



Excel Academy Charter Irvine Petition

3.10.2026

Excel Academy Leadership Team



Heidi Gasca
Superintendent/CEO



Heather Ferenc
Director of Education



Jenny Craig
*Director of Operations &
Accountability*



Leah Vides
*Assistant Director of
Special Education*



Joe Sorrera
*Director of Business
Services*



Megan Anderson
*Director of Human
Resources*



Tamara Murphy
*Assistant Director of
Special Programs*



April Saade
Elementary Principal



Lorrie Wood
Secondary Principal



Jenn Sheehey
Virtual Path Principal



MISSION

At Excel Academy, we invest in each student, by providing a personalized and engaging learning experience, centered on a collaborative partnership between school and home that creates unmatched opportunities for excellence and future success.

What we are all about: Our Vision

C

Compassion, Creativity ,
Collaboration, Challenge, &
Confidence.

H

Helpful, Hands-On , Humility,
& Happiness.

O

Optimism, Options,
Opportunities, Ownership, &
Others

I

Independence,
Individualization,
Inspiration, & Investigation

C

Child-focused , Curiosity,
Critical Thinking,
Consideration, & Community

E

Education, Equity,
Enjoyment. Exploration &
Empowerment

SCHOOL GOALS

Sustainable Growth



Retention



Quality Programs



Professional Development



Accolades & Achievements

**BEST
HIGH SCHOOLS**

& WORLD REPORT
U.S. News

**CHARTER
2025-2026**



ERP EDUCATIONAL
RESULTS
PARTNERSHIP

HONOR ROLL

- ☆ **William Hall, President**
 - *57 years in education*
- ☆ **Michael Humphrey Vice President**
 - *45 years in education*
- ☆ **Steve Fraire, Clerk**
 - *53 years in education*
- ☆ **Susan Houle, Board Member**
 - *31 years in education*
- ☆ **Larry Alvarado, Board Member**
 - *46 years in education*

Board Governance



Two Different Paths—Personalized & Virtual

PERSONALIZED

VIRTUAL



Personalized Elementary

(TK-6) The parent is the primary educator who works with a credentialed Excel Academy Teacher who oversees student progress.



Personalized Secondary

(7-12) The parent is the primary educator who works with a credentialed Excel Academy Teacher, and School Counselors, who oversees student progress.

Virtual Path

(TK-8) Students are placed into grade level classes where an Excel Academy Teacher is the primary educator on all subjects.

We serve students who...

Have
unique
health
needs

Experience
anxiety or
social
challenges

Have
academic
challenges
or are
seeking
acceleration

Are
homeless
or in
foster
care

Are socio
economically
disadvantaged

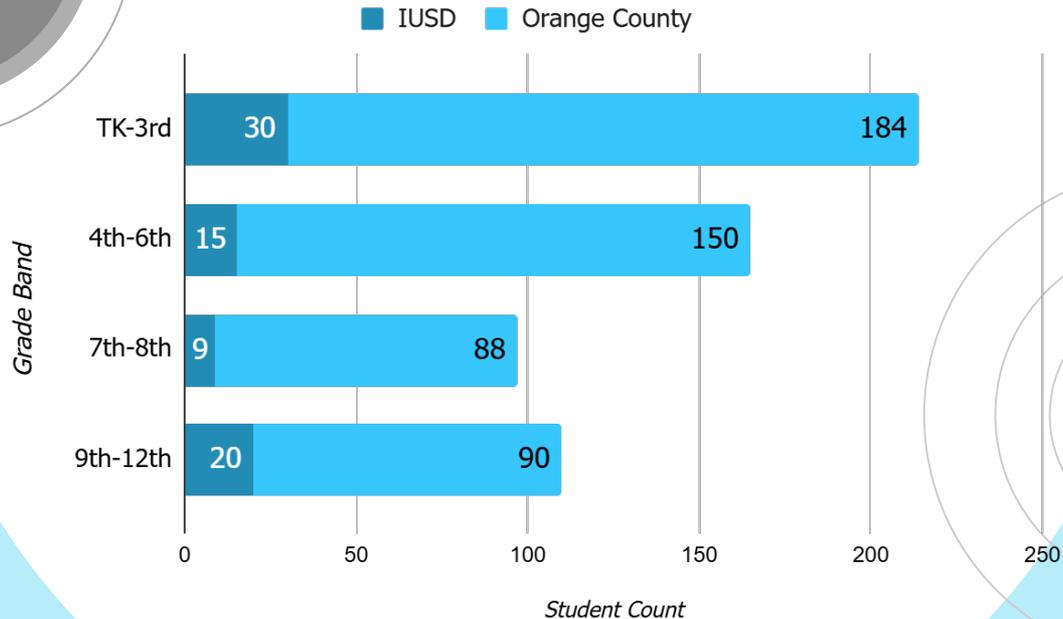
Are
Athletes &
Actors

Have
parents in
the
military

Need
flexibility
in their
schedule

Experienced
bullying in
traditional
schools

2025-26 Enrollment Data



TK-K LITERACY



Research-Based Foundational
Literacy Instruction



Early Screening and Targeted
Interventions



Specialized Early Childhood
Educators & Coaching



Literacy Binders & Reading
Fluency Assessments



Strong Family Partnerships & SEL
Support



Data-Driven Progress Monitoring



GATE PROGRAM



INCLUSIVE & PERSONALIZED ACCESS

- ✓ Open to ALL students: both GATE-identified and those who are high-achieving or highly curious.
- ✓ Personalized, home-based model tailored to strengths and interests
- ✓ Targeted acceleration when appropriate



ENRICHMENT-FOCUSED MODEL

- ✓ Depth & complexity within grade-level standards
- ✓ Inquiry-based, project-based, and experiential learning
- ✓ Emphasis on critical and creative thinking



COMMUNITY & COLLABORATION

- ✓ Monthly enrichment events (STEM, design challenges, field trips)
- ✓ Peer collaboration and intellectual community building
- ✓ Parent education and partnership in gifted learning



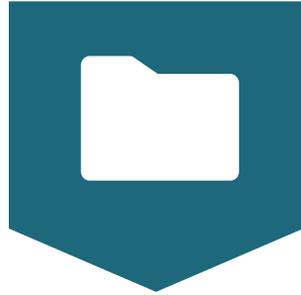
DATA-INFORMED PLANNING

- ✓ Annual CogAT (Grades 3–6)
- ✓ Verbal, Quantitative, and Nonverbal domains
- ✓ Used to inform instruction—not gatekeep access

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM



- **Scope:** Supports the entire continuum of student disability needs
- **Regional Impact:** Currently serves 51 Orange County students (including 11 IUSD residents) via consultation, direct service, and parent support.



- **Elementary Speech:** Articulation-focused intervention groups.
- **High School:** Specialized social language communication groups.
- **Strategic Alignment:** Ongoing partnership for Special Education (SpED) referrals.



- SAI Small Groups**
 - Synchronous, IEP-aligned instruction (all grade levels.)
 - Includes core subjects, study skills, and post-secondary prep.
 - Maximum of 9 students to prioritize individual progress.
 - Multiple teaching staff provide varied instructional approaches.



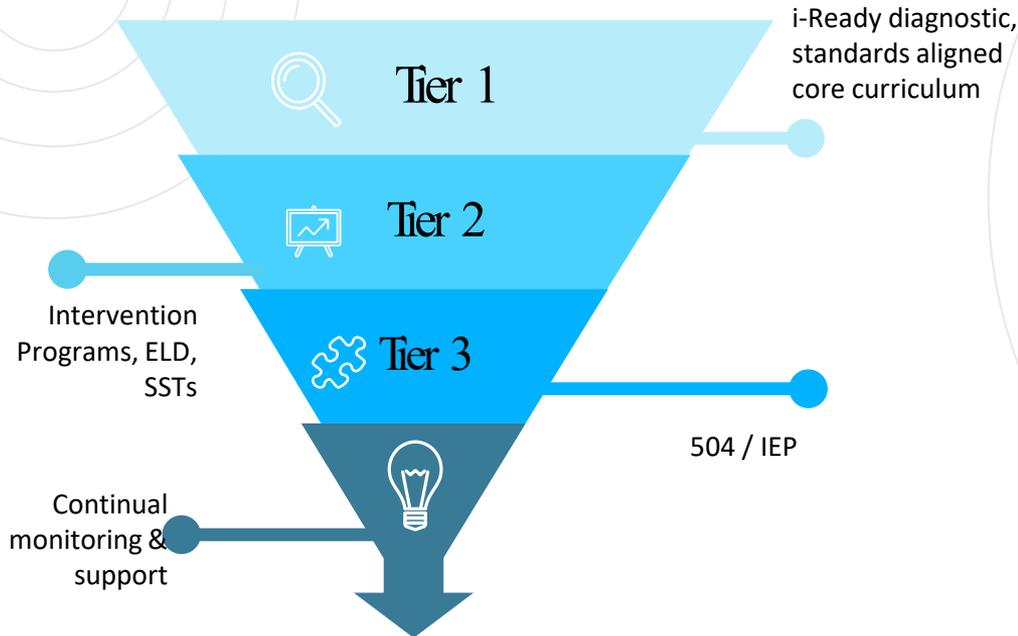
- Related Services**
 - Expert Team: In-house Speech, Psychology, and Occupational Therapy specialists.
 - Direct Service: Counseling, behavior support, and O.T. delivered entirely by Excel Academy staff.



- Mod-Severe/ESN**
 - Focus: Academic support and peer exposure for intensive needs.
 - Format: Live, synchronous TK-12 group instruction.
 - Delivery: Collaborative teaching model with shared student oversight.

STUDENT SUPPORT:

Excel's mtss Program



WN(What I Need) Program

1

Initial Student identification based on local diagnostic scores

2

Additional assessments data is gathered, as needed, to ensure accurate student placement

3

Data is triangulated to determine students' best fit interventions and support, including routine progress monitoring.

Secondary Program Offerings

A.C.E
your future

**CHART YOUR
PATH TO SUCCESS**



EXCEL ACADEMY
**ACADEMICS | COLLEGE & CAREER
EDUCATION**

WE WANT YOU TO LEAVE HIGH SCHOOL WITH THREE THINGS: **EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS, TECHNICAL SKILLS & ACADEMIC SKILLS.** WITH A.C.E. YOU'LL GRADUATE WITH A PATH TO SUCCESS, WHETHER THAT IS ADDING SOME COLLEGE CLASSES TO YOUR COURSE LOAD, RECEIVING A SEAL OF BILITERACY, OR ENROLLING IN OUR CTE PROGRAM. LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR **A.C.E. PROGRAM** AND HOW YOU CAN CHART YOUR PATH TO SUCCESS.



Concurrent Enrollment **A-G**

Seal of Biliteracy **SBAC CTE**



**CONTACT YOUR TEACHER OF
RECORD FOR DETAILS!**

ETL
EXCEL TEACHER-LED
LIVE CLASSES



HOMESCHOOL HELPER HOUR

Drop-In Tutoring for 7th- 12th Graders

Wednesdays, 9AM-10AM

- English
- History
- Spanish

Wednesday Zoom Link
Passcode: ExcelHelps

Fridays, 9AM-10AM

- Math
- Science

Friday Zoom Link
Passcode: ExcelHelps



DROP

THIS MONTH IN COUNSELING:

✓ **National Bullying Awareness Week**
November 11-15th

✓ **California College Applications due 12/2**
UC and CSU college applications open up for students.

✓ **Financial Aid Workshop with GCU**
Join Grand Canyon University as their rep discusses financial aid options.
November 6 at 6pm

✓ **Counselor Office Hours for Families**
Daniel Favela: Mondays 10:00-11:00 am
Larissa Allen-Jefferson: Fridays 12:00-1:00 pm

✓ **Teen Talk grades 7-12**
Thursdays at 12:00 pm
A guided discussion with counselors on social topics

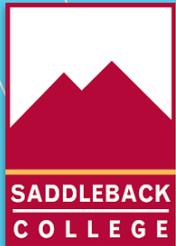
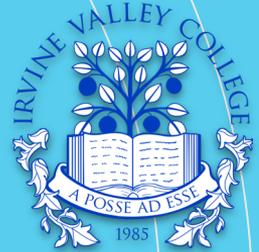
✓ **Hey Kiddo grades 7-12**
Wednesdays at 9-9:30 am
Wednesdays at 9:35-10:05 am
Students learn the 5 CASEL skills with open-ended questions.



Teen Talk



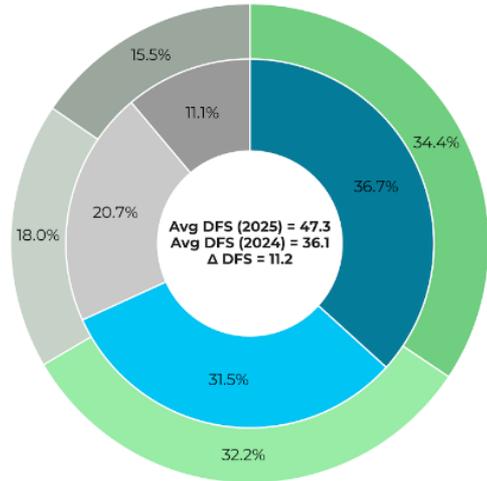
Where our grads have gone



CAASPP ELA and MATH Data

**Excel Academy Charter - OC Students Only
CAASPP 2025 vs 2024**

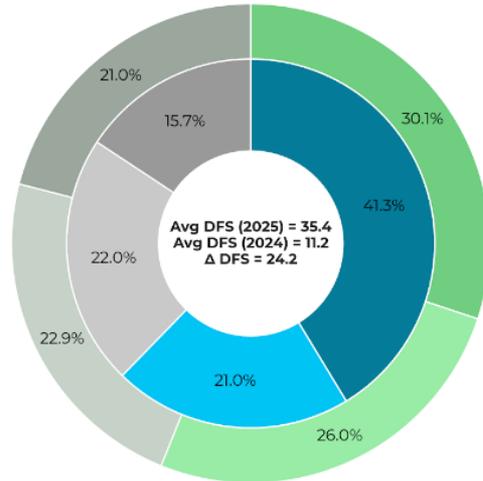
ELA



Met or Exceed
Excel OC: 68.2%
 Orange County: 59%
 California: 49%

Avg DFS
Excel OC: 47.3
 Orange County: +20.3
 California: -8.1

Math



Met or Exceed
Excel OC: 62.3%
 Orange County: 49%
 California: 37%

Avg DFS
Excel OC: 35.4
 Orange County: -7.1
 California: -42.4



68.2%
 of OC Students
 Met or
 Exceeded ELA
 Standards

62.3%
 of OC Students
 Met or Exceeded
 Math Standards

Verified i-Ready Data

Local assessment 2025 spring results indicate that Orange County students are shifting to higher achievement levels with fewer students performing one or more grade levels below.

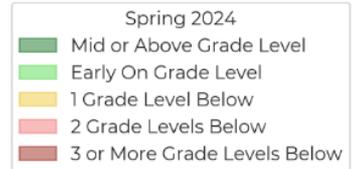
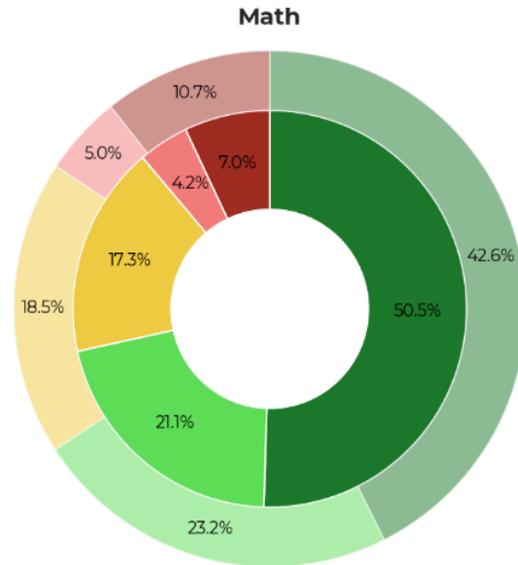
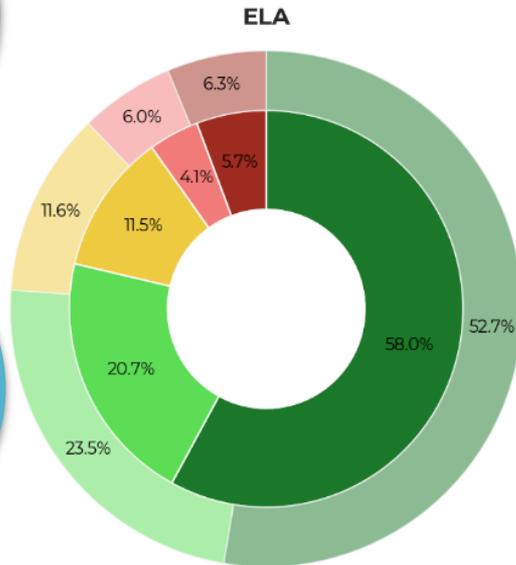
58%

of OC Students were Mid or Above Grade Level in ELA

50.5%

of OC students were Mid or Above Grade Level in Math

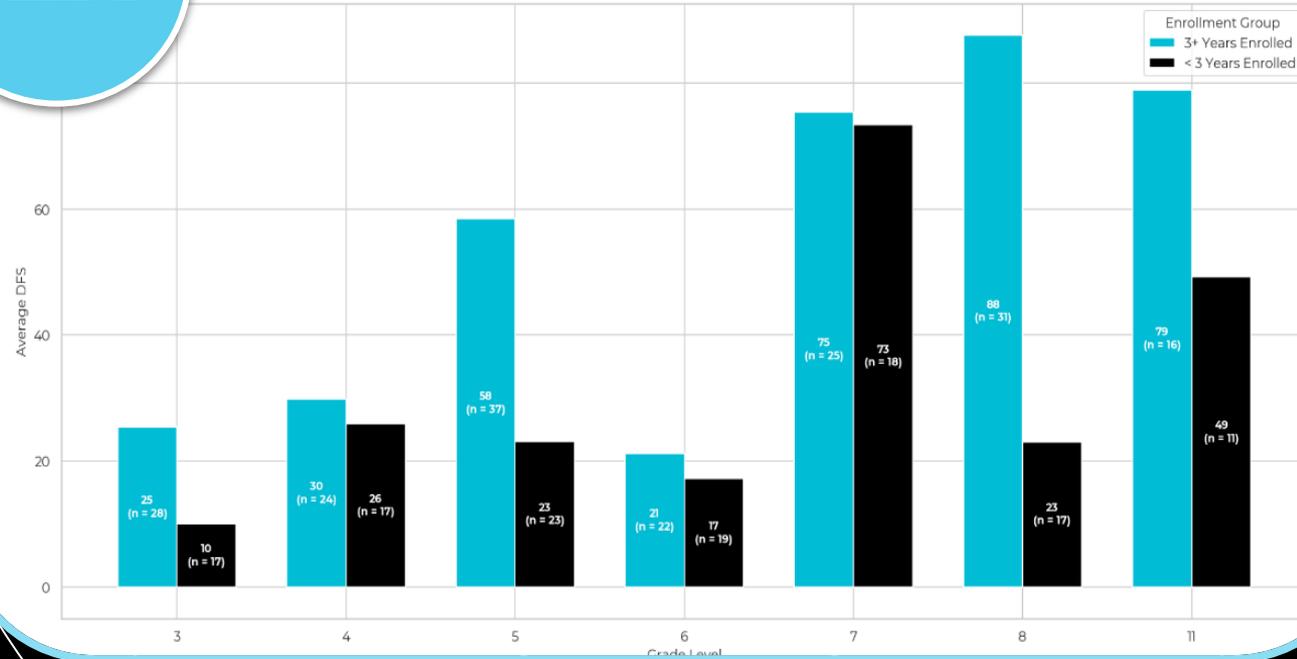
Excel Academy - OC Students Only i-Ready Relative Placement 2024 vs 2025



The Power of CONTIGUOUS ENROLLMENT

ELA

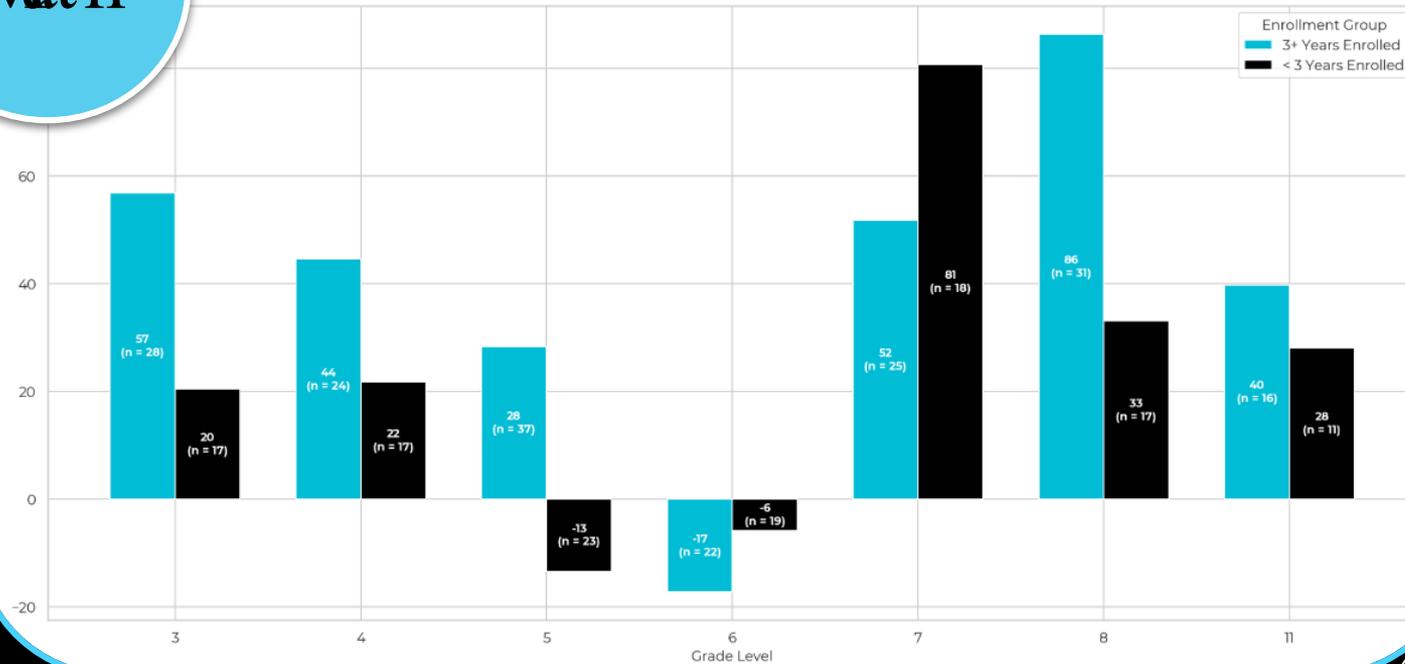
Excel Academy - OC Students Only - ELA
DFS by Grade and Enrollment Length



The Power of CONTIGUOUS ENROLLMENT

Math

Excel Academy - OC Students Only - Math
DFS by Grade and Enrollment Length



Budget Assumptions

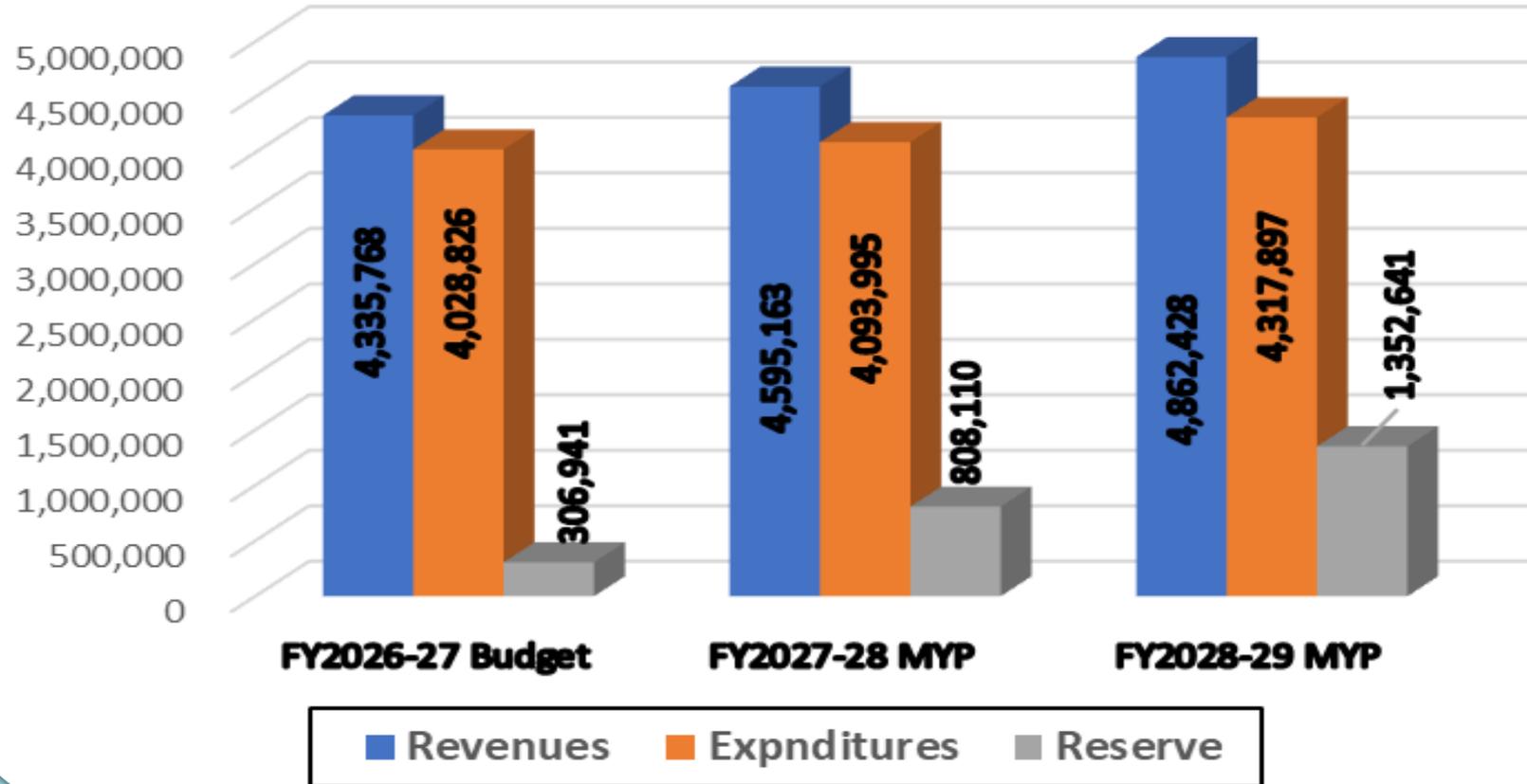
Revenues:

Assumption	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Statutory COLA	3.02%	3.42%	3.31%
Attendance Rate (ADA)	98%	98%	98%
Enrollment Increase Projection		3.00%	3.00%
Enrollment	300	309	318

Expenditures:

Assumption	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
CalSTRS Employer Rate	19.1%	19.1%	19.1%
CalPERS Employer Rate	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Step & Column Increase	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Average Class Size ratio	25:1	25:1	25:1
Funds Borrowed from other EACS schools	\$1,000,000	0	0

Financial Analysis



Annual Audits

2019-2020

Passed - No findings



2022-2023

Passed - No findings



2020-2021

Passed - No findings



2023-2024

Passed - No findings



2021-2022

Passed - No findings



2024-2025

Passed - No findings





Thank you!

