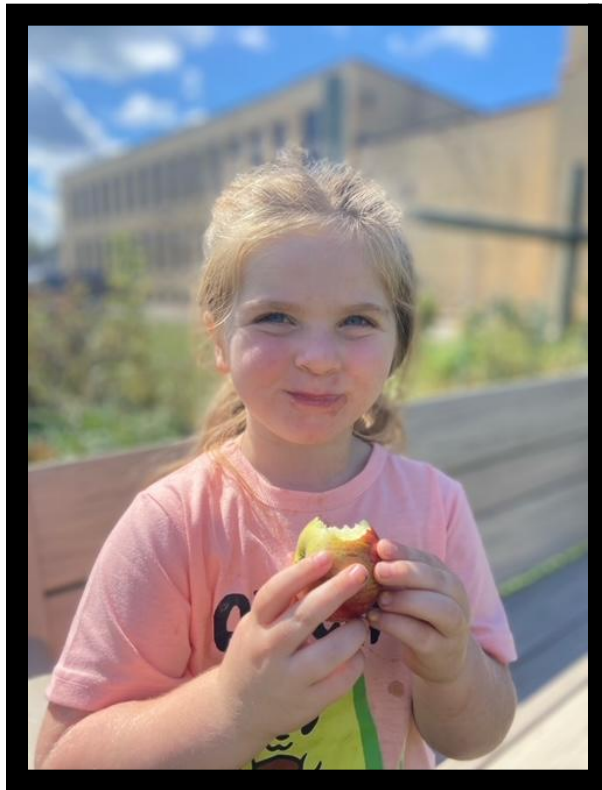




Discovery Woods



PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL DISTRICT # 4198-07
SCHOOL YEAR 2024-2025

COMPREHENSIVE ACHIEVEMENT AND CIVIC READINESS & ANNUAL REPORT

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1. School Information

CONTACT INFORMATION

604 N 7th St, Brainerd, MN 56401

218-828-8200

director@discoverywoods.com

www.discoverywoods.com

Discovery Woods School (DWS) is a public charter school that opened its doors to students in the fall of 2011 for kindergarten through 5th grade. In 2012, the school expanded through 6th grade. DWS also has a tuition-based preschool option that serves 20 students. The school is 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. The school's location provides opportunities to explore the neighborhood park and the Mississippi River, as well as other walking field trip possibilities to the local public library and businesses in downtown Brainerd. In the 2024-2025 school year, the school served 85 K-6 students.

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.



AUTHORIZER INFORMATION

Discovery Woods is proud to be authorized by Osprey Wilds (OW) in Sandstone, Minnesota. DWS has been authorized by Osprey Wilds since January 2011, with Discovery Woods officially opening in the fall of 2011. OW has renewed Discovery Woods' contract through June 30, 2028.

The authorizing mission of Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center is to ensure quality academic and environmental literacy outcomes for Minnesota students through effective charter school authorizing.

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/

2. Implementation of Primary and Additional Statutory Purposes

Discovery Woods Schools' primary purpose is to maximize learning and enhance achievement for all students. DWS improves student learning in a variety of ways. In the past several years, DWS has adopted new math and English language arts curricula, increased evidence-based practices, and started using explicit teaching methods. In addition to the core curriculum, students participate in environmental education activities throughout the school year. DWS highlights student accomplishments by encouraging students to share their work with classmates at gathering times, displaying it in the hallway, or sharing it with families twice per year during two end-of-semester Student Showcases. Discovery Woods School provides an alternative option for students with academic and/or behavioral challenges, or for those families who don't feel like their child's needs are being met in the large elementary schools or the middle school in the local district. DWS meets the needs of lower-performing students by improving their self-concept through repeated experiences with academic success and perceived growth, which translates into increased motivation and engagement in the classroom environment.

Discovery Woods School utilizes the following systems to support students beyond core instruction: Title I programming, AmeriCorps tutors, Response to Intervention (RtI) procedures, and Special Education services. DWS has a robust Response to Intervention program for students needing further academic support. DWS holds frequent RtI and Child Study meetings where teachers, special education staff, and special education professionals through the Paul Bunyan Cooperative (the school's special education service director) discuss, identify, and plan avenues of support for children with special needs. In addition, the school started the process during the 2024-25 school year of moving toward the Minnesota Multi-tiered System of Support (MnMTSS) model; the Assistant Director of the school attended the initial training & support sessions to move



in this direction. DWS receives Title I funding to support children identified with a need for additional instruction each day. The school staffs an Academic Interventionist to work with students using both push-in (tier 1) and pull-out (tier 2 or 3) assistance models for both math and literacy. DWS also hosts the following AmeriCorps positions to provide further academic support for those students identified through the academic screening process: Early Learning Corps tutor, Reading Corps tutor, and Math Corps tutor. Special Education services have been streamlined so that one special education teacher focuses mostly on those students

needing special services for a specific learning disability in reading. The school's second special education teacher focuses on students needing special services for a specific learning disability in math and those students needing social skills development.

3. Student Enrollment & Demographics

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Discovery Woods School has a goal to improve recruitment practices by implementing a comprehensive marketing plan and increasing the number of family and community events. DWS continues to build a relationship with the local community and network with local businesses and families. DWS staff regularly strive to develop relationships with DWS students and families to achieve greater student retention as well as maintain or improve the school's annual attendance rate.

Number of Students Enrolled	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Preschool or PreK	20	20	19
Kindergarten	18	18	8
1st Grade	15	13	11
2nd Grade	20	20	12
3rd Grade	16	14	17
4th Grade	9	9	10
5th Grade	16	17	11
6th Grade	10	9	12
Total	104	100	100
Total ADM (Average Daily Membership) for the year	124.54	99.12	93.49

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Discovery Woods School's student demographics have not changed significantly since 2011. The Brainerd area historically and currently does not include much racial diversity, and those numbers are reflected in the DWS student body. The largest at-risk 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	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total Enrollment	104	100	101
Special Education	32	28	27
English Learners	0	0	0
Free/Reduced Priced Lunch	64	66	65
Black, not of Hispanic Origin	8	7	0
Hispanic/Latino	4	4	5
Asian/Pacific Islander	0	0	0
American Indian/Alaskan Native	6	11	7
White, not of Hispanic Origin	86	78	77
Two or more races		17	12

4. Student Attendance, Attrition & Mobility

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Student Attendance Rate	83.1%	84.3%	82.9%

STUDENT ATTRITION

Discovery Woods School's student population retention has been similar for the past three reporting periods since the initial post-COVID school year of 2021-2022, when student population retention dipped. Without knowledge of typical elementary school retention rates in Minnesota, nor guidance on expectations for student population retention, it is difficult to comment on how well Discovery Woods School is doing in this regard. However, student mobility tends to be higher for families who are living in low socioeconomic situations. With over 60% of students who attend DWS qualifying for free or reduced lunch, it would be great information to learn whether retaining 80% or more of the student population is average, below, or above for schools with similar student populations.

Percentage of students* who were continuously enrolled between October 1 of the 2023-2024 school year and October 1 of the 2024-25 school year.	79%
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Percentage of students* who continued enrollment in the school from Spring 2024 to October 1, 2024.	80%
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STUDENT MOBILITY

	Summer Transfers In	Number of students on Oct. 1	Mid-year Transfers In	Mid-year Transfers Out	Total Mid-year Transfers	Mobility Index* (as a percent)
2022-23	25	103	*3	*1	4	4%
2023-24	24	99	3	6	9	9%
2024-25	6	105	8	14	22	21%

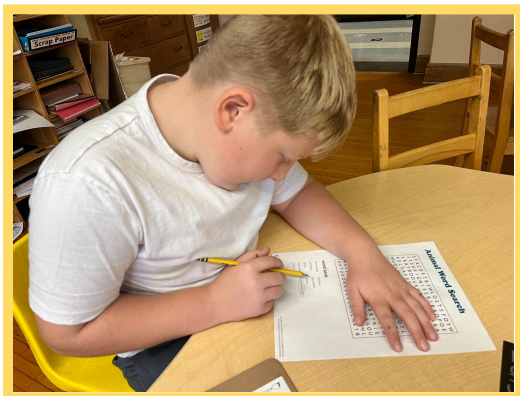
*Total mid-year transfers (in and out) divided by the number of students on October 1.

Notable in the above table is the reduction in transfers to the school over the summer months of 2024-25. Additionally, mid-year transfers into the school were slightly higher, while mid-year transfers out rose significantly. The explanation for the higher number of transfers out of the school can be explained by the fact that two families with three or more children left the district. The lack of summer transfers in can, unfortunately, be explained by some complications over that summer with a former staff member responsible for enrollments, who was not completing paperwork or communicating properly with interested families.

Percentage of students who were enrolled for 95% or more of the 2024-25 school year.	96%
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Discovery Woods School's continuous enrollment percentage has remained steady for the past three reporting periods since the initial post-COVID school year of 2021-22, when the continuous enrollment of students over the 2021-2022 school year dropped to 85%.

5. Educational Approach & Curriculum



Discovery Woods Schools' mission revolves around offering families another choice for public elementary education, either from the start of a student's academic career or when students need an option apart from the traditional districts in the area. As a small, public Charter school, DWS is often better able to address students' individual needs than traditional school settings. Additionally, DWS offers environmental and outdoor learning experiences that students may not have access to at other elementary schools. The school's main pedagogical approaches have recently shifted to focus more heavily on evidence-based practices such as explicit whole-group instruction to maximize instructional time for students. Practices

formerly used, like Constructivist, Social Constructivist, Reflective, and Inquiry or Discovery-based learning, have been abandoned since these are not as effective methods of approaching the overall curriculum regularly. Collaborative practices are used, as appropriate. Behaviorist and Integrative approaches are more closely aligned with the school's current pedagogical approaches. The Behaviorist pedagogical approach is more closely aligned with evidence-based practices that match what is known about the science of learning and how people's brains learn. The school has been working toward a more Integrative approach over the years to incorporate cross-curricular learning experiences by integrating science and social studies topics into English language arts and to weave science and English language arts standards into the school's environmental education learning goals and projects. DWS's preschool and Kindergarten program still incorporates Montessori materials and individualized learning plans for the use of these materials for part of the school day. Overall, however, curriculum and instructional decisions are influenced and guided by the Minnesota State Academic Standards. The school has successfully reviewed curriculum, researched and selected materials, and is well into the implementation process. Regarding literacy/ELA, Discovery Woods School is entering into Year 4 of the implementation process, but continues to add and adjust in response to data and observation. The school uses UFLI for whole group tier I instruction and supplemental materials to further address phonemic awareness, phonics, reading, and writing in small group instruction in Kindergarten, Flyleaf Publishing in grades 1-2, and Bookworms for grades 3-6. Several teachers finished an extensive literacy training called LETRS at the end of the 2022-2023 school year, and CORE's OL&LA training in the 2024-2025 school year. The school monitors data, makes adjustments as needed, and continues to find professional learning opportunities for teachers to continue to develop and enhance the school's literacy program. Discovery Woods has improved reading achievement rates and reduced the number of students in need of reading remediation since implementing instructional materials and routines based on the "science of reading". DWS recently began focusing more on math by adopting a new math curriculum and having teachers participate in training with the Open Up Resources Math Curriculum. Because it takes several years to see the benefits after implementing new learning initiatives, DWS will be monitoring and assessing student math growth to gauge how the new curriculum is helping to improve student math skills. For students at Discovery Woods School in need of remediation, the following systems support students beyond core instruction: Title I programming, AmeriCorps tutors, Response to Intervention (RtI) procedures, and Special Education services. DWS has a robust RtI program for students needing further academic support. DWS holds frequent RtI and Child Study meetings where teachers, special education staff, and special education professionals through the Paul Bunyan Cooperative (the school's special education service director) discuss, identify, and plan avenues of support for children with special needs. In addition, the school started the process this school year of moving toward the

Minnesota Multi-tiered System of Support (MnMTSS) model; the Assistant Director of the school attended the initial training & support sessions to move in this direction. DWS receives Title I funding to support children identified with needs for extra instruction each day, and the school staffs an Academic Interventionist to work with students using both push-in (tier 1) and pull-out (tier 2 or 3) assistance for math and literacy. DWS also hosts the following AmeriCorps positions to provide further academic support for those students identified through the academic screening process: Early Learning Corps tutor, K-3 Reading Corps tutor, and K-3 Math Corps tutor. For both remediation and acceleration, grades K-4 have a thirty-minute block of time called Differentiated Instruction (DI), within which data from screening and diagnostic assessments are used to determine which students need additional skill development in either math or reading and which students would benefit from ELA enrichment in the form of higher-level text reading. In 2nd through 4th grade, students who are ready for reading enrichment participate in reciprocal reading groups, which is an instructional approach where students participate in a shared novel reading experience in small groups and hold comprehension-based discussions each day about what they have read. All in all, DWS has made major progress in the academic programming at this school thanks to the knowledge-base, directives, and support provided by the Assistant Director who has worked at DWS as a classroom teacher, reading specialist, and curriculum lead and has been able to grasp where the school was struggling and put proper measures in place to make necessary changes for growth at a systemic level.

Staffing to Meet the Mission

Discovery Woods School staff choose to work in a small public Charter school with more limited pay and resources than regular school districts because they support the vision and mission of the school to provide a different choice for local families who may want a more individualized approach to learning that emphasizes personal growth and/or a school that emphasizes environmental stewardship. DWS does its best to hire Highly Qualified teachers. Although DWS espouses typical hiring procedures, such as job postings and interviews, the school is clear about emphasizing its focus to ensure that teachers who come on board align with the vision and mission of the school.



In the hiring process, DWS administrators look for evidence of strong teaching practices, classroom management skills, differentiated instruction knowledge, and experience with special education or other diverse learners. The school's Assistant Director guides teachers to: enhance the quality of classroom instruction through both management and pedagogical techniques, demonstrate growth through high-quality professional development, and implement and teach curricula that use evidence-based instructional routines and satisfy the Minnesota State Academic Standards. Teacher teams participate in professional learning communities, and response to intervention (RtI) teams meet regularly, and all-staff meetings are conducted monthly. Several inservice workshops occur throughout the school year, and those days are used to evaluate programs, discuss student needs, and plan strategies to ensure instruction is evidence-based to support student growth and development. Staff members also receive training, as needed, in behavior management, cultural competency, mental health awareness, English language learners, and differentiated instructional practices. DWS continually seeks avenues to attract and retain experienced, qualified teachers from diverse backgrounds. DWS administrators provide support and guidance for specific professional development opportunities to assist teachers in areas of need or interest. Observation and coaching methods are used to support teachers through reflection and goal-setting. Teachers are encouraged to become experts in a content area where they feel strongest, and for which they are most excited and interested, so that the

school can house content experts to mentor and provide support to other teachers in these areas.

Special Education

Discovery Woods has a dedicated special education staff, including special education teachers, special education paraprofessionals, a behavior interventionist, and a licensed speech pathologist. DWS works in partnership with the Paul Bunyan Special Education Cooperative of Brainerd, which provides the school with guidance and oversight. The Cooperative's Special Education Director is also DWS's designated Special Education Director. The Cooperative provides specialized services such as monitoring special education compliance, providing consultation, and scheduling observations by specialists in all areas, such as school psychology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, autism spectrum disorders, and applied behavioral analysis. The Cooperative participates regularly in child study meetings to assist in modifying existing plans for students already identified as needing special education services, identification of students who are good candidates for a special education evaluation, and consultation regarding compliance and parent relations. The special education staff attend training opportunities offered by the Paul Bunyan Service Cooperative and the Minnesota Department of Education to enhance their knowledge and skills in instructional and behavioral interventions and strategies. An evidence-based literacy intervention program called Passport to Reading is for those students receiving services for a specific learning disability in reading. Teachers receive copies of their students' Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals, and become 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 paraprofessionals are in the regular education classroom to provide the necessary modifications and accommodations to ensure successful learning in the classroom environment, as outlined in the student's IEP. A special education teacher or special education paraprofessional may sit with students to help implement the goals of an IEP. Full inclusion is the school's goal as long as the placement is appropriate and social and academic interactions with general education students are supported, and the learning needs of all students are still being met. For special education students, full inclusion provides the opportunity to observe appropriate behaviors and actions modeled by others. For general education students, full inclusion and work on joint projects with special education students fosters an appreciation and respect for everyone's unique characteristics and abilities. Teachers are knowledgeable about the needs of students with disabilities, informed of responsibilities for particular students, able to adhere to a student's program, and implement any modifications or accommodations in their classes in accordance with the students' IEPs.



Multilingual/English Learner Program

DWS's Multilingual Learners (MLLs)/English Language Learners (ELLs) are monitored via ACCESS for MLLs/ELLs standardized testing. Currently, there are no MLL/ELL students at DWS. As the need arises through home language surveys, intervention strategies will be employed for MLLs/ELLs who demonstrate a greater need than those typically outlined through programs such as Title I and RtI. Every effort will be made to meet the unique cultural needs of individual students meeting MLL/ELL qualifications. DWS provides multiple opportunities for structured and unstructured talk and allows students to collaborate for maximized language experiences.

DWS teachers also include open-ended questions in their lessons for MLLs/ELLs to provide avenues for dialogic learning.

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 2:50 pm to 5:30 pm. 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

Since the school's opening and through the 2024-25 school year, the preschool students have shared a classroom with the kindergarten students. This grouping of students is called "Children's House," as inspired by the Montessori education model. The ages of the children in the preschool are 33 months through age 5. The classroom is a "living room" for children. Instruction is individualized with a work plan for each student. After a lesson, the children choose their work from among the materials displayed on open shelves as they work in specifically designated work areas. In the Montessori preschool, students are supposed to receive direct instruction and then perform repeated practice of the learned skill with built-in error correction. Students use a variety of materials to accomplish their learning goals as dictated by an individualized learning plan.

6. Innovative Practices & Implementation

Several innovative instructional practices listed below support the mission of Discovery Woods School by putting into practice quality features of an elementary school that focus on the individualized needs of students.

Montessori Philosophy and Manipulatives

The philosophy of Maria Montessori is a component of the early childhood educational program at Discovery Woods School; however, the overarching emphasis is to meet the evidence-based instructional practices within the standards set forth by the Minnesota Department of Education. Aspects of the Montessori philosophy DWS espouses include freedom of movement, explicit instruction, repeated practice, multimodalities, immediate corrective feedback, and multi-age classrooms.

Differentiated Instructional Block

Discovery Woods School includes a Differentiated Instruction (DI) block for thirty minutes per day in grades K-4. Using assessment data, students are pulled out for interventions or receive targeted instruction in small groups for either remediation or enrichment needs. DWS uses a team approach during this time so that as many staff members as possible are available to support students' needs during this learning block.

Robust Intervention Programming

Discovery Woods School does not support using a "wait and see" model for students flagged on assessments as not meeting grade level benchmarks. DWS focuses on prevention over remediation and provides services to students as soon as they show a need for support. The school takes student skill gaps seriously; as such, students do not suffer the trauma and humiliation of school failure due to a lack of intervention. Since this approach was put into place several years ago, DWS has reduced the number of older students in need of academic remediation.

Successes and Challenges

Successes

DWS has been successful with a highly-trained staff member, who is the school's current Assistant Director, running the school-wide Title I program. This staff member teaches, models, and supports teachers as new techniques and practices are incorporated into core English language arts instructional time, as well as intervention time, based on what literacy-based research shows works best for students. DWS continues to utilize an Academic Interventionist and Math & Reading Corps tutors to help students develop math and reading skills, as well as using a curriculum to guide teachers as they work hard to improve the school's math and English language arts instructional program. DWS continues to use the Montessori philosophy, as appropriate, in several ways throughout different early education classroom settings, but the use of which has been greatly modified due to challenges within the Montessori educational program and materials, and the misalignment with required standards and assessments.



Challenges

One of DWS's main challenges is to hire and retain quality teachers due to salaries that cannot compete with main school districts in the area. DWS's main challenge moving forward is to increase enrollment, not only to serve more students but to be able to increase the budget for teacher salaries. The school is working on ways to increase enrollment through improved family and community relations, marketing, improved academic results, and building a transparent and welcoming school culture and community.

Strategic Plan

The current strategic plan completed its five-year cycle at the close of the 2024-25 school year. The goals on this strategic plan that have come to fruition include: establishing an Affiliated Building Company (ABC) to acquire the school building (in process and almost completed), creating a curriculum review cycle, and solidifying needed administrative roles (still in progress). In writing a renewed strategic plan for the next five years, some goals that need to remain a focal point of the school are redoing or enhancing the school playground, enhancing fundraising and marketing strategies, and increasing enrollment through the establishment of another preschool classroom. Goals for the new strategic plan are still in the board discussion and development phase.

7. Academic Performance: Goals & Benchmarks

Discovery Woods keeps students at the forefront of all decision-making sessions. Staff at Discovery Woods School go above and beyond in efforts to ensure the decisions being made are what is best for students. Assessment data is routinely analyzed to address the needs of students. FastBridge assessments are used for screening purposes three times each year to determine how many students are above, at, or below grade level in reading and math. All students identified as needing services based on the assessment data collected are provided with the proper intervention and support they need to make growth and build confidence as they develop their skills and move toward grade-level proficiency. In addition to Fastbridge assessments, diagnostic and localized assessments are used to determine student strengths and areas of need to provide the necessary enrichment or modifications for the classroom, small groups, or individualized instruction. With a robust intervention program, students in need of reading or math interventions

are served by one of the following: Assistant Director, Academic Interventionist, or the Early Learning, Reading and Math Corps tutors. The DWS schoolwide Title I program emphasizes whole school change initiatives to enhance learning success for all students. DWS delivers Environmental Education (EE) instruction, and the Environmental Education Coordinator provides materials, guidance, and feedback as teachers work to meet the goals in the Environmental Learning Plan (ELP). Students participate in a Student Showcase at the end of each semester to demonstrate one or more educational accomplishments they feel proud of from the semester. Preschool staff prepare students for kindergarten by building on previously learned and practiced skills to move them closer to Kindergarten readiness. DWS continues to work on attendance and works hard to keep the consistent attendance percentage above 90%. DWS will provide performance data for each goal to make it clear that progress is being made and standards are being met

PROGRESS ON OSPREY WILDS CONTRACTUAL ACADEMIC GOALS & CACR ALIGNMENT

Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness (CACR) Goal Areas:

- **Ready for Kindergarten [R4K]:** All students meet school readiness goals.
- **Achievement Gap Closure [AGC]:** All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.
- **Career and College Ready [CCR]:** All students are career- and college-ready before graduating from high school.
- **Graduate from High School [GRAD]:** All students graduate from high school.
- **Lifelong Learners [LL]:** All students are prepared to be lifelong learners.

Indicator 1: Mission Related Outcomes

Goal: Students at Discovery Woods School (DWS) will demonstrate growth in environmental stewardship as measured by environmental education projects.

CACR Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal:

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

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

Measure: 80% of students in grades K-6 will receive a passing score on a post-trip assessment after attending an Environmental Education field trip.

Result: 51/59 or 86.4% of students received a passing score on a post-trip assessment after attending an Environmental Education field trip.

Indicator 2: English Language Learners

Goal: To maintain an English Language Learner (ELL) Plan and remain abreast of the ACCESS assessment systems to be prepared if DWS serves ELL students in the future.

CACR 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: *Discovery Woods is not evaluated in this indicator area as the school does not serve a population of English Learners.*

Provide relevant ACCESS data for your school: *Discovery Woods has not served ELL students for several years.*

Percentage of students making progress towards English Language Proficiency	School
2024-25	NA

The average progress students made towards their individual targets	School
2024-25	NA

Indicator 3: Reading Growth and Progress

Goal: Students at DWS will demonstrate growth in reading as measured by state assessments and nationally normed assessments.

CACR 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.
- **Lifelong Learners [LL]:** All students are prepared to be lifelong learners.

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

Measures:

- **Measure 3.1:** *The overall percentage of students whose achievement level on the statewide assessments for reading (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) improved on statewide assessments is equal to or greater than the state.*
 - **Result:** *15.2% of DWS students improved on statewide assessments for reading in school year 2024-25 as compared to school year 2023-2024, while 18.7% of students in the state of Minnesota improved on statewide assessments in the same comparison year.*
- **Measure 3.2:** *The overall percentage of students whose achievement level decreased or stayed "does not meet standards" on statewide assessments for reading (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) is equal to or less than the state.*
 - **Result:** *48.5% of DWS students decreased or stayed "does not meet standards" on statewide assessments for reading in school year 2024-25 as compared to school year 2023-2024, while 39.4% of students in the state of Minnesota decreased or stayed "does not meet standards" in the same comparison year.*
- **Measure 3.3:** *The aggregate percentage of students in grades K-6 who meet or exceed their individual growth goal from fall to spring, as measured by the FastBridge assessment, will be at least 50%.*
 - **Result:** *61.3% of DWS students in grades K-6 met or exceeded their individual reading growth goal from fall to spring as measured by the FastBridge assessment in the 2024-2025 school year.*

Indicator 4: Math Growth and Progress

Goal: Students at DWS will demonstrate growth in math as measured by state assessments and

nationally normed assessments.

CACR 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.
- **Lifelong Learners [LL]:** All students are prepared to be lifelong learners.

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

- **Measure 4.1:** The overall percentage of students whose achievement level on the statewide assessments for math (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) improved on statewide assessments is equal to or greater than the state.
 - **Result:** *15.2% of DWS students improved on statewide assessments for math in school year 2024–25 as compared to school year 2023–2024, while 13.7% of students in the state of Minnesota improved on statewide assessments in the same comparison year.*
- **Measure 4.2:** The overall percentage of students whose achievement level decreased or stayed "does not meet standards" on statewide assessments for math (as measured by North Star Academic Progress) is equal to or less than the state.
 - **Result:** *48.5% of DWS students decreased or stayed "does not meet standards" on statewide assessments for reading in school year 2024–25 as compared to school year 2023–2024, while 44.1% of students in the state of Minnesota decreased or stayed "does not meet standards" in the same comparison year.*
- **Measure 4.3:** The aggregate percentage of students in grades K–6 who meet or exceed their individual growth goal from fall to spring, as measured by the FastBridge assessment, will be at least 50%.
 - **Result:** *68.8% of DWS students in grades K–6 met or exceeded their individual math growth goal from fall to spring as measured by the FastBridge assessment in the 2024–2025 school year.*

Indicator 5: Reading Proficiency

Goal: Students at DWS will demonstrate proficiency in reading as measured by state assessments.

CACR 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.
- **Lifelong Learners [LL]:** All students are prepared to be lifelong learners.

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

- **Measure 5.1:** The school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in grades 3–6 will be maintained or increase from the baseline proficiency index score (FY18, FY19, and FY22 baseline – 58.7) OR will be equal to or greater than that of the state for the same grades (3–6).

- **Result:** *41.8% of DWS students met or exceeded expectations on the statewide assessment for reading in school year 2024-25, as compared to 47.6% of students in the state of Minnesota in the same year.*
- **Measure 5.2:** The school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch group will be equal to or greater than that of the state for the same group and the same grades (3-6).
 - **Result:** *27.8% of DWS students who qualify for free & reduced lunch met or exceeded expectations on the statewide assessment for reading in school year 2024-25, as compared to 31% of students in the state of Minnesota in the same year.*
- **Measure 5.3:** The school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch group will be equal to or greater than that of the local district (Brainerd) for the same group and the same grades (3-6).
 - **Result:** *27.8% of DWS students who qualify for free & reduced lunch met or exceeded expectations on the statewide assessment for reading in school year 2024-25, as compared to 37.2% of students in ISD 181 in the same year.*
 - **Note:** This comparison is to all grades in ISD 181 and not just grades 3-6, as it is difficult to calculate this data with the information provided on the Minnesota Department of Education website.
- **Measure 5.4:** The school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Special Education group will be equal to or greater than that of the state for the same group and the same grades (3-6).
 - **Result:** *22.7% of DWS students who qualify for special education met or exceeded expectations on the statewide assessment for reading in school year 2024-25, as compared to 27.4% of students in the state of Minnesota in the same year.*
- **Measure 5.5:** The aggregate percentage of students in grades K-6 who are at low risk or above in FastBridge Reading assessment will be greater than 50%.
 - **Result:** *56.3% of DWS students in grades K-6 were at low risk or above as measured by the FastBridge reading assessment in the 2024-2025 school year.*

Indicator 6: Math Proficiency

Goal: Students at DWS will demonstrate proficiency in math as measured by state assessments.

CACR 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.
- **Lifelong Learners [LL]:** All students are prepared to be lifelong learners.

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

- **Measure 6.1:** The school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in grades 3-6 will be maintained or increase from the baseline proficiency index score (FY18, FY19, and FY22 baseline – 41.9) OR will be greater than that of the state for the same grades (3-6).
 - **Result:** *21.8% of DWS students met or exceeded expectations on the statewide assessment for math in school year 2024-25, as compared to 42.6% of students in*

the state of Minnesota in the same year.

- **Measure 6.2:** The school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch group will be equal to or greater than that of the state for the same group and the same grades (3-6).
 - **Result:** *19.4% of DWS students who qualify for free & reduced lunch met or exceeded expectations on the statewide assessment for math in school year 2024-25, as compared to 24.7% of students in the state of Minnesota in the same year.*
- **Measure 6.3:** The school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch group will be equal to or greater than that of the local district (Brainerd) for the same group and the same grades (3-6).
 - **Result:** *19.4% of DWS students who qualify for free & reduced lunch met or exceeded expectations on the statewide assessment for math in school year 2024-25, as compared to 28.7% of students in ISD 181 in the same year.*
 - **Note:** This comparison is to all grades in ISD 181 and not just grades 3-6, as it is difficult to calculate this data with the information provided on the Minnesota Department of Education website.
- **Measure 6.4:** The school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Special Education group will be equal to or greater than that of the state for the same group and the same grades (3-6).
 - **Result:** *13.6% of DWS students who qualify for special education met or exceeded expectations on the statewide assessment for math in school year 2024-25, as compared to 26.3% of students in the state of Minnesota in the same year.*
- **Measure 6.5:** The aggregate percentage of students in grades K-6 who are at low risk or above in FastBridge Math assessment will be at least 50%.
 - **Result:** *50% of DWS students in grades K-6 were at low risk or above as measured by the FastBridge math assessment in the 2024-2025 school year.*

Indicator 7: Science Proficiency

Goal: Students at DWS will demonstrate proficiency in science as measured by state assessments.

CACR 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.
- **Lifelong Learners [LL]:** All students are prepared to be lifelong learners.

Key Measures & Results for this Goal: *Provide data and an analysis of the school's performance on this goal, addressing key measures.*

- **Measure 7.1:** The school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in grade 5 will maintain or increase from the baseline proficiency index score (FY18, FY19, and FY22 baseline – 60.5) OR will be greater than that of the state for the same grade (5).
 - **Result:** *9.1% of DWS students were proficient on the statewide assessment for*

science in school year 2024–25, as compared to 26.5% of students in the state of Minnesota in the same year.

- **Measure 7.2:** The school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in grade 5 will be equal to or greater than that of the district for the same grade (5).
 - **Result:** *9.1% of DWS students were proficient on the statewide assessment for science in school year 2024–25, as compared to 28.1% of students at ISD 181 in the same year.*

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

Goal: Preschool students at DWS will demonstrate readiness for kindergarten as measured on a curriculum-based measure.

CACR Goal Areas Addressed by this Goal:

- **Ready for Kindergarten [R4K]:** All students meet school readiness goals.
- **Achievement Gap Closure [AGC]:** All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

- **Measure 8.1:** The aggregate percentage of preschool students who have mastered 50% of the Ready for Kindergarten skills on the school-implemented Parent Aware-approved assessment will be 85%.
 - **Result:** 54.5% of preschool students at Discovery Woods mastered 50% of the Ready for Kindergarten skills on the school-implemented Parent Aware-approved assessment

Indicator 9: Post-Secondary Readiness

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

Indicator 10: Engagement

Goal: Students at DWS will attend the school at high rates.

CACR 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.
- **Lifelong Learners [LL]:** All students are prepared to be lifelong learners.

Key Measures & Results for this Goal:

- **Measure 10.1:** The average of the school's annual consistent attendance rates will be equal to or greater than the state.
 - **Result:** 82.8% of DWS students had consistent attendance in the 2024–2025 school year, as compared to 75.5% for the state of Minnesota.

Federal and State Accountability

High Quality Charter School Status:

DWS has not been identified as a High Quality Charter School by MDE and has not received the CSP grant for the FY25 school year. DWS does not have current plans for expansion or replication.

ESSA Identification

DWS has not been identified to receive comprehensive support or additional targeted support for the FY25 school year.

ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC DATA

Reading Proficiency

Proficiency Category	Number of Students	Goal Met?
	11	
	37	
	18	
	16	
Total who met proficiency goal	45/80 = 56%	Yes

Reading Growth

Growth Category	Number of Students	Goal Met?
	14	
	41	
	13	
	13	
Total who met growth goal	49/80 = 61%	Yes

Math Proficiency

Proficiency Category	Number of Students	Goal Met?
	8	
	35	
	29	
	11	
Total who met proficiency goal	40/80 = 50%	Yes

Math Growth

Growth Category	Number of Students	Goal Met?
	6	
	50	
	8	
	17	
Total who met growth goal	55/80 = 69%	Yes

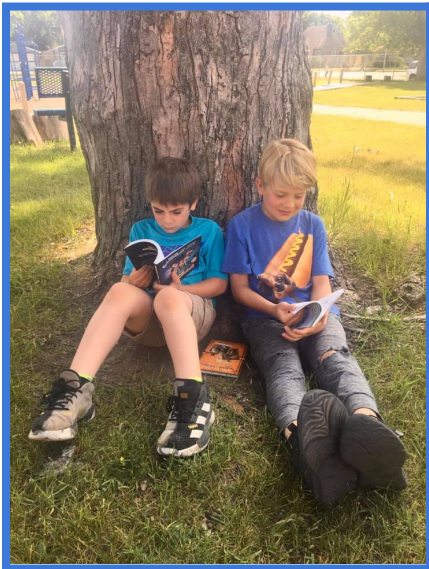
8. Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Strategic Plan Report

A. Assessing Student Progress and Instructional Strengths

Discovery Woods School uses the FastBridge assessment system to screen all students in grades K-6 in the fall, winter, and spring. Students in Kindergarten and first grade are assessed using the Early Reading English assessment and the Early Math assessment. Students in grades 2-6 are assessed using aReading and aMath. Additionally, students in grades 1-3 are assessed for oral reading fluency using a Curriculum Based Measurement in reading (CBMr). Further diagnostic assessments are given for foundational reading skills in grades K-2, including a phonological and phonemic awareness survey and a phonics survey. These diagnostic assessments serve to determine skills on which the majority of students need further instruction and those skills that should be targeted in intervention services. Students who are flagged as performing below the grade-level benchmarks in reading and math are provided with further instruction in tier 2 or tier 3 intervention settings, which may occur as push-in or pull-out services. DWS utilizes a Minnesota Reading Corps tutor and a Minnesota Math Corps tutor for tier II intervention services. DWS also employs an Academic Interventionist to provide tier I and tier II push-in and pull-out support for students performing below grade level.

DWS looks closely at data related to students who qualify for free and reduced lunch and also those in special education. To close the achievement gap, the school prioritizes providing support

and services to populations of students to promote growth and grade-level proficiency. DWS has noticed an uptick in reading scores as a result of efforts to close the achievement gap for students in these groups. In 2023, 38.5% of DWS students who qualified for free and reduced lunch met or exceeded standards on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment in reading, compared to 31.4% of students who qualified for free or reduced lunch in the entire state of Minnesota. In 2024, 41.9% of DWS students who qualified for free and reduced lunch met or exceeded standards on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment in reading, compared to 31.7% of students who qualified for free or reduced lunch in the entire state of Minnesota. Additionally, DWS has had several students who earlier qualified for special education services for a specific learning disability in reading who have been released from special education services because they achieved grade-level reading standards, which is a rare occurrence in the special education world. DWS seeks to continue efforts to close the achievement gap in reading through evidence-based instruction.



Discovery Woods uses Fastbridge local assessments as well as MCA assessment results to determine if a student needs accelerated learning opportunities or could fall under the category of “gifted and talented”. If a student scores at or above the 90th percentile on their FastBridge assessments and scores an “exceeds” mark on their MCAs, demonstrates consistent attendance, and has a work completion rate of 90% or higher, along with possessing the social and emotional maturity as recommended by their teacher, parent and the student themselves, DWS would begin looking at possibilities to either enhance their level of education by pushing into higher grade level instruction or being promoted a grade level. This is a team approach with the school teacher, school director, student, and their family. Some students may only demonstrate “giftedness” in one subject, and DWS would then have that student only push in on upper-grade-level instruction for that subject.

DWS’s Kindergarten early entrance policy states that if a parent considers their underage child to be ready for school, they need to meet the following requirements:

- The child must turn age 5 before October 31st.
 - Send a statutorily approved identifier for proof of age.
- Proof of Kindergarten Readiness from Brainerd Public Schools’ Early Childhood Assessment must be presented.
- A meeting must be held between the administration, the kindergarten teacher, the parent, and the student.
- Unanimous approval by the Administration and the Kindergarten teacher must be obtained
- A Kindergarten Application must be completed and submitted.
- A letter of recommendation is encouraged to be submitted from a preschool teacher or other group setting instructor.

Any student admitted under the early entrance into kindergarten at Discovery Woods is eligible under this guideline to enter 1st grade with satisfactory completion of kindergarten requirements.

For the past four years, the school has been implementing an evidence-based ELA curriculum in grades 1-6. The school just completed its second year of implementing a new math curriculum in grades K-6, for which most teachers were provided training. The Montessori philosophy is incorporated into several areas of the academic program, and is especially prevalent in the Children's House classrooms. The Assistant Director, along with teaching staff, reviews the success of the curriculum and makes adjustments to ensure student success.

DWS works hard to create an equitable environment for all students by using evidence-based curricula and instructional practices, along with differentiated learning tasks and maximized intervention support. Teachers take advantage of professional development opportunities regarding equitable educational practices (like ensuring all students can read), and participate in cultural competency training, which the school provides on a three-year cycle, to meet teacher relicensure requirements. DWS monitors data to identify gaps and then meets to discuss how to address these gaps by using interventionists, specialists, and tutors, as well as other methods of instruction. The changes made within the ELA curriculum and literacy intervention program have resulted in equitable access to reading for students from lower socioeconomic households.

The school's Assistant Director collects and disseminates data, and schedules and guides all student intervention services. She also helps mentor classroom teachers and provides push-in instructional support for ELA and math. AmeriCorps tutors and an Academic Interventionist help provide interventions in math and reading. Teachers use the state standards to guide implementation and further development of curriculum and instruction for students. The formal and informal assessments performed in class are based on this instruction. Students are screened using the FastBridge assessment in the fall, winter, and spring. The data from this screening is analyzed to look at both individual students and classroom trends to



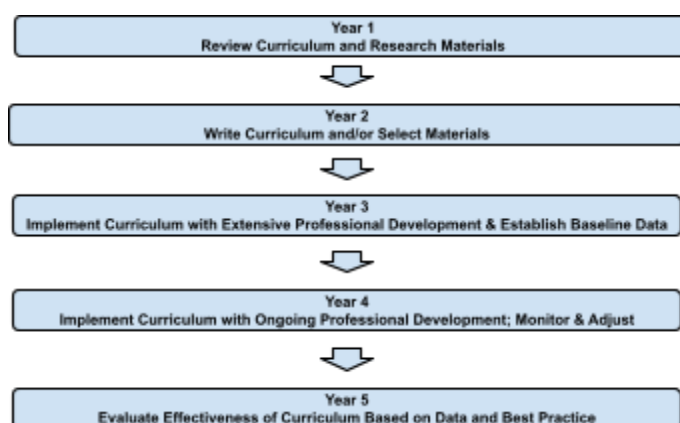
determine intervention groups and focus areas in core instruction. All primary students (K-3) are given diagnostic assessments in phonics and phonemic awareness as part of the Title I School-Wide reading program. A School-Wide Title I Reading Plan is in place to support those students at Discovery Woods School who are not meeting state standards and who are not reading at grade level. The Discovery Woods Director, Assistant Director, Special Educator, and Classroom Teachers meet regularly to discuss Response to Intervention (RtI) Plans for students who need additional academic support. Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings focus on core areas of instruction in ELA and math. The Assistant Director leads 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 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-3) to prevent later reading difficulties, and to remediate reading difficulties in older students (grades 4-6). The reading goals outlined in the Title I narrative are measured using FastBridge screening results, as well as phonics and phonemic awareness diagnostic surveys. 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 evident, adjustments to the intervention are made, and the intervention continues 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 Rtl team and the student's parents or guardians.

B. Curriculum and Instruction Review System

Curriculum Review Cycle

As a public Charter School, the Minnesota State Standards are center stage in the curriculum and instructional review process. The DWS curriculum review cycle is ongoing and used to evaluate alignment of standards with the curriculum, review common assessments, and contribute to the overall mapping of the school's curriculum. A curriculum review cycle is in place to ensure the effectiveness of instruction and curriculum. Additionally, this cycle serves as a way to hold school leadership and teachers accountable for student learning and closing the achievement gap. In addition to viewing curriculum as a way to meet the majority of students' needs, DWS looks closely at data related to students of underrepresented populations, those who qualify for free and reduced lunch and those who participate in special education. DWS continues its efforts to close the achievement gap through evidence-based curriculum and instruction in all tiers of instruction.



Year 1: Review Curriculum & Research Materials – Are students learning? What are others doing, and what do the experts say?

In Year 1, the Director and classroom teachers (hereafter referred to as simply the “team”) will continue to look for trends in student-achievement data and plan for ways to make improvements. The team will also begin to look at research, as well as what the experts say about best practice in this content area.

Guiding questions include:

- What support are teachers finding they need, and how can we provide that support?
- Is our action plan resulting in increased student achievement?
- What is going well, and how can we replicate that success?
- What concerns do we have about student learning, and how can we effectively address those concerns?
- What changes need to be made to our curriculum maps and/or pacing guides?
- What does research indicate works in this area, and what do the experts say is best practice in this area?

Tasks may include:

- Identify areas in which teachers need support and provide the necessary support.
- Using assessment data, identify areas of strength and areas of concern.
- Hypothesize as to why strengths and weaknesses exist in the assessment data.
- Use the hypothesis to develop a plan to replicate success and improve areas of concern.

- Make necessary changes to curriculum maps and/or pacing guides.
- Examine research about teaching and learning, and identify what is considered best practice in this content area.

Products may include:

- Action plans for providing requested support to teachers.
- Action plans for replicating successes and improving areas of concern.
- Revised curriculum maps and/or pacing guides.
- A summary of research and best practice in this content area.

Year 2: Write Curriculum and/or Select Materials – *Which materials will best fit our needs?*

In Year 2, the team will analyze materials, coordinate possible piloting of materials in classrooms, and/or develop curriculum materials. If materials are being piloted or developed, they will be measured against a set of evaluation criteria that was developed by the team in Year 1. By the end of Year 2, the team will make a recommendation to the administration. The team will also continue to monitor and adjust according to student achievement data.

Guiding questions include:

- Are our students meeting our achievement expectations?
- Which curriculum material best fits the criteria we have established?
- How does the material we are creating fit the criteria we have established?
- How does the piloted or developed material enhance student learning compared to the materials the district is currently using?
- What recommendations can we make to the administration?

Tasks may include:

- Examine student achievement data and identify trends.
- Carry out the piloting plan established.
- Develop curriculum materials where needed.
- Make a materials purchase recommendation to the administration.

Products may include:

- Action plans for replicating successes and improving areas of concern.
- Completed pilot materials evaluation criteria forms.
- Completed general standards alignment form for each program recommended for purchase or development.
- A written recommendation for the chosen curriculum materials.

Year 3: Implement Curriculum with Extensive Professional Development and Establish Baseline Data – *What does it look like in the classroom?*

In Year 3, the team will put the implementation plan from Year 2 into action and monitor and adjust the plan as needed. The Director will be available to assist teachers with the implementation of the new materials.

Guiding questions include:

- What support are teachers finding they need, and how can we provide that support?
- What parts of the implementation plan are working?
- What parts of the implementation plan are not working, and what can we do to fix those parts?

Tasks may include:

- Identify areas in which teachers need support and provide the necessary support.
- Identify areas where the implementation plan is working.
- Identify areas where the implementation plan is not working.
- Determine why the problems with the implementation plan exist and develop a plan to solve those problems.

Products may include:

- Action plans for providing requested support to teachers.
- Documentation showing what parts of the implementation plan are working and which parts are not, and an action plan for improving the implementation.

Year 4: Implement Curriculum with Ongoing Professional Development; Monitor and Adjust – *How well is it working, and how can we make it better?*

In Year 4, the team will determine the effectiveness of the new curriculum and make any necessary changes to curriculum maps, instruction, assessment, and pacing. The team will also continue to support teachers in their second year of using the new curriculum materials.

Guiding questions include:

- What changes need to be made to our curriculum maps and/or pacing guides?
- What support are teachers finding they need, and how can we provide that support?
- What adjustments need to be made to instruction to make this curriculum material more effective for students?
- What do student achievement results indicate about the effectiveness of this curriculum material?
- Are the revisions we made to the implementation plan working?

Tasks may include:

- Make necessary changes to curriculum maps and/or pacing guides.
- Identify areas in which teachers need support and provide the necessary support.
- Identify any adjustments to instruction that are needed, and develop a plan for making those adjustments.
- Identify areas where the implementation plan revisions are working and not working.
- Determine why the problems with the revised implementation plan exist and develop a plan to solve those problems.

Products may include:

- Revised curriculum maps and/or pacing guides.
- Action plans for providing requested support to teachers.
- An action plan for making adjustments to instruction.
- An action plan for improving the parts of the revised implementation plan that are not working.

Year 5: Evaluate the Effectiveness of the Curriculum Based on Data and Best Practice

In Year 5, the Director will continue to support teachers and make adjustments to curriculum maps and/or pacing guides. Just like in other Year 4, time will be focused on how the curriculum/material is affecting student learning. The team will continue to identify areas of success and areas of concern, and the team will develop an improvement plan.

Guiding questions include:

- What support are teachers finding they need, and how can we provide that support?
- Is our action plan resulting in increased student achievement?
- What seems to be going well, and how can we replicate that success?
- What concerns do we have about student learning, and how can we effectively address those concerns?
- What changes need to be made to our curriculum maps and/or pacing guides?

Tasks may include:

- Identify areas in which teachers need support and provide necessary support.
- Using assessment data, identify areas of strength and areas of concern.
- Hypothesize as to why strengths and weaknesses exist in the assessment data.
- Use the hypothesis to develop a plan to replicate success and improve areas of concern.
- Make necessary changes to curriculum maps and/or pacing guides.

Products may include:

- Action plans for providing requested support to teachers.
- Action plans for replicating successes and improving areas of concern.
- Revised curriculum maps and/or pacing guides.

Teacher Evaluation

Formal Teacher observations are performed by the Assistant Director one to three times per year. Teachers in their first 3 years of teaching, or those needing support or improvement, are in crucial areas and receive at least three formal observations, while teachers in year 4 or above who do not show evidence of needing support or improvement are formally observed at least once. Informal observations are also performed by the Assistant Director, which includes a feedback form provided to the teacher.

The framework for DWS's teacher evaluation consists of:

- An annual evaluation process, including formal and informal observations
- Professional Learning Communities participation
- Knowledge of and accountability to student proficiency measures
- Knowledge of and accountability for student growth measures
- Professional growth goals with coaching & support

The education staff is responsible for:

- Measuring and documenting student growth
- Measuring and documenting student engagement explicitly aligned with the elements of their content-specific curriculum
- Participation and documentation of the following:
 - Annual goal setting based on school-level goals
 - Evaluation meetings 1-3 times per year
 - Reflection and personal goals for development
 - Self-Evaluations

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 DWS ensures exceptional achievement. It is the Executive Director's responsibility to champion staff, 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, and provide an opportunity via self-assessment for the Executive Director to reflect on his/her performance

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EVALUATION TIMELINE

August

- Jointly establish the Executive Director's goals
 - Included but limited to: Areas defined in job description
- Collectively establish the 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
- The Board conducts a 360 evaluation in accordance with the Board procedure
- Executive Director and Board summarize assessment results
- Jointly establish and adjust the 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 is 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.

C. Improving Instruction and Student Achievement

As addressed in section 8B, the school uses a curriculum review cycle to support and improve teaching and learning that is aligned with the comprehensive achievement and civic readiness plan. However, as the school is in a transitional period with leadership, strategic planning, and moving from the former World's Best Workforce plan to the current CACR plan requirements, the specific alignments between the school's comprehensive, long-term strategic plan and the CACR plan will be updated in the upcoming 2025-26 school year. In general, the school's curriculum and instructional practices are thoroughly discussed in section 5 – Educational Approach & Curriculum, section 7 – Academic Performance: Goals & Benchmarks, and section 8A – Assessing Student Progress and Instructional Strengths. School leadership will focus on aligning the school's academic goals from exhibit g with the school's strategic plan and the CACR plan requirements to ensure that strategies are streamlined for proper implementation and evaluation purposes.

D. Equitable Distribution of Teachers

As outlined in section 11 regarding staffing, Discovery Woods School's hiring process follows a basic hiring procedure that involves a minimum posting of two weeks and a minimum of one interview with at least 2 members of the staff, as able, and required background checks after the offer but prior to the hiring being approved by the DWS Board of Directors. DWS does not often hire out-of-field placements, other than for special education positions in which other qualified applicants do not accept the position. DWS is situated in a region of the state without a high population of People of Color, so it is difficult to balance our teaching staff to represent various races and cultures. However, DWS does hire and retain many paraprofessional staff members who have American Indian heritage. The school is currently working with two American Indian paraprofessionals who are pursuing further education to seek advancement in the school. As far as equitable distribution of teachers, DWS is a very small district with one school building, so teacher placement options are limited.

	Licensed Educators (% of total)	3+ Years' Experience (% of total)	Working in the Area of Licensure (% of total)	Advanced Degrees (% of total)	Racially / Ethnically Diverse (% of total)
Teachers	100%	80%	90%	20%	0%
Admin Staff	50%	50%	50%	50%	0%

E. Education Effectiveness Practices

DWS monitors data to identify gaps, and staff meet to discuss how to address noticeable gaps by using interventionists, specialists, and tutors, as well as differentiated methods of instruction. The changes made within the ELA curriculum and literacy intervention program have resulted in equitable access to reading for students from lower socioeconomic households. DWS holds frequent Response to Intervention (RtI) and Child Study meetings at which teachers, special education staff, and special education professionals through the Paul Bunyan Cooperative (the school's special education service director) discuss, identify, and plan avenues of support for children with special needs. In addition, the school started the process during the 2024–25 school year of moving toward the Minnesota Multi-tiered System of Support (MnMTSS) model; the school's Assistant Director attended the initial training & support sessions to move in this direction. DWS receives Title I funding to support children identified with needs for extra instruction each day, and the school staffs an Academic Interventionist to work with students using both push-in (tier 1) and pull-out (tier 2 or 3) assistance for math and literacy. DWS also hosts the following AmeriCorps positions to provide further academic support for those students identified through the academic screening process: Early Learning Corps tutor, K-3 Reading Corps tutor, and K-3 Math Corps tutor. For both remediation and acceleration, grades K-4 have a thirty-minute block of time called Differentiated Instruction (DI), within which data from screening and diagnostic assessments are used to determine which students need additional skill development in either math or reading and which students would benefit from ELA enrichment in the form of higher-level text reading. In 2nd through 4th grade, students who are ready for reading enrichment participate in reciprocal reading groups, which is an instructional approach where students participate in a shared novel reading experience in small groups and hold comprehension-based discussions each day about what they have read. All in all, DWS has made major progress in academic programming thanks to the knowledge-base, directives, and support provided by the Assistant Director who has previously worked at DWS as a classroom teacher, reading specialist, and curriculum lead and has been able to determine where the school was struggling and put proper measures in place to make necessary changes for growth at a systemic level.

The school's ELA curriculum, Bookworms, for grades 2nd-6th has incorporated culturally sensitive books and provides teacher support for discussing complex topics, reflecting a commitment to having young readers see themselves in their books and understand diverse cultures through texts. The curriculum also includes differentiated instruction to support diverse learners and focuses on evidence-based routines to promote reading achievement across different student subgroups, as supported by research from the University of Delaware. Key aspects of the Bookworms curriculum that demonstrate antiracist and culturally sustaining principles include:

- Culturally diverse literature: The curriculum has been revised to include a wider range of books that reflect diverse cultures and histories, such as Native American tales, West African stories, and biographies of important figures.
- Increased representation: The revisions are part of an ongoing effort to ensure children can



- see themselves in their reading materials, which is crucial for keeping them engaged.
- Teacher support: New versions of the curriculum provide extensive support for teachers to help them discuss complex and sensitive issues that may arise from the diverse texts included.
- Differentiated instruction: Bookworms uses a diagnostically driven approach to differentiation, tailoring instruction to meet the specific learning needs of individual students, which has been shown to be effective for various student subgroups, including those in special education and English language learner programs.
- Evidence-based instruction: The curriculum is built on research and uses evidence-based routines to support reading and writing across different student populations, including those who struggle with reading.

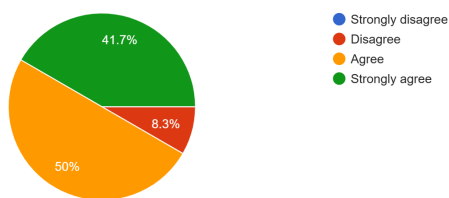
Additionally, the school has a classroom library policy that states the following: *Each classroom will have books that represent diverse groups and individuals, including, but not limited to: Indigenous Cultures of the Americas, Black Americans, Asian Americans, and people from different areas of the world who represent different cultures, religions, and traditions. Different family organizations and structures, and characters that represent both male and female likeness, should also be fairly represented.*

9. Student & Parent Satisfaction

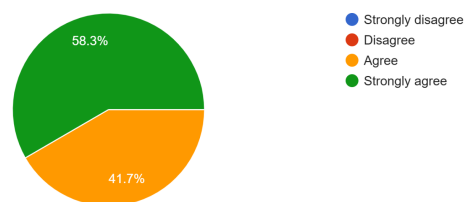
The following graphs demonstrate the results of the family and the student surveys regarding the categories of safety, academics, teaching staff, and recommending the school to others. Please note that the percentage of families who responded to the family survey is very low. The responses for the student survey are mostly from the school's older student body, as a better method to address students in younger grades needs to be developed. As the graphs show, most families and students are satisfied in all categories. However, there is room for improvement in the category of safety, as the school board, leadership, and staff do not want even one student to feel unsafe at school. Additionally, the school should investigate why students would not recommend DWS to other kids.

Results of the parent survey:

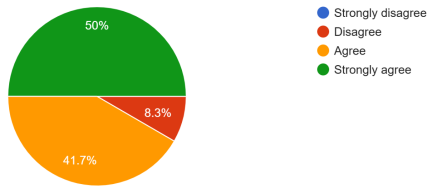
My child is safe at this school.
12 responses



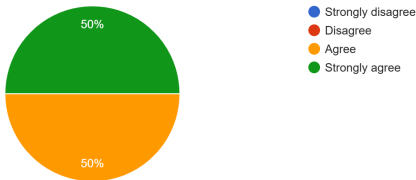
This school has appropriate academic expectations for my children.
12 responses



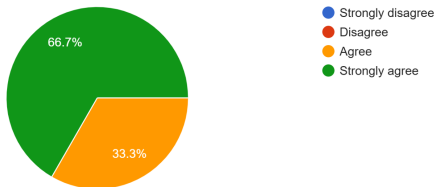
This school meets the academic needs of my children.
12 responses



My children have highly effective teachers at this school.
12 responses

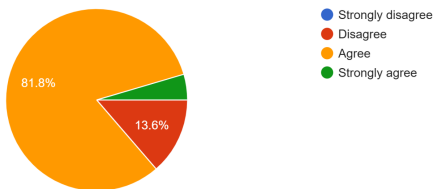


I would recommend this school to other families.
12 responses

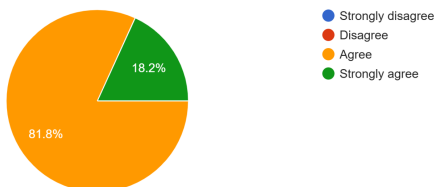


Results of the student survey:

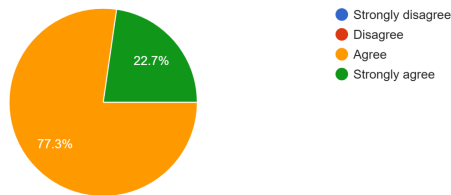
I feel safe at this school.
22 responses



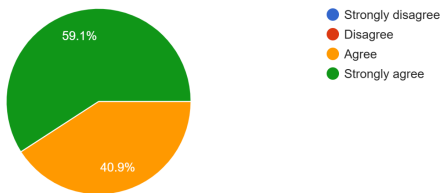
This school has appropriate academic expectations for me.
22 responses



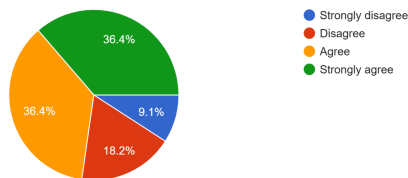
I am learning what I need at Discovery Woods.
22 responses



I learn well from my teacher.
22 responses



I would recommend this school to other kids.
22 responses



10. Environmental Education

As guided by the mission of the school's Charter Authorizer, Osprey Wilds, whose mission is to instill a connection and commitment to the environment in people of all communities through experiential learning, Discovery Woods School incorporates environmental and nature-based education throughout the weeks, months, and each semester. Osprey Wilds defines environmental education as the implementation of values and strategies that foster learning and environmentally literate people who create healthy outcomes for individuals, communities, and the Earth. The overarching goal of environmental education is an environmentally literate community, within which people can work individually and collectively toward sustaining a healthy natural environment to create a healthy planet where all people live in balance with the Earth. DWS works to accomplish this overarching goal both through informal guidance, like encouraging teachers to bring learning to an outside space for any subject area, and formal measures, which are outlined below.

Although the school faces challenges due to staff comfort level with managing outdoor learning or a lack of easy access to any forest, prairie, or wetland space, DWS incorporates environmental education and outdoor learning in multiple ways throughout the year. To accommodate teachers



and students who may feel more comfortable in an organized outdoor learning space, the school has an outdoor classroom space in the garden area, which has convertible benches and shade umbrellas for classes to use. On a more formal level, environmental education at DWS looks and



feels different within the various developmental groupings throughout the building. In the younger groupings – preschool through Kindergarten – environmental education looks like weather investigation, sensory play with outdoor materials, visits to the garden and local park, as well as seasonal explorations with pumpkins and leaves in the fall and life cycles in the spring. Additionally, Kindergarten students participate in a seasonal exploration of one tree throughout the school year, during which time they explore weather patterns, seasonal changes, and compare the needs of trees to their own needs or the needs of other living things. The school's first and second-grade teacher is the champion of moving the classroom outside; she tracks how many hours her class spends in outdoor learning, and the final count was 155 hours

outside during the 2024–25 school year! At the 1st–2nd grade level, students also take a field trip to the planetarium to explore how the movement of Earth in the solar system affects climate and weather patterns. Students in these grades also participate in a long-term animal project, in which they research, write, and build a diorama to demonstrate knowledge about a self-chosen animal. 1st–2nd graders extend the tree investigation that they did in Kindergarten to include further investigations about how seasonal changes impact a tree and the creatures that depend on that tree. In the 3rd–4th-grade classrooms, students work through a long-term ecosystem unit. They also experience a unit in which they learn about pumpkins and engineer a container to protect a pumpkin when dropped from a second-floor window at the school (called the “pumpkin drop”). At the 5th–6th grade level, students do a renewable energy-based project every year that includes group research and a presentation. The 6th graders participate in the school's Green Team and are responsible for educating all students in the school about recycling, and they also collect the school's recycling each week. This oldest group of students also attends an environmental education-based field trip every year to the Deep Portage Learning Center.

11. Governance & Management

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Discovery Woods School Board holds regular board meetings monthly during the calendar year. The Board is composed of 5 voting members: 2 teachers and 3 parents; the board had 2 community members previously who could no longer serve on the board. The DWS Board meetings are conducted with Robert's Rules of Order and comply with Minnesota Open Meeting Law. Board members can access meeting materials through the DWS shared Board Google Drive folder. The agenda is prepared and posted online, and physically five business days before the regular board meeting. After a board meeting, all meeting minutes are posted on the DWS website. The Board reviews the school policies, financial statements, and operational data regularly during meetings. The Board works to ensure that the school embodies the vision, meets its mission, adheres to Authorizer goals, provides financial stability, and maintains positive staff, student, and family relations.

Board Membership Table:

Member Name	Board Position	Affiliation	Most Recent Date Elected	Most Recent Date Seated	Term End Date	Email Address
Emma Needham	Chair	Parent	May 23, 2024	July 25, 2024	June 2027	eneedhamboard@discoverywoods.com
Dawn Snook	Vice Chair	Teacher	May 22, 2023	July 31, 2023	June 2026	dsnookboard@discoverywoods.com
Rebekah Kent-Ehlebracht	Treasurer	Parent	May 22, 2023	July 31, 2023	June 2026	rkentboard@discoverywoods.com
Ashley Gangestad	Secretary	Teacher	May 22, 2023	July 31, 2023	June 2026	agangestadboard@discoverywoods.com
Matt Hastert	Member	Parent	May 22, 2023	July 31, 2023	June 2026	mhastertboard@discoverywoods.com
Kristi Crocker	Ex-Officio	School Director	NA	NA	NA	kcrockerboard@discoverywoods.com
Kara DeVriendt	Ex-Officio	Interim Director	NA	NA	NA	kdevriendt@discoverywoods.com

Board Training and Development

The Board participates in board training through the Minnesota School Boards Association, the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools, Osprey Wilds, and Creative Planning annually. At Board work sessions throughout the year, the Board discusses and plans additional training and development needs. The Board regularly reads and discusses OW's Sounding Board as training topics. DWS is a member of the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MACS), which provides the Board with another source for information, training, and development. Each new Board member moves through an orientation process, which includes sitting in to observe a board meeting the month before being seated.

Initial Training

The current director is reporting on the information that was able to be found from the departing director, who was in charge until May 2025. As such, anything left blank is a result of the proper documentation not being located for specific trainings or otherwise.

Training Prior to Being Seated				
Board Member Name	Original Date Seated	Board's Role & Responsibilities	Open Meeting Law*	Data Practices Law*
Emma Needham	July 20, 2020	8/12/20 OW		
Dawn Snook	July 31, 2023	7/8/2023 OW	12/2/24 OW	11/8/24 OW
Rebekah Kent-Ehlebracht	July 31, 2023	11/4/23 OW	11/4/23 OW	11/8/24 OW
Ashley Gangestad	July 31, 2023	9-7-23 OW	1/23/25 OW	
Matt Hastert	July 31, 2023	11/4/23 OW	11/4/23 OW	

New Board Member Training				
Board Member Name	Original Date Seated	Board's Role & Responsibilities Regarding Student Success, Achievement, and Performance*	Employment Policies & Practices	Public School Funding & Financial Management
Emma Needham	July 20, 2020		11/18/2020 OW	8/11/2020 OW
Dawn Snook	July 31, 2023		7/16/2023 OW	11/7/2023 OW
Rebekah Kent-Ehlebracht	July 31, 2023		11/4/23 OW	11/4/23 OW
Ashley Gangestad	July 31, 2023		12-15-23 OW	12-15-23 OW
Matt Hastert	July 31, 2023		11/4/23 OW	11/4/23 OW

Annual Assessment of Training Needs

The DWS board does an annual self-evaluation to determine areas of strength and weakness in the three fiduciary duties of a non-profit board—the Duty of Care, the Duty of Loyalty, and the Duty of Obedience. Board members are invested in and continue to incorporate training to develop knowledge in the areas of finance, operations, and legal compliance. One of the goals board members had in common was to become more familiar with school and board policies. Because of this goal, the board has created and is moving through an initial policy review cycle. Another goal cited by board members that has not yet come to fruition is to be more involved in marketing and fundraising, to help support the improvement of family and community involvement, to increase school offerings, and to attract more families and students to enroll in Discovery Woods School.

Annual Training

Annual Training – FY25			
Board Member Name	Date of Training	Training Title or Topic	Presenter or Trainer
Ashley Gangestad	1/23/25	What Boards Need to Know About Public School Funding & Financial Management What Boards Need to Know About Their Roles & Responsibilities What Boards Need to Know About Employment Practices & Policies	Osprey Wilds

Dawn Snook	11/4/24	What Boards Need to Know About the Charter School Contract	Osprey Wilds
	11/5/24	What Boards Need to Know About Their Roles & Responsibilities	
	12/12/24	Building Your School Budget What Boards Need to Know About Public School Funding & Financial Management	
Rebekah Kent-Ehlebracht	11/8/24	What Boards Need to Know About Public School Funding & Financial Management What Boards Need to Know About Open Meeting Law What Boards Need to Know About Their Roles & Responsibilities Building Your School Budget What Boards Need to Know About Employment Practices & Policies What Boards Need to Know About the Charter School Contract	Osprey Wilds

Annual Assessment of the Board's Performance

MANAGEMENT

The Board oversees operations through a finance and a management report produced by Creative Planning every month at the board meeting. DWS is supported by contracted consultants to provide additional administrative functions:

- Mindy Wachter and Kelly Rimpila, Creative Planning, Financial Management & Accounting
- Jennifer Johnson, Paul Bunyan Educational Cooperative (PBEC), Special Education Director

Discovery Woods School has a policy in place for the evaluation of the school's Executive Director. The purpose and objective of this policy is to ensure that the Executive Director is responsible for student growth and grade-level proficiency. The evaluation process allows the Board to engage formally with its Executive Director about performance strengths and challenges and to discuss professional development opportunities. In August of each year, the Director and the Board jointly

establish goals and a professional development plan. In January of each year, there is a 6-month progress check-in, and goals are adjusted if needed. The Board sends out a staff survey to obtain feedback about the performance of the Director and the school as a whole. Then, at the May board meeting, the Director completes a self-assessment, the board evaluates the self-assessment along with the staff survey, and together the Board and Director summarize the assessment results to celebrate success and determine necessary adjustments moving forward.

ADMINISTRATORS

Kristi Crocker, Executive Director (resigned in early May 2025)

Kristi Crocker has been with DWS since August 2012 in different positions. She is currently the Executive Director and works with Creative Planning on the day-to-day finances. The director's duties include managing the budget and finance along with Creative Planning, preparing board meeting packets, applying for Title grants, attending special education meetings, reporting to MDE and the authorizer, managing HR and personnel issues, improving parent involvement, and overseeing other areas like facilities construction, maintenance, insurance, conducting staff meetings, sending out RFPs for services, and acting as the MARSS Coordinator. Kristi obtained her Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in finance at Bemidji State University in December of 2022.

Name of School Leader: Kristi Crocker
Date board approved professional development plan: Unknown
Training Topic & Date
August 14 Assured Partners Employment Law
August 14 Implementing the Science of Reading: Lessons Learned from Chisago Lakes ISD
August 14 2024-25 VPK/SRP Program Implementation for Funded Programs
August 27 PELSB: You're invited to meet new Data, Compliance (STAR), and Permission Specialists
August 28, 2024 Title IX Compliance Training
September 17 MACS: Charter School Staff Compensation Conversation with PELSB
September 24 MACS: AI Training w/ Jon Fila
October 2 Early Learning Scholarships Provider Information Session: Greater Twin Cities United Way
October 3 American Indian Education Field Hearing
October 15 Pathway II Entering Payment Requests in ELSA
October 17 OW Community of Practice: Title IX
October 25 MACS Virtual Grassroots Kickoff
November 8 School Law Seminar - Ratwik Law
November 15 MACS MDE Data Practices & Open Meeting Law Training
November 19 Growing Through Grief: Helping children and youth deal with loss in schools
December 10 MARSS University - MARSS 109 - Changes for next year
December 12 Conversation with PELSB Around Meeting Your Recruitment and Retention Needs
January 16 OW's School Leader Community of Practice
January 24 Q&A with PELSB and MACS
February 27 Edumonics-Georgetown University - A tough budget season: What you need to know
March 7 MDE LAN - MN Language Access Training
March 20 Embracing Minds of All Kinds Series: Session 1 Behavior as Communication: Supporting Executive Function to Foster Positive Behavior
March 27 Supporting the Supporters: Staff Mental Health & Well-Being

April 1 OW's – MnEEP: Creating Safe & Supportive Schools for Immigrant & English Learner (EL) Students
April 8 MN PBIS Virtual PD: Tier 1 partnerships to promote positive behavior
April 9 Building Workforce Resilience: Reflective Practice Supervision to Enhance Individual and Organizational Health
April 9 NAPCS – Navigating the Supreme Court Case: Strategy and Potential Impact
April 10 Embracing Minds of All Kinds Series: Session 2 Beyond Behavior Charts: Building UDL-Friendly Classrooms to Support Diverse Learners
April 16 MDE's Special Education New-Year Grab Bag
April 16 Supporting School Climate & Culture, Topic: Cultivate Compassion
April 23 MARSS University: MARSS 212 – Voluntary Pre-kindergarten and School Readiness Plus Reporting
April 24 MARSS University: MARSS 112 – Voluntary/ECSE Dual Reporting
April 30 Special Education – MEGS
Total Hours: 31

Kara DeVriendt, Assistant Director (Interim Director starting in May 2025)

Kara DeVriendt has worked as an educator for over 20 years. She has been with Discovery Woods School since the 2017-2018 school year. She worked as a lower elementary classroom teacher for two years, then moved into a Title I Reading Specialist position, then into the role of Curriculum & Intervention Coordinator, and is currently the Assistant Director. This current position oversees all aspects of curriculum and intervention, including coaching teachers, the academic interventionist, and Reading & Math Corps tutors; teacher and teacher assistant evaluations, curriculum guidance, development, and modeling; teaching English language arts to 2nd grade students, coordinating the environmental education program, leading the response to intervention initiative, implementing Fastbridge and diagnostic assessments, creating data reports for teachers and the school board, sharing information with families concerning student progress; scheduling all school interventions; reporting for the READ Act; reporting to the Authorizer about EE and academic data, developing and leading Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) for teachers; overseeing and communicating with stakeholders regarding the Schoolwide Title I program; running an after school book club. Kara has a Bachelor's degree in liberal arts & science (English & Environmental Studies), a Master of Science degree in Sustainable Community Development, and a Master of Arts degree in Education with an emphasis in Literacy Curriculum & Instruction. She holds teaching licensures in 5-12 Communication Arts & Literature and K-12 reading. She is also certified through the Center for Effective Reading Instruction (CERI) as a Structured Literacy Dyslexia Interventionist. She has taken many other trainings, particularly in the area of literacy, such as Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) and CORE Online Literacy & Language Academy (OL&LA) facilitator training.

Professional Development Goals/Areas of Focus for 2024-25:

- Facilitate PLCs for teachers taking the CORE OL & LA training as part of the READ Act requirements
- Participate in the Early Childhood LETRS training, along with the PreK Lead teacher, to help support and guide needed changes in our preschool literacy program.
- Support the PreK Lead teacher as she implements a new assessment system (Teaching Strategies GOLD) per Voluntary PreK (VPK) requirements.
- Supervise and coach the school's new Early Learning Corps tutoring position, along with the school's Math & Reading Corps tutors
- Participate in MnMTSS training through the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to further develop our response to intervention efforts and ensure a cohesive and effective schoolwide system of support

Name of School Leader: Kara DeVriendt
Date board approved professional development plan: NA
Training Topic & Date
Early Childhood LETRS (Lexia) - 22 hours MnMTSS training (MDE) - 15 hours District Literacy Lead Network (Sourcewell) DAC Network (Sourcewell) Curriculum Coordination Network (Sourcewell) Local Certified Facilitator Community of Practice (Sourcewell)

12. Staffing

Discovery Woods School's hiring process follows a basic hiring procedure that involves a minimum posting of two weeks and a minimum of one interview with at least 2 members of the staff, as able, and required background checks after the offer but prior to the hiring being approved by the DWS Board of Directors. DWS ensures 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. DWS holds workshops that will help staff with environmental initiatives and understand the mission of the school. Since it is difficult to attract enough applicants or have interested applicants accept a position due to the low salary the school offers, DWS needs to work on increasing teacher salaries to improve retention, which, in turn, will improve student performance and enhance the school's reputation overall.



2024-25 Licensed Teaching Staff				
Name	File #	License and Assignment (subject/grades)	2025-26 Status*	Comments
Dawn Snook	446715	Special Education	R	Master's in Special Education
Nicholas Forbes	1024792	Special Education	R	OFP ABS
Renee Huberty	427018	Elem. Teacher Kindergarten Pre-Primary	R	
Chasidi Grant	1016469	Elem. Teacher Kindergarten Pre-Primary	R	Tier 1, Tier 2 obtained June 2024
Kara DeVriendt	485948	Assistant Director	R	CAL 5-12 Reading K-12 license Master's in Literacy
Shawna Sachs	480413	Elem. Teacher	NR	
Emily Sipprell	1023126	Elem. Teacher	R	Tier 2, Tier 3 obtained June 2024
Rachel Hanford	518156	Elem. Teacher	NR	
Ashley Gangestad	454339	Elem. Teacher	R	
Kayla Huether	470648	Elem. Teacher - PE	NR	Tier 3 Restricted

* R = Returning, NR = Not Returning

2024-25 Teacher Professional Development Activities:

The preschool lead teacher, along with the Assistant Director, participated in and completed the Early Childhood LETRS training. Additionally, these two staff members learned about Teaching Strategies GOLD as a new preschool assessment system being used as a VPK-approved assessment system. Teachers in grades K-4 participated in CORE's OL&LA training per the MN READ Act, which was facilitated by the Assistant Director, who had become a trained facilitator in the school year prior. The OL&LA training moves through evidence-based instructional practices in reading, along with diagnostic assessments in reading.

Teacher Retention:

Discovery Woods continues to retain and recruit quality staff for the school. Many teachers who apply are first-year teachers, so DWS put together a scope and sequence to help guide new teachers and purchased math & ELA curricula that are both evidence-based and easy to follow for teachers to provide the best opportunity for effective instruction. The Assistant Director creates, models, teaches, oversees, and adapts most of the ELA materials, which helps provide teachers with the support and guidance they need to be successful. Retention has improved as a direct result of these initiatives; however, DWS continues to look at ways to retain staff by offering a more competitive salary.

Percentage of Licensed Teachers from 2024-25 not returning in 2025-26 (non-returning teachers/total teachers from 2024-25 x 100)	30%
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2024-25 Other Licensed (non-teaching) Staff			
Name	License and Assignment	2025-26 Status*	Comments
Ann Weber	Academic Interventionist	R	

* R = Returning, NR = Not Returning

2024-25 Non-Licensed Staff			
Name	Assignment	2025-26 Status*	Comments
Sara Prettyman	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Michael Knakmuhs	Boiler Engineer	R	
Tom Lytle	Behavior Interventionist	NR	
Kristi Crocker	Director	NR	
Jenni Blessing	Teacher Assistant/Preschool Lead	R	
Alyssa Christmann	Preschool Assistant/Special Ed 1:1	R	
Randi Sutton	Special Ed 1:1	NR	
Jackie Miller	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Lillian Kujala	Administrative Assistant	R	
Cassie Brooks	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Cora Collins	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Joshua Clobes	Janitor	NR	
Sam Thompson	Preschool Assistant/Special Ed 1:1	R	
Kaylyn Thompson	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Karen Rock	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Heidi Rock	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Kori Sawyer	After Care	R	
Andriah Schwartz	After Care	R	

* R = Returning, NR = Not Returning

13. Operational Performance

Discovery Woods complies with applicable laws, rules, and regulations of a public charter school. The building is 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 a new practice of keeping the school unlocked only from 7:35–8:00 a.m. for student arrival, with a staff member at the door welcoming and monitoring. The school building contains ten classrooms, a main office, bathrooms, a staff workroom, storage, 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. School facility records of inspections are 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 logbook. Discovery Woods School's Administrative Assistant provides basic first aid and dispensing of medication to students when needed. Classrooms are arranged with practicality in mind by teachers to maximize sightlines for the safety of the students. Each room strives to create a balance between a structured classroom environment and a comfortable home-like environment that sparks student interest and engages the children in a variety of academic studies.

Discovery Woods School's administrative staff fulfills many duties of school operation under the school board's oversight. Administrative staff advertise job openings, conduct interviews, and use fair hiring practices. Background checks are completed for staff, board members, and volunteers. Administrative staff maintain secure and private student records and transfer records when needed. Student enrollment procedures follow policies that direct a fair and open process. Enrollment for the school year begins with an advertised two-week application period concluding in a lottery draw in February; however, in recent years, the school has not had more student applications than spots available. Applications are randomly assigned a space by grade for the upcoming school year. Applications received after the lottery draw deadline are 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 the prohibition of religious instruction in a public school.

Discovery Woods School contracts with other organizations to provide all necessary services. DWS works 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. The school has a joint agreement with ISD 181 to provide daily breakfast and lunch to students. Creative Planning conducts the school's annual payroll, accounting, budgeting, and financial oversight. Schlenner Wenner and Company conducted the fiscal year 2024 financial audit. Paul Bunyan Educational Cooperative manages the school's Special Education department. The Paul Bunyan Educational Cooperative guides and supports the school in following laws and collecting data on student discipline for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). The school uses a Multitiered System of Support to create plans for students with social, emotional, or behavioral issues who have not yet been identified for special education services. Staff track disciplinary incidents in the school's JMC



software program. Additionally, the school has a Behavior and MTSS team that meets regularly to create, discuss, and adapt student behavioral support plans.

Discovery Woods School engages the community and families through newsletters, social media accounts, the school website, and events. DWS makes sure to send out information via physical copies, email, social media, text messaging, and voice mail to ensure every parent/guardian receives the necessary communication in a format that works for them. The school is currently working to finalize a Language Access Plan (LAP) as required to ensure fair and equal distribution of information. A goal the school has is to form a parent-teacher group to help create, advise upon, and organize more events that not only target the school community but also the community at large. Being such a small school with a high population of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch, parent participation has historically been a challenge for the school. The school is also working on developing a marketing plan to reach more members of the community through a variety of venues, serving the diversity of membership in the local community.

14. Finances

For questions regarding school finances and for complete financials for 2024-25 and/or an organizational budget for 2025-26, contact:

Name: Mindy Wachter
Position: Outsourced Controller
Contact info: Creative Planning
Phone: 612-227-7793
Email: Mindy.Wachter@creativeplanning.com

The school contracts with Creative Planning 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 Environmental Learning Center no later than December 31, 2025.

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

FY25 Finances	Fund 1	Fund 2	Fund 4
Total Revenues	\$1,463,884	\$0	\$55,425
Total Expenditures	\$1,536,237	\$0	\$63,642
Net Income	(\$72,353)	\$0	(\$8,217)
Total Fund Balance	\$773,477	\$0	\$127,168

Overview

The school ended the year under the enrollment targets (93.48 actual ADM compared to 101 budgeted) so gen ed aids were budgeted a bit higher than actuals. Special ed funding came in less than we budgeted for but it's only a 5% difference compared to expenditures so not a huge budget impact. The state's holdback remained at 10% and with the currently healthy cash balance, 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 both came in under budget due to enrollment targets being 8 kids below our budget estimates. The school had REAP grant award revenues of \$14,366 in FY25. Library aid resulted in an additional \$20,000 in revenues and we did still have \$21,885 in COVID dollars to spend.

General Fund revenues came from the following sources:

- State Aids and Grants: \$1,339,406
- Federal Aids and Grants: \$102,366
- Fees Collected and other Miscellaneous Revenues : \$22,112

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): \$15,204
- Fees Collected and other Miscellaneous Revenues: \$25,221

Expenses

General Fund

The school's largest expense was for employee salaries and benefits (\$974,808). Other expenses incurred by the school were for:

- Lease, property taxes, and property insurance: \$190,791
- Purchased Services (including building utilities): \$273,887
- Supplies and Instructional Materials Purchased: \$43,296
- Building Improvements and Equipment (including technology equipment): \$41,890
- Memberships, Other Fees, and Fund Transfer: \$11,565

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: \$61,343
- Supplies and Food: \$1,506
- Memberships, Other Fees, and Fund Transfer: \$793

Net Surplus or Deficit and Fund Balance

The net operating deficit of (\$80,570) in all funds resulted in an ending fund balance of \$900,645 for the year, or 55.3% of current expenditures. The FY26 approved budget is projecting a net income of \$5,984 due to our plan to move the lease to Friends of Discovery Woods and using our extra cash reserves to partially fund that project.

Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Annual Budget

In order to successfully implement our CACR strategic plan (formerly known as WBWF), we need staff and student experiences. Our preschool program, and its budgeted expenses for those students moving to Kindergarten the next year, are part of this plan. We also employ an Academic Interventionist and Local Literacy Lead to help identify students with additional needs and prepare a plan to bring them to grade level. This often can result in additional training for our Academic staff which Title slightly helps to offset. Lastly, Environmental Education field trips are budgeted for as part of our mission-related goal.

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

15. Future Plans

Discovery Woods School is still awaiting, after creating an Affiliated Building Company (ABC) called Friends of Discovery Woods, to obtain ownership of the school building, with a projected extended closing date of fall 2025 (continues to get pushed back), and an exact closing date has not yet been determined. With this purchase through a USDA loan, renovations will take place on the lower level of the building to provide staff with a nursing mother's room and break-out rooms for community affiliates and student needs, as well as help with technology needs. Renovations should be done during the summer of 2026. Taking ownership of the building and completing the planned renovations will provide the school with an opportunity to offer more resources and workable spaces in the building moving forward.



As part of strategic planning to enhance the school's appeal and increase enrollment, Discovery Woods School has done fundraising activities to work toward building up enough funds to update the school's playground and obtain higher-quality equipment. DWS would also like to look into a nature-based playground space for the school's early childhood program. DWS has offered after-school groups to help students through physical activity, math, and book clubs. The school would like to expand these offerings and may add midday student-led clubs during recess once or twice per week.

Discovery Woods School is working to continue student growth and proficiency in reading, and the drastic improvement of students' math scores. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have become more focused and intentional in response to data and student needs. Due to the requirements of the READ Act and the need for PreK-3rd-grade teachers to understand how the brain learns to read and how to implement evidence-based teaching practices in foundational reading skills and beyond, the school's PLCs for the 2024-25 school year focused on CORE's OL&LA training. The next focus of the school's PLCs will be aligning the math curriculum to the Minnesota math standards. Other educational program changes include the school adding Voluntary PreK (VPK) last school year. The Assistant Director, in association with the preschool lead teacher, has been working to implement the required components of the school's preschool programming to meet the requirements for VPK funding; these requirements have provided a positive push toward improving the school's preschool programming. DWS added a summer preschool program to help families with child care, as well as help students with kindergarten preparedness. The current school director would like to focus enrollment efforts at the earliest level – in the school's preschool program. The changes being implemented to improve the preschool programming will help attract more families to the school. Plans to enhance academic achievement and improve the behavioral response initiative will serve to keep students engaged, and more families will desire to continue their child's educational journey at Discovery Woods School.