Discovery Woods
School

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL DISTRICT # 4198-07

SCHOOL YEAR 2025-2026

COMPREHENSIVE ACHIEVEMENT AND CIVIC READINESS & ANNUAL REPORT



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1. School Information

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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.

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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. DWS uses the Open Up Resources math curriculum across grade levels. For English language arts, DWS uses the University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI) phonics curriculum in Kindergarten, Flyleaf Publishing in 1st through mid-2nd grade, and Bookworms from mid-2nd grade through 6th grade. In recent years, DWS has emphasized the need to increase evidence-based practices and 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. Additionally, 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 experiencing academic success and emphasizing areas of 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, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) procedures, and Special Education services. DWS has a robust MTSS program for students needing further academic support. DWS holds frequent MTSS 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 (now Director) of the school attended the initial training & support sessions to move in this direction. The Director also attended MDE's Compass Summer Institute in June of 2026 and focused on attending sessions with an emphasis on math instructional practices. 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 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 worked hard 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	2025-26
Preschool or PreK	20	20	19	20
Kindergarten	18	18	8	12
1st Grade	15	13	11	8
2nd Grade	20	20	12	8
3rd Grade	16	14	17	10
4th Grade	9	9	10	10
5th Grade	16	17	11	10
6th Grade	10	9	12	6
Total	104	100	100	84
Total ADM (Average Daily Membership) for the year	**124.54**	**99.12**	**93.49**	**71.26**

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Discovery Woods School's student demographics have not changed significantly since 2011. The Brainerd area historically and currently is not home to a racially diverse population, and that population is 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	2025-26
Total Enrollment	104	100	101	84
Special Education	32	28	27	17
English Learners	0	0	0	0
Free/Reduced Priced Lunch	64	66	65	26
Black, not of Hispanic Origin	8	7	0	0
Hispanic/Latino	4	4	5	1
Asian/Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
American Indian/Alaskan Native	6	11	7	9

White, not of Hispanic Origin	86	78	77	65
Two or more races		17	12	9

4. Student Attendance, Attrition & Mobility

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Student Attendance Rate	83.1%	84.3%	82.9%	78.9%

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 2024-2025 school year and October 1 of the 2025-26 school year.	80%

Percentage of students* who continued enrollment in the school from Spring 2025 to October 1, 2025.	75%

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%
2025-26	20	81	12	14	26	32%

*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, which returned to normal trends in the summer of 2025-26. The increase of summer transfers can be explained by new and increased marketing efforts by the school. Mid-year transfers into the school were higher, while mid-year transfers out remained the same for the past two school years.

Percentage of students who were enrolled for 95% or more of the 2025-26 school year.	83%

Discovery Woods School's continuous enrollment percentage had remained steady for 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%, and now it has dipped down to those levels again. This dip may be explained by a major staff turnover, including the Executive Director position in which the former Executive Director abruptly quit with little notice before the school year was over making families lose confidence in the school community. Additional departures by the gym teacher (leaving the school without gym classes for a year) and the separation of an effective teacher and retention of an ineffective teacher by former leadership played a role in a period of lack of confidence in the DWS school community. Moving into the next school year, DWS leadership has worked hard to repair that damage and is looking forward to continuous enrollment numbers to rebound.

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 or middle schools. The school's main pedagogical approaches have 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 mostly been abandoned since these are not effective instructional methods to use as part of an all-encompassing approach to learning. Collaborative practices are used, as appropriate. Behaviorist and Integrative approaches are more closely aligned with the school's current pedagogical approaches, as 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 acquire and store knowledge. 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; because this approach is such a heavy lift, it will take several more years to fully implement this vision. 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 5 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 is currently focusing heavily on math after the adoption of a new math curriculum and having teachers participate in training with the Open Up Resources Math Curriculum and working on alignment between the curriculum and the new MN math standards during Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). 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, and will work to fill observed gaps. For students at Discovery Woods School in need of remediation, the following systems support students beyond core instruction: Title I programming, AmeriCorps tutors, MTSS procedures, and Special Education services. DWS has a robust MTSS program for students needing further academic support. DWS holds frequent MTSS 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 current School 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 the academic programming at this school thanks to the knowledge-base, directives, and support provided by the Executive 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, one that emphasizes personal growth, and 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 hiring team clearly communicates with teacher candidates about its areas of 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 Executive 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 multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) 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, explicit, and differentiated 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. The DWS Executive Director provides 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.

Aftercare Program
To accommodate working parents' schedules, there is an after-school care program available to all students. The after-school care program, called Aftercare, 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 was called "Children's House," as inspired by the Montessori education model. As of the 2025-26 school year, the preschool is now a stand-alone program, which has proven to be a positive move for the preschool since it is a Certified Childcare Center through the state of Minnesota and has different requirements than our Kindergarten students who are part of our K-6 public Charter School program. Now, the preschool program is a stand-alone program only for children who are 33 months through age 5. This shift has created separate preschool and Kindergarten spaces that are able to serve students in a more developmentally appropriate way. Although some Montessori elements are still incorporated, the school shifted preschool practices further away from the overall Montessori model to better prepare students for Kindergarten entry. Students in the DWS preschool program demonstrated extraordinary growth as a result of these changes during the first school year of the separation.

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 (depending on enrollment).

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 created a successful English language arts and literacy intervention program due to a highly-trained staff member, who is the school's current Executive Director, guiding the curriculum and running the Title I Targeted Services 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 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; as such, the school's Board of Directors created a new 5-year Strategic Plan. The goals on this strategic plan that are already in process include: developing a board-approved enrollment,

marketing & fundraising plan, refining the school's behavior management system, and improving outdoor learning and play spaces. Future goals include: expanding the preschool program,, updating the school's HVAC system, increasing staff retention through quality programming and increased compensation and benefits, and creating more formalized job descriptions for several staff positions.

7. Academic Performance: Goals & Benchmarks

Discovery Woods School keeps students at the forefront of all decision-making sessions. Staff at DWS go above and beyond to ensure the decisions being made are 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 the Academic Interventionist or the Early Learning, Reading and Math Corps tutors. 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: 85% of students received a passing score on a post-trip assessment after attending an Environmental Education field trip. Field trips included: Deep Portage, Mille Lacs Indian Museum, and a planetarium.

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
2025-26	NA

The average progress students made towards their individual targets	School
2025-26	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****: This data is not available for this reporting period due to changes to the statewide assessment for reading.*

- ***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**: This data is not available for this reporting period due to changes to the statewide assessment for reading.*

- ***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**: 57.4% 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 2025-2026 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**: *0% of DWS students improved on statewide assessments for math in school year 2025-26 as compared to school year 2024-2025, while 13.3% 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**: *80% of DWS students decreased or stayed "does not meet standards" on statewide assessments for reading in school year 2025-26 as compared to school year 2024-2025, while 45.1% 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**: *81.5% 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 2025-2026 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**: *32.3% of DWS students met or exceeded expectations on the statewide assessment for reading in the school year 2025-26, as compared to 46.2% 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**: *30% of DWS students who qualify for free & reduced lunch met or exceeded expectations on the statewide assessment for reading in school year 2025-26, as compared to 31.5% 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**: *30% of DWS students who qualify for free & reduced lunch met or exceeded expectations on the statewide assessment for reading in school year 2025-26, as compared to 39.1% 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**: *30.3% of DWS students who qualify for special education met or exceeded expectations on the statewide assessment for reading in school year 2025-26, as compared to 25.6% 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**: *54% of DWS students in grades K-6 were at low risk or above as measured by the FastBridge reading assessment in the 2025-2026 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**: *11.8% of DWS students met or exceeded expectations on the statewide assessment for math in school year 2025-26, as compared to 44.9% 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**: *14.3% of DWS students who qualify for free & reduced lunch met or exceeded expectations on the statewide assessment for math in school year 2025-26, as compared to 26.1% 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**: *14.3% of DWS students who qualify for free & reduced lunch met or exceeded expectations on the statewide assessment for math in school year 2025-26, as compared to 32.4% 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**: *0% of DWS students who qualify for special education met or exceeded expectations on the statewide assessment for math in school year 2025-26, as compared to 24% 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**: *55% of DWS students in grades K-6 were at low risk or above as measured by the FastBridge math assessment in the 2025-2026 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**: *0% of DWS students were proficient on the statewide assessment for science in school year 2025-26, as compared to 25.8% 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**: *0% of DWS students were proficient on the statewide assessment for science in school year 2025-26, as compared to 28% 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**: 75% 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**: 78.9% of DWS students had consistent attendance in the 2025-2026 school year, as compared to 76.5% 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 FY26 school year.

ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC DATA

Reading Proficiency

Proficiency Category	Number of Students	Goal Met?
	10	
	21	
	19	
	13	
Total who met proficiency goal	34/63 = 54%	Yes

Reading Growth

Growth Category	Number of Students	Goal Met?
	5	
	24	
	18	
	9	
Total who met growth goal	31/54 = 57%	Yes

Math Proficiency

Proficiency Category	Number of Students	Goal Met?
	3	
	23	
	28	
	9	
Total who met proficiency goal	35/64 = 55%	Yes

Math Growth

Growth Category	Number of Students	Goal Met?
	4	
	32	
	4	
	16	
Total who met growth goal	44/54 = 81%	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

Academic Assessments Used

Discovery Woods School uses a combination of state and local assessments to measure student progress, including:

- FastBridge Early Reading English (K-1), Early Math (K-1), aReading (2-6), aMath (2-6), and a Curriculum-Based Measure in Reading (CBMr) in grades 1-3
- Diagnostic assessments in phonological/phonemic awareness and phonics for K-2
- Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) in reading, math, and science for 3-6
- Local standards-based assessments that align with the curriculum
- Formative classroom assessments

Gifted/Talented Identification Process

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.



Description of Accelerated Instruction

The school provides accelerated learning opportunities through flexible grouping, choice boards, project-based learning opportunities, student leadership assignments, and grade-level advancement in certain subject areas as appropriate.

Instructional Strengths/Needs Review

The school's Executive Director, who leads assessment, curriculum, and MTSS, reviews student data with classroom and special education staff at least three times per year to evaluate instructional effectiveness. Data is reviewed for whole-class needs versus needs for small-group or individualized instruction. Strengths and weaknesses in curriculum and instruction are identified through data analysis, classroom observations, and staff input. The goal is to ensure all students are on track for college, career, and civic readiness.

B. Curriculum and Instruction Review System

Measures to Assess Instruction

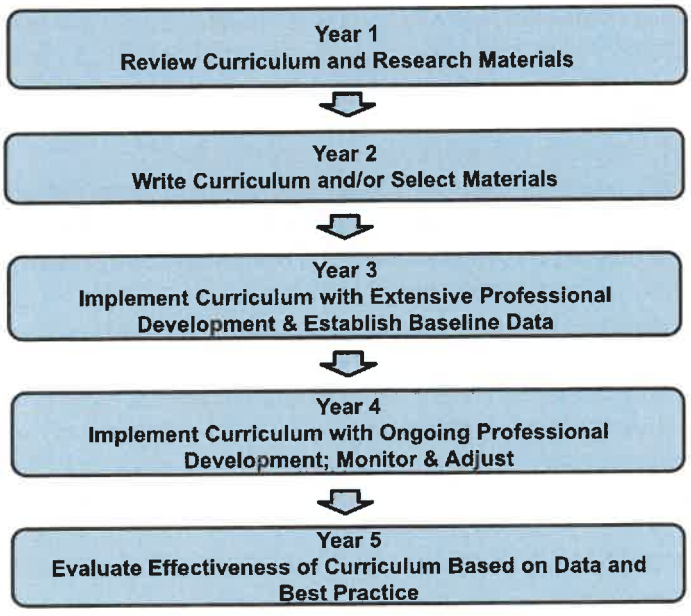
Instruction is evaluated through:

- Student performance data and growth indicators.
- Teacher evaluations aligned with Minn. Stat. § 122A.40, subd. 8.
- Instructional coaching cycles.

Practices to Evaluate Curriculum
Curriculum effectiveness is reviewed using:

- Alignment checks with Minnesota Academic Standards and benchmarks.
- Review of instructional materials for cultural accuracy and inclusivity.
- Examination of student performance trends and achievement gaps.
- Collaboration with teachers to identify best practices and necessary adjustments.

Curriculum Review
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. In year 1 of the curriculum review cycle, the Director and classroom teachers (hereafter referred to as simply the "team") identify trends in student achievement data and plan for ways to make improvements. The team begins to look at research, as well as determine what experts say about evidence-based best practices in the content area being reviewed. In year 2, the team analyzes materials, coordinates possible piloting of new materials in classrooms, and/or develops 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. The team then continues to monitor and adjust according to student achievement data. In year 3, the team puts the implementation plan from year 2 into action and monitors and adjusts the plan as needed. The Director assists teachers with the implementation of new materials, as needed, through coaching or professional learning community meetings. In years 4 & 5, the team determines the effectiveness of the new curriculum and makes necessary changes to curriculum maps, instruction, assessment, and pacing. The team continues to support teachers in their second year using the new curriculum materials. The focus then shifts to the effect that curriculum and support materials have on student learning. The team identifies areas of success and concern, and the team develops an improvement plan, if needed.



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 Executive Director one to three times per year, and these evaluations include a scale for various pedagogical scoring categories. Teachers in their first 3 years of teaching, or those needing support or improvement in crucial areas, 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 per year by the Director. Other components of the teacher evaluation process include: analysis of student data, mentorship for new teachers, coaching to all teachers, as needed, based on request or observed needs during the evaluation process, and peer collaboration during Professional Learning Communities.

School Director Evaluation
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.

C. Improving Instruction and Student Achievement
Improving instruction and student achievement is central to Discovery Woods School's mission. This section outlines the strategies the school has in place to strengthen teaching practices, enhance curriculum, and ensure that every student, regardless of background, has equitable access to high-quality learning opportunities. These strategies are data-driven, culturally responsive, and designed to support both academic growth and social-emotional development. If DWS begins to serve English language learners, there would be an added focus on the language development and academic growth of English learners.

Strategies include:

- Expand multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) to provide early intervention for struggling learners.
    - DWS is moving toward the adoption of the MnMTSS system for student support
- Implement ongoing, job-embedded professional development focusing on culturally responsive teaching strategies and differentiated instruction.
    - DWS provides cultural competency training to staff on a 3-year cycle. Additionally, staff receive training to serve English language learners and to use differentiated instructional practices.
- Strengthen English learner (EL) supports, including targeted English language development and, where feasible, native language support.
    - DWS has not served English language learners for several years, but is equipped to do so if necessary in the future.
- Increase opportunities for experiential and project-based learning that connects academic content to real-world applications.
    - Through the school's environmental education programming, students have opportunities for experiential learning through field trips and project-based learning that focus on environmental topics and also meet grade-level cross-curricular standards.
- Use data from assessments and progress monitoring to adjust instruction and provide targeted enrichment or remediation.
    - See section VII for more information about these strategies.

D. Equitable Distribution of Teachers

Data Collection and Analysis Process
DWS is a very small district with one school building, so teacher placement options are extremely limited. If the school were to grow and expand the number of classrooms, student demographic information and classroom-level performance outcomes would be considered to ensure equitable distribution of effective educators.

Current Status of Teacher Assignment
Discovery Woods School employs a team of 9 licensed teachers, 56% of whom have five or more years of teaching experience.. A review of 2025-26 teacher assignment data shows that students from low-income families (~60% of total enrollment) are not disproportionately taught by first-year or out-of-field teachers. No evidence of inequitable distribution of experienced teachers was found.

Improvement Strategies and Timeline:

- Annually review teacher placement to ensure students from low-income families and students of color are not disproportionately taught by inexperienced or out-of-field teachers.
- Enhance recruitment efforts to attract diverse and highly qualified candidates.

- Provide mentorship and coaching programs for early-career teachers to strengthen instructional quality.

	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%	75%	88%	13%	0%
Admin Staff	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%

E. Education Effectiveness Practices

Instructional and Curriculum Practices

- Implement evidence-based instructional strategies, such as explicit teaching of foundational literacy skills, academic vocabulary, collaborative learning, and culturally relevant pedagogy.
- Use technology to provide motivating supplemental academic practice, engage with books in various formats (e-books or read-to-me formats), and support students who need personalized learning plans
- Create safe spaces for dialogue about race, identity, and equity, ensuring students view these conversations as integral to learning.
- Validate students' home languages and cultures by integrating them into lessons, as applicable.
- Review existing curriculum for bias, omissions, stereotypes, and replace materials with accurate and inclusive content.
- Align content with students' cultural experiences by incorporating texts, authors, and historical figures from various racial and ethnic backgrounds.

The school's ELA curriculum, Bookworms, for grades 2nd-6th incorporates 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.*



Culturally Sustaining Practices for Students and Families

- Incorporate students' cultural backgrounds and home languages into lessons and school events, as applicable.
- Adopt and share the school's Language Access Plan (LAP)
- Create opportunities for students and families to share their cultural traditions and perspectives within the classroom.

Culturally Sustaining Practices for Staff

- Offer professional development on cultural competency, American Indian students/families, English language learners, and students with differing academic needs based on special education or free/reduced lunch status.
- Recognize and celebrate the cultural strengths and contributions of all staff.

Strategies to Build a Collaborative Professional Culture

- Implement professional learning communities (PLCs) to promote collaboration and shared problem-solving.
- Conduct regular climate surveys to gather feedback and improve staff well-being.
- Encourage teacher leadership and shared decision-making in school improvement initiatives.

Recruitment and Retention Strategies

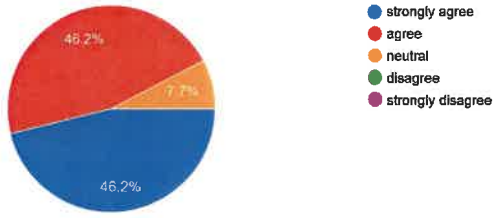
- Provide competitive compensation and recognition programs for outstanding teaching.
- Offer leadership development opportunities and pathways for advancement for staff of color and other underrepresented groups.

9. Student & Parent Satisfaction

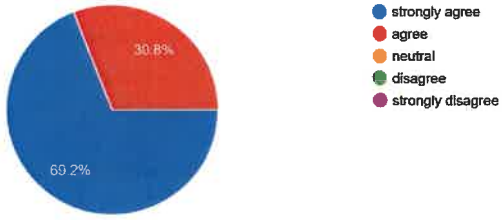
The following graphs demonstrate the results of the family and the student surveys regarding the categories of safety, academics, teaching staff, and recommending the school to others. Please note that the percentage of families who responded to the family survey is very low. As the graphs show, most families and students are satisfied in all categories. However, there is room for improvement in any category with strongly agree/agree results below 80%, which occurs in several categories on the student survey.

Results of the parent survey:

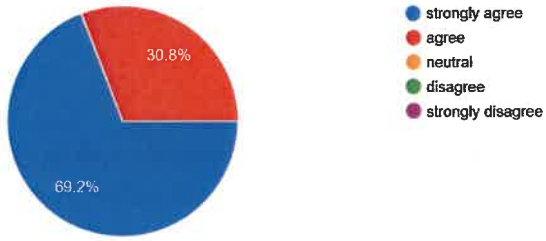
My child is safe and secure at this school.
13 responses



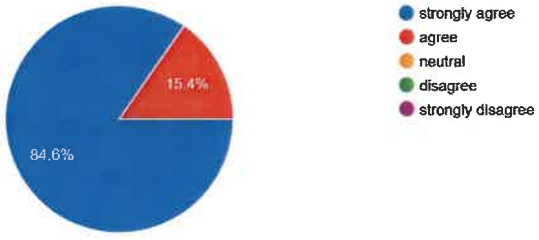
This school has appropriate academic expectations for my children.
13 responses



The school provides a caring learning environment for my children.
13 responses

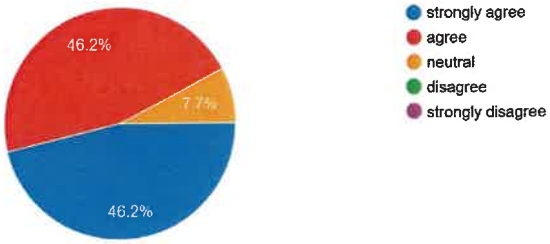


My child receives the support s/he needs at the school.
13 responses



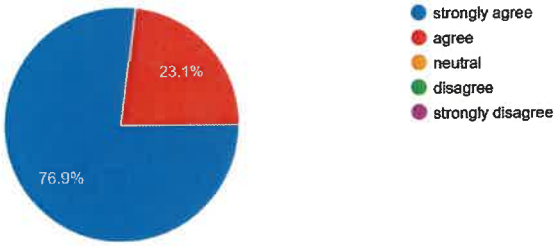
This school handles student behavior appropriately.

13 responses



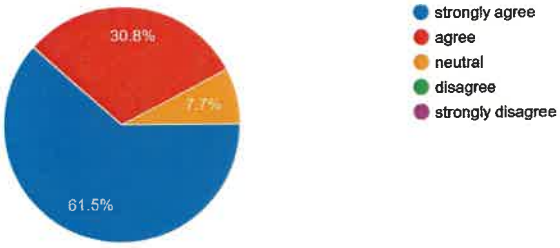
My student has at least one adult who they feel comfortable sharing their individual needs with.

13 responses



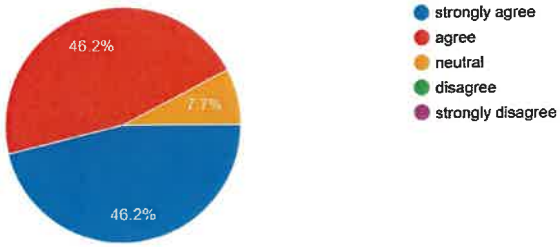
I am a valued member of Discovery Woods community.

13 responses



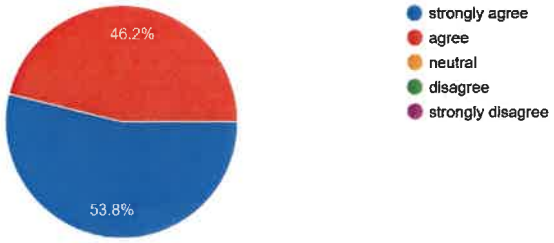
The school building is welcoming, clean, and inviting.

13 responses



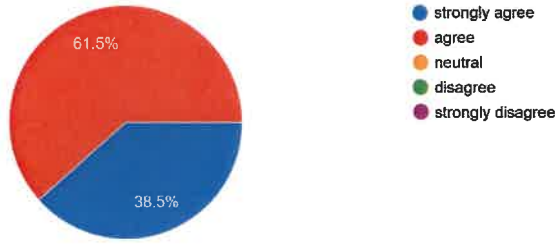
The school staff are visible and approachable.

13 responses



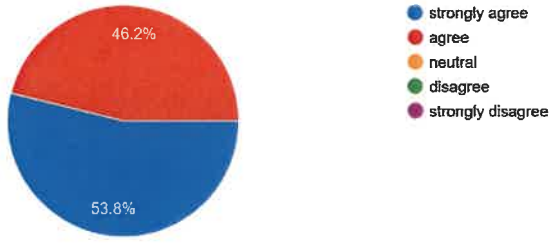
This school staff communicates effectively with families.

13 responses



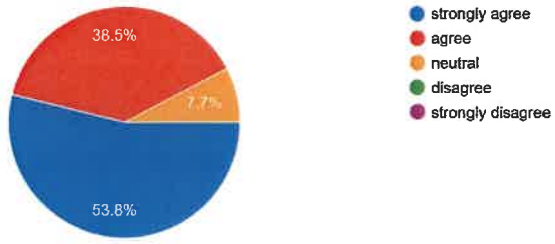
I would recommend this school to other families.

13 responses

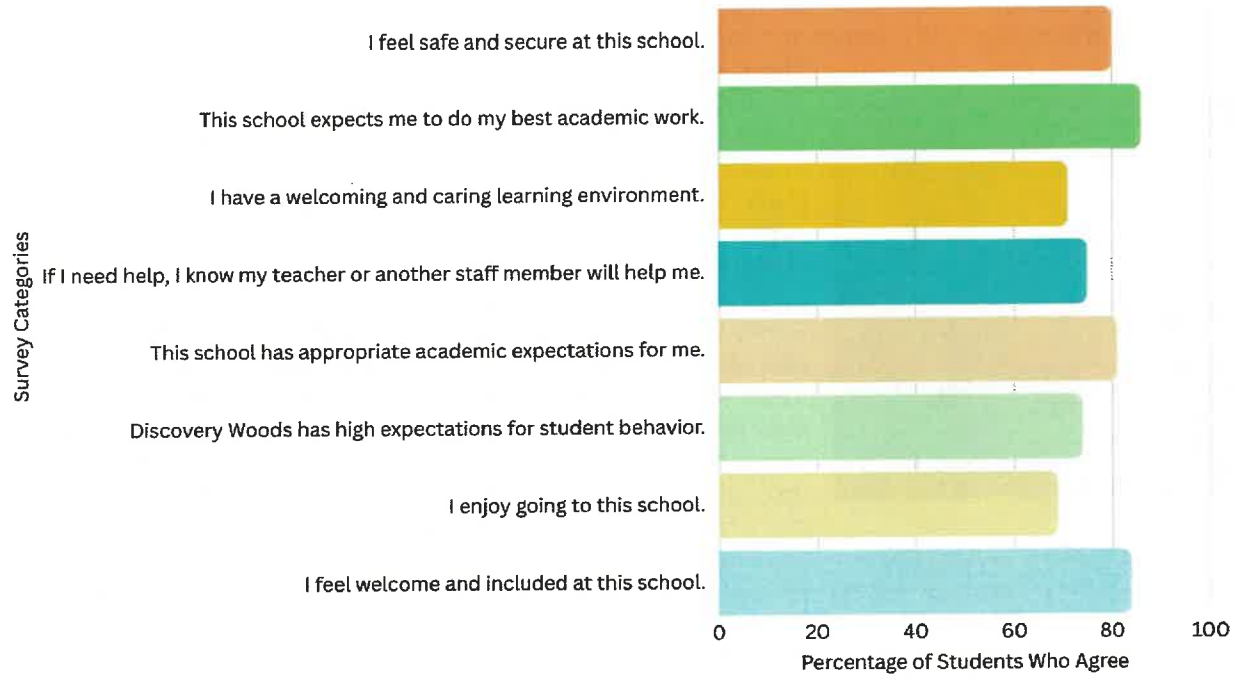


The mission of Discovery Woods is very important to me.

13 responses



Results of the student survey:



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 through 3rd grade 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 2nd-3rd-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 over 160 hours outside during the 2025-26 school year! At the 2nd-3rd 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 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 4th grade classroom, students work through a long-term ecosystem unit. The 2nd-4th grade classrooms combined to 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
Chasidi Grant	Member	Teacher	May 22, 2025	July 24, 2025	June 2028	cgrantboard@discoverywoods.com
Denise Belden	Member	Parent	May 22, 2025	July 24, 2025	January 2026	dbelden@discoverywoods.com
Kara DeVriendt	Ex-Officio	Executive 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

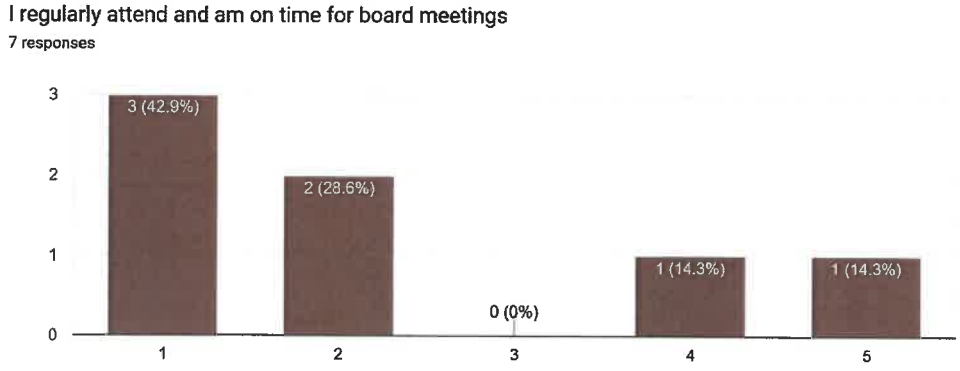
The board is currently discussing moving forward with a consulting group to better organize training needs and requirements and create an annual training plan based on the board's specific areas of need.

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	8/12/20 OW	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	12/15/23 OW
Matt Hastert	July 31, 2023	11/4/23 OW	11/4/23 OW	11/4/23 OW
Chasidi Grant	August 21, 2025	07/16/2025 OW	07/16/2025 OW	07/16/2025 OW
Denise Belden	August 21, 2025	07/22/2025 OW	07/22/2025 OW	07/22/2025 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	8/12/20 OW	11/18/2020 OW	8/11/2020 OW
Dawn Snook	July 31, 2023	7/8/2023 OW	7/16/2023 OW	11/7/2023 OW
Rebekah Kent-Ehlebracht	July 31, 2023	11/4/23 OW 11/8/24 OW	11/4/23 OW	11/4/23 OW
Ashley Gangestad	July 31, 2023	9/7/23 OW	12/15/23 OW	12/15/23 OW
Matt Hastert	July 31, 2023	11/4/23 OW	11/4/23 OW	11/4/23 OW
Chasidi Grant	August 21, 2025	07/16/2025 OW	07/16/2025 OW	07/16/2025 OW
Denise Belden	August 21, 2025	07/22/2025 OW	07/22/2025 OW	07/22/2025 OW

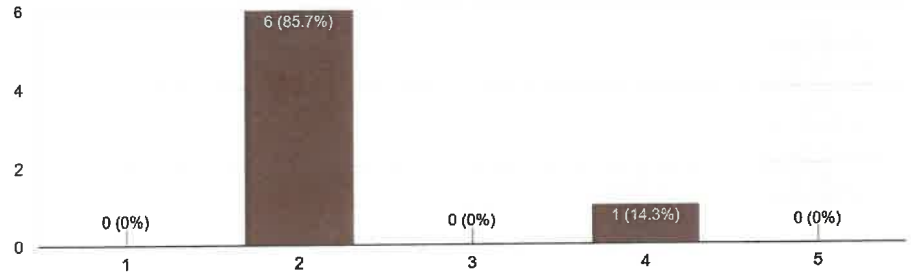
Annual Assessment of Training Needs

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. The results of the board's annual self-evaluation are included below, with 1 indicating "strongly agree" and 5 indicating "strongly disagree". Although most board members marked "strongly agree" or "agree" on all questions, two out of seven board members expressed that they should attend board meetings more regularly. Due to the fact that the board does not have many committees, that is an area where board members indicated neutrality, "disagree", or "strongly disagree". Another goal cited, which is not on the survey below, that has started to come to fruition (and a committee has been formed) 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.



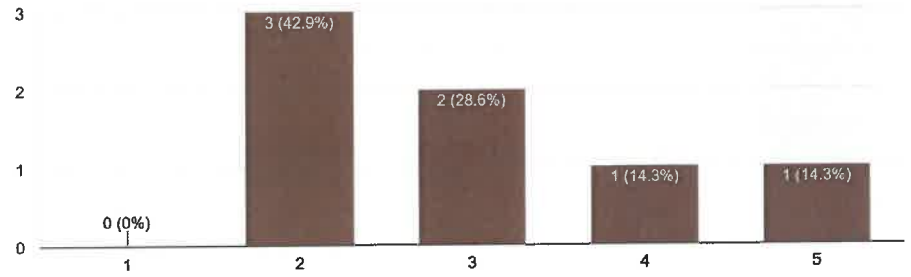
I prepare for meetings by reviewing the agenda and reading the minutes and other materials before I attend the meeting

7 responses



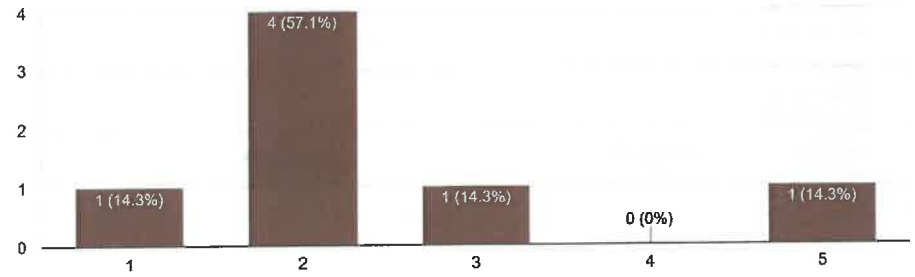
I faithfully serve on board committees and task forces for which I volunteer or on which I am assigned to serve

7 responses



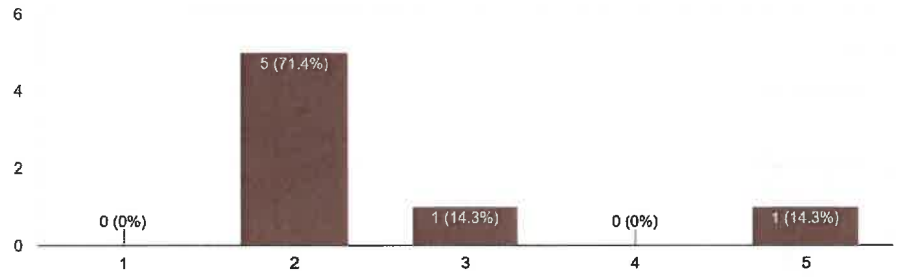
I actively participate in the discussion of issues and make motions or seconds.

7 responses



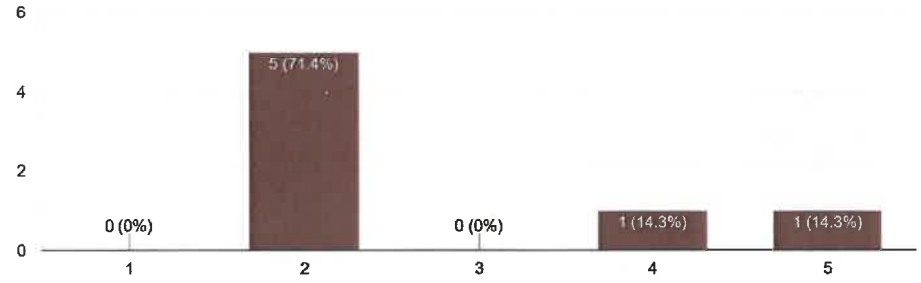
I am familiar with and involved in the financial management and well-being of the school.

7 responses



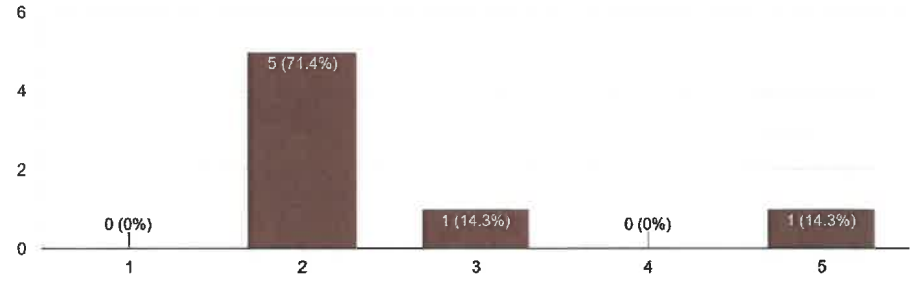
I understand my responsibility and the process to investigate misconduct.

7 responses



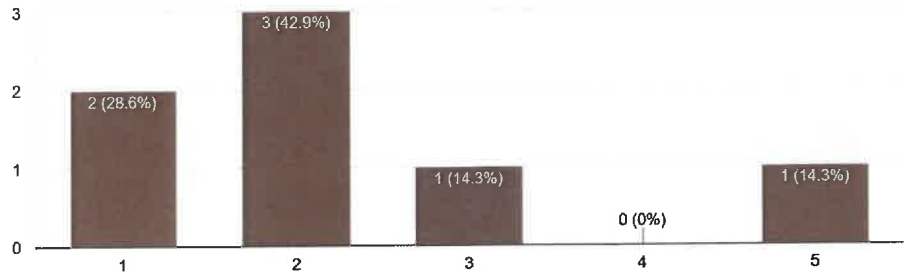
I understand the difference between governance and management.

7 responses



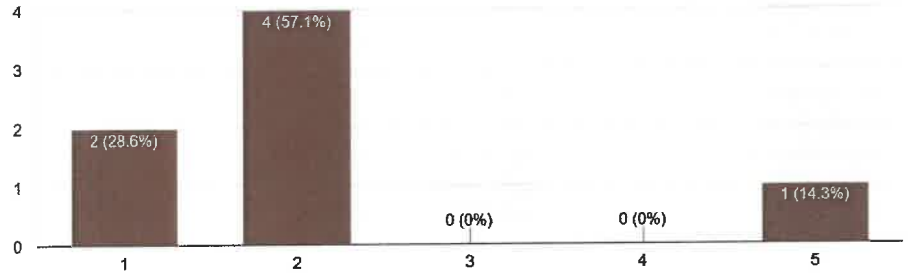
I am familiar with the Conflict of Interest Policy.

7 responses



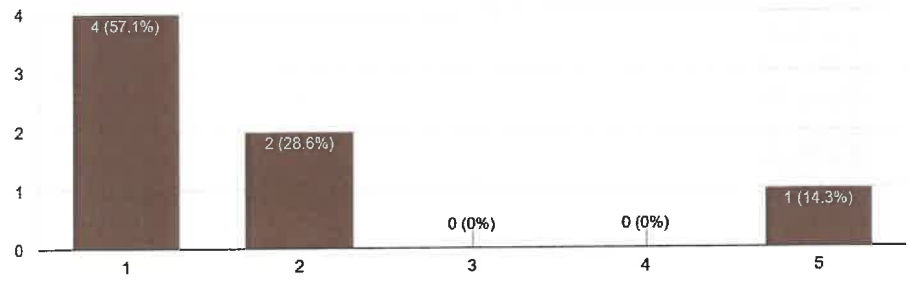
I understand that it is my responsibility to inform the Board of potential conflicts of interest.

7 responses



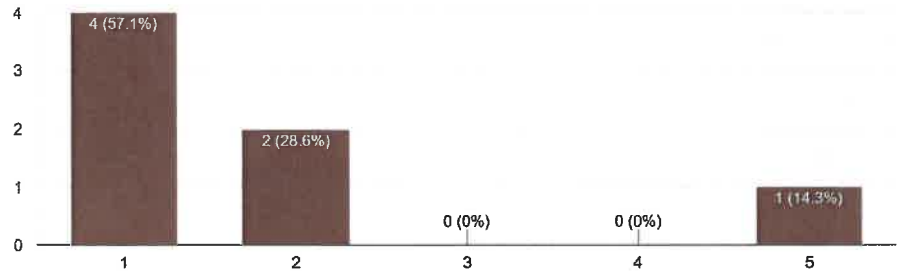
I understand that I have a moral and legal obligation to not engage in or benefit from any business opportunity based on my position on the board.

7 responses



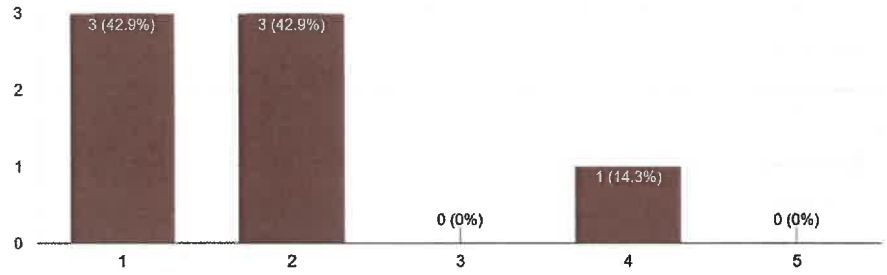
I understand that issues discussed in a closed meeting are to be kept confidential.

7 responses



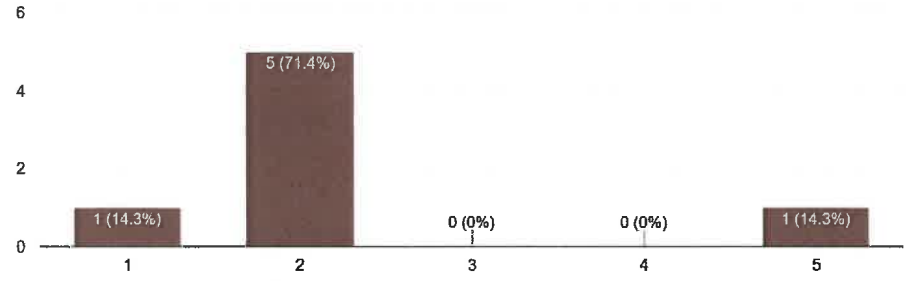
I know the vision and mission statements of Discovery Woods School and of the Board of Directors.

7 responses



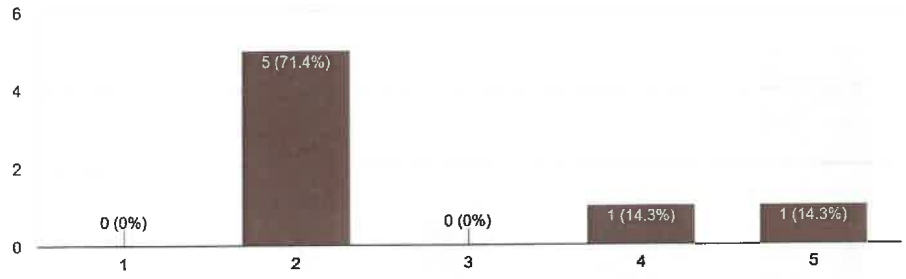
I am familiar with the Board Bylaws, Policies, and Strategic Plan.

7 responses



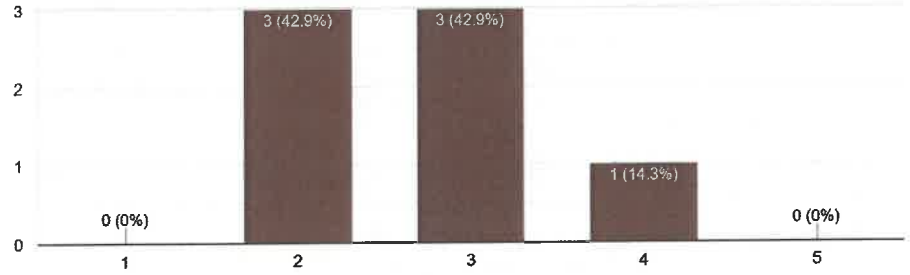
I am familiar with the Charter School Contract with the school's Authorizer.

7 responses



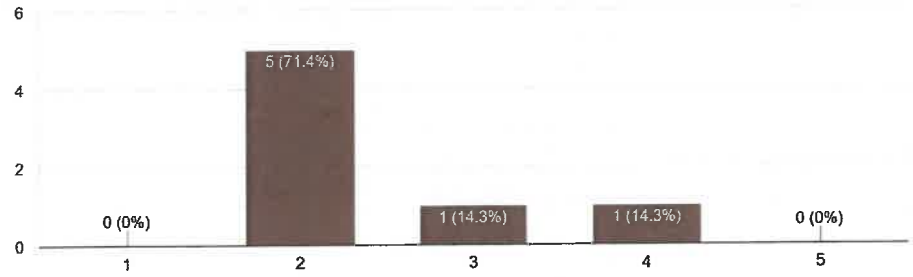
I am familiar with the MN Nonprofit Law (MN Statute 317) and the 501(c)3 Provisions of the IRS Rules.

7 responses



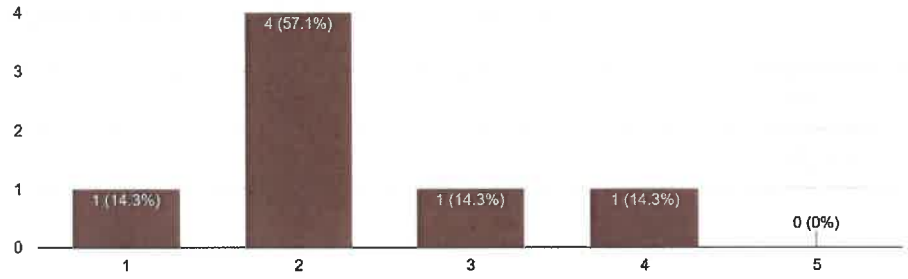
I am familiar with the MN Charter School Law (MN Statute 124D.10) and the MN Open Meeting Law (MN Statute 13D).

7 responses



I am familiar with the MN Employment Law (MN Statute 181, the MN Public School Fee Law, the MN Pupil Fair Dismissal Law, and the MN Non-Discriminatory Law.

7 responses



Annual Training

Annual Training – FY25			
Board Member Name	**Date of Training**	**Training Title or Topic**	**Presenter or Trainer**
Rebekah Kent-Ehlbrecht	9/18/25	How a School Board oversees the Affiliated Building Company (ABC) Board.	Sean Elder, TenSquare
	4/16/26	ABC Refresher Training	Scott Brown, EdFinMN
Denise Belden	9/18/25	How a School Board oversees the Affiliated Building Company (ABC) Board.	Sean Elder, TenSquare
	7/16/25	What Boards Need to Know About the Charter School Contract	Osprey Wilds
	4/16/26	ABC Refresher Training	Scott Brown, EdFinMN
Dawn Snook	9/18/25	How a School Board oversees the Affiliated Building Company (ABC) Board.	Sean Elder, TenSquare
	4/16/26	ABC Refresher Training	Scott Brown, EdFinMN
Ashley Gangestad	9/18/25	How a School Board oversees the Affiliated Building Company (ABC) Board.	Sean Elder, TenSquare
	4/16/26	ABC Refresher Training	Scott Brown, EdFinMN
Chasidi Grant	9/18/25	How a School Board oversees the Affiliated Building Company (ABC) Board.	Sean Elder, TenSquare
	7/22/2025	What Boards Need to Know About the Charter School Contract	Osprey Wilds

	4/16/26	ABC Refresher Training	Scott Brown, EdFinMN
Emma Needham	9/18/25	How a School Board oversees the Affiliated Building Company (ABC) Board.	Sean Elder, TenSquare
	4/16/26	ABC Refresher Training	Scott Brown, EdFinMN
Matt Hastert	9/18/25	How a School Board oversees the Affiliated Building Company (ABC) Board.	Sean Elder, TenSquare
	4/16/26	ABC Refresher Training	Scott Brown, EdFinMN

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

Name & Title of School Leader: Kara DeVriendt, Executive Director			
Date board approved professional development plan: NA			
Training Topic	**Provider of Training**	**Date**	**Hours**
Para Train the Trainer	Sourcewell	6/23/25 - 6/24/25	12
New School Leader Onboarding	Osprey Wilds	8/22/25	1.5
Literacy Lead Community of Practice Cohort	Sourcewell	10/22/25	5

Legal Framework of School Discipline	MDE	12/9/25	2.5
Child Find Training	Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative	4/8/26	0.5
Train-the-Trainer - Structured Literacy: Unlocking Literacy for All Educators	STRIVE	4/17/26	1.5
Discipline Data (DIRS) Reporting Series - Incident Activity Information & Disciplinary Action Information	MDE	4/22/26 - 4/24/26	1.5
COMPASS Summer Institute	MDE	6/16/26-6/17/26	14
Structured Literacy: Disciplinary Literacy Course	STRIVE	8/2/26	35
		Total Hours:	**73.5**

Kara DeVriendt, Executive Director
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.

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.



2025-26 Licensed Teaching Staff				
Name	**File #**	**License and Assignment (subject/grades)**	**2026-27 Status***	**Comments**
Dawn Snook	446715	Special Education	R	Master's in Special Education
Susan Kirby	450065	Special Education	R	
Nicholas Forbes	1024792	Elem. Teacher	NR	
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	Executive Director	R	CAL 5-12 Reading K-12 license Master's in Literacy
Laiken Bladow	1044010	Elem. Teacher	R	
Emily Sipprell	1023126	Elem. Teacher	NR	
Ashley Gangestad	454339	Elem. Teacher	R	

* R = Returning, NR = Not Returning

2025-26 Teacher Professional Development Activities:

Due to the previous year's demanding professional development commitment to meet the state's READ Act requirements, and the Director's commitment to facilitating the READ Act training requirement for the school's paraprofessionals, the teaching staff did not participate in extensive professional development activities during the 2025-26 school year. The school's teaching staff met in weekly professional learning communities to map out the school's math curriculum and compare each unit with the new state standards in mathematics. Teachers also participated in a child find training hosted by the Paul Bunyan Cooperative.

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 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 2025-26 not returning in 2026-27 (non-returning teachers/total teachers from 2025-26 x 100)	25%

2025-26 Other Licensed (non-teaching) Staff			
Name	**License and Assignment**	**2025-26 Status***	**Comments**
Ann Weber	Academic Interventionist	R	

* R = Returning, NR = Not Returning

2025-26 Non-Licensed Staff			
Name	**Assignment**	**2025-26 Status***	**Comments**
Sara Prettyman	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Michael Knakmuhs	Boiler Engineer	R	
Kaylyn Thompson	Behavior Interventionist	R	Returning as Educational Assistant
Jenni Blessing	Teacher Assistant/Preschool Lead	R	
Tosha Nelson	Preschool Assistant/Special Ed 1:1	R	
Kayla Johnson	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Melissa Johnson	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Lillian Kujala	Administrative Assistant	R	
Cassie Brooks	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Cody Buchite	Janitor	R	
Rob Gartner	Janitor	NR	
Sam Thompson	Preschool Assistant/Special Ed 1:1	NR	
Brittney Buchite	Business Manager	R	
Karen Rock	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Heidi Rock	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Brittany Thurstin	Special Ed 1:1	NR	
Barry Trigo	Special Ed 1:1	NR	
Joslyn Plourde	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Breanna Mott	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Sam Blocker	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Mary Doucette	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Ann Rudolph	Special Ed 1:1	R	
Jessica Meyer	Special Ed 1:1	NR	
Kori Sawyer	After Care	NR	
Andriah Schwartz	After Care	NR	
Nolen O'Dell	Technology	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 2025 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.

2025-26 School Information Dissemination Activities:
*Use the table below to document the activities your school conducted this year to share its offerings **and** enrollment procedures with Minnesota's diverse populations and targeted groups (as required by MN Stat. § 124E.17, Subd. 1(a)). Target populations include low-income families, students of color, students at risk of academic failure, and groups currently underrepresented in your school.*

Dissemination Activities Log

Method of Dissemination / Event	Date of Activity	Languages Used	Targeted Group Addressed
Movie Night	3/6/2026	English	BLA families of varying socioeconomic backgrounds, family structures, and educational needs
Movie Night	4/10/2026	English	BLA families of varying socioeconomic backgrounds, family structures, and educational needs
Enrollment Video	4/10/2026	English	BLA families of varying socioeconomic backgrounds, family structures, and educational needs for Kindergarten enrollment
Summer Send Off	5/16/2026	English	BLA families of varying socioeconomic backgrounds, family structures, and educational needs
Big Jays Fundraiser	5/28/2026	English	BLA families of varying socioeconomic backgrounds, family structures, and educational needs
Farmers Market Walk	5/28/2026	English	BLA families of varying socioeconomic backgrounds, family structures, and educational needs

Bounce House Fundraiser	6/11/2026	English	BLA families of varying socioeconomic backgrounds, family structures, and educational needs
Arts in the Park	06/28/2026	English	BLA families of varying socioeconomic backgrounds, family structures, and educational needs
Fourth of July Parade	07/04/2026	English	BLA families of varying socioeconomic backgrounds, family structures, and educational needs
Crow Wing County Fair Booth	08/02/2026 - 08/06/2026	English	BLA families of varying socioeconomic backgrounds, family structures, and educational needs

Dissemination Narrative: Discovery Woods School has significantly ramped up community events in the Brainerd/Baxter area to market the school with the goal of increasing enrollment. The school's marketing efforts have occurred both on the school grounds and in the broader community. The events listed above outline different events that cater to a variety of people living in the local community, including those from differing socioeconomic backgrounds, families of color, and families who have children with special needs.. The demographics of the Brainerd Lakes area does not currently call for a language other than English to be used in disseminating information. The school is currently working on developing ongoing partnerships with community stakeholders.

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	$1,171,347	NA	$114,249
Total Expenditures	$1,549,135	NA	$71,185

Net Income	($377,788)	NA	$43,064
Total Fund Balance	$406,485	NA	$170,232

Overview

Due to enrollment challenges, revenues for the school this year were lower than projected. Additionally, with a change in leadership and a lack of communication on the part of Creative Planning about special education reimbursements, a majority of the school's paraprofessionals were paid out of the school General Fund and not eligible for special education fund reimbursement as a result of not passing the ParaPathways test; the cruciality of passing this test was not passed along to the school by Creative Planning until the end of the school year. In addition, the school's former Executive Director had left the school's security system sub par with two doorways unsecured and an outdated system overall, which required a major expense on the part of the school. The State of Minnesota required a lighting retrofit, which added an additional cost to the school during the 2025-26 school year. Due to the school losing enrollment as a result of lack of marketing and engagement with the school community and community at large, the new Executive Director, along with the school's new Business Manager, created a marketing and fundraising plan, which did not exist in prior years. As such, more expenses were allocated to marketing efforts to increase enrollment. The finalization of the building purchase via the school's Affiliated Building Company creates future savings on lease expenses, which helps to lessen the projected deficit in coming years.

Revenues

Over 90% of the revenue for Fund 01 comes from State Aid Funding. The largest category of this is General Education Aid followed by Special Education Aid. Fund 04 remains a successful program with a large interest in the school's preschool offerings.

Expenses

Staffing makes up the largest category of expenses, which is expected. The school elected not to adopt a revised budget; actual expenses incurred came in roughly $200,000 higher than the original budget (see explanation in overview).

Net Surplus or Deficit and Fund Balance

The preliminary deficit is estimated at $335,00, which is a 37% decrease in fund balance.

Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Annual Budget

In order to successfully implement our CACR strategic plan, we allocate part of our budget to employ an Academic Interventionist and use it to pay for part of our Executive Director's salary for acting as the Local Literacy Lead; both of these roles help identify students with additional needs and prepare a plan to bring them to grade level to move our academic goals in the right direction. Additionally, the Executive Director of the school's K-6 program also acts as the Director of the preschool, which is a separate Certified Childcare Center, and part of this salary is directed for the Kindergarten readiness goals associated with our preschool program. These efforts often result in additional training for our academic staff which Title funds help to offset. Lastly, Environmental Education field trips are budgeted for as part of the school's mission-related goal. This information

has been provided by Creative Planning, a firm that provides accounting and financial management services for the school.

FY 2026 Budget Summary:

- Staffing: $926,583 (includes benefits)
- Professional Development: $2766 (includes Title II)
- Curriculum/Instructional Materials: $11,065 (includes $5,654 of instructional software)

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

15. Future Plans

Discovery Woods School finally obtained ownership of the school building via the school's Affiliated Building Company (ABC) called Friends of Discovery Woods, with a closing date of December 31, 2025. This purchase was made possible through a USDA loan, which includes renovation plans, including a much needed heating, ventilation, and cooling (HVAC) system to replace an outdated and expensive boiler. Renovations continue to be pushed back due to financial concerns; however, the school will attempt to move this project forward to be completed by the summer of 2027. 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 amped up fundraising activities to work toward building enough funds to update the school's playground and obtain higher-quality equipment. As a result of these efforts, several pieces of outdated playground equipment were removed and a new piece of playground equipment - a geodome - to the playground, and we were able to place new woodchips under the geodome and our swings. DWS hopes to purchase and install a new playground following the 2026-27 school year and then look into expanding the school garden and transforming it into both a nature-based playground space for the school's early childhood program and an outdoor classroom space for our K-6 program. DWS has offered after-school groups to help students through physical activity, math, and book clubs.



Discovery Woods School is working to continue student growth and proficiency in reading, and drastically improving 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. During the 2025-26 school year, the school's PLCs worked to align the math curriculum to the new Minnesota math standards, and this work will continue into the 2026-27 school year. The Director, in association with the academic interventionist and preschool lead teacher, have worked toward improving the school's preschool programming by adding Teaching Strategies GOLD rubrics, which guided the creation of developmentally appropriate preschool assessments in literacy and math foundational skills. The school would like to continue to focus

enrollment efforts at the earliest level - in the school's preschool program, and then to retain these students as they decide on a Kindergarten program. The changes being implemented to improve the preschool programming will help attract more families to the school and convince more families that our school offers a quality educational program all the way from preschool to grade 6. Continued work 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.