

Voyager Academy

School Improvement Plan 2021-2023

Mission

Voyager Academy is a fully accredited K-12 charter school. The mission of Voyager Academy is to provide students in kindergarten through grade twelve an academically challenging and supportive learning environment. Staff utilizes experiential and traditional learning strategies so that students become responsible, engaged, and innovative members of society. The school's expectation is that all students, working with dedicated faculty and family, will excel academically and socially.

Vision

Inspiring lifelong learning in every Viking.

Background

Voyager Academy requested and received accreditation through AdvanceEd in the 2015-2016 school year, with five focus areas: Teaching for Learning, Leadership, Personal and Professional Learning, School and Community Relations, and Data and Information Management. Voyager Academy renewed accreditation through Cognia in Fall 2021, with focus upon a learning capacity domain and a resource capacity domain.

A team of administrators, teachers, students and parents was formed (the "School Improvement Team") to develop the initial school improvement plan, with a primary goal being to continue to close student achievement gaps in sub groups of students. For each focus area, we developed strategies and activities to advance those strategies, along with methods to measure progress and outcomes. Since that initial year of successful accreditation (with the exception of the 2020-2021 pandemic school year), the school improvement team has worked to update the goals and strategies contained in the school improvement plan for each academic year. This document reflects a simplified version of that original plan, and is structured around the Board of

Directors' Strategic Goals:

Goal 1 (Academics): Increase Academic Achievement

Goal 2 (Faculty/Staff): Recruit, Support and Retain Highly Qualified Educators


Goal 3 (Financial): Maintain and Strengthen Fiscal Responsibility

Goal 4 (Project-Based Learning): Enhance and Brand Project-Based Learning as Unique Learning Strategy

Goal 5 (Safety): Provide a Safe Environment for All Students and Staff

Goal 6 (Community Engagement): Build a Connected Learning Community, Engaging Families and Partners to Meet the Needs of all Students

The School Improvement Team is particularly well positioned to provide support for Goals 1, 2, 4 and 6, and will defer to the Board of Directors and School Leadership for Goals 3 and 5 (but lend input or support as needed or requested).

VOYAGER SIP 2021-2023 GOAL #1: INCREASE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT		
	Strategies	Progress Status (Initiating/ Progressing/ Achieved)
Objective 1.1 Improve performance as necessary to achieve an A rating from the NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI).	<p>At the Elementary School:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support full-time Reading Interventionist. ● Adopt Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) and Bridges curriculum, and observe at Excelsior Classical Academy on CKLA implementation. ● Recruit and retain highly qualified teachers – increase in salary is an incentive (see Goal #2). ● Adopt Zones of regulation (Social-emotional) and provide training. ● Increase 3rd grade EOG scores by 10%. <p>At the Middle School, support full-time Reading and Math interventionists.</p> <p>At the high school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase graduation rate and Math 1 scores. ● Re-organize and devote resources to Biology in order to achieve growth per EVAAS, including observation of best practices at high performing schools. <p>Across schools, at least 80% of teachers implement data-based decisions in core classes, and 10% of teachers share/present during professional development session.</p> <p> 2021 EVAAS Growth Chart District Value-Added Re...</p>	Progressing

<p>Objective 1.2 Meet or exceed expected growth based on standards established by the NCDPI.</p>	<p>2021 EVAAS Growth Chart District Value-Added Re...</p>	<p>Achieved for 2021-2022</p>
<p>Objective 1.3 Encourage innovation to improve curricular excellence (AP, electives, internships, technology, extracurricular)</p>	<p>Review and refine scope and quality of multiple innovative curricular options.</p> <p>ES: UNC Internship Program Elementary Art Show Family Walk and Talk Event Science Extravaganza Science Olympiad Chick-Fil-A Book Drive Chick-Fil-A Monthly Reading Challenge Before School Chorus Enhanced Lego Classes Full Time Reading Interventionist Adopted CKLA curriculum Adopted Bridges curriculum Valient Vikings Program</p> <p>MS: Student Council National Junior Honor So. Projects (PBL) Science Olympiad Interventionist Plays Curriculum Meetings Electives–Art,Spanish, Chorus, PE, Drama,Technology- Science Fair Field Trips Athletic</p> <p>HS: Voyager Academy SIP 22-23 Obj. 1.3 (high school)</p>	<p>Progressing</p>

Objective 1.4 Maintain AdvanceEd (now Cognia) accreditation.		Achieved in 2021-2022
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VOYAGER SIP 2021-2023 GOAL #2: RECRUIT, SUPPORT AND RETAIN HIGHLY QUALIFIED EDUCATORS		
	Strategies	Progress Status (Initiating/ Progressing/ Achieved)
Objective 2.1 Provide tools and training necessary to excel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide more structure and consistency in mentoring and orientation for first year teachers, and maintain feedback loop from early stage teachers to continue to improve support mechanisms (per Cognia report). Consider viability of “team” of mentors. Include mentorship for teachers who are not new to the profession, but new to Voyager. ● Aligns with PBL Goal, emphasize and differentiate PBL training based upon teacher experience with PBL. ● Provide professional development that is specific to needs of staff at least twice per semester (annual survey to assess needed/desired programming). ● Provide additional support and mentorship for teachers pursuing National Board certification. 	Progressing
Objective 2.2 Provide competitive salary and benefits packages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Overlaps with Financial Goal, primarily handled by leadership and Board, but SIT emphasizes importance of annually assessing and enhancing compensation salary and benefits in order to maintain competitive placement among peer schools and districts. ● Overlaps with Community Engagement/Marketing goal of busting charter school myths, but advertise that Voyager is competitive in salary and packages, and has a strong financial foundation. 	Progressing Compensation package upgrade achieved in 2021-2022

<p>Objective 2.3 Increase diversity of instructional staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Aligns with Community Engagement goal of promoting Voyager Academy and charter schools more effectively throughout the region, and emphasizing outreach to constituencies who are underrepresented in our student and faculty demographics.● Enhance Voyager visibility in job fairs and other places that college students/graduates seeking fulfilling teaching opportunities would be, primarily in partnership with regional colleges/universities, TeacherMatch, Indeed.Com.● Self assessment, reflection and training in overcoming implicit bias in hiring practices.	<p>Progressing</p>
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VOYAGER SIP 2021-2023
GOAL #3: MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY
(Defer to Voyager Board of Directors and School Leadership)

VOYAGER SIP 2021-2023		
GOAL #4: ENHANCE AND BRAND PROJECT BASED LEARNING AS A UNIQUE LEARNING STRATEGY		
	Strategies	Progress Status (Initiating/ Progressing/ Achieved)
<p>Objective 4.1 Improve the PBL design to ensure specified, measurable, and intentional learning outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Design a universal K-12 PBL planning form. ● Create a PBL user guide for staff that defines measures and expected outcomes. ● Students are able to demonstrate and present knowledge of how to solve their driving question. 	Progressing
<p>Objective 4.2 Develop a training program to ensure 100% of teachers have the skills/knowledge to integrate PBL into the curriculum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Differentiate the PBL training to meet the varying needs of staff - beginner 101 and advanced. ● Make sure that training is provided by leading experts, in addition to staff-run workshops. ● Collaborate with colleagues to engage in fine tuning of project based learning. 	Initiating
<p>Objective 4.3 Enhance parent and community understanding of the Project Based learning model.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement a parent engagement night to inform and demonstrate how PBL educational strategies are implemented. ● Ensure that all projects connect to solving real world problems. ● Develop student independence and agency to improve their community and world. ● Showcase projects quarterly to community on website, newsletter, etc. 	Initiating

VOYAGER SIP 2021-2023

**GOAL #5: PROVIDE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL STUDENTS AND STAFF
(Defer to Voyager Board of Directors and School Leadership)**

<p style="text-align: center;">VOYAGER SIP 2021-2023</p> <p style="text-align: center;">GOAL #6: BUILD A CONNECTED LEARNING COMMUNITY, ENGAGING FAMILIES AND PARTNERS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS</p>		
	Strategies	Progress Status (Initiating/ Progressing/ Achieved)
<p>Objective 6.1 Increase Voyager’s visibility within the Durham community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fall Festival/Spring Fling are signature events to reach out to the community. We have over 40 local vendors and public safety personnel in attendance. We have advertised via social media and handing out flyers as an open campus event. ● Sports teams and performing arts accolades being shared via the school newsletter, local paper and on the Voyager social media and parental social media sites (emphasize progress in social media presence, including protocols). ● Open the High School Exhibition night to the local Voyager community. 	<p>Progressing</p>
<p>Objective 6.2 Create opportunities for students to make a positive impact in the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multiple opportunities to serve the community exist through service clubs, student council, National Junior & National Honor Societies, Athletics Booster Club, and Project-Based Learning and other classroom projects, as well as community events like Spring Fling and Fall Festival. ● Host 2 projects per building that incorporate a community partner. ● Further elevate recognition of high school Service Laureate certificate recipients (beyond individual and high school acknowledgment). 	<p>Progressing</p>
<p>Objective 6.3 Better leverage community alliances and resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Elevate long-term “premiere” sponsors like Chick-Fil-A and Emerge Ortho, and add additional sponsors through student ambassadors and Booster Club. 	<p>Initiating</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Better coordinate multiple contacts with key sponsors so that school-wide support is documented and recognized and strong relationships are nurtured. 	
<p>Objective 6.4 Enhance Parent Engagement as valued partners in the success of Voyager Academy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build upon growing success and participation in community-wide events like Spring Fling and Fall Festival, and encouraging parent volunteerism and donations to support school events like street parties, school trips and projects. ● Focus upon engagement from all constituents and families, and provide support to make it easier for families to participate in school activities (including translation services, for example). ● Assess parent enrichment night model in order to maximize participation on topics of common interest (consider including students in planning and presentation). 	<p>Initiating</p>