

U.S. Department of Education
2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [] Title I [X] Charter [] Magnet[X] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. Deanne Shiroma-Carroll
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Eagle Academy Charter School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 10901 Mausel Street, Suite 101
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Eagle River State AK Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 99577-8019

County Anchorage Municipality

Telephone (907) 742-3025 Fax (907) 742-3035

Web site/URL https://www.asdk12.org/eagleacademycharter E-mail carroll_deanne@asdk12.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Deena Bishop E-mail bishop_deena@asdk12.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Anchorage School District Tel. (907) 742-4000

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Ms. Elisa Vakalis
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2020 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2014 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2019-2020) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 65 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 10 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 9 High schools
 - 4 K-12 schools
- 88 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
 Suburban
 Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2019 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	15	10	25
1	15	10	25
2	10	16	26
3	14	12	26
4	15	11	26
5	10	16	26
6	16	6	22
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	95	81	176

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 2.7 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1.6 % Asian
 - 3.8 % Black or African American
 - 3.3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 76.1 % White
 - 12.5 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2018 - 2019 school year: 9%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	6
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	9
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	15
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	176
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.09
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	9

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4 %
7 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 15 %

Total number students who qualify: 26

8. Students receiving special education services: 11 %

19 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>1</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>4</u> Developmental Delay | <u>3</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>10</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	7
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	5
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 26:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2019.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

Encourage academic and character excellence by integrating proven instructional methods with a challenging curriculum and high expectations providing the foundation to achieve proficiency of EACS's performance standards.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

Eagle Academy Charter School (EACS) is an Anchorage School District (ASD) school of choice. As such, EACS follows all ASD online lottery and enrollment guidelines. Lottery applications are completed online. All students, regardless of gender, religion, language, physical ability, ethnic or national origin of children and their parents, residing within the Municipality of Anchorage are eligible to apply for both the spring and summer lotteries.

Lottery procedures are determined by ASD’s Administrative Regulation (AR) 5116(a). The lottery system produces randomly selected student lists that have been organized and ranked according to the district's lottery policy. No student is denied participation because of a learning disability, handicapping condition, or special needs. In accordance with ASD Lottery guidelines siblings of currently enrolled students are given preference. The lottery system adds new applicants to each programs’ existing waitlist from previous lotteries. The system is accessible from traditional desktop computers, laptops, or mobile devices to apply, check status, and confirm or decline positions. Parents receiving email notification of acceptance into EACS are given 48 hours to accept the seat. If a seat is declined, the electronically generated waitlist enables EACS to communicate with waitlisted families in order of position.

The lottery process may be preempted for the following reasons: grade level balance, documented hardship (extenuating circumstances, medical, safety, psychological, or curriculum considerations), and gender balance. All preemptions require advance approval of the appropriate Instructional Division Senior Director.

Should an opening occur during the school year, the waitlist is used to fill an open space. EACS accepts students into the program until the date and time that spring lottery applications are due.

PART III - SUMMARY

In the spring of 2002, a group of parents and educators desiring a rigorous core instructional program with an emphasis on the ideals of excellence, patriotism and good character undertook a three-year research and planning process that resulted in the opening of Eagle Academy Charter School (EACS) in the fall of 2005.

EACS is a small K-6 standards-based program in the Chugiak/Eagle River Community. The Chugiak/Eagle River area is part of the Municipality of Anchorage, but lies 10 miles north, separated from Anchorage by a highway and Joint Base Elmendorf/Richardson (JBER). Enrollment is open to all students residing within the Municipality of Anchorage. A majority of our 176 students reside in the Chugiak/Eagle River community. Due to our proximity to the military base, approximately 50 percent of our students reside in a home where one or both parents are active duty or retired military service members.

Every decision and action that is undertaken by the Academic Policy Board (APB), Principal, teachers, and staff reflect two core beliefs. First, the success of all students who walk through our doors is the shared responsibility of both parents and EACS. Second, every student can meet EACS's standards regardless of socioeconomic conditions and individual ability. These two core beliefs are the foundation of our success.

With regard to "shared responsibility," we know that parents choose EACS because of commitment to excellence and rigor, as well as the opportunity to be a part of a community working for student success. The EACS open-door policy paves the way for parent engagement and involvement. Four of the seven seats on the Academic Policy Board (APB), the governing body of the school, are reserved for parents. Parents are also encouraged to take an active, supportive role in the education of their children both inside and outside of the school day. In addition to ensuring that their student(s) complete daily homework assignments that are purposefully designed to reinforce classroom instruction, each family is also expected to complete a minimum of 16 hours of school service. While there are no negative consequences for not completing school service hours, families recognize the positive impact that their presence has on the success of EACS. It is not uncommon to see parents working on bulletin boards, displaying artifacts of student work in the halls, making copies or prepping assignments/projects in the workroom, assisting in the classrooms with lessons, reviewing phonograms or math facts with students, supervising in the lunchroom, being an extra set of eyes and ears on the playground, chaperoning field trips, volunteering at monthly Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) functions, or giving a guest presentation in an area of expertise. During the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years, families logged 3,590 and 3,435 total hours of school service, averaging 32.93 and 30.67 hrs. per family respectively. During just the first semester of the 2019-20 school year, families logged 1,560 hours of school service, which is right on pace with prior year totals.

With regard to "student success," EACS believes that every student has the ability to meet the school's high academic standards. To ensure that each student receives instruction in their zone of proximal development, instructional readiness is assessed at the beginning of each academic year. Placement is determined by the teacher and parents using multiple data points, including teacher-developed assessments based on EACS standards, the State of Alaska summative assessment, ASD's universal screener test results, and placement tests provided by textbook publishers of the adopted curriculum. To address individual student potential and effectively implement the math and language arts curriculum, the school schedule includes a 3.5-hour block each morning for all grade levels, allowing for homogeneous grouping of students. The teaching of these two core subjects is given priority in scheduling and is steadfastly protected to provide uninterrupted instructional time. Students can "level up" or "level down" in language arts and/or math classes according to individual skill levels.

A culture of school pride, personal success, and citizenship is evident to every person stepping inside EACS's doors. To cultivate academically strong, mindful students achieving their full potential, we employ a uniform dress code; daily announcements that incorporate "Project Wisdom" daily messages and the Pledge of Allegiance; kind, respectful, and positive interactions between students and staff in the classrooms, hallways, lunchrooms, and playground; as well as parent engagement and involvement.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas

EACS’s research-based curriculum is aligned to ASD and Alaska State Standards. The Spalding Multisensory (seeing, hearing, speaking, and writing) method of direct instruction is the basis for all instruction at all grade levels across the core content areas.

EACS is fortunate to have a corps of strong instructional practitioners, with a combined total of 92 years of teaching our adopted curriculum. It is the preference and practice of the APB and selection committee to seek out and hire candidates experienced in Saxon and Spalding instructional methods. All new instructional staff members (teachers, TA’s, and principal) receive training in Multisensory Instruction of Language Arts (MILA) I by a Spalding Education International certified instructor, at the first class available after hire. MILA II is required at the first opportunity following their first year at EACS.

Data based decision making is a critical component of our instructional program. All students take the annual Performance Evaluation for Alaska's Schools (PEAKS) assessment, the district-mandated NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) universal screener, and are regularly assessed using both formative and summative assessments to gauge student learning and to guide instruction.

EACS teachers use formative assessments to check student comprehension and academic progress during a lesson or unit. Results from these assessments help identify concepts that students may be struggling to understand, skills they are having difficulty acquiring, or learning standards they have not yet achieved. They provide immediate feedback in order for interventions, supports, or enrichment to happen in a timely manner.

Summative assessments are used to evaluate standard mastery and achievement at the conclusion of a project, unit, semester, or school year. These allow administrators and teachers to see each student’s individual strengths and weaknesses, as well as gauge the overall effectiveness of EACS’s academic program.

Consistency in instructional practices, competence through professional development, confidence through years of experience, and data-guided instruction are the foundation of our instructional program.

1b. Reading/English language arts

The 120-minute language arts (LA) block consists of a total LA program that integrates essential research-based components, educational philosophy, and a methodology containing time-tested principles of learning and instruction. Students are taught with a multisensory instructional method employing explicit direct teaching where teachers lead the students in carefully constructed step-by-step lessons. Every new skill, procedure, or concept is explained and demonstrated. Teachers set clear lesson goals and make sure students have frequent opportunities to practice the new skill. Students are continually engaged in activities and discussions to ensure participation. Questioning techniques are used to check knowledge and higher-level thinking skills. Teacher instruction includes modeling, guiding, coaching, scaffolding, and fading to develop independent thinkers, skilled readers, critical listeners, and accomplished speakers.

The program cultivates lifelong learners through quality literature with a strong phonics foundation. The use of integrated instruction ensures that connections between speaking, writing, and reading are constantly taught and reinforced. Spelling and writing are integrated with vocabulary and grammar to build fluent reading and writing skills. Students learn to read through their own writing and are taught comprehension skills using text structure and mental actions. Both manuscript and cursive handwriting are taught using Spalding’s specific methods. EACS considers handwriting to be a critical component in connecting the brain pathways. Communication skills are strengthened through speaking, writing, and presenting using current

technology. These skills begin in kindergarten and continue to be emphasized throughout the grade levels.

Students are evaluated using performance-based assessments developed by teachers in alignment with EACS standards, universal screeners, and standardized assessments. The data is used for LA placement centered on individual skill levels. For example, if a student scores exceedingly high in all or the majority of the LA areas, they may be placed in the grade level above for instruction. If a student assesses a year or more below grade level, they may be leveled to the grade below to meet their instructional needs. Assessment data is continually reevaluated to ensure accurate academic placement throughout the year.

Student data is used to drive instruction and determine individual intervention needs in reading and writing. Teachers use diagnostic formative assessments daily through interactions, meaning they carefully observe each student's progress and adjust instruction to meet individual needs. Students who are "below proficient" in a specific standard are scheduled for 5-15 minute targeted interventions throughout the LA block to achieve skills. These interventions are reevaluated weekly for progress and proficiency with the goal of "filling in the gaps" for students to learn at their instructional level and above.

Additionally, all new families are required to attend a Parent Training session on phonograms. Scheduled during the first month of school each year, these training sessions are even voluntarily attended by returning families wanting a refresher. Often, parents are unsure of the "correct" way to teach something. The intent of these sessions is to provide parents with the tools necessary to support student learning at home. This way they can be sure that their student(s) is on the right path and better partner with classroom teachers to provide additional practice at home.

1c. Mathematics

EACS's standardized test scores in mathematics have consistently been higher than those of other schools across the state. We attribute our sustained performance to the following key strengths; rigorous standards, scaffolding curriculum, logical reasoning and problem-solving, and direct instruction.

EACS's adopted math standards meet or exceed the Anchorage School District's and the State of Alaska's standards for math. Four years ago, EACS modified its math program by advancing materials so that each instructional level is taught with materials intended for one level higher (a "grade level jump"). This modification challenges students and provides them with a stronger foundation in mathematical concepts at each level. As a result, the majority of our 6th-grade students are able to test into pre-algebra or algebra when making the transition to middle school in the 7th-grade.

EACS's scaffolding math curriculum uses an incremental approach to math instruction, reinforcing prior learning through the continual practice of previously learned concepts. Our math instruction emphasizes mastery of basic facts appropriate to each grade level, alongside a solid program of instruction that teaches computation and problem-solving skills, mental math, and decoding and solving word problems that reflect real-life applications. Elements of algebra and geometry are integrated where applicable at each grade level.

A key concept that we use from the many skills above is daily problem-solving. EACS students learn how to break word problems down into logical parts. First, students learn to "analyze" the problem to determine what is being asked. They also learn to discern which pieces of information are relevant and which are not need to solve the problem. Students then make a "plan" to solve the problem by utilizing strategies such as logical reasoning, guess and check, acting it out, drawing a picture or a table, making an organized list, or working backward. Finally, they "check" their work for accuracy. These daily practices teach students how to apply logic and reasoning to solve problems. We want our students to be problem-solvers for the modern, global, and technological age.

Direct instruction is used in the delivery of our adopted math curriculum. Students are engaged in learning through independent practice, manipulatives, and hands-on learning tools to help them develop and demonstrate understanding in daily lessons. Teachers check for understanding by collecting data using formative assessments (through daily instruction, lesson practice, and written practice) and summative assessments (Power Up, Cumulative, Benchmark, and End-of-year tests). Pacing guides and vertical

planning time help teachers ensure they are meeting the needs of students. Teachers and teacher assistants work together to help struggling students who need additional support.

1d. Science

EACS's science program uses a K-6 curriculum that is aligned to ASD's standards and Alaska State standards which reflect the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The curriculum offers a balance of content (life science, physical science, earth science, and health) and inquiry-based hands-on activities with cross-curricular connections. The curriculum links reading and science skills with a variety of high-interest leveled readers for student enrichment. The scientific method is used for all experiments. Through informal classroom and formal science fair presentations, students practice public speaking and informational writing skills to share their hypotheses, processes, results, and reasoning behind their conclusions. The combination of instructional scaffolding with a strong focus on reading informational texts and real-world, hands-on exploration has created a culture of engagement and excitement during science.

The EACS Parent-Teacher Organization sponsors an annual "Science Night" to kick off the science fair season. Representatives from local, state, and national organizations are invited to set up booths, do demonstrations, and provide opportunities for students to explore a variety of science-related activities. Participating organizations include; The Anchorage Police Department's (APD) K-9 unit, APD's Crime Scene Investigation Unit, Civil Air Patrol, Vertical Gardening, Campbell Creek Science Center, Alaska Resource Development Council, Alaska Pacific University's Fisheries, Aquatic Science, and Technology Dept., the Renewable Energy Alaska Project, and the Environmental and Natural Resource Institute. This evening event is very well attended by students and their families, exemplifying EACS's strong partnerships with community organizations.

1e. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement

EACS's social studies program includes history (World, United States, and Alaska), geography & world cultures, economics, government, and political studies. Instructional objectives include developing an understanding of US history and how the US has been shaped by historical events occurring around the world, understanding privileges and responsibilities associated with the US Constitution and its Amendments, the State of Alaska and its government, and recognition of different types of geographical features. Teachers use textbooks, teacher guides, and technology to teach social studies. The curriculum helps students build a diverse knowledge of ancient, classical, and modern civilizations, cultures, and concepts. From kindergarten through sixth grade, EACS students are engaged in a variety of hands-on projects and activities to enhance their understanding of social studies. These include the second grade's Ancient Greek Olympics, fourth grade's panda conservation project, fifth-graders Civil War scrapbooks, and sixth graders using technology tools to present information about the French Revolution or World War II.

Civic learning and engagement are achieved daily through "Words of Wisdom." During this time, students learn about different character traits and employ them in showing caring and compassion in the community. The EACS Student Council, along with individual classrooms, participates in several charitable drives throughout the school year. Some of the favorites include Jump Rope for Heart, a food drive for a local food bank, blankets and personal kits for the homeless, cancer research, and baby clothes and items for a local chapter of Newborns in Need.

1f. For secondary schools:

1g. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

EACS students rotate through one-hour blocks of instruction after lunch each week that taught by certified specialists in art, music, physical education, and technology. All of our "specials" are by nature hands-on, highly engaging, and interactive.

Art class activities are designed to foster creativity and increase understanding of the visual arts in relation to history and cultures in coordination with grade-level social studies curriculum. Students learn to apply media, techniques, and processes in creating art projects. Student artwork is proudly displayed throughout our hallways. EACS student art pieces are frequently selected to be displayed at the ASD Ed. Center, the State Capitol, and the Anchorage Museum.

Music class teaches comprehensive musicianship through singing, playing instruments, notation, and music appreciation. Students develop an understanding of the relationship between music and other disciplines, including history and culture. Our music teacher coordinates an annual winter holiday music concert and a spring talent show.

Physical Education classes develop students with knowledge, skills, and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity. Class activities are designed to develop coordination, teach students to work together through team sports, and aid students in developing individual fitness goals and skills. For the past three years, Eagle Academy students have participated in the Alaska Healthy Futures program. The program has two core elements: the Healthy Futures activity log, to develop the habit of daily physical activity; and event support, to increase youth attendance at community recreational events. The Physical Education teacher sponsors several after school activities, including a running club in the fall, Junior Native Youth Olympics in the winter, and a basketball club in the spring.

Technology classes provide students with computer skills that prepare them for future employment. The instructional objective is to develop effective use of technology by teaching keyboarding, basic computer skills, responsible use of internet resources, applications (spreadsheets, slide presentations, and movie editing), and programming. The technology teacher coordinates with classroom teachers to assist with technology-based student projects in core subjects.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

The Spalding Method described more fully in Section 3c, is highly effective for students with a wide range of needs, including those performing below grade level. At EACS, students are placed at their instructional learning level and a special education teacher assists those students who need remediation. Teachers continually use data from diagnostic instruction, as well as from formative and summative assessments, to track students who are struggling in specific subject areas. Both instruction and classroom placement may be modified as the student progresses.

The Student Support Team (SST), consisting of the special education teacher, principal, and two classroom teachers, is dedicated to supporting students identified as needing academic or behavioral supports by providing timely systematic assistance and appropriate interventions. The team meets bi-weekly to problem solve, plan, and schedule interventions, including but not limited to, additional help from classroom teacher assistants or an Interventionist TA and the use of Lexia Lab. These are described further in the following paragraphs.

K-6 classroom teacher assistants, work with students one-on-one, in small groups and assist in whole group instruction to provide differentiation. They help monitor students during instruction and work with their teacher to respond quickly to student needs.

An Interventionist TA, funded through a State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) grant, works four days a week during the 3.5-hour Language Arts and Math morning block. The Interventionist TA works one-on-one with students who have the highest needs in K-4 classrooms to teach, practice, reinforce targeted skills as identified and scheduled by the SST.

Parent volunteers and sixth-grade “peer tutors” are used on a voluntary basis by teacher recommendation. Both types of tutors assist students with extra practice. Tutoring sessions are monitored by teachers and students are continually reevaluated to fine-tune interventions. Lexia Lab, a computer-based reading literacy

program, is a supplemental activity for students in need. Students work in the EACS technology lab or independently at home.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Students performing above grade level qualify for two options. First, students may be placed in a higher-level classroom according to their readiness. Leveling decisions are based on the following criteria: assessments provided by the curriculum, teacher-developed assessments that meet EACS standards, results of state summative PEAKS Assessment (grades 3-6) and ASD universal screeners (FastBridge assessment for K-2 and MAP assessment for 3-6), classroom grades, study habits, and parental input.

At the beginning of each school year, every teacher gives assessments in language arts and math. After each teacher has had time to compile all the information on each student, a leveling meeting is held where teachers can report how many students are moving up a grade level, how many are remaining at their present grade level, and how many are moving to the grade level below. The EACS goal is to ensure that every student is receiving instruction at his/her learning level. Movement can also take place at mid-quarter or end-of-quarter if a student demonstrates a need for instruction at a higher level. Teachers are constantly assessing and hold high standards for students.

Second, students may qualify for IGNITE. IGNITE is an ASD-sponsored enrichment “pull-out” program for academically accelerated or intellectually gifted learners who have met the eligibility criteria. Qualification for IGNITE is based on a score of 95 percent or higher on an achievement and ability test. This program is available to students in grades 2-6 and challenges students with activities that align with the Common Core Standards. In the 2019-20 academic year, 20 EACS students in grades 3-6 qualified for this program. Ignite students attend this 2.5 hour block one afternoon a week.

3c. Special education

Placement of special education students complies with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Anchorage School District administrative regulations.

Special education instruction and support at EACS are conducted on an inclusion basis. Instructional supports provided to EACS students on an IEP in the general education classroom or instructional interventions follow the EACS's approved curriculum. The Spalding Method utilizes explicit, sequential, interactive, and multisensory instruction employing continual diagnostics to ensure students achieve mastery. The multisensory approach in particular – using visual, auditory, verbal, and kinesthetic pathways to the brain to reduce the amount of practice required for mastery – helps prevent or overcome learning difficulties. This method is highly effective for students with a wide range of ability levels (academically gifted, average, and those with learning difficulties) and is therefore effective in an inclusion-based classroom.

The EACS Special Education teacher works collaboratively with classroom teachers to ensure that all accommodations and modifications written into an EACS student's IEP are fully implemented. This includes supporting individual students in the general education setting during direct instruction, providing additional strategies and activities that can be used at home by parents, modifying assignment due dates, coordinating additional supports and services by community organizations, or providing a quiet space for students to take assessments. Additionally, all of the interventions outlined in Section 3a (above) are also available to students with IEPs.

3d. ELLs, if a special program or intervention is offered

Our core belief is that every student can meet EACS standards regardless of socioeconomic conditions or individual ability, with teaching directed toward the highest potential of each student. Students designated as English Language Learners (ELL) are assessed and placed in language arts and math levels using the same process as their grade-level peers at the beginning of the year. This ensures that students receive a level of instruction according to their level of readiness. ELL designated students at Eagle Academy participate in

the WIDA ACCESS assessment in February. Results from the assessment are reviewed and used to help guide classroom instruction. Any additional supports are provided through the SST program on an as-needed basis.

3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant), if a special program or intervention is offered

EACS has a very small (less than 10) population of students who qualify for Migrant Ed. and/or Title VII (Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native Education) enrichment programs that directly support the attainment of challenging state academic content and student academic achievement standards. EACS has received funds under these federal programs (through the ASD) to hire certified teachers to provide small group tutoring. These hour-long tutoring sessions occur after school. The number of sessions, days of the week, and scheduled times are mutually agreed upon by both tutors and parents to ensure optimal attendance and participation.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

All of EACS’s curricula and instructional practices were chosen with student engagement in mind. The language arts program is interactive by design, starting in kindergarten. Kindergarten students learn to write by drawing letters in sandboxes with their fingers and verbally reciting phonograms daily as a group. This active participation builds on itself and progresses through each grade level. Math lessons in primary grades begin daily instruction with a class morning meeting to practice counting, telling time, and solving math problems as a group. Intermediate grades do a daily math Power Up (fact practice and problem-solving), which involves the class verbally answering mental math questions.

During core subject instruction, teachers incorporate hands-on activities into lessons such as baking brownies for a math lesson, raising salmon from eggs to release into local lakes, hatching chicks, and growing plants from seed for the school’s greenhouse to harvest in the fall. Teachers also incorporate technology into special projects as appropriate for each grade level, utilizing the school’s computer lab, Chromebooks, and iPads.

Language arts and social studies have components that can be used to connect with social and emotional learning. Teachers use Read Aloud time to share a novel with the class, which guides discussion about what the characters might be thinking and feeling. This helps teach perspective and leads to an understanding of emotions and empathy. Another one of EACS's core values is embracing patriotic themes and responsibilities. These values are tied to social studies using historical role models to demonstrate character traits for students to emulate. Students also receive class jobs in their grade level to give them a sense of self-worth and responsibility.

EACS provides a positive classroom environment focusing on and offering each student support in their growth academically, socially, and emotionally. Our forward-facing classroom layout supports teacher-student engagement. We foster student self-esteem through a culture of mutual respect between staff and students. Student success is reinforced through quarterly awards based on measured personal achievement in core subjects, “specials,” and citizenship.

School pride is promoted through school uniforms, spirit wear, and yearbooks. Third through sixth graders participate in Student Council, which chooses school spirit days and schoolwide community service projects. Students also compete annually at the school, district, and state levels in IditaREAD, Battle of the Books, Geo Bee, and Spelling Bee competitions. Sixth grade takes a three-day science trip to Kasitsna Bay in Homer annually. Through our multifaceted approach to student engagement, EACS students feel accomplishment and pride in themselves and their school community.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

EACS is fortunate to have a high rate of family engagement. This relationship begins when families attend a new parent orientation before their student enrolls in our program and continues during the year. Primary and intermediate Open Houses in August provide parents with information on classroom expectations for their children. Classroom newsletters and graded work are sent home weekly so parents can monitor student progress and stay aware of classroom activities. Twice yearly parent-teacher conferences offer face to face meetings for teachers and parents to discuss student achievements and/or challenges. Families attend quarterly student awards assemblies.

Parents have an active role in school governance, as part of the APB. In addition, the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) supports the school by organizing and hosting monthly family night events and raising funds to sponsor various schoolwide and grade-level classroom activities.

Each family is expected to perform a minimum of sixteen hours of volunteer service. Many families far exceed this number. Participation in school events, assistance in classrooms, and leadership involvement all

count toward volunteer hours.

Opportunities for family engagement also include Cheers and Tears Breakfast (kindergarten parents), Fall Festival, Military Appreciation Day, Holiday Music Concert, Spring Talent Show, Outdoor Learning Day, Field Day, Volunteer Appreciation Day, Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week, Mother's Day Tea and Father's Day Kickball, and our annual Breakfast, Blanket, and a Book family reading event.

EACS is also fortunate to have several local businesses and organizations partner with us. First National Bank Alaska, Eagle River branch, provides judges for our annual Geo Bee. Carrs/Safeway sponsors our annual Breakfast, Blanket, and a Book event. Community Covenant Church, located nearby, allows us to use their auditorium for our annual holiday concert and talent show. It is also a designated alternate evacuation location in case of emergencies. Pacific Rim Athletics, another nearby business, partners with our physical education teacher to provide anti-bullying and confidence-building presentations. Kids Don't Float, a program of the Alaska State Department of Natural Resources provides annual cold water survival presentations to students.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The staff forms the foundation of an excellent school. EACS is focused on the continual development of its staff. EACS and its stakeholders recognize that enhancing the skills and knowledge of its staff results in immeasurable rewards. Our school focuses on relevant professional development (PD) that enhances understanding of the core curriculum. The goal is to increase student success by giving all staff the tools they need. PD collaboration empowers the implementation of instructional practices, goals, and the mission outlined in the EACS charter.

EACS applies annually to The Alaska Department of Education for three half-days per year of PD. These half-days are used to develop and fine-tune EACS's academic standards, performance-based assessments, and curriculum training. EACS leads the district in standards-based assessment and reporting. EACS teachers developed and implemented standards-based assessments and a standards-based report card for nontraditional grading. These align with EACS's adopted standards, as well as ASD and Alaska State Standards.

EACS employs the only Spalding Education International certified instructor in the State of Alaska. Language Arts PD has included spelling with vocabulary, grammar, reading fluency and comprehension, print and cursive handwriting, as well as composition writing of various text structures. This has ensured the expertise of EACS staff in a multisensory approach of explicit direct instruction. Additionally, EACS has invested funds in on-site Saxon Math professional trainers to coach staff through the implementation of "grade level jumps" in the curriculum to meet and exceed our standards.

EACS has just one class per grade level. Teachers have bi-weekly scheduled time to collaborate in vertical planning sessions. The main objective is to address gaps and minimize overlaps to create a seamless flow of instruction. This helps EACS maintain consistency and better understand student needs for success in subsequent grades. The EACS instructional team works together to strengthen and support each other. The results of continual professional development are quality teaching practices, high student performance, and strong leadership capacity. Most importantly, providing all staff opportunities and the supports needed to better themselves creates an atmosphere of respect and professionalism.

4. School Leadership:

The Academic Policy Board (APB) is the EACS governing body. The APB consists of seven members: four parents, one community member at large, and two EACS teachers. The job of the APB is to support the academic operation of the school and ensure the fulfillment of the mission of the school. Performing this job includes creating school policy, approving and monitoring the school budget, setting school goals and objectives, selecting curriculum, ensuring adherence to the school's charter and policies, and hiring and supervising the principal. The APB holds monthly public meetings in accordance with the Alaska Open Meetings Act (OMA). Professional development is important for APB members who attend annual training

on OMA, Roberts Rules, and charter school oversight. Recently they conducted an onsite two-day strategic planning session to develop long-range goals to advance Eagle Academy's vision and mission.

The ability of the EACS principal to work collaboratively with the APB is integral to student progress and achievement. The principal manages all of the EACS daily operations; is responsible for establishing and nurturing a climate where every student and staff member feels welcome, safe, valued, and inspired to strive for excellence; and guides the implementation of the school's program and philosophy.

EACS is a small school by design and this directly impacts the principal's visibility in the school. The principal has the opportunity to know each and every student by name through a daily presence at drop-off and pick-up, in the lunchroom, on the playground, and visits to classrooms. Being available to greet and talk with both students and parents frequently provides the ability for formal and informal interaction throughout the school day. The principal leads with an open-door policy that ensures accessibility for staff, parents, and students; which promotes strong relationships with families and community stakeholders.

John Hattie's 2018 updated list of factors related to student achievement identifies collective teacher efficacy as having the biggest positive impact. Collective teacher efficacy refers to "a staff's shared belief that through their collective action, they can positively influence student outcomes, including those who are disengaged and/or disadvantaged." As the lead learner and instructional leader of teachers, the EACS principal also directs a fair amount of her energy toward providing support, being a resource, and building the capacity of teachers to improve their teaching.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

While our high expectations, evidence-based multisensory curriculum, teacher and staff efficacy, parent involvement, and protected instructional time are all key factors in EACS's success, there is something that you rarely find in schools that sets EACS apart. This is the all-encompassing support and belief in every aspect of our program/philosophy by all school stakeholders (APB, principal, staff, and parents).

Someone once described these phenomena as a three-legged stool. Its stability very much dependant on the strength of each leg: parents, the school staff, and the APB. Each leg equally bearing the "shared responsibility" of supporting our program and philosophy - the seat - on which rests the success of the student.

To keep governance strong, APB members must believe in and honor the charter and its original intent: how and why the program was put together. Without strong members to hold true to our charter, pieces of the program could dissolve. We believe it is the careful combination of all aspects of our program functioning together that creates the school's success.

Our high achievement rate could not be sustained without a staff (principal, teachers, and support staff) that unwaveringly backs our program, philosophy, and curriculum. All EACS teachers, guided and supported by the principal, believe in and implement with fidelity the components of our program. In addition, many of our teacher assistants have children that attend or have attended EACS, which is not a requirement of the position but rather speaks to the quality of relationships within the building. Parents who apply for these positions feel so strongly that our total program works that they want to be part of the energy and excitement for learning at EACS. All staff members have a vested interest in the success of our students and school.

Parents are encouraged and expected to be an active part of their students' education. Whether they partake in a governance role, assist with PTO activities, or provide daily homework support with their children, all of our EACS parents truly value the education their children are receiving and put forth the effort needed to make it effective.

They say a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. At Eagle Academy Charter School, there are no weak links. We are truly a community of parents, staff, and students working in unison to support one another in fulfilling our vision of preparing children to become academically strong, mindful citizens who aspire to achieve their full potential.