



New Discoveries Montessori Academy  
#4161-07  
2013-2014  
Year 8  
Annual Report  
World's Best Workforce Plan

The purpose of this Annual Report is to inform our authorizer, Audubon Center of the North Woods (ACNW), a comprehensive description of the educational programs and practices at New Discoveries Montessori Academy during the 2013-2014 school year, our eighth year of operation. This report also includes information for the World's Best Workforce Plan (MN Stat. 120B.11).

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Charter school requirements underlined. MN Stat. 124D.10

**World's Best Workforce Pan (WBWF) requirements bolded. MN Stat. 120B.11**

## **SCHOOL INFORMATION**

New Discoveries Montessori Academy  
1000 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW Hutchinson,  
Minnesota 55350 (320).234.NDMA  
(6362) [www.newdiscoveries.org](http://www.newdiscoveries.org)

**Grades Served:** Pre-K – 6<sup>th</sup> grade

**Year opened:** September 2006

**Vision:** Enriching Community through Montessori Excellence

### **Core Values**

Enriched community experience begins as each child learns and contributes in a holistic and nurturing growth process of extraordinary resources. Through this distinguishing process of excellence, it generates outstanding citizens who enrich the community in which they ultimately participate.

#### ***Dynamic Leadership***

At New Discoveries, everyone, from the children to the Board of Directors, will be offered multiple opportunities to grow as leaders through a mentoring, experiencing, sharing, and learning environment. NDMA will uphold the highest standards of integrity and respect that are visible and shared by staff and students at school, at home, and in their communities.

#### ***Intentional Interdependence***

A blend of interdependence will be woven into the fabric of NDMA to represent a mix of school and community working together to achieve the shared vision. Utilizing community volunteers for relevant and meaningful activities will not only be a common occurrence, but an accepted mode of operation. The community will be used as a classroom for students to realize the relevancy of learning.

#### ***Exemplary Montessori Principles***

The profound legacy of Maria Montessori's learning principles will be implemented, recognizing individual learning styles of each child to produce optimum individual achievement. Each child will experience a personalized and interactive learning experience that integrates the Montessori beliefs of: \*

Independence

- \* Observation
- \* Following the child
- \* Connecting with the child
- \* Prepared environment
- \* Absorbent mind

#### ***Measurable Accountability***

NDMA will passionately pursue measurable metrics for student and staff improvement. Part of the metric configuration will be continuous improvement of processes that innovatively produce staff and student achievement beyond those deemed necessary by state and national requirements. Empowerment will not be just a word. It will be a process of clear expectations, adequate resources, mentoring/coaching, and transfer of power monitored within the boundaries of vision, policies, and goals. Students will be held to the metrics of competency-based curriculum and given the necessary technical and human resources available to prepare them for tomorrow's challenges.

## Authorizer Information

Audubon Center of the North Woods (ACNW) is NDMA's authorizer. It is a natural fit for New Discoveries to partner with ACNW as NDMA has recognized and exercised the importance of environmental education for its students. ACNW has served NDMA in this capacity since the summer of 2006. NDMA participates in ACNW's annual charter school retreat, where we are afforded the opportunity to network with other ACNW authorized schools. NDMA students also look forward to our annual trip to the ACNW Environmental Center, a time during which 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders travel to Sandstone for three days of rich immersion in environmental education with Audubon Center staff.



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David Greenberg, ACNW Director of Charter School Authorizing

## STUDENT ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHICS

### ENROLLMENT

	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-2015 (est.)</b>
<b>Kindergarten</b>	35	20	24
<b>1st Grade</b>	27	14	24
<b>2nd Grade</b>	22	34	28
<b>3rd Grade</b>	27	23	24
<b>4th Grade</b>	24	27	24
<b>5th Grade</b>	23	24	24
<b>6th Grade</b>	20	19	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>172</b>
<b>Total ADM (Average Daily Membership) for year</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>154</b>	

The Marketing Committee, consisting of members from our Board of Directors and Administration, continue to work diligently on increasing awareness of NDMA in Hutchinson and surrounding communities.

### DEMOGRAPHICS

#### Key Demographic Trends

Enrollment decreased in 2013-2014. We lose a number of students going from 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade because many families choose to enroll their child(ren) in the traditional public middle school (grades 6-8) rather than have their child(ren) remain at NDMA for 6<sup>th</sup> grade citing that the 'transition' will be less stressful. In addition, being in our 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a 3 year School Improvement effort have had some families not enrolling their child(ren). Nearly 28% of our student body received special education services and 53% of our students qualified for free/reduced lunches which is significantly greater than that of the local traditional public schools.

	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015 (est.)</b>
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	178	161	172
<b>Male</b>	86	78	86
<b>Female</b>	88	79	86
<b>Special Education</b>	43	44	59
<b>LEP</b>	0	2	2
<b>African American</b>	4	4	4
<b>Latino</b>	7	3	3
<b>Asian/PI</b>	3	2	2
<b>American Indian</b>	3	5	5
<b>White</b>	160	141	153
<b>F/R Lunch</b>	100	86	100

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE, ATTRITION & MOBILITY

### STUDENT ATTENDANCE

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
<b>Overall Attendance Rate</b>	95%	94.5%	93.5%

NDMA Board of Director's and NDMA Teaching Staff revised the attendance policy. This year the policy was given to all families and was reviewed specifically with those families who have ongoing attendance issues. Teaching staff also took time the first couple days of school to review school expectations and policies in each of the classrooms with students. In the smaller classroom setting the students were able to ask specific questions and teachers were given an opportunity to USE examples that have happened in prior years. The year started with everyone on the same page.

Attendance rates decreased in 2013-2014. This is attributed to a few students having a significant number of both excused and unexcused absences. NDMA will continue to communicate with all families the importance of school attendance.

### STUDENT ATTRITION

Percentage of students who are continuously enrolled between October 1 of 2012-13 school year and October 1 of 2013-14 school year.	<b>89%</b>
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Percentage of students who continue enrollment in the school from Spring 2013 to October 1, 2013.	<b>89%</b>
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There were 151 on the first day of school for the 2013-2014 school year and 156 on the last day. This reflects 14 students leaving during the school year and 19 students enrolling.

### STUDENT MOBILITY

Percentage of students who were enrolled for 95% or more of the 2013-14 school year.	<b>91%</b>
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## EDUCATIONAL APPROACH AND CURRICULUM

### **Primary Pedagogical Approach**

New Discoveries Montessori Academy Educational Program highlights:

- Montessori Method of Instruction
- Multi-age Grouping
- Environmental Education

### **Montessori Method of Education**

Montessori is a teaching methodology predicated upon the natural learning processes of children. Dr. Maria Montessori, the first woman to become a physician in Italy, developed the method more than 100 years ago. Dr. Montessori used the phrase “the absorbent mind” to describe how a young child learns in a comfortable and stimulating environment. Within such an environment, a child becomes absorbed in work, developing concentration, independence and self-discipline (Lillard, Paula P., *Montessori Today*). Dr. Montessori believed that children learn best through their senses. By working with concrete materials, the child begins to understand abstract concepts. With guidance by a trained Montessori teacher, the child gradually masters various materials and concepts. As the child masters each task, learning is reinforced as a positive experience.

The Montessori curriculum is interdisciplinary. Subjects are studied in an integrated fashion, not in isolation. This approach offers the child learning opportunities which result in a strong foundation in core subject areas: Language Arts (reading, spelling, vocabulary, grammar, handwriting, and creative writing), Social Studies (history, geography and cultures), Science, and Math. It is worth noting that while this division of disciplines is a convenient way to conduct learning in a school environment, this is not how children – or adults, for that matter – experience the world. The NDMA curriculum complies with all expectations regarding Minnesota's new academic standards.

The Montessori classroom allows children to take responsibility for their own education in a “prepared environment.” Within an orderly framework, children are largely free to choose those activities that will assist them in their process of self-construction. The classroom contains “self- correcting,” sequenced Montessori materials.

### **Multi-age Grouping**

Educational theory and research indicate that learning is an individual process in terms of time frame, style, and interests - and that children learn from one another (Healy, Jane M., *Endangered Minds*, p. 283 and Gardner, Howard, *The Unschooled Mind*, p. 11). Though most schools are organized by single age groupings (homogenous environments), research has not found this to be beneficial. Conversely, grouping by ability level allows for identification of struggling and advanced students, improves relationships among students, and facilitates the use of common learning objectives and expectations. This latter approach improves peer culture, resulting in peer instruction, peer modeling, and peer reinforcement (Brookover, W.B., Beammer, L., & Elthin, H., *Creating Effective Schools*, p. 11). Montessori education supports multi-age grouping, and Montessori teachers have implemented it for over 100 years.

Dr. Montessori believed learning should occur in multi-age classrooms where children at various stages of development learn from and with each other. Her approach was designed with intentions to fit each child instead of making each child fit the program (Lillard, Paula P., *Montessori Today*). Interestingly, Miller (1989) reviewed twenty-one studies of multi-grade classrooms and found no significant differences between single-grade and multi-grade classes in terms of academic achievement, but in terms of emotional factors, results favored the multi-



grade classes. Students in multi-grade classes had more positive attitudes toward school and toward themselves, and more positive social relationships as well (Miller, B., *Teaching and Learning in the Multi-grade Classroom: Student Performance and Instructional Routines*, ERIC Digest).

## Classrooms

Montessori classrooms are separated into three divisions: Children's House, Elementary I, and Elementary II. Elementary I and Elementary II classrooms are constructed to facilitate the full curriculum at each level to be completed over a three year period.

### CHILDREN'S HOUSE PROGRAM (AGES 3-5)

The Montessori early childhood community is referred to as Children's House. In the Children's House Program, we serve children ages 3 to 5. Each classroom combines preschool and kindergarten, and is guided by a trained Montessori teacher and a classroom teaching partner. The teacher/guide and teaching partner provide developmentally appropriate, interest-based activities that encourage children to develop a love of learning and trust in their own ability to learn. At this level children begin to develop their physical, social and intellectual independence. Healthy snacks are provided.

Work in the Children's House includes everything from taking care of the classroom environment and learning practical life skills to studies in Math and Reading.

### CURRICULUM AREAS –

**Grace and Courtesy** (Character Education)

**Practical Life** (Coordination, Control, Independence & Order)

**Sensorial** (Refinement of the Senses in Personal and Curricular Domains)

**Mathematics** (Numeracy, Addition, Subtraction, Division, & Multiplication)

**Language** (Phonics, Beginning Reading, Sight Words, Reading Fluency, Comprehension, Grammar, & Spelling)

**Geography** (Landforms, Continents, & History)

**Science** (Sorting & Classification, Living & Non-living)

**Music / Art / Physical Education**

<b>3 year olds</b>	Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday MORNINGS -	8:45 a.m. to noon	Tuition: \$150/month
<b>4 year olds</b>	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday MORNINGS	8:45 a.m. to noon	Tuition: \$200/month
<b>4 year olds</b>	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday ALL DAY	8:45am to 3:10pm	Tuition: \$350/month
<b>Kindergarteners</b>	ALL DAY, EVERY DAY	8:45am to 3:10pm	Tuition-free

### ELEMENTARY 1 (AGES 6-9)

The Early Elementary Montessori classroom community is referred to as Elementary I, or E1. In the Elementary I classroom we serve children ages 6 to 9. Each classroom combines first, second and third grades, and is guided by a trained Montessori teacher. The teacher/guide provides opportunities for children to exercise the freedoms of 1) movement, 2) choice, and 3) repetition. There is a strong sense of community built within the classroom.

#### What Makes E1 Unique?

1. Multi-age classrooms
2. Three freedoms: movement, choice and repetition
3. High staff to student ratio
4. Strong sense of community with student to student mentoring, and shared responsibilities

#### Essential Components of E1

1. Small group lesson presentations
2. Whole life/whole being education (not just academics)
3. Fostering excellence, respect and accountability
4. Students allowed to progress beyond and without limitations

#### E1 Montessori Focus

1. Three Freedoms
2. Montessori Materials – offering concrete to abstract learning
3. Self-regulating – creating independence in students
4. Family nights – Montessori game nights focus on extending learning into the home, and involving families

#### Minnesota Academic Standards

1. Aligned Minnesota Academic Standards to Montessori
2. Strong foundational reading and mathematics skill building
3. Rich science and social studies experiences

## ELEMENTARY 2 (AGES 9-12)

The Upper Elementary Montessori classroom community is referred to as Elementary II, or E2. In the Elementary II classroom we serve children ages 9 to 12. Each classroom combines fourth, fifth and sixth grades, and is guided by a trained Montessori teacher. The teacher/guide provides opportunities for children to excel.

### What Makes E2 Unique?

1. Multi-age classrooms
2. We meet every child where he/she is at
3. Students assist one another with learning
4. Students have choices regarding work

### Montessori Focus

1. Montessori materials
2. Small group focus
3. Nurturing atmosphere
4. Grace and courtesy
5. Flexible grouping

### Essential Components of E2

1. Guided Reading based on ability level
2. Audubon Experiential/Environmental learning
3. Mathematics based on ability level
4. All staff have on-going experiential training

### Minnesota Academic Standards

1. Aligned Minnesota Academic Standards to Montessori
2. Weekly Learning Plans that list the topics and standards
3. Students are aware of MN requirements and why they are learning
4. Curriculum is spiraled (science and social studies)

## Environmental Education

The goal of environmental education is to develop a world population that is aware of the environment and its current challenges, and that has the knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivations, and commitment to work individually and collectively toward solutions of current problems and the prevention of new ones (The Belgrade Charter, ERIC Digest, p. 2).

Environmental education is not limited solely to developing environmental awareness and appreciation. Using the school's surroundings and community in which they live, local experiences help students learn within an environment that is personally meaningful, connecting place with self and community (Woodhouse, Janice L., Place-Based Curriculum and Instruction: Outdoor and Environmental Education Approaches, ERIC Digest). Researchers have provided numerous examples of situations where in-the-environment learning was, or could be, more effective than about-the-environment learning in the classroom.

*"Those things which can best be taught outdoors should there be taught." - L.B. Sharp*



At NDMA, our environmental education goal is: Staff, students, and parents at New Discoveries Montessori Academy will increase their environmental literacy, and develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to support a sustainable, healthy environment. At New Discoveries, environmental education is an essential component in all that we do.

## **Alignment to State Standards**

### **Marrying Montessori and the Minnesota Mandates**

NDMA provides Montessori curriculum in a public school setting, which presents both opportunities and challenges for the school. Opportunities lie in the rich tradition, beautiful materials, developmentally appropriate activities and multi-age classrooms. A central challenge is found in a lack of explicit connection of the Montessori curriculum to the Minnesota Academic Standards. Over the past two years, staff has worked countless hours to align the Montessori curriculum with Minnesota Academic Standards.

NDMA will continue to ensure that our teachers receive and maintain the proper Montessori credentials. In addition, NDMA will make certain that our teachers and our teaching partners are well-versed in the Minnesota Academic Standards, curriculum alignment, and effective teaching strategies. Our staff will receive on-going training and support in administering assessment and in understanding and interpreting data. Data informs our planning and instruction like never before; we have quickly endorsed and have become a culture of data- driven decision making.

### **SMART GOALS** (From our School Improvement Plan)

#### **2013-2014**

##### READING

- The percentage of students in grades 3 – 6 at NDMA enrolled by October 1, 2013 who are proficient on the Reading MCA (All accountability tests) will increase from 43.3% in 2013 to 53% in 2014.
- The percentage of all students who qualify for free/reduced priced meals in grades 3 – 6 at NDMA enrolled by October 1 who are proficient on the Reading MCA (all accountability tests) will increase from 46.9% in 2013 to 57% in 2014.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY OR PRACTICE: Close Reading/Comprehension

BENCHMARKS: Weekly PLCs, Job-embedded Professional Development (JEPD)

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS: Observations / walk throughs, Close reading strategies embedded in all content areas, Student artifacts, Anecdotal evidence

##### MATH

- The percentage of all students grade 3 – 6 enrolled at NDMA by October 1, 2013 who are proficient on the MCA Math (all accountability tests) will increase from 33.3% to 43% by the spring of 2014.
- The percentage of all students who qualify for free/reduced priced meals in grades 3 – 6 enrolled at NDMA by October 1, 2013 who are proficient on the MCA Math (all accountability tests) will increase from 30.6% proficient to 41% by the spring of 2014.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY OR PRACTICE: Use academic math dialogue (math talk) and provide JEPD on higher level questioning and inquiry.

BENCHMARKS: Bi-annual review of Year-long Learning Progressions revisions

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS: PLC agendas & Summary Notes

## 2014-2015

### READING

- The percentage of students in grades 3 – 6 at NDMA enrolled by October 1, 2014 who are proficient on the Reading MCA (All accountability tests) will increase from 62.2% in 2014 to 72% in 2015.
- The percentage of all students who qualify for free/reduced priced meals in grades 3 – 6 at NDMA enrolled by October 1 who are proficient on the Reading MCA (all accountability tests) will increase from 65.3% in 2014 to 75% in 2015.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY OR PRACTICE: Continue with close reading and critical thinking/compare contrast

BENCHMARKS: F/W/S FAST and NWEA K-2 Assessments

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS: CBM scores – FAST/NWEA, OLPA and MCA data

### MATH

- The percentage of all students grade 3 – 6 enrolled at NDMA by October 1, 2014 who are proficient on the MCA Math (all accountability tests) will increase from 47.6% in 2014 to 58% in 2015.
- The percentage of all students who qualify for free/reduced priced meals in grades 3 – 6 enrolled at NDMA by October 1 who are proficient on the MCA Math (all accountability tests) will increase from 44.9% in 2014 to 55% in 2015.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY OR PRACTICE: Academic/Accountable Math Talk

BENCHMARKS: F/W/S AIMS assessments, OLPA, NWEA (K-2)

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS: CBM scores – AIMS, NWEA, OLPA and MCA data



## Assessment

In order to assess school-wide student learning at NDMA, the following assessments are used: AIMSweb (K-6) and NWEA-MAP Reading (K-6) and Math (K-2). These assessments were administered Fall, Winter and Spring.

### AIMSweb

- benchmarking capabilities for all students in reading and math
- graphing data for individual students, classes, grades, and districts
- national norm benchmark levels
- ability to disaggregate data based on student sub-groups, classes, and grades
- emergent literacy, emergent numeracy, reading and math assessments
- quick assessment procedures of one minute samples, per assessment, per child

### NWEA-Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

- strong correlation with Minnesota State Standards for Math and Common Core English Language Arts Standards
- benchmarking capabilities for fall, winter, and spring
- web-based access for students to be able to assess using technology
- national norm benchmark levels
- ability to disaggregate data based on student sub-groups, classes, and grades
- emergent literacy, emergent numeracy, reading, and math assessments
- group assessment procedures which are similar to Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA)

In preparation for the MCA Math assessment, the **Optional Local Purpose Assessment (OLPA)** was administered to 3rd-6th graders twice during the testing window.

## Professional Development

NDMA has dedicated 90 minutes weekly for school-wide Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). PLC topics focused on implementing researched-based instructional practices in reading and math, using data to drive instructional practice and applying scaffolding for sustainability.

The link from content to practice is evident throughout the Job-embedded Professional Development (JEPD) cycle with ample opportunities provided for peer feedback and implementation to classroom instruction. JEPD was provided throughout the school year and during the summer. Topics for JEPD sessions have focused on areas of need as identified in our comprehensive needs assessment.

Scheduled Job-Embedded Professional Development at NDMA included:

- \* One hour every Tuesday afternoon of dedicated JEPD, led by specified NDMA Leadership Team members. 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday – Teachers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday – Teachers/Teaching Partners, 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday – Teachers, 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday – Teaching Partners
- \* 30-minute Tuesday morning “Curriculum Coffee Klatch,” led by Regional Center of Excellence liaison Dr. Mary Jenatscheck.
- \* Two-hour late starts once monthly on Wednesday mornings, led by specified NDMA Leadership Team members.
- \* Implementation of Elementary Literacy Team and Elementary Math Team, each meeting for 30 minutes on Wednesday or Friday morning with representatives from

each level, facilitated by Data and Instructional Coach, Continuous Improvement Specialist, and Math Specialist.

- \* Two day workshop with Allison Awes of the Montessori Training Center of Minnesota on Montessori Philosophy and Foundation.

### **Differentiation**

Montessori programming lends itself to differentiation within each classroom since students are continually selecting work that is at their respective learning levels. Children's House Montessori practice individualizes instruction to the needs of each child and follows that child's development by presenting lessons that "scaffold" the child to the next level. E1 and E2 classrooms differentiate in both reading and math according to ability levels as demonstrated in normed and classroom assessments.



### **Enrichment Programs**

"Afterschooligans" - 4-H sponsored after school activities. The group met for 1 hour over six weeks in October and March. 20 students participated. 4-H activities revolve around learning about and helping our community.

Sports Discoveries, a free physical enrichment program consisting of basketball, dodge ball and baseball/softball, was available for E2 Students on selected Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:15 to 4:15. After School Sports is treated as a "rain or shine" event, cancelled only in the event of a school closing. Each after school sport involved students learning skills and rules relevant to the games played. Students experience teamwork, winning and losing honorably, exercising sportsmanlike conduct toward each other, and other principles.

E1 Learning Discoveries is an extended learning opportunity held on Tuesdays in March and April from 3:15 to 4:30. Learning Discoveries provides students with further time to sharpen their skills in reading and math. Guidance was provided by E1 teachers, NDMA's Title 1 teacher, our Math Specialist, and our Continuous Improvement Specialist.



Summer Discoveries was offered for all students enrolled at NDMA during the months of June and August. Summer Discoveries took place Tuesday-Thursday mornings from 9:00 to 12:00, during which time NDMA teachers engaged students in math, literacy, and environmental learning activities.

E2 Cribbage Club was offered on Wednesday afternoons from 3:30 to 4:30 for eight weeks. During this time children had a snack, learned how to play cribbage and learned how to use strategy to win. 12-20 students participated.

### **Special Education**

NDMA has developed a reputation in our short history of providing exemplary service to children with special needs. This reputation has emerged as we have welcomed children with a broad range of needs and concerns. As a result, our special education population has increased to nearly 35% of our student enrollment. Staff includes 3.5 FTE Special Education teachers. Current student needs require approximately 20 special ed paraprofessionals. Our special ed program uses a combination of pull out/push in strategies for our identified students allowing them the most time in the classroom (least restrictive environment). In addition, we have several social skills groups that meet weekly. West Metro Learning Connection has developed an ASD program unique to our setting. NDMA has developed a strong relationship with Hutchinson Health who provide OT, PT and Speech services as well as the Greater MN Family Foundation who provide mental health services to our students. Our plans for next year include hiring a Special Education Coordinator to provide oversight for our expanding program.

### **English Learner (EL) Program**

Prior to the 2011-2012 school year all students enrolled at NDMA were English speaking students. We currently have two EL students enrolled and have a part-time ELL licensed teacher providing services. NDMA has an English Language Development (ELD) Program flow chart outlining procedures for conducting English proficiency tests and providing English Language Development instruction.

### ***Describe how the school is staffed to meet its educational mission/vision.***

NDMA staff and leadership have made great strides towards realizing our vision this past year. We had the good fortune of bringing Ms. Alison Awes – a Montessori trainer from the Montessori Training Center of Minnesota – to provide foundational Montessori training for all instructional staff, leadership, administration and Board members last January. She also provided follow-up support last Spring. This was a critical piece in bringing school staff together to find common resolve around *Enriching Community through Montessori Excellence*. “Through teacher observation, guided choice, repetition and discovery, the whole child will develop academic knowledge and skills to become a normalized learner.” written by the NDMA staff, May 2014.

We also had the support of Dr. Dagel, Continuous Improvement Specialist and Literacy Instructional Coach, Rosine Hermodson-Olsen, Math Instructional Coach, Joan Bendix, Data and Assessment Coach, and Dave Conrad, Family & Community Liaison and Culture for Learning Specialist to provide guidance, leadership and practical knowledge to support the instructional program at NDMA. This past year also found our teachers assuming a more active role in leadership – through providing solid leadership in our 90-minute PLC's, to participating in monthly Instructional Leadership meetings. Quality Job Embedded

Professional Development played a key role and bringing teachers and teaching partners together around implementing best practices regarding instruction and assessment. Our goal of marrying the Magic of Montessori with the Mandates of Minnesota is coming to fruition, as we noted NDMA's 2014 MMR (Multiple Measures Rating) increasing to 77.8, and NDMA's focus rating increasing to 86.4. These numbers are up from the initial announcement of MMR and FR in 2012 of 2.1 and 6.84 respectively.

## **INNOVATIVE PRACTICES & IMPLEMENTATION**

NDMA provides Montessori curriculum in a public school setting. This presents both advantages and disadvantages for students, parents and staff. We enjoy rich tradition, beautiful materials, distinguishable learning activities, and multi-age classroom settings. NDMA leadership, administration and staff have worked diligently during the last two school years to identify specific areas of concern and set a course for aligning Montessori curriculum with state standards. We have made remarkable progress in this journey, and have made a commitment to make the marriage of the magic of Montessori and the mandates of the state of Minnesota a life-long union.

NDMA maintains its membership in the American Montessori Society (AMS), and teachers receive proper Montessori credentialing. We have partnered with the *Montessori Training Center of Minnesota* to provide comprehensive foundational training for all instructional staff and Board members. This collaboration began in January 2014, and will culminate in a comprehensive course for all teachers, teaching partners, leadership, administration and Board members in the Spring of 2015.

### **After School Discoveries & Summer Discoveries**

New Discoveries offers a series of after school "Discoveries" series. This year we offered "Sports Discoveries" which met each month for 3 days a week after school for one hour. During this time students participated in organized, large group games and activities such as football, basketball, dodgeball, badminton, baseball/softball, golf and running. The purpose of this after school program was to increase their physical fitness levels, social skills and enjoyment in being active. This position was supervised by our Phy-ed teacher which was part of his work day so there was no additional cost.

Summer Discoveries was offered for all students enrolled at NDMA during the months of June and August. Students met for 3 weeks from 9:00am-12:00pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Transportation was provided for this summer learning opportunity. During Summer Discoveries, NDMA teachers engaged students in math, literacy, and environmental learning activities. Teachers and paras were hired for this program and it was part of our annual budget. There was a small fee for student snacks.

### **PRESCHOOL**

The Preschool Program served twelve 3 and 4 year olds last year. It is a tuition based program with three half days (Tuesday–Thursday) for 3-year olds and four half days (Monday–Thursday) for 4-year olds, paying a modest tuition of \$150 or \$200 monthly. NDMA offers the only Montessori preschool in Hutchinson and immediate surrounding communities, with approximately 75% retention from preschool to kindergarten. The curriculum offered encompasses academic areas of language arts, mathematics, science, geography, and sensorial and practical life.



This program allows for complete individualization and teaches/ reaches the whole child. One-on-one presentations are conducted with each child three times a week for preschoolers, a distinguishing characteristic of our Montessori approach. (See page 8-9 for more information on the Preschool/Children's House Program.)

### **Successes from the 2013-2014 School Year**

2013-2014 saw the continuation of a successful comprehensive school improvement effort. Increased learning time, Job embedded professional development, 90-minute teacher-led PLC's, increased family involvement, and sound curricular decisions all contributed to marked improved student achievement. In addition, the significance we placed on the assessment experience proved to be a crucial factor in student academic success.

Through the PLC process all instructional staff – teachers and teaching partners – received comprehensive training in the following focus areas: close reading strategies, academic math talk and foundational skills development. Practice profiles were developed for each of the three focus areas. As we examined student data through our PLC meetings and subsequent conversations, we were able to provide key instructional support for every student based on what they needed, when they needed it.

It was amazing this year to observe teachers assume leadership roles, and to see them take initiative around the data analysis, instructional enhancements and the assessment protocol.

Making sure every family received a Math Game Box, and training/practice regarding effective use of the math games was exciting. This was an opportunity for us to partner with both families and community on a high level, as many local businesses and individuals donated money which enabled us to purchase a game box for every family.

The continued, ongoing support from our SIG staff, Regional Center of Excellence Staff and the Minnesota Department of Education staff has enabled NDMA to be a Celebration-eligible school for the second year in a row.



### **Challenges from the 2013-2014 School Year**

Having weathered the storm of Priority School designation in May of 2012, NDMA made significant progress to receive Celebration-Eligible status for the 2013-14 school year. This brought its own set of challenges, including the need to lobby both the state and federal government to be allowed to continue in the three-year cohort in order to continue to be eligible for School Improvement Grant (SIG) funding. We were successful in this endeavor, allowing us to see continued funding for fiscal 14.

Along the way, it became evident that our SIG-hired Principal was not qualified to serve as instructional leader. This was an extremely difficult part of our journey, as staff became divided as to how to deal with this reality. We entered into a memo of understanding with MDE to provide an improvement plan for the principal. There were specific deadlines in the plan, and continued SIG funding was directly linked to the success or lack of success regarding meeting the plan requirements.

Unfortunately, the principal did not meet the requirements of the plan within the required time frame. The principal resigned in December 2013. The division in the ranks resulted in several key staff and Board members moving on at or near the time of the principal's departure.

Under explicit guidance from MDE, NDMA Board and Administration began a process of replacing the principal. Job descriptions were rewritten, as was the organizational structure. Policy was updated and/or introduced to support the changes. To date, we have been unsuccessful in hiring a qualified person for the position. We have, however, had the good fortune of hiring an interim instructional leader who has had a definitively positive impact on our instructional program.



### **STRATEGIC PLAN**

NDMA's strategic plan has become a road map for Administration, Board Members and Staff. We refer to it regularly as a detailed accountability document. We have consistently updated the plan based on thoughtful, honest reflection. The SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis was a critical starting point for this important effort. (See attached Strategic Plan at the end of this report for details.)

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Goal	Results	Explanation of Results
PLEASE NOTE: With the School Improvement effort/grant, our goals have been updated for the past two years to reflect SMART goals that are rigorous and time bound.		
The percentage of <b>all</b> students in grades 3 – 6 at NDMA enrolled by October 1, 2013 who are proficient on the <b>Reading</b> MCA (All accountability tests) will increase from 43.3% in 2013 to 53% in 2014.	62.2% MCA Proficiency	Through the use of Close Reading/Comprehension as our instructional strategy and practice embedded in all content areas, all students increased in proficiency on the MCA Reading and NDMA <b>exceeded</b> their goal.
The percentage of all students who qualify for <b>free/reduced</b> priced meals in grades 3 – 6 at NDMA enrolled by October 1 who are proficient on the <b>Reading</b> MCA (all accountability tests) will increase from 46.9% in 2013 to 57% 2014.	65.3% MCA Proficiency	Through the use of Close Reading/Comprehension as our instructional strategy and practice embedded in all content areas, free/reduced students increased in proficiency on the MCA Reading and NDMA <b>exceeded</b> their goal.
The percentage of <b>all</b> students grade 3 – 6 enrolled at NDMA by October 1, 2013 who are proficient on the MCA <b>Math</b> (all accountability tests) will increase from 33.3% to 43% by the spring of 2014.	47.6% MCA Proficiency	Using the instructional strategy and practice of academic math dialogue (math talk) and higher level questioning and inquiry in the classroom, all students increased in proficiency on the MCA Math and NDMA <b>exceeded</b> their goal.
The percentage of all students who qualify for <b>free/reduced</b> priced meals in grades 3 – 6 enrolled at NDMA by October 1, 2013 who are proficient on the MCA <b>Math</b> (all accountability tests) will increase from 30.6% proficient to 41% by the spring of 2014.	44.9% MCA Proficiency	Using the instructional strategy and practice of academic math dialogue (math talk) and higher level questioning and inquiry in the classroom, free/reduced students increased in proficiency on the MCA Math and NDMA <b>exceeded</b> their goal.
<b>Environmental Goal:</b> Staff of NDMA will teach and model Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Energy Conservation, and Environmental Stewardship. All students will demonstrate these concepts. (Contract Goal) Revised goal: Staff, students and parents at <i>New Discoveries Montessori Academy</i> will increase their environmental literacy, and develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to support a sustainable, healthy environment.	All students participate in daily activities that involve environmental consciousness.	Nature walks, sharing responsibility for sorting recyclables, delivering recyclables to reclamation center, practical life experiences within the classroom and school setting, are some examples of student exposure to environmental experiences that enhance their learning experience. Good stewardship is a part of our daily routine.

## Contract Student Academic Goals

Student Gains Goal:

- By 2015, 85% of students tested and continuously enrolled at NDMA for at least one year will achieve at least one year's worth of growth in exchange for one year's worth of instruction in reading, language arts and mathematics as measured by the ITBS growth from the Spring test of one year to the Spring test the following year.
- The remaining 15% of students will show developmentally appropriate progress in reading, language and mathematics.

With our School Improvement Plan (SIP) implementation, the academic goals have been updated to reflect SMART goals. (see above)

## Reading and Math Growth

MDE Report Card Data:

<b>MATH</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
Percent of students "On Track for Success"	45.0	45.8	47.3
Percent of students making High, Medium, and Low Growth			
High			33.3
Medium			49.1
Low			17.5

<b>READING</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
Percent of students "On Track for Success"	55.0	69.0	77.2
Percent of students making High, Medium, and Low Growth			
High			61.4
Medium			26.3
Low			17.5

## Proficiency Results in Reading, Math, and Science

<b>Proficiency Index, Math (All Accountability Tests, All Students)</b>					
	<b>NDMA</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Local District - Hutchinson Park Elementary</b>	<b>Comparison School - Glencoe Silver Lake - Lakeside Elementary</b>	<b>Comparison School - Lafayette Charter School</b>
2014	52.4	71.4	81.5	76.0	47.9
2013	42.2	71.3	83.2	75.0	40.7
2012	35.9	72.0	84.5	78.3	45.5

<b>Proficiency Index, Reading (All Accountability Tests, All Students)</b>					
	<b>NDMA</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Local District - Hutchinson Park Elementary</b>	<b>Comparison School - Glencoe Silver Lake - Lakeside Elementary</b>	<b>Comparison School - Lafayette Charter School</b>
2014	65.9	69.0	78.8	71.5	53.2
2013	51.7	68.0	45.4	69.3	57.0
2012	64.6	82.9	86.2	82.5	77.3

Proficiency Rates, Math (the % of proficient students that were enrolled on October 1)					
	NDMA	State	Local District - Hutchinson Park Elementary	Comparison School - Glencoe Silver Lake - Lakeside Elementary	Comparison School - Lafayette Charter School
2014	47.6	61.9	80.2	66.5	23.4
2013	33.3	61.6	75.6	65.3	23.3
2012	28.4	62.7	77.6	68.8	27.3

Proficiency Rates, Reading (the % of proficient students that were enrolled on October 1)					
	NDMA	State	Local District - Hutchinson Park Elementary	Comparison School - Glencoe Silver Lake - Lakeside Elementary	Comparison School - Lafayette Charter School
2014	62.2	62.2	70.2	60.8	40.8
2013	43.3	43.3	66.8	57.4	44.7
2012	54.7	54.7	81.0	75.7	64.9

Proficiency Index, Science (All Accountability Tests, All Students)					
	NDMA	State	Local District - Hutchinson Park Elementary	Comparison School - Glencoe Silver Lake - Lakeside Elementary	Comparison School - Lafayette Charter School
2014	50.0	53.4	75.2	49.6	40.0
2013	40.9	52.4	80.3	43.1	39.1
2012	26.9	50.8	71.0	48.0	36.4

Proficiency Rates, Science (the % of proficient students that were enrolled on October 1)					
	NDMA	State	Local District - Hutchinson Park Elementary	Comparison School - Glencoe Silver Lake - Lakeside Elementary	Comparison School - Lafayette Charter School
2014	47.8	54.5	75.7	49.1	38.9
2013	42.9	53.4	80.5	43.5	35.3
2012	30.4	51.9	71.8	47.5	36.4

Additional Data: AIMSweb & NWEA MAP

**AIMSweb/NWEA MAP Data  
June 16, 2014**

**AIMSweb Benchmarking- R-CBM:** (conducted in September, January and May)

Fall- 71/135 students met norm target

Winter- 61/136 students met norm target

Spring- 61/142 students met norm target

**AIMSweb Benchmarking- M-CAP:** (conducted in September, January and May)

Fall- 58/105 students met norm target

Winter- 47/104 students met norm target

Spring- 50/111 students met norm target

**AIMSweb Benchmarking- M-COMP:** (conducted in September, January and May) Fall-  
**86/132** students met norm target  
Winter- **70/137** students met norm target  
Spring- **77/140** students met norm target

**NWEA- MAP:** (Reading grades K-6-conducted in September, January, and May) Fall  
testing- **73 students** at or above national norms = **48 % proficiency**

Kindergarten- **10** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 142.5/149.5**  
1<sup>st</sup> grade- **16** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 160.3/160.8**  
2<sup>nd</sup> grade- **12** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 175.9/180.5**  
3<sup>rd</sup> grade- **9** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 189.9/ 177.4**  
4<sup>th</sup> grade- **11** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 199.8/ 195.5**  
5<sup>th</sup> grade- **11** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 207.1/ 204.7**  
6<sup>th</sup> grade- **4** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 212.3/ 207.2**

Winter testing- **83 students** at or above national norms = **56 % proficiency**

Kindergarten- **6** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 151/154**  
1<sup>st</sup> grade- **17** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 170.7/174.1**  
2<sup>nd</sup> grade- **14** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 183.6/189.1**  
3<sup>rd</sup> grade- **9** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 194.6/ 191**  
4<sup>th</sup> grade- **14** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 203.2/ 202.8**  
5<sup>th</sup> grade- **16** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 209.8/ 210.8**  
6<sup>th</sup> grade- **7** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 214.3/ 213.5**

Spring testing- **87 students** at or above national norms = **58 % proficiency**

Kindergarten- **8** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 157.7/162.3**  
1<sup>st</sup> grade- **19** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 176.9/180.8**  
2<sup>nd</sup> grade- **16** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 189.6/197**  
3<sup>rd</sup> grade- **11** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 199.2/196**  
4<sup>th</sup> grade- **14** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 206.7/209.8**  
5<sup>th</sup> grade- **13** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 212.3/215.1**  
6<sup>th</sup> grade- **6** students at or above national norms  
National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 216.4/216.8**



**NWEA- MAP:** (Math for grades K-2)

**Fall testing- 43 students** at or above national norms = **67 % proficiency**

Kindergarten- **6** students at or above national norms

National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 143.7/142.6**

1<sup>st</sup> grade- **21** students at or above national norms

National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 162.8/165.7**

2<sup>nd</sup> grade- **16** students at or above national norms

National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 178.2/188.9**

**Winter testing- 49 students** at or above national norms = **80 % proficiency**

Kindergarten- **7** students at or above national norms

National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 150.7/158**

1<sup>st</sup> grade- **23** students at or above national norms

National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 172.4/178.8**

2<sup>nd</sup> grade- **19** students at or above national norms

National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 185.5/202.5**

**Spring testing- 47 students** at or above national norms = **72 % proficiency**

Kindergarten- **7** students at or above national norms

National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 159.1/157.7**

1<sup>st</sup> grade- **22** students at or above national norms

National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 179/183.7**

2<sup>nd</sup> grade- **18** students at or above national norms

National norm RIT/NDMA **mean RIT= 191.3/206.6**

**Performance of English Learners of ACCESS Assessment**

NDMA only has two students enrolled that are English learners. The ACCESS Assessment was administered in February. Tests results are not yet available but preliminary results indicate that both students increased in their English language proficiency. For the 2014-15 school year an ELL licensed teacher has been hired for EL instruction.



## Multiple Measures Rating

	Designation 2014	2014	2013	2012	Initial Designation	2011	2010
<b>Multiple Measurements Rating (MMR)</b>	<b>67.27%</b>	<b>77.88%</b>	<b>56.66%</b>	<b>31.61%</b>	<b>2.10%</b>	<b>0.86%</b>	<b>3.34%</b>
<b>Proficiency</b>	<b>16.53</b>	<b>11.42</b>	<b>5.11</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>2.33</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>1.84</b>
Weighted percentage of subgroups reaching targets	-	45.7%	20.4%	0.0%	-	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Growth</b>	<b>39.26</b>	<b>21.99</b>	<b>17.27</b>	<b>5.27</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>0.08</b>	<b>0.58</b>
Average Growth Z-Score	-	0.4212	0.288	-0.0105	-	-0.514	-0.2781
<b>Achievement Gap Reduction</b>	<b>45.11</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20.11</b>	<b>17.77</b>	<b>0.16</b>	<b>0.08</b>	<b>0.08</b>
Achievement Gap Reduction Score	-	-0.427	-0.1798	-0.0458	-	0.8196	0.8173
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>100.9</b>	<b>58.41</b>	<b>42.49</b>	<b>23.71</b>	<b>3.15</b>	<b>0.65</b>	<b>2.5</b>
Possible points	150	75	75	75	150	75	75
<b>Focus Rating (FR)</b>	<b>75.88%</b>	<b>86.54%</b>	<b>65.22%</b>	<b>36.99%</b>	<b>6.84%</b>	<b>1.18%</b>	<b>12.50%</b>
<b>Achievement Gap Reduction</b>	<b>45.11</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20.11</b>	<b>17.77</b>	<b>0.16</b>	<b>0.08</b>	<b>0.08</b>
Achievement Gap Reduction Score	-	-0.427	-0.1798	-0.0458	-	0.8196	0.8173
<b>Focused Proficiency</b>	<b>30.77</b>	<b>18.27</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>0.72</b>	<b>6.68</b>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>6.17</b>
Weighted percentage of subgroups reaching targets	-	73.1%	50.0%	0.0%	-	0.0%	0.0%
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>75.88</b>	<b>43.27</b>	<b>32.61</b>	<b>18.49</b>	<b>6.84</b>	<b>0.59</b>	<b>6.25</b>
Possible points	100	50	50	50	100	50	50
Multiple Measurement Designation	Celebration Eligible	Celebration Eligible	Celebration Eligible	Priority Status	Priority Status	Not Making AYP	Not Making AYP

To climb out of priority status in one year's time is remarkable! We are grateful that the comprehensive needs assessment (CNA), job embedded professional development (JEPD), the core work of our 90-minute Professional Learning Communities (PLC), the data review and analysis, and instructional strategies implementation have proved effective beyond what we hoped for. We had projected academic goals through 2017, but found we surpassed them with the revelation of our 2014 Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) scores, and multiple measurement rating (MMR) & focus rating (FR) announcement.

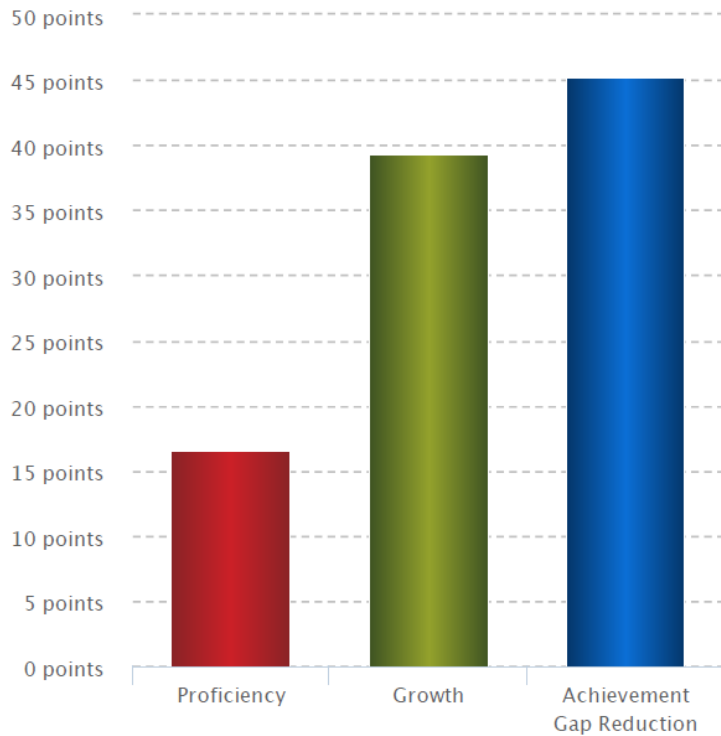


## School Performance: What are our Multiple Measurement Ratings?

### New Discoveries Montessori Academy

#### Designation 2014 Multiple Measurement Domains

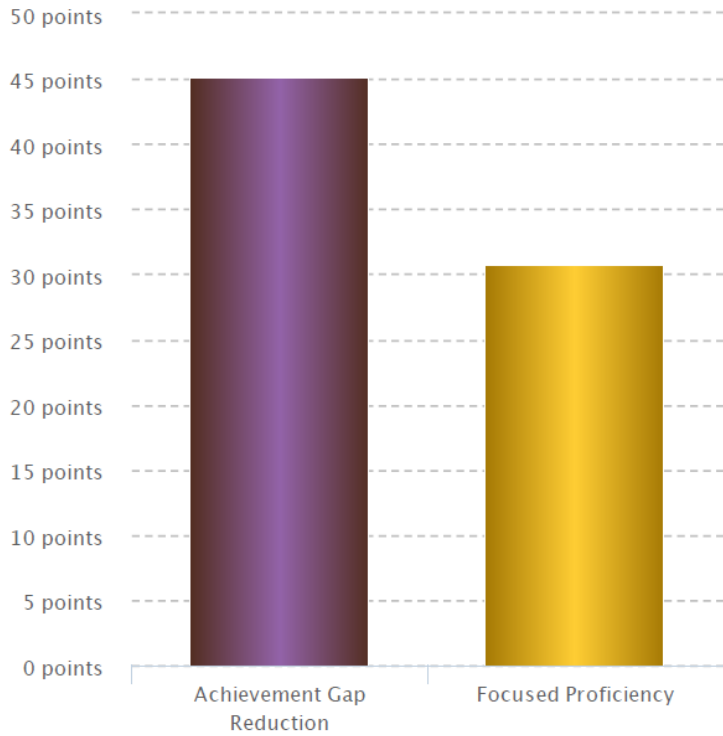
Please note that minor changes were made to the MMR and FR calculations, and the results on this page reflect these improved calculations starting in 2013. Results prior to 2013 used the previous MMR and FR calculations.



Multiple Measurements Rating (MMR) is 67.27%.

Domain	Score
<b>Proficiency</b>	16.53 points
Weighted percentage of student groups reaching targets	-
<b>Growth</b>	39.26 points
Average Growth Z-Score	-
<b>Achievement Gap Reduction</b>	45.11 points
Achievement Gap Reduction Score	-
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	100.9 points
Possible points	150 points

**Designation 2014 Focus Domains**



Focus Rating (FR) is 75.88%.

Domain	Score
<b>Achievement Gap Reduction</b>	45.11 points
Achievement Gap Reduction Score	-
<b>Focused Proficiency</b>	30.77 points
Weighted percentage of subgroups reaching targets	-
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	75.88 points
Possible points	100 points

**Designations and Status**

**Scores**

MMR: 67.27% FR: 75.88%

**Multiple Measurement Designation**

This school is currently designated as a CELEBRATION ELIGIBLE school.

**Current Comparison Group**

Elementary School

**Title I Status**

Applied for Title I funding in 2015 (2014-15 school year)

## **Additional World's Best Workforce Data**

### **Outline the school's progress towards closing the achievement gap.**

NDMA uses a variety of tools to measure and determine students' academic growth and proficiency of grade level standards. These tools range from informal assessments observed in the classroom to formal, mandated assessments such as the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA). Additionally, New Discoveries tracks student growth and progress through the use of AIMSweb benchmarking assessments and probes. Teacher use these assessments to identify the needs of the students and adjust instructional strategies to meet the needs of their students and encourage individualized academic growth. NDMA received 25 out of 25 points in the Achievement Gap Reduction score for 2014. This is up from 20.11 points out of 25 for 2013, and .08 out of 25 for our initial designation.

### **Outline the school's progress towards ensuring all students are ready for kindergarten.**

NDMA's separate preschool program for 3 and 4 year olds in an integral part of ensuring all students are ready for kindergarten. The multi-age aspect of blending our preschool program with our kindergarten program is crucial in this regard. The familiarity with the materials, staff, curriculum and routine are all key factors leading towards a successful kindergarten experience at NDMA.

### **Outline the school's progress towards ensuring that all students in third grade achieve grade level literacy.**

New Discoveries Montessori Academy uses Balanced Literacy as its reading, writing and language arts program. Balanced Literacy is a research based and content-rich approach that provides high-interest, developmentally appropriate instruction for each student. Included in this program are components for guided reading, read aloud, shared reading, leveled reading and independent reading. To enhance this curriculum, NDMA has a growing elementary library with a variety of fiction and nonfiction reading materials, covering a wide range of reading levels. Each classroom also has their own reading center where students can enjoy books and other resources selected by their classroom teacher.

All students in grades K-3 are given the AIMSweb screening/benchmarking assessment three times throughout the course of the year in fall, winter, and spring. Using this data, along with data from Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), struggling and at-risk students are identified and referred for interventions. Specific interventions are based on further assessments, and the interventions are implemented through the collaborative efforts of the classroom teacher and other specialists. Each student's progress is monitored regularly during a daily intervention period and if the intervention selected is not working, another intervention is selected and implemented. Minnesota Reading Corps is also utilized for reinforcement.

The goal of New Discoveries is to ensure that all learners successfully achieve the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in English Language Arts (2010) for their grade level. The standards are aligned with the Montessori curriculum.

### **Student and Parent Satisfaction**

Student surveys were completed in the classroom indicating students are satisfied with the NDMA program. It would be reasonable to observe that a majority of students responding a) believe they are learning at NDMA, b) feel valued and respected by (their) teacher, and c) understand that their teacher makes sure that all students are learning. This is encouraging, and speaks to how important the teacher-student relationship is in the learning equation. It

would also be reasonable to observe that a significant number of students have seen either some or big improvement in their ability to 1) read, 2) write, 3) speak in front of a group, and 4) to think mathematically. Students indicated that they would really like art.

The family satisfaction survey was given to each child to bring home to their parents. Only 18 were returned. Of those, there were 91% of respondents that agreed with the statements on the survey. The main thing families would like to see is more communication – from their child, from their child's teacher and from the school in general. It is both affirming and humbling to note that among parent/family respondents, that the majority of parents are overwhelmingly appreciative and happy about their experiences at NDMA, and supportive of our efforts.



SeaPerch at the McLeod County Fair

<b>Student Satisfaction Survey 2013-2014 Results</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>No Answer</b>
1) I am learning at this school.	140	2	5	I learned times; I like learning; public schools are nothing compared to here;	0
2) I like learning using the Montessori materials.	106	22	18	the skip chain is fun; yes with hard work; yes; its not exactly a fav for me; because I never used the materials; no because not all of them help; because they are boring; I check yes/no; because some materials don't help me (abacus); I used what 3 materials? They never teach us these;	1
3) I talk with my family about school.	100	33	10	I do. my mom asks how'd the day go; sometimes; sometimes; not all the time; sometimes I do and sometimes I don't; not that much; because my mom works at school; not very important; sometimes; how my day is my mom asks me; is it like with the binder; I normally say what I learned & stuff about my friends;	2
4) I feel valued and respected by my teacher.	128	6	12	don't know; Mrs V checks; for me yes for the other kids I don't know; I cant tell; I like this;	1
5) My teacher makes sure that all students are learning.	132	0	13	yes checking for people stalling on tests; for me yes for the other kids I	2
6) My teacher expects me to do well in school.	129	2	15	I cant tell; definitely;	1
7) My teacher tells me how I am doing in school.	109	17	20	sometimes. All the time; always	1
8) I feel safe and comfortable in school.	118	9	19	I love school. I want to move into school. Never ever; I love this part of the school; it is scary in lockdown and other emergencies because you don't know what's going to happen; kinda because you don't know what could happen; despite certain people;	1
9) I think the things we do at New Discoveries help to make our community better.	109	11	25	that is very true. I don't know;	2
10) My teacher listens to me and respects me.	126	5	13	Sometimes;	2
11) The students in school help and respect one another.	102	18	25	yes a little bit; all the time; a little; respect me some time people; but there is a little bullying; but there is still a little bully;	2
12) I think that this school is preparing me for my future.	111	9	24	very good. I have no clue; yes because I might need to know something for my future; I need to learn more;	1
13) The director and staff take care of situations when students make poor choices/misbehave.	123	5	16	yes my teachers. I don't have the others; even me;	2
14) I know my academic strengths and weaknesses.	109	9	20	sometimes. I learned. all of them;	4
15) I know the New Discoveries Montessori Academy rules.	125	6	8	Awesome. I know. some of them. I know my classroom rules. I know my classroom. all of them;	4
16) I would recommend New Discoveries Montessori Academy to other kids.	113	9	18	every single day. I love NDMA. no clue; because I think it's a good school; I do it at my friends and no way they want to come here;	3

Improvement Level:	Big	Some	None		
<b>I HAVE IMPROVED IN MY ABILITY TO:</b>					
1) Read	92	41	2	my favorite; I have done good; I don't know I was a good reader so I just got	1
2) Write	92	44	11	still learning; it got worse; kind of; it's legible now	1
3) Speak about something in front of a group	70	45	19	still learning; it's been going up and down; I have some work on it; I am stage	3
4) To think mathematically	80	47	6	love it; there's a long story;	2
5) Participate in Phy Ed	103	22	11	awesome; I always participate;	2
6) Participate in Art	65	21	24	not so hard; but we don't have an art teacher; we do not have a art teacher but I wish we had a art teacher; it would be nice to have art teacher; we need a art teacher; we don't have an art teacher; no art at NDMA; no art teacher; I wish we could have a art teacher; we don't have art; we do not have art; we did not do a lot; no art; don't have art; art, what art?	27
7) Participate in Music activities	77	41	12	so fun; I have done ok; I don't like music; I love music;	4

**What I like best about NDMA:** I like to learn; my teachers; my teachers; physical education; all of it; playing games and teachers; math; gym; teacher; reading; playground and teachers; math; Is everything; everything; NDMA is a fun way to learn; my teacher; that we can walk around; my teachers; my teacher Mrs. Anderson is cool; my friends; teachers; what I like best is it is fun; my teacher; math is recess; gym; phy ed; phy ed; math; phy ed; it's fun and the people are nice; math; getting to you matters; math and reading; I like the teachers; phy ed; people like me for who I am; you can learn a lot in this school; phy ed; I like the tests, recess and lunch; the people are very nice; it is fun and I feel safe; that you can eat gum at school; to meet new friends; there are fun activities here; I like when we have gym; phy ed and recess; I like that we are allowed to use computers; not a lot of homework; hanging out with my friends; the fun learning things that teachers do; snow days; that I can move around; you don't have to stay in a desk all day; no homework; friendly environment; I made a lot of friends; is that the teachers care and help us; I like how we have a choice on where we get to sit and have help from people; you can make good friends, learn more about other stuff than before; book fair; I like that we don't have desks that we sit as the whole class and that we get to go to Audubon; I also like what we learn; the teacher are fun; smell of food; teacher; teachers are nicer than parks; is the phy ed, music, and other specialties activities; I loved Audubon, recess outside and learning and art; what I like about NDMA is math and art; Audubon, friends, and phy ed; is the learning and how they teach they give you time; is that you can move freely and do not have desks; is fun; that I can walk to get a drink in class; if you are really good at math in 5th grade I can do 6th grade math; you get to be challenged in some things; nice teachers; is fun; it's awesome and I like seeing my friends; that there are 5th 6th and 4th graders in a room; it is easier for me I can do my work at my pace; I like how there is one on one; pretty rad kids here; I have real friends again ( I think) we have lots of fun; art; I love school so much; I like math at NDMA; I like phy ed the best; gym; I like that we have reading time; I like to have green group; that gym is fun and the teacher is nice; I make a lot of friends; I like all the flowers outside the school; I like to reach at NDMA; having new friends every day; it's fun; nothing; I really like that we have daily five time; I like math time; that we don't have homework; I like lunch and recess the most, because I can talk and play with my friends; 30 mins in gym and 30 mins in recess; that the teachers are nice; recess/lunch; recess, art; is that it has lots and lots of books; I like the books at NDMA; I like to write stories a lot, I like to do math too; science; you can talk in class not a lot but you have to be quiet; more phy ed time and recess time; mostly everything; I like there is no gift and talent for math masters; no more bully; I like recess that we do not have to do one thing; people; I like the teachers and what they let us do; it has nice people; my friend; that a lot of people are nice; phy ed; is that I get to hang with my friends; that we have time to work on stuff; I like it when we get done with all our work and we get to do fun things; sometimes it's more easy to learn; the way they teach; Mr. P; P.; the end of the year; Mr. P; it is big;

**What I would like to change at NDMA:** I don't know; I want to stay in E1; Nothing; I would change nothing; Home work every once in awhile otherwise nothing; A food; I would not like to change

anything; nothing; nothing; no; what I would change at NDMA it would be that I wish that I was Mrs. Anderson. a place to play tag. Nothing. have recess for 50 minutes each day; do fun stuff; nothing; nothing; nothing; nothing; I would kind of like to change the playground it's really not that fun anymore; getting 15 minutes in lunch; nothing; nothing; to have a art teacher; nothing; have recess for 3 hours; have an art teacher; More phy ed time; nothing; longer recess, longer lunch, no fish for lunch and an art teacher; not enough phy ed time; have recess for 7 hrs; I would change the E1's get the salad bar; movies on Fridays no matter what; I would like an art and science program and more books please; bullying; less homework; about how some of the kids act, esp. bullying; nothing; less bullying and make it quieter; a bigger playground; longer recess; no assigned spots can be able to sit where you would like; nothing I think it is perfect; nothing; that if you have a good friend they wont switch that friend to another class; no mean kids; the lunch and so I can do the dishes more or forever; I would like art class; more phy ed; nothing; the rules and some staff; we should have more art or outside; I don't want to change anything; that a superintendent shouldn't move kids away from a different classroom where she didn't have friends and without parents permission; nothing; to have more field trips and be outside more; budget a vending machine; recess more recess; no this is a good school I do not want to change it; bring art back, E2 should get more food or seconds, more field trips (some for each grade and maybe overnight ones and some more 5th and 6th one together like Audubon; no fights; more field trips; more field trips; I would like there to be art classes; get rid of those terrible, terrible assistant teacher; we should play football a lot; more bathrooms; I want more math time; more math time; have more recess time; I think I would change the room bigger; more recess because don't have time to think what to do, have more drinks at lunch; more recess, more pizza, don't pay for breakfast, more field trips; less math time, more daily five; make recess longer, make math kind of easier, make PE more longer and music longer too; I would change the grades to make them bigger; having a science teacher; fun Friday three days a week, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday; I don't want math lessons, I want more daily five time; to have school for a long long time; math lasts too long, we need more daily five; more gym and recess, more art; rules; nothing; no resets, more time to read and write; a few more minutes of recess; art; spelling back; I have two things one the preschoolers should come the whole day and I would like to have harder math; no I like the school how it is; some people; id like us to learn about zoology; at recess there is a gossip corner; bigger classroom; no thanks, I like it the way it is; add a workshop; is that bullying I hate when my friends or some what friends get bullied; lunch and breakfast; had a choice to go outside if it's hot out; I would like to change the bullying that goes on; E2's get salad bar;

**Other comments:** I want an art teacher and the bus ride to be short; more phy ed; I would want an art teacher; I want more cement; I really liked pet day; I love recess; I want more art; it would be nice to have an art teacher; I want more four square room; I want a art teacher now; I like art; can we get an art teacher? No guided reading; I feel like some teachers listen to kids really well and others have their favorites; if you bring back art Tara would be a really good art teacher. Adoubon should be longer like a week, we should get a swimming pool, all the E2 should get tablets for school and have games on it for not at school; instead of chairs, bean bag chairs; more recess time; the assistants are really meany and couldn't care less about my feelings. NDMA is great! I like to be outside; I like more math time! need more math games, need more art, need more time at recess; I would like to have more gym; when it is cold outside we have 20 minutes, when it's warm outside we have 35 minutes; need more math games; nothing; more lunch time; your welcome; I loved all the friends I have made cant wait be back soon; I really love this school I recommend it to everybody; if you get in trouble you shouldn't be treated any differently or if you miss a lot of school teachers and students shouldn't treat you differently.

## NDMA Family Satisfaction Survey 2013-2014

Each year, as part of our charter agreement with our authorizer, Audubon Center of the North Woods (ACNW), and the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), we need to determine the level of satisfaction among the stakeholders of New Discoveries Montessori Academy, in particular, the families of the NDMA students. **It is very important that we receive your completed survey!** Please check the box that reflects your opinion of the following statements about New Discoveries. (N/A – please use this column only if not applicable or you do not have enough information to respond.)

	Agree	Disagree	N/A	Comments (Please be specific)
1) Overall, my child seems to be satisfied at New Discoveries Montessori Academy.	18			They absolutely love NDMA;
2) My child has made friends at New Discoveries Montessori Academy.	18			Lots of friends;
3) My child feels safe at New Discoveries Montessori Academy.	18			
4) My child feels safe on the way to and from school.	15	3		We drive her because the bus is overwhelming; has had bussing issue with bullies; Bussing; Bus is a <u>big</u> issue –mean kids.
5) My child appreciates his/her teacher.	17	1		Mr. Marcus is awesome; not compassionate or fun.
6) My child feels valued and respected by his/her teacher.	18			
7) My child appears to be progressing academically.	16	1		They have made tremendous progress;
8) My child feels valued and respected by the adults at NDMA.	18			
9) My child’s teacher knows and responds to my child’s individual needs.	15	2	1	They deal amazingly well with IEP;
10) My child’s teacher supports and encourages my child’s attempts to gain new skills.	17		1	
11) My child’s teacher helps to build my child’s self-esteem.	17		1	Sarcastic at times but overall caring; working on looking up and making eye contact.
12) My child’s teacher listens to me, respects me as a parent (or guardian) and supports us as a family.	16	2		Has truly helped my child get over hurdles he has been facing; she isn’t welcoming; strong personality.
13) School guidelines are stated in a positive way.	18			
14) The atmosphere at New Discoveries Montessori Academy is warm and nurturing.	18			I couldn’t ask for a better school;



	Agree	Disagree	N/A	Comments (Please be specific)
15) The school staff interacts respectfully with each other.	14	1	2	Not sure;
16) The director and staff intervene effectively when children misbehave.	16		1	My child hasn't needed intervention; I will have to assume; Bus needs better monitoring.
17) Families are informed frequently about school happenings through newsletters, notes and phone calls.	15	3		More communication (email from teachers re; progress for instance) would be appreciated; Early releases –never notified via text; Needs work
18) I have received information on the school's philosophy and goals for children.	18			
19) I feel welcome to visit my child's school at any time.	17	1		
20) I know whom to go to with my concerns and feel confident that my concerns will be addressed respectfully and promptly.	16	1		The admins are very responsive;
21) I have been made aware of my child's academic strengths and weaknesses.	16	1		The testing and rating is much improved;
22) My child tells me what is happening at school.	16	1		Not all the time;
23) I am aware of opportunities and feel welcome to volunteer in my child's school.	16	1		
24) I feel my child is receiving a well-rounded education at New Discoveries Montessori Academy.	15	1	1	I know you're working hard and consistently
25) I would recommend New Discoveries Montessori Academy to other families.	17			It is a key selling point for the whole town; Absolutely positively; Definitely!

Needs Assessment:

1) Which of the following sources are you MOST likely to rely on for information about New Discoveries Montessori Academy? (Choose one.)

5 School Newsletter

1 Local Newspaper – Hutch Leader

1 Friends/Neighbors/Other People

4 e-mail/website

2 Other: Direct communication; my child

3 Classroom Newsletter

7 Material brought home by children

3 NDMA Staff/Teachers

1 Mailings

Don't know

2) What kind of school information would you be most interested in? (check all that apply.)

11 How students are doing/Student Progress

7 Volunteer opportunities

6 Teachers/Teaching methods

1 School Board information

6 Curriculum information

10 Special Events

3 Charter Schools

5 Montessori Philosophy/Method

- 3) Why did you enroll your child(ren) at New Discoveries Montessori Academy?  
Ability to handle special needs and accelerate along key growth areas, teaching methods and multi grade classroom; Montessori methods; challenging my child where she is strong & supporting areas of need because she has a different learning style; because of the Montessori aspect; my child felt horrible with all the bad behavior notes West Elementary sent home; our son is autistic and the school fit his needs; he was familiar with the school because his grandma works there; we enrolled our daughter when she was old enough; because he did so well at his last Montessori; not public school; when we moved here she had attended Becks Montessori in Eagan; I wanted her to be in a Montessori here; individualized learning; kid got picked on at public/ grades; public school was not the right fit for my child; you can feed my child curriculum that meets his level (excelled); for schooling outside a regular schooling style; I believe my children benefit from independent, self-directed learning; smaller class sizes – more 1 on 1; too many behavior problems at West; because they are very bright, and the Montessori method helps them in a forward motion; not held back with rest of class; classroom is smaller like the Montessori academy.
- 4) In what ways would you like to be involved at New Discoveries Montessori Academy?  
Volunteer for math assistance, teaching opportunities, career day; specific job needs – a short term commitment; reading in the classroom; projects that help the classroom teachers, Board, PTO & employment; I can help in classroom, on field trips, special projects, making copies, etc.; any, as long as I'm available; PTO, love the information sent home; volunteer to help at special events and help teacher if needed; limited due to work hours/ schedule and having a 4yr old at home and no day care; more open communication/ updates from teachers so we can coordinate efforts at home with what is seen at school; whenever possible; just with my children; helping my kid at home with reading and math games.
- 5) When considering NDMA's school improvement effort, please list what you feel has 'worked'?  
Adding enrichment and parents nights; new to the school this year; not sure; unsure; didn't know what needed improving; both of children get the attention they need to progress well; the teachers and staff keep us well informed about their needs and progress; can't say haven't been here long enough; all; I like the methods they use for math; giving the student a chance to "teach" a class has given him more confidence; learning nights; haven't seen it in use this year, but my kids really enjoyed Raz kids –similar resources that can be done at school and home would be great; I know Mr. Conrad and the staff are really trying.
- 6) In your opinion, what needs to be improved to increase student achievement at NDMA?  
More space; focus time on all areas of academics plus social skills (i.e. bullying prevention curriculum); bot sure; stick to Montessori; I like the plan to separate 1-2 to further the benefit of class study for test and progress readiness; bussing, if it were available, most of my children would be here; my child is not too fond of the reading packets but I can't think of anything to change right now; I am very concerned that in the past year I have heard many instances of 'indoor recess' which has in most cases been a quiet, sedentary activity such as watching a movie and I know the multipurpose room is shared but I still think that a gym-divider would allow kids to be active during recess even while other classes are eating lunch; safer bussing makes a big difference in a child's education; one on one with children who need the extra help; spelling test; my kids don't have the spelling abilities for their grade level.
- 7) As you think about student achievement at NDMA, what strategies for supporting higher student achievement do you want to see continued?  
I really like the multiple grades in same class/lesson concept E1/E2, it accelerates those that can handle it and promotes competition; make sure to teach all academic subjects (i.e. science, social studies, art) in addition to math, reading, music and physical education; the warm heart the teacher gives my daughter; listen to children and let them be involved in their education; the school is doing an excellent job; I do not have any suggestions for this question at this time; the teacher and para input it's above and beyond; I am pleased with what you are doing this year; not sure; more options, opportunities and chances like teaching poetry; recognition for achievements and positive reinforcement; I think consistency and you are working hard with that.

8) One thing I like about New Discoveries:

The Montessori and advancement opportunities; small school, teachers & staff know my child well; the people attitudes when I have visited; my child now LOVES school and no longer feels like a failure; the school encourages whole family education participation; everything; school hours; class sizes; the staff are fantastic to work with; the additional staff in each classroom; schooling that steps out of the box; communication with the teachers; that you guys have children learn at their own pace; I love that when we pass Mr. Conrad in the halls, he addresses my kids by name, he truly knows and cares about every student; it's like a family environment.

9) One thing I would like to change:

More marketing to 'traditional' kids; most of the town is completely ignorant of the gem they have here; more cooperation with NCA – same starting time, use the ACC bussing service; more Montessori type learning; staff interaction; bussing; to be done with school at end of March; lunches for children to be able to choose between lunches or actual salad bar, healthier choices for meals will enable a more observant child; para or volunteers to ride bus with kids, the bus was a big issue for us this year; better communication before things happen and I know it's hard sometimes.

Other Comments (Please be specific): Never got a reason why Dr. Cannon left, unless I missed it.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey! We appreciate your comments and your opinion matters!

**Please return by Friday, May 30<sup>th</sup>.**

*"Enriching Community through Montessori Excellence"*

## Environmental Education

The mission of *New Discoveries Montessori Academy's* authorizer, the Audubon Center of the North Woods, is to "instill a connection and commitment to the environment in people of all communities through experiential learning." As part of our contract with our authorizer, we have agreed to the following environmental education goal:

Staff, students and parents at *New Discoveries Montessori Academy* will increase their environmental literacy, and develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to support a sustainable, healthy environment.

The Audubon Center of the North Woods defines environmental education as the implementation of values and strategies that foster learning and create environmentally literate citizens who engage in creating healthy outcomes for individuals, communities, and the earth. Environmental literacy is the knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivation, and commitment to work individually and collectively toward sustaining a healthy natural and social environment. To meet the above goal, *New Discoveries Montessori Academy* has agreed to provide opportunities to instill a connection and commitment to the environment through experiential learning.

Being a member with Audubon we work toward teaching and showing our students that what we do today to our environment will impact how the world will be left for generations to come. NDMA Staff, students and parents are aware we recycle and students bring this knowledge home to practice there. NDMA will increase their environmental literacy, and develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to support a sustainable, healthy environment.

### Indicator Area 1: EE-based Curriculum Components

Describe how the school integrates environmental education into science curriculum and other disciplines.

In what ways does the school integrate environmental education into its academic program?

By design, the Montessori curriculum is interdisciplinary - subjects are studied together, not in isolation - therefore, environmental education is frequently integrated into our science curriculum and other disciplines at New Discoveries.

Are EE values and strategies present in disciplines other than science? If so, in what way(s)?

Yes. We incorporate EE values throughout the curriculum. For example, in our language arts curriculum, we find informational texts that have environmental topics for the students to read and discuss. Our E1 classrooms monitor our local Eagle nest and journal their observations. (mnbound.com)

Please provide a list of specific examples (e.g. courses, projects, EE-related student accomplishments, etc.) that demonstrate EE integration in science and other discipline areas.

Each week, NDMA E2 students collect recyclables from throughout the school. They take the recyclables - paper, plastic, glass and cans - to the local solid waste facility. NDMA receives a small check for their recycling efforts.

The environmental literacy of the NDMA students is demonstrated through the care of their environment both inside and outside the school building and in the language they use as they discuss the world around them.



## **Indicator Area 2: Field Trips to Natural Areas**

09/2013 - 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students spend three days and two nights at the Audubon Center.

Environmental Learning Experience - Students in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades spend an extended time at an environmental learning center which provides an outdoor immersion experience at ACNW.

Classroom Supplementary Learning Activities - Classroom teachers prepare the students for this trip with the online curriculum provided from ACNW and bring it back to the classroom for follow-up and extended learning activities.

Classroom Learning/Standards - The ACNW classes are aligned to the MN Standards. E2 students write a reflection about their environmental experience at ACNW. In addition, they choose one of the classes that they participated in, prepare a project and present this at Family Discoveries Night. After spending time at ACNW, the students are much more aware of food waste in the cafeteria.

03/2014 - Children's House and E1 students visit the MN Arboretum.

Environmental Learning Experience - Students learn about the science of maple syrup and participate in the process of maple syrup making.

Classroom Supplementary Learning Activities - Classroom activities included the study of trees that produce maple syrup and the process of maple syrup making.

Classroom Learning/Standards - Students learn about using the natural environment for making maple syrup and discuss the health benefits of using natural food products.

10/2013 - Grades 1, 2, and 3 participate in river walk along the Crow River.

10/2013 - Kindergarteners visit local apple orchard.

05/2014 – 4<sup>th</sup> graders participate in county-wide environmental learning day at McLeod County Fairgrounds.

## **Indicator Area 3: Promote Environmental Stewardship**

10/2013 and 03/2014 - "Afterschooligans" - 4-H sponsored after school activities. The group met for 1 hour over six weeks and 20 students participated. 4-H activities revolve around learning about and helping our community and environment.

Fall & Spring - Families are invited to participate in highway cleanup for one-mile stretch. Students learn the value of not littering and cleaning up debris and garbage along the highways to keep our world beautiful.

Spring - PTO Spring Clean-up - all families are invited to participate on a Saturday clean-up day where the landscaping and garden around the school are tended to. Creekside Compost Facility donates mulch for the school to use on the grounds. Mulch is made from resident curbside organic recycling material. Students learn about reusing recycled materials for landscaping projects.

## Indicator Areas 4 & 5: EE Elective Trend Areas

Trend Area:

- EE trained teachers or experts
- Energy efficiency
- Food program
- Natural vegetation/wildlife use
- Outdoor recreation
- Operations & finance
- Waste reduction

04/2014 - Tree planting – 3<sup>rd</sup> graders work with the City of Hutchinson and Hutchinson Utilities to plant trees on the school grounds. Each year, NDMA receives (6) trees donated from the City of Hutch. These trees are planted to help shade the building on the west side. Energy is conserved by providing shade for the classrooms. 18 trees have been planted so far. Students learn about the types of trees that are being planted and learn to identify.

Trend Area:

- EE trained teachers or experts
- Energy efficiency
- Food program
- Natural vegetation/wildlife use
- Outdoor recreation
- Operations & finance
- Waste reduction

Summer-Fall 2013 - Garden project - E2 students helped plant, weed and harvest garden vegetables.

## Indicator Area 6: Commitment

Describe how the school uses its resources to carry out EE mission match activities.

New Discoveries has made the commitment to fund the experiential opportunities for students that can't afford it. Scholarships are available for those students. Our recycling efforts bring in a small check for the school.

Describe the school's commitment to EE in its financial and operational decision-making.

NDMA does apply for EE ACNW funds for the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade trip to ACNW. Using our F/R numbers helped to make the fee more affordable for some families. Classrooms use recycled paper for scratch paper and disposable paper projects.

## Indicator Area 7: Environmental Literacy

Describe the school's approach to environmental education.

At NDMA, environmental education is integrated into everything that we do. It is a natural fit in a Montessori school. Students take care of their classroom environment which includes plants and classroom pets.

What have been your success and challenges related to environmental education?

Challenge - Our biggest challenge is finding the resources and dollars to do the things we'd like to do such as increased recycling efforts, energy efficiency projects and landscaping. These projects are expensive and costs additional money that we do not

have. For example, we would love to add some landscaping projects such as a rain garden and peace garden.

Success - Students at NDMA are guided to be good stewards and this is evident throughout our campus in appearance and student care of their environment.

Have the school's EE activities impacted students' environmental literacy? How do you know?

The environmental literacy of the NDMA students is demonstrated through the care of their environment both inside and outside the school building and in the language they use as they discuss the world around them. The impact of the EE is clearly visible in through the usage of the recycling bins, the neatness of both the interior and exterior areas of the school grounds, and the visually pleasing and well cared for plants and animals.



### Staffing

NDMA has consistently pursued both licensed and non-licensed staff who are committed to the holistic development of the child. All lead teachers are licensed, and all teaching partners (paraprofessionals) are "highly qualified," as determined by specific criteria staff are expected to meet both as members of NDMA's teaching and learning community, and per MDE expectations and guidelines. Excellence among NDMA staff has a direct impact upon developing excellence in our students.

<b>2013-14 Licensed Teaching Staff</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>File Folder #</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>2013-14 Status*</b>
Anna Anderson	462059	E1 Classroom Teacher	NR
Diane Bruemmer	441972	Special Education Teacher	NR
Cynthia Flynn	407753	CH Classroom Teacher	R
Lynn Hackbarth	343755	Special Education Teacher	R
Donna Herdegen	255191	Title 1 Teacher	NR
Betty Jodzio	433693	E2 Classroom Teacher	R
Oriann Johnson	422846	E2 Classroom Teacher	NR
Theresa Larson	459177	E2 Classroom Teacher	R
Ethan Marcus	475289	E1 Classroom Teacher	R
Tari Niemeyer	365533	Special Education Teacher	NR
Eric Pokornowski	438394	Phy Ed Teacher	NR
Lois Tritz	287559	Special Education Teacher	R
Heather Vaillancourt	478922	E1 Classroom Teacher	R

\* R = Return, NR = Not Return

<b>2014-2015 Licensed Teaching Staff</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>File Folder #</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
Peggy Enerson	327575	CH Classroom Teacher
Cynthia Flynn	407753	CH Classroom Teacher
Lynn Goodermont	430739	Special Education Teacher
Lynn Hackbarth	343755	Special Education Teacher
Brett Haugen	366573	E1 Classroom Teacher
Betty Jodzio	433693	E2 Classroom Teacher
Sue Kubasch	256324	Special Education Teacher
Theresa Larson	459177	E2 Classroom Teacher
Tammy Maiers	406911	Speech Teacher
Peggy Linsmeier	282563	English as a Second Language
Ethan Marcus	475289	E1 Classroom Teacher
Michelle Martig	397165	Title 1 Teacher
Lisa Paulson	468432	Physical Education
Cody Rose	478495	E2 Classroom Teacher
Lois Tritz	287559	Special Education Teacher
Heather Vaillancourt	478922	E1 Classroom Teacher

**Licensed classroom teacher percentage turnover rate:** 2/7 = 29%

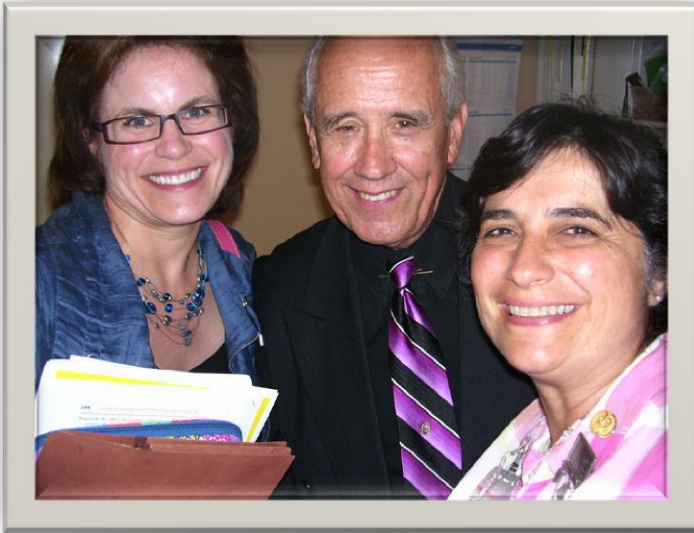
NDMA is pleased to have retained 5 of our 7 licensed classroom teaching staff into the 2014-2015 school year. This is especially noteworthy given the significant changes in staffing NDMA has experienced in the past. A teacher vacancy in one of our E1 classrooms led to the hiring of a teacher in October. Our MN Reading Corps Tutor (a licensed teacher) was assigned to be the lead teacher in that classroom. Our largest turnover rate has been in the other licensed teacher areas of Special Ed, Phy Ed and Title where there were two retirements, one with a new job opportunity and one left because of all the changes.

In regards to our support (non-licensed) staff, 33 of 45 staff members returned for the 14-15 school year. Reasons that the 12 support staff left include: retirement, health issues, new job opportunities, disciplinary issues, lack of appropriate qualifications and dissatisfaction with all the changes.

<b>2013-14 Other Licensed (non-teaching) Staff</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>File Folder #</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>14-15 Status*</b>
Conrad, David L	281232	Superintendent, Building Operations Manager, Family & Community Liaison, Culture for Learning Specialist	R
Dagel, Lora E	253530	Continuous Improvement Specialist	R
Hermodson-Olsen, R	286288	Math Specialist	R
Sax, Joan (Bendix)	302969	Data & Instructional Coach	NR

\* R = Return, NR = Not Return





**2014-15 Other Licensed (non-teaching) Staff**

Name	File Folder #	Assignment
Conrad, David L	281232	Director of Operations, Building Operations Manager, Family & Community Liaison, Culture for Learning Specialist
Dagel, Lora E	253530	Continuous Improvement Specialist
Hermodson-Olsen, R	286288	Math Specialist
Kinzler, Kirsten	316170	Director of Instruction, Data Instructional Coach

**2013-14 Support (Non-Licensed) Staff**

Name	Assignment	13-14 Status*
Anderson, Susan	Resource Teaching Partner	R
Baysinger, Kathleen	Resource Teaching Partner	NR
Buxcel, Karen M	Food Service Director	R
Cannon, Robert J	Principal	NR
Corson, Jill M	Resource Teaching Partner	NR
Carrigan, Michelle M	Resource Teaching Partner	R
Condon, Blake W	Resource Teaching Partner	R
Crary, Michael A	Resource Teaching Partner	NR
Ellis, Sheri L	Resource Teaching Partner	R
Ellis, Steve M	Resource Teaching Partner	R
Erickson, Tara Jean	Administrative Assistant	R
Erickson, William D	Custodial	R
Ewert, Rebecca Mae	Resource Teaching Partner	R
Grack, Nicole L	School Nurse	R
Hanson, Scott A	Resource Teaching Partner	R
Harris, Mei Li	Resource Teaching Partner	R

Helget, Samantha J	Resource Teaching Partner	R
Hierlmaier, Teigan J	Resource Teaching Partner	R
Hoffmann, Luann M	Administrative Assistant	R
Hudson, Rebecca J	Resource Teaching Partner	R
Johnson, Erena L	Resource Teaching Partner	NR
Kubasch, Susan M	Resource Teaching Partner	NR
Kalenberg, Michaleen R	Resource Teaching Partner	R
Kinzler, Tim T	Maintenance Director	R
Massmann, Nancy T	Resource Teaching Partner	R
Myers, Cheryl J	Librarian	R
Niemeyer, Derek D	Behavior Specialist	NR
Nadeau, Michelle R	Behavior Specialist	R
Olson, Jodi J	Lunch Clerk	R
Plombon, Leslie A	Playground	NR
Prieve, Sandra L	Children's House Teaching Partner	R
Prior, Cynthia L	Resource Teaching Partner	NR
Raedel, Cyndy M	Resource Teaching Partner	NR
Rettig, Kari Lynn	Resource Teaching Partner	R
Riederer, Linda L	Cook's Assistant	R
Rohy, David W	Resource Teaching Partner	NR
Ryan-Lauer, Cyndi	Music Teacher	R
Scharpe, Bernadette	E2 Teaching Partner	NR
Schoenherr, Amanda	Resource Teaching Partner	R
Schwartz, Niccole	E1 Teaching Partner	R
Shimpa, Margaret J	Title I Teaching Partner	R
Stenberg, Charles A	Food Service	R
Stenberg, Sue E	Resource Teaching Partner	R
Swayne, Connie D	Resource Administrative Assistant	R
Thompson, Susan M	Resource Teaching Partner	R

\* R = Return, NR = Not Return

<b>2014-15 Support (Non-Licensed) Staff</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
Anderson, Susan	Resource Teaching Partner
Brown, Janet	Food Service
Buxcel, Karen	Food Service Director
Carrigan, Michelle	Resource Teaching Partner
Colvin, Shari	Gifted & Talented/Enrichment
Collette, Marci	Resource Teaching Partner
Condon, Blake	Resource Teaching Partner
Cox, Jamie	Resource Teaching Partner
Ellis, Sheri	Resource Teaching Partner
Ellis, Steve	Resource Teaching Partner
Erickson, Bill	Custodial
Erickson, Tara	Administrative Assistant
Ewert, Rebecca	Resource Teaching Partner
Grack, Nicole	School Nurse
Hanson, Scott	Resource Teaching Partner

Harris, Meili	Resource Teaching Partner
Helget, Samantha	Resource Teaching Partner
Hierlmaier, Teigan	Resource Teaching Partner
Hoffmann, LuAnn	Administrative Assistant
Hudson, Rebecca	Resource Teaching Partner
Kalenberg, Michaleen	Resource Teaching Partner
Kinzler, Tim	Maintenance Director
Kirchoff, Lisa	Resource Teaching Partner
Massmann, Nancy	Resource Teaching Partner
McKee, Julie	Resource Teaching Partner
Mickolichuk, April	Resource Teaching Partner
Myers, Cheryl	Librarian
Nadeau, Michelle	Behavior Specialist
Olson, Jodi	Lunch Clerk
Pawlicki, Brandi	Resource Teaching Partner
Prieve, Sandra	Children's House Teaching Partner
Rettig, Kari	Resource Teaching Partner
Riederer, Linda	Cook's Assistant
Ryan-Lauer, Cyndi	Music Teacher
Schoenherr, Mandy	Behavior Specialist
Shimpa, Margaret	Title 1 Teaching Partner
Swayne, Connie	Resource Administrative Assistant
Thompson, Susan	Resource Teaching Partner
Wilson, Missy	Resource Teaching Partner



## Governance and Management

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The New Discoveries Montessori Academy Board of Directors meets the third Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. to discuss and direct the affairs of the school. The Board is comprised of six individuals: three parents; one teacher; and two community members. Ex-officio members include the Director of Operations, Director of Instruction, and Administrative Assistant. The following table provides greater detail of Board roles and affiliations.

Member Name	Board Position	Affiliation	Date Elected	Date Seated	Term End Date	Email Address
Jill Bierbaum-Rice	Secretary	Parent	July 2012	July 2012	June 2015	jill.bierbaum@newdiscoveries.org
Shari Colvin	Chair	Community Member	July 2012	July 2012	June 2016	shari.colvin@newdiscoveries.org
Susan Kubasch	Treasurer	Parent	July 2014	July 2014	June 2017	susankubasch@gmail.com
Betty Jodzio	Vice Chair	Teacher	July 2013	July 2013	June 2016	betty.jodzio@newdiscoveries.org
Jennie Pirnie	Member	Parent	July 2014	July 2014	June 2017	pirnieandpirnie@gmail.com
Patrick Selchert	Member	Community Member	July 2014	July 2014	June 2017	pselchert@gmail.com
Dave Conrad	Ex-Officio	Director of Operations	December 2005	N/A	N/A	dave.conrad@newdiscoveries.org
Tara Erickson	Ex-Officio	Administrative Assistant	May 2012	N/A	N/A	tara.erickson@newdiscoveries.org
Kirsten Kinzler	Ex-Officio	Director of Instruction	August 2014	N/A	N/A	kirsten.kinzler@newdiscoveries.org

### Board Training & Development

NDMA believes that the training of its board members is crucial to its effectiveness in operating as a governing body. Board members, Jill Bierbaum-Rice, Shari Colvin, Dave Conrad, Tara Erickson and Betty Jodzio participated in training in the areas of Finance, Board Governance: Roles and Responsibilities, and Employment Matters on April 29, 2014 with Chuck Herdegen and Dave Conrad as trainers. Additionally, Shari Colvin and Dave Conrad attended the ACNW Leaders Retreat and the Charter School Conference at the University of Minnesota.

New Discoveries Montessori Academy (NDMA) materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the charter contract and school bylaws relating to:

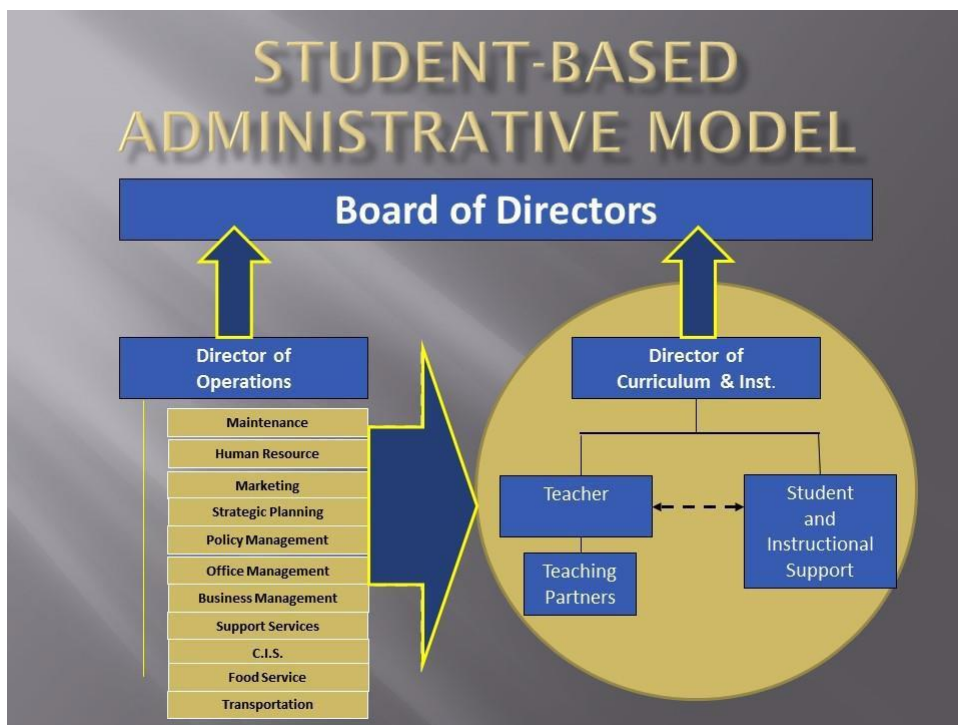
- school board composition, and the board demonstrates the capacity to govern an effective charter school;
- board member training;
- effectively and transparently conducting board meetings:

- A discernible method for conducting meetings (i.e. Robert's Rules)
- Complying with MN Open Meeting Law
- Timely distribution of board materials prior to meetings to board members and authorizer
- Appropriate documentation of board and committee meetings
- board decision-making and oversight, including but not limited to:
  - Establishing, reviewing and implementing policy
  - Establishing performance expectations that are in alignment with charter contract
  - Regularly reviewing academic, financial and operational data
  - Overseeing school improvement plans as necessary
  - Conducting timely review and approval of key organizational documents including the budget, contracts for service, facility lease, annual reports and financial audits

## MANAGEMENT

### Management Structure

The school improvement process has provided an opportunity to evaluate and better define our organizational structure. For example, we developed and are moving from a Director model (one administrator) to a shared leadership structure including the following roles: Director of Operations and Director of Instruction. (See organizational chart below) This refined structure will ensure the integrity of the school improvement plan, and ultimately, improved student achievement.



The Board of Directors evaluates the Director of Operations and the Director of Instruction on an annual basis, including a 360 degree evaluation in which staff are invited to participate.

## **Professional Development Plan and Implementation (Administration)**

NDMA utilized the Minnesota Model for evaluating its principal, Dr. Robert Cannon. In addition, due to the fact that Dr. Cannon lacked the credentials necessary to serve in the instructional leadership role for a priority school, the Minnesota Department of Education issued a memo of understanding requiring Dr. Cannon to complete a detailed improvement plan in order to remain at NDMA as instructional leader. By December of 2013, Dr. Cannon ranked below 60% on the evaluation instrument, and had summarily failed to meet the requirements of the improvement plan. Consequently, Dr. Cannon submitted his resignation on December 16, 2013.

At that point, NDMA partnered with MDE to articulate a detailed process to recruit and hire a qualified principal. In April we were given permission to hire an interim instructional leader. We are continuing to follow the process as we pursue a qualified candidate for the permanent position.

## **Operational Performance**

### **Health Services**

A Licensed Practical Nurse is on duty during the school day to assist students who are ill or injured. All medication is dispensed from the health office - both prescription and nonprescription. The nurse provides screenings during the school year for vision, hearing, height, weight, body mass index, high blood pressure, and scoliosis to students at recommended ages.

### **Transportation**

NDMA uses the local bus company to provide transportation for our students. We share our transportation with District 423 – Hutchinson Public Schools. We also use vans from ACC Midwest Transportation for our Glencoe area students.

### **Food Service**

New Discoveries has a full service food service program providing breakfast and lunch to our students. Food is prepared and served by a full kitchen staff including a Food Service Director, Cook, Lunch Clerk and Food Service Assistant. Our kitchen is an approved NSF commercial kitchen. Paraprofessionals provide lunchroom supervision.

### **Due Process – Student Discipline Data**

New Discoveries has a very clear Student Discipline Policy that references the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act. This brochure is included with the letter to families describing the student suspension.

### **Parent Engagement**

#### **PTO (Parent Teacher Organization)**

The mission of the PTO: Parent Advocates providing Resources to improve the learning Environment for New Discoveries Teachers, Students and Staff. The PTO works closely with the school staff in order to build community within the school. The PTO assists with many events and activities throughout the school year including Staff Appreciation Meals, Field Trip Support, School Pride/Spirit Wear, Family Restaurant Nights, and a variety of fundraising activities. PTO Meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm unless otherwise noted.

## Background Checks Of Staff, Board and Volunteers

The NDMA Administrative Assistant submits information to Trusted Employees, an online background check service. Background checks are completed with each new hire or board member. We also complete background searches on all regular volunteers.

## Key ACNW operational performance indicators:

New Discoveries Montessori Academy (NDMA) materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the charter contract relating to:

- relevant compliance and reporting requirements to the authorizer, state education agency, and/or federal authorities, including but not limited to:
  - State reporting and applications, including but not limited to: MARSS, STARS, UFARS, EDRS, Q Comp, DIRS, lease aid;
  - TRA/PERA;
  - School website is compliant with statutory and authorizer expectations;
  - Insurance coverage;
- the school facilities, grounds and transportation, including but not limited to:
  - Fire inspections and related records;
  - Viable certificate of occupancy or other required building use authorization;
  - Physical space provides a safe, positive learning environment for students;
  - Appropriate and safe student transportation practices;
- health and safety, including but not limited to:
  - Nursing services and dispensing of pharmaceuticals;
  - Food service;
  - Emergency management plan;
- admission and enrollment rights of students, including but not limited to policies and practices related to admissions, lottery, waiting lists, fair and open recruitment;
- due process and privacy rights of students, including but not limited to:
  - Due process protections, privacy, civil rights and students liberties requirements, including First Amendment protections and the Establishment Clause restrictions prohibiting public schools from engaging in religious instruction;
  - Conduct of discipline pursuant to the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act;
  - Maintain the security of and provide access to students records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and other applicable authorities;
  - Transfer of student records;
- employment including transparent hiring, evaluation and dismissal policies and practices;
- required background checks for all school employees

## FINANCES

Information presented below is derived from preliminary audit figures. The full financial audit will be completed and presented to Minnesota Department of Education and Audubon Center of the North Woods no later than December 31, 2014.

<b>FY14 Finances</b>	<i>Fund 1</i>	<i>Fund 2</i>	<i>Fund 4</i>
Total Revenues	\$ 2,671,963	\$139,158	\$8,935
Total Expenditures	\$ 2,555,960	\$139,158	\$8,935
Net Income	\$ 116,003	0	0
Total Fund Balance	\$ 116,003		



## Overview

At the Board Finance Committee level, regular dialogue concerning management reports, financial statements and enrollment created a solid dynamic this year, which resulted in sound, timely recommendations to the Board of Directors. Administration made timely recommendations which were acted on in a timely fashion, allowing us to deal constructively with lower enrollment numbers than anticipated. The end result is our ability to surpass our fund balance goal for fiscal 14 and receive the School Finance Award.

## Revenues

With lower enrollment than expected, revenue was down accordingly. The budget was revised, based on recommendations from administration via the Board Finance Committee. Fiscal 14 saw year two of a generous federal school improvement grant. Grant revenue allowed NDMA to continue to realize academic and staff development support through contracted employees, in the persons of Continuous Improvement Specialist, Data and Instructional Coaches, Building and Operations Manager, and Family and Community Liaison for ongoing school improvement efforts.

## Expenses

Expenses were curbed to some extent due to adjustments which resulted in fewer students enrolled than anticipated. The negative impact of this was diminished to some extent due to the fact that we made some expenditures in year-one of the School Improvement Grant which allowed us to require fewer expenditures in year two.

## Net Income and Fund Balance

Our efforts in the area of reduced expenditures allowed us to navigate through the reality of less net income while realizing a larger fund balance than we had set as a goal. As we updated financial goals through our ongoing strategic planning efforts, we increased our fund balance goal from \$20,000.00 to \$36,800.00. The good news is that we were able to surpass even the increased fund balance goal. The following is one approach to providing financial information for the annual report. Full financial statements are not necessary. Even though you may not have final FY14 audited financial information, you must still provide preliminary information.

Questions regarding school finances and for complete financials for 2013-14 and/or an organizational budget for 2014-15, contact:

Chuck Herdegen, Business Manager

Beltz, Kes, Darling & Associates

22488 Chippendale Avenue

Farmington, MN 55024

651.563.2233

chuck@bkda.org

## Future Plans

- *Expansion plans - There is a good deal of logic in considering expanding our academic program to include grades seven and eight. We have made the kind of progress academically and fiscally that we need to be making in order to consider this change in the future.*
- *Facility changes - As our student population grows (regardless of potential grade expansion), we find ourselves limited regarding space in our building. Also, our growing special education population poses facility challenges. Therefore, we are always*



considering our options regarding facility changes. We have a great relationship with our landlord, and have been assured that they are at the ready to “grow with us” if and when this becomes an option.

- o Program changes - We are not looking at any significant program changes in the near future. We have found a rhythm through our comprehensive school improvement effort that we wish to sustain.
- o Technology updates - We underwent a major technology update just prior to the start of the 2013-14 school year. We have been growing into the changes this year, and we are pleased with the updates. We have applied for E-Rate, and look forward to realizing some revenue for technology expenses through that program. We are planning to replace our wireless network before the 2015-16 school year, as that was the only major technology element we did not update last year.

## WHY NEW DISCOVERIES?

### Parents say...

Teaching methods- multi grade classroom, Montessori methods, challenging my child where she is strong & supporting areas of need because she has a different learning style.

Ability to handle special needs and accelerate along key growth areas.

I believe my children benefit from independent, self-directed learning.  
Smaller class sizes – more 1 on 1.

### Students say...

I love school. I want to move into school.

I really love this school I recommend it to everybody!

### What do you like about NDMA?

I like to learn. My teachers. Phy Ed. Music. Art. Playing games, teachers. Math. Gym. Teacher. Reading. Recess. Playground and teachers. All of it. Everything.

**SWOT Classification:** Operational

**SWOT Placement:** Weakness

**SWOT Statement:** The Board of Directors has been functioning in a state of continuous crisis throughout the duration of fiscal year 2012-13. An administration/Board rhythm has not been established as to an acceptable norm of expectations and roles.

**Core Value(s) Impacted:** Dynamic Leadership

**STRATEGY STATEMENT:**

Formulate an accepted norm for future operational excellence at the Board, administrative, and staff level.

- Goal #1**      Develop written policy to create collaborative roles for administration and Board by January 31, 2014. – Goal Accomplished  
**Person Responsible:**    **Board of Directors Chairperson**
- Goal #2**      Articulate, in writing, a post-SIG succession plan for staffing by May 30, 2014. – Plan formulated  
**Person Responsible:**    **Board of Director’s Chairperson**
- Goal #3**      Ensure all board members and instructional staff have Montessori theory training by May 30, 2014.– Initial Goal Accomplished and will be ongoing  
**Person Responsible:**    **Principal**
- Goal #4**      Fund up to \$200 of an approved off-site professional development experience for each classroom instructor by June 30, 2015 – Ongoing  
**Person Responsible:**    **Principal**

**SWOT Classification:** Outside Involvement      **SWOT Placement:** Opportunities

**SWOT Statement:** Building community relationships and alliances remains an opportunity. It will depend on what priority the Board and administration place on this endeavor. These relationships include generating more involvement with parents and business/industry. Results of active community relations can result in corporate financial support, community/parent involvement in the school, recognition for staff, and even entrepreneurial opportunities.

**Core Value(s) Impacted:** Intentional Interdependence

**STRATEGY STATEMENT:**

Implement a parent and community involvement process that contributes to the ownership of the NDMA vision statement and Core Values.

- Goal #1**      Implement a process to involve 80% of the NDMA family units to contribute five hours of service during the 2013-14 school year. – Tracking system developed, still working toward greater involvement  
**Person Responsible:**    **Superintendent**
- Goal #2**      Assign individual Board members and Administrators to make at least one presentation, on behalf of NDMA, in the community by June 30, 2014. – Only a couple of presentations made.  
**Person Responsible:**    **Board Member, Jill Bierbaum**
- Goal #3**      Establish a process for endowment funding by June 30, 2014. – Goal not accomplished  
**Person Responsible:**    **Policy/Governance Committee Chairperson**
- Goal #4**      Implement a plan to use a minimum of twelve (12) community resources to enhance learning at NDMA by May 30, 2014. – Goal met  
**Person Responsible:**    **Principal**

**SWOT Classification:** Student Growth                      **SWOT Placement:** Opportunities

**SWOT Statement:**                      Qualitative and quantitative student growth paves the way for the future. NDMA has no choice but to strive for higher academic outcomes with proven learning processes, proactive solutions, and creative decision-making. Quantitative growth may depend on planning how to expand special and gifted education facilities.

**Core Value(s) Impacted:**                      Exemplary Montessori Principles

**STRATEGY STATEMENT:**

                    Create an effective instructional model that ensures continuous student improvement.

- Goal #1**                      Demonstrate that at least (percentages to coincide with the percentages on the SIP) of NDMA students meet minimum academic standards in Math and Reading (MCA) testing by June 30, 2015. – *In progress*  
**Person Responsible:**    **Principal**
  
- Goal #2**                      Require student-related instructional technology (IT) training for 100% of instructional staff by December 31, 2013. – *Not completed*  
**Person Responsible:**    **Principal**
  
- Goal #3**                      Complete, in writing, the instructional “Scope and Sequence” by June 30, 2014. – *Learning Progression Document Developed to meet goal.*  
**Person Responsible:**    **Data/Instructional Coach, Joan Bendix**
  
- Goal #4**                      Integrate keyboarding technique into the curriculum for all E2 students by December 31, 2013. – *Not completed*  
**Person Responsible:**    **Principal**
  
- Goal #5**                      Design a written process, detailing effective academic methodology, to sustain high academic results in the NDMA culture by August 31, 2014. – *Learning Progression Document Developed to partially meet goal.*  
**Person Responsible:**    **Data/Instructional Coach, Joan Bendix**



**SWOT Classification:**     Financial                                     **SWOT Placement:**     Weakness

**SWOT Statement:**       Financial management is an operational issue characterized by diminished credibility with accounting projections, timely administrative planning/monitoring, inconsistent policy application, Board awareness, and leadership communications resulting in repeated yearly negative E.O.Y. fund balances near Statutory Operating Debt status.

**Core Value(s) Impacted:**       Measurable Accountability

**STRATEGY STATEMENT:**

Design financial management processes to ensure consistent application and measurable accountability resulting in sustaining yearly positive fund balances and building a General Fund reserve of \$100,000 by the end of FY2016.

- Goal #1**           Define, in writing, the financial roles/responsibility of each representative of the Finance Committee ensuring: accurate documented projections, advance meeting agendas, timely consideration to issues, meaningful financial planning, on-going communications to the Board, meeting minutes, meeting frequency, on-going budget monitoring, etc. to be presented to the Board at the July, 2013 meeting as policy approval. – *Goal met*  
**Person Responsible:**   **Superintendent**
- Goal #2**           Review all existing financial policies, as a Board agenda discussion item, with the Board of Directors prior to September 1, 2013. – *Goal met*  
**Person Responsible:**   **Policy Governance Chairperson**
- Goal #3**           Develop a yearly time-based schedule of monthly financial items that will be required to be on monthly Board agendas, either for discussion or approval, by September 1, 2013. – *Goal needs to be clarified.*  
**Person Responsible:**   **Superintendent**
- Goal #4**           Comply with the strategy to ensure General Fund balance of at least:  
                     Beginning Fund Balance, July 1, 2014    \$20,000 (Already approved action by the Board)  
                     – *This portion of the goal has been meet (exceeded)*  
                     Beginning Fund Balance, July 1, 2015    \$60,000 (Board action required in Jan, 2014)  
                     Beginning Fund Balance, July 1, 2016    \$100,000 (Board action required in Jan, 2015)  
**Person Responsible:**   **Superintendent**
- Goal #5**           Implement a comprehensive purchase order encumbrance system by November 30, 2013. – *Goal met*  
**Person Responsible:**   **Superintendent**



**SWOT Classification:** Operational

**Core Value(s) Impacted:** Dynamic Leadership

At New Discoveries Montessori Academy (NDMA) everyone, from the children to the Board of Directors, will be offered multiple opportunities to grow as leaders through a mentoring, experiencing, sharing, and learning environment. NDMA will uphold the highest standard of integrity and respect that is visible and shared by staff and students at school, at home, and in their community.

**STRATEGY STATEMENT:**

**Create and maintain a culture of trusting relationships**

- Goal #1** Add, by July 1, 2014, to the Instructional Leadership Team one non-teacher Board representative, who will attend, participate, bring Board concerns, communicate back to the Board of Directors, but who will be considered a non-voting member.  
**Person Responsible:** NDMA Leadership Team
- Goal #2** Produce a trusting NDMA environment through three intentional efforts that will be in full implementation by November 15, 2014:
- Create written guidelines or procedures as re-occurring situations arise that staff and administration will follow uniformly.  
**Person Responsible:** Instructional Leader
  - Design and publish a written guideline to respond to concerns that are expressed to Board members by staff that focus on an open discussion between the parties involved before formal grievances are considered.  
**Person Responsible:** Policy/Governance Committee Chair
  - Empower the Instructional Leadership team to discuss operational issues, make recommendations to administration for resolution, and require administration to report back to the team on the action taken.  
**Person Responsible:** Instructional Leader

Revised 09/12/14

**SWOT Classification:** Outside Involvement

**Core Value(s) Impacted:** Intentional Interdependence

A blend of interdependence will be woven in the fabric of NDMA to represent a mix of school and community working together to achieve the shared vision. Utilizing community volunteers for relevant and meaningful activities will not only be a common occurrence, but an accepted mode of operation. The community will be used as a classroom for students to realize the relevancy of learning.

**STRATEGY STATEMENT:**

**Create a positive community impact**

**Goal #1**      Implement, by July 1, 2014, a marketing plan that promotes a positive NDMA image and targets increased enrollment in Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade.  
**Person Responsible:**    **Director of Operations**

**Goal #2**      Coordinate with resources at NDMA to use print and/or electronic media to inform parents of specific teaching techniques to use at home with their children by February 28, 2015.  
**Person Responsible:**    **Instructional Leader**

Revised 09/12/14



**SWOT Classification:** Staff Development

**Core Value(s) Impacted:** Exemplary Montessori Principles

The profound legacy of Maria Montessori’s learning principles will be implemented recognizing individual learning styles of each child to produce optimum individual achievement. Each child will experience a personalized and interactive learning experience that integrates the Montessori beliefs of

- Independence
- Observation
- Following the child
- Connecting with the child
- Prepared environment
- Absorbent mind

**STRATEGY STATEMENT:**

**Consistent staff adherence to Montessori practices and principles**

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Goal #1</b> | Develop and publish a list of acceptable Montessori certification programs for NDMA Classroom Teachers by September 15, 2014.<br><b>Person Responsible:</b> Instructional Leader   |
| <b>Goal #2</b> | Design, by September 1, 2015, a written list of Montessori competencies required of instructional staff to effectively use when working with children at NDMA.<br><b>Person Responsible:</b> Instructional Leader  |
| <b>Goal #3</b> | Implement by December 1, 2014, a foundational Montessori-related in-service training approach consisting of at least three 5-hour modules that will be required of all instructional staff in the first two years of NDMA employment.<br><b>Person Responsible:</b> Director of Operations |

Revised 09/12/14

**SWOT Classification:**     Student Growth

**Core Value(s) Impacted:**     Measurable Accountability

NDMA will passionately pursue measurable metrics for student and staff improvement. Part of the metric configuration will be continuous improvement of process that innovatively produces staff and student achievement beyond those deemed necessary by state and national requirements. Empowerment will not be just a word. It will be a process of clear expectations, adequate resources, mentoring/coaching, and transfer of power monitored within the boundaries of vision, policies, and goals. Students and Staff will be held to the metrics of competency-based curriculum and given the necessary technical and human resources available to prepare them for tomorrow's challenges.

**STRATEGY STATEMENT:**

**Consistent staff adherence to Scope and Sequence and Continuous Improvement of Academic Methodology**

- Goal #1**           Implement by September 1, 2014, the 2013-14 continuous improvement goal of a written academic methodology process to ensure consistent use by instructors to sustain high academic student performance in the NDMA culture.  
**Person Responsible:**   **Instructional Leader**
  
- Goal #2**           Benchmark instructor's adherence to Scope and Sequence by March 1, 2015, while working with instructional staff to make necessary improvements to this process.  
**Person Responsible:**   **QComp Lead Teacher**
  
- Goal #3**           Develop by November 1, 2014 appropriate student academic goals that are consistent with Q-Comp and SIP goals.  
**Person Responsible:**   **Data Coach & Instructional Leader**
  
- Goal #4**           Assign responsibility for monitoring compliance of scope and sequence, and report continuous process improvement results to the Board in February and June.  
**Person Responsible:**   **QComp Mentor Teacher**
  
- Goal #5**           Comply with the strategy to ensure General Fund balance of at least:  
                   Beginning Fund Balance, July 1, 2015    \$100,000  
                   Beginning Fund Balance, July 1, 2016    \$140,000  
**Person Responsible:**   **Director of Operations**

Revised 09/12/14







Spring 2013