

2018-2019 Twin Cities Academy Annual Charter School Report (4132-07)

Submitted by Betsy Lueth, Executive Director

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Purpose

The purpose of this report is to communicate to the constituents of Twin Cities Academy who we are and to monitor and report our annual school data, accomplishments and goals.

Vision

We serve a diverse student body to succeed in a rigorous college preparatory program.

Mission

Twin Cites Academy ensures that all students graduate with the skills to achieve in college, to contribute positively to society, and be accepting of all people.

Twin Cities Academy is a public charter middle and high school located in St. Paul, Minnesota serving grades six through twelve. Twin Cities Academy is a college preparatory school committed to academic rigor, active citizenship, and character development. The foundation of our programs supports the student's ability to be ready for college at the end of their secondary education.

This past year we enrolled approximately 615 students. Although TCA offers a small school environment, our students benefit from a wide variety of courses at the secondary school level. All students are able to take a world language, participate in band, and a variety of electives including STEM, video production, technology, physical education, music, dance, theater and visual arts. TCA also offers multiple Advanced Placement, Honors and College In the Schools options to ensure a rigorous experience for all students. During a midday school advisory time, students are able to participate in clubs and receive additional tutoring through office hours. Students in the middle school and high school also receive guidance lessons during this time both related to social skill development and college readiness. Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, Twin Cities Academy began the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) for all 9th graders. AVID is a nationally recognized college readiness program. After school students may participate in a variety of extracurricular activities such as competitive sports programs, competitive speech program, theater and band ensembles.

Our educational model emphasizes community involvement and relationship building. Families sign a covenant agreeing to share in the partnership of providing support and ensuring success for their children academically, socially, and behaviorally. Our school has a high degree of student and family engagement, reflected in data from 2018-19. Parent/Teacher Conferences held on Saturdays (November, February and April) averaged 92% in attendance

Twin Cities Academy realigned its internal assessment measures during the 2018-2019 school year to include the Math and Read inventory from Houghton Mifflin, alongside the ASPIRE assessments at all grade levels which are directly aligned with predicting how a student will do on the ACT in the 11th grade. The MCA-III and internal assessments indicate that we are providing a quality educational experience for our students and they are consistently out-performing the resident school district, Saint Paul Public Schools. As a public charter school, we offer an academically rigorous educational choice to Minnesota families, and provide our students a high-quality, individualized education.

Twin Cities Academy is focused on the following purposes per Minnesota statute 124D.10: a. improve pupil learning and student achievement; b. measure learning outcomes and create different innovative forms of measuring outcomes; c. create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.

Academic Program

2018-2019 Academic Accountability Data

Comparison of 2018 to 2019 MCA-III Scores

	Reading	Math	Science
TCA	57.7%	45.3%	45.4%
(FY18)			
TCA	53.7%	33.9%	34.2%
(FY19)			

Academic Goals:

Q-Comp

• Introduce and implement a MTSS model, and in so doing, increase overall school proficiency in mathematics, science and reading by at least 2%, using Spring 2019 MCA-III results. (Assessment Goal)

Performance to Goal Results: The goal was not met in any category. TCA has reviewed the curriculum and internal assessments used for student in its extensions programs and has determined that the curriculum was weak and the formative assessments lacked consistency to standards. Based on this, for the 2018-2019 school year, TCA adopted the HMH Read and Math 180 programs as the curriculum for these Title I support courses, and is using the HMH Read and Math inventory assessments two times a year for all students and three times a year for students who are in the extensions programs to determine skills gaps in "real time." This immediate assessment feedback allows for immediate remediation for those students who are not proficient. TCA anticipates it will take several years for this new design and curriculum to impact proficiency.

WBWF

• Students qualifying for FRP lunch will achieve a 36.1% high growth rate in reading and a 27.7% high growth rate in math. (North Star new measures – from "high growth" to "improved achievement level)

Performance to Goal Results: Free or reduced priced lunch students are our lowest performing demographic. Based on MCA growth measures from spring 2019, no goals were met. Although the measurement of growth is no longer an indicator under the new accountability system, TCA is using the "improved achievement level" calculation from the MCA to meet this goal. 18.84% of students qualifying for FRP improved their achievement level in reading and 5.04% in math.

Mission Specific Goals

• More than 95% of all seniors were accepted by May 1st to two or four year college programs.

Performance to Goal Results: 100% of all graduating seniors were accepted by May 1st to two or four year college programs.

• More than 95% of TCA sixth graders will participate in at least one college visit during the school year.

Performance to Goal Results: 98% of all sixth graders participated in a college visit on site with a representative from the University of Minnesota's early outreach program.

Before and After School Programming

TCA academic day runs from 8:50 to 3:40. Tutoring and homework help is available to all students from 8:00 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. each morning, and Twin Cities Academy has recently partnered with Conway Recreational Center to send students to the Conway after school program which includes leadership activities, homework help and tutoring, and a hot meal. All sports, theater, band ensembles and some clubs occur before and after school as well. Conway also provided tutoring for students after school through its Dreamline Coaches program during the 2018-2019 school year.

Parent Involvement and Satisfaction

Under the TCA covenant agreement, which is signed by both parents/guardians and students at the time of enrollment, families are very strongly encouraged to commit to the family-school partnership by attending three conferences per year. The conference attendance rate for the 2018-2019 school year was 92% of all families participating in teacher-family conferences. Additionally all TCA families in the middle school are strongly encouraged to commit to 20 volunteer hours annually in support of our school-family partnership.

Parents and guardians are also asked to participate in an online satisfaction survey. The quantifiable portion of the family survey for the 2018-2019 school year is provided as an attachment to this report. 94.5% of parents surveyed indicated that they are satisfied or very satisfied with TCA overall.

Curriculum Report

Twin Cities Academy is committed to providing a college preparatory program. Courses at TCA prepare students for college. To support the rigorous requirements for advanced classes in high school, world languages begin in the sixth grade for most students. For students who are not at grade level in math or English, additional support classes in one or both of these core courses are offered, these courses are called "extensions" and are part of the MTSS system to support Tier II and Tier III students. The goal of the TCA curriculum is to offer a liberal arts focus with rigor infused in all coursework. All courses are aligned to Minnesota state standards. TCA keeps all core courses at a high rigor level, and offers support through the extension classes, or individual/small group skills work offered by the math or reading interventionist. Using this model ensures that all students are exposed to and have access to college preparatory programming regardless of academic ability when they enter Twin Cities Academy.

All curriculum is tied to Minnesota State standards. Upon a full review and vertical alignment of standards in math and science, Twin Cities Academy teachers and administrators determined the need for two significant changes to the math and science curriculum. In math, new textbook adoptions occurred at all levels 6-12. In science the redesign of the 9th grade required science program was changed to Integrated Science using pre-Advanced Placement standards for Physical Science, Chemistry and Biology. The design of this course occurred to prepare more students for AP courses in their sophomore, junior and senior year, and to fill content knowledge gaps from their elementary and middle school science programming in order to be prepared for high

school level Chemistry and Biology. Twin Cities Academy has approximately 40% new students to their 9th grade program and are finding these students have significant gaps in their basic science content knowledge.

Schedule Report

The Twin Cities Academy daily schedule consists of seven academic class periods at approximately 48 minutes each and a mid-day advisory and lunch period which is dedicated to supporting students both academically and socially. The advisory period includes lessons in both social emotional learning and college readiness, and offers students a mid-day break as a "brain break."

Each course meets daily for a total student contact calendar of 172 days. Teachers work 187 days, with nine days of workshops prior to students returning each school year and an additional six days of professional development spread out throughout the school year. The last Friday of each month is an early release day, to allow teachers continued embedded professional development opportunities. During this time teachers are working with student data, reviewing instructional interventions and have school wide professional development relating to supporting struggling learners and culturally responsive teaching.

Professional Development and Teacher Evaluation System Report

All professional development for the 2018-2019 school year was designed to offer training and support in the Instructional Discipline and Culturally Responsive Curriculum approaches. Based on the continuing racial disparities, and the need to develop a more equitable and relationship-based school climate and culture, the administration and faculty are actively pursuing these two initiatives in tandem to meet the changing needs of our students.

Twin Cities Academy remains a data-driven school, with continuous and ongoing review of data to drive instructional practices and curriculum review. The administration reviews all academic and discipline data monthly through a Student Support Team meeting. During this meeting school wide initiatives are reviewed for results towards the school wide goals. Students are tested internally in math and reading using HMH Read and Math inventory standardized tests. These results combined with grades in their classes and curriculum based measures provide the data for the academic evaluation at these meetings. Behavioral data focused on office referrals, attendance and school counselor visit data provides the information for review monthly regarding student social emotional learning.

All teachers participate in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) that meet weekly. Content PLCs focus on instructional and curricular methods as directed by the strategic plan, administration and the data of student performance. During the 2019-2020 school year, teachers will also choose to participate in one of seven different professional development opportunities. This embedded PD will be offered based on teacher goal-setting and needs. The embedded-PD PLCs will offer teachers individualized support and training in a variety of topics where they need the most support, such as instructional strategies, curriculum and lesson planning design, mindfulness strategies, culturally relevant curriculum and student engagement.

All teachers are observed formally one time per year using the Charlotte Danielson rubric, and provided informal observational feedback at a minimum two other times in the year by administration. Teachers who are currently struggling in their performance or have less than three years in the teaching profession are formally evaluated two times per year. Weekly walk through observations occur for all teachers, feedback is provided based on observational data. All teachers new to Twin Cities Academy are also enrolled in the teacher mentor program. All new teachers receive a 1:1 mentor (a veteran teacher) to meet with for a minimum of two times in

the month. New teacher meetings also occur monthly and are conducted by peer mentors. Teachers also have the opportunity one time per month to observe their colleagues. Lastly, all students have the opportunity to participate in a student engagement survey at the beginning and at the end of the school year. All data is used as a part of the final formal evaluation of teachers by administration. All teachers receive a formal appraisal report annually from the administration. TCA uses the school-wide REACH survey developed by the Search Institute to determine student engagement and satisfaction. The REACH survey will be conducted two times per year to determine growth school-wide in this area. The REACH survey is a nationally-normed student satisfaction tool which will provide TCA with more reliable data in this area.

Governance and Management

Teacher Licensure Verification – See Attachment

Information on Management and Administration

For the 2018-2019 school year, Betsy Lueth, executive director, functioned as the single leader of the school, and was the only direct report to the school board. Ms. Lueth is a MN licensed K-12 principal with thirteen years of administrative experience in charter schools. The 2019-2020 school year will be her eighth year at Twin Cities Academy.

2019-2020 Administrative Professional Development Plan

Betsy Lueth, Executive Director, is a licensed school administrator in the state of Minnesota (Principal's License) from the University of St. Thomas. Additionally, Ms. Lueth has completed the two year Minnesota Principal's Academy and has accumulated the CEU's necessary as required for her license renewal by the state of Minnesota.

Cliff Skagen, Principal/Director of Teaching and Learning, is a licensed school administrator in the state of Minnesota (Principal's License) from St. Mary's University. Mr. Skagen is also a member of the MAAP board of directors and has completed the CEU's necessary for his license renewal by the state of Minnesota.

Erin Amundson, Assistant Principal, is not a licensed school administrator in the state of Minnesota. Ms. Amundson completed the two year Minnesota Principal's Academy at the University of Minnesota and is now enrolled in a formal Principal licensure program at the University of Minnesota.

Administration Staff:

Name	File Number	Assignment	Yrs. w/ School	Status
Lueth, Betsy	397306	Executive Director	7	Returning Fall 2019

Ausen, Terri		Food Service/Transportatio	10	Returning Fall 2019
		n Coordinator		
Delesha, Lynn		Library Aide	4	Returning Fall 2019
Reedy, Brenda		Business Coordinator	4	Returning Fall 2019
Fleischhacker, Laverne		Cafeteria	20	Returning Fall 2019
Allen, Branch		Cafeteria/Custodian	4	Returning Fall 2019
Zakrzewski, JoAnn		Cafeteria	7	Returning Fall 2019
Skagen, Cliff	346725	Principal/Director of Teaching and Learning	2	Returning Fall 2019
Spector, Erin		Enrollment and Marketing Coordinator	3	Returning Fall 2019
Vondracek, Victor		Athletic Director	2	Returning Fall 2019
Ancel, Sarah	439395	Dean of Student Life	11	Returning Fall 2019
Amundson, Erin	410808	Assistant Principal	17	Returning Fall 2019
Meuer, Morgan	502804	Special Education Coordinator	1	Not Returning Fall 2018
Hoyos, Janeth		Cafeteria	1	Not Returning Fall 2018

Current Strengths, Challenges and Plans for the Future

TCA boasts a 100% graduation rate and is proud to report that last year's seniors were awarded over \$700,000 dollars in scholarship money over their four years of college education.

Although TCA has something to celebrate as it becomes more diverse and is seeing all students entering post-secondary programs at high rates, TCA is deeply concerned about both decreased proficiency rates and increasing achievement gap rates as indicated by student growth in FRP and non-white students as compared to their non-FRP and white peers. To this end, TCA has completely revamped its curriculum programming in the extensions courses (remedial skills-based courses in math and reading.) In addition TCA has begun to require all 6th and 9th grade students to participate in one semester of an AVID elective. The introduction to AVID at the 6th and 9th grade is the beginning of becoming a school-wide program. AVID is a nationally recognized college-preparatory program focused on the "soft skills" students need to be college ready and participate in advanced courses during high school. TCA is also hopeful that by retaining all the high quality math teachers from the 2018-2019 school year into the 2019-2020 school year, combined with a second year of math and reading interventionists in the school, that these changes will begin to impact the proficiency levels positively in the years to come.

Administrative Oversight

Beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, a new Director of Teaching and Learning position was created and filled with a veteran leader from the Lakeville Area Learning Center. Mr. Cliff Skagen joined TCA in July 2017 to lead all curriculum and instruction programming with a lens towards equity and closing the opportunity gap.

Mr. Skagen continues to work collaboratively with teacher leaders and other administrators to further strengthen the curricular and instructional programs at TCA. Ms. Amundson leads the behavior and discipline structure of the school, as well as the student support and intervention system. TCA continues to see year after year an increase of needs in the student body, the current data from standardized testing indicates there is still much work to be done in the 2019-2020 school year.

As mentioned above, Twin Cities Academy is continuing a complete equity review of current student policies and practices. Dr. Hays will be working with the administration directly to review current procedures and practices focusing on equity. Any policy changes will be brought to the school board for review and comment.

Most specifically TCA is focused on closing the opportunity gap as it relates to behavior and discipline practices. With a direct correlation between suspensions and student achievement, TCA believes that by developing a culturally responsive school, it will close the behavior gap while simultaneously increasing academic scores for students who were more at risk of being excluded due to discipline practices that relied heavily on exclusionary approaches to behavior rather than restorative and instructional. TCA also recognizes that student engagement is a key factor to decreasing disruptive behaviors and keeping students learning. Teachers and administrators are also highly focused on developing culturally responsive instructional practices in curriculum.

School Climate

Twin Cities Academy, like many schools across the state and the nation, is seeing a significant increase in student anxiety and aggressive/angry behavior. TCA currently employs one full time and one part time social worker, a full time school psychologist, a full time school counselor and has onsite therapy services full time for students to access. Despite a significant amount of mental health support, the need is greater than the current staffing. Mental health is a significant problem for all youth despite socio-economic or racial identification. It is a need for all of our students, and our staff who serve them, at TCA. To this end, TCA has hired Mindfulness LLC, a school-based mindfulness group, to begin building a school wide program that promotes self-regulation and a common language and practice for calming strategies to reduce anxiety and anger.

TCA has also reviewed and revised the student support system model in order to identify students needing either academic or social emotion support sooner. The Student Support Team lead by Erin Amundson, assistant principal, will be reviewing student data weekly and identifying students needing immediate interventions. By working with the classroom teachers and other support staff, the interventions can get started sooner. In the past the Student Support Team relied on teacher referrals, which are still an option, as the only method to provide students with interventions. This new more data-driven approach allows for the administration to deploy resources more quickly and more effectively than the referral model.

Lastly, in order to ensure all stakeholders are able to contribute to the conversation and the solutions to improving the school climate, the TCA school board and executive director are holding regular listening sessions. The sessions are designed so that staff, students and families have an opportunity on a monthly basis to share their concerns and ideas for school improvement. From these sessions, TCA leadership hopes to find solutions to some of the more complex problems the school faces related to the opportunity gaps, student behavior, and adult-student relationships. Through listening to all the constituents of the school, the leadership hopes to build a school based on trust and mutual problem-solving in the future.

School Enrollment (October 1)

Enrollment	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Projections	(actual)	(actual)	(actual)	waitlist		
Grade 6	105	106	99	0	105	105
Grade 7	100	105	102	20	105	105
Grade 8	97	99	104	10	100	95
Grade 9	97	86	95	0	90	90
Grade 10	102	83	74	0	80	80
Grade 11	64	90	68	4	75	75
Grade 12	53	59	79	2	70	75
Total	598	624	621	36	625	625

Admissions

Twin Cities Academy is dedicated to a free-access quality education, without discrimination, and follows all Minnesota statutes as they relate to application and admission procedures for charter schools. Enrollment is open to all middle and high school students residing in any school district in Minnesota.

TCA holds open houses and accepts applications throughout the year. Per the school board adopted enrollment policy, the school board establishes the open enrollment period applicable to the following school's year admission by October 1st or the current year. Available enrollment seats by grade is published by February 1st of the current year for the following year, which will always be prior the last day of the open enrollment period, and the lottery, if a lottery is required. Lottery numbers are generated electronically and drawn randomly. Lottery results are mailed to families.

Students submitting applications after the last day of the open enrollment period, are placed on our waiting list and acceptance is based on space availability.

Once students are accepted, they are then asked to complete a registration packet, attend a covenant meeting, and participate in new student orientation. Please refer to the TCA enrollment application on the next page of this document.



A St. Paul Charter School for Grades 6 thru 12

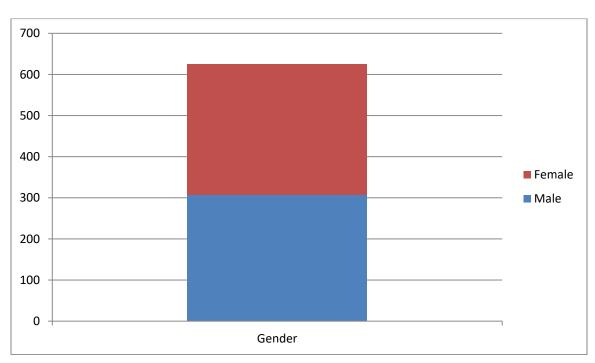
STUDENT INFO	RMATION		
Last Name		First Name	
Current Grade	Grade Next Fall	School Year Apply	ying For: 20 20
Home Address			Apartment
City & State	Zip Code _	Home	Phone
Sibling Enrolled at TC	'A* Yes No	Sibling Enro	lled at TCAHS* Yes No
PARENT / GUAR	DIAN INFORMATIO	N	
Parent / Guardian		Work Pho	ne
Cell Phone		Email	
			ne
*Twin Cities Academy's en transfer between TCA and	TCAHS.		ol. Alumni and sibling preference does not
capacity of a program, clas preference for enrollment to lot. If a charter school is the of the town must be given p	duardian oll an eligible pupil who submits a s, grade level, or building. In this o a sibling of an enrolled pupil an e only school located in a town se	case, pupils must be accept d to a foster child of that pring pupils within a particecepting pupils by lot. A	Date s the number of applications exceeds the oted by lot. A charter school shall give oupil's parents before accepting other pupils by cular grade level, then pupils that are residents charter school may not limit admission to pupils
If applying for enrollmen	t during the current school year	r, please contact the scho	ol office.
OFFICE USE ONLY	: Date Received		Lottery Number
690 Birmingh	am St. Paul. MN 55106	(651) 205-4797	Fax (651) 205-4799 09/11

Student Demographic Data for 2018-19

Gender

	Male	Female	Total	Male/Female Ratio
2018-19	307	318	625	49%/51%

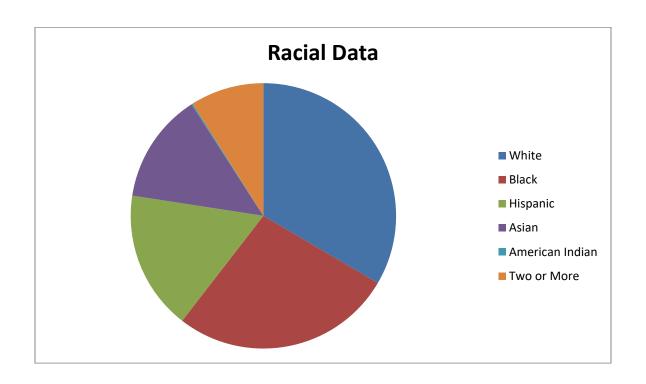
Proportion of Males and Females, 2018-19



Race/Ethnicity

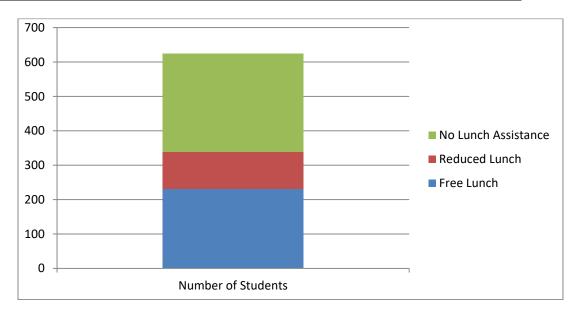
In 2018-19, approximately 67% of the students were of color.

	Asian American	Black American	Hispanic	White	Two or more races	American Indian	Total
No. of Students	84	169	106	209	56	1	625
%	13.4%	27.0%	17.0%	33.4%	9%	0.2%	100%



Free & Reduced Lunch

	No. of Students	% to Total School Enrollment
Free Lunch	231	37%
Reduced Lunch	108	17%
Combined Free & Reduced	339	54%
No Lunch Assistance	286	46%



Special Education

	% to Total	Primary Disability	Students Per
	School Total		Category
85	13.6%	Speech & Language	8
		■ SLD	31
		OHD	19
		Autism	10
		Vision	1
		■ EBD	9
		• DCD	4
		Physically Impaired	3
		Hearing Impaired	1

Limited English Proficiency

No. of	% to Total School
Students	Enrollment
41	6.6%

Community Connections and Partnerships

TCA students benefit from many community partnerships through our extensive service-learning program. Partners include Urban Roots, Keystone Community Services, East Side Elders, Second Stork, Friends of the Mississippi River and many others. TCA also has a strong relationship with the Conway Recreation Center and the Sanneh Foundation. During the 2018-2019 school year, TCA students benefitted from three Dreamline Coaches offered through the Sanneh Foundation, and after school tutoring at the Conway Rec Center.

Twin Cities Academy is a member of the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools and the Minnesota School Boards Administration.

Board of Directors

TCA's governing board includes teachers, parents, and community members. The following chart shows membership for 2019-20.

Board Membership – See attached.

Professional development is scheduled for the governing board, both as a group (total board trainings) and individually. Minnesota Charter Law mandates ongoing education for the governing board, in which TCA is compliant. From July 2018 to June 2019, Board Members attended the following training sessions:

• AVID Program Training presented by Cliff Skagen on June 17, 2019

All board members satisfied the state required board training in board governance, personnel/employment and finances. Services were provided by the MN School Board Association, Non-Profit Assistance Fund or the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools.

Authorizer Information

Authorizer	Contact Information	Liaison	Contract Expiration
University of St.	University of St. Thomas	Molly McGraw-Healy	June 30, 2023
Thomas	1000 LaSalle Street	mccgraw@stthomas.edu	
	Minneapolis, MN		
	651-962-4844		

Because charter schools are not part of traditional community school districts, they are accountable to the State of Minnesota for student learning and financial performance through a state-approved charter school overseer, or authorizer. Our authorizer is The University of St. Thomas, in St. Paul, Minnesota. Their role is to ensure that we are true to our school's mission; provide continued quality of our academic programs as demonstrated by quantifiable student learning; that we meet parents' expectations and satisfaction; and that we comply with state and federal mandates. We submit our School Board minutes and financial statements monthly to the University of St Thomas.

Finances

Twin Cities Academy is on solid financial footing. The school entered the 2019-20 school year with a positive fund balance of \$2,005,360. This represents a 22.9% fund balance (unaudited). The final audited financials will be available in December 2019.

The Board, primarily through the Finance Committee, actively partners with the executive director to oversee financial matters. Bergan KDV Accounting firm in collaboration with the executive director compiles and presents a financial report to the Board monthly. This report is a review of checking and savings account balances, fund balance, and income and expenses statements. These financial statements are provided to the treasurer and finance committee members before the board meeting. The Board reviews and analyzes all budgets, expenditures, and bank statements, and provides monthly/quarterly financial statements to the authorizer.

Following is a summary of TCA's budget and actual (unaudited) financial results for Fiscal Year 2019 as well as our financial position at June 30, 2019.

The audit for the fiscal year 2018 contained no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies as prepared by MMKR audit firm and presented to the school board during the December 2018.

The school board and administration chose to pursue working with Bergan KDV and to prepare and review the financials in collaboration with the executive director. The board and the executive director will continue to oversee the overall financial health of the school, on a monthly basis through review of detailed finances in the board finance sub-committee, and by presenting the financials monthly to the full school board during the regular school board meeting. By using an outside firm such as Bergan KDV, Twin Cities Academy is assured to have strong internal controls and procedures in place to continue financial health and clean audits.

Fund Balance:

Un-audited fund balance as of June 30, 2019 - \$2,005,360

2018-2019 Annual Audit Report –
MMKR Certified Public Accountants & Co.
55353 Wayzata Blvd. Suite 410
Minneapolis, MN 55416