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Excelsior Academy (EA) is a K-8 charter school opened in 2009. Its inception came after several parents saw that their children needed a better educational opportunity than had been present. Excelsior Academy's mission statement reads: ***“The mission of Excelsior Academy is to educate scholars with a broad classical foundation of knowledge, assisting them with opportunities to learn at their challenge level, in an intentionally inviting environment to help scholars acquire a life-long love of learning.”*** These parents worked to create a charter opportunity focusing on academic rigor and virtuous character development. Excelsior Academy has found success in fulfilling the founding Board's vision by working with great mentor schools, a helpful state charter board along with the EA governing board, and proven curriculums.

Excelsior Academy is chartered to educate 675 students. Each grade, K through 8, has approximately 75 students divided among three classrooms. The student population becomes more diverse each year as Tooele County continues to grow. Hispanic/Latino students make up 6.7% of student population. Asian students comprise 1.6 % student body; American Indian, 2.6%; African American, 1.5%; and Pacific Islander, 1.6%. According to UTREx data, Special Education holds 71 files, 8.2% of school population. The Special Education department makes sure to follow RTI for any students of concern. The leveled-learning model used by the school, ensures that each student is given the best opportunity to learn at his/her challenge level whether at, above, or below grade level. EA is a Title 1-Targeted Assistance School with 33% students falling into a “disadvantaged” measure of socio-economic levels set by Federal guidelines.

Excelsior Academy's students progress every year. Part of this success comes from the high rate of continuous enrollment, 79.1% in SY 2012. Ninety-seven percent of current student population has submitted intent to re-enroll paperwork. Transfer rates within the school year fall below 10%. In 2013, EA's ADM was 660.717. The overall percent compared to Oct 1 was 97.7 %. The school's last UCAS score, 501, was the highest elementary score in the county. The school's overall grade was a “B” with only one county elementary school scoring higher in that range. CRT scores present data showing that EA scholars are doing well. Eighty-seven percent of students are proficient in Language Arts, 74% in Math, and 85% in Science. Ninety-three percent of 5th and 8th graders earned proficient scores on the 2013 DWA. EA strives to improve growth and proficiency each year.

The Direct Instruction (DI) curriculum and methodology are a pivotal part of this growth plan. Direct Instruction, in use with EA's Reading, Math and Spelling blocks, allows academic rigor while providing ability to place students according to their challenge level. Reading Mastery and Connecting Math Concepts have proven records. Saxon math and Spalding Spelling in conjunction with Shurley English, Adventures in Language and the Core Knowledge Sequence ensure a very thorough education meeting school and Common Core standards.

Extensive training is given during the summer, and throughout the year, to ensure that teachers are prepared to meet the academic and character development needs of students. DI programs are taught to greatest fidelity. Scripted programs offer staff the opportunity to know exactly what should be taught while giving teachers the ability to engage and excite students creating the "life-long love of learning" expressed in the school's mission statement. Data collection allows teachers and administration to track student mastery. Teachers follow the CHAMPS behavior management approach. Scholars know expectations while teachers are afforded means to correct without emotion. Above all, a sense of positivity pervades EA's hallways.

Students are also supported by the school's recognition of the learning 'trivium.' EA believes that every person has a three-leveled learning curve. Teachers understand that before logic and rhetoric can take place, students must have a strong foundation of set facts. This grammar stage brings success as students gain the ability to think in an "if/then" format. This ability, in turn, gives students desire to participate in defending knowledge and opinion, in the rhetoric phase. Even within the grammar and logic phases, students practice rhetoric as facts are mastered. At Excelsior Academy, GRAMMAR, LOGIC, and RHETORIC stages are key to growth and proficiency.

Excelsior Academy's focuses of academic rigor and virtuous character development have improved the opportunities of Tooele County students whose families choose to enroll children at the school. EA's wait list number exceeds 600. Excelsior Academy has been willing to partner with other schools and organizations, to seek consultation where needed, and to work diligently to ensure mastery of concepts. Teachers and students are held to high expectations. Teachers collect data using it to ensure student mastery and correct challenge-level placement. Students gain strength and confidence through learning at their challenge levels while developing virtuous character strength. EA believes that focusing on academic rigor and character development has propelled, and will continue to propel, the school to greater successes.

