



New Discoveries *Montessori Academy*

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Official Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Monday, September 20, 2021

The Official Board Meeting of New Discoveries Montessori Academy of Hutchinson, MN was held at New Discoveries Montessori Academy, Hutchinson, MN.

1. Call Meeting to Order – The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m.
Voting members present: Shari Colvin, Spencer Kangas, Chris LaPlante, Patti Hoerner, Patrick Selchert (6:05 p.m.). Absent: Amanda Sundblad, Meytal Stancek.
Non-voting members: Dave Conrad, Tara Erickson, Kirsten Kinzler. Absent: Dustin Reeves.
2. Guests: Tamara Polzin.
3. Spotlight Report – No report this month.
4. Agenda – MS (Hoerner/LaPlante) to approve the agenda with addition of 9.d. New Business; roll call vote taken; motion carries unanimously.
5. MS (Kangas/La Plante) approval of the consent agenda, no corrections, roll call vote taken; motion carries unanimously.
 - a. Approval of Minutes of August 16, 2021 Meeting
 - b. Submitted Committee Reports
6. Financial Reports
 - a. Received the August 2021 financial statements, discussion noted that eight students are still needed to reach the enrollment goal. Budget allows for benefit increases for staff.
 - b. MS (Hoerner/Kangas) to approve August 2021 supplemental information report, Reeves noted at the finance committee meeting that the line of credit is paid off at this time, roll call vote taken; motion carries unanimously.
7. Reports
 - a. Executive & Associate Directors
 - i. Personnel changes – resignations, dismissals, reassignments, and new employments, Rita Bisbee, Amy Petree, Katlyn Rannow, all paraprofessionals.
 - ii. Strategic Plan Update
 - iii. Environmental Education Update – 2 new apple trees were planted on the property. Fruits were purchased from the local farmers market for afternoon snacks for students. A group of middle school students will be traveling to Wolf Ridge Environmental Centre in Finland, MN in October.
 - iv. Academic Testing and Achievement Update – testing in progress at this time. The Board will review NWEA data at next board meeting.
 - v. Enrollment Update – 238 students PK-8

- vi. Activities and Happenings related to the school, staff, students, families, community. A group of parents is working with staff to have AWARENESS WEDNESDAYS which recognizes different disabilities and health areas, packets of information were also given to students to take home.
 - b. Board Activities – Continue Work on Strategic Plan Goals and Carpenter book study, The 7 Outs. The team reviewed Strategic Planning goals and how to use “The 7 Outs” to change/review goals.
8. Old Business
9. New Business
- a. Received the resignations of Mia Madson and Laura Stuber from the board. Thank you for your service.
 - b. MS (Colvin/Kangas) to nominate Chris La Plante as board secretary, no additional nominations received, roll call vote taken; motion carries unanimously.
 - c. MS (Hoerner/Kangas) to approve expenditure not to exceed \$8,000 for a consultant to assist with comprehensive succession plan with \$8000 moved from the budget line 740 - interest cost online of credit, to cover the expenses, Polzin explained to the board the process of this request for proposal, discussion was about phase one to be completed by February, phase two when needed, roll call vote taken; motion carries unanimously.
 - d. MS (Hoerner/La Plante) to extend the leave of absence for Lois Tritz, Children’s House teacher, roll call vote taken; motion carries unanimously.
10. Upcoming Meetings/Events/Announcements
- a. Next board meeting, October 18, 2021 – 5:30 p.m.
 - b. Finance Committee Meeting, October 11, 2021 – 12:00 p.m.
 - c. Policy/Governance Committee Meeting, October 11, 2021 – 1:00 p.m.
11. Adjournment 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tara Erickson



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Executive Director Report for NDMA's Board of Directors – Dave Conrad, Monday, September 20, 2021

1. Employment Update

- We have hired three additional Teaching Partners to serve in the following classrooms: Children's House – Ash (#307); Children's House – Elm (#311); and Elementary I – Birch (#317)

2. COVID-19

- Since mid-August, we have had *four* positive COVID cases with students, and *four* positive cases with adults.
- Last week we had one staff member in isolation with positive COVID diagnosis, and two staff members out for quarantine due to close contact at NDMA.
- This week we have one staff member in isolation with positive COVID diagnosis, and four students in quarantine due to close contact at NDMA.
- We began onsite nasal rapid COVID testing this morning. Staff members – under guidance – self swab and wait while a portable device "reads" the test. After approximately 20 minutes, my iPad will indicate the results. This is going to dramatically impact our ability to keep staff on-site. If the result is negative, the Staff member is encouraged to mask up for the week, and to be super-vigilant paying attention to symptoms that may appear in the coming days. If the result is positive, they will be sent home to isolate, and contact tracing will be re-initiated.
- We are awaiting delivery of BinaxNOW OTC at-home test kits for families.

3. Enrollment

- As of today, our enrollment stands at 238 preschool through eighth grade students. This is up seven students from the end last school year.
- We have students on our waiting lists in preschool and third grade.
- We currently have wiggle room in grades five through eight.

4. Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center 2021-22

Authorizing Activities

- The following is a summary of expected oversight and monitoring activities for NDMA for the current school year. Osprey Wilds may conduct further activities, with or without notice as deemed necessary to fulfill our authorizing responsibilities, consistent with the charter contract and MN statutes. Information gathered through these activities will help inform the annual Osprey Wilds performance evaluations and charter renewal decisions. For more information about our oversight activities, please visit our website.

Osprey Wilds Oversight Activities

- Monthly review of board meeting documents (agenda, packet, minutes, financials)
- Attendance at approximately two board meetings
- Approximately one site visit, and additional site visits as needed
- Monitor Epicenter compliance task completion (on-time rate)
- Monitor the school's Safe Learning Plan
- Monitor the school's Performance Improvement Plan progress (Exhibit S)

Site visits: Site visits will take place in-person for as long as in-person schooling continues. (All OW evaluators are fully vaccinated against Covid-19 and will mask.) However, we will continue to monitor conditions related to Covid-19 and distance learning and may conduct some virtual site visits as needed.

Board meeting observations: When streaming or remote observation is available, OW evaluators will conduct board meeting evaluations virtually. Should the school hold on-site meetings, OW expects schools in greater Minnesota to use the conference speaker and webcam OW sent during the 2019-20 school year to enable the observer to hear and see all board members.

Osprey Wilds Feedback and Evaluation

- Site visit feedback letter(s)
- Annual budget review
- Completed board meeting observation form(s) and immediate feedback during formal board meeting observations
- Periodic feedback on board meeting and packet reviews
- Annual performance evaluations, including academic and financial



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4. Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center 2021-2022

Authorizing Activities (continued)

School Responsibilities

- As requested, provide a complete board packet prior to any meetings that Osprey Wilds staff will attend when it is sent to the full Board.
- Satisfy Epicenter compliance tasks accurately and on time.
- Notify Osprey Wilds of significant changes at the school that relate to the charter contract.
- Implement requirements related to any intervention or other notice that Osprey Wilds may issue during the school year.
- Implement the school's Performance Improvement Plan (Exhibit S), including updating Osprey Wilds on the need for changes to the plan.
- Ensure all formal communications from Osprey Wilds are included in the next board meeting packets and are on the agenda for board discussion and action as needed.
- Per Section 6.20 of the school's contract, notify OW via an updated board roster of any resignations or additions to its School Board within ten business days of such a change.
- The school also is required to inform OW of any special and emergency meetings at the same time as notice is provided to board members and the public. This responsibility also extends to notification of changes in the normal board meeting schedule.
- Notify OW if the school is changing learning modes. This notification should be provided at the same time the school community is notified.
- Per Section 6.7 of the school's contract, provide student assessment and school performance data via the annual academic data request and FY21 Annual Report, and submit to OW by the indicated deadline.

5. Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) Funding

- Applications are due to MDE October 1st for round three COVID relief funding. The criterion for qualified expenditures includes:
 - Keeping students healthy and connected to learning
 - Extended learning time opportunities
 - * Summer school programming
 - * Extended day programs
 - * After school programs
 - * Enrichment programs

6. Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) Funding (continued)

- Addressing learning loss through increased staffing, course offerings, etc.
- Mental health support
- Support for historically underserved populations
- Air quality projects

7. Important Dates

8.

- *Professional Development*, Friday, September 24th
 - Teachers and Teaching Partners 8 to 11:30, *team meetings and Trauma-Informed Educare*
 - Teachers, *CORE check-in* 12:30 to 1 p.m.
 - Teachers, *Connection Academy* 1 to 2:30 p.m.
- *Instructional Leadership Team (ILT)* rescheduled, Tuesday, September 28th
- Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MACS) *Policy Update & Annual Meeting*, October 7th, 2:30 p.m. & 4:30 p.m.
- EIII Wolf Ridge *Environmental/Experiential Learning*, week of October 11th
- *Parent/Teacher Conferences*, Tuesday, October 19th & 20th

1) Student Achievement - Data/Assessments – Academic Goals

NWEA MAP Fall Assessments are almost complete for all students in grade K-8. Data will be available for the board in October.

2) Environmental Education/Focus on our environment – Environmental Literacy Plan (ELP)

Ludmila and I went to the Hutchinson Farmers Market last week and purchased watermelons and tomatoes in bulk to use for our Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program. This program allows us to serve a fresh fruit or vegetable snack to all of our students and encourages the use of local farmer's produce. It's a win-win!

With the beautiful weather this fall, many of our classrooms have been exploring outdoors. Dave planted some new trees on the grounds with students (ask him about the specifics). Trees were donated by the City of Hutchinson.

3) Marketing/Fundraisers – PTO

The Montessori Mural has been completed and it looks great! Crow River Signs installed a 'wrap' on the wall. The mural was funded through the PTO which held a school fundraiser and collected local donations. Check it out!

4) School Happenings

AWARENESS WEDNESDAY – Over the summer three of our NDMA moms got together with some of our staff and developed a plan to highlight different disabilities and health areas throughout the school year. Each month will be highlighting a different awareness topic. Students and staff are also encouraged to wear the designated color at school each Wednesday to show support. Students in the classrooms received a packet of information to go through in their classrooms and then bring home to their families. What a great grassroots effort by these moms! Yay!

We are preparing to send our 7th and 8th graders to Wolf Ridge Environmental Center in Finland, MN October 11-15. The cost of the trip is \$300 per student. If you or someone you know would be able to make a donation to help our much-needed scholarship fund, please see me. This is an amazing experience for our students, and we want to make sure all of our students can attend.

This Friday we have a Professional Development Day where all staff will be present in the morning for a session on Trauma-Informed Educare. Our Special Education Director, Tammy Pulver, will be our presenter. Licensed teachers will be attending the CORE Reading Academy where we are studying the Science of Reading. In the afternoon, Jane Schuette, will be present for a session on Connections at NDMA and Self-Care.

5) Other

- See Dave's Weekly Update/Board Report for other information...