



New Discoveries Montessori Academy
#4161-07
2024-2025
Year 19
Annual Report

Comprehensive Achievement & Civic Readiness (CACR) Strategic Plan
(formerly known as the World's Best Workforce Plan (WBWF))

The purpose of this Annual Report is to inform our stakeholders – employees, parents and our community, as well as our authorizer, Osprey Wilds, with a comprehensive description of the educational programs and practices at New Discoveries Montessori Academy during the **2024-2025** school year, our **nineteenth** year of operation. This report also includes information for the Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness (CACR) Strategic Plan (formerly known as the World's Best Workforce Plan WBWF) required in MN Stat. 120B.11.

All school information is disseminated to stakeholders via e-mail, upon request and available on the school website – www.newdiscoveries.org.

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Charter school requirements underlined. MN Stat. 124.E

Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness (CACR) requirements bolded. MN Stat. 120B.11

SCHOOL INFORMATION

New Discoveries Montessori Academy
1000 5th Avenue SW
Hutchinson, Minnesota 55350
(320).234.NDMA (6362)
www.newdiscoveries.org

Grades Served: Pre-K – 8th grade

Year opened: September 2006

Vision: Providing a quality, comprehensive public education within a Montessori context

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 standard of integrity and respect, so they are visible and shared by staff and students at school, at home, and in their community. Professional Development, workshops, JEPD, Family Discoveries Nights, Student Ambassadors, and Music and Art Showcases will create ongoing opportunities for leadership development.

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. Inherent outcome: Positive interactions among and between students, families, staff and community.

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:

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

Measurable Accountability

NDMA will passionately pursue measurable rubrics for student and staff achievement and improvement. There will be a continuous improvement process resulting in innovation and achievement beyond state and national requirements. It will be a process of clear expectations, adequate resources, mentoring/ coaching, and leadership development within the boundaries of vision, policies, goals, and budget parameters. Students and Staff will be held to the standards-based curriculum and given the necessary technical and human resources available to prepare them for future challenges.



Authorizer Information

Osprey Wilds (OW), formerly known as Audubon Center of the North Woods (ACNW), is NDMA's authorizer. It is a natural fit for New Discoveries to partner with Osprey Wilds as NDMA has recognized and exercised the importance of environmental education for its students. Osprey Wilds has served NDMA in this capacity since the summer of 2006. Our current contract is in effect through June 30, 2028 as we just completed our renewal and we were awarded a 3-year contract.

Osprey Wilds Charter School Division Authorizing Mission - to ensure quality academic and environmental literacy outcomes for Minnesota students through effective charter school authorizing.

Osprey Wilds Charter School Division Authorizing Vision - to authorize a portfolio of high performing charter schools that instill a connection and commitment to the environment in their school communities, while working towards a healthy planet where all people live in balance with the Earth.

NDMA students look forward to our annual trip to the Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center, a time during which 5th and 6th graders travel to Sandstone for three days of rich immersion in environmental education with the staff at Osprey Wilds.

Erin Anderson, Director of Charter School Authorizing
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Osprey Wilds
Environmental Learning Center



IMPLEMENTATION OF PRIMARY AND ADDITIONAL STATUTORY PURPOSES

New Discoveries Montessori Academy's primary purpose is to improve pupil learning. This purpose will be achieved in the following ways: (from our OW/NDMA Contract FY21-FY25)

Increased Learning Opportunities

New Discoveries Montessori Academy will increase learning opportunities for students by providing another choice in elementary education in the Hutchinson Area. This choice will be grounded in the Montessori philosophy and pedagogy.

- Through the use of the Montessori materials, students will receive hands-on learning experiences where children touch, make discoveries, and deeply understand complex concepts. The materials allow concrete understanding of concepts helpful for understanding abstract principles, are self-teaching and self-correcting, have multiple levels of challenge and can be used at different developmental levels. New Discoveries Montessori Academy will provide classrooms utilizing the direction of the Montessori "prepared environment".
- We believe that the larger community is officially part of our classroom environment. Field trips are a vital part of children's personal, social, and intellectual development. Small groups of children will regularly plan and go on supervised trips all around our greater community.
- With Osprey Wilds (formerly known as Audubon Center of the North Woods), there are many environmental applications for our students. They offer residential environmental education experiences to schools with a full array of adventure programming including a wildlife barn, maple syruping shack, ropes course, hiking explorations, and wall climbing. Students at New Discoveries Montessori Academy will participate in these unique environmental experiences.

Innovative Teaching Methods

- Long Learning Cycles - Montessori education reserves extended uninterrupted time periods for the children to work freely on a task or project. The children absorb themselves in their studies. They complete their work, emerging fulfilled, refreshed, and satisfied with their accomplishment. The extended periods result in saved time due to fewer transitions while, even more importantly, they lead to deeper learning, more interest, and great satisfaction for the children. Our great period designated during our academic day allows for these extended periods of learning.
- Multi-age grouping – Classrooms will be based on a three-year age span as opposed to the one year of traditional education. Teachers and students get to know each other quite well by working together in a multi-age class for a three-year period. Multi-age groupings mean more small-group options relative to abilities and interests as well as maximizing the potential of each individual child in an environment that has a place for everyone, providing a profound sense of belonging.

- Using the natural environment and facilities of our authorizer, Osprey Wilds, students will participate in an overnight environmental experience. Students will also explore and understand their local environment and be involved in environmental-focused service-learning projects which will foster the idea of stewardship for their environment.

Effective Measurement of Learning Outcomes

- New Discoveries Montessori Academy will administer several assessments (i.e. NWEA MAP, FAST, MCAs) throughout the school year to provide baseline data for all students at NDMA. The information acquired from the assessments will be used to determine the amount of measurable progress made by each child. Families receive an individual report for their child. In addition, the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) will be administered as required. These standardized tests will be one of the measures used to show student academic achievement.
- New Discoveries Montessori Academy will continue to clarify and improve consistency in our curriculum, and to align the Montessori competencies with the MN Academic Standards ensuring that we meet or exceed each standard - all in a manner that remains true to our Montessori educational vision.
- New Discoveries Montessori Instructional Staff have developed a Year-Long Learning Progression (YLLP) that provides a road map for implementation of curriculum over a three-year timeframe to account for having multiple grades in every classroom. This is teacher-led and an on-going process.

New Forms of Accountability for Schools

- Student, parent, and staff satisfaction surveys will indicate program satisfaction among its stakeholders. New Discoveries Montessori Academy will design the survey and the survey will be administered annually in the spring. Results will be used by the Board and staff in our continuous improvement plan, strategic plan and annual report.
- New Discoveries Montessori Academy will continue its membership with the American Montessori Society (AMS) as a member school and will continue to ensure that our teachers and administration receive and maintain the proper Montessori training.
- New Discoveries Montessori Academy will renew its membership with the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MACS). This membership is intended to provide additional accountability as well as additional resources for NDMA.
- 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 in understanding and interpreting data. Data informs our planning and instruction creating a culture of data-driven decision making.

Professional Opportunities for Staff

- In order for this school to be successful, teachers of Montessori programs must be thoroughly trained in Montessori theory and practice. Staff will participate in Montessori training opportunities and New Discoveries Montessori Academy will seek ways to budget for and support staff Montessori certification.
- New Discoveries Montessori Academy is a Quality Compensation (QComp) school. Teacher leaders will assume the roles of Mentor and Lead Teachers. The Mentor Teachers will provide 1:1 mentoring at their respective levels. Lead Teachers will facilitate weekly PLC meetings at their respective grade levels.
- NDMA's Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) will play a primary role in determining areas of focus for professional development for both certified and support staff. Our ILT membership is comprised of Lead Teachers from every grade level, Mentor Teachers, School Psychologist, Title I Teacher, Special Education Coordinator, Board Representative, Parent Representative and Administration.
- New Discoveries Montessori Academy will provide and encourage professional development opportunities for staff in an ongoing effort for them to be lifelong learners and provide academic opportunities that improve student achievement.



**The greatest sign of
success for a teacher. . .
Is to be able to say, "The
children are now working
as if I did not exist. "**

- Maria Montessori

www.quotes.pics

STUDENT ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHICS

ENROLLMENT

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2025 (as of 10.20.25)
PreK 3	7	6	8	3	5
PreK 4	23	23	22	25	21
Kindergarten	29	29	30	24	24
1st Grade	28	29	28	25	20
2nd Grade	26	27	25	25	25
3rd Grade	24	24	25	23	24
4th Grade	28	25	28	23	24
5th Grade	25	25	17	24	20
6th Grade	27	23	22	15	18
7th Grade	19	18	14	15	14
8th Grade	8	8	9	12	11
Total PreK-8	244	237	228	213	206
Total ADM (Average Daily Membership) for year	213.82	221.16	209.28	200.62	

2024-2025 enrollment remained steady around 213 students. During the 24-25 school year, we had 10 children leave NDMA. Transfers in included 11 students that enrolled at NDMA after the first day of school. In addition, we had 6 students come and go during the school year. They enrolled after the first day and left before the last day.

DEMOGRAPHICS

42.0% of our student body received special education services and 59.4% of our students qualified for free/reduced lunches. This is significantly greater than that of the local traditional public schools. (District #423 Hutchinson – SpEd 21.4% - F/R 32.7% - although their numbers have also increased.) Source: MN Report Card

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026 (as of 10.20.25)
Total Enrollment	244	233	228	213	206
Male	133	123	114	102	107
Female	111	110	114	111	99
Special Education	96	113	86	99	97
ELL/LEP	3	3	2	5	4
Black/African American	2	3	2	2	2
Hispanic/Latino	25	30	24	22	28
Asian	3	3	1	1	1
American Indian	1	1	5	2	2
2 or more races	10	9	3	3	6
White	198	189	193	182	157
F/R Lunch	115	213	137	153	136
Homeless	2	4	2	11	5

New Discoveries is fortunate to serve children from Hutchinson and the surrounding communities.

District	# Students	District	# Students
108 – Norwood Young America	1	739 – Kimball	1
111 – Watertown Mayer	2	2159 – BLH Buffalo Lake Hector	5
112 – Eastern Carver County Schools	2	2365 – GFW Gibbon Fairfax Winthrop	3
423 – Hutchinson	168	2396 – ACGC Atwater Cosmos Grove City	4
424 – Lester Prairie	0	2687 – HL-W Howard Lake - Waverly	3
465 – Litchfield	6	2859 – GSL Glencoe Silver Lake	12
466 – Dassel Cokato	9		

STUDENT ATTENDANCE, ATTRITION & MOBILITY

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Overall Attendance Rate	93.17%	90.67%	92.11%	92.7%	92.91%

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Consistent Attendance Percentage	97.9%	87.9%	61.7%	66.1%	78.2%

Source: MDE Report Card

STUDENT ATTRITION

Percentage of students who were continuously enrolled between October 1 of the 2023-2024 school year and October 1 of the 2024-2025 school year.	71.0%
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Percentage of students who continue enrollment in the school from Spring 2024 to October 1, 2024.	97.0%
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STUDENT MOBILITY

	Summer Transfers In	Number of students on Oct. 1	Mid-year Transfers In	Mid-year Transfers Out	Total Mid-year Transfers	Mobility Index* (as a percent)
2020-21	71	228	20	7	27	12.27%
2021-22	25	234	10	10	20	8.54%
2022-23	23	237	8	12	20	8.43%
2023-24	27	221	10	4	14	6.3%
2024-25	27	214	10	4	14	6.54%

* Total mid-year transfers divided by Number of students on Oct. 1. (Information from JMC.)

School Calendar/Daily Schedule

Our 2024-2025 school calendar had 167 school days and primarily followed Hutchinson Public Schools – District 423 calendar since many of the families we serve have children enrolled at New Discoveries and Hutchinson Public Schools.

We began the school year on Monday, August 26th. Our day begins at 8:15am and is done at 2:50pm. Our last day of school was May 29th.

2024-2025

-JULY-	-AUGUST-	-SEPTEMBER-
S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
-OCTOBER-	-NOVEMBER-	-DECEMBER-
S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31
-JANUARY-	-FEBRUARY-	-MARCH-
S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31
-APRIL-	-MAY-	-JUNE-
S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

EDUCATIONAL APPROACH & CURRICULUM

Educational Approach and Curriculum

Vision: Providing a quality, comprehensive public education within a Montessori context.

Mission: "Education for Life": To provide children with a quality education that prepares them intellectually, physically, socially, creatively, and emotionally for our changing world and all its joys and challenges.

Educational Program Overview

New Discoveries Montessori Academy (NDMA) offers a multi-age, student-centered educational experience rooted in Montessori principles. While our foundational structure is inspired by the Montessori method, NDMA has integrated other proven instructional approaches to meet the needs of our diverse student population.

Classroom Structure

NDMA's multi-age classrooms foster collaboration, independence, and continuity of learning. Classrooms are organized into the following groupings:

- Children's House (CH): Ages 3–5 (preschool and kindergarten)
- Elementary I (EI): Grades 1–3
- Elementary II (EII): Grades 4–6
- Erdkinder (EIII) (Middle School): Grades 7–8

Each classroom is staffed by a general education teacher, a special education co-teacher, and one or more teaching partners (paraprofessionals), providing robust academic and social-emotional support in every classroom.

Montessori materials are used most consistently in Children's House and Elementary I classrooms. As students progress into Elementary II and Erdkinder, instruction becomes increasingly abstract. While Montessori principles continue to guide classroom culture, instruction is complemented by more traditional curriculum and resources to ensure students are well-prepared for high school and beyond.

Montessori Principles Honored at NDMA

These core Montessori principles guide our approach to instruction, classroom environment, and student engagement:

- Freedom of movement, choice, and repetition
- Learning through interest and curiosity
- Peer collaboration and multi-age grouping
- A prepared environment that supports independence and order
- The teacher as a guide
- Learning in context with real-world application
- Intrinsic motivation as the foundation for engagement

"IMAGINATION DOES NOT BECOME GREAT UNTIL HUMAN BEINGS, GIVEN THE COURAGE AND STRENGTH, USE IT TO CREATE."

-DR. MARIA MONTESSORI

These principles are not isolated ideals—they inform the way we structure our environments, interact with students, support autonomy, and build community. The following examples show how Montessori principles are expressed across all grade levels.

Montessori Principle	Children’s House (CH)	Elementary I (EI)	Elementary II (EII)	Erdkinder (EIII)
Freedom of movement, choice, and repetition	Children choose from material shelves, move freely, and repeat works daily.	Students select independent work; flexible seating and pacing encouraged.	Continued choice with larger projects; increasing accountability for managing time.	Weekly schedules with independent work time; student-designed projects.
Learning through interest and curiosity	Works build on children’s natural interest (e.g., pouring, puzzles, real-life tasks).	Individual work plans reflect student interests (e.g., research on animals, history).	Students pursue topics that connect to personal interest.	Students find interest-based projects and participate in service learning.
Peer collaboration and multi-age grouping	Older students model and support younger students with work and routines.	Cross-age tutoring and cooperative projects; strong classroom community.	Leadership roles and group presentations; mentor younger students.	Students work in teams for field studies, composting, and school service tasks.
Prepared environment that supports independence	Materials arranged to promote self-direction; lessons given 1:1 or in small groups.	Shelf work, checklists, and teacher conferences support student autonomy.	Organizational systems like binders and planners introduced for self-management.	Students manage individual and group timelines for school work and projects.
The teacher as a guide	Teachers observe and give lessons based on readiness, not age.	Guides redirect when needed but allow exploration and self-correction.	Mini-lessons offered; students encouraged to self-advocate and reflect on progress.	Teachers act as mentors and facilitators; students lead presentations.
Learning in context with real-world application	Practical life tasks mirror home life; gardening, snack prep, and cleanup are integral.	Field trips and nature walks support real-world connections to content.	Cross-curricular projects link science, history, and current events.	Real-world learning through service learning, composting, cooking, and field studies.
Intrinsic motivation as foundation for engagement	Students complete works for joy and pride; no extrinsic rewards.	Students take pride in mastery and sharing work with peers.	Reflection journals and goal setting used to guide progress.	Student-led exhibitions, personal learning goals, and authentic assessments.

A defining feature of NDMA's Montessori approach is our emphasis on Grace and Courtesy. These practices are intentionally taught and reinforced across grade levels to support peaceful conflict resolution, respectful communication, and the development of a strong, caring community.

Key Program Features

In addition to our core Montessori practices, NDMA offers the following programmatic features to support a comprehensive, inclusive education:

- **Preschool (3s and VPK):** Tuition-based half-day program for three-year-olds and tuition-free, four-day Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten for four-year-olds. Strong retention from preschool to kindergarten.
- **Co-Teaching Model:** General and special education teachers collaboratively lead all classrooms, supporting differentiated instruction and inclusion.
- **Academic Supports:** Title I staff, as well as Reading and Math Interventionists, provide targeted support in core areas.
- **Specialists:** Music, Physical Education, and Library enrich the core curriculum.
- **Environmental Education:** Integrated throughout the school experience, including composting, recycling, gardening, outdoor classroom, and service learning.

Staffing to meet the NDMA Educational Mission/Vision

At NDMA, our leadership team, comprised of the Executive Director, School Psychologist, Behavior Interventionist, and Human Resource-Office Manager plays a pivotal role in guiding and supporting our instructional program. Their expertise and practical knowledge contribute significantly to our educational mission.

In addition to this, our teacher leaders have taken on more active roles in leadership within our school community. They provide strong guidance during our weekly 90-minute PLC (Professional Learning Community) sessions and actively participate in our monthly Instructional Leadership meetings. These collaborative efforts have been instrumental in fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

A cornerstone of our success has been our commitment to Quality Job-Embedded Professional Development. This approach has brought our teachers and teaching partners together, facilitating the implementation of best practices in instruction and assessment. We recognize the importance of blending the 'Magic of Montessori' with the 'Mandates of Minnesota,' and our instructional focus on Efficiency, Proficiency, and alignment with the MN State Standards. We continually ask ourselves, "Is it efficient? Does it lead to proficiency? Is it aligned with the MN State Standards?" This focus on efficiency, proficiency, and alignment is bearing fruit and helping us achieve our educational goals.

This collaborative and holistic approach ensures that our students receive a well-rounded education that combines the unique Montessori philosophy with the educational requirements of the state, ultimately providing them with a strong foundation for success.

Alignment to State Standards

Marrying the Magic of Montessori and the Minnesota Mandates

NDMA offers the Montessori philosophy within a public-school environment, which presents a unique blend of opportunities and challenges. The opportunities stem from the rich tradition, the utilization of beautiful educational materials, developmentally appropriate activities, and

the integration of multi-age classrooms. However, a central challenge arises from the absence of a clear connection between the Montessori curriculum and the Minnesota Academic Standards. Our dedicated staff has invested countless hours in aligning the Montessori curriculum with the Minnesota Academic Standards, an ongoing endeavor.

NDMA is committed to ensuring that our teachers receive and maintain proper Montessori training. Additionally, we prioritize equipping our teachers and teaching partners with a deep understanding of the Minnesota Academic Standards, curriculum alignment, and effective teaching strategies. Our staff undergoes continuous training and support in administering assessments, comprehending and interpreting data. This data-driven approach informs our planning and instructional decisions, fostering a culture of data-driven decision-making at NDMA.

Differentiation

Montessori programming naturally supports differentiation, as students regularly choose work that aligns with their individual learning levels. In Children's House, personalized instruction is a cornerstone, with lessons tailored to each child's developmental journey, guiding them toward the next stage of understanding. This differentiated approach extends into both reading and math in all classrooms, where instruction is adjusted based on ability levels. Normed assessments, along with classroom evaluations, are used to ensure that each student's learning is appropriately supported and challenged.

Remediation

At New Discoveries, remediation is seamlessly integrated into our daily instructional practices through differentiation. Our approach involves continuous progress monitoring, flexible grouping, and the use of multi-age classrooms, all of which enable teachers to meet students at their individual levels and provide targeted support as needed. These strategies ensure that remediation occurs organically, allowing NDMA staff to identify and address learning gaps effectively and in a timely manner.

Acceleration

New Discoveries Montessori Academy is committed to offering a diverse range of educational opportunities tailored to meet the needs of all students, including those with exceptional abilities. We recognize that each student possesses unique strengths and potential, and we are dedicated to providing programs that foster both personal and academic growth. Differentiated instruction is the foundation of our acceleration programs, ensuring that advanced learners are challenged appropriately.

We offer various pathways for highly capable students, such as subject-specific acceleration, telescoping, and whole-grade acceleration, as outlined in our Board Policy 590P: Acceleration. These options are designed to nurture and extend the abilities of students who are ready for more advanced learning, helping them achieve their fullest potential.

The children of today will make all the discoveries of tomorrow. All the discoveries of mankind will be known to them and they will improve what has been done and make fresh discoveries. They must make all the improvements in houses, cities, communication, methods of production, etc. that are to be made. The future generation must not only know how to do what we can teach them, they must be able to go a step further.

Special Education

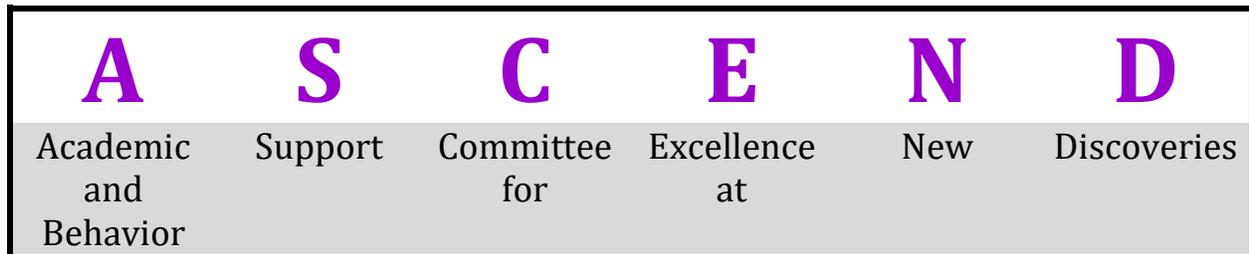
At NDMA, we are committed to supporting the diverse learning needs of our students through a comprehensive and well-structured special education program. Our special education services are designed to provide targeted assistance to students who require additional support, ensuring they can thrive in an inclusive and nurturing environment.

Key components of our special education program include:

1. **Leadership and Coordination:** Our dedicated Director of Special Education in partnership with the Executive Director who also has a Sped Director license, oversees the entire program ensuring it aligns with legal requirements and best practices.
2. **On-Site Coordinator:** We have a Special Education Coordinator based on-site to provide direct support to staff and students, assisting with day-to-day needs. In addition, the coordinator co-leads the Special Education Team and ASCEND Team in partnership with the School Psychologist.
3. **School Psychologist:** NDMA employs a full-time School Psychologist who leads all psychological assessments and co-leads the ASCEND (Academic & Behavior Excellence at New Discoveries) process. This process helps identify students in need of additional behavioral and academic interventions.
4. **Child Study Process:** We implement a thorough and consistent child study process (ASCEND), ensuring each student's needs are accurately identified and addressed. This includes collaboration with educators, specialists, and families to create individualized plans for each student.
5. **Family Collaboration:** Our team works closely with families to ensure that Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals are met, and that all deadlines and legal requirements are upheld. We believe that strong family involvement is crucial to student success.
6. **Transportation Services:** We extend our services by providing transportation options to many communities surrounding New Discoveries, facilitating access for our students.
7. **Contracted Services:** We have partnered with various professional service providers, including Hutchinson Health, West Metro Learning Connections, Southwest West Central Cooperative, Steppingstone Therapeutic, Crow River Family Services, Greater Minnesota Family Services, PrairieCare, NorthStar Counselling, Aspire Counselling, and Serenity Counseling. These providers consistently deliver the necessary support and services to our students.
8. **Co-Teacher Model:** We offer a co-teaching model, where special education teachers work directly in classrooms alongside general education teachers. This ensures that all students have access to the support they need in real-time.
9. **Early Childhood Special Education Specialist:** We have a specialist who specializes in supporting our early childhood population.
10. **Specialized Professionals:** Our team includes 2.5 Speech Therapists – 1.5 onsite and 1 teletherapy, Behavior Interventionist, and approximately 25 special education

paraprofessionals (Teaching Partners) who were employed this past year to ensure that the unique needs of our students and their families are met.

Together, these resources ensure that every student at NDMA receives the individualized support they need to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. This comprehensive approach underlines our commitment to providing a supportive and nurturing environment for all our students, regardless of their individual needs and challenges.



Child Find Process - ASCEND

Our Child Find process at NDMA is comprehensive and designed to ensure that all students' needs are identified and addressed effectively. Here's an overview of our Child Find process:

1. **Vision and Hearing Screening:** We initiate the process with vision and hearing screenings for all our students to identify any potential issues that may affect their learning.
2. **Preschool Screening:** For our youngest learners, we conduct preschool screenings to assess their developmental readiness.
3. **Academic Benchmarking:** Starting from Kindergarten through 8th grade, we employ academic benchmarking to monitor and evaluate each student's progress and identify areas where additional support may be needed.
4. **Collaborative Meetings:** We hold a series of collaborative meetings led by our school psychologist and lead teachers to discuss student concerns. These meetings include:
 - **PLC (Professional Learning Community):** A forum for our educators to exchange insights and best practices.
 - **ILT (Instructional Leadership Team):** A team focused on educational leadership and improvement.
 - **SpEd (Special Education) Meetings:** Addressing the unique needs of our students with special requirements.
 - **ASCEND Meetings:** A core team comprising administrators, teachers, and special education representatives that reviews school data to determine which students might benefit from tier 2 and potentially tier 3 interventions.
5. **Tiered Interventions:** For students identified as needing additional support, select core team members work closely with classroom teachers. They match students to appropriate interventions, provide necessary training, and ensure that these interventions are implemented effectively and consistently.

6. **Supporting Tier 1 Practices:** The ASCEND team also works to bolster tier 1 practices by promoting the use of evidence-based teaching methods and classroom management strategies. This support helps maintain a strong foundation for all students.
7. **Broad Staff Involvement:** We have intentionally extended invitations to staff members with knowledge and skills in evidence-based practices, even if they are not currently serving in lead or mentor teacher roles. This inclusion ensures that a wide range of expertise contributes to the ASCEND mission.

This multi-faceted approach underscores our commitment to early intervention, collaborative decision-making, and the use of evidence-based practices to provide the best possible educational experience for all our students.

English Learner (EL) Program

At New Discoveries Montessori Academy, while the number of students identified as English Learners (ELs) is typically small—five or fewer each year—we are committed to providing tailored support to help these students succeed. Identified EL students receive specific English Language Development (ELD) instruction directly within their classrooms, under the guidance and oversight of an EL teacher.

NDMA uses a structured approach, guided by our ELD Program flowchart, to ensure that procedures for assessing and supporting English proficiency are consistently followed. This includes the administration of English proficiency tests, such as the ACCESS Assessment, which is conducted annually in February. The results of these assessments inform the level and type of instruction provided, ensuring that each student receives the appropriate support to develop their English language skills.

This approach allows us to meet the unique needs of English Learners, helping them to thrive academically and socially within our school community.

Additional Programs

At New Discoveries Montessori Academy, we offer additional programming beyond the regular school day to support students' social, emotional, and academic growth. These programs are designed to engage students in meaningful, hands-on learning experiences that extend the Montessori principles into new settings.

After School Discoveries

Our After School Discoveries program currently features rotating enrichment groups such as Friendship Group and Cooking Group. Each group meets for one hour after school, one day per week, over the course of 6–8 weeks. This structure allows new students to participate each session and helps build a sense of community across grade levels.

In Friendship Group, students learn and practice social-emotional skills such as empathy, communication, conflict resolution, and how to build and maintain positive peer relationships. In Cooking Group, students engage in collaborative cooking and baking projects, learning practical life skills while also developing teamwork, following instructions, and experiencing the joy of creating and sharing food.

All After School Discoveries programs are offered at no cost to families and are facilitated by NDMA staff who volunteer their time and talents to enhance student learning in creative and supportive ways.

Summer Discoveries

NDMA's Summer Discoveries program offers continued learning opportunities for all currently enrolled students. Held over six days from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., the program provides hands-on activities focused on literacy, math, and environmental education. NDMA teachers and teaching partners lead the sessions, with staffing and materials included in the school's annual budget. Families are responsible for transportation, and a small fee is requested to cover student snacks.

Commitment to Growth

NDMA remains dedicated to providing a high-quality, public Montessori-influenced education remaining focused on student-centered, inclusive practices. As we continue to grow and evolve, we aim to preserve the heart of Montessori—respect, independence, and meaningful learning—within a comprehensive educational model that reflects the needs of our students and community.

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES & IMPLEMENTATION

New Discoveries Montessori Academy (NDMA) continues to advance its mission through Montessori-inspired practices that blend individualized, hands-on learning with environmental education and character development. Multi-age classrooms, co-teaching partnerships, and a strong emphasis on grace and courtesy nurture independence, collaboration, and respect for others—qualities central to NDMA's philosophy and community culture.

Key Successes:

NDMA's 2024–25 school year reflected steady academic progress in Reading and Math, continued implementation of co-teaching partnerships, and a sustained focus on student well-being. The school's character education program, grounded in Montessori's "Grace and Courtesy," is implemented schoolwide and has strengthened NDMA's positive, safe, and inclusive culture.

Environmental education remains a cornerstone of NDMA's identity. Students participate in daily stewardship practices such as composting, recycling, and caring for indoor and outdoor environments. The school also continues its tradition of residential environmental learning experiences—with 5th–6th graders attending a three-day program at Osprey Wilds and middle schoolers participating in a five-day experience at Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center. These experiences connect students deeply to nature and foster environmental literacy beyond the classroom.

NDMA also celebrates low staff turnover and the continued dedication of long-term employees. The school's licensed School Psychologist, who has served since 2015, and its outgoing Special Education Coordinator have been instrumental in strengthening systems of support for students with special needs.

Key Challenges and Response:

NDMA faces ongoing challenges in staffing, particularly within special education, where teacher shortages have made it difficult to sustain fully co-taught classrooms. Financial

constraints remain a concern as lease aid has not increased in over 15 years despite rising costs, and nearly half of NDMA's students receive special education services, increasing the overall cost of instruction. While the school continues to work toward a more competitive salary structure, modest salary adjustments have been implemented to support recruitment and retention efforts.

Strategic Priorities:

NDMA's 2024–25 Strategic Plan, approved in October 2024, focuses on four pillars: Dynamic Leadership, Intentional Interdependence, Exemplary Montessori Principles, and Measurable Accountability. Priorities include strengthening Montessori implementation through professional development, maintaining fiscal stability, expanding family engagement, and supporting high-quality instruction in every classroom.

Through its commitment to individualized learning, environmental responsibility, and community connection, NDMA continues to exemplify innovation in public education—preparing students to lead with curiosity, empathy, and purpose.



ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: GOALS & BENCHMARKS

Progress on Osprey Wilds Contractual Academic Goals and CACR Alignment

Ready for Kindergarten [R4K] All students meet school readiness goals.

Achievement Gap Closure [AGC] All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.

Career and College Ready [CCR] All students are career- and college-ready before graduating from high school.

Graduate from High School [GRAD] All students graduate from high school.

Lifelong Learners [LL] All students are prepared to be lifelong learners.

Indicator 1: Mission Related Outcomes

Goal: *Over the period of the contract, students at New Discoveries Montessori Academy (NDMA) will demonstrate a commitment to their community through service.*

Measure 1.1: From FY21 to FY24, the aggregate percentage of students who meet the school's community service requirements annually will be at least 60.0%. The annual requirement is at least 15 hours of community service.

CACR Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: *Lifelong Learners*

Key Measures & Results for this Goal: *NDMA had at least 60% of the students meeting the school's community service requirement meeting this goal.*

Indicator 2: English Language Learners

The school does not have points apportioned in this indicator area as it does not serve a significant population of English Learners.

Goal: *n/a*

CACR Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: *n/a*

Key Measures & Results for this Goal: *n/a*

Indicator 3: Reading Growth and Progress

Goal: *Over the period of the contract, students at NDMA will demonstrate growth in reading as measured by state accountability tests and nationally normed assessments.*

CACR Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: *Career and College Ready*

Key Measures & Results for this Goal: *The school demonstrated mixed, though improving, performance on Reading Growth measures through the term of the contract. North Star Progress measures saw the school outperform for both the percent of students whose achievement levels improved and the percent of students whose achievement levels decreased or did not meet. This is a strong showing on the publicly reported progress measures. Local growth outcomes for NWEA all saw improvement through the term of the*

contract, with the school approaching target for students in grades K-2, with 45% of students meeting their expected growth, and meeting target for students in grades 3-8, with 53% of students meeting expected growth. Overall, the school earned 72.5% of points for this indicator, which approaches target, though is only 2.5 percentage points away from meeting target.

Indicator 4: Math Growth and Progress

Goal: Over the period of the contract, students at NDMA will demonstrate growth in math as measured by state accountability tests and nationally normed assessments.

CACR Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready

Key Measures & Results for this Goal: The school demonstrated improving performance on Math Growth measures through the term of the contract, so much so that the school ended in a strong position by overall meeting target. North Star Progress measures saw the school outperform the state the percent of students whose achievement levels improved, did not meet target for the percent of students whose achievement levels decreased or did not meet. Local growth outcomes for NWEA all saw improvement through the term of the contract, with the school meeting target for students in grades K-2, with 52% of students meeting their expected growth, and meeting target for students in grades 3-8 as well, with 52% of students meeting expected growth. Overall the school earned 75% of points for this indicator, which meets target.

Indicator 5: Reading Proficiency

Goal: Over the period of the contract, students at NDMA will demonstrate proficiency in reading as measured by state accountability tests.

Effective July 1, 2023, the READ Act replaces the Read Well by Third Grade goal in World's Best Workforce (MN Stat. 120B.12). The legislature seeks to have every child reading at or above grade level every year, beginning in kindergarten. Because the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments measure reading proficiency for the first time in third grade, reporting on third grade reading proficiency serves as a proxy for determining if the school is meeting the READ Act literacy goal.

CACR Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready

Key Measures & Results for this Goal: The school had mixed performance in Reading Proficiency through the term of the contract. The school met target for the Free/Reduced Price lunch and Special Education student groups when compared to the state, and approached target for the same groups when compared to the district. The school did not meet target for all students in comparison to the district or baseline, though did approach target for all students in comparison to the state. Overall, the school earned 53.1% of the points, which approaches target.

Indicator 6: Math Proficiency

Goal: Over the period of the contract, students at NDMA will demonstrate proficiency in math as measured by state accountability tests.

CACR Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready

Key Measures & Results for this Goal: The school had poor performance in Math Proficiency through the term of the contract. The school approached target for the Free/Reduced Price lunch and Special Education student groups when compared to the state. The school did not meet target for any other measure, which includes all measures and student groups in comparison to the local district. Overall, the school earned 12.5% of the points, which does not meet target.

Indicator 7: Science Proficiency

Goal: Over the period of the contract, students at NDMA will demonstrate proficiency in science as measured by state accountability tests.

CACR Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Career and College Ready

Key Measures & Results for this Goal: The school had mixed performance in Science Proficiency (and Growth) through the term of the contract. The school met target for the Free/Reduced Price lunch student group when compared to the state, and approached target for the same group when compared to the district. All students and the Special Education student group approached target in comparison to the state, with the same groups not meeting target in comparison to the district. Overall, the school earned 50.0% of the points, which approaches target.

Indicator 8: Proficiency or Growth in Other Curricular Areas or Educational Programs

Goal: Over the period of the contract, prekindergarten students at NDMA will demonstrate readiness for kindergarten as measured by "Early Childhood Indicators of Progress: Minnesota's Early Learning Standards" rubric.

CACR Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: Ready for Kindergarten

Key Measures & Results for this Goal: The school demonstrated weak performance on the Proficiency in Other Curricular Areas measure through the term of the contract. The aggregate percentage of prekindergarten students who demonstrated readiness for kindergarten was 72%, which is 13 percentage points less than the target of 85%.

Indicator 9: Post-Secondary Readiness

The school does not have a contractual goal in this indicator area as it does not serve high school students.

Goal: *n/a*

CACR Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: *n/a*

Key Measures & Results for this Goal: *n/a*

Indicator 10: Engagement

Goal: *Over the period of the contract, students at NDMA will attend the school at high rates.*

CACR Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal: *Career and College Ready. Lifelong Learner*

Key Measures & Results for this Goal: *The school demonstrated weak performance on Attendance measures through the term of the contract. The school's aggregate consistent attendance rate was 8 percentage points less than that of the state.*

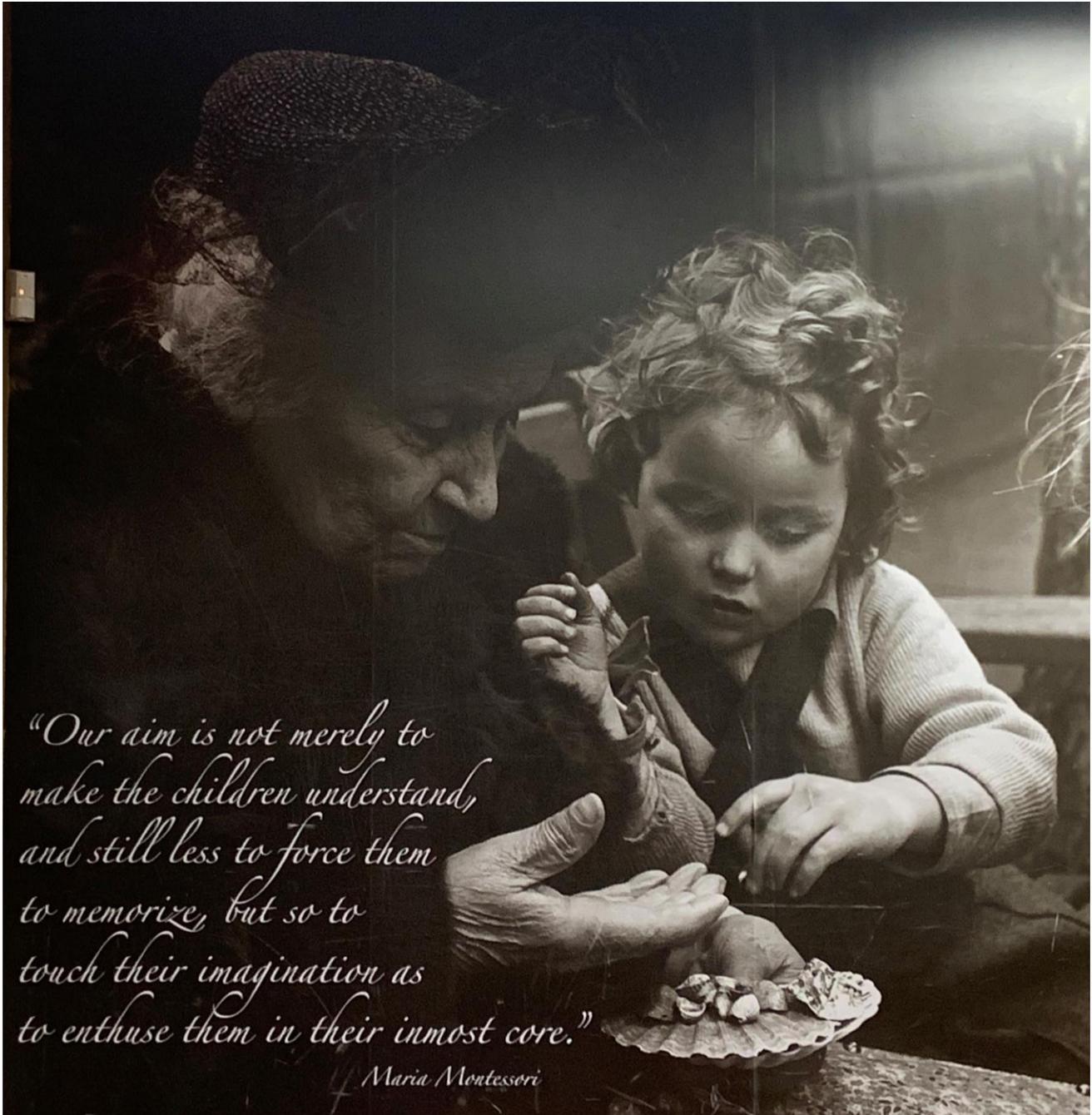
Federal and State Accountability

High Quality Charter School Status

New Discoveries has been identified as a High-Quality Charter School (HQCS) and was a recipient of the CSP Expansion Grant.

ESSA Identification

NDMA is a Title I school and has not been identified for any additional support under ESSA.



COMPREHENSIVE ACHIEVEMENT & CIVIC READINESS (CACR) STRATEGIC PLAN REPORT

Assessing Student Progress and Instructional Strengths

New Discoveries Montessori Academy (NDMA) uses multiple assessments to monitor student learning and guide instruction throughout the year. Students in grades K–8 complete FastBridge (FAST) and NWEA MAP assessments in reading and mathematics three times annually—fall, winter, and spring—providing benchmark and growth data. FAST screenings support early identification of needs, while NWEA MAP offers adaptive, standards-aligned measures of academic growth.

In Spring 2025, NDMA students achieved an average 47th percentile in Reading and 48th percentile in Mathematics, with corresponding growth percentiles of 53 and 43, respectively. These results align with the school's FY25 Strategic Plan goal to raise Reading proficiency from 45.7% to 48% and Math from 48.9% to 51%, demonstrating progress toward increased student achievement.

The Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) and weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) review data after each assessment cycle to evaluate Tier 1 instruction and determine additional supports. NDMA's co-teaching model, implemented school-wide, ensures equitable access to high-quality instruction and allows real-time support for students with individualized plans.

Through the ASCEND Child Find and Intervention System, staff analyze academic and behavioral data to identify students for Tier 2 or Tier 3 supports. Interventions are monitored for effectiveness, adjusted as needed, and documented through ongoing progress monitoring. Title I services and Character Education programming further strengthen equity and engagement.

NDMA's multi-age classrooms naturally support acceleration and enrichment. Approximately five students participated in subject-specific acceleration during 2024–25. Guided by Board Policy 590P, teachers and mentors use classroom observations and assessment data to recommend subject or grade acceleration, ensuring advanced learners are challenged appropriately.

Instructional practices are reviewed continuously through Q-Comp observations, PLC data dialogue, and ILT evaluation. Staff analyze assessment data and student work to identify strengths, share strategies, and align instruction to the Minnesota standards and Montessori principles. The Year-Long Learning Progressions (YLLP) guide curriculum alignment across multi-age cycles. Professional development during 2024–25 emphasized data-based instruction, Montessori observation, co-teaching collaboration, and literacy alignment with the READ Act.

Civic readiness is embedded through Montessori Grace and Courtesy lessons, Character Education programming, multi-age mentoring, and service learning. For example, students participated in a City of Hutchinson Community Clean-Up Day and engage in environmental stewardship projects such as composting, gardening, and recycling—activities that cultivate responsibility, empathy, and leadership within the community.

Curriculum and Instruction Review System

NDMA maintains a structured system for reviewing and evaluating curriculum and instruction to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with state standards and Montessori philosophy. All curricula are reviewed by the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) and grade-level Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Reviews consider student outcome data, teacher feedback, and fidelity to both state standards and Montessori principles.

Instructional materials and strategies are evaluated for effectiveness using results from NWEA MAP, FAST, and MCA assessments, along with student work samples and observational data. PLCs meet weekly to analyze data and make instructional adjustments; ILT meets monthly to synthesize findings and guide schoolwide professional development priorities.

Teacher evaluations and the school's Q-Comp program provide formative and summative feedback focused on instructional practice. The Executive Director is evaluated annually and the evaluation includes performance indicators related to instructional leadership and student outcomes.

NDMA promotes access to effective teachers who reflect the diversity of the school community. The school actively recruits educators from underrepresented populations and provides mentorship to ensure retention and success. Ongoing professional learning in culturally responsive teaching, trauma-informed practice, and Montessori pedagogy ensures all students benefit from high-quality instruction.

Improving Instruction and Student Achievement

NDMA's strategic plan prioritizes continuous improvement in instruction and student learning outcomes. The Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) oversees alignment of instructional practices and curriculum with Minnesota standards and Montessori principles.

Curriculum Improvement: Teachers use the Year-Long Learning Progressions (YLLP) to align instruction across grade bands. The curriculum integrates Montessori materials with evidence-based programs such as UFLI Foundations, CORE Reading Strategies, Barton, and RightStart Math. Teachers look at student results each year to see what's working and make changes to improve learning.

Instructional Practices: NDMA emphasizes data-based instruction, co-teaching collaboration, and observation-driven reflection. Weekly PLCs analyze student progress to plan differentiated instruction and interventions. Mentor Teachers and the Executive Director provide feedback through Q-Comp observation cycles.

English Development: Although NDMA serves a small number of English Learners (typically ≤ 5), the school follows its ELD flowchart to assess and monitor growth, using ACCESS scores to guide instruction.

These strategies collectively improve instructional consistency, align our teaching approaches with Minnesota's updated expectations for reading instruction (READ Act), and strengthen academic achievement for all students.

Equitable Distribution of Teachers

NDMA reviews staffing annually to ensure equitable access to effective, licensed, and experienced teachers for all students, regardless of background. Staffing data are analyzed by the Executive Director and HR Manager using licensure, experience, and demographic information to confirm equitable distribution. All NDMA teachers hold valid Minnesota licenses in their assigned instructional areas or have the appropriate Out-of-Field Placement (OFF) licensure. Multi-age classrooms and the co-teaching model support equitable access to instruction, allowing students from diverse backgrounds to learn alongside experienced educators.

	Licensed Educators (%)	3+ Years Experience (%)	Working in Area of Licensure (%)	Advanced Degrees (%)	Racially / Ethnically Diverse (%)
Teachers	100% (25/25)	88% (22/25)	88% (22/25)	52% (13/25)	0
Admin	100% (1/1)	100% (1/1)	100% (1/1)	100% (1/1)	0

NDMA's hiring priorities emphasize recruiting educators from underrepresented groups and supporting their retention through mentoring, professional learning, and an inclusive school culture. Although Hutchinson's candidate pool is not highly diverse, the school continues to seek and encourage applications from diverse educators.

Education Effectiveness Practices

Educational effectiveness at NDMA is grounded in high-quality instruction, technology integration, and an inclusive, collaborative culture.

Rigorous, Culturally Sustaining Instruction: NDMA's curriculum blends Montessori principles with evidence-based programs to create rigorous and relevant learning experiences. Lessons incorporate hands-on, inquiry-based learning and technology tools such as IXL Math and digital literacy programs.

Validating and Affirming School Culture: Grace and Courtesy lessons, SEL instruction through Character Strong, and community-based projects (gardening, composting, clean-up day) nurture respect and empathy. NDMA's emphasis on environmental stewardship and service builds civic responsibility and inclusivity.

Collaborative Professional Culture: Q-Comp, PLCs, and ILT structures promote continuous feedback, coaching, and shared leadership. Professional development aligns to strategic goals—data-driven instruction, Montessori observation, and culturally responsive teaching—ensuring retention and growth of highly qualified and diverse educators.

Together, these practices advance NDMA's mission to develop academically proficient, socially responsible, and civically engaged learners prepared for future success.

Q-Comp Annual Report

New Discoveries Montessori Academy (NDMA) continues to take part in the state's Quality Compensation (Q-Comp) program, which supports teacher growth and collaboration to improve student learning. During the 2024–25 school year, six Lead and Mentor Teachers represented every grade level and special education. They led weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings and joined the monthly Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). These meetings gave teachers regular time to share ideas, review student data, and align lessons across classrooms while keeping the Montessori approach at the center of instruction.

Teachers reported stronger teamwork and more consistent instruction across grade levels. Coaching and peer feedback helped teachers strengthen classroom management, student engagement, and the use of Montessori materials. Students showed steady growth overall—especially in reading—based on spring NWEA MAP results.

A year-end review found that the combination of coaching, PLC teamwork, and clear feedback continues to build teacher confidence and effectiveness. The current teacher-evaluation rubric based on the Danielson Framework works well, but the team noted a need to include more culturally responsive teaching practices. Work to update the rubric will begin in 2025–26.

In 2024–25, 94% (17 of 18) eligible teachers earned performance pay based on observation and evaluation results. No teachers received pay based on student-achievement goals because the schoolwide target was not fully met. The team will review the performance-pay system to ensure it stays fair and balanced between growth and achievement.

Looking ahead, NDMA will continue strengthening PLCs with a focus on using data to guide instruction and on designing curriculum together. The teacher-evaluation rubric will be updated to include culturally responsive elements, and professional development will continue to focus on evidence-based instruction and collaboration. The Q-Comp program remains a vital part of NDMA's culture of teamwork and continuous improvement, helping teachers—and students—grow every year.

Student & Parent Satisfaction

Survey data show that both students and parents at New Discoveries Montessori Academy continue to express high levels of satisfaction and a strong sense of safety within the school community. All parents (100 percent) agreed that their child feels safe at school and is satisfied with their NDMA experience. Among students, 91 percent said “yes” when asked if they are learning at school, and 81 percent reported that they feel safe and comfortable in school.

These results highlight NDMA's continued success in creating a safe, supportive, and engaging learning environment for children. The slightly lower percentage on student safety reflects normal developmental variation and helps guide conversations about school climate, supervision, and peer relationships. Staff use this information in Professional Learning Community (PLC) discussions and at Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) meetings to identify ways to enhance communication, belonging, and student voice.

Feedback from the staff and community surveys further supports these positive trends. Nearly all staff members indicated they feel valued and would recommend NDMA to families, and community members overwhelmingly agreed that NDMA is an asset to Hutchinson and that its staff are friendly and welcoming.

Parent and student comments reflect the caring, peaceful culture that defines the school. One parent shared, “*The atmosphere of everything and kindness from all staff,*” while a student noted,

“Calm and peaceful class.” These reflections capture what NDMA families value most—safe, nurturing classrooms where kindness, learning, and community come together each day.

Overall, survey results confirm that NDMA's focus on relationship-building, multi-age mentorship, and Montessori Grace and Courtesy practices continues to foster a culture where students, families, and staff feel connected, safe, and proud to be part of the NDMA community.



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Environmental education continues to be a vital part of daily life at New Discoveries Montessori Academy. Our students learn to care for the environment not only through lessons but through hands-on experiences that connect directly to their classrooms and community. From our youngest learners planting and harvesting vegetables to our middle school students managing the school compost center, environmental literacy is woven throughout our curriculum and culture.

During 2024–25, each classroom maintained an Outdoor Classroom Space designed to help students build awareness of the natural world. Teachers used reflection journals and a schoolwide tracking system to document outdoor learning. Seventy percent of classrooms met or exceeded the goal of 12 hours of outdoor education time across the year, and all classrooms engaged students in environmental exploration and observation.

Students also deepened their environmental knowledge through grade-level projects. Elementary I students identified trees and plants on school grounds, with 86% completing their environmental checklists. Older students studied climate change and its impact on the Earth. Pre- and post-assessments showed strong growth, with 86% of students improving their scores and 84% able to describe one way they can make a positive difference for the planet.

Hands-on environmental action continues to be one of NDMA's greatest strengths. Every student participates in recycling and composting, and 100% of students help reduce school waste through daily composting. Middle School students track compost data, while several families and staff take compostable food to feed farm animals. Since starting the program, NDMA has reduced weekly waste from about 200 pounds to roughly 20 pounds. Kindergarten students care for the school garden and proudly deliver their harvest by wagon to the local food shelf—a highlight of the year for students and families alike.

The school's recycling and composting programs foster positive attitudes and real-world skills. In student reflections, 81% were able to explain why recycling matters, and survey data showed 96% of students, families, and staff actively recycle both at school and at home.

While NDMA continues to make excellent progress toward environmental literacy, one ongoing goal is to strengthen consistency in documenting outdoor classroom activities across all grade levels. This improvement will help capture the full scope of learning happening every week.

Overall, NDMA's environmental education program continues to bring the Montessori philosophy to life—empowering students to explore, question, and care for their world. Whether tending gardens, studying climate systems, or composting food waste, students are growing as informed stewards who understand that even small actions can make a big difference.



Indicator Area 1: Awareness

Students demonstrate an awareness of the relationship between the environment and human life and the diversity of life that shares the earth with humans.

Goal: Students and staff at *New Discoveries Montessori Academy* have the awareness, or are increasing their awareness, of the relationship between the environment and human life.

Strategy 1.1

All classrooms (Grades K-8) will have a designated Outdoor Classroom Space where they will focus on the outdoor environment at least 20 minutes per week.

Evaluation method 1.1.1

Each week, classrooms will track and document time spent on the Outdoor Classroom Space calendar page in the Environmental Education binder. Minimum school year results will be 36 weeks x 20 minutes/week = 720 minutes or 12 hours spent in Outdoor Classroom Space per classroom. By exploring the outdoor environment, students will demonstrate their awareness and their relationship with the environment with reflections of time spent in their Outdoor Classroom Space articulated in their Environmental Journal.

Results: *During the 2024–2025 school year, several classrooms at NDMA consistently incorporated the Outdoor Classroom Space into their experiential education (EE) curriculum and documented their experiences. While informal observations suggest that all classrooms are engaging with the outdoor environment through EE activities and reflection journals, the practice of consistently recording this time is still developing. In the classrooms most successful with outdoor learning, this time is intentionally scheduled and embedded as a regular part of the weekly routine.*

For the second consecutive year, classroom staff used a Google Form to log their outdoor learning experiences. All 10 classrooms recorded their use of the Outdoor Classroom Space or other environmental learning activities. Of these, 7 classrooms—representing 70%—met or exceeded the goal of 720 minutes (12 hours) of outdoor learning time. This progress reflects NDMA’s ongoing commitment to fostering environmental literacy and underscores the value of structured scheduling to support meaningful and consistent engagement with nature.



Indicator Area 2: Knowledge

Students have knowledge of how natural systems function and how human systems interact with and depend on them.

Goal: Students and staff at *New Discoveries Montessori Academy* have the knowledge, or are increasing their knowledge, of human and natural systems and processes.

Strategy 2.1

- Students and staff will be able to identify the trees, plants, birds and animals that are found on school grounds.

Evaluation method 2.1

- Student Environmental Journal will contain a checklist of the trees and plants found on the property. 80% of E1 students (Grades 1-3) will complete the checklist over the course of the school year.

Results: *All E1 Student Environmental Journals contain a checklist of the trees and plants found on the property. 85% of students have been successful in completing the checklist. 64 students completed the checklist out of 74 E1 students. (86.5%)*

Strategy 2.2

- E2/E3 students (Grades 4-8) will learn about climate change and its effects on our environment.

Evaluation method 2.2

- **At least 80% of E2/E3 students (Grade 4-8) will take a pre- and post-assessment on climate change and will reflect an increase in knowledge on their post-assessment by 10 points. Scholars who initially score above 80% on the assessment will score equal to or greater than their initial score in the post-assessment.**
- At least 80% of E2/E3 students (Grade 4-8) will be able to articulate one way in which they can positively affect climate change.

Results: *In the fall of 2024, (38) out of (91) E2/E3 students scored 80% or above on the Climate Change pre-test. 43% were proficient. On the post-test survey, in the spring (78) out of (91) students scored at 80% or above which means that 86% of the students improved their knowledge regarding climate change. Review of the student's environmental journals and EE projects demonstrate that 84% (76/91) of the E2/E3 students can identify at least one way that they can positively affect climate change.*

Indicator Area 3: Attitudes

Students demonstrate respect and concern for the earth's health and the motivation to participate in environmental stewardship.

Goal: Students and faculty at *New Discoveries Montessori Academy* have an attitude, or are increasing their attitude of, appreciation and concern for the environment.

Strategy 3.1

- Students will be able to model recycling practices in their classrooms and school, describe why it is important to recycle and share their knowledge with their families at home.

Evaluation method 3.1.1

- E2 students (Grades 4-6) will collect the recyclables in the school each week as part of their classroom jobs. Recyclables are brought to the McLeod County Solid Waste Management site 2x's/week and will be tracked on a calendar indicating a commitment to school-wide recycling practices. **By the end of May 2024, at least 80% of students in grades 4-6 will be able to articulate at least one reason why they believe recycling is an important action they can take to protect the environment.**

Results: *Based on a journal prompt/writing assignment about the importance of recycling, (51) out of (63) or 81% of E2 students are able to articulate at least one reason why they believe recycling is an important action to take to protect the environment.*

Evaluation method 3.1.2

- Student/Staff/Family Satisfaction Surveys will include the following survey questions about recycling: (yes or no)
 - I recycle at school. (students-90% | staff-100%)
 - I/We recycle at home. (students-76% | staff-92% | family-73%)
 - Students and staff actively engage in recycling. (staff-100%)
 - My child knows how to recycle paper, plastic, glass and aluminum. (students-89% | family-68%)

Responses will indicate at least 80% of the respondents will respond “yes” to the above statements. Tracking the survey responses from year to year will indicate an increase from the previous year in awareness in environmental stewardship.

Results:

Recycling Survey Data - composite average score of survey questions from Student/Staff/Family Satisfaction Surveys				
2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
71% 167/235	83% 201/243	84% 208/248	92% 234/255	96% 267/278

Indicator Area 4: Skills

Students possess the skills needed to identify and critically analyze environmental issues, and to contribute to resolving the root of environmental challenges.

Goal: Students and faculty at *New Discoveries Montessori Academy* have or are increasing their problem solving and critical thinking skills as it relates to the environment and human life.

Strategy 4.1

- Students at New Discoveries will care for their outdoor environment by planting trees, cleaning up the grounds and working in the gardens.

Evaluation method 4.1.1

- The 3rd grade students will learn how to plant trees on the property in the spring of each year. This will be documented in their Environmental Journal. When surveyed, 80% of the students will write or verbalize 2/3 of the following
 - how trees are important for environmental health,
 - what causes trees to die
 - and why we need to remove and replace diseased trees.

Results: *3rd Grade students planted new trees on the NDMA property in the Fall of 2024. Journaling and reports on this topic occurred prior to planting. From student environmental journal assignment, teachers of the 3rd graders reported that 16 out of 20 (80%) of students were able to write or verbalize responses to the above prompts/questions.*

Evaluation method 4.1.2

- Kindergarten students will learn how to plant, identify, weed, harvest, cook and donate garden vegetables from our gardens. 80% of Kindergarten students will be able to correctly list 2 ways in which the gardening process impacts the environment.

Results: *All kindergarten students participated in planting and caring for the school garden, with teachers capturing photos of the students throughout each stage of the process. As part of our annual tradition, the experience culminated in a joyful walk to the local food shelf, where students delivered their harvested vegetables by wagon. Notably, 83% of kindergarten students (19 out of 23) were able to articulate how gardening positively impacts the environment, demonstrating early environmental awareness and stewardship.*

Indicator Area 5: Action

Students have the capacity, or are increasing their capacity, to perceive and interpret the health of environmental and social systems and take appropriate action to maintain, restore, or improve the health of those systems.

Goal: Students and staff at *New Discoveries Montessori Academy* demonstrate the capacity, or are increasing their capacity, to work individually and collectively toward sustaining a healthy natural environment.

Strategy 5.1

- Through adult instruction, modeling, and student practice, all NDMA students (Grades K-8) will reduce garbage waste through composting their breakfast and lunch food at the compost center. In addition, classrooms will separate compostable foods from their Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program afternoon snacks and E2/E3 students will compost in our on-site compost.

Evaluation method 5.1

- Breakfast and lunch garbage waste will be tracked reflecting a reduction from 4-6 full garbage bags of waste to less than one garbage bag per day of waste improving waste management at NDMA and overall environmental health. Composted food will be tracked on a calendar and brought out to our on-site compost. In addition, adult staff will take edible waste for their farm animals. Through tracking the number bags brought to the garbage and the number of buckets brought out to the compost, students will become aware of the impact their food waste and garbage affects the environment, discuss ways to reduce both and improve the environment.

Results: *100% - 215/215 All 215 (100%) students at NDMA consistently participate in composting their lunch waste at the school's compost center. In addition, several staff members and school families regularly collect 5-gallon pails of compostable food—sometimes weighing up to 20 pounds—to feed their farm animals, particularly chickens.*

Middle School students have taken ownership of composting waste from the afternoon fruit and vegetable program. They are responsible for transporting the compost to a designated backyard bin, with a calendar in place to track daily amounts. The school currently averages between 1.25 to 2.5 gallons of compost collected per day.

Since launching our composting initiative a few years ago, we have dramatically reduced our weekly compost waste from approximately 200 pounds to just 20 pounds of unused material. Looking ahead, we hope to expand the program to include breakfast food waste as well, further enhancing our environmental impact.

GOVERNANCE & 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 nine individuals: three parents; three teachers; and three community members. We currently have one community member position open. Ex-officio members include the Executive Director. The following table provides Board roles and affiliations. (24-25 school year)

2024-2025 NDMA Board Roster						
Member Name	Board Position	Affiliation	Date Elected	Date Seated	Term End Date	Committee/Email Address
Shari Colvin	Member	Community Member	April 2008, 2012, 2016, 2019, 2022, 2024	July 2024	June 2025	Finance, Policy Governance, Director Review Committee shari.colvin@newdiscoveries.org
Patti Hoerner	Member	Teacher #313511	April 2017, 2020, 2023	July 2023	June 2026	Marketing patti.hoerner@newdiscoveries.org
Spencer Kangas	Treasurer	Teacher #506087	April 2018, 2019, 2022	July 2022	June 2025	Marketing, Finance spencer.kangas@newdiscovereis.org
Chris La Plante	Secretary	Teacher #327575	April 2021, 2024	July 2024	June 2027	christine.laplante@newdiscovereis.org
Samantha Casillas	Member	Community	September 16, 2024	Oct 2024	June 2027	samantha.casillas@newdiscoveries.org
Tiffany Knox	Member	Parent	April 2024	July 2024	June 2027	tiffany.knox@newdiscoverie.org
Tim Dezelske	Chair	Parent	April 2022	July 2022	June 2025	Finance, Policy Governance, Director Review Committee tim.dezelske@newdiscoveries.org
Jill Montes	Member	Parent	April 2024	June 2023	June 2027	jill.montes@newdiscoveries.org
OPEN	Member	Community Member			June 2026	
Kirsten Kinzler	Ex-Officio	Executive Director #316170	August 2014	N/A	N/A	Finance, Policy Governance, Marketing, kirsten.kinzler@newdiscoveries.org

FY25 Annual Board Election Results – April 28, 2025 – for terms commencing on July 1st, 2026

Teacher Member: Spencer Kangas (3yr term – 2028)

Parent Member: Tim Dezelske (3yr term - 2028)

Community Member: Shari Colvin (3yr term – 2028)

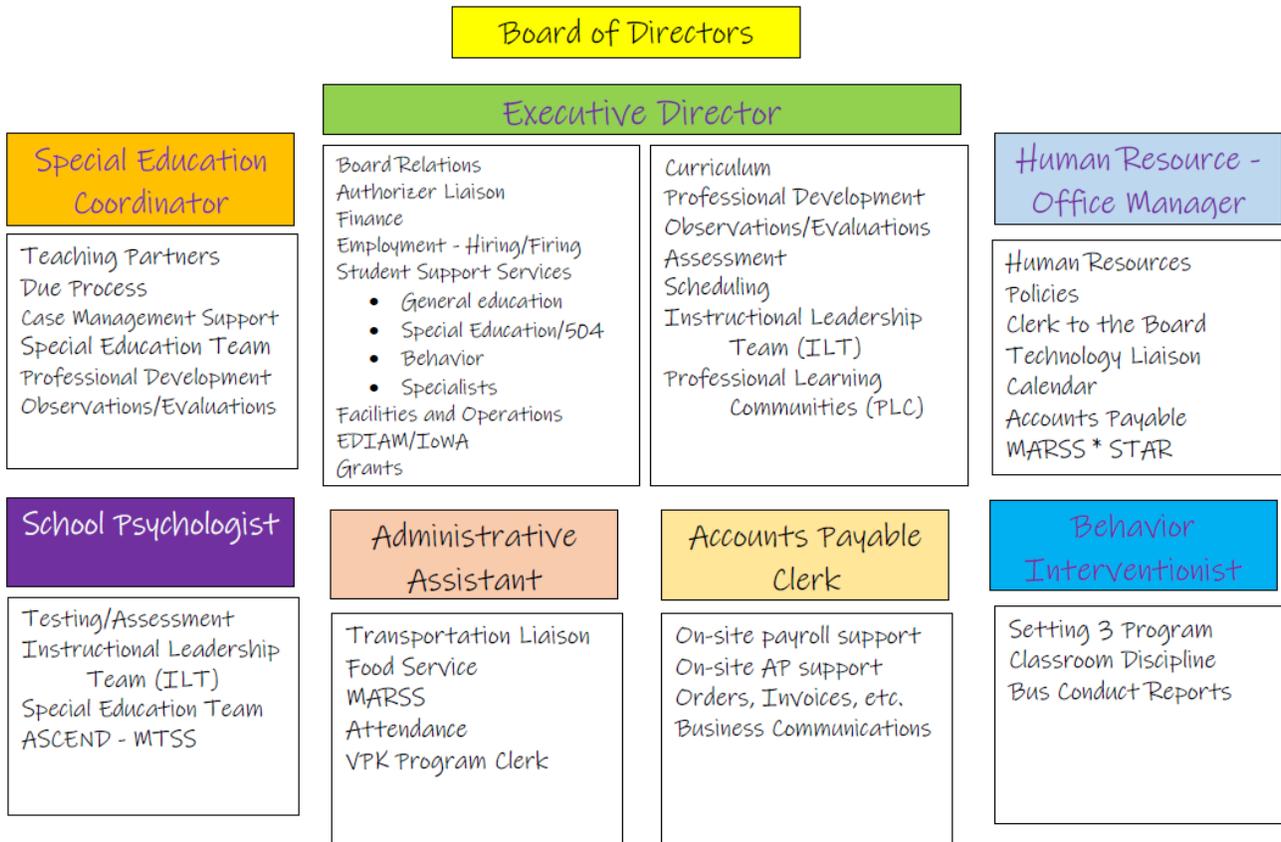
Community Member: Open (2yr term – 2027)

Board Training & Development

NDMA believes that the training of its board members is crucial to its effectiveness in operating as a governing body. Initial training of Open Meeting Law Data Practices Law, Board's Role & Responsibilities Regarding Student Success, Achievement, and Performance must be

MANAGEMENT
Management Structure

New Discoveries Montessori Academy
Organizational Structure 24-25



06.30.24

NDMA Leadership Team Overview

The NDMA Leadership Team is comprised of the Executive Director, School Psychologist, Special Education Coordinator, Behavior Interventionist, and Human Resource/Office Manager. This team was formed following the departure of our Director of Curriculum and Instruction in June of 2023, requiring a reassignment of key responsibilities.

Executive Director

The Executive Director oversees all aspects of operations and instruction. Key responsibilities include managing board relations, acting as the liaison with our authorizer, handling finance, employment (hiring and firing), student support services, facilities management, MDE compliance, curriculum oversight, co-planning professional development with the Special Education Coordinator, teacher and support staff evaluations, serving as the District Assessment Coordinator, managing the master schedule, co-leading the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) with the School Psychologist, and overseeing the Professional Learning Communities (PLC). The Executive Director is hired by the NDMA Board of Directors. The Board performs the Executive Director Review Process in the spring of the year.

Human Resource/Office Manager

The Human Resource/Office Manager role handles all human resources functions, including payroll, health insurance, PTO, and benefits. Additional responsibilities include board policies, website compliance, serving as clerk to the board, technology liaison, managing the master calendar, accounts payable, and submitting MDE reports such as MARSS and STAR.

Special Education Coordinator

The Special Education Coordinator supervises teaching partners, oversees due process and case management support, co-leads the Special Education Team alongside the School Psychologist, collaborates with the Executive Director on professional development, and conducts observations and evaluations of special education staff.

School Psychologist

The School Psychologist is responsible for all special education assessments and testing. In addition, the School Psychologist co-leads the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) with the Executive Director, co-leads the Special Education Team with the Special Education Coordinator, and oversees the ASCEND-MTSS process (Academic & Behavior Excellence at New Discoveries).

Behavior Interventionist

The Behavior Interventionist plays a critical role in managing student behavior and discipline. This position oversees the Setting 3 program, which provides structured support for students requiring a different placement outside of the regular classroom for a large portion of their day, manages schoolwide classroom discipline, and handles all transportation and bus conduct reports.

Administrative Assistant

The Administrative Assistant serves as the face of the school. Responsibilities include acting as the Transportation Liaison, managing Food Service (CLiCs), overseeing attendance, and addressing various front office needs.

Accounts Payable Clerk

Working in collaboration with our contracted business service firm, the Accounts Payable Clerk provides on-site support for payroll, accounts payable, orders, invoices, filing, and business communications. Together, these leadership roles create a well-rounded delegation of duties, ensuring the smooth operation of New Discoveries.

Additional Leadership Positions

Through our Q-Comp program, we have four Lead Teachers, one from each grade level—Children's House, Elementary I, Elementary II, and Middle School. These Lead Teachers guide weekly PLC (Professional Learning Community) meetings, which focus on best classroom practices and using student data to inform teaching strategies.

We also provide mentoring support through two Special Education Mentors and a Montessori Mentor. Special Education Mentors assist new Special Education teachers with all aspects of their role, while the Montessori Mentor conducts weekly Montessori training for Children's House teachers and provides guidance on implementing Montessori principles in our unique learning environment.

ADMINISTRATORS/QUALIFICATIONS

Kirsten Kinzler, Executive Director

Kirsten has a MN Teaching License in K-12 Music Education, Master of Science in Educational Administration, and is a MN Licensed Superintendent, Principal, and Director of Special Education as of September 2018.

Areas of Responsibility: Maintenance, Transportation, Food Service, Facility, Finance, Staff - Teachers, Teaching Partners, and support staff, Charter School Law and Compliance, Special Education oversight and Student Behavior.

NDMA Executive Director Professional Development Activities – 2024-2025 - See Appendix.

STAFFING

NDMA has consistently pursued both licensed and non-licensed staff who are committed to the holistic development of the child. All classroom teachers are licensed, and all teaching partners (paraprofessionals) are “highly qualified,” as determined by specific criteria. Excellence among NDMA staff has a direct impact upon developing excellence in our students.

2024-2025 Licensed Teaching Staff				
Name	File #	License and Assignment	25-26 Status*	Comments <i>Include information regarding special licensure (e.g. Community Expert) or other relevant information.</i>
Jennie Asher	297263	E1 Special Education Teacher	NR	Resigned - December 2024
Brandy Barrett	374981	E2 Classroom Teacher	R	
Anna Bashans	528630	E1 Special Education Teacher	R	
Bess Bauman	481139	Special Education Coordinator	NR	Resigned - August 2025
Elizabeth Christian	482225	School Psychologist	R	
Ashley DeGolier	1000458	E1 Special Education Teacher	R	
Peggy Enerson	327575	CH Classroom Teacher	R	
Tom Fischer	342817	CH Classroom Teacher	NR	Terminated - November 2024
Alexis Grack	1009952	E1 Special Education Teacher	R	
Jeff Grand	337766	E2 Classroom Teacher	R	
Ariel Griswold	1034519	CH Classroom Teacher	R	
Patti Hoerner	313511	E1 Classroom Teacher	R	
Spencer Kangas	506087	Physical Education/DAPE	R	OFPP - Graduated from program - December 2024!
Christine La Plante	437685	E2 Special Education Teacher	R	
Laura Lonquist	1001973	CH Special Education Teacher	R	Out of Field Permission – SpEd
Tammy Maiers	406911	Speech Teacher	R	
Ethan Marcus	475289	E1 Classroom Teacher	R	
Michelle Martig	397165	E3 Classroom Teacher	R	
Michelle Nadeau	474646	E2 Special Education Teacher	R	OFPP - Graduated from program – May 2025!
Meghan Rettke	470622	E3 Special Education Teacher	R	
Rhonda Rossing	690843	E2 Classroom Teacher	NR	Retired - April 2025
Maggie Schroeder	439215	E3 Classroom Teacher	R	Out of Field Permission - GenEd
Allyssa Sims	508382	E1 Special Education Teacher	R	
Dawn Teetzel	465623	E3 Special Education Teacher	R	
Nicole Winkle	427466	E3 Special Education Teacher	R	Out of Field Permission – SpEd

* R = Returning, NR = Not Returning

2025-2026 Licensed Teaching Staff				
Name	File #	License and Assignment		Comments <i>Include information regarding special licensure (e.g. Community Expert) or other relevant information.</i>
Brandy Barrett	374981	E2 Classroom Teacher		
Anna Bashans	1009310	E1 Classroom Teacher		
Elizabeth Christian	482225	School Psychologist		
Ashley DeGolier	1000458	E1 Special Education Teacher		
Peggy Enerson	327575	CH Classroom Teacher		
Alexis Grack	1009952	E1 Special Education Teacher		
Jeff Grand	337766	E2 Special Education Teacher		
Ariel Griswold	1034519	CH Classroom Teacher		
Patti Hoerner	313511	E1 Classroom Teacher		
Spencer Kangas	506087	Physical Education/DAPE		
Christine La Plante	437685	E2 Special Education Teacher		
Laura Lonquist	1001973	CH Special Education Teacher		Out of Field Permission – SpEd
Tammy Maiers	406911	Speech Teacher		
Ethan Marcus	475289	E1 Classroom Teacher		
Michelle Martig	397165	E3 Classroom Teacher		
Michelle Nadeau	474646	E2 Special Education Teacher		
Meghan Rettke	470622	E2 Special Education Teacher		
Maggie Schroeder	439215	E3 Special Education Teacher		Out of Field Permission – SpEd
Allyssa Sims	508382	E1 Special Education Teacher		
Dawn Teetzel	465623	Behavior Specialist – Setting 3 Teacher		
Seth Tieden	468670	E2 Classroom Teacher		
Nicole Winkle	427466	E3 Special Education Teacher		Out of Field Permission – SpEd

Percentage of Licensed Teachers from 2024-2025 not returning in 2025-2025 (non-returning teachers/total teachers from 2024-2025)	2/23 8%
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2024-2025 Other Licensed (non-teaching) Staff				
Name	File #	License and Assignment	24-25 Status*	Comments
Kinzler, Kirsten	316170	Executive Director	R	

* R = Returning, NR = Not Returning

2025-2026 Other Licensed (non-teaching) Staff				
Name	File #	License and Assignment		Comments
Kinzler, Kirsten	316170	Executive Director		

2024-2025 Non-Licensed Staff			
Name	Assignment	25-26 Status*	Comments
Andren, Carli	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Bahrke, Jennifer	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Blancarte, Iris	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Brausen, Cassandra	Level 3 Teaching Partner	R	
Carter, Sandra	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Cartie, Hilary	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Cartie, Stephanie	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Colvin, Shari	Gifted & Talented/Enrichment	R	
Decker, Cindy	Food Service	R	
Dressel, Jessica	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Duenow, Connie	Level 3 Teaching Partner	NR	Terminated – April 2025
Ellis, Sheri	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Erickson, Tara	Human Resources -Office Manager	R	
Giesen, Gina	Resource Teaching Partner	NR	Moved – February 2025
Grack, Nicole	School Nurse	R	
Gunder, Taylor	Resource Teaching Partner	NR	Non-renewal
Henke, Darlene	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Johnson, Erena	Resource Room Teaching Partner	R	
Kalenberg, Michaleen	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Kaping, Margo	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
King, Danielle	Occupational Therapist	R	
Kinzler, Damian	Night Custodian	NR	Death – August 2025
Kinzler, Tim	Maintenance Director	R	
Larson, Beth	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Lee, Paulette	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Lenz, Patti	Title	R	
Luciano, Jose	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Monahan, Juli	Interventionist	R	
Palkova, Ludmila	Food Service Director	R	
Petree, Amy	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Powers, Starla	Food Service	R	
Prieve, Sandra	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Robbins, Melanie	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Rusch, Joanne	Resource Teaching Partner	NR	Non-renewal
Ryan-Lauer, Cyndi	Music Teacher	R	
Scharpe, Bernadette	Accounts Payable	R	
Schmidt, Joy	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Schwartz, Niccole	Admin Assistant/Receptionist	R	
Shimpa, Margaret	Title 1 Teaching Partner	R	
Vollrath, Glynda	Resource Teaching Partner	NR	Health reasons – Sept 2024
Wendinger, Lisa	Level 3 Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Wessman, Shelly	Resource Teaching Partner	R	
Wilson, Melissa	Resource Teaching Partner	NR	Moved – November 2024

* R = Returning, NR = Not Returning

2025-2026 Non-Licensed Staff		
Name	Assignment	Comments
Bahrke, Jennifer	Resource Teaching Partner	
Beckmann, Amburr	Resource Teaching Partner	
Blancarte, Iris	Resource Teaching Partner	
Brausen, Cassandra	Level 3 Teaching Partner	
Carter, Sandra	Resource Teaching Partner	
Cartie, Hilary	Resource Teaching Partner	
Cartie, Stephanie	Resource Teaching Partner	
Colvin, Shari	Gifted & Talented/Enrichment	
Davis, Kalby	Resource Teaching Partner	
Davis, Katlin	Resource Teaching Partner	
Decker, Cindy	Food Service	
Denault, James	Night Custodian	
Dressel, Jessica	Resource Teaching Partner	
Eischens, Sherri	Resource Teaching Partner	
Ellis, Sheri	Resource Teaching Partner	
Erickson, Tara	Office Manager/Human Resources	
Felber, Marie	Resource Teaching Partner	
Grack, Nicole	School Nurse	
Henke, Darlene	Resource Teaching Partner	
Johnson, Erena	Resource Room Teaching Partner	
Kalenberg, Michaleen	Resource Teaching Partner	
King, Danielle	Occupational Therapist	
Kinzler, Tim	Maintenance Director	
Larson, Beth	Resource Teaching Partner	
Lee, Paulette	Resource Teaching Partner	
Lenz, Patti	Title I/Interventionist	
Luciano, Jose	Resource Teaching Partner	
Monahan, Juli	Interventionist	
Palkova, Ludmila	Food Service Director	
Petersen, Misty	Resource Teaching Partner	
Peterson, Alison	Resource Teaching Partner	
Petree, Amy	Resource Teaching Partner	
Powers, Starla	Food Service	
Prieve, Sandra	Resource Teaching Partner	
Randall, Rachel	Librarian	
Robbins, Melanie	Resource Teaching Partner	
Ryan-Lauer, Cyndi	Music Specialist	
Scharpe, Bernadette	Accounts Payable	
Serfling, Sharon	Interventionist	
Schmidt, Joy	Resource Teaching Partner	
Schwartz, Niccole	Admin Assistant/Receptionist	
Shimpa, Margaret	Title 1 Teaching Partner	
Wendinger, Lisa	Level 3 Resource Teaching Partner	
Wessman, Shelly	Resource Teaching Partner	

Percentage of Non-Licensed Staff from 2024-2025 not returning in 2025-2026 (non-returning Non-Licensed Staff /total Non-Licensed Staff from 2024-2025)	6/42 14%
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NDMA Teacher/Teaching Partner Professional Development Activities – 2024-2025

Civil Rights & Nutrition (1.5 hours)
Health Services Assistant (Basic First Aid and Medication) (1 hour)
School Staff Health and Safety (1 hour)
Confidentiality, FERPA, and HIPAA (.5 hour)
Signs of Abuse or Neglect: What you need to know (1 hour)
Introduction to IDEA's 13 Areas of Disability (2 hours)
Introduction to Accommodations and Modifications (.5 hour)
Roles and Responsibilities in the Classroom (.5 hour)
Communicating with Student Teams (.75 hour)
Developing Positive Communication Skills (.75 hour)
Building and Maintaining Respectful Relationships with Students (.5 hour)
Negotiation and Conflict Resolution Skills (.75 hour)
How to Create a Sense of Belonging for All Students (.5 hour)
A Look at the Impact of Poverty (.5 hour)
Helping vs. Hovering: How to Avoid the "Helicopter" Effect (.5 hour)
Co-Teaching in the classroom at NDMA, Part 1 (2 hours)
Montessori Principles (0.5 hour)
Character Strong – Schoolwide SEL Program (1 hour)
Behavior management at NDMA – Collaborative Problem-Solving Plan (1.5 hours)
Health Office, OSHA and Basic First Aid (0.5 hours)
Environmental Education and Character Education (0.5 hours)
Leadership Development – School Culture & Climate (8 hours)
Naloxone Training (0.5 hours)
Montessori Mondays – Montessori Training & Discussion on Mondays with Lead Montessori Teacher (20 hours)
CPI – Crisis Prevention and Intervention Renewal Training (4 hours)
Suicide Prevention (1 hour)
ELL – English Language Learners Training (1 hour)

OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Health Services

At New Discoveries Montessori Academy (NDMA), the health and well-being of students are a top priority. A Licensed Practical Nurse is on-site daily to provide care for students who become ill or injured and to administer prescription and over-the-counter medications safely.

NDMA partners with Navigate Care Consulting for nursing oversight and compliance support. Navigate assists in aligning the school's health program with state and federal requirements and provides staff training on medication administration, OSHA standards, and first aid. Each classroom designates at least two staff members trained to administer medications on field trips, and all NDMA staff complete an annual Health and Safety course.

Navigate nurses also collaborate with NDMA's multidisciplinary special education team, contributing to evaluations, developing health-related IEP goals, and conducting vision and hearing screenings. Routine health screenings—including vision, hearing, height, weight, BMI, and scoliosis—are completed in accordance with state guidelines, supporting early identification and intervention.

Together, these systems ensure NDMA maintains a safe, healthy learning environment that supports both academic and social-emotional success.

Safety

NDMA prioritizes school safety through regular fire, lockdown, and severe weather drills in compliance with state law. All instructional staff, including teachers, Teaching Partners, and administrators, complete Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) training, ensuring staff can respond to student needs and emergency situations with calm and effective strategies.

Transportation

Student transportation is provided by ACC Midwest/Labraaten, a Hutchinson-based bus company. NDMA maintains an active partnership with the company, supporting driver training and ensuring safe, reliable service for all students.

Food Service

NDMA operates a full-service food program offering breakfast and lunch daily through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Meals are prepared in the school's NSF-certified commercial kitchen by a licensed Food Service Director, cook, and assistants. Teachers and paraprofessionals supervise students during meals, and the program continues to run efficiently while meeting all federal and state nutritional standards.

Due Process and Student Discipline

NDMA upholds clear student behavior expectations and fair discipline practices. The school's Student Discipline Policy aligns with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act and is implemented alongside NDMA's Responsive Classroom and CharacterStrong frameworks, ensuring a restorative and consistent approach. When suspensions occur, families receive a written explanation and a Pupil Fair Dismissal brochure.

Parent Engagement

NDMA's Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) plays a vital role in fostering community and supporting staff and students. The PTO coordinates appreciation events, assists with field trips,

promotes school spirit through NDMA gear, and leads fundraising efforts. Their mission—Parent Advocates providing Resources to improve the learning Environment for New Discoveries Teachers, Students and Staff—reflects the school's collaborative culture.

Background Checks

All NDMA staff, board members, and regular volunteers undergo background checks through an online screening service prior to employment or service, ensuring student safety and compliance with state requirements.

Montessori Principles honored at New Discoveries Montessori Academy:

1. *Movement* can enhance thinking and learning.
2. Learning and well-being are improved through *freedom and choice*.
3. We tend to learn better when we are *interested* in what we are learning.
4. *Intrinsic* motivation leads to meaningful reward.
5. Learning *with and from peers* is powerful.
6. Learning *in context* brings deeper understanding.
7. The teacher is a *guide*.
8. *Order in the environment* is beneficial to children.

10.01.19

FINANCES

The school contracts with Creative Planning to provide accounting and financial management services for the school. For questions regarding school finances and for complete financials for 2024-25 and/or an organizational budget for 2025-26, contact:

Name: Dustin Reeves

Position: Controller

Phone: 952.563.6834

Email dustin.reeves@creativeplanning.com

The New Discoveries Montessori Academy (NDMA) Board of Directors provides comprehensive financial oversight to ensure compliance, maintain effective internal controls, and safeguard public funds. The board has an active and involved Finance Committee who meet monthly to discuss the school's finances.

Board members receive training in financial oversight and play an active role in establishing, monitoring, and amending the school's annual budget. They closely evaluate the school's financial position, recordkeeping, and internal controls, ensuring compliance with the Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting Standards (UFARS) and the Minnesota Accounting and Reporting Student System (MARSS). Each year, the board retains an external auditor, Schlenner Wenner, to assess the school's financial processes and internal controls. If any deficiencies are identified, the board initiates and monitors corrective actions to prevent repeat findings in future audits.

The board also approves the budget prior to the start of each fiscal year, with its involvement evident through finance committee meetings. A working budget is regularly updated to reflect current circumstances, with reasonable budget-to-actual variances. Although enrollment predictions have posed some challenges, the board's finance committee, which meets monthly, actively monitors the school's financial health. The full board reviews and approves detailed monthly financial statements, ensuring ongoing transparency and fiscal responsibility.

Information presented below is derived from preliminary audit figures. The full financial audit will be completed and presented to the Minnesota Department of Education and Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center no later than December 31, 2025.

FY25 Finances	Fund 1	Fund 2	Fund 4	TOTAL ALL FUNDS
Total Revenues	5,787,281	231,089	19,460	6,037,830
Total Expenditures	(6,050,735)	(217,775)	(19,460)	(6,287,970)
Net Income	(263,453)	13,314	0	(250,139)
Total Fund Balance	128,249	114,887	15,750	258,886

Overview

NDMA's overall enrollment came close to its target number, with a final Average Daily Membership (ADM) of 200. To sustain day-to-day operations during the fiscal year, the school utilized their line of credit. It's important to note that a significant portion of the school's budget is allocated to Special Education expenditures. As a result, the school has a substantial holdback and will be recouped in the upcoming FY26.

Revenues

General Fund

General Education and Charter School Lease aids were in line with the budget. General Fund revenues came from the following sources:

State Aids and Grants: \$5,496,274

Federal Aids and Grants: \$243,453

Fees Collected and other Miscellaneous Revenues: \$47,554

Food Services Fund

A fund balance transfer from the General Fund was not needed in the Food Services Fund. The school receives state and federal reimbursements for meals served to students. During the year, the Food Service fund had revenues from:

State Sources: \$28,787

Federal Sources: \$195,239

Commodities, Sales of meals, Catering: \$7,063

Community Services Fund

The school operates a preschool program through its Community Services Fund. The revenues from the program are intended to cover operating expenses. Community Services Fund revenues came from the following sources:

Fees Collected and State Revenues: \$15,000

Children's House Program Fees: \$4,460

Expenses

General Fund

The school's largest expense was for employee salaries and benefits: \$3,538,653. The school's second largest expense was for the lease on its school building: \$444,000.

Other expenses incurred by the school were for:

Contracted and Purchased Services (including transportation & building utilities): \$1,893,149

Supplies and Materials: \$123,035

Equipment and Technology: \$7,249

Interest Costs on Cash Flow Borrowing: \$9,947

Memberships and Other Fees: \$34,702

Food Service Fund

Expenses in the Food Service fund for lunches, breakfasts, and catered meals served consisted of:

Salaries, Wages, and Benefits: \$117,066

Purchased Services and Utilities: \$25,163

Meals and Other Supplies Purchased: \$74,232

Other Fees: \$1,315

Community Services Fund

Expenses in the Community Services Fund for the preschool program operated consisted of:

Salaries, Wages, and Benefits: \$19,460

Supplies and Materials Purchased: \$0

Net Surplus or Deficit and Fund Balance

The deficit of (\$250,139) in all funds resulted in an ending fund balance of \$258,883 for the year, or 4.1% of current expenditures.

The Fiscal Year 2026 outlook is currently projecting a surplus in the Working Budget which will continue to grow our fund balance.



FUTURE PLANS

New Discoveries Montessori Academy (NDMA) will continue to focus on sustainability, student growth, and continuous improvement in alignment with its mission to provide a high-quality, Montessori-inspired education for all learners.

Enrollment and Sustainability:

NDMA remains committed to maintaining strong enrollment as the most significant factor in the school's financial stability. Outreach efforts to surrounding communities will continue, highlighting the school's Montessori-inspired approach, individualized learning, and positive culture. The goal remains to achieve full enrollment with a waiting list, ensuring long-term stability and program vitality.

Facility Improvements:

While no major facility changes are anticipated, NDMA continues to pursue funding to bring natural gas, electricity, and water service to the school greenhouse. This project supports environmental literacy and hands-on learning opportunities for students throughout the year. Classroom spaces will continue to be adjusted as needed to promote continuity between grade levels and optimize the learning environment.

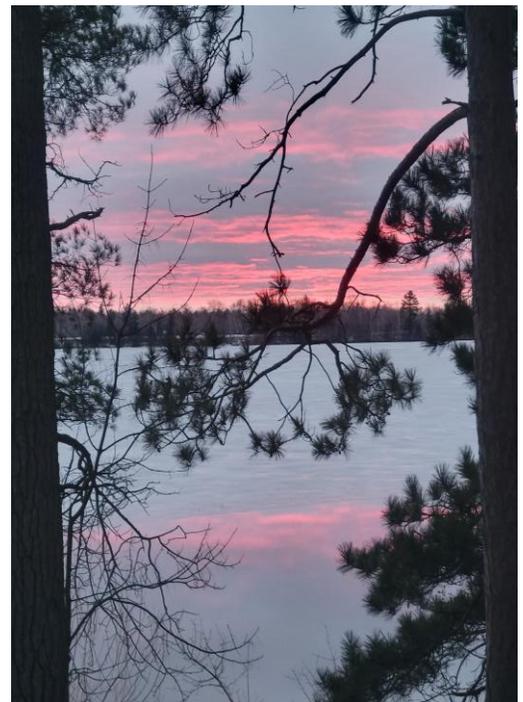
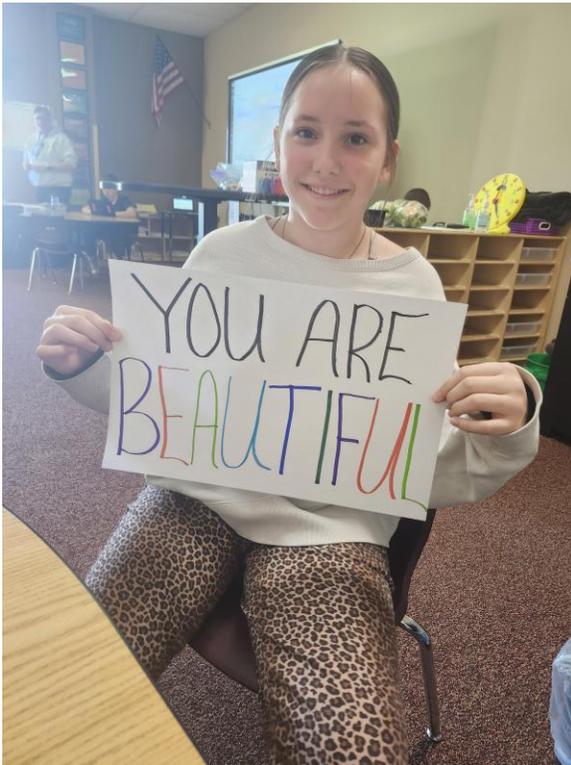
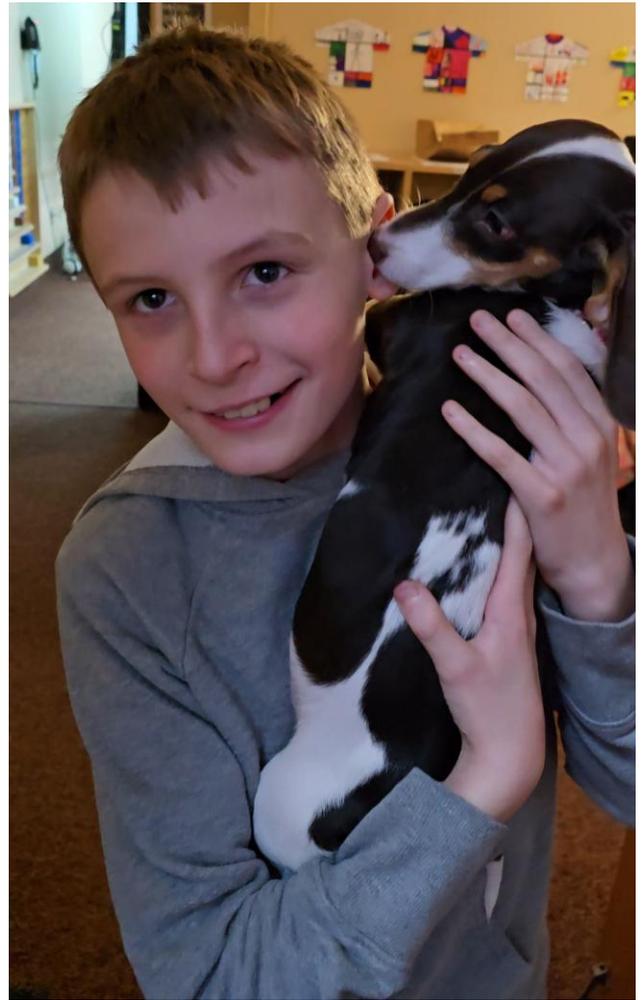
Program Development:

NDMA will continue investing in professional growth opportunities for staff, particularly in Teaching Partner training, data-informed instruction, and social-emotional learning. These focus areas ensure that teachers are supported and students benefit from consistent, high-quality instruction across all grade levels. Through the Title II initiative, co-teaching teams will also identify and pursue professional development aligned with their classroom needs.

Technology and Resources:

The school will maintain and update classroom technology and software to support instruction, communication, and operational efficiency, while planning carefully for reduced federal funding streams. Strategic budgeting will prioritize investments that directly enhance learning and staff capacity.

Looking ahead, NDMA's future plans center on stability and continuous refinement. The school will build on its strengths—its Montessori-inspired methodology, environmental stewardship, and nurturing school culture—while seeking new opportunities for collaboration, community engagement, and academic growth.



APPENDICES

NDMA Executive Director Professional Development Activities – 2024-2025

- 07.09.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)
- 07.09.24 Character Strong: Welcoming and Onboarding New Teachers to your School (1 hour)
- 07.10.24 Addressing Chronic Absenteeism: What Works? (1 hour)
- 07.11.24 Education Workforce Legislative Update (1 hour)
- 07.16.24 Data Dashboard Training (1 hour)
- 07.17.24 Proposal Review – Leadership Structure (1 hour)
- 07.17.24 Social Emotional Training – Character Strong (3 hours)
- 07.23.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)
- 07.24.24 GoToWebinar: Understanding & Supporting Children with Autism Spectrum (2.5 hours)
- 07.24.24 ESY Planning Meeting (2 hours)
- 07.25.24 Charter Leader Retreat, MDE (5 hours)
- 08.01.24 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)
- 08.05.24 Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) (1.5 hours)
- 08.06.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)
- 08.06.24 Leadership at NDMA with Jane and Leadership Team (2 hours)
- 08.07.24 Leadership at NDMA with Jane and Leadership Team (2 hours)
- 08.08.24 SEL Committee Meeting and Planning (1.5 hours)
- 08.08.24 Principal Listening & Networking, Ann Mitchell (1 hour)
- 08.12.24 Culturally Responsive Observation Framework (1.5 hours)
- 08.13.24 MACS Charter School Administrators Meeting (4 hours)
- 08.14.24 Assured Partners Employment Law Seminar (1.25 hours)
- 08.14.24 Implementing the Science of Reading: Lessons Learned from Chisago Lakes (1 hour)
- 08.14.24 NDMA MN-ITS Account/DHS Revalidation Training (.5 hour)
- 08.15.24 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)
- 08.15.24 PELSB Information Session (1 hour)
- 08.19.24 OW Environmental Education 24-25 Kick-off (1 hour)
- 08.20.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)
- 08.20.24 Foster Care Point of Contact Network (1 hour)
- 08.22.24 WebEx: Introduction to MARSS in Ed-Fi Reporting (1.5 hours)
- 08.29.24 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)
- 09.10.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)
- 09.12.24 Client Onboarding to HealthEquity (1 hour)
- 09.17.24 ESCE Leadership 101 (3 hours)
- 09.17.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)
- 09.17.24 Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) (1.5 hours)
- 09.17.24 MACS Charter School Staff Compensation Conversation with PELSB (1 hour)
- 09.18.24 Q-Comp Coordinator Training (1 hour)
- 09.18.24 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)
- 09.19.24 Charter Leader Cohort - Culturally Responsive Leadership, Ann Mitchell (1 hour)
- 09.20.24 SW&M 2024 School Law Seminar (7.5 hours)
- 09.24.24 Creating Neurodiversity-Affirming Schools Webinar (1 hour)
- 09.24.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)
- 09.24.24 NDMA Leadership Team Meeting (.75 hour)

09.24.24 MACS AI Training w/ Jon Fila (1 hour)

09.24.24 Community of Practice: Culturally Responsive Rubric Alignment Session (1.5 hours)

09.25.24 Professional Coaching with Jane – Conflict Management (1 hour)

09.26.24 MACS Legislative Updates and Annual Meeting (5 hours)

09.25.24 Professional Coaching with Jane – Conflict Management Session 4 (2 hours)

10.01.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

10.01.24 MASPA Webinar: MN Paid Leave Law for Minnesota Schools (1.5 hours)

10.02.24 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)

10.08.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

10.08.24 MDE Curriculum Director Meeting (1 hour)

10.11.24 October 2024 Special Education Directors' Forum (2.75 hours)

10.11.24 Amplify: The Science of Reading + Writing: Turning a New Page Together (1 hour)

10.15.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

10.15.24 Practical Tools for Communication for Students with Autism (1 hour)

10.16.24 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)

10.16.24 PTO Family Tech Talk (1 hour)

10.17.24 OW Community of Practice: Title IX (1 hour)

10.18.24 Introduction to Pathological Demand Avoidance/Persistent Drive for Autonomy (2 hours)

10.22.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

10.22.24 NDMA Leadership Team Meeting (.75 hour)

10.22.24 Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) (1.5 hours)

10.24.24 Charter Leader Cohort - Culturally Responsive Leadership, Ann Mitchell (1 hour)

10.24.24 MACS Advocacy Team: Grassroots Kick off for School Leaders (1 hour)

10.29.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

11.05.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

11.07.24 Principal Listening & Networking Session, Ann Mitchell (1 hour)

11.07.24 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)

11.08.24 Ratwik 2024 School Law Seminar (6.5 hours)

11.08.24 Professional Coaching with Jane – Conflict Management Session 5 (1.5 hours)

11.12.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

11.12.24 Board Training: What Boards Need to Know About Charter School Audits (1 hour)

11.14.24 Charter Leader Cohort - Culturally Responsive Leadership, Ann Mitchell (1 hour)

11.14.24 Ratwik Section 504 Quarterly Session (2 hours)

11.15.24 MACS Legislative Forum (1 hour)

11.15.24 MACS/MDE Data Practices & Open Meeting Law Training (1.5 hours)

11.19.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

11.19.24 Shaping the Future – Overcoming Chronic Absenteeism – Character Strong (1 hour)

11.19.25 School Leadership Live: Work With The Grownups Without Losing Your Mind! (1.5 hours)

11.19.24 Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) (1.5 hours)

11.21.24 OW School Leader Community of Practice (1.5 hour)

11.21.24 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)

11.22.24 MACS Legislative Information & Training (1 hour)

11.26.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

11.26.24 NDMA Leadership Team Meeting (.75 hour)

12.03.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

12.05.24 MACS Story of Self Advocacy Training (1 hour)
 12.05.24 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)
 12.10.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)
 12.10.24 All Things Montessori with Montessori Mentor Collaboration and Planning (1 hour)
 12.11.24 MACS Legislative Platform (.75 hour)
 12.13.24 Legislative Information & Training (1hour)
 12.17.24 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)
 12.17.24 Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) (1.5 hours)
 01.07.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)
 01.07.25 Planning for Succession - Charter Leaders, Ann Mitchell (1 hour)
 01.08.25 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)
 01.10.25 MACS Legislative Information & Training (1 hour)
 01.14.25 MMA's Employment Law Advisor 2024 updates employment law (1.5 hours)
 01.14.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)
 01.15.25 MSBA Charter School Board Member Workshop (6 hours)
 01.16.25 OW Community of Practice: Improving Math Outcomes (1 hour)
 01.16.25 Ratwik Section 504 Quarterly Meeting (2 hours)
 01.17.25 MACS Legislative Forum (1 hour)
 01.21.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)
 01.21.25 Planning for Succession - Charter Leaders, Ann Mitchell (1 hour)
 01.21.25 All Things Montessori with Montessori Mentor Collaboration and Planning (1 hour)
 01.22.25 NWEA How to Drive Accreditation with MAP Data Webinar (1 hour)
 01.22.24 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)
 01.23.25 McKinney-Vento Homeless Guidance Document and Forms Webinar (1.5 hours)
 01.28.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)
 01.28.25 NDMA Leadership Team Meeting (.75 hour)
 01.30.25 EdWeek: Support Your Newest Teachers with Personalized PD & Coaching)1 hour)
 01.30.25 MDE Superintendent Listening Sessions (.75 hour)
 01.31.25 MACS Legislative Forum (1 hour)
 02.04.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)
 02.04.25 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)
 02.04.25 All Things Montessori with Montessori Mentor Collaboration and Planning (1 hour)
 02.05.25 Monthly ESCE Leaders Call (1 hour)
 02.06.25 Creative Planning Budget Review (1 hour)
 02.06.25 PD: Observation & Data Collection: Virginia Montessori Association (1 hour)
 02.07.25 MACS Legislative Forum (.5 hour)
 02.07.25 MDE: Compensatory Revenue for Superintendents and Administrators (1 hour)
 02.11.25 Accident Fund (work comp) meeting with Loss Control consultant (1 hour)
 02.13.25 Creative Planning Budget Review (1 hour)
 02.13.25 MACS Winter Virtual Charter School Administrators Meeting Confirmation (2 hours)
 02.18.25 All Things Montessori with Montessori Mentor Collaboration and Planning (1 hour)
 02.18.25 Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) (1.5 hours)
 02.19.25 NASP-National Association of School Psychologists Conference (8 hours)
 02.20.24 NASP-National Association of School Psychologists Conference (8 hours)
 02.25.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

02.25.25 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)

02.26.25 MACS Staffing & Org Structures Workshop (1.5 hours)

02.27.25 All Things Montessori with Montessori Mentor Collaboration and Planning (1 hour)

03.06.25 Ratwik Section 504 Quarterly Meeting (2 hours)

03.07.25 Leadership/ILT Conflict Management Training with Jane (2.5 hours)

03.11.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

03.11.25 MDE Superintendent Listening Sessions (.75 hour)

03.12.25 Social media, Girls Mental Health, Teaching and Learning – Great Lakes Equity (3.5 hours)

03.14.25 OSHA 300 Logs - Recordkeeping Best Practices (1 hour)

03.18.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

03.15.25 All Things Montessori with Montessori Mentor Collaboration and Planning (1 hour)

03.15.25 Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) (1.5 hours)

03.15.25 MDE Alternate Assessment Chat and Connect Series (1 hour)

03.21.25 MACS Legislative Update (.5 hour)

03.25.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

03.25.25 NDMA Leadership Team Meeting (.75 hour)

03.25.25 Leadership/ILT Conflict Management Training with Jane Part 2 (1.5 hours)

03.26.25 Regional Call w/ Capti ReadBasix, SWWC (.75 hour)

03.26.25 General Education Conferencing & Planning (1 hour)

03.26.25 MDE/CAREI Bridge2Read Information Session (.5 hour)

03.27.25 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)

03.28.25 MACS Legislative Update (.5 hour)

04.01.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

04.01.25 All Things Montessori with Montessori Mentor Collaboration and Planning (1 hour)

04.03.25 Creative Planning Budget Review (1 hour)

04.03.25 MACS Legislative Update (.5 hour)

04.08.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

04.08.25 Media Use by Kids Zero to Eight: The Common Sense Census Report (1 hour)

04.11.25 MACS Legislative Update (.5 hour)

04.14.25 Strategies for Tweens/Teens Who Are Literal Thinkers and Socially Less Aware (1 hour)

04.15.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

04.15.25 EdAllies Mid-Session Policy Update Podcast (1 hour)

04.15.25 MDE Alternate Assessment Chat and Connect Series (1 hour)

04.16.25 Webinar: VIA's Mindfulness-Based Strengths Practice (MBSP) (1 hour)

04.18.25 Leadership/ILT Conflict Management Training with Jane Part 3 (2 hours)

04.22.25 MACS Charter School Administrators Regional Meeting (4.5 hours)

04.23.25 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)

04.23.25 OW School Garden Networking (1 hour)

04.24.25 MDE/CAREI Highly Aligned Bridge2Read: Information Session (1 hour)

04.29.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

04.29.25 Charter Leader Advisory, Ann Mitchell (1 hour)

04.30.25 MACS Watch Party - SCOTUS Oklahoma Religious Charter School Case (1.5 hours)

05.01.25 Ratwik Section 504 Quarterly Session (2 hours)

05.02.25 MACS Legislative Update (.5 hour)

05.06.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

05.07.25 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)
05.09.25 MACS Legislative Update (.5 hour)
05.11.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)
05.11.25 All Things Montessori with Montessori Mentor Collaboration and Planning (1 hour)
05.16.25 MACS Legislative Update (.5 hour)
05.16.25 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)
05.19.25 General Education Conferring & Planning (1 hour)
05.19.25 MDE Superintendent Listening Sessions (.75 hour)
05.19.25 NDMA Board Training – KK/MSBA (.5 hour)
05.20.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)
05.20.25 MACS - READ Act Q&A w/ Julie Novak, Director of Literacy at MDE (.75 hour)
05.20.25 Instructional Leadership Team (1.5 hours)
05.22.25 MDE McKinney-Vento Homeless Training (1 hour)
05.23.25 MACS Legislative Update (.5 hour)
05.27.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)
05.27.25 All Things Montessori with Montessori Mentor Collaboration and Planning (1 hour)
05.27.25 MACS Paid Family Medical Leave Program Info session and Q/A (1.5 hours)
05.29.25 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)
05.30.25 MACS Legislative Update (.5 hour)
06.03.25 OW Board Training (8 hours)
06.04.25 OW Board Training (1 hour)
06.06.25 MACS Legislative Update (.5 hour)
06.06.25 MDE Special Education Directors' Forum (2 hours)
06.09.25 Completing the SFY26 ESEA Consolidated Application in MEGS (2 hours)
06.10.25 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)
06.12.25 Summer Discoveries Staff Planning & Prep (1 hour)
06.16.25 Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) (1.5 hours)
06.17.25 KA Insurance Employee Benefits Summit (2 hours)
06.18.25 Professional Coaching with Jane (1 hour)
06.24.25 MACS Weekly Charter School Administrators Support Call (1 hour)

SWOT Statement: There is a need to hire and retain well-trained and high performing staff.

Core Value(s) Impacted: **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. The Academy 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: NDMA will become a community known for having exemplary staff members.

Goal #1 SMART Goal – NDMA will increase wages for licensed general education staff so that we are more competitive with area schools and are able to retain our high performing staff. In addition, an updated Salary Schedule will be created and include additional pay for extra duties.

Persons Responsible: Executive Director, HR/Office Manager, Finance Committee

Goal #2 SMART Goal – NDMA staff will create a communications group that will help increase the visibility of our school. (i.e. create interesting social media posts, invite local legislators to NDMA.)

Persons Responsible: Administration, volunteer staff

SWOT Statement: The school must take deliberate actions to increase the number of going- outs and coming-ins to improve community perceptions of the school and gain greater support for the school’s vision.

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: There will be an increase in family and community awareness of and participation in NDMA activities.

- Goal #1** SMART Goal – Every classroom will invite parents to come during the school day to be a part of an opportunity that allows them to see what we do at NDMA. (Bring your Parent to Specialists, Classroom Play/Skit, Science Fair, etc.)
AND/OR
Each classroom will have one volunteer to support classroom activities. (assist in organizing class field trips, class special events, organize other visiting volunteers to come into their classroom for a particular activity – gardening, sewing, cooking, etc.)
Persons Responsible: Classroom Teachers
- Goal #2** SMART Goal – NDMA will have one parent education night this year on the topic of Children and Screen Use.
Persons Responsible: Administration

SWOT Statement: There is an opportunity to increase the awareness and practice of the core Montessori principles in the school, in our homes and in the greater community.

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: Students, staff, and families will routinely reference and practice the identified Montessori principles honored at NDMA

1. *Movement* can enhance thinking and learning.
2. Learning and well-being are improved through *freedom and choice*.
3. We tend to learn better when we are *interested* in what we are learning.
4. *Intrinsic* motivation leads to meaningful reward.
5. Learning *with and from peers* is powerful.
6. Learning *in context* brings deeper understanding.
7. The teacher is a *guide*.
8. *Order in the environment* is beneficial to children.

Goal #1 SMART Goal – All licensed staff will participate in a 60-minute professional development course on the importance of observations in the Montessori environment.

Persons Responsible: Executive Director, Montessori Mentor Teacher

Goal #2 SMART Goal – Using this information on observation, all licensed teachers will observe each child in their classroom at least once throughout the year using the prepared Montessori Principles observation checklist.

Persons Responsible: Executive Director, Montessori Mentor Teacher

SWOT Statement: There are opportunities for staff to better understand and utilize data to improve student outcomes and for the board to maintain financial stability/cash flow.

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 used to say, “It’s your job, now do it.” 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 accountable 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 1: Learners enrolled at New Discoveries Montessori Academy will meet expected growth as defined and measured by NWEA MAP assessments.

Goal #1 SMART Goal – Increase the percent of students scoring at or above the 50th percentile from Reading 45.7% to 48% and Math 48.9% to 51%.
Persons Responsible: School Psychologist, Executive Director

STRATEGY STATEMENT 2: All licensed staff will implement data-based instructional strategies and evidence-based instructional practices.

Goal #1 SMART Goal – All classrooms will use universal screening practices 3x/year and use that data to inform instruction using Montessori/CORE/UFLI/Barton curriculum materials.
Persons Responsible: Licensed Staff, Executive Director

STRATEGY STATEMENT 3: Increase the general fund balance by a minimum of \$75,000 each year until a 20% of income fund balance is reached.

Goal #1 SMART Goal – Through close scrutiny of the monthly financial statement and supplemental information, the board will monitor revenues and expenses, look for appropriate expenditure cuts and income revenue streams when needed, and maintain financial stability.
Persons Responsible: Finance Committee, NDMA Board Members

Q Comp Annual Report 2024-2025

New Discoveries Montessori Academy

Core Component: Career Advancement Options

Implementation

Are the teacher leader positions that were implemented this year the same as those outlined in the approved plan (approval letter and subsequent plan change approval letters)?

If no, please explain what changes have occurred and why?

The teacher leader positions are the same as articulated in the approved plan:

Lead/Mentor Teachers in Children's House (CH) (PreK-K), Elementary 1 (E1) (Grades 1-3), Elementary 2 (E2) (Grades 4-6), Elementary 3 (E3) (Grades 7-8) and Special Education.

Impact

How did the work of teacher leaders through coaching, observing, mentoring, facilitating learning teams and performing other responsibilities impact classroom instruction?

The CH, E1, E2 and E3 teacher leaders led weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). One of the Special Education teacher leaders and Montessori coach also participated in monthly Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) meetings. The Montessori coach worked closely with the Children's House team to increase the usage and understanding of Montessori materials and principles at that grade-level. The Special Education mentors provided coaching, worked with a student teacher, and began developing a more comprehensive coaching plan for very inexperienced teachers. The Montessori coach also participated in weekly meetings with the Executive Director discussing the integration of Montessori with state standards and mentorship opportunities.

How did the work of teacher leaders impact student achievement?

It is difficult to assess how the work of the teacher leaders have impacted student achievement.

Review Findings

How did the training teacher leaders received impact their ability to fulfill the responsibilities of the position and meet the needs of the licensed staff members?

The training teacher leaders received equipped them to fulfill their responsibilities as evidenced through their work in PLCs, ILT meetings, teacher observations and coaching conversations.

What did the results of the evaluations of the teacher leaders in their leadership roles demonstrate about the impact they had on the effectiveness of the licensed staff members?

The teacher evaluations indicate that the teacher leaders have had a positive impact on their peers' work.

Recommendations

How will the district use the review findings to improve the effectiveness of teacher leadership? The Instructional Leadership Team will discuss the findings to determine the effectiveness of the teacher learning.

Core Component: Job-embedded Professional Development

Implementation

Are learning teams configured and meeting as outlined in the approved plan (approval letter and subsequent plan change approval letters)?

If no, please explain the changes that have occurred and why?

The learning teams are configured and meetings are conducted as outlined in the approved plan.

Impact

How did teacher learning from learning teams and other job-embedded professional development activities impact classroom instruction?

Teacher learning from learning teams and other job-embedded professional development activities impacted classroom instruction in several ways. More Montessori materials were distributed and used throughout grade levels than in previous years. Teachers have begun implementing more evidenced-based instruction in their classrooms. There has been a significant amount of work done to increase consistency of instruction within each grade level.

How did teacher learning from learning teams and other job-embedded professional development impact student achievement?

The spring NWEA data indicates that the teacher learning is maintaining student achievement levels.

Review Findings

How did the sites or learning teams identify needs and instructional strategies to increase student achievement? Learning teams identified needs and instructional strategies through their review and scrutiny of student assessment data.

How did learning teams use data and implement the selected instructional strategies and follow-up on implementation?

Teacher leaders discussed student assessment data, instructional strategies and implementation in their ILT meetings and then followed up with conversations within PLC meetings.

Recommendations

How will the district use the review findings to improve the effectiveness of job-embedded professional development?

The Instructional Leadership Team has reflected and determined that the focus over the next few years should be on the PLC groups and how to help the leaders and the group members get the most out of the

professional learning time. There are growth opportunities in the areas of data analysis, conflict management, and curriculum design.

Core Component: Teacher Evaluation

Implementation

Are licensed staff members observed/evaluated as outlined in the approved plan (approval letter and subsequent plan change approval letters)?

If no, please explain the changes that have occurred and why?

Licensed staff were observed and evaluated only one time as outlined in the approved plan.

Impact

What impact did the observation/evaluation process, including coaching, have on classroom instruction?

Coaching conversations led to increased use of evidence-based instructional strategies and improved teacher-student relationships.

What impact did the observation/evaluation process, including coaching, have on student achievement?

The spring NWEA data indicates that the evaluation process is maintaining student achievement levels.

Review Findings

How did the feedback teachers received from each observation/evaluation assist in self-reflection and improved instructional practice?

Post-observation conferences provided rich opportunities for constructive self-reflection, much of which influenced improved instructional practices.

How did the training observers/evaluators received throughout the year impact inter-rater reliability and their ability to provide constructive and meaningful feedback to all licensed staff members?

All instructional staff members and administrators shared the same rubric, process and training relative to the observations/evaluation process.

Recommendations

How will the district use the review findings to improve the effectiveness of teacher evaluation?

The Instructional Leadership Team has discussed wanting to update our rubric and evaluation system. A committee will be formed to lead this effort. The evaluation system will need to be updated by the beginning of next year to incorporate culturally responsive practices as well.

Core Component: Performance Pay and Alternative Salary Schedule

Implementation

Are the performance pay amounts and standards the same as outlined in the approved plan (approval letter and subsequent plan change approval letters)?

If no, please explain the changes that have occurred and why?

The performance pay amounts and standards are the same as outlined in the approved plan.

Is salary schedule movement or base salary increase based on the same measure of performance as outlined in the approved plan (approval letter and subsequent plan change approval letters)?

If no, please explain the changes that have occurred and why?

The salary schedule movement and base salary increase is based on the same measure of performance as outlined in the approved plan.

Impact

What percentage of all licensed staff met the standard to earn performance pay for the measures of student achievement? %

None of the eligible teachers met the standard to earn performance pay for the measure of student achievement.

What percentage of all licensed staff met the standard to earn performance pay for observation/evaluation results? %

94% (17/18) of eligible teachers achieved an average of 85% or better through this year's observation/evaluation process. 66% (12/18) of eligible teachers achieved an average of 92% or better!

What percentage of tenured licensed staff met the standard to earn performance pay for observation/evaluation results? %

NA

What percentage of probationary licensed staff met the standard to earn performance pay for observation/evaluation results? %

NA

Is performance pay awarded for another area (besides schoolwide goals, measures of student achievement and observation/evaluation results)?

NA

If yes, what percentage of all licensed staff members met the standard to earn performance pay for this other area? %

NA

What percentage of all licensed staff met the standard to earn movement on the salary schedule or an increase in base salary? %

NA

What percentage of tenured licensed staff met the standard to earn movement on the salary schedule or an increase in base salary? %

NA

What percentage of probationary licensed staff met the standard to earn movement on the salary schedule or an increase in base salary? %
NA

Recommendations

How will the district use the data to improve the effectiveness of this core component?
The Instructional Leadership Team will discuss the findings to determine the effectiveness of the performance pay system.

General Program Impact and Recommendations

What overall impact on instruction has the district or charter school seen as a result of implementing the Q Comp program?
The greatest instructional impact as a result of implementing QComp has been greater consistency within grade levels.

What overall impact on student achievement has the district or charter school seen as a result of implementing the Q Comp program?
NDMA has noted consistent individual student growth because of the work of the teacher leaders and all instructional staff have done through QComp.

How will the district use the review findings to improve the overall effectiveness of the program?
The Instructional Leadership Team will discuss the findings to determine the effectiveness of the QComp program.

New Discoveries Montessori Academy

Executive Director Performance Review

The Executive Director evaluation is to be completed yearly and accepted by the Board of Directors prior to July 1 of the current fiscal year. Portions of the evaluation will involve 360 degree input from Board members and school staff. The Board of Director’s designated representatives will administer the evaluation process.

Individual Ratings:

5—Exemplary Impact	(Performance impact is beyond expectations.)
4—Proficient Impact	(Performance impact is in compliance with expectations.)
3—Average Impact	(Performance impact is at mediocrity level.)
2—Questionable Impact	(Performance impact is below standard of expectations.)
1—Negative Impact	(Performance impact is disabling to quality progress.)
N/A—Not Applicable	(Not enough information to rate this item.)

Performance Criteria:

The evaluation has two distinct groupings: Goals/Objectives Performance and Core Value Performance. These two groupings will blend into the total evaluation process with a weight factor of

Goals/Objectives	40%	Evaluation by Board of Directors
Core Values	60% (15% per core value)	360 degree evaluation

Final interpretations of the Director of Operations’ evaluation will culminate in a Summary Report and a Fiscal Year Professional Development Plan. Both will be approved by the Board of Directors by formal action at either their regularly scheduled meeting or a special meeting called for this purpose.

Kirsten Kinzler is the Executive Director for the 2023-24 fiscal year. This instrument is used to evaluate Ms. Kinzler’s performance in multiple areas – whether she performs the responsibilities directly or oversees them through delegation. The Board is seeking as much feedback as appropriate to conduct as thorough an evaluation as possible. Clarifying comments in addition to the ratings of each item aid in achieving this goal. Additionally, please rate N/A any of the items you feel that you do not have enough information on which to provide feedback.

A summary of the progress made on the goals in the Goals/Objectives Performance are included in this document.

Thank you in advance for taking time to contribute to this evaluation process.

2024-25 Executive Director Evaluation – Return to Tara Erickson by May 14, 2025

Goal 1

The Executive Director will continue Culture development at NDMA by providing professional development with the leadership team.

Actions to meet goal #1

- a. **Character Strong Program**
- b. **ILT PD: Conflict Management by Building Strong Relationships Series** (Same program that Executive Team participated in summer and fall of 2025. To be delivered on March 7, 25, and April 1, 2025)
- c. **PD for Licensed Teaching Staff: Who Am I at My Best: Identifying Strengths session using ADW Strengths Report.** Delivered on Friday April 18, 2025

Outcomes – How do we know the goal has been met: The climate is calm, there are great conversations with relational circuits on, staff are able to identify and regulate emotions.

Goal 2

The Executive Director will enhance personal productivity by improving time management, delegation, and meeting efficiency. Progress will be reported to the school board.

- a. **Time Management:** Prioritize tasks, schedule uninterrupted "deep work" sessions, and conduct regular time audits to align with priorities.
- b. **Delegation:** Identify tasks to delegate, provide clear instructions and deadlines, and hold regular check-ins to ensure progress.
- c. **Meeting Efficiency:** Prepare clear agendas, set time limits, and evaluate meetings for continuous improvement.
- d. **Address Barriers:** Identify and eliminate blockers, and cultivate a positive, proactive mindset.

Outcomes – Time Management to Ensure Timely Submission of Key Documents and Reports for State and Local Authorization

- a. Reports filed on or before deadlines – 20 reports due Nov 1, Jan 31, Feb 15, Sept 1, May 1
- b. 20 Hours per week for Deep Work time. (4 hours per day)

Goal #__3_:

Measurable Accountability – The Executive Director will fulfill the academic, environmental, financial and operations goals set forth in the school's contract with its Authorizer.

2024-25 Executive Director Evaluation – Return to Tara Erickson by May 14, 2025

1.0 GOAL ACHIEVEMENT (40%): Evaluation conducted by the Board of Directors

Goal #_1_:

Leadership – The Executive Director will continue Culture development at NDMA by providing professional development with the leadership team.

- a. Work with classrooms using their personalized report(s) and assist with discussion on how to apply in the work environment.
- b. Participate in administrative leadership coaching and development.

Rating: _____

5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Exemplary Impact	Proficient Impact	Average Impact	Questionable Impact	Negative Impact	Not Enough Information

Board Comments:

Goal #_2_:

The Executive Director will enhance personal productivity by improving time management, delegation, and meeting efficiency. Progress will be reported to the school board.

- e. **Time Management:** Prioritize tasks, schedule uninterrupted "deep work" sessions, and conduct regular time audits to align with priorities.
- f. **Delegation:** Identify tasks to delegate, provide clear instructions and deadlines, and hold regular check-ins to ensure progress.
- g. **Meeting Efficiency:** Prepare clear agendas, set time limits, and evaluate meetings for continuous improvement.
- h. **Address Barriers:** Identify and eliminate blockers, and cultivate a positive, proactive mindset.

Rating: _____

5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Exemplary Impact	Proficient Impact	Average Impact	Questionable Impact	Negative Impact	Not Enough Information

Board Comments:

Goal #_3_:

Measurable Accountability – The Executive Director will fulfill the academic, environmental, financial and operations goals set forth in the school's contract with its Authorizer.

Rating: _____

5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Exemplary Impact	Proficient Impact	Average Impact	Questionable Impact	Negative Impact	Not Enough Information

Board Comments:

2024-25 Executive Director Evaluation – Return to Tara Erickson by May 14, 2025

2.0 Dynamic Leadership (15%):

Rating: _____

5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Exemplary Impact	Proficient Impact	Average Impact	Questionable Impact	Negative Impact	Not Enough Information

2.01—Board Collaboration

- _____ Recommends to the Board alternative solutions and probable consequences;
- _____ Give Board members complete and accurate explanations of issues;
- _____ Provides on-going orientation and growth development for Board members.

Comment:

2.02—Policy Management

- _____ Complies consistently with existing policies;
- _____ Displays understanding of policies when making recommendations;
- _____ Provides leadership to policy modification and development.

Comment:

2.03—Administrative Effectiveness

- _____ Grants effective empowerment to others who make decisions on his/her behalf;
- _____ Demonstrates planning to minimize crisis management;
- _____ Implements an organizational structure with clear lines of authority and responsibility.

Comment:

2.04—Budget/Finance Management

- _____ Leads the budget development process in a timely and effective manner;
- _____ Monitors and acts timely on budget and financial issues;
- _____ Plans for the unexpected expenditure with a budgeted emergency reserve.

Comment:

2.05—Instruction/Curriculum/Non-Instructional Leadership

- _____ Demonstrates on-going leadership with instructional and curriculum improvement;
- _____ Provides staff with job-related growth opportunities;
- _____ Challenges and empowers staff to strive for excellence within the organizational vision.

Comment:

2024-25 Executive Director Evaluation – Return to Tara Erickson by May 14, 2025

3.0 Intentional Interdependence (15%):

Rating: _____

5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Exemplary Impact	Proficient Impact	Average Impact	Questionable Impact	Negative Impact	Not Enough Information

3.01—Board Collaboration

- _____ Represents the Board on operational complaints that are voiced to the Board members;
- _____ Takes Board suggestions as positive input and follows through on implementation;
- _____ Facilitates Board strengths with a focus on enhancing core values and vision.

Comment:

3.02—Policy Management

- _____ Obtains input from appropriate sources before recommending policy;
- _____ Communicates policy effectively to staff, Board, and community;
- _____ Participates and supports recommendations of the Board Policy/Governance Committee.

Comment:

3.03—Administrative Effectiveness

- _____ Works diligently with staff, parents, and community to generate ownership and support;
- _____ Displays controlled emotions in his/her professional relationship with people;
- _____ Communicates effectively to all stakeholders NDMA's vision and core values.

Comment:

3.04—Budget/Finance Management

- _____ Displays a creative relationship with funding sources in business and community;
- _____ Sustains a positive working relationship with state/federal funding agencies;
- _____ Practices timely communication with staff, parents, and Board on budget planning.

Comment:

3.05—Instruction/Curriculum/Non-Instructional Leadership

- _____ Displays an instructional/curricular expertise that results in support for staff;
- _____ Establishes a facilitative leadership model with staff that generates group synergism;
- _____ Procures parents, business, and community involvement to assist in creating excellence.

Comment:

2024-25 Executive Director Evaluation – Return to Tara Erickson by May 14, 2025

4.0 Exemplary Montessori Principles (15%):

Rating: _____

5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Exemplary Impact	Proficient Impact	Average Impact	Questionable Impact	Negative Impact	Not Enough Information

4.01—Board Collaboration

- _____ Builds up the Board’s awareness with on-going dialog about Montessori Principles;
- _____ Involves Board in the process improvement of achieving State/National standards;
- _____ Articulates the process for student achievement along with outcomes.

Comment:

4.02—Policy Management

- _____ Develops policy to place a high-value on Montessori implementation;
- _____ Design’s strategies to integrate State/National outcomes with Montessori principles;
- _____ Creates procedures that insure consistent use of Montessori methods.

Comment:

4.03—Administrative Effectiveness

- _____ Re-enforces instructional efforts that engage children in their learning style;
- _____ Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the Montessori concept;
- _____ Institutes change necessary to ensure effective instructional and assessment practices.

Comment:

4.04—Budget/Finance Management

- _____ Discerns high-impact instructional processes for priority funding;
- _____ Institutes long-term budge planning for equipment, facilities, landscaping and technology;
- _____ Makes timely priority-based financial decisions to maintain instructional integrity.

Comment:

4.05—Instruction/Curriculum/Non-Instructional Leadership

- _____ Demonstrates a keen awareness of Montessori principal and practices;
- _____ Requires a process of benchmarking each child’s progress from where they started;
- _____ Maintains a succession plan for staff positions to avoid negative impact on students.

Comment:

2024-25 Executive Director Evaluation – Return to Tara Erickson by May 14, 2025

5.0 Measurable Accountability (15%):

Rating: _____

5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Exemplary Impact	Proficient Impact	Average Impact	Questionable Impact	Negative Impact	Not Enough Information

5.01—Board Collaboration

- _____ Initiates an annual process of Board of Director’s strategic planning;
- _____ Reports to the Board on-going progress on his/her goals;
- _____ Responds to accountability standards imposed by the Board.

Comment:

5.02—Policy Management

- _____ Demonstrates a proactive approach to policy development and implementation;
- _____ Performs within his/her administrative role as defined by Board policy;
- _____ Mentors the Board to achieve its full potential in its role of policy governance.

Comment:

5.03—Administrative Effectiveness

- _____ Makes operational decisions based on NDMA’s core values;
- _____ Provides instructional support mechanisms to help staff increase effectiveness;
- _____ Leads by example.

Comment:

5.04—Budget/Finance Management

- _____ Provides financial management that consistently produces EOY positive fund balances;
- _____ Recommends creative ways to reduce cost and increase operational effectiveness;
- _____ Provides an accurate and timely financial reporting system in an understandable format.

Comment:

5.05—Instruction/Curriculum/Non-Instructional Leadership

- _____ Implements a fair and effective means to evaluate staff performance;
- _____ Tracks improved student achievement outcomes under his/her leadership;
- _____ Manages student behavior and discipline effectively.

Comment:

2024-25 Executive Director Evaluation – Return to Tara Erickson by May 14, 2025

MN Charter School Boards Performance Assessment & Improvement Process



MN ASSOCIATION OF
CHARTER SCHOOLS
Unleashing education from convention

Standards, Indicators & Documentation of Indicators

The Board Performance Assessment and Improvement Process is a tool for Charter School Boards to assess their own performance in governing the school and then outlining a plan to improve governance.

MISSION, VISION & STRATEGIC DIRECTION		
Standards	Indicators	Documentation of Indicators
The Board ensures that the mission statement for the school and the vision statement of the preferred future for its students are guiding school operations.	The school has developed a mission statement for the school and a vision statement for the preferred future for its students.	In Place and given to all board members
	The Board has adopted a policy that establishes expectations regarding the distribution and use of the mission and vision statements within the school community.	A procedure is in place where the mission, vision and core values are in place on multiple documents and in multiple places throughout the school.
	The Board monitors the knowledge and understanding level of the staff, students, parents and community supporters of the mission and vision.	
	The Board has adopted and implemented a policy and process for the periodic review of the mission and vision statements.	This is also in procedure vs policy.

MISSION, VISION & STRATEGIC DIRECTION (cont'd)

Standards	Indicators	Documentation of Indicators
<p>The Board keeps the school leadership and community focused on the strategic directions and long range plans for achieving the mission and fulfilling the vision.</p>	<p>The Board has developed strategic directions, long range plans and approved short term action plans.</p>	<p>This has been and continues to be done via the Strategic Plan which is reviewed quarterly and updated annually</p>
	<p>The Board evaluates the budget to ensure that it reflects the priorities and goals in the long range plan and short term action plans.</p>	<p>The budget is reviewed monthly at finance committee meetings and findings or recommendations are presented to the board at each monthly board meeting.</p>
	<p>The Board has adopted policy that outlines the process for how staff, parents and other community stakeholders have input into the planning process.</p>	<p>All updates to the strategic plan are announced at board meetings and recorded in board meeting minutes which are posted on the school website. In addition, the Instructional Leadership Team members work on SMART goals for the plan.</p>
	<p>The Board has adopted a policy and process for monitoring the implementation of the long range plan and the short term action plan.</p>	<p>Administration presents updates on the implementation of the plan on a regular basis at board meetings.</p>
	<p>The Board monitors the implementation of the long range plan and the short term action plan.</p>	<p>Yes, at board meetings.</p>

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

<u>Standards</u>	<u>Indicators</u>	<u>Documentation of Indicators</u>
The board ensures that the programs of the school meet student needs and contribute to the academic achievement and success of students.	The Board has adopted student achievement goals and curriculum policies to achieve those goals.	These are adopted through the short-term goals of the strategic plan - those goals are updated annually
	The Board has adopted and implemented a process on the periodic review of academic achievement goals and curriculum policies.	Board appointed administrator updates the board multiple times per year on academic progress of students.
	The Board has adopted policies and approved programs for addressing the diverse needs and interests of students.	The board's role is governance and delegates the development and implementation of programs to address the needs and interests of students to the CEO. CEO informs the board of the programs.
	The Board monitors academic achievement, curriculum implementation and program success.	The board monitors progress through quarterly reports by CEO
	The Board monitors that all academic reports to MDE are filed in a timely manner (AYP, etc.)	board is informed annually when AYP reports are available

FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT

Standards	Indicators	Documentation of Indicators
<p>The Board ensures that the school is financially solvent, practices sound financial management and allocates resources to achieve the mission, vision and goals of the school.</p>	<p>The Board budgeting process requires that allocations be evaluated in terms of the mission, vision and goals of the school.</p>	<p>The finance committee carefully goes through all items of the budget</p>
	<p>The Board monitors the following financial statements monthly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Balance sheet ▪ Monthly income/expenditures ▪ Budget vs Actual income & Expenses ▪ Cash flow projections 	<p>All these financial statements are reviewed at monthly finance committee meetings and presented to the full board every month.</p>
	<p>The Board has developed and adopted appropriate internal financial control policies for the school.</p>	<p>The appropriate internal financial controls are in place as indicated in annual audit</p>
	<p>The Board has developed and adopted a 3-5 year financial plan that relates to the achievement of the mission, vision and goals of the school.</p>	<p>There is a multi-year budget updated and presented to the board annually</p>
	<p>The Board monitors the implementation of all financial management policies.</p>	<p>yes</p>
	<p>The Board adopts policies, expectations and goals for fundraising and development activities undertaken by the school.</p>	<p>The board is informed of all fundraising and development activities of the school</p>
	<p>The board has established and empowered Finance Committee to play a leadership role in financial oversight.</p>	<p>There is a standing board finance committee chaired by the board treasurer</p>
	<p>The board has adopted a policy and process for hiring of the auditor.</p>	<p>The board has a process for hiring an auditor</p>
	<p>The Board monitors that all financial reports are filed with MN government agencies, including MDE and TRA.</p>	<p>Board is informed when all financial reports are filed</p>

PERSONNEL		
<u>Standards</u>	<u>Indicators</u>	<u>Documentation of Indicators</u>
The Board authorizes the Executive Director or administrative team as the CEO and delegates full authority to manage operational affairs of the school.	The Board has developed, and adopted a policy that delegates the CEO full authority for the management of the school and that defines the respective roles and responsibilities of the Board and the CEO.	Policy 203P Operation of NDMA Board Administrator and Board Collaboration document in Board Handbook
The Board ensures that the school has effective administrative leadership managing the operations of the school.	The Board has developed and adopted a policy that outlines the process and procedures for recruiting and hiring of the CEO.	308P - Hiring a Board Appointed Administrator
	The Board has developed and adopted a succession plan for the CEO position that addresses the voluntary resignation, involuntary resignation, retirement or dismissal of the CEO.	307P - Emergency or Short Term Administrator Succession Plan
	The Board has developed and adopted evaluation criteria and process for the CEO.	There is an annual evaluation process for CEO using the board adopted evaluation form
	The Board has written documentation of the contract or employment terms with the CEO.	Kept on file with office manager and board chair
The board ensures that the work environment of the school is conducive to fulfilling the mission of the school.	The board has developed and adopted personnel policies that establish clear workplace expectations, processes and procedures.	multiple policies and procedures to establish workplace expectations
	The board monitors the implementation of personnel policies.	Yes, through review of personnel policies.
	The board has a policy and process for annually reviewing personnel policies.	Yes
	The Board has adopted fair and just compensation and benefits for school employees.	Yes

ADVOCACY & OUTREACH

<u>Standards</u>	<u>Indicators</u>	<u>Documentation of Indicators</u>
The Board promotes the interests of the school and students in the state and federal legislative processes.	The Board actively takes action to support the public policy agenda of the MN Association of Charter Schools.	
	The Board encourages the CEO and staff to participate in the development of MACS public policy agenda.	
	The Board members know their local legislators and invite them to visit the school.	
	The Board ensures that legislative issues and new laws are reported to staff, parents and other community stakeholders.	
	The Board adopts guidelines and goals relative to the student recruitment plan.	
The Board promotes the charter school to parents, potential parents and students and the general public.	The Board adopts expectations and goals for public relations and community outreach.	Through strategic plan
	The board monitors the implementation of the student recruiting, public relations and community outreach programs.	Administration provides board information on "happenings" through monthly director's report
	The board develops and adopts policies relative to measuring participation and involvement levels of students, staff, parents and community members in the activities of the school.	

BOARD FOCUS & OPERATIONS

<u>Standards</u>	<u>Indicators</u>	<u>Documentation of Indicators</u>
The Board operates in a manner that ensures effective governance and decision making processes.	The Board has developed board operations policies recommended by the MN Association of Charter Schools	
	The Board has written charges for all committees, taskforces and working groups that it has established.	Yes
	The board has adopted and implemented a board recruitment and orientation process.	yes
	The board has a policy and process for the periodic review of its own operational policies.	yes
	The individual members of the board annually assess their own performance relative to the fiduciary duties of nonprofit board members.	
	The board annually assesses its overall performance in fulfilling its duties as a board.	
	The board has developed and adopted a job description and expectations for board members.	yes

BOARD FOCUS & OPERATIONS (cont'd)

Standards	Indicators	Documentation of Indicators
The Board operates in a manner that ensures effective governance and decision making processes. <i>(cont'd)</i>	The board has developed and adopted a process on policymaking that provides staff and parents input in the process.	All policy governance meetings are open to the public, and all new policies are given readings at two consecutive board meetings and adopted at the following meeting.
	The Board has a policy, process and timeline for the school operational policies.	yes
	The board monitors the school's compliance with federal and state laws that are applicable to charters.	through policy/governance committee
	The Board adopts a policy and process for negotiating and monitoring the implementation of the charter contract provisions with the sponsor.	yes
The Board maintains focus on the mission of the school.	The Board agenda items and meeting times primarily deal with student achievement issues.	
	The Board has allocated time in its calendar to study, reflect and discuss the philosophy and theories that are the basis of the school programs.	occasionally

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANT BOARD PERFORMANCE & AREAS FOR BOARD IMPROVEMENTS

CATEGORY	SIGNIFICANT DOCUMENTED PERFORMANCE	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
<i>Mission, Vision and Strategic Direction</i>		
<i>Academic Achievement</i>		
<i>Financial Oversight & Management</i>		
<i>Personnel</i>		
<i>Advocacy & Outreach</i>		
<i>Board Focus & Operations</i>		

Governance Improvement Plan from September (Month) **20**24 --- June (month) **20**24

AREA	TASK	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE
<i>Mission, Vision and Strategic Direction</i>	1) Currently a Strength of the board 2) 3)		
<i>Academic Achievement</i>	1) Have various grade levels present YLLP at board meetings 2) 3)	Teacher Board members	Once per quarter
<i>Financial Oversight & Management</i>	1) Board training time at meetings on Budget Bytes 2) Training on reading Supplemental Reports 3) Training on reading Financial Statements	Finance Committee	FY 25
<i>Personnel</i>	1) 2) 3) Strong Administrative Team		
<i>Advocacy & Outreach</i>	1) Board members create "elevator speech" on strengths of NDMA 2) 3)	Individual Board members	Have two presentations per year
<i>Board Focus & Operations</i>	1) Clarify NDMA's position as a Montessori School 2) 3)	Instructional Leadership Team	Presentation to board in February

**NDMA Student Satisfaction Survey
2024-2025**

As part of our charter agreement with our authorizer, Osprey Wilds, (formerly known as 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 students of NDMA. Please check the box that reflects your opinion of the following statements about NDMA. (*Don't Know - please use this column only if you don't have enough information to respond.*)

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	Comments (Please be specific)
1) I am learning at this school.				
2) I like learning using the Montessori and hands-on materials.				
3) I talk with my family about school.				
4) I feel valued and respected by my teacher.				
5) My teacher makes sure that all students are learning.				
6) My teacher expects me to do well in school.				
7) My teacher tells me how I am doing in school.				
8) I feel safe and comfortable in school.				
9) I think the things we do at New Discoveries help to make our community better.				
10) My teacher listens to me and respects me.				
11) The students in school help and respect one another.				
12) I think that this school is preparing me for my future.				
13) The director and staff take care of situations when students make poor choices/misbehave.				
14) I know my academic strengths and weaknesses.				
15) I know the New Discoveries Montessori Academy rules.				
16) I know how to recycle paper, plastic, glass and aluminum.				

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	Comments (Please be specific)
17) We recycle at school.				
18) We recycle at home.				
19) We learn about taking care of our environment.				
20) I would recommend New Discoveries Montessori Academy to other kids.				

Please rate your improvement in the following areas over the past school year:

I HAVE IMPROVED IN MY ABILITY TO:	BIG IMPROVEMENT	SOME IMPROVEMENT	NO IMPROVEMENT	Comments (Please be specific)
1) Read				
2) Write				
3) Speak about something in front of a group				
4) To think mathematically				
5) Participate in Phy Ed activities				
6) Participate in Art activities				
7) Participate in Music activities				
8) Environmental Education – be a good steward of the environment				

What I like best about NDMA: _____

What I would like to change at NDMA: _____

Other comments (*please be specific*): _____

Thank you! :)

**NDMA Family Satisfaction Survey
2024-2025**

Each year, as part of our charter agreement with our authorizer, Osprey Wilds, (formerly known as 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.				
2) My child has made friends at New Discoveries Montessori Academy.				
3) My child feels safe at New Discoveries Montessori Academy.				
4) My child feels safe on the way to and from school.				
5) My child appreciates his/her teacher.				
6) My child feels valued and respected by his/her teacher.				
7) My child appears to be progressing academically.				
8) My child feels valued and respected by the adults at NDMA.				
9) My child’s teacher knows and responds to my child’s individual needs.				
10) My child’s teacher supports and encourages my child’s attempts to gain new skills.				
11) My child’s teacher helps to build my child’s self-esteem.				
12) My child’s teacher listens to me, respects me as a parent (or guardian) and supports us as a family.				
13) School guidelines are stated in a positive way.				
14) The atmosphere at New Discoveries Montessori Academy is warm and nurturing.				
15) The school staff interacts respectfully with each other.				
16) The director and staff intervene effectively when children misbehave.				
17) Families are informed frequently about school happenings through newsletters, notes and phone calls.				
18) I have received information on the school’s discipline policy , philosophy, and				

goals for children.				
19) I feel welcome to visit my child's school at any time.				
20) I know whom to go to with my concerns and feel confident that my concerns will be addressed respectfully and promptly.				
21) I have been made aware of my child's academic strengths and weaknesses.				
22) My child tells me what is happening at school.				
23) I am aware of opportunities and feel welcome to volunteer in my child's school.				
24) WELLNESS: When I send a lunch from home, I understand that I need to send healthy foods and refrain from sending snacks and beverages (e.g., candy, regular potato chips, soda or fruit drinks that are not 100% juice).				
25) I feel my child is receiving a well-rounded education at New Discoveries Montessori Academy.				
26) I would recommend New Discoveries Montessori Academy to other families.				

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

<input type="radio"/> School/Classroom Newsletter	<input type="radio"/> Family Learning Discoveries Events	<input type="radio"/> Local Newspaper – Hutch Leader
<input type="radio"/> Material brought home by children	<input type="radio"/> Friends/Neighbors/Other People	<input type="radio"/> NDMA Staff/Teachers
<input type="radio"/> e-mail/website/Facebook	<input type="radio"/> Mailings	<input type="radio"/> Don't know
		<input type="radio"/> Other _____

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

<input type="checkbox"/> How students are doing	<input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum information	<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Events
<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers/Teaching methods	<input type="checkbox"/> Charter Schools	<input type="checkbox"/> School Board information	<input type="checkbox"/> Montessori Philosophy/Method
<input type="checkbox"/> Special Education/Title	<input type="checkbox"/> Afterschool Discoveries	<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

- 3) Environmental Stewardship:
 - My child knows how to recycle paper, plastic, glass and aluminum.
 - We recycle at home.
 - My child talks about environmental experiences that happen at school.

- 4) Why did you enroll your child(ren) at New Discoveries Montessori Academy?

- 5) One thing I like about New Discoveries:

- 6) One thing I would like to change:

Other Comments (Please be specific):

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

NDMA Staff Satisfaction Survey

2024-2025

Each year, as part of our charter agreement with our authorizer, Osprey Wilds, (formerly known as 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 staff of NDMA. **It is very important that we receive your input!** Please check the box that reflects your opinion of the following statements about NDMA. (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) I understand that I am employed at New Discoveries under an ‘at-will agreement’ - I can leave or be let go at anytime.				
2) NDMA offers me adequate facilities to create a positive learning environment.				
3) I feel valued and appreciated in my work by my colleagues .				
4) I feel valued and appreciated in my work by administration .				
5) I feel valued and appreciated in my work by parents of the children at NDMA.				
6) I feel valued and appreciated in my work by the students at NDMA.				
7) I feel valued and appreciated in my work by the community .				
8) I feel valued and appreciated in my work by the NDMA school board .				
9) I feel I am provided with sufficient opportunities to grow professionally.				
10) We are adequately meeting the needs of our students.				
11) I am satisfied with the academic program at NDMA.				
12) I think the overall atmosphere within NDMA is beneficial to student learning.				
13) There is adequate communication between staff and administration .				
14) There is adequate communication between staff and parents .				
15) There is adequate communication between staff and the school board .				
16) There is adequate communication among the staff .				
17) Administration and staff take care of situations when children misbehave or make poor choices.				
18) I like the multi-age classrooms.				
19) I feel that students are learning at NDMA.				
20) Resources are available to help me accomplish my job and I understand how to access them.				
21) The school building and grounds are well maintained.				
22) I recycle at school.				
23) I recycle at home.				

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

- School Newsletter
- Local Newspaper – Hutch Leader
- Friends/Neighbors/Other People
- e-mail/website/social media
- Other _____
- Classroom Newsletter
- Material brought home by children
- NDMA Staff/Teachers
- Mailings
- Don't know

4) What kind of school information would you be most interested in?

- How students are doing/Student Progress
- Volunteer opportunities
- Teachers/Teaching methods
- School Board information
- Other _____
- Curriculum information
- Special Events
- Charter Schools
- Montessori Philosophy/Method
- Don't know

5) In your opinion, what needs to be improved at NDMA?

6) What do you value and like about NDMA?

Other Comments (Please be specific):

Please circle your age category: 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65-74 75+

If you would like more information, please list your name, address, phone and e-mail address. _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey! Please mail completed survey in enclosed envelope and return by **Wednesday, June 4th**. The results will be used to help us better serve our students. We appreciate your comments! :)

Providing a quality, comprehensive public education within a Montessori context



May 2025 – All School Photo