program with MN state standards are described below. Elementary standard curriculum at SciTech Academy includes:

- Wonders – mainstream literacy program and used to support ELL programming: <https://www.mheducation.com/prek-12/program/microsites/MKTSP-BGA07M0/wonders.html>
- Bridges in Mathematics: <https://www.mathlearningcenter.org/bridges>
- STEMscopes for Science (K-8): <https://www.stemscopes.com/>

Middle School standard curriculum includes:

- Open-Up Resources for math: <https://openupresources.org/math-curriculum/>
- myPerspectives for English Language Arts:
<https://www.savvas.com/index.cfm?locator=PS2rBh>
- Northern Lights - Social Studies, grade 6: nl.mnhs.org
- Cengage – Social Studies, grades 7-8: <https://www.cengage.com/s/?q=social%20studies>
(log-in's for each book are different)

To supplement the regular curriculum and help students close individual skill gaps, SciTech uses several digital curriculum resources. These include -

- MobyMax (www.mobymax.com): MobyMax lends itself to independent practice both at school and at home. Instead of assigning worksheets, SciTech Academy uses this platform for E-Learning and to design contests for homework. In MobyMax, students are required to master material at one level before moving to the next.
- IXL (www.ixl.com): IXL is a comprehensive digital curriculum that provides practice in Math, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies.
- BrainPOP Jr. (<https://jr.brainpop.com/>)
- Super Teacher Worksheets (<https://www.superteacherworksheets.com/>)
- Reading A-Z, supplemental, also used for EL (<https://www.readinga-z.com>)

Teachers assign material using these digital curricula based on students' needs, to supplement the main curricula in the various subjects and ensure all students are keeping up.

In developing its learning program, SciTech Academy is committed to specific elements of educational design, which are specified in the school's contract with its authorizer. Specifically, Section 6.8 of the contract, Learning Program, posits five specific strategies to be used. SciTech Academy is in fact making use of these strategies, as follow (Contract language in italics): *Student learning and achievement will improve through the use of proven curriculum and pedagogy and utilizing best teaching strategies, organizational structure and practices, which include:*

- *Smaller class sizes, ranging from 15-25 students depending on grade levels.* –SciTech Academy maintains small class sizes: generally no more than 25 students in a classroom, usually less.
- *Individualized instruction:* teachers strive to individualize instruction to meet each student's needs: lesson plans are differentiated based on data showing where students need more or less work, students are put in small groups based on skills levels, and there are individual check-in's daily for all students. These strategies to individualize instruction are particularly important to keep well-connected with every students during distance learning.

- *STEM integration* – SciTech utilizes the STEMscopes program for science (www.stemscopes.com). This allows students to do projects in STEM topics such as designing apps for digital devices.
- *Hands-on learning and exploratory - CRA (Concrete, Representational, and Abstract) approach* – teachers at SciTech seek to utilize hands-on and exploratory approaches in order to keep students engaged. Though remote learning presents challenges for effective hands-on learning, the school is striving to maintain this approach, e.g. through science experiments students can do at home with the support of materials sent by their teachers. There have also been hands-on art projects done remotely, and an energy-saving project with supplies sent from the school. Even in the early grades students are supported and coached to carry out individual projects, and to present them via Powerpoint. This promotes interpersonal communication, and helping students build these communication skills early on will help close achievement gaps.
- *Aligned to Minnesota Academic Standards and the World’s Best Workforce* – SciTech ensures all curricula are aligned to state standards, through review when curricula are adopted. For instance, STEMscopes aligns particularly well with MN state science standards, and Wonders, the elementary-grades reading curriculum from McGraw-Hill, includes an EL curriculum as well as the standard reading curriculum and therefore is particularly well-aligned to building literacy for SciTech’s population of English Learners. In math, the elementary grades use the Bridges program which includes manipulatives to teach math concepts and is particularly well suited for EL students.

SciTech Academy’s approach proposed also aims to incorporate students’ cultural assets and real life experiences into the learning process.

Finally, SciTech Academy provides Parent Academy events quarterly, to which all parents are invited. Parents learn from school staff about the school, its programs, how to support their student in completing homework, how to engage with the school, and the role of special education services in addressing specific learning needs. This is particularly important given our population of recent immigrants / English Learners.

Future Plans

For the future, SciTech Academy plans to retain the successful elements of the program that has been built, while continuing to strive for improvements to bring students to the point of closing achievement gaps, including ensuring that all students read well by third grade.

During 2019-20 a planned expansion of the school was carried out, with five additional classrooms added. Plans were put in place in the spring of 2020 to add three more classrooms for 2020-21, a second fourth-grade classroom and two more sections of Middle School, as the

school expands from K-7 to K-8. As noted above, the school has successfully expanded for the 2020-21 school year, adding approximately 100 students and serving grades K-8.

Other long-term goals include adding an offering of after-school programming; building collaboration with STEM-supporting agencies; bringing in more outside resources for professional development; and continuing expansion of the program. Ultimately SciTech Academy hopes to serve grades K-8 from a larger facility including a gym and library. After-school programming was begun during 2019-20 with a program begun shortly before the COVID-19 pandemic and shift to distance learning. This program was established in response to parent demand and also student needs, for extra support for some students. In the future SciTech Academy hopes to be able to offer after-school programming throughout the year, and to expand summer programming (there was a summer program in 2019, but it was greatly reduced in the summer of 2020 due to the pandemic).

Attachment: World's Best Workforce Report

2019-20 World's Best Workforce (WBWF) Summary and Progress Report

District or Charter Name: Scitech Academy

Grades Served: K-8

WBWF Contact: Abdisallam Abdulle

Title: Principal / Director

Phone: (612) 800-2036

Email: aabdulle@scitechacademymn.org

World's Best Workforce Annual Report

MDE understands this past school year (2019-20) ended under unique circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, we are providing reporting options that reflect this disruption in your ability to appropriately report annual progress.

WBWF Requirement: For each school year, the school board must publish a report in the local newspaper, by mail or by electronic means on the district website.

- Provide the direct website link to the district's WBWF annual report. If a link is not available, describe how the district disseminates the report to stakeholders.

SciTech Academy's annual report, which includes the World's Best Workforce annual report, is posted on the school's website, at

<https://scitechacademymn.org/about-us/annual-report/>.

Annual Public Meeting

These annual public meetings were to be held in the fall of each school year. Report on this measure for the 2019-20 school year.

WBWF Requirement: School boards are to hold an annual public meeting to communicate plans for the upcoming school year based on a review of goals, outcomes and strategies from the previous year. Stakeholders should be meaningfully involved, and this meeting is to occur separately from a regularly scheduled school board meeting.

- Provide the date of the school board annual public meeting to review progress on the WBWF plan for the 2019-20 school year.

Board meetings are held monthly throughout the year, are open to the public and include discussion of the school's efforts on behalf of students. This World's Best Workforce Plan will be reviewed by the Board at its December 2020 meeting.

Also, the SciTech Academy Board assigned to the director to host meetings with parents and community members to update them on changes to the program and hear their feedback. These meetings are intended to be held quarterly but were suspended in the spring of 2020, resuming summer 2020 with a meeting in August. Finally, SciTech's monthly Parent Academy nights are another opportunity for school leadership to solicit parents' input on topics of concern including preparing students for success in the workplace and in life beyond school.

District Advisory Committee

The District Advisory Committee should be in place at the start of the school year. Report on your membership list.

WBWF Requirement: The district advisory committee must reflect the diversity of the district and its school sites. It must include teachers, parents, support staff, students, and other community residents. Parents and other community residents are to comprise at least two-thirds of advisory committee members, when possible. The district advisory committee makes recommendations to the school board.

Complete the list of your district advisory committee members for the 2019-20 school year. Expand the table to include all committee members. Ensure roles are clear (teachers, parents, support staff, students, and other community residents).

District Advisory Committee Members	Role in District
Abdisallam Abdulle	Principal and Director
Laura Ferguson	Educational Coach and Instructional Leader
Ayan Ibrahim	Business Office Manager
Bashir Yusuf	Dean of Students
Dr. Abdirizak Warfa	Board Chair
Fadumo Yusuf	Board Secretary
Abdirashid Abdi	Board Treasurer
Mohamed Mohamoud	Board Member
Abdiwahab Omar	Board Member (until his departure in Feb. 2020)

Equitable Access to Excellent and Diverse Educators

Staffing should be in place by the start of the 2019-20 school year. Report on your equitable access to excellent and diverse educators for the start of the 2019-20 school year.

WBWF Requirement: WBWF requires districts and charters to have a process in place to ensure students from low income families, students of color, and American Indian students are not taught at disproportionate rates by inexperienced, out-of-field, and ineffective teachers. The legislation also requires that districts have strategies to increase access to teachers who reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of students.

While districts/charters may have their own local definitions, please note the definitions developed by Minnesota stakeholders during the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) state plan development process:

- An **ineffective teacher** is defined as a teacher who is not meeting professional teaching standards, as defined in local teacher development and evaluation (TDE) systems.
- An **inexperienced teacher** is defined as a licensed teacher who has taught for three or fewer years.
- An **out-of-field teacher** is defined as a licensed teacher who is providing instruction in an area which he or she is not licensed.

The term “equitable access gap” refers to the difference between the rate(s) at which students from low income families, students of color, and American Indian students are taught by inexperienced, out-of-field, or ineffective teachers and the rate at which other students are taught by the same teacher types. This is not to be confused with the “achievement gap” (how groups of students perform academically); rather, “equitable access gap” is about which student groups have privileged or limited access to experienced, in-field, and effective teachers. Districts/charters are encouraged to monitor the distribution of teachers and identify equitable access gaps between and within schools, but they may also make comparisons to the state averages or to similar schools.

It is important to note that some of the most significant equitable access gaps occur at the school and classroom level.

Districts/charters may also use other indicators of “effectiveness” such as teachers receiving stronger evaluations overall, teachers with strengths in particular dimensions of practice (e.g., culturally responsive practices), teachers certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, or teachers with demonstrated student growth and achievement results.

Respond to the questions below.

- Describe your process for ensuring students of color, American Indian students and students from low income families have equitable access to experienced, in-field, and effective teachers.
 - How did the district examine equitable access data? What data did you look at?
How frequently do you review the data?
 - Who was included in conversations to review equitable access data?
Limit response to 200 words.
 - What strategies has the district initiated to improve student equitable access to

- experienced, in- field, and effective teachers?
- What goal(s) do you have to reduce and eventually eliminate equitable access gaps?
Limit response to 200 words.

WBWF also requires districts and charters to examine student access to licensed teachers who reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of students. A growing body of research has demonstrated that all students benefit when they are taught by racially and ethnically diverse staff throughout their career, and students of color and indigenous students benefit even more. Consequently, working to increase teacher racial diversity is beneficial to all schools.

- Describe your efforts to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of teachers in your district.
 - Which racial and ethnic student groups are present in your district that are not yet represented in your licensed teacher staff? How many additional teachers of color and American Indian teachers would you need in order to reflect your student population?
Limit response to 200 words.
 - What strategies has the district initiated to increase and retain teachers of color and American Indian teachers in the district? What goal(s) are you pursuing?
Limit response to 200 words.

SciTech Academy is led by its Director and Principal; the administrative team also includes the Educational Coach and Instructional Leader and the school’s Business Office Manager. The administrative team meets weekly and as needed to review student and school data and analyze data to inform decision-making.

As a Minnesota charter school, SciTech Academy operates as its own independent school district. To ensure quality staff, interview questions address issues of inclusiveness, how candidates perceive diversity among students and their experience working with diverse student populations. Hiring criteria include not only licensure and general competence in teaching but also commitment to serving diverse populations of students, and readiness to care for the success of all students regardless of background or skill level.

SciTech Academy provides extensive professional development for all staff, including two weeks during the summer. This training, led by the principal and Academic Coach, supports all teachers in becoming better able to serve our particular population of students.

Local Reporting of Teacher Equitable Access to Excellent and Diverse Educators Data

Districts are required to publicly report data on an annual basis related to student equitable access to teachers, including data on access for low-income students, students of color, and American Indian students to experienced, in-field, and effective teachers *and* data on all student access to racially and ethnically diverse teachers.

For this 2019-20 WBWF summary report submission, please check the boxes to confirm that your district publicly reported this data.

- District/charter publicly reports data on an annual basis related to equitable teacher distribution, including data on access for low-income students, students of color, and American Indian students to effective, experienced, and in-field teachers.
- District/charter publicly reports data on an annual basis related to student access to racially and ethnically diverse teachers.

Goals and Results

SMART goals are: specific and strategic, measurable, attainable (yet rigorous), results-based and time-based. Districts may choose to use the data profiles provided by MDE in reporting goals and results or other locally determined measures.

All Students Ready for School

Not applicable. SciTech Academy does not serve pre-Kindergarten students.

All Students in Third Grade Achieving Grade-Level Literacy

Goal	Result	Goal Status
<p><i>Provide the established SMART goal for the 2019-20 school year.</i></p> <p>Charter contract Goal No. 2: Academic Achievement – Reading Proficiency: Students who are continuously enrolled (1 October) will exceed MCA Reading proficiency rates in reference to comparable schools.</p>	<p><i>Provide the result for the 2019-20 school year that directly ties back to the established goal.</i></p> <p>If unable to report a result because of disruptions due to COVID-19, please respond, “Unable to report”</p>	<p><i>Check one of the following:</i></p> <p>On Track (multi-year goal) Not On Track (multi-year goal) Goal Met (one-year goal) Goal Not Met (one-year goal) Met All (multiple goals) Met Some (multiple goals) Met None (multiple goals) District/charter does not enroll students in grade 3 X Unable to Report</p>

Narrative is required; 200-word limit.

- What data have you used to identify needs in this goal area? How is this data disaggregated by student groups?
- What strategies are in place to support this goal area?

SciTech Academy adopted a Local Literacy Plan, updated for the 2019-20 school year, which begins by stating the school’s commitment to ensuring all students are able to read at or above grade level by the end of third grade:

SciTech Academy is committed to providing research-based balanced literacy instruction which includes phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing skills.

This supports the mission of the school which is “to empower and educate ALL student to reach high performance, while eliminating the achievement gap. . .” A rigorous and comprehensive literacy program that is integrated into all curricular areas including Special Education and English as a Second Language, along with using assessment data to inform instruction and reach struggling learners, will help ensure that our students will attain reading proficiency by the end of 3rd grade.

The Plan goes on to state SciTech Academy’s goal and objectives for third-grade literacy:

SciTech Academy students will demonstrate grade-level reading proficiency by the end of their 3rd grade year. This means students will be able to read grade-level material accurately and fluently, and will be able to comprehend and interact with texts that are read. It also means that students have “learned to read” and are now ready to “read to learn”.

The objectives to reach this goal are as follows:

- 1. Students will have access to high quality literacy instruction that includes phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing skills, and will align with Minnesota state standards.*
- 2. Teachers will present instruction through whole groups, small groups, individual student conferences, and cooperative, project-based activities to meet the needs of all learners.*
- 3. Teachers will use data to inform their instruction, they will differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all learners in their classrooms, and will monitor those who struggle the most to ensure they are getting the school-wide supports that they need.*
- 4. A multi-tiered system of supports will be used to determine and meet the needs of all readers in the school. Intervention, English Language Learner, and Special Education programs will be utilized to meet individual student needs in literacy.*
- 5. Students will read and write every day and across all curricular areas.*
- 6. Teaching staff will receive professional development on best practices in literacy instruction each year and will meet in Professional Learning Teams where literacy will be a focus at different times throughout the year.*
- 7. Teaching staff will receive professional development on best practices for teaching English Language Learners in their classrooms each year in order to most effectively reach our high population of ELL students.*
- 8. Parents are considered partners in the education of their children. Parents will be notified of their child’s progress and proficiency and will be given strategies to use at home to help their child meet their reading goals.*

Close the Achievement Gap(s) Between Student Groups

Goal	Result	Goal Status
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<p><i>Provide the established SMART goal for the 2019-20 school year.</i></p> <p>Charter contract Goal No. 1: The School will show positive student growth measured by state accountability measures; the School will show a Growth Z Score of '0' at the end of the first year.</p>	<p><i>Provide the result for the 2019-20 school year that directly ties back to the established goal.</i></p> <p>If unable to report a result because of disruptions due to COVID-19, please respond, "Unable to report"</p>	<p>Check one of the following:</p> <p>On Track (multi-year goal) Not On Track (multi-year goal) Goal Met (one-year goal) Goal Not Met (one-year goal) Met All (multiple goals) Met Some (multiple goals) Met None (multiple goals) X Unable to Report</p>
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Narrative is required; 200-word limit.

- What data have you used to identify needs in this goal area? How is this data disaggregated by student groups?
- What strategies are in place to support this goal area?

SciTech Academy aims to close the achievement gap by providing excellent educational opportunities, and results, to its population of previously-underserved students. Goals revolve around enhancing academic growth and achievement for all students.

- *SciTech Academy utilizes FastBridge assessments to determine student' achievement levels in core academic subjects and monitor student progress. Teachers also administer classroom assessments on an ongoing basis. SciTech had planned to administer the FastBridge assessments three times during 2019-20 but was only able to complete the fall and winter administration of the test, with spring testing canceled due to the shift to distance learning.*
- *SciTech Academy serves a population that is over 90% eligible for free or reduced-price school meals, categorized as African/African-American, and Limited-English Proficient. Aside from special education students, whose individual goals are stated and measured as per their Individual Education Plans, disaggregation of student groups is not applicable.*
- *SciTech Academy's essential strategies to enhance our students' achievement revolve around implementing a research-based curriculum incorporating a STEM emphasis and with elements of project-based learning for all students. SciTech Academy is a small school, with small classrooms and low student-to-teacher ratios; we strive to create a welcoming environment for all students, then support students based on their individual needs. The instructional approach and school environment are designed to meet students where they are, then to enhance each student's skills and prepare them for success. Educators at SciTech Academy implement best practices instruction, employing a variety of methods to support and ensure high academic expectations.*

All Students Career- and College-Ready by Graduation

Not applicable for K-7 school.

All Students Graduate

Not applicable for K-7 school.