



Discovery Woods



**SCHOOL YEAR 2021-2022  
WORLD'S BEST WORKFORCE & ANNUAL REPORT**

Discovery Woods OW FY22 World's Best Workforce & Annual Report,| Drafted September 26, 2022

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## **School Information**

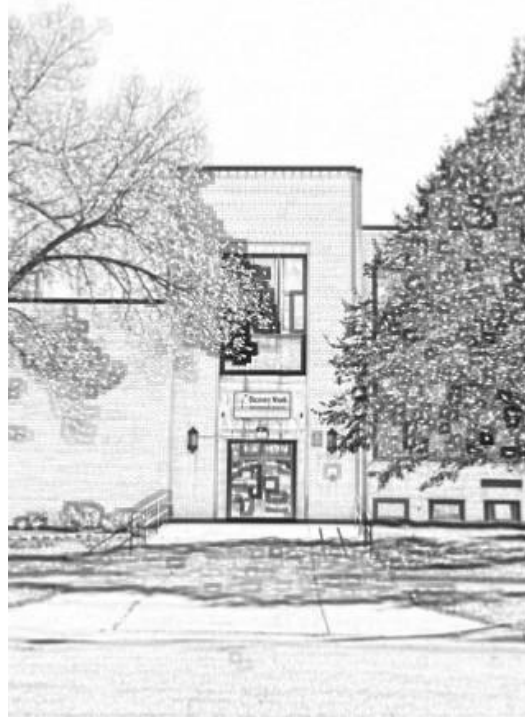
Discovery Woods is a Montessori inspired and environmentally centered charter school that opened its doors to students the fall of 2011 for kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. In 2012 we were able to expand through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. DW's enrollment has fluctuated through the years and we are hoping for a steady incline since the pandemic. We currently serve 102 students. DW also has a tuition based preschool option that currently serves 17 students. We are dedicated to creating a high quality charter school where each child is respected as an individual and given the foundation to become a lifelong learner and responsible leader. Our facility location provides opportunities to explore the neighborhood park and Mississippi river as well as other field trip possibilities.

### **MISSION**

To provide Brainerd Lakes Area families a choice for quality elementary education centered around the individual needs of the child with a focus on the environment.

### **VISION**

Discovery Woods is dedicated to educational excellence, environmental stewardship, and personal growth. Our students will have the foundation to be critical thinkers and responsible citizens.



**Discovery Woods**  
**604 N 7<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**Brainerd, MN 56401**  
**218-828-8200**  
**[office@discoverywoods.com](mailto:office@discoverywoods.com)**  
**[www.discoverywoods.com](http://www.discoverywoods.com)**

## **AUTHORIZER INFORMATION**

Discovery Woods is proud to have been authorized by the Osprey Wilds in Sandstone, Minnesota. Osprey Wilds has authorized Discovery Woods since January of 2011 with Discovery Woods officially opening in the fall of 2011. Discovery Woods was in the final year of its June 2014 to June 2018 contract with Osprey Wilds for the School year 2017-18 with the contract expiring on June 30, 2018. OW renewed Discovery Woods' contract through June 30, 2021 and due to the Covid-19 pandemic our contract was extended for an additional year and then was given an extension for the following year therefore DW will continue their good work helping students succeed and will renew with Osprey Wilds on June 30, 2023.

The authorizing mission of Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center is to ensure quality academic and environmental literacy outcomes for students in Minnesota by conducting effective oversight and evaluation of its authorized schools, providing strategic support to schools, and making informed and merit-based decisions about its portfolio of charter schools.

The authorizing vision of Osprey Wilds is 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.

Erin Anderson, Director of Charter School Authorizing  
Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center  
Charter School Division  
1730 New Brighton Blvd  
Suite 104, PMB 196  
Minneapolis, MN 55413  
(612) 331-4181  
[ospreywilds.org/charter-school-division/](https://ospreywilds.org/charter-school-division/)

## Implementation of Primary and Additional Statutory Purposes

Discovery Woods is a charter school that serves students by providing instruction that will improve student learning and student achievement through different and innovative teaching methods using Montessori philosophy and beyond.

**Primary Purpose:** Improve pupil learning and student achievement. DW uses Response to Intervention (RtI) programming to provide accurate remediation and acceleration for students. Currently, data is used from STAR and/or Fastbridge assessments in Reading and Math to also determine the students' level of learning. Classroom assessments and data are also collected to determine additional struggles or acceleration needs. Discovery Woods implements a Montessori philosophy program to individualize learning for each child while also helping all children learn to work together respectfully and productively in the learning environment. DW has been intentional to provide support to improve math and reading proficiencies through teacher professional development, parent information nights and literature, as well as additional instructional opportunities. DW has many staff taking advantage of Sourcewell's workshops and networking. Sourcewell is a service cooperative created by the Minnesota legislature that provides contract purchasing solutions and professional development opportunities for schools in the area. DW has had a Reading Corp tutor for a few years. DW also recently took part of Math Corp to work with small math groups to advance the students' knowledge.



**Additional Statutory Purposes:** DW increases learning opportunities for pupils by participating in field trips, using the school garden and other learning opportunities. Our sixth graders participated in the Project YES! (Youth Eco Solutions) Fall Summit at the Prairie Woods Nature Center located in Spicer, MN in September for great team building. YES! provides a unique opportunity for students to learn about clean energy, waste reduction, local foods, habitat restoration, and water quality issues and opportunities by working on and completing hands-on projects. Our Upper level (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> graders) students were able to go to Deep Portage to enjoy the winter outdoors in February and then got to explore Camp Shamaineau at the end of the year. 6th graders also got to participate in Learn to Ski at Mount Ski Gull. Third and fourth graders had a wonderful time at the Mille Lacs Indian Museum. First and Second Grade students got to explore the Charles Lindbergh Museum and State Park. DW teachers also take advantage of the city park and school garden on almost a daily basis. DW has had parents and staff begin extracurricular activities such as basketball, Anime Club, Yearbook Club and Nature Club. This year we were limited to our Discovery Book Club but had a large turnout. Our Physical Education teacher has continued to teach tennis and ice skating by using the Gregory Park tennis courts and ice rink and using the school's tennis rackets, ice skates and helmets. DW is also lucky to have rain boots for our students so they can explore the outdoors in wet and sloppy conditions without extra clean up.

## Student Enrollment & Demographics

### STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Discovery Woods is continuing marketing and recruitment practices to sustain the increased enrollment that is happening. DW is building up a relationship with the North Side Association which is a group within the school neighborhood and networking with local businesses and families. DW staff continually build relationships with DW students and families to achieve greater student retention as well as a better attendance rate each year.

<b>Number of Students Enrolled</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23 (est)</b>
Kindergarten	16	21	15
1st Grade	8	17	20
2nd Grade	18	15	18
3rd Grade	13	21	12
4th Grade	18	11	20
5th Grade	8	9	10
6th Grade	14	5	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>Total ADM (Average Daily Membership) for year</b>	<b>110.87</b>	<b>114.74</b>	<b>119.00</b>

### STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Discovery Woods' student demographics have not changed much since 2011. The Brainerd area is not very racially diverse, and those numbers are reflected in the DW student body. The largest demographic groups include Special Education and those who qualify for free and reduced lunch. Discovery Woods' philosophy is that all students have equal access to educational programming, in a safe and caring environment, regardless of race, gender, religion, ethnicity, ability, beliefs, sexual orientation, or economic status.

Demographic Trends	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (est.)
Total Enrollment	119	115	95	107	102
Male	58	61	39	51	50
Female	61	75	56	56	52
Special Education	19	22	22	27	24
English Learners	4	2	2	0	0
Free/Reduced Priced	67	58	52	60	52

Lunch					
Black,not of Hispanic origin	6	7	11	8	8
Hispanic Latino	5	6	2	2	0
Asian/Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0
American Indian/Alaskan Native	2	1	7	9	3
White,not of Hispanic Origin	92	107	75	88	91

## Student Attendance, Attrition & Mobility

### STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Discovery Woods believes good attendance promotes academic success. It is very important that all students attend school and class on time every day. DW does have families who may take occasional trips out of town, but most students' absences are due to illness. DW is watching absences more frequently and keeping families informed of the importance of attendance for all ages of students. Letters, emails and phone calls are ways DW communicates with families regarding absences and the attendance policy. DW's attendance policy states that it is expected for every student to attend school at least 96% of the school year and through diligent efforts this will continue to be the goal. There were families who did take family vacations as well as some families who got Covid or other illnesses so our consistent attendance percentage was down from normal.

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
<b>Overall Student Attendance Rate</b>	95%	96%	93%

<b>Consistent Attendance Percentage</b>	98%	80%	74%
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### STUDENT ATTRITION

Discovery Woods has had consistent numbers of students remain at the school. There have been two major staff changes within the school's existence where multiple students/families did leave however student retention is consistently between 60% to 75%. Going into the 2021-22 school year we had 84% for our student retention which increased to 86% going into the 2022-23 school year. 10% of students who left were either in Grades 4-5, moved or had extenuating family circumstances. There are multiple families who have had students here since preschool or kindergarten.

<b>Percentage of students* who were continuously enrolled between October 1 of the 2021-22 school year and October 1 of the 2022-23 school year.</b>	86%
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<b>Percentage of students* who continued enrollment in the school from Spring 2022 to October 1, 2022.</b>	86%
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### STUDENT MOBILITY

Mobility rates have remained consistent with some students leaving due to family moves and a few deciding that they wish to go back to traditional schools or homeschooling. Most years we have 4<sup>th</sup> and/or 5<sup>th</sup> grade student summer leavers due to the public school beginning middle school in a separate building for 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Discovery Woods is becoming more balanced and other than times around the pandemic our mobility rates are dropping.

	<b>Summer Transfers In</b>	<b>Number of students on Oct. 1</b>	<b>Mid-year Transfers In</b>	<b>Mid-year Transfers Out</b>	<b>Total Mid-year Transfers</b>	<b>Mobility Index* (as a percent)</b>
<b>2018-19</b>	20	117	7	3	10	9%
<b>2019-20</b>	33	110	8	9 (about half went to homeschooling due to Covid-19)	17	15%
<b>2020-21</b>	28	95	14	3	17	18%
<b>2021-22</b>	13	99	5	0	5	5%

<b>Percentage of students who were enrolled for 95% or more of the 2021-22 school year.</b>	96%
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## **Educational Approach & Curriculum**

Discovery Woods uses Montessori philosophy as well as a personalized approach to learning that incorporates hands-on activities, inquiry-based, project-based and place-based learning. All curriculum choices and decisions are influenced and guided by the goals and mission of the school and based on the Minnesota State Academic Standards. DW has developed scope and sequence as well as curriculum review cycle. Curriculum mapping aligns curriculum, skills, standards, and expectations of course levels. Children's House uses the Montessori math curriculum which the students enjoy and have had success with. DW is using Guided Math instruction as well as Moving with Math for Grades 1-4. Moving with Math is a research based program using true manipulatives and the Concrete-Representational-Abstract Instructional method. Moving with Math and Montessori work well together with uses of manipulatives. We have added great pieces to our ELA curriculum including Handwriting without Tears for grades Preschool through 4th, Heggerty for Kindergarten through 2nd, FlyLeaf for Grades 1/2, Bookworms for Grades 3-6. All these elements tie together well and will give students the fundamental skills that they need while hitting the state standards. DW has also introduced the Caring School Community (CSC) to help with social emotional learning. Caring School Community is a comprehensive, research-based social and emotional learning (SEL) program that builds school-wide community, develops students' social skills and SEL competencies, and enables a transformative stance on discipline. CSC also works well with our Montessori beliefs showing empathy and being peaceful. This CASEL SEL program promotes positive behavior through direct teaching of responsibility, empathy, and cooperation, creating settings where students feel heard, known, and cared for. Students become intrinsically motivated to contribute productively to a community they feel invested in, and where they know they matter. We have been able to expand the CSC curriculum to involve cross-age buddies which has been a great success and next year we plan to expand further to include family projects and events. DW will continue staff development activities and share professional development opportunities.



### **Pedagogical Approaches and their Alignment to our Mission**

Discovery Woods utilizes an individualized approach to learning that incorporates hands-on activities and manipulatives, community learning opportunities, and learning in the natural environment. All students experience nature based learning through integration in all curricular areas, but also do hands-on work in the school garden. Discovery Woods is dedicated to building character in all students, and strives to do so with the incorporation of activities such as throwing recycling in the correct bins once a day and by having a student leadership team with upper elementary students, the team brings innovative ideas to the administration as well as helping come up with solutions for concerns brought to the team. Teachers at Discovery Woods are eager to extend beyond the walls of a traditional classroom into the natural environment and local community. Classes regularly use the environment as a context for learning. Discovery Woods uses field trips to the local city park at least weekly along with our own playground and school garden. We have also incorporated invitations from neighbors of the school to see their worm compost and gardens. Discovery Woods brings on project based learning as well and our school garden was one of those biggest projects. Students helped with many aspects including deciding the layout, what to plant, how/where to plant, amount of soil needed for the planters and the actual labor of getting the

school garden built and ready. The classes have also watched to see what kind of rain barrel works the best for our garden. DW students have also developed a butterfly garden and rain garden.

Discovery Woods also recognizes the extreme need for reading, writing, and comprehension skills. DW staff are devoted to building each child's literacy through individualized instruction. Literacy centers, games, guided reading, conferencing, and a variety of other strategies are used as a part of the curriculum. Discovery Woods staff make classroom and school wide expectations their priority to teach during the first week of school and will revisit as often as they need to so every student can become confident, develop character and be collaborative.

### **Remediation and Acceleration Practices and Programming**

Discovery Woods has students attend classes in multi-age learning environments. We have 1st and 2nd grade in our lower elementary program, 3rd and 4th grade in our middle elementary program and 5th and 6th grade in our upper elementary program.

We also offer a fee-based preschool program known as Children's House for children ages 33 months through 5 years old. Kindergarten children enrolled in the charter school are included in the mixed age Children's House environment.

Children's House uses the Montessori philosophy by our teachers presenting lessons, but most of the student's education is introduced into five main areas: language arts, mathematics, geometry, cultural studies (science and history) and geography. These subjects are integrated with one another. Upper and Lower Elementary are using individualized learning using small ability based work groups, and other lessons aligned with the Minnesota state standards. Music and Art are taught by the classroom teachers. We have been lucky enough to have a Spanish teacher instructing students for the past few years. We have a Physical Education teacher to teach the PE curriculum which includes ice skating and tennis. DW also has a full time Title I reading teacher for intervention with struggling readers. DW also has Reading Corps and Math Corps tutors.

The following characteristics are integral to DW and offer a new alternative to learning in the community:

- Individual and small group instruction used daily in all subject areas.
- Specialty multi-sensory materials used alongside some textbooks and worksheets.
- Choice of work from interests and abilities under the guidance of the teacher.
- Freedom to move around the room, students choose their workspace and work partners every day and are not assigned a desk or table (except in rare cases at the teacher's discretion).
- Grace and Courtesy lessons as well as CSC meetings that help children learn etiquette, cooperation, conflict resolution, and consideration for others.
- Multi-age classrooms of two to three grades combined.
- Students remain with the same teacher and classmates for two to three years.
- Discovery Woods offers an Environmental Education curriculum as well, which enhances and adds depth to the program. Contact with nature is a priority, and taking students to learn in natural outdoor spaces is part of this program.

## **The specific goals for the children who attend Discovery Woods are:**

### **Developing a positive attitude toward school**

Most of the learning activities are individualized: i.e., each child engages in a learning task that particularly appeals to her/him...because the child finds the activities geared to their needs and level of readiness. Consequently, the child works at her/his own rate, repeating the task as often as the child chooses, thus experiencing a series of successful achievement and mastery. In this manner, the child builds a positive attitude toward learning.

### **Helping each child develop self-confidence**

The student tasks are designed so that each new step is built upon what the child has already mastered, thus removing the negative experience of frequent failure. A carefully planned series of successes builds upon inner confidence in the child assuring him that he can learn by her/himself. These confidence building activities likewise contribute to the child's healthy emotional development.



### **Assisting each child in building a habit of concentration**

Effective learning presupposes the ability to listen carefully and to attend to what is said or demonstrated. Through a series of absorbing experiences, the child forms habits of extended attention, thus increasing her/his ability to concentrate.

### **Fostering an abiding curiosity**

Curiosity is a prerequisite for creative learning. By providing the child with opportunities to discover qualities, dimensions and relationships amidst a rich variety of stimulating learning situations, curiosity is developed and an essential element in creative learning is established.

### **Developing habits of initiative and persistence**

Surround the child with appealing materials and learning activities so the child becomes accustomed to engaging in activities on their own. "Ground rules" call for completing a task once begun and replacing materials after the task is accomplished. This "completion expectation" gradually results in a habit of persistence and perseverance.

### **Fostering inner security and sense of order in the child**

The classrooms provide an environment where children are free to explore, to work, and understand their world. The environment is intended to foster independent functioning resulting in the child's ability to care for themselves, their environment and each other.

## **What our school implements to meet these goals includes:**

**Differentiated instruction.** In a DW classroom, instruction is tailored to the individual needs of students. The teachers work with small groups or individual children to provide lessons at different skill levels while the other children complete assignments or practice skills.

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Assignments vary in complexity and are geared to different ability levels and/or learning styles. Independent work also allows students to devote different amounts of time, according to their needs, in order to achieve mastery of tasks.

**Assessment.** Continuous ongoing assessment is vital for effective differentiated instruction. Teachers will use a comprehensive battery of assessment tools for diagnostic, formative and summative assessments. Using multiple assessments, the teacher can obtain a comprehensive picture of student achievement and use the data to inform ongoing instructional decisions such as adjusting activities to particular learning styles or providing additional support and/or intervention. Such data can also be used to gauge the effectiveness of the instructional program, and inform professional development and school progress towards accountability.

**Multi-age groups.** Students will remain with the same teacher for two or three years in the Elementary Levels: This continuity maximizes teaching and learning time, as students do not spend time every year getting to know new teachers, routines, classrooms, and entire new peer groups. Multiage grouping aids in the identification of students' learning styles, learning needs, and improves school culture, resulting in peer tutoring, peer modeling, and peer reinforcing. Since all students are not expected to have identical skills or perform equally, there is less competition, more respect for each person's individuality, and the recognition that everyone has unique strengths and contributions to offer the group, which promotes cooperation, empathy, and a sense of community. It also encourages self-respect and keeps students involved and motivated, which is particularly useful for at-risk and special needs students.

**Unique Design Characteristics** include the development of independence and the freedom and ability to make choices. In a DW classroom, the teacher provides freedom within limits. Children become independent learners and make choices which permit them to become responsible for their own learning, and contribute to the formation of lifelong learners.



**Time and practice to achieve mastery.** In order for successful learning to occur and for students to meet achievement goals the amount of repetition and the time needed for processing information and skills vary according to the child, the skill, and the topic. Allowing students the time they need for mastery also helps children learn how to concentrate and develop patience and perseverance. The long blocks of time included in the schedule for students to work independently on their work and the classroom materials provides increased efficiency, leading to increased time-on-task and enhanced skills in application of knowledge.

**Motivation.** The function of the school is “not only to make the child understand, and still less force him to memorize, but to touch his imagination as to enthuse him to his innermost core.” This reflects a basic tenet of the Montessori Method: that children are naturally motivated to learn and that school must nurture and exploit their motivation in order to maximize academic achievement. DW will harness students' intrinsic motivation by giving them opportunities to interact and share with their peers as they work on projects to acquire knowledge and skills that take into account their interests and experiences.

## **Special Education**

Discovery Woods had a special education fiscal and compliance audit during the 2018-2019 school year and was awarded by the Commissioner for having a clean report and no findings for corrective action. DW also received a Notice of No Findings on May 13, 2020 by the Minnesota Department of Education after review of compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, federal grant guidance and state requirements as they relate to procurement and internal controls. The teaching staff attend regular training opportunities for instructional and behavioral interventions, fiscal compliance, and strategies for working with students throughout the school year offered by the Paul Bunyan Service Cooperative and the Minnesota Department of Education.

Discovery Woods has a dedicated special education staff, special education teachers, behavior interventionist, special education paraprofessionals, a licensed speech pathologist, and offers a variety of intervention services. DW works in partnership with the Paul Bunyan Special Education Cooperative of Brainerd which provides DW with the Special Education Director. The Cooperative provides specialized services such as monitoring DW special education compliance, school psychologists, specialists in all areas such as OT, PT, ASD, and behavioral specialists. The Cooperative participates regularly in child observation and child study meetings to assist in identification of special needs students on site.



The curriculum and approach to instruction are designed/adapted to students with disabilities. Our implementation of the inclusion model allows us to serve the needs of all students, including those students classified as students with disabilities, in the least restrictive environment. At DW full inclusion of special education students means the delivery of services inside the regular classroom. Thus, children who qualify for related services (as dictated by their IEPs) will, to the extent possible, receive their adapted curriculum work, and other therapies such as speech-language, physical, and/or occupational therapy, within their regular education classroom. Teachers receive copies of their students' IEP goals, and must be knowledgeable about the needs of students with disabilities, informed of their responsibilities regarding the particular student's program

needs, and actively implement any modifications or accommodations in their classes in accordance with the students' IEPs.

When inclusion is appropriate and in accordance with students' IEPs, it is required that special education teachers and special education paras come into the regular education classroom, to provide services to individuals or small groups of regular and special education students in ratios dictated by the IEPs. A special education teacher, special education para, or teaching assistant may sit with students to help implement the goals of an IEP. Full inclusion is our school's goal and will ensure that social and academic interactions with general education students are valued and leveraged to support all student needs. For special education students, full inclusion provides the opportunity to observe appropriate behaviors and actions modeled by others and foster's development of feelings of empowerment and self-control. For general

education students, full inclusion and work on joint projects with special education students fosters an appreciation and respect for the fact that everyone has unique characteristics and abilities. Teachers must be knowledgeable about the needs of students with disabilities, informed of their responsibilities for particular students, able to implement a student's program, and implement any modifications or accommodations in their classes in accordance with the students' IEPs.

### **English Learner Program**

DW's English Language Learners are monitored via ACCESS for ELLs standardized testing. Since the number of ELL students is so small and the learners are only with DW for part of the school year, Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives numbers are not available. As the need arises through home language surveys, intensive intervention strategies will be employed for English Language Learners who demonstrate a greater need than those typically outlined through programs such as Title I and RtI. Every effort will be made to bring the unique cultural needs of individual students into the school day to aid in the transition from home to school.

### **Staffing to Meet the Mission**

Discovery Woods is staffed with Highly Qualified teachers that are selected after an interview process that includes evidence of strong teaching practices, differentiated instruction, and experience with diverse learners.



DW conducted professional development workshops in the following areas and provided them to the teachers throughout the school year. Refining the quality of classroom instruction, enabling individuals to grow professionally, introducing some Montessori manipulatives to help with the applications of research based strategies and assisting teachers in implementing and teaching strategies aligned with the Minnesota State Academic Standards. The training days for teacher team meetings are regularly scheduled for four times a month and all staff meetings monthly, and for seven in-service days to evaluate programs, discuss children, and plan strategies that will ensure that instruction is targeted to children's individual needs, and that teachers are informed.

It is deemed important that teachers are able to create appropriate academic plans based on the Montessori philosophy and research-based best practices for students of all ability and skill levels. This includes instructional planning and assessment of learning as an integral part of instruction to meet students where they are and move each one to growth. Teachers must also apply the school's assessment system to planning and use effective classroom management techniques.

Through bi-monthly Leadership Team and Professional Learning Community meetings, monthly Response to Intervention meetings, and staff development throughout the school year, the teaching staff receive ongoing training on the Minnesota Academic Standards, assessment, and differentiation of instruction, classroom management, and both math and reading interventions.

## **High School Graduation**

Discovery Woods teaches students the tools they need to foster their own learning. Discovery Woods teachers use language that helps students realize the need for high school graduation and studies beyond high school. We help students understand and work with issues facing today's youth by reaching beyond the classroom. We bring in guest speakers, visit universities through Project YES!, participate in team-building activities, and encourage students to take leadership roles. These opportunities give our students the confidence to focus on their studies and develop a solid work ethic both in class and through extracurricular activities. DW facilitates academic decision-making, curriculum information, and assessment of student interests and needs. DW also provides a positive school culture, meaningful relationships with adults, and engaging instruction to help motivate students to want to be in school. DW also uses technology as a tool to bolster learning and keep the students' attention.



Librarian Day!!

# Discovery Woods 2022-2023 Calendar

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		In Session	Workshop	No School =	
	28	29	30	31							Staff Workshop =	
September					1	2	3	Teacher Workshop 8/29-9/1		4	School Days =	
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Labor Day 9/5	4		First/Last Day =	
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	First Day of School 9/6	5		Board Meeting =	
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24		5		Early Out =	
	25	26	27	28	29	30			5			
									19			
October							1					
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Inservice Day 10/7	4			
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15		5			
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	EM Conference	3			
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29		5			
	30	31							1			
									18			
November				1	2	3	4	5				
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		4			
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19		5			
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	Thanksgiving 11/24-25	5			
	27	28	29	30				Inservice 11/28	3			
									2	1		
									19			
December					1	2	3					
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		2			
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17		5			
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24		5			
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	Winter Break 12/23 -1/2	4			
									0			
									16			
January												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Inservice 1/3				
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	School resumes 1/4	3			
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21		5			
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	Inservice 1/16	4			
	29	30	31					End of 1st Semester 1/20	5			
									2			
									19			
February				1	2	3	4					
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		3			
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Inservice 2/17	5			
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	President's Day 2/20	4			
	26	27	28						4	1		
									2			
									18			
March					1	2	3	4				
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Inservice 3/3	2			
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		5			
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	Spring Break 3/13-3/17	0			
	26	27	28	29	30	31		School resumes 3/20	5			
									5			
									17			
April							1					
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Good Friday 4/7	4			
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Inservice 4/10	4			
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22		5	1		
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29		5			
	30								18			
May												
	1	2	3	4	5	6			5			
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		5			
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20		5			
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	Last PS Day 5/26	5			
	28	29	30	31				Memorial Day 5/29	2			
								Last Kindergarten Day 6/1	22			
June					1	2	3	End of 2nd Semester 6/2	2			
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Last student day 6/2	2			
								Teacher Workshop 6/5	1			
									168	12		

Semester Start/End Dates		
	Start	End
Sem 1	Sept. 6	Jan. 20
Sem 2	Jan. 23	Jun. 2

Board Meeting Dates		
7/25/2022		1/30/2023
8/29/2022		2/27/2023
9/26/2022		3/27/2023
10/24/2022		4/24/2023
11/21/2022		5/22/2023
12/19/2022		6/26/2023

Testing Calendar			
	Fall	Winter	Spring
STARFAST Testin	Sept 12th-23rd	January 9th-27th	May 8th-19th
MCA Rd & M	NA	NA	April 3rd-28th
MCA Sci	NA	NA	May 1st-5th
MTAS	NA	NA	April 3rd-28th

## Innovative Practices & Implementation

### After School Care:

To accommodate working parents' schedules, there is an after school care program available to all students. The after school care program runs from 2:50pm to 5:30pm. Registration for after school care is a separate process from the school's enrollment registration. This is a fee based program.

### Discovery Woods Preschool Program:

The Montessori preschool students share a classroom with the kindergarten students in the morning. The grouping of students is called "Children's House". The ages of the children in the preschool are 33 months through age 5. The classroom is a "living room" for children. The instruction is individualized and after a lesson the children choose their work from among the materials displayed on open shelves, and they work in specific work areas. In the Montessori preschool, academic competency is a means to an end, and the manipulatives are viewed as "materials for development".

### Montessori Philosophy and Manipulatives:

The philosophy of Maria Montessori will be the cornerstone of the educational programs at Discovery Woods while complying with the requirements of the Minnesota Department of Education. Students will have the freedom to move about the room, have individualized instruction, participate in extended work periods every morning, have grace and courtesy lessons, have multi-age classrooms, utilize the outdoors as a classroom and remain with the same teacher for 2-3 years.



### Successes and Challenges:

DW has had success with having a school wide Title I Reading Specialist who shares with staff what techniques and research shows is working well with students so we can continue to see the growth in our student's reading proficiency. DW continues to work with Math Corps to help with our math skills as well as finding curriculums to supplement Montessori that not only are shown to work well for students but will help our teachers as well. DW has also had success with student retention by listening to the families and students and providing what they need through academics, SEL and student leadership teams. DW has also implemented a new social emotional learning curriculum, CSC that will help students in many ways including academics. DW has had great challenges with finding teachers who are Montessori trained but continue to use the Montessori philosophy knowing that when implemented correctly our students will receive great benefit in educational learning. We will continue to find high quality teachers who enjoy hands-on, individualized learning and train and mentor them with Montessori and the philosophy that goes with Montessori learning.

### Strategic Plan Highlights:

- Financial Stability: Discovery Woods will continue the financial plan for long term sustainability. DW will continue marketing and fundraising efforts.
- Academic Programming: Discovery Woods will continue to find the educational strategies that are working well for our students as well as continue developing our curriculum mapping and retain open minds to new and innovative strategies.
- Nature & Outdoors: Continue to implement more outdoor classroom experience as well as exploring and playing outdoors daily. All staff involve the students in our school gardens for

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lessons.

- Community & Culture: Continue with our CSC SEL curriculum and Grace & Courtesy efforts to strive to have school-wide behavior management that all staff believe in and are part of. Increase parent and community involvement by having continuing communication and involve parents and neighborhood adults to volunteer.

## **Academic Performance: Goals & Benchmarks**

### **PROGRESS ON OW CONTRACTUAL ACADEMIC GOALS & WBWF ALIGNMENT**

Discovery Woods has always had their students at the forefront of every decision that is made. Staff at Discovery Woods go above and beyond what they need to make sure they are doing all that they can for students. Our assessment data has been looked at to address certain needs in our students and we look at this data routinely and come up with strategies to make quick changes along with long term ideas. We did switch from NWEA in FY 16 to STAR for FY 17 which also represented some changes in goals. Having a couple of years under our belts with STAR has helped us to regain the ability to truly dig deep into the data and see where we as a school need to concentrate academically and also for our educators to see where individual students are struggling.

Due to the effects of COVID-19, we extended our previous year's goals. We continue to use local assessments to find out where students are and have openly discussed with teachers that they can use STAR assessing throughout the school year as they feel necessary. For younger grade levels we have also used Fastbridge to assess as well as use their top notch intervention system. Kits have been made for 1/2 classrooms so teachers do not have to take the time to put the games together or print anything out, everything is there for them. We are finding that there has been a lot of learning loss for our students and we are looking at ways to help them through this and get them caught up without putting too much on the students or the staff. We are continuing to look at adding resources for teachers for teaching math as well as increasing extra math assistance for students. We had a MathCorps instructor this year to help with students in 3rd-6th grade. We plan to continue with our school wide Title I reading program and have also taken advantage of the Minnesota Reading Corps beginning in FY19 and continued through FY22. DW is working hard on continuing their high staff retention to help further our proficiency. Data during the pandemic was hard to obtain as there were many obstacles with students during distance learning and even after the school shut down as students were working through many social emotional issues. With data being impacted this is bringing on more monitoring and assessing now to provide the instruction each student needs so they are not falling behind or have pieces or gaps in their instruction.

DW does plan to provide all performance data for every goal to make it clear that we have had progress and will meet the standard. Goals have been revised to show our change from NWEA to STAR testing. DW is planning to continue our school wide Title I Reading instruction as well as part time Title Math instruction to keep us on board with proficiency. DW is also continuing our Environmental Education (EE) instruction through each classroom teacher as well as having our EE lead instructor help provide lessons and resources. Our EE teacher is also addressing science proficiency along with our E2 teachers so we can meet our contractual goals and meet standards. Students schoolwide will participate in our Environmental Education Exhibition. Preschool staff will prepare students for kindergarten and measure their work completion. DW will continue to work on attendance and work hard to keep this above 90%.

**World's Best Workforce (WBWF) Goal Areas:**

- **Ready for Kindergarten [R4K]:** All students are ready for kindergarten.
- **Reading Well by 3rd Grade [RG3]:** All students in third grade achieve grade-level literacy.
- **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.

<b>Indicator 1: Mission Related Outcomes</b>
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**Goal:** *Over the period of the contract, students at Discovery Woods School (DWS) will demonstrate growth in critical thinking and environmental stewardship as measured by classroom observations of executive function and environmental education projects.*

**WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal:**

- **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.

**Key Measures & Results for this Goal:**

Students in younger grades showed growth in observations of differentiating man-made and natural objects, students in older grades were able to identify impacts humans have had on the natural world.

Most students (between 74% and 80%) were able to correctly identify stages of plant growth in younger grades. Older students did well (80%) identifying parts of a flower. All students also were able to spend time in the garden planting, weeding, watering, and harvesting. The harvested vegetables were used in practical life works in Children's House classrooms and for snacks in our aftercare program. Students also are able to use the produce for salsa making in the classroom.

Minnesota animals and habitats are a focus of grades 1-2 and grade 5 at Discovery Woods. This fits with the MN science standards as well. Students performed well with 90% in all grades achieving a passing score on a grade level rubric for the assigned diorama.

Environmental awareness as measured by the student survey went up but not as much as was expected by the goal.

The sixth graders completed their action project of sampling the water in the Mississippi River, comparing pollutant levels in the fall and the spring. They then wrote an informational flier for residents about the dangers of pollutants entering the waterway, as well as stenciled the storm drains in the neighborhood of the school.

## Indicator 2: English Language Learners

**Goal:** Discovery Woods is not evaluated in this indicator area as it does not serve a significant population of English Learners. We have a family with two students so DW has put together an English Learner Plan of Service.

### WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal:

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

### Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

DW has an English Learner Plan of Service in place and our District Assessment Coordinator and on-site testing coordinator have had training for ACCESS testing. The two students were assessed with the ACCESS and results will be distributed to the family at fall conferences as well as teachers using the results to determine an EL education plan for the students. We will also collaborate with English Learner certified teachers. DW provides school wide Title I services and our ELL students will participate in this program.

ACCESS Data: Discovery Woods does not serve a significant population of English Learners.

## Indicator 3: Reading Growth

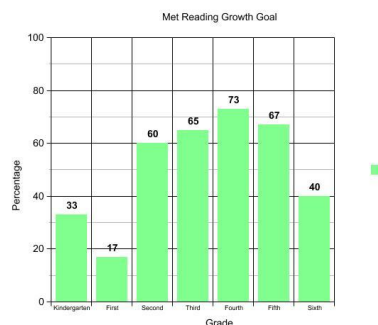
**Goal:** *Over the period of the contract, students at DWS will demonstrate growth in reading as measured by state accountability tests and nationally normed assessments.*

### WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal:

- **Reading Well by 3rd Grade [RG3]:** All students in third grade achieve grade-level literacy.
- **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.

**Key Measures & Results for this Goal:** DW has continued to provide a full time Title I Reading teacher. There was also a ReadingCorps program in place for the 2021-2022 school year. This allows the school to commit time and resources to help our students reach their reading goals, especially after the pandemic distance learning time period. Our local assessment results show that 48/99 or 48% of students were able to meet their growth goal in reading for the 2021-2022 school year. .

**Individual grade level performance is evidenced by the chart below:**



#### Indicator 4: Math Growth

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

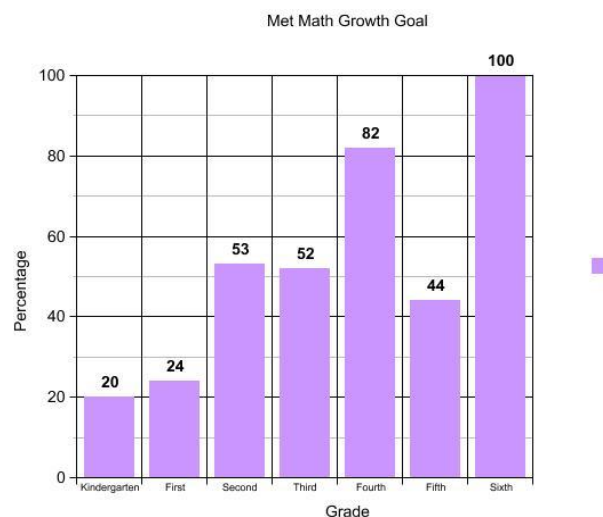
**WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal:**

- **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.

**Key Measures & Results for this Goal:**

Discovery Woods had a MathCorps tutor for the 2021-2022 school year that was able to work with students. The school's results show that 45/98 or 46% of students met their growth goal, though those in upper grades grew more than students in younger grades.

**Individual grade level performance is evidenced by the chart below:**



#### Indicator 5: Reading Proficiency

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

**WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal:**

**Reading Well by 3rd Grade [RG3]:** All students in third grade achieve grade-level literacy.

**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.

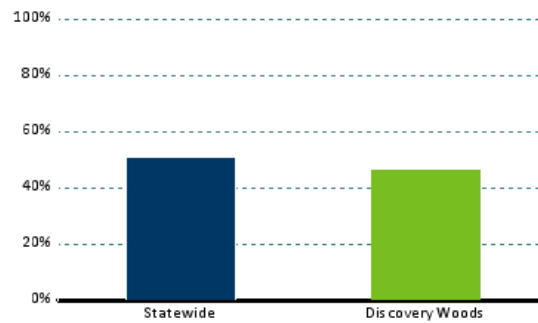
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**Graduate from High School [GRAD]:** All students graduate from high school.

**Key Measures & Results for this Goal:**

Discovery Woods came close to state results in Reading proficiency according to MCA scores for 2022. Discovery Woods school wide was 46.5% proficient compared to 51% proficient at the state level.

**Schoolwide Results for Reading Proficiency:**



**Indicator 6: Math Proficiency**

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

**WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal:**

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

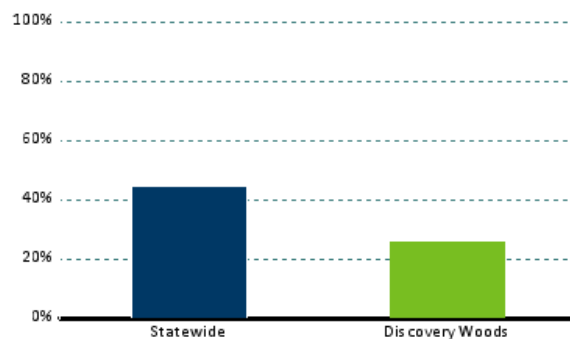
**Career and College Ready [CCR]:** All students are career- and college-ready before graduating from high school.

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

**Key Measures & Results for this Goal:**

Discovery Woods Math proficiency was quite a bit lower than the state level proficiency with the school percentage at 25.6% and state at 44.6%.

**Schoolwide Results for Math Proficiency**



## Indicator 7: Science Proficiency (and Growth)

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

**WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal:**

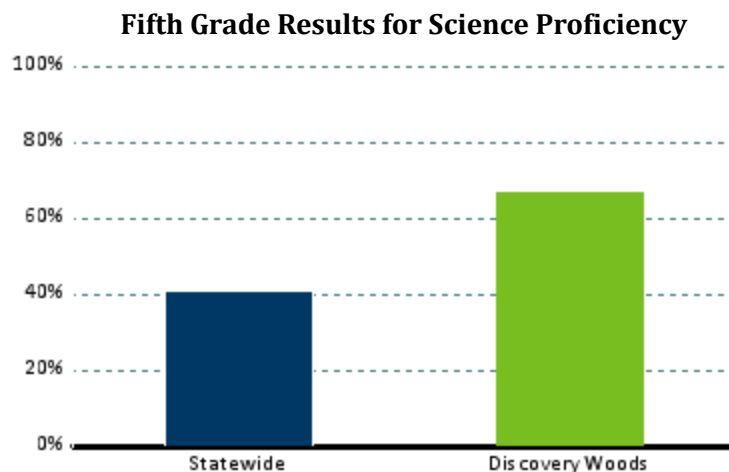
**Achievement Gap Closure [AGC]:** All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.

**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.

**Key Measures & Results for this Goal:**

Discovery Woods exceeded the state proficiency in the 5th grade Science MCA in 2022. Discovery Woods proficiency was at 66.7%, the state proficiency was at 41%.



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

**Goal:** *Over the period of the contract, preschool students at DWS will demonstrate readiness for kindergarten as measured by work completion rates.*

**WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal:**

**Ready for Kindergarten [R4K]:** All students are ready for kindergarten.

**Key Measures & Results for this Goal:**

Work completion rate for preschool students was 100% from SY22. Students are given chances to master a work before moving on to another lesson, so they practice until proficiency. If students are not consistently meeting expectations, they are monitored and parents are met with concerning kindergarten entrance or recommendation of remaining at preschool status. Since students are in the same classroom for Pre-K and Kindergarten, parents and staff are open to this option.

## Indicator 9: Post Secondary Readiness

**The school is not evaluated in this indicator area as it does not serve high school students.**

## Indicator 10: Attendance

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

### **WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal:**

**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.

**Key Measures & Results for this Goal:** Discovery Woods believes good attendance promotes academic success. It is very important that all students attend school and class on time every day. DW is watching absences more frequently and keeping families informed of the importance of attendance for all ages of students. DW wants each student to know their worth and feel good about themselves. DW is developing a culture and climate through CSC (Caring School Community) so students are feeling good and have that structure and positive feeling while they are attending DW. DW also works with families collaboratively at how the family and school can work together on attendance.

### **Teacher Equity Data:**

Conversations include the School Director, Instructional Lead and members of the Leadership Implementation Team as part of Discovery Woods' annual staffing process February to March of each academic year. Teachers are also part of our bimonthly PLCs to ensure alignment across curriculum and grade level spans.

School Director, Assistant Director, Instructional Lead along with the business manager and administrative assistant maintains data on all teachers including demographic data, number of years' experience, professional degrees, licensure areas, and evaluation results.

Our priority is to hire highly qualified candidates for all positions, as well as those who will be a good fit for our district/school/students as determined through the interview and reference check process. As positions open, we prioritize hiring licensed staff for direct, core instruction, and look to community experts or teachers with a variance for specialized areas.

Discovery Woods continues to develop a 3-year evaluation cycle to support professional growth on an ongoing basis. Teachers who are not making adequate gains participate in a professional improvement plan to support their growth and development.

We actively encourage staff to advance their education by offering salary adjustments annually. Many district sponsored staff development activities offer recertification credit. At times we offer stipends for staff to take advanced training.

We try creative recruitment ideas to attract high quality teachers during this time of teacher shortages. DW is also continually educating teachers of cultural diversity and providing any knowledge needed to be sure we are educating all students equally.

We attempt to hire teachers from diverse backgrounds by posting and recruiting at locations where they would likely be connected. DW's student population includes African American, Native American Indian and Spanish ethnicities and DW continues to not only send job notifications to families but also in local newspapers, bulletin boards and other areas we feel notifications will meet all cultural diversities. It has been difficult to find diverse staff due to the Brainerd Lakes Area not having high diversity but continuing to look and offer to qualified individuals.

It is Discovery Woods' policy and practice to provide equal educational opportunity for all students, as evidenced through school board policy, as well as the district's mission and vision statements. All policies along with the mission and vision are available on the district website for the public and school families to access.

DW is a member of the service cooperative, Sourcewell, and takes advantage of the many professional development opportunities they offer for teachers, administration and support staff. DW currently sends the Title I teacher to the Title I network meetings and workshops, as well as classroom teachers who have attended different subject networks and workshops and our Instructional Lead attends the DAC and science networks and workshops.

Discovery Woods' recruitment/interviewing team meets annually to look at staffing and discuss whether any staff need to be rotated to better serve student needs as well as looking at where each teacher may excel depending on their teaching/learning styles, their background and their licenses and degrees. We gather assessment results, parent/student feedback as well as staff input to see if there are areas/classrooms that may need to be re-structured. Discovery Woods also looks through every class list and places students as evenly as possible dependent on knowledge of data, gender etc. We previously moved a teacher from the classroom to a Title I Reading/Reading Specialist position as she has a Master's in Reading, Bachelor's in Communication Arts/Literature and due to that being her love she routinely looks at research to better every student and herself. We in turn use her skills to then help classroom teachers with reading strategies and interventions and she helps mentor new teachers or those that lack the ELA knowledge. Discovery Woods' goal is to have experienced licensed educators for every classroom so every student receives the best education possible. We have had great success in finding teachers who teach what they have a license in so luckily have 100% in that area. However retaining experienced teachers has been a struggle however we currently have 75% of teachers having at least three years of experience. We have been lucky enough to have some educators with advanced degrees who bring a great element of insight into the student instruction. We will



continue to not only find retention in those highly qualified teachers but also continue to seek experienced and qualified teachers when a position arises and be sure to have staff in the areas where they exceed so all students have an equal opportunity to a great education. DW also aspires to help guide struggling or new teachers so they become successful instructors.

	Licensed Educators	3+ Years Experience	Working in Area of License	Advanced Degrees	Racially/Ethnically Diverse
Teachers	12	9 (75%)	12 (100%)	2 (17%)	0 (0%)
Support Staff	1	1 (100%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)	

### **Federal and State Accountability**

During the school year of 2014-2015, Discovery Woods was identified as a priority school by the Minnesota Department of Education using the Multiple Measurement Ratings system. Since then, we have worked with various advocates assigned to us from different Centers of Excellence and continue to work on a comprehensive needs assessment, aligning the state standards in math and reading, and identifying and implementing research-based instructional and assessment strategies to increase student learning. During the first three years we implemented an authentic Montessori program, and the majority of the teachers were unfamiliar with the state standards and how to integrate them with Montessori methods/philosophy. Thus, our students were not exposed to standards-based instruction and assessments in their regular classroom practice as explicitly as best practice would indicate is ideal. Additionally, we identified that while Montessori materials are high quality and effective at teaching concepts, the state tests often refer to manipulatives or concepts that our students had not been exposed to, so we needed to bring a standards-based model to use with our Montessori philosophy so that our students receive the best of both conventional and Montessori philosophy instruction. Additionally, we brought in a Math corp tutor for students to get more support in learning complex math concepts and also to go over the base math that students need prior to advancing. We have concentrated on our ELA standards for scope and sequence and have tied in Montessori materials and philosophy with these state standards. DW continues to work with our scope and sequence and continues concentrating more on the math standards. DW has been identified as a High Quality Charter School by MDE but did not apply for the CSP grant.

### **ESSA Identification**

DW has not been identified to receive comprehensive support or additional targeted support for the FY21 school year.

## Educational Effectiveness: Assessment & Evaluation

### Curriculum & Instruction Review Process:

Discovery Woods implements the Minnesota State Standards, in addition to the state standards Discovery Woods is a school based on Montessori philosophy and embeds these standards into each content area across all grades, kindergarten through grade 6. A curriculum review is ongoing and



used to evaluate alignment of standards and curriculum, review common assessments, and complete curriculum mapping. DW continuously reviews individualized instruction to align with the Minnesota State Standards and the Common Core. We are currently at completion for our ELA curriculum writing and are in the process of implementation. We are continuing math curriculum writing. Once implementation of the curriculum begins, teachers then begin review of how it is being implemented. This is then brought to the Administration team to assess and give feedback on.

The Montessori focus is ensuring each child learns and from their own individual launching point, we are here to help children learn. Adding in the instruction, learning targets, and assessments of content aligned with the Minnesota State Standards/Benchmarks ensures that students are prepared for success from grade level to grade level within and beyond our school. DW works hard to be equitable for all students by using multiple learning methods, getting the tools each child needs and meaning each child where they are. Our teachers watch for professional development opportunities regarding equity and have gone through cultural competency training. DW watches data to identify gaps and then meets to discuss how we will address these gaps by using interventions, specialists and tutors as well as other methods of instruction.

### Teacher Evaluation

DW implemented a teacher evaluation process.

The framework for the teacher evaluation consists of:

- Annual Evaluation Process
- Professional Learning Communities
- Student Engagement Measures
- Student Growth Measures
- Professional Growth Plan

The education staff is responsible for:

- Understanding and implementing the requirements of the Minnesota State Statute 122A.40
- Measuring and documenting student growth
- Measuring and documenting student engagement explicitly aligned with the elements of their content specific curriculum
- Participation and documentation of a Professional Growth Plan (PGP) and (Professional Growth Goals PGG) that includes:
  - Annual goal setting based on school level goals

- Administrative conferences 2 times per year
- Reflection and documentation of their PGG
- Peer Mentoring
- Self Evaluations

Teacher observations are performed by the school's Assistant Director three times per year, teachers complete a self-evaluation form and debrief a lesson observation with the Assistant Director. Observations are also performed by the Instructional Lead on a rotating basis, with feedback given informally and formally.

## **School Director Evaluation**

The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that students are achieving at the highest levels. Recruiting and retaining exceptional school leaders is a means by which our School ensures exceptional achievement. It is the Executive Director's responsibility to champion its leader, build and nurture trust, encourage and reward candor, and address challenges proactively and in partnership with the staff. The evaluation process allows the Board to engage formally with its Executive Director about performance strengths and challenges and to discuss professional development opportunities.

### **OBJECTIVES FOR A SCHOOL LEADER EVALUATION**

- Foster explicit communications at regular intervals between the Board and the Executive Director regarding personal performance, progress against goals, and accountability
- Develop clear performance measures and goals so the Executive Director's work is aligned with and supports the school's strategic direction
- Discuss the Executive Director's performance throughout the school year, allowing for opportunities to revise performance expectations, goals, and professional development plans
- Create opportunities to discuss long-term leadership needs of the school throughout the year
- Provide opportunities for professional development, where needed, provide an opportunity via self-assessment for the Executive Director's to reflect on his/her performance
- Evaluate the Executive Director's ability to perform the core competencies of the position and to complete pre-defined goals, recognizing successful completion of goals and addressing performance issues associated with incomplete goals
- Reward performance per results achieved and behaviors demonstrated.
- Address performance concerns and develop targeted professional development plans to improve performance.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EVALUATION TIMELINE**

#### **August**

- Jointly establish Executive Director's goals
- Included but limited to: Areas defined in job description
- Collectively establish Executive Director's professional development/improvement plan (if required)

#### January

- 6 month progress check in
- If necessary, jointly adjust goals

#### June

- Executive Director completes self-assessment
- Board conducts 360 evaluation in accordance with Board procedure
- Executive Director and Board summarizes assessment results
- Jointly establish and adjust Executive Director's goals

It is the understanding of the Board and the Executive Director that the Board would evaluate the Executive Director's performance based on progress being made toward the achievement of these expectations along with his/her overall performance relative to the usual responsibilities of the Executive Director.

#### **Additional Data:**

- A Title I teacher for reading continues to work with students and also helps mentor classroom teachers and provides some push in instruction. Also, extra math help was provided by math corp on an as-needed basis determined by the assessments in class as well as STAR and/or Fastbridge score from each student. Fifth grade students are given time for a science class every day based on fifth grade science MCA scores. We have done well on this assessment in most previous years and want to continue with the high scores.
- Teachers use the state standards to develop curriculum and instruction for students. The formal and informal assessments performed in class are based on this instruction. Students are given the STAR and/or Fastbridge assessment in the fall, winter, and spring. The data from this screening assessment is analyzed for each student with the areas of skill improvement highlighted in future lessons. All primary students (K-2) are assessed for reading skills through the Title I School Wide Reading program using a Phonics Inventory and the Phonemic Awareness Skills Test.
  - A School Wide Title I Reading Plan is in place to support those students at Discovery Woods School who are not meeting state standards requirements and who are not reading at benchmark assessments levels. The Discovery Woods Director, Assistant Director, Instructional Lead, Reading Specialist, Special Educator, and Teachers meet regularly to discuss our strategic Response to Intervention (RtI) Plan for students that need additional academic support, and Professional Learning Communities (PLC) Meetings. The Administration team made up of the instructional lead, director and assistant director lead the PLCs.
  - The purpose of a School Wide Title I Program is to improve the academic program for the entire school community. Title I resources may be used to help classroom teachers improve core academic instruction, provide prevention and intervention services, and/or to coordinate any school wide learning improvement initiatives.
  - The overall goal of the School Wide Title I Reading program is to provide classroom support and intervention in the primary grades (K-2) to prevent later reading difficulties, and to remediate reading difficulties in older students (grades 3-6). The

reading goals set forth in the Title I narrative are measured using FastBridge, STAR Assessments, as well as phonics, phonemic awareness, and oral reading fluency measures.

- Students who receive School Wide Reading Title I Services as part of the school's Response to Intervention (RtI) plan are progress monitored on a weekly or bi-monthly basis. If progress is being made after 8 weeks, the intervention continues until the student is no longer in need of intervention. If progress is not being made, a new intervention is started for another 8 weeks. If a student fails to make necessary progress, the student may be referred for a special education evaluation as determined by the RtI team and the student's parents or guardians.
- Data from MCA tests are examined at the end of the school year, with staff working together to determine the percentage in each score category (does not meet, partially meets, meets, exceeds) of each student group. These are discussed and strategies are developed for improving curriculum and instruction within these sub groups.

**Student Learning:** Discovery Woods improves student learning in a variety of ways. Foremost in improving learning is the Montessori model or philosophy, which uses an individualized approach to meet the academic and social needs of each child. Lessons are given individually or in small groups, students keep track of their assignments and meet frequently with the teacher to discuss progress. Responsibility to choose academic activities, track assignments and cooperate with peers is given to students so that they can improve executive function skills, an important predictor of



success. Students are able to show their best work by sharing it with their class at gathering times, displaying it in the hallway, sharing it with families during events or publishing it in the local newspaper.

Discovery Woods takes children where they are and works to advance their skills, whether they are lower, higher, or at an average level. We want to have flexibility in meeting the child's learning needs.

Discovery Woods uses multi-age groupings and a vast variety of materials and books that allow a child to practice skills below an average level or to encourage curious and faster learners to reach beyond the standard curriculum and explore their interests further in

language, math, science, history, geography and the arts. Discovery Woods can capitalize on this flexibility further in some cases by sending a child with advanced skills to another classroom for lessons meant for older children or supporting a student that needs extra social or academic encouragement in a classroom with younger children while maintaining that student in his/her age-based grade. These techniques improve learning for students, but don't always translate to better standardized test scores. Discovery Woods gives options to students who have trouble learning in traditional settings or don't feel like their needs are being met in the large elementary schools in the local district. The hands-on manipulatives and freedom to move about the classroom entices some children to progress that would otherwise lose interest or give up on studying. Discovery Woods helps lower-performing students improve their learning, even though it may be far below the norm and do not meet the standard.

Struggling students get further support through additional services Discovery Woods provides. The school utilizes Title I funding to give identified children extra instruction. Discovery Woods holds frequent Response to Intervention (RtI) and Child Study meetings of collaboration with teachers, special education staff and special education experts through the Paul Bunyan Cooperative, the school's special education director, to identify and support children with special needs.

Discovery Woods uses Title I and Special Education to improve pupil learning to regular instruction, but considers the methods listed above and the use of the outdoors the school's best and mission-fulfilling educational tools. Discovery Woods describes its implementation of the Montessori philosophy, environmental education, Title I, and special education services in each annual report.

### **Secondary Purposes:**

#### **1. Increase learning opportunities for pupils:**

Discovery Woods offers the non-traditional public school option in the Brainerd Lakes area. Our Montessori philosophy offers a new learning opportunity for students, and those that choose Discovery Woods are taking advantage of this option. Discovery Woods uses the Montessori philosophy of multi-age classrooms, manipulative learning materials, prepared environment, small group lessons, and self-directed learning that is more effective for some learners.



#### **2. Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods:**

Discovery Woods uses the Montessori philosophy, now over 100 years old and the most widespread educational method in the world, yet considered innovative as it is not the typical technique used in the United States. Teachers will receive Montessori support through our Montessori consultant and some will receive Montessori training. All Montessori trained teachers will also support those who do not have official training. Discovery Woods is implementing more environmental education and outdoor classroom experience for students to expand their educational experience.

Discovery Woods is working on both staff retention as well as student retention by addressing needs of both staff and students and using additional help by Sourcewell to also help with student achievement. DW has also introduced a new social emotional curriculum, Caring School Community, that we feel will help with retention as students and staff will be heard and supported.

DW is reaching out for help with teacher networking opportunities and training to integrate high quality instruction. Our team works together in leadership teams and meetings to provide a rigorous curriculum for students. Children's House (preschool and kindergarten) classes push a full Montessori education. Practical Life activities help the child to develop independence, competence,

and confidence through use of materials that speak to the young child's love of doing and participating. This curriculum area offers a wide variety of everyday materials for the child to use to develop order, coordination, concentration, and independence – all of which lay a strong foundation for later academic achievement. The Sensorial curriculum speaks to the young child's innate desire to directly and actively explore the world through one's senses. These materials help to refine the child's sensory awareness and foster his/her ability to make judgments and comparisons on the basis of size, shape, weight, texture, and sound. Montessori Children's House classrooms are language rich environments. From the earliest age children learn to use language to express their needs and feelings, developing oral and receptive language skills as powerful communication tools. Children's vocabularies are enhanced on a routine basis through specific lessons and through the practice of using accurate and correct language when naming things. Words like "sphere", "peninsula", and "rectangle" are examples of specific language that children learn to use in relation to experiences with concrete objects. The Language curriculum follows the child through sequential activities that develop skills in sound discrimination, prepare the hand for writing, encourage the development of written expression, and lay a foundation of phonetic skills that prepare a child for reading and writing. Children develop visual and auditory discrimination skills through matching, sequencing and rhyming activities, playing "I Spy" games to develop awareness of the sounds that make up words. The child is introduced to sandpaper letters to aid in the mastery of sound/symbol association, eventually composing simple phonetic words and learning to read (decode) both phonetic and sight words. This process unfolds in a predictable sequence, but as the child is ready, not on a set teacher-directed time table. The refinement of the pincer grip through various Practical Life activities supports the eventual use of a pencil for handwriting. During the Kindergarten year the child continues to practice with phonetic and phonemic skills, putting them into daily practice with actual reading and writing activities. The refinement of the hand continues as the child practices handwriting skills on a daily basis. In this year, the children are introduced to the story elements of character, setting, plot, conflict and resolution as well as the genres of folk tales, fables, fairy tales, fantasy, non-fiction, and poetry. The Montessori Math materials support the child's gradual understanding of abstract mathematical concepts through the manipulation of concrete materials. Over the 3-year Children's House cycle the child internalizes concepts of number, symbol, and sequence, exploring the decimal system through use of concrete materials, and working with operations such as addition and subtraction, again through use of concrete, attractive, and engaging materials. The Montessori Math materials help the child build a solid foundation of the basic math principles to prepare for later abstract reasoning and to develop problem-solving capabilities. Using hands-on materials, the Kindergartners are introduced to the concepts of number relations and algebra, geometry, measurement, money, and telling time. The Children's House History and Geography curriculum builds upon the child's keen interest in our planet and the life upon it. Beginning with the creation of the Earth, during a child's birthday celebration, the child gains an impression of the passage of time; this concept will be explored much more fully in the Lower, Middle and Upper Elementary classrooms. Children's House classes focus each year on continent studies, helping children to gain an appreciation of different cultures, holidays and traditions celebrated around the world. The Science curriculum introduces them to the concept of living and non-living, plant and animal, magnetic and non-magnetic, sink and float, the nomenclatures of the





animal kingdom and the human body. The Nature curriculum often changes with the season and helps children understand the reasoning behind common phenomena such as leaves changing color, hibernation of animals, migration of birds etc. Teachers are using both large and small group instruction as well as one on one instruction when able for teaching lower, middle and upper elementary students literacy.

Classes also worked on math in a different variety of ways including using manipulatives and extra small groups and one and one time with a math specialist during the school day. Teachers are using state standards to educate with a rigorous curriculum. Teachers not only use inquiry-based instruction but also use concept-based instruction and manipulatives to achieve better absorption of material for students

who learn in many different ways.

Our school is its own district, we also have a small student and teacher population, these factors contribute to a small need for teacher distribution. We continue to have only seven classroom teachers. However, we do look at background and academic needs when placing students within a classroom, and split them evenly throughout. We also have administration meetings two times a month to look at data and inquire as to what is working for students and what we need to work on and how to address those needs.

## **Student & Parent Satisfaction**

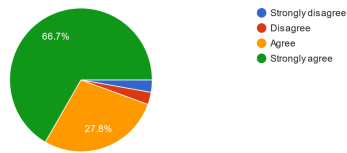
Discovery Woods did reach out to families with surveys for parents and students. Fall surveys did show families are happy with Discovery Woods in areas of safety, feeling welcome, communication, instruction and discipline. Student survey was communicated through the classroom teacher and students felt heard and safe however students were still not feeling prepared for assessments.

### **Fall Parent Survey Results:**

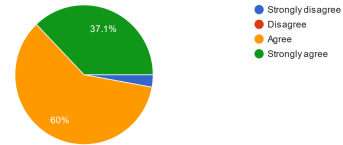
Family involvement has been a struggle for Discovery Woods however we had more families contribute to the Fall 2021 survey than we have had in the past. We had 36 families participate. Within these results 100% of surveyed families felt the school had appropriate academic expectations, their children enjoy going to school, the school provides a caring environment, the children are recognized for doing good work the school building is clean and inviting, the teachers are highly effective, families feel welcome and they would recommend Discovery Woods to other families. Two respondents disagreed that the school had good communication however 86.7% felt communication was good. We will continue to strive at making communication the best that it can be and using multiple ways. Families feel the teachers at DW are highly effective and that they would recommend DW to other families.

## Fall 2021

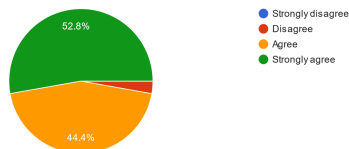
My child is safe at this school.  
36 responses



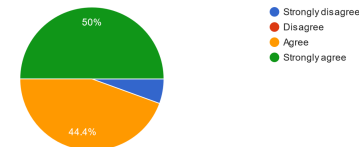
This school has high standards for student behavior.  
35 responses



This school meets the academic needs of my children.  
36 responses



Overall, I am satisfied with Discovery Woods  
36 responses

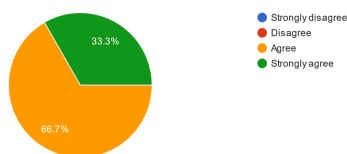


## Spring Parent Survey Results

For our spring 2022 survey we only received 15 responses. Within these results 100% of surveyed families felt their child was safe at school, that the school has appropriate academic expectations, the children enjoy coming to school, the school provides a caring environment, children are recognized for doing good work, the school meets academic needs, the school building is clean and inviting and families feel welcome. Two respondents disagreed that the school had good communication however 86.7% felt communication was good. We will continue to strive at making communication the best that it can be and using multiple ways. Families feel the teachers at DW are highly effective and that they would recommend DW to other families.

## Spring 2022

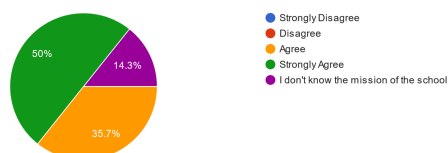
The school building is clean and inviting.  
15 responses



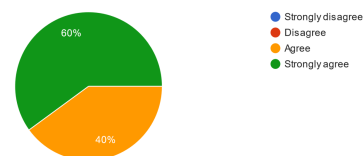
I would recommend this school to other families.  
14 responses



The mission of Discovery Woods is very important to me.  
14 responses



Overall, I am satisfied with Discovery Woods  
15 responses

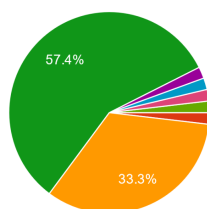


## Student Surveys

It is hard with some very young students to get true survey results so for the students we did some interviews and small groups as well as surveys. The students felt safe throughout the school year showing about the same results from the fall to the spring. The students also felt they were pushed just the right amount academically and that they enjoy coming to school.

From Student Fall 2021 Survey:

Overall, I am satisfied with Discovery Woods  
54 responses



● Strongly disagree  
● Disagree  
● Agree  
● Strongly agree  
● Feels good most but gets scared when a class mate gets upset, an school a...  
● Yes this is my favorite school  
● holden  
● I feel like school is an ok place overall

## Environmental Education

The mission of Discovery Woods' authorizer, Osprey Wilds, is to instill a connection and commitment to the environment in people of all communities through experiential learning. Osprey Wilds defines environmental education as the implementation of values and strategies that foster learning and create environmentally literate citizens who engage in creating healthy outcomes for individuals, communities, and the Earth. The overarching goal of environmental education is an environmentally literate citizenry. The test of environmental literacy is the capacity of an individual to work individually and collectively toward sustaining a healthy natural environment. This requires sufficient awareness, knowledge, skills, and attitudes in order to create a healthy planet where all people live in balance with the Earth.

### Indicator Area 1: Awareness

*Students and staff at Discovery Woods have the awareness, or are increasing their awareness, of the relationship between the environment and human life.*

#### Strategy 1.1

- Explore Gregory Park and the school garden and grounds.

#### Evaluation method 1.1

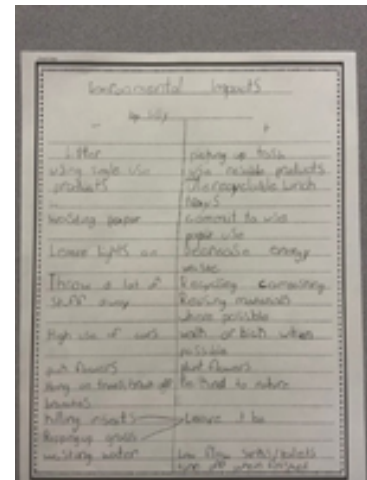
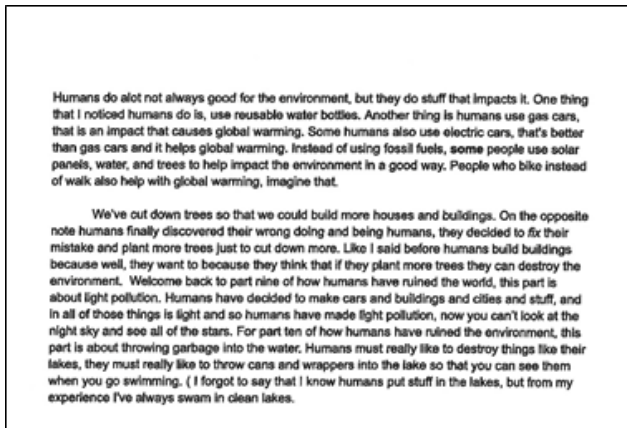
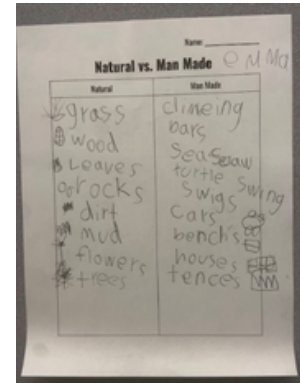
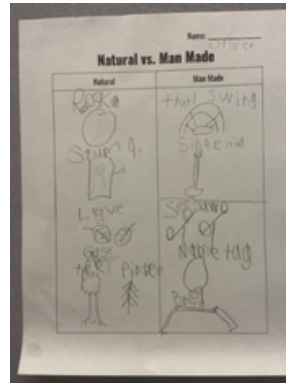
- Through exploration and journaling, 90% of students in grades K-2 will have an increase of 50% in observations from fall to spring of man-made and natural objects around the school grounds and Gregory Park.



- Through exploration and journaling, 90% of students grades 3-6 will be able to identify ten impacts that humans have had on the landscape around the school grounds and Gregory Park.

## Results

- 100% or 27/27 students in grades 1-2 had an increase of 50% or more from fall to spring of man-made and natural objects around the school ground and Gregory Park.
- 100% or 28/28 students in grades 3-4 identified ten impacts that humans have had on the landscape around the school grounds and Gregory Park.



- 100% or 13/13 students in grades 5-6 identified ten impacts that humans have had on the landscape.

## Strategy 1.2

- All students K-6 will grow a plant from seed and study plant needs, life cycles and parts.

## Evaluation method 1.2

- 90% of K-3 students will be able to [identify all stages of plant growth](#) including: seed, seedling, tree, flower, fruit. As well as be able to [identify parts](#) including: plant, roots, stem, leaf, and flower.
- 90% of 4- 6 students will [document all stages of plant growth](#) including: seed, germination, seedling, plant/tree, flower, and fruit. As well as be able to [identify the parts](#) of a flower including: sepal, petal, stamen, pistil, and ovule.

## Results:

- 80% or 24/30 students in grades 1-2 were able to identify all stages of plant growth in order. 94% or 46/49 students in grades K-2 were able to identify parts of a plant.
- 74% of students in grades 3-4 were able to identify stages of plant growth in order. Students in grades 3-4 were not assessed for parts of a flower in the 2021-2022 school year.
- 25% or 3/12 students in grades 5-6 were able to document stages of plant growth in order (they did not recognize the term “germination”). 80% or 8/10 students in grades 5-6 were able to identify the parts of a flower.

## Indicator Area 2: Knowledge

*Students and staff at Discovery Woods have the knowledge, or are increasing their knowledge, of human and natural systems and processes.*

### Strategy 2.1

- 1-3rd students will learn about MN animals and their habitat. Gregory Park and the school grounds will be used to search for animal signs such as track and scat. (Distance Learners will explore their yards and neighborhoods)

### Evaluation method 2.1

- 90% of students in grades 1-2 will receive a passing score (according to the teacher created [rubric](#)) on their animal project.

## Results:

- 90% or 28/31 students in grades 1-2 received a score of 70% or above on their animal project.



### Strategy 2.2

- All 5<sup>th</sup> graders will learn about MN biomes and the flora and fauna within.  
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## Evaluation method 2.2

- 90% of students in grade 5 will receive a passing score (according to the teacher created [rubric](#)) on an individually created Biome project.

### Results:

- 90% or 9/10 students in grade 5 received 80% or higher on their Biome project.



## Indicator Area 3: Attitudes

*Students and faculty at Discovery Woods have an attitude, or are increasing their attitude of, appreciation and concern for the environment.*

### Strategy 3.1

- All students K-6 will take a [survey](#) on Environmental Education twice per year to gauge increases in environmental stewardship.

## Evaluation method 3.1

- 90% of all students will be able to increase their knowledge by 50% or more of environmental stewardship from fall to spring.

### Results:

- Overall the average raised by over 50% on the environmental awareness survey in grades 1-2. Students in grades 1-2 scored an average of 3.64/6 (60%) in the fall, raising their average to 5.5/6 (92%) in the spring. Responses totaled 28 students in the fall and 29 students in the spring. Grades 1-2 met the goal for 3.1.
- Students in grades 3-4 went from an average score of 6.45/9 (72%) in the fall to 7.22/9 (80%) in the spring on the environmental awareness survey. Responses totaled 29 in the fall

and 27 in the spring. Due to the high scores in the fall, it was not possible to raise scores by 50% or more of the original average. Grades 3-4 did not meet the goal for 3.1.

- Students in grades 5-6 went from an average of 6.33/12 (53%) in the fall to 6.92/12 (58%) in the spring. The questions on the 5-6 survey will need to be modified for clarity for grading if the survey continues to be used. Grades 5-6 did not meet the goal for 3.1.
  - If we interpret the results another way, 2/15 (13%) students received a score of 67% or higher in the fall, and 7/13 (54%) students received a score of 67% or higher in the spring, which shows overall improvement.

## 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.*

### Strategy 4.1

- Sixth graders will make a presentation of an environmental action project which will be available through a live and/or virtual format.

### Evaluation method 4.1

- 90% of students will receive a passing score on a teacher created [rubric](#) based on their presentation about the action project including how the project impacts our school and community.

### Results:

- Sixth graders researched and performed an action project focused on testing the water in the Mississippi River in the fall and the spring and also stenciling storm drains in the neighborhood. Our school is located 2 blocks from the Mississippi River and all the drains lead to the river. Students researched which pollutants we found and the impacts of each. They wrote a [flyer](#) to give to families in the neighborhood while stenciling and shared with the school community. They created a [slideshow](#) presentation that was shared with families during our spring showcase and with the Project YES! judges.
- 100% or 6/6 students received a passing score on the rubric based on the presentation.



## 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.*

### Strategy 5.1

- Sixth grade students will work towards sustainable environmental solutions by implementing their Project YES! action project in the school or community, involving other students and community members.

### Evaluation method 5.1

- At least 70% of the sixth grade students will be involved in following through with all aspects of the action project, including working on the presentation and doing the actual project. Participation will be assessed based on a teacher developed [collaborative work rubric](#). Past examples include building a rain garden, educating students and staff about single-use plastics, and implementing water saving methods throughout the school.

### Results:

- As noted above, the sixth grade students implemented their action project and made a presentation. All 6/6 (100%) students received 70% or better on their collaborative work rubric.



## Strategy 5.2

- All students at Discovery Woods will be active in preparing, planting and harvesting the school garden.

## Evaluation method 5.2

- 90% of students in K-6 will plant, weed, and harvest crops in the school garden as evidenced by the sign-in sheet and record log in the garden.

## Results:

- All students were able to plant seeds to monitor their growth while in class and bring them home. Students also helped to plant seeds inside to grow under grow lights for use in the school garden. All teachers visited the garden with students in the fall to harvest tomatoes, carrots and beans, and to plant garlic.
- Students in the spring visited the garden during class in May as well as recess and after school to plant, water, and weed.



## Additional Questions

1. **Explain how the school integrates environmental education into its academic program. Describe how EE supports students' academic success.**

- Discovery Woods incorporates environmental and nature-based education in as many aspects as we can throughout the school day. Teachers are encouraged to take students outside for all subject areas including math and reading. Standards are linked with EE concepts, such as a combined social studies and science unit in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade focusing on water use.

- The upper level science teacher and ELA teacher collaborated on projects such as nature journaling and researching famous environmentalists. At the younger grades, students also read about plant and animal life cycles as described in the science standards but are also applied with



meeting the ELA writing standards. In Children's House, teachers use natural objects and nature-themed resources to teach math and alphabet skills. The school reading specialist and EE coordinator work together to implement classroom read aloud books and chapter books that have nature and ecological themes within the ELA curriculum. By using topics in EE that are engaging for students, they have a higher success rate in listening, comprehension, and writing skills.

**2. Describe how the school creates a culture of environmental sustainability and stewardship among students, staff, and school leadership (including the board).**

We often remind teachers of our mission and vision during staff meetings, including reminders of paper and electricity use as well as recycling. By modeling behavior for our students and educating them about sustainability concepts such as recycling, reusing, and being kind to the earth we hope to create an atmosphere of caring and knowledge of environmental practices. Students often have ideas of how we should change our school-wide behaviors (such as disposable lunch trays) and begin to develop solutions in the student leadership group. When we visit natural areas or parks, we remind students of leave no trace practices and if we are collecting for a leaf collection or similar project, how to do it sustainably.

- Each month the school board receives a report from the EE coordinator including the major projects or events that are happening within the school, and where the school is at relating to the ELP.
- 3. Describe how the school adapts environmental education to fulfill its mission or meet the needs of its students.**

The school has adapted the EE program throughout the years due to different locations and needs of teachers. With teacher turnover we have needed to train or retrain teachers based on needs and their experience teaching EE concepts. In order for each student to receive a similar experience between classrooms, we continue to work on a cohesive EE curriculum that will be applied at each grade level. Each student also has a different background when it comes to comfort outside or with nature. We work with students to meet them where they are at and develop a middle level where students who are excited about the outdoors and those who are unsure can each be comfortable.

**4. Summarize how the board allocates appropriate financial, human, and organizational resources to carry out environmental education and monitors the school's progress toward its goals.**

The EE coordinator reports to the school board monthly about goal progress and general EE happenings such as related field trips and school projects. Most of the EE funding comes from fundraisers and school participation in Project YES! for the 6<sup>th</sup> grade action plan. The Project YES! registration fee is allocated from the general fund of the school when not received as a grant from a local organization. Any funding that is not already covered is determined as needed or not by the administrative team and then approved by the board if needed. Human resources and volunteers are present when asked for by the EE coordinator. Board members have volunteered in the past to help in the school garden and with other EE programs within the school.

**5. Describe how operational decision-making (e.g. facilities, food, schoolyard and outdoor areas, transportation, purchasing, and teacher training) reflects a commitment to environmental sustainability.**

Operational decision making always has an undercurrent of sustainability. We have our food service sourced out to ISD 181, they have been using compostable trays during COVID and we have received the green light to go back to washable trays and silverware. The conversation has been started to begin this process. The school garden is used for an outdoor classroom and discussion of sustainability of local foods, as well as learning about growing your own food. Transportation is addressed through the students walking as much as possible to field trip areas instead of busing. We try to purchase as much eco-friendly products as possible within the school budget, and encourage teachers to reuse items instead of buying new. Our PD for teachers includes at least one EE element during our fall workshops and teachers are encouraged to attend more throughout the year, as provided via emails from the EE coordinator. The school also has applied and been accepted to have a member of the Minnesota GreenCorps at the school for the next school year. They will be working on increasing the energy efficiency of the building through renewables and retrofits. They will also be educating the students, staff, and public about things they can do in our school and their own homes to increase efficiency in order to decrease air pollutants.

**6. What have been your successes and challenges related to environmental education this year?**

Our sixth graders completed a fantastic action project this year and it was a great success. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers completed all EE goals and worked hard to incorporate plant and animal learning into their day to day teaching. The combined project in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade using social studies and science concepts was a great addition to the EE program. Students combined learning in the classroom with walking to the Mississippi River landing, then carried back a gallon of water to school to understand how much we take water for granted in our area and how saving water is important. Overall, being in school with no distance learning this year made meeting or at least completing the ELP goals easier than last year.

There were still challenges, and we are working on what to do to make everything easier for teachers as far as reporting is concerned. Some teachers were not as familiar with the ELP goals and reminders from the EE coordinator did not seem to help as much as it did with others. Since we do have teacher turnover, we will be changing some goals for the new ELP to incorporate a new curriculum purchased from Project Learning Tree. By providing each teacher with a specific unit to teach that has an assessment built in, it will provide an easier way to show learning in each classroom. Teachers will be given a calendar which will show when the unit will be taught and that way we will be assessing throughout the year instead of the end, which is when much of the assessing for the ELP goals takes place now.

## Governance & Management

### Includes Annual Board Training & Administrator Professional Development Report(s)

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Discovery Woods School Board meets monthly during the calendar year. The Board is composed of 5 voting members: 2 community members, 2 teachers and 1 parent. The DW Board meetings are conducted with Robert's Rules of Order and comply with Minnesota Open Meeting Law. Board members and OW are sent meeting materials approximately one week prior to a meeting. After a board meeting, all meeting minutes are posted on the Discovery Woods website. The DW Board reviews the school policies, financial statements and operational data regularly during meetings. Through the board's work it is ensured that the school meets its mission goals, provides financial stability, maintains rigorous academic programming and develops committed community relationships within the Brainerd lakes area.

Member Name	Board Position	Affiliation	Date Elected	Date Seated	Term End Date	Email Address
Tom Potter	Chair	Community Member	May 18, 2020	July 20, 2020	July 2023	tpotterboard@discoverywoods.com
Kara DeVriendt	Vice Chair	Teacher	May 26, 2021	July 28, 2021	July 2024	kdevriendtboard@discoverywoods.com
Emma Needham	Secretary	Parent	May 18, 2020	July 20, 2020	July 2023	eneedhamboard@discoverywoods.com
Dawn Verdon	Treasurer	Community Member	May 18, 2020	July 20, 2020	July 2023	dverdonboard@discoverywoods.com
Lisa Laasch	Member	Teacher	January 25, 2021	February 22, 2021	January 2024	llaaschboard@discoverywoods.com
Kristi Crocker	Ex-Officio	School Leader	July 28, 2021	July 28, 2021	July 2024	kcrockerboard@discoverywoods.com

#### Board Training and Development

The Board participates in board training through Minnesota School Boards Association, Minnesota Association of Charter Schools and Bergan KDV annually. This year the Board implemented work sessions to address additional training and development needs. The Board is asking more questions, being more involved and continues to seek out training regularly and has continued using OW's Sounding Board for training topics. DW is a member of MACS to help the continued training and development. Each new member is given a quick training before being seated and is given a 3-ring binder with training requirements, bylaws etc. There is also a Google Drive that Discovery Woods board members will track their board training.

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## 2022 Discovery Woods Board Training – Initial and FY22 (2021-2022 school year)

Initial Training				
Board Member Name	Original Date Seated	Governance-Board's Role & Responsibilities	Employment Policies & Practices	Financial Management
Tom Potter	7/1/2014	10/2014 MACS 9/22/2017 MACS	10/25/2014 MACS	9/2014 BKD&A
Dawn Verdon	7/20/2020	02/10/2021 MACS	06/23/2021 MACS	02/23/2021 MACS
Kara DeVriendt	7/19/2018	10/6/2018 MACS	11/10/2018 MACS	11/10/2018 MACS
Emma Needham	7/20/2020	8/12/2020 OW	11/18/2020 OW	8/11/2020 OW
Lisa Laasch	1/25/2021	8/09/2021 OW	06/23/2021 MACS	6/22/2021 MACS

### Annual Training FY22

	Tom	Kara	Dawn	Emma	Lisa
July -None	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
August - Open Meeting Law	yes	yes	yes	no	NA
September - OW Sounding Board Issue - 16 - Role of the Board Chair	yes	yes	yes	yes	NA
October - OW Sounding Board - 17 - Board Member Roles and Responsibilities	yes	yes	yes	yes	NA
November - <i>It's Audit Season: What it Means for</i>	yes	yes	yes	no	NA

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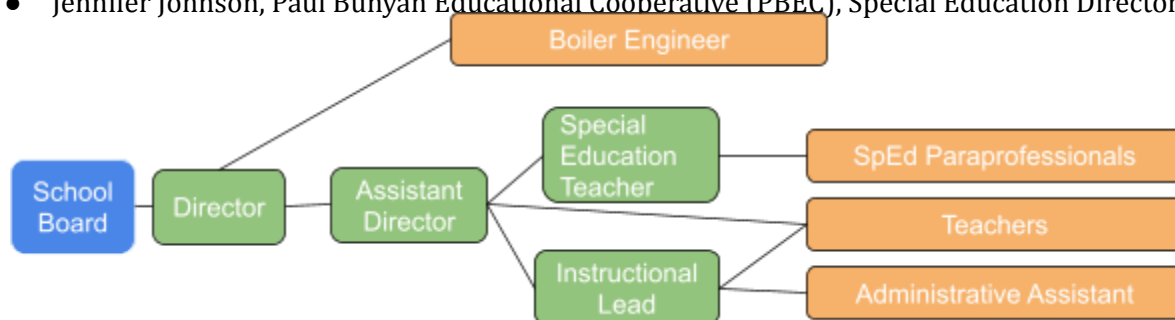
<i>Your Charter School</i>					
<b>December - New member board training review</b>	yes	yes	yes	yes	NA
<b>January - Meeting Minutes</b>	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
<b>February - Duties, Responsibilities, and Authority of a Charter School Board Chair</b>	yes	no	yes	no	yes
<b>March - Bylaws &amp; Board Policies</b>	yes	yes	yes	no	no
<b>April - Board Recruitment</b>	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
<b>May - Board Self Evaluations</b>	yes	yes	yes	no	no
<b>June - Onboarding New Members</b>	yes	yes	yes	yes	no

## MANAGEMENT

The Board oversees the operations through a finance report and management report produced by Bergen KDV every month at the board meeting. With staffing we needed to fill two classroom teaching positions as well as our Special Education position and Speech. We did also hire for another administration position, Assistant Director to help with social emotional learning and Special Education.

In addition, DW is supported by contracted consultants to provide additional administrative functions:

- Kelly Rimpila and Brenda Kes, Bergen KDV, Financial Management & Accounting
- Jennifer Johnson, Paul Bunyan Educational Cooperative (PBEC), Special Education Director



## **Discovery Woods had three administrators in FY22:**

- **Kristi Crocker, Executive Director**

Kristi Crocker has been with DW since August of 2012 in different positions. She is currently the Executive Director and works with BerganKDV on the day-to-day finances. The director's duties include managing the budgeting and finance, board meeting preparation, title grants, special education, reports due to MDE and the authorizer; HR management and personnel issues; parent involvement; facilities construction, improvement and maintenance; insurance; instruction and academic management; student support; testing; professional development for teachers; observation and evaluation of teachers; coordinating with Montessori coach to observe and coach teachers; creating the agendas for, conducting, and participating in weekly staff meetings; teacher development for accountability (aligning the curriculum to the Common Core Standards) and analyzing student achievement data as examples; managing student behavior when sent out of the classroom; creating the board agendas and keeping minutes at each meeting, distributing board packets; preparing reports and gathers data regarding academics and assessments. Kristi has her Associates of Arts Degree and has been working towards her Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in finance at Bemidji State University and will graduate in December of 2022. Kristi has had much work experience with both managing and finances. Kristi additionally oversees the website; sends out RFPs for services; reports to MDE; and is the MARSS Coordinator.

### **Kristi Crocker 2021-2022 Professional Development Plan**

To advocate for rigorous academic opportunities for all children, and to identify and support strategies that further DW's students' proficiency and growth in Minnesota Academic Standards

- Active with PLC (Professional Learning Team) Meetings
- Active with RtI (Response to Interventions) Meetings
- Active with CST (Child Study) Meetings

To advocate and support the mental health of all children, and to ensure that youth serving professionals identify and support children with mental health challenges and to help support children with other special needs

- MN Statewide Webinar - Kognito, September 16, 2021
- Mandated Reporter Training, September 2, 2021

To advocate and support equality and equity of all children

- Kindergarten Webinar: Play Based Literacy Instruction, September 16, 2021
- Identification of Students who become "homeless" for charter schools, October 27, 2021
- MN MTSS Overview Part I, November 2, 2021

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- MN MTSS Overview Part II, November 18, 2021
- I have the data, now what?, December 7, 2021
- Special Education Maintenance of Effort Webinar, March 2, 2022
- Leveraging UDL for students with complex needs, March 14, 2022
- Best Practices for Supporting students with Autism, March 22, 2022

To establish a stable financial framework for Discovery Woods

- ESSER Webinar, September 16, 2021
- Technical Grant Application Guidance Webinar, September 16, 2021
- Multiple meetings throughout the year with Bergan KDV regarding finances and grants
- REAP Webinar, February 10, 2022
- College courses taken in Spring 2022 at Bemidji State University: Investments

To establish an effective working relationship with the school board and obtain knowledge to be a successful effective leader

- Monthly Charter School Admin Support Call - MACS
- Monthly Charter Leader Support Network - Sourcewell
- School Law Seminar, November 5, 2021
- Charter School Bootcamp, dependent on topic - monthly
- Navigating Staffing Challenges, January 13, 2022
- Western MESPA networking sessions, monthly (March 2022-June 2022)
- College courses taken in Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 at Bemidji State University: Computer Business Apps, Operations Management, Risk Management and Insurance

## **Professional Development Report**

Erin Anderson, Assistant Director

Erin Anderson has been the Assistant Director at Discovery Woods since the fall of 2020. As Assistant Director, Erin has many duties including, but not limited to, evaluating staff, implementing initiatives, administering educational programming, administering special education programming, evaluating and planning curriculum along with the Lead Teacher, determining professional development needs of the staff, providing professional development, assisting in hiring and staffing decisions, enforcing discipline policies with students, attending various meetings to organize and continue school improvement, organizing opportunities for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and ensuring that staff understand goals, expectations, and strategies for this time, and collaborating with other principals throughout the region to improve school culture and performance.

### ***Education***

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Bachelor of Arts in English & Education - Luther College  
Master of Science in Teaching, Learning & Leadership - Southwest Minnesota State University  
Educational Administration K-12 Principal - Saint Mary's University of Minnesota

Courses:

1. Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction Systems
2. Leadership Theory
3. Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction Leadership
4. Organization and Human Resources Management
5. Special Education and Diverse Learners
6. Student Management
7. Ethical Issues for Administrators
8. Financial Management
9. Legal Issues in Education
10. Data Collection and Assessment
11. Principal as Building Leader
12. Principal Seminar
13. Principal Field Experience I
14. Principal Field Experience II

***Currently enrolled*** (will be completed April 2023):

Graduate Nonprofit Management Certification - Saint Mary's University of Minnesota

Courses:

1. Strategic Nonprofit Management
2. Nonprofit Human Resources Management
3. Nonprofit Fund Development and Financial Management
4. Community Engagement and Partnerships

***Goals for the School Year***

- Increase implementation of Caring School Community, including Caring School Discipline, Cross-Age Buddies, Schoolwide Community-building Activities
  - Implement the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) element of Caring School Discipline
  - Implement Cross-Age Buddies along with Lead Teacher using the new teacher-created, theme-based schedule
  - Plan and host Schoolwide Activities with the Student Leadership Team
- Implement effective PLC strategies to continue reviewing and improving instruction and assessment
  - Work with preschool teachers to ensure that instruction is standards-based, engaging, and assessed to determine effectiveness
- Provide extensive training for staff:
  - Caring School Community
  - Licensure requirements

- Increase and improve strategies for working with high-need students and effectively track data related to any interventions that are used, often through the Response to Intervention (RtI) Team

***Professional Development (many related to Goals)***

MN Summit for Learning and Leading	8/11-12/21	8.5
Montessori Math Training	8/31-9/1/21	10
Caring School Community Training	9/1/21	2
Mandated Reporting Training	9/2/21	1
Handle with Care	9/14/21	4
Blood Borne Pathogens	10/6/21	1
Leadership Academy - SEL Implementation	6 dates during '20-'21 school year	27
Handle with Care Overview	11/29/21	1
Visual Supports for Behavior Management	11/29/21	1
Science of Reading	1/17/22	1
Data Analysis & Curriculum Modification	5/6/22	1

**Professional Development Report  
Heidi Auel, Instructional Lead**

Heidi Auel has been with DW since 2013 in different positions. She is currently the Instructional Lead and Environmental Education Coordinator. The Instructional Lead's duties include instruction and academic management; student support; statewide and other standardized testing; professional development for teachers; observation and evaluation of teachers; teacher development for accountability (aligning the curriculum to the Common Core Standards) and analyzing student achievement data as examples. Heidi also teaches 5th and 6th grade science classes and helps guide teachers with environmental education. Heidi has her Bachelors of Science in Animal Ecology with an emphasis in environmental education, minor in

environmental studies. Heidi has her teaching license in 5-8 General Science and 9-12 Life Science and has completed 30+ Masters credits in the MAT program at Hamline University.

### **Goals for the Previous School Year**

- Continue Instructional Coaching training and continue coaching programs with teachers.
- Continue participation in Sourcewell Networks.
- Attend subject area conferences including those that are science and school garden related.

### **Goals for Current School Year**

- Begin reviewal and development of school-wide science curriculum based on the new standards of Phenomena-based inquiry.
- Continue Instructional Coaching, meeting with teachers at least twice per year for a coaching cycle.
- Continue participation in Sourcewell Networks.
- Attend subject area conferences including those that are science and school garden related.

### **Workshops/Conferences Attended 2021-2022**

ESTEP week-long workshop for science educators geared towards 6th grade science educators to learn how to implement the new standards.

Sourcewell networks, continuing Curriculum Coordinator and DAC

LETRS training (Science of Reading training to assist teachers with Instructional Coaching)

### **Professional Organizations**

Member of MnSTA

Member of NSTA

### **Goals for the School Year**

Develop PLC agendas and inservice days to assist teachers in curriculum work

Review LIT goals and work with Director to develop long term plan for LIT

Research curriculum and development in other schools plus best-practices as referenced by Regional Centers of Excellence

Continue personal subject area professional development (science, EE, school garden)

Develop long-term professional development plan after this school year based on new duties

## **School Board:**

### **Activities Completed/Progress/Results for 2021-22:**

- MN Association for Charter Schools (MACS) membership continued for use of their resources for board training, access to policies, board insight and self-evaluation tools
- Monthly review of contractual goals through academic reports, financial reports and the Director's report
- Using Google Drive to organize board documents
- Addition of new board members

### **Professional Development Goals/Areas of Focus for 21-22:**

Board members are invested in and continue to incorporate training to develop our knowledge as a board in the areas of finance, operations, and legal compliance. The board continues to implement new oversight and organizational strategies. We have continued to organize all board documents on google drive in order for everyone to have access at all times. We have also begun a cycle to go over policies which we work on together at our monthly work meetings. These small steps make our meetings more productive. Epicenter has been kept up to date through the director and board secretary.

We continue to work as committees to take on projects. We also continue to work on our strategic planning committee.

Administration will continue leading staff with assessing data, social emotional learning and professional development opportunities.

Social emotional learning has been and will remain the priority of the 2020-21 school year until we feel we have reached a good balance.. DW staff feel that if students are doing well mentally and emotionally then they will be able to do better with academics. Our Title I Reading/Reading Specialist position will continue to cover a wider range of students since we are a schoolwide Title program. There will be more opportunities for families to come in and be part of their student's literacy education. DW continues to collaborate on how to expand our math program and will continue to research effective instruction strategies.

## **Staffing**

Discovery Woods' hiring process follows a basic hiring procedure that involves a minimum posting of two weeks, a scoring rubric evaluated by two staff to select candidates to interview, a minimum of one interview with 2-4 members of the staff, and required background checks after the offer but prior to the hiring being approved by the DW Board of Directors. During our interviews with new candidates they are always made aware of our Montessori philosophy and what that means and also that we are an environmental education school and what that means. DW wants to make sure staff are qualified for their position and know the school's mission so they are capable of helping educate every child as an individual and with a focus on environmental education. DW has a Montessori consultant work with staff regarding individualized learning and DW holds workshops that will help staff with the environmental factor.

## 2021-22 Staffing

2021-22 Licensed Teaching Staff				
Name	File #	License and Assignment (subject/grades)	2021-22 Status*	Comments <i>Include information regarding special licensure (e.g., Community Expert) or other relevant information.</i>
Dawn Snook	446715	Special Education	R	
Renee Huberty	427018	Elem. Teacher Kindergarten Pre-Primary	R	
Chasidi Grant		Elem. Teacher Kindergarten Pre-Primary	R	
Kara DeVriendt	485948	Title I Coordinator Reading Specialist	R	Reading K-12 license Master's in Literacy
Shawna Sachs	480413	Elem. Teacher	R	
Danielle Hillsdale		Elem. Teacher	NR	
Lisa Laasch	445202	Elem. Teacher Kindergarten Pre-Primary	NR	
Rachel Hanford		Elem. Teacher	R	
Allison Christensen	1005464	Elem. Teacher	R	
Heidi Auel	413652	5-6 Science Teacher Instructional Lead	R	
Kayla Huether	470648	Physical Education Teacher	R	Tier 2
Erin Anderson	393288	Assistant Director Special Education Social Skills	R	Out of Field Permission-Academic and Behavioral Strategist
Cindy Anderson		Speech Pathologist	R	

\* R = Returning, NR = Not Returning

## 2021-22 Teacher Professional Development Activities:

DW conducted professional development workshops in the following areas and provided them to the teachers throughout the school year. Refining the quality of classroom instruction, enabling individuals to grow professionally, introducing some Montessori manipulatives to help with the applications of research based strategies and assisting teachers in implementing and teaching strategies aligned with the Minnesota State Academic Standards. DW worked hard at looking through data to see where we could help each student. Teachers met weekly talking about what strategies to use for each student and what the assessments said for each. The training days for teacher team meetings were regularly scheduled for four times a month and all staff meetings monthly and for seven in-service days to evaluate programs, discuss children, and plan strategies that will ensure that instruction is targeted to children's individual needs, and that teachers are informed.

### Teacher Retention:

Discovery Woods is continuing to find the right staff for the school. Many teachers that apply are first year teachers and coming into a school that does not have a set curriculum has been very overwhelming so DW has put together a scope and sequence to help guide as well as bought resources such as Moving with Math curriculum and manipulatives. Our Title I and Reading Specialist helps with many ELA materials and guidance as well. Retention has been difficult as some staff are finding our school as a start or end to their careers. DW continues to look at ways to retain staff. Teacher training and administration flexibility and open-mindedness are also great tools used for teacher retention.

<b>Percentage of Licensed Teachers from 2021-22 not returning in 2022-23 (non-returning teachers/total teachers from 2021-22 x 100)</b>	17%
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<b>2021-22 Non-Licensed Staff</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>2021-22 Status*</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Samantha Meyer	Special Education 1:1	R	
Jesse MacArthur	Special Education 1:1	NR	New Zealand for school
Sara Prettyman	Special Education 1:1	R	
Teresa Miles	Teacher Assistant	R	
Nick Forbes	Special Education 1:1	R	
Michael Knakmuhs	Boiler Engineer	R	
Tom Lytle	Special Education 1:1	R	Behavior Interventionist in SY23
Gracie Miles	Special Education 1:1	R	
Kristi Crocker	Director	R	
Taylor Crocker	Administrative Assistant	R	
Jenni Blessing	Teacher Assistant	R	
Alyssa Marvin	Special Education 1:1	R	
Amanda Bell	Special Education 1:1	R	
Katie McGuire	Special Education 1:1	R	
Jaime Janssen	Special Education 1:1	NR	

\* R = Returning, NR = Not Returning

### Operational Performance

Discovery Woods complies with applicable laws, rules and regulations of a public charter school. Our school building contains ten classrooms, a main office, bathrooms, a staff workroom, storage, a computer lab, a library, a gymnasium with a stage, a kitchen and a lunch service area. There is also a large playground on the school grounds. Access to the main school building is secure and monitored by staff and surveillance cameras. Classrooms are beautifully arranged and maintained by teachers. Each room provides an inviting and comfortable home-like environment that sparks student interest and engages the children in a variety of academic studies through use of a multitude of specially designed manipulative materials. This building gives us 27,000 square feet of space, and provides for adequate 1:1 and small group instruction and services for Title I and special education needs. In the summer of 2015, an elevator was added, first floor bathrooms were made accessible, and secure building access was relocated along with adding new practice of keeping the building

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locked from 8:00 a.m.—7:35 a.m. daily, having the school unlocked only from 7:35-8:00 a.m. for student arrival.

School facility records, inspections were kept on schedule and are maintained in the office. Fire and emergency drills are held several times per year, and are recorded in the emergency plan and drill log book.

Discovery Woods administrative staff fulfills many duties of school operation under school board oversight. Administrative staff and personnel committee members advertise job openings, conduct interviews and use fair hiring practices. Background checks are conducted for staff, board members and volunteers. Administrative staff maintains secure and private student records and transfers records when needed. Student enrollment procedures follow policies that direct a fair and open process. Enrollment for the 2021-22 school year began with an advertised two week application period, concluding in a lottery draw on February 23, 2022, for spaces that had more student applications than spots available. Applications were randomly assigned a space by grade or a waitlist space by grade for the upcoming school year. Applications received after the lottery draw deadline were added to the class lists or wait lists. The class lists and wait lists are maintained and updated by administrative staff. School policies direct other processes, including student discipline, First Amendment protections, Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, and prohibition of religious instruction in a public school. Lastly, Discovery Woods administration provides basic first aid and dispensing of medication to students when needed.

Discovery Woods does work with Brainerd School District 181 to provide student busing. The school works closely with the Brainerd transportation office and its bus provider Reichert to coordinate safe and effective transportation to and from school.

Discovery Woods contracts with other organizations in order to provide all necessary services. The school has a joint agreement with ISD 181 to provide daily hot lunch to students. Cleaning services were provided by Minnesota Cleaning Solutions. Accounting and financial oversight was conducted by Bergan KDV. Schlenger Wenner and Company conducted the fiscal year 2021 financial audit. Discovery Woods finances were maintained and stayed steady even in light of the pandemic. Paul Bunyan Educational Cooperative manages our Special Education department.

Discovery Woods is communicating with the North Side Association, which is a group of people in the neighborhood, about our events and open our events to DW families and the community. DW is working hard on engaging more families and giving the community more opportunities to learn about the school. Discovery Woods' has put most events on hold or conducted them digitally due to Covid.

## **Finances**

For questions regarding school finances and for complete financials for 2021-22 and/or an organizational budget for 2022-23, contact:

Name: Kelly Rimpila

Position: Outsourced Senior Advisor

Contact info: BerganKDV

Phone: 612-716-0569

Email: Kelly.Rimpila@bergankdv.com

The school contracts with BerganKDV to provide accounting and financial management services for the school. Information presented below is derived from preliminary unaudited figures. The full financial audit will be completed and presented to the Minnesota Department of Education and Osprey Wilds no later than December 31, 2022.

FY22 Finances	Fund 1	Fund 2	Fund 4
Total Revenues	\$1,427,033	\$0	\$118,173
Total Expenditures	\$1,356,325	\$0	\$63,848
Net Income	\$70,708	\$0	\$54,325
Total Fund Balance	\$951,886	\$0	\$54,325

#### Overview

The school ended just under the enrollment targets for the year (103.8 actual ADM compared to 105 budgeted) so state aids were budgeted accurately compared to actuals. The state's holdback remained at 10%, which helped the school's cash flow position. The school did not need to rely on a line of credit to meet cash flow needs during the year.

#### Revenues

##### General Fund

General Education and Charter School Lease aids were in line with the budget due to enrollment targets ending very close to budget. The school had REAP grant award revenues of \$13,037 in FY22.

General Fund revenues came from the following sources:

State Aids and Grants: \$1,152,350

Federal Aids and Grants: \$250,160

Fees Collected and other Miscellaneous Revenues: \$24,523

##### Food Services Fund

The Food Service Fund has been closed due to the food service program being moved to the District.

##### Community Services Fund

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

Pathways Scholarship funds (from State): \$15,000

COVID Childcare Funds (from MN Department of Human Services): \$22,400

Fees Collected and other Miscellaneous Revenues: \$80,773

## Expenses

### General Fund

The school's largest expense was for employee salaries and benefits (\$789,553). Other expenses incurred by the school were for:

Lease, property taxes, and property insurance: \$161,388

Purchased Services (including building utilities): \$323,276

Supplies and Instructional Materials Purchased: \$59,930

Building Improvements and Equipment (including technology equipment): \$8,209

Memberships, Other Fees, and Fund Transfer: \$13,969

### Food Service Fund

The Food Service Fund has been closed due to the food service program being moved to the District.

### Community Services Fund

Expenses in the Community Services Fund for the programs operated consisted of:

Salaries, Wages, and Benefits: \$63,848

## Net Income and Fund Balance

The net operating income of \$125,032 in all funds resulted in an ending fund balance of \$1,006,210 for the year, or 70.9% of current expenditures. The FY23 approved budget is projecting a deficit of (\$66,222) to use some of the school's fund balance.

## World's Best Workforce Annual Budget

There is no information for the budget/expenses related to implementation of the WBWF plan. This was not broken down and tracked.

The school's annual audit was performed by Schlenner Wenner & Company, St. Cloud, MN, 56302

## Future Plans

- Discovery Woods will continue our weekly Professional Learning Communities and full day professional development to look at assessment data and state standards. DW will allow teachers to go through Montessori training and continue to align state standards and benchmarks with the Montessori curriculum and other individualized learning. Our instructional leaders will continue to work with teachers on scope and sequence and curriculum mapping through our curriculum review cycle. Our future plans largely include continuing to make gains in student learning so that our state assessment scores and local standardized assessments reflect that.
- DW plans to continue developing a consistent instructional approach schoolwide and after demonstrating more success in growth we may apply to expand our grades, adding 7th and 8th to give our families options of having their students stay at Discovery Woods. The Brainerd Lakes area public school has middle school beginning at 5th grade so we lose many students after 4th grade. We have had a large population of families concerned that their child is not able to stay at Discovery Woods until 8th grade and then continue on to high school.
- DW was granted the four star Parent Aware rating in the spring of 2016 and renewed every two years for our preschool so we are able to offer our families Early Learning Scholarships.
- Discovery Woods would like to find a grant and do fundraising to update our playground and obtain equipment that is higher quality. DW would also like to look into Peaceful Playgrounds and take advantage of all of our space on the playground, including the basketball court which could also hold Peaceful Playground markings.
- DW board members have started discussions with families regarding possibilities of renovating the current building, an addition to the current building and/or grounds or building an entirely new building on different grounds as we outgrow our current facility. A strategic planning committee has begun to collect data and information to lead us in this area. This was put on hold due to Covid and we are hoping to begin this again soon.
- DW continues to expand the arts and language in hopes of having full time language, music and art instructors in the future.
- We feel there may be some impact on our FY budget due to needing extra support for students. DW can see that students not only need extra instruction to build them back up from the learning loss due to the pandemic but to also be there to support those students struggling with social emotional welfare.
- DW will also look at ways to bring summer instruction and would like to expand the day with extra instruction beyond the regular school day.

## **Safe Learning Plan Description and Reflection on Implementation**

A big piece for our 2021-22 Safe Learning Plan was listening to our families and depending on them having communication with us. We learned that families want a say in how their children will receive instruction. We feel that students and families were served effectively as we were able to take safety precautions and keep children in the building for in person instruction as so many students and families were affected negatively with distance learning. We did service one family who did feel their child needed to learn through distance learning until a vaccine was readily available for them so we put plans into place for them and their student was able to join in for in person instruction with the new year.

We were able to always rearrange staffing to fit the needs of the students so that there were no gaps in instruction. The Safe Learning Plan worked well for us and we measured the effectiveness by monitoring illnesses, watching for the amount of students/staff out, what classrooms etc. We kept our classroom grade levels into cohorts even for normal community times of Recreation and Lunch as well as during the end of the day pickup. We had minimal illness so feel that our Safe Learning Plan provided a lot of success. Staff worked hard on communication and administration worked with our mental health provider so there were staff on hand for students and DW staff made many referrals for students who needed more help. Our enrollment definitely went down from Covid-19 however not to the extent that other districts had and we feel it was due to listening to our families and what they needed. We will continue to grow our enrollment back up to pre-Covid numbers. Staffing has been difficult since Covid, not as much with teachers but with support staff. Luckily we have kept retention and only lost two teachers and 1 EA. We are seeing that we need more staff to help students during the post Covid time as they are suffering from learning loss and trauma. We are hiring more support staff as well as bringing our mental health provider in for full weeks of meeting students and adding to our social emotional learning curriculum, Caring School Community. DW tried to keep everything as normal as possible for our students and stay stable and provide structure so they felt safe and were able to learn. Staff kept the building safe and clean and put in extra measures for students. Administration checked in with staff to make sure they were taking care of their own mental health and provided support throughout. DW is especially proud that Covid did not affect our school much this year and that we were also able to continue seeing gains with our ELA with all students. DW has worked hard on being equitable for students and families and we feel we pulled through on that goal.