



# 20-21 Annual Report

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FIND YOUR PATH

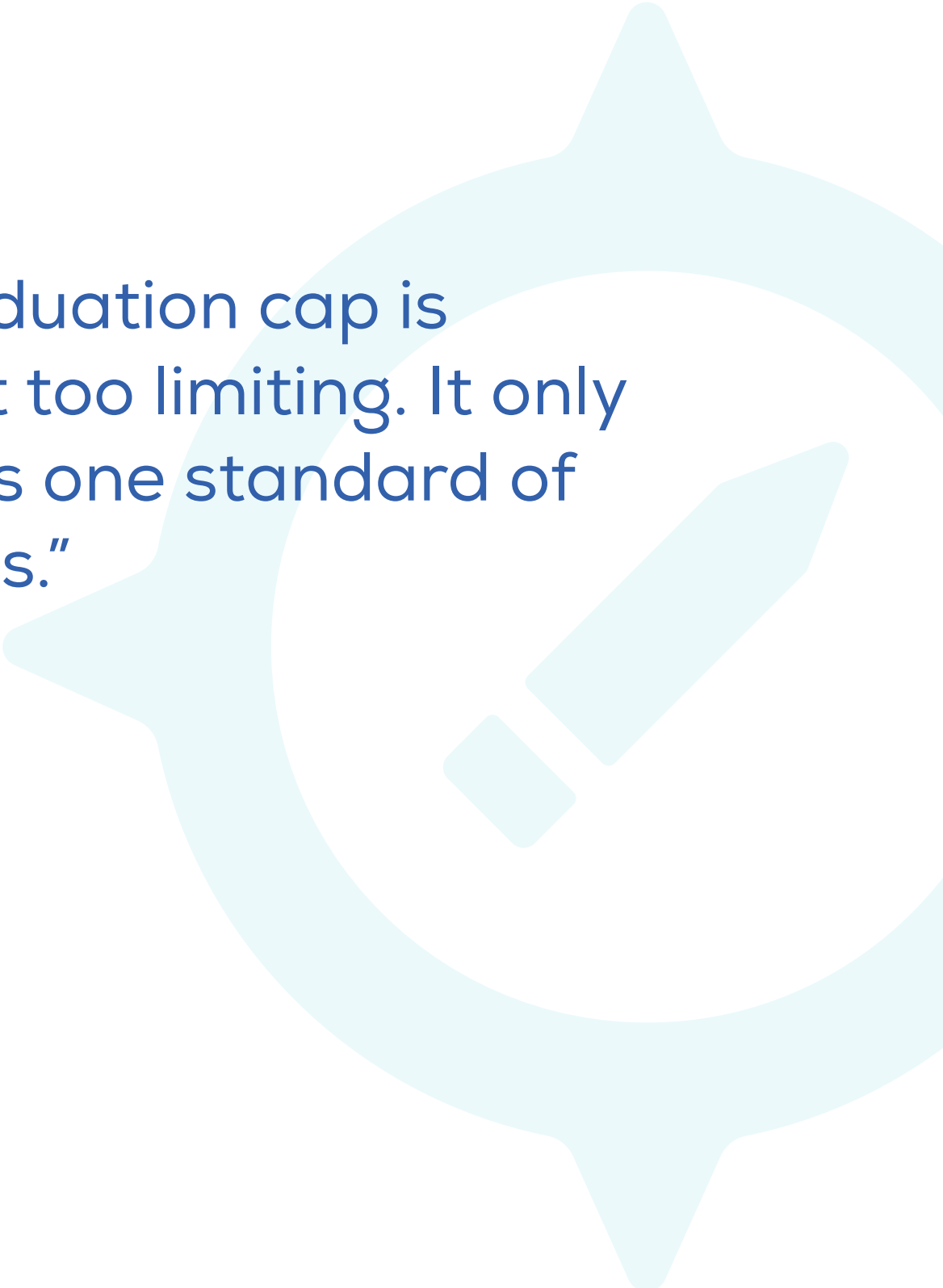


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"A graduation cap is almost too limiting. It only defines one standard of success."

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# 01 ABOUT US

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# Who We Are



***TRECA Digital Academy is an online, non-profit K-12 public community school, chartered through the Ohio Department of Education. TRECA strives to provide the best possible distance learning opportunity to Ohio students who have decided that online education is a good alternative to the brick-and-mortar environment.***

Students utilize a comprehensive and interactive curriculum that meets all of Ohio's Learning Standards. Students can attend class in a safe environment, taught by highly qualified teachers who offer personal attention and support. Students are required to attend school 180 days per school year and can access their online coursework twentyfour hours a day, seven days a week from any computer.

Prior to the 2020-2021 school year, TRECA had been identified as a Dropout Prevention and Recovery program. This designation is given to schools when a majority of students are between ages 16 and 21 and identified as at-risk for dropping out. During the 2020-2021 school year

however, TRECA's student population changed. A larger proportion of new enrollment in grades K-6 occurred; and thus, the Dropout Prevention & Recovery status was not awarded. This shift was due in large part to the COVID-19 pandemic, with approximately a quarter of families indicating the pandemic as the reason for enrolling in an online school.

Plain and simple, we're an online school for K-12 students, but we believe we're so much more! We're a safe place to learn, a place for students seeking an alternative to brick-and-mortar schools, and we're that extra push for anyone seeking a challenge! We're fully public and completely non-profit.

# Board of Directors



**Kate Fisher**

## Board President

As both owner of her own social media marketing company and president of the Marion City Council, Ms. Fisher brings a critical business perspective to our organization.



**Jim Craycraft**

## Board Vice President

Mr. Craycraft is a Marion leader who has served numerous superintendent tenures with various districts. He now serves at OSU Marion to assist in developing their teachers.



**Ray Funk**

## Board Member

Mr. Funk comes from a background in education. Over the course of his career, he has served numerous districts, businesses, and other educational entities.



**Fran Voll**

## Board Member

Mr. Voll is another experienced educator who brings valuable insight to our table. He has a wealth of knowledge and expertise from years of service at Marion Catholic.



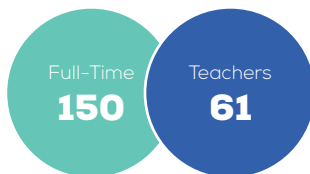
**Vaughn Sizemore**

## Board Member

Mr. Sizemore is both a business leader and active supporter of the Marion community. His background in technology and government relations bring great value to our board.

# School Demographics

## STAFF



### TRECA Staff

Even though we're online, that doesn't mean students are on their own! We have close to **150** staff members who serve and support the needs of our TRECA Digital Academy students.

## FULL-TIME STUDENT POPULATION



# 2,280

### TRECA Digital Academy Student Population

As of spring 2021, TRECA served the equivalent of 2,280 full-time students in the Digital Academy program. Over the course of the year, enrollment peaked near 2,300 students.

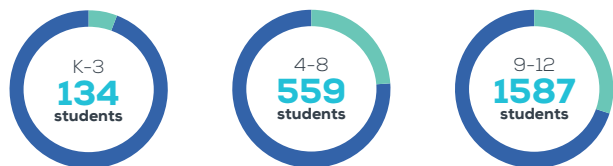
### Enrollment by Gender

Of the total number of students enrolled in TRECA Digital Academy, 55% are female and 45% are male.



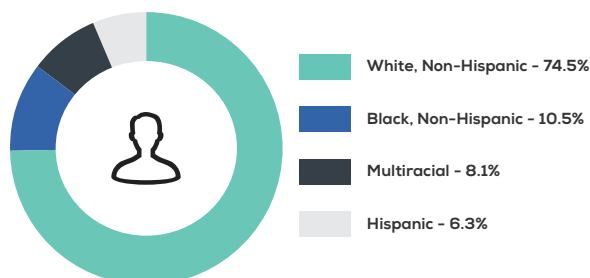
### Enrollment by Grade Level

Nearly 70% of TRECA Digital Academy students are in grades 9-12. The remaining 24% of students are in grades 4-8 and 6% are K-3.



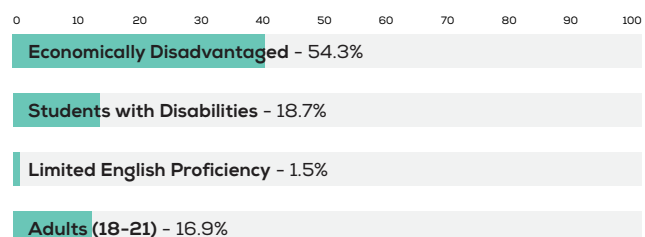
### Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

The majority of TRECA Digital Academy students are white, followed by black, multiracial, and Hispanic.



### Enrollment by Subgroup

The following breaks down the student population in other specific subgroups measured by the Ohio Department of Education.





# Our Executive Director

*The Executive Director acts as the district leader with the support of the district's administrators, who make up the district leadership team.*



A passion for education and technology brought me to TRECA fifteen years ago. I started as a teacher's aide and became a high school government teacher before moving into administration. My mission has always been more than putting diplomas in students' hands. We're about helping students find their path, and we are committed to that more than ever!

*Adam Clark*

**ADAM CLARK**



# Our Treasurer



***The Treasurer is the Board's chief fiscal officer and is responsible for the prudent accountability of all monies received and spent by the school. He or she maintains the Board's official records and is responsible for the duties required by law and the state auditor.***

## ◀ JESSICA WAKE:

*Mrs. Wake brings a fresh perspective to our financial team. As a recently-licensed treasurer, she's extremely knowledgeable of the latest rules, regulations, and contemporary practices. As a longtime employee with TRECA, she has a strong understanding of the fabric of our organization.*

# What Drives Us

Our great purpose at TRECA is to help others find their path! The primary focus of that is on the paths of our students and their families. However, our purpose isn't exclusive to that; we're also adamant about the betterment of our own people and community. It's part of our DNA. Our people make us who we are. We value them and build on their strengths. This all sets the stage for upholding our mission and values as an organization.

## OUR MISSION

We firmly believe that all students deserve meaningful learning experiences despite the obstacles they face. We will prepare them for tomorrow by removing barriers, building relationships, and making learning relevant. This is the mission for which we aim. Each new adventure begins with this key belief in mind!

## OUR VALUES

Our values are captured in three simple precepts:

- Student First
- Empower People
- Never Give Up!

These values drive everything we do. They define our choices, our policies, and our every interaction with students!

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# 02

# EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

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# 2020-2021 Highlights

***The COVID-19 pandemic and its challenges to families and students remained throughout the 20-21 school year. In spite of these challenges, TRECA continued to seek new ways to engage students and serve its mission to help them find their path.***

## Admissions | Enrollment Growth

TRECA sustained its enrollment from the previous school year during 2020-2021, reaching a peak of nearly 2,300 active students.

## Orientations | Family Engagement

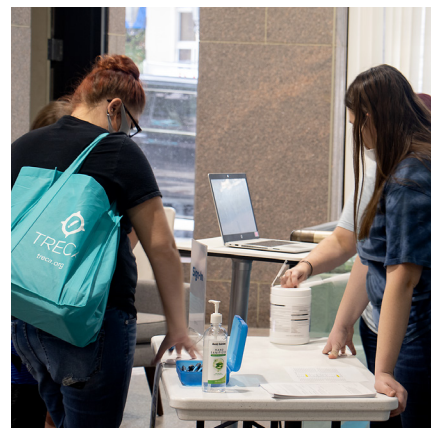
A unique component of TRECA Digital Academy is our in-person orientation requirement. Unlike some online schools, we require a face-to-face orientation with every new enrollee. This is a powerful component of our educational program because it serves as an opportunity to acclimate our students to our virtual tools, complete diagnostic exams, interact with families, and receive personalized support! The orientation process was directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic during the 2020-2021 school year. While orientations still took place in person, modifications and precautions were made to ensure the safety of students, families and staff.

## Career Technical Program | TRECA Tech

The 2020-2021 school year marked year three of the TRECA Tech program. The program provides students with pathways in both Business and Information Technology. In the first two years of the program, more than 50 students began their career technical education journey. We have increased our marketing and outreach efforts to increase student and family awareness of our program, with the goal of increasing overall enrollment from within our existing student body. We designed a new commercial that is located on our website and is part of our online orientation course. We continue to offer college credit through an agreement with Marion Technical College and at all Ohio public colleges and universities through the ODE CTAG program. Students may also earn industry certifications towards graduation through TRECA Tech. Notably, we began offering the Technology Seal to all TRECA students as part of Ohio's new graduation requirements.

## Student & Family Engagement | Field Trips

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person activities and field trips were limited. Instead, several virtual opportunities were provided to students and families. These activities included locations throughout the state, nation, and even into space: Ohio metropark virtual scavenger hunts, Great Lakes Now virtual field trip, Bright Farms virtual field trip, Breef's virtual field trip to the Coral Reef, virtual programming from the Cleveland Aquarium, Scholastic's virtual field trip to Ellis Island, a virtual tour of the International Space Station from NASA, and various STEM & Career focused presentations from organizations like COSI of Columbus.



# Curriculum & Instruction

***The State Model Courses of Study are the basis for TRECA Digital Academy curriculum. These are the content items around which the state testing program is built.***

Our curriculum uses a variety of resources including teachers, community personnel, subscription sites, and the World Wide Web. A critical component of our program is our highly qualified teaching staff. Our teachers provide differentiated instruction to our students. Since our curriculum is accessible around the clock and our continuous progress instructional model is in place, students can move forward at rates that best meet their learning styles and needs.



## PERSONALIZED

With a core value of “student first,” it’s essential that our curriculum and instruction live up to this precept. All of our materials are designed to cater to students’ unique needs. We truly believe that personalization is a key advantage of online learning

## ENGAGING

Engagement of students and parents was a continued focus in 2020-2021. New additions to the Parent Portal were made to provide a detailed view of student attendance. Using the portal, learning partners can observe their student’s regular attendance, down to the very minute. Such detail is necessary to ensure that families are aware of potential attendance concerns.

## CHALLENGING

An undertaking at any school is to find that perfect blend of material that both challenges learners while providing them opportunities for success. We feel that our curriculum does just that! It grows our students and caters to a wide range of needs.



*A major focus in 2020-2021 was to enhance our curricular program through the following:*

## CHECK & CONNECT MENTORING



The Check & Connect mentoring program, developed through the University of Minnesota, completed its second year at TRECA in 2020-2021. In total, seventy students were paired with a trained mentor. By building stronger relationships with their students, mentors work to keep them on a path towards graduation. The Check & Connect program will continue to expand at TRECA as additional mentors are trained and paired with students.

## COVID-19 MITIGATION PROTOCOLS



Throughout the 2020-2021 school year, TRECA implemented several mitigation strategies for the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. These included universal masking among students and staff, installation of plexi-glass barriers within offices, desk dividers to provide a physical barrier between students, and distancing of all individuals within school spaces. Even though TRECA is a virtual school, these steps were necessary to maintain safety during state-mandated testing, orientations, and any other in-person activities that took place within school facilities.

## EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR PROGRAMS



At the conclusion of the 2020-2021 school year, TRECA provided additional learning opportunities to students. This included an expanded summer school program for high school students. Approximately 159 students had the opportunity to recover and/or complete classes that were incomplete from the school year, earning 103.5 credits. In middle school (grades 7-8), 90 students were provided the opportunity to complete reading and math programs over the summer. In elementary (grades K-6), 59 students participated in reading and math summer programming. These activities were targeted to address students that had identified learning gaps or failed to complete their required coursework during the school year. Internet connectivity and computer access were provided to all students participating in the summer programs.

## SCHOOL QUALITY IMPROVEMENT



TRECA's School Quality Improvement Plan (SQIP) concluded at the end of the 2020-2021 school year. This three-year plan was developed by administrators, teachers, and support staff. The SQIP focused on implementing evidence-based strategies to address targeted student needs, such as achievement and graduation. While the COVID-19 pandemic limited some of the observable data associated with student achievement, successes were clearly displayed in the graduation and mobility rates at TRECA. Over the course of the plan, TRECA's four-year graduation rate rose from 18.5% to 35%. In addition, student mobility (percentage of students enrolled at TRECA less than one year) declined from 68.7% to 44.7%. Each reflects tremendous gains in engaging students and guiding them toward better academic outcomes.



# Our Report Card

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact the normal assessment regimen for students at TRECA. State assessments were administered in the spring, however, the pandemic significantly impacted participation among students. In previous years, upwards of 98% of tests were administered to students across all grade levels. In 2020-2021, this fell to approximately 86%. In light of the pandemic's impact, the Ohio General Assembly has again modified school report cards for 2020-2021. Results from state assessments will be released in October of 2021 and will not contain ratings. Instead, the state will provide scores based on whatever data was available from 2020-2021. When posted, the modified report card can be found at <https://reportcard.education.ohio.gov/>.

## GRADUATION RATES

Given the at-risk population that TRECA serves, graduation rates have been a consistent area of emphasis, and it is anticipated that it will continue to be an area in which TRECA will focus its resources, including efforts put forth by teachers, counselors, advisors, and the SAFE program's social workers. In 2020-2021, TRECA's graduation rates continued an upward trend, reaching 35% among students graduating in four years. This was a significant increase from the previous school year, where 25.9% graduated, and up from 22.3% in the 2018-2019 school year. The improvement among students' on-time graduation can be attributed to the work of TRECA teachers and support staff, all of which have worked hard to identify at-risk students and guide them toward a path to success. Much work remains, but 2020-2021 demonstrated another large step forward.

# Parent & Community Involvement

As in the past, TRECA Digital Academy strongly encouraged parents and guardians to be actively involved in their student's education during 2020-2021. Each new enrollee was required to attend an orientation in the accompaniment of at least one parent/guardian. During this introduction to our online school, both students and adults were guided through a hands-on demonstration of how our school functions and how students participate in classes and communicate with teachers. Information was also provided to parents/guardians on how to access online tools to check their student's progress.

The use of web conferencing continued this year; teachers expanded their use of a synchronous technology tool called Google Meet. Google meetings provide VOIP connections to allow teachers and students to connect through audio or

video chats, instant messaging, desktop sharing, and use of a whiteboard, allowing even more two-way communication in real time. Other communication tools for parents/guardians included toll-free telephone access to the TRECA Call Center and administrative offices, as well as access to students' data-only iPhone, allowing families to message teachers as a consistent means of communication.

The annual end-of-year survey of guardians indicated that approximately 97% of respondents were "satisfied" with the education their students received at TRECA. With over 700 parent responses to the survey, this was a positive indication that the services and opportunities provided by the TRECA program are supporting the needs of students and families.



**97%** Satisfied with TRECA

**97%** Would recommend TRECA

**93%** Agree their student develops good work habits while at TRECA

**95%** Agree their student develops values of hard work while at TRECA

**99%** Agree their student uses technology effectively at TRECA

**94%** Agree their student establishes personal and career goals while at TRECA

# Safe & Orderly Environment

*As you may expect, online schooling requires administration to address safety issues that may differ from the traditional brick-and-mortar schools. Our cyber environment lends itself to safety issues such as inappropriate digital content within assignments, emails, and online classroom sessions.*



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## Custom Technology Solutions



**256<sup>bit</sup>**  
encryption

Student computers are specifically designed to work within a “closed” environment, yet allow access to the many resources available through the Internet. Students are not permitted to receive email from non-school entities. Websites are filtered for appropriateness through software installed on each machine. Social opportunities are provided through monitored online chats and discussion boards. Ensuring the security and safety of our students in an online environment is our number one priority.

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## Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs)



**100%**  
participation

All students and parents/guardians sign an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) as part of their induction into the school. This policy states that they agree to follow guidelines for appropriate use of the hardware and software. Should students violate this policy, procedures are in place to restrict their access to only what is necessary to complete school work within the intranet. All disciplinary actions are documented. While there are many reasons students and parents choose to enroll in an online school, we know from parent feedback that a primary reason is the desire for a safer environment than was experienced in a prior educational setting. We are diligent in our efforts to meet those expectations for a safe school.



# Collegiality & Professionalism



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

All TRECA staff, licensed and unlicensed, create Individualized Professional Development Plans that outline their professional growth goals. Plans and activity hours are reviewed and approved by our Local Professional Development Committee. A few of the most impactful professional development opportunities staff participated in during the 2020-2021 school year continued coaching in visual learning and problem solving in math and reciprocal teaching in all other subject areas. As part of the School Quality Improvement Plan, this job-embedded professional development is part of an ongoing 2-year process that goes beyond a short workshop and becomes a part of our instructional culture. The instructional coaching team facilitated data-based discussions with teachers across many areas of professional learning and development. We supported all teachers as they engaged in one of two schoolwide, research-based professional development initiatives: improving student literacy through reciprocal teaching and developing math skills through problem-solving with Pear School Solutions. Our quarterly meetings with each teacher deepened professional relationships, further developed supportive rapport, and provided opportunities to examine classroom data and further improve the ways we support our students. In addition, district leadership worked closely with State Support Team 7 personnel for school improvement purposes. Staff also participated in the Ohio Leadership for Inclusion, Implementation, and Instructional Improvement, Ohio Association of Administrators of State and Federal Education Programs Conference, Ohio School Counselor Association Conference, Alternate Assessment training, ODE webinars, ESC trainings regarding new graduation requirements, and Check and Connect staff training.

## REMOTE & TRAVEL

Just as our students work from their homes, so do the majority of our teaching staff at TRECA. The COVID-19 pandemic reduced the amount of travel and in-person activities among the teaching staff in 2020-2021; however, time to collaborate took place virtually. Travel was required to sites around the state to meet with students for face-to-face administration of state-mandated and diagnostic testing. While face-to-face opportunities were reduced in 2020-2021, these activities will return in the upcoming school year.

## TEACHER-BASED TEAMS

Teacher-Based Teams, organized by subject area and/or grade band, met for collaboration surrounding students' instructional needs, curriculum review and evaluation, assessment data analysis, trend data analysis, and pedagogical professional development.

## INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

Teachers were instrumental in recommending changes to instructional programs used with students. The elementary special needs program implemented Freckle Learning as one of their instructional resources, along with MobyMax. Both of these programs offer adaptive curriculum for ELA, math, science, and social studies. Our elementary program continued to use a combination of programs with math workbooks that support student practice offline. Throughout the second half of the school year, the Reading Improvement Committee met to review reading data of our students to develop a district-wide plan to address student's academic needs specific to reading. The committee determined that the addition of reading groups within the existing K-3 courses and the addition of reading classes for grades 2-4 would be implemented during the 2020-21 school year. Teachers of grades 7-12 continued to expand student use of Google tools and resources by incorporating them into classes as a means of instruction and student-completed activities.



## INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS

Teachers were required to post instructional times, showing when they were available for immediate feedback and chats with students. Teachers went above and beyond the required time frames to assist individual students. This included making themselves available in the evenings and on weekends.

## TOOLS & RESOURCES

To foster and facilitate communication throughout the year, the staff accessed many tools that encourage a sense of professional community. TRECA utilized Google tools, not only to collect and analyze staff feedback (via Forms and Sheets), but to hold virtual conferences and meetings (Hangouts), build Professional Development resources (Docs, Sheets, Forms, Sites), provide classroom walkthrough feedback related to OTES (Forms, Sheets, Docs), and even to support our Resident Educator mentoring programs (Sites).

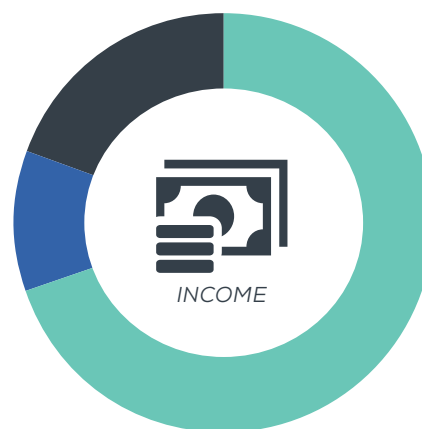
# Financial Report

*The following captures TRECA Digital Academy's income and expenses for fiscal year 2020-2021, as well as the cash balance.*

2020-2021

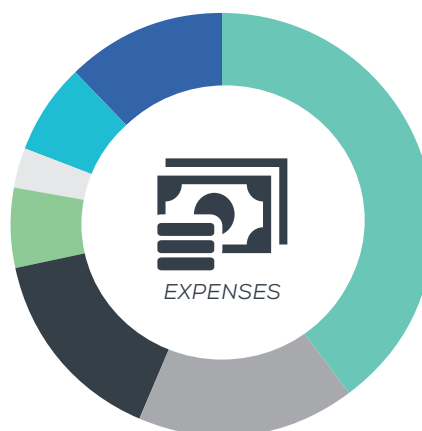
## INCOME

State Foundation Payments	\$12,155,427.58	
Federal Grants	\$1,939,378.97	
Other Revenue	\$3,316,511.04	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$17,411,317.59</b>	



## EXPENSES

Salaries & Wages	\$6,960,817.34	
Employee Benefits	\$2,977,687.09	
Purchased Services	\$2,636,288.68	
Supplies and Materials	\$1,068,173.47	
Capital Outlay	\$538,474.92	
Other	\$1,241,036.56	
Foundation "Clawback" Deduction	\$2,110,452.38	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$17,532,930.44</b>	



CASH BALANCE \$4,185,894.87



# Governance & Operations

***The governance and operations of TRECA Digital Academy is always in the best interest of its students, families, and staff members.***

The TRECA Digital Academy Board of Directors met virtually on a monthly basis during the 2020-2021 school year. Meetings followed all public meeting regulations with minutes posted regularly to the school website. Day-to-day operations of the school were overseen by the Executive Director and Treasurer, each of whom reported directly to the Board. Acting board members and minutes from each meeting can be found at [www.treca.org/about](http://www.treca.org/about).

Our TRECA Leadership Team consists of staff who represent over 140 years of experience in education with experience in traditional public schools (urban, suburban, and rural), community schools, eSchools, and juvenile detention centers. The majority of our leadership team hold advanced degrees.





# Planning for 2021-2022

*Our board of directors and the staff of TRECA Digital Academy are committed to high quality online teaching and learning, aiming to achieve the following during the 2020-2021 school year:*

**1****Target 1**

Return to in-person field trips and family engagement activities, while continuing COVID-19 mitigation strategies.

**2****Target 2**

Utilizing federal ESSER funding to upgrade student computers.

**3****Target 3**

Address potential learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic by providing students with on demand virtual tutoring.

**4****Target 4**

Expand summer learning programs to address learning loss.

**5****Target 5**

Provide additional career exploration course offerings to high school students.

**6****Target 6**

Pilot the usage of new content creation tools among TRECA teachers to enhance their virtual instructional practice.

**7****Target 7**

Implement new Renaissance STAR reading and math assessments for all high school students.

**8****Target 8**

Hold open houses at each of TRECA's regional offices to encourage students and families to meet teachers and staff face to face.

