



Discovery Woods - District # 4198
Board of Directors Board Meeting
5:00-6:30 p.m. at 604 N 7th Street, Brainerd, MN 56401
Date: October 23, 2025

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.

Board of Directors' Purpose

To provide leadership, set policy, and develop accountability practices that will ensure high student achievement.

Called to order at 5:06 pm by Emma Needham

Present: Ashley Gangestad, Chasidi Grant, Denise Belden, Dawn Snook, Rebekah Kent-Ehlebracht, Matt Hastert, Emma Needham

Absent: Melina Kramer

Ex-Officio: Kara DeVriendt

Guests:

1. Community Forum - (3 minutes)-
2. Charter School Finance Committee Report
 - i. September [Financials](#) and [Supplement](#)
 - ii. Cash and fund balance are both healthy. There are some that are high percentages but there is a plan to cover those. The audit is going well. The board might have the audit meeting in December rather than November.
 - iii. Motion to accept the September Financials. M/S Rebekah/Dawn Chasidi- yes, Denise-yes, Matt-yes, Emma-yes, Ashley-yes, Dawn-yes, Rebekah-yes. Motion passed.
3. Minutes from Prior Meeting: [September 18, 2025](#)
 - a. Motion to accept the September 18, 2025 minutes. M/S Emma/Dawn. Motion passed.
4. Board Training - [Osprey Sounding Board: Staff Retention](#)
 - a. Employee encouragement cards, staff birthdays, and anniversaries. The board could sign all of the birthday cards and anniversaries at one time.
 - b. Boarding Training Folder/Tracking options. An online copy of training needed for the board.
 - c. Financial training for some of the new board members. The chair will create the online copy of training.
5. Old and/or Unfinished Business:
 - a. Strategic Plan
 - i. We can take off some of the strategic plan and keep parts of it.
 - ii. Build up preschool instead of older students.
 - iii. Look at enrollment paperwork and procedures.
 - iv. Budget for recruitment of more students.
 - v. Book fair fundraisers, online wallet and donations from other family members. Sharing very specific links and what those links do. Online book ordering can also get teachers books.
 - vi. Student recruitment social media committee.
 - vii. Work meeting on October 30, 2025 to further discuss strategic plans.

6. School Director's report:

- a. 5th/6th grade change
 - i. Having behavioral dynamics so we have two groups of students with separate lunch and recess times.
 - ii. The behavioral team has made schedules and two rooms to take a break in or work in.
 - iii. There are plans and everyone is following through with the plans.
- b. Title application approved in MEGS
 - i. Switched from Schoolwide to Targeted Services for Title I
 - ii. How we use our funds targeted services is a better choice for our school.
 - iii. It doesn't change the funding, it changes how we can use the funding.
- c. Personnel:
 - i. Resignations -
 1. EA, Alyssa Christmann (effective 9/26/25)
 - a. Motion to accept the resignation of Alyssa Christmann. M/S Rebekah/Dawn. Chasidi- yes, Denise-yes, Matt-yes, Emma-yes, Ashley-yes, Dawn-yes, Rebekah-yes. Motion passed.
 - ii. On leave indefinitely -
 1. EA, Abbey Thurstin
 - a. Motion to accept the leave of Abbey Thurstin. M/S Rebekah/Dawn. Chasidi- yes, Denise-yes, Matt-yes, Emma-yes, Ashley-yes, Dawn-yes, Rebekah-yes. Motion passed.
 - iii. Change of Status -
 1. EA, Abby Rees (full-time to part-time)
 - a. Motion to accept the change of status of Abby Rees. M/S Rebekah/Dawn. Chasidi- yes, Denise-yes, Matt-yes, Emma-yes, Ashley-yes, Dawn-yes, Rebekah-yes. Motion passed.
 - iv. Hires -
 1. Brittany Thurstin - EA
 - a. Motion to accept the hire of Brittany Thurstin. M/S Rebekah/Dawn. Chasidi- yes, Denise-yes, Matt-yes, Emma-yes, Ashley-yes, Dawn-yes, Rebekah-yes. Motion passed.
 2. Breanna Mott - EA
 - a. Motion to accept the hire of Breanna Mott. M/S Rebekah/Dawn. Chasidi- yes, Denise-yes, Matt-yes, Emma-yes, Ashley-yes, Dawn-yes, Rebekah-yes. Motion passed.
 3. Tosha Nelson - EA
 - a. Motion to accept the hire of Tosha Nelson. M/S Rebekah/Dawn. Chasidi- yes, Denise-yes, Matt-yes, Emma-yes, Ashley-yes, Dawn-yes, Rebekah-yes. Motion passed.
 4. Madelyn Harper - EA
 - a. Motion to accept the hire of Madelyn Harper. M/S Rebekah/Dawn. Chasidi- yes, Denise-yes, Matt-yes, Emma-yes, Ashley-yes, Dawn-yes, Rebekah-yes. Motion passed.
 5. Kayla Johnson - EA
 - a. Motion to accept the hire of Kayla Johnson. M/S Rebekah/Dawn. Chasidi- yes, Denise-yes, Matt-yes, Emma-yes, Ashley-yes, Dawn-yes, Rebekah-yes. Motion passed.
 6. Amber Kounkel - Part-time Office Assistant
 - a. Motion to accept the hire of Amber Kounkel. M/S Rebekah/Dawn.

Chasidi- yes, Denise-yes, Matt-yes, Emma-yes, Ashley-yes, Dawn-yes, Rebekah-yes. Motion passed.

d. Accept Annual Report

- i. Motion to accept the Annual Report. M/S Emma/Dawn. Motion passed.

e. Enrollment:

Enrollment Year End 2024-2025:

Current numbers for 2025-2026:

PK	19	PK	20
K	8	K	12
1	11	1	8
2	12	2	9
3	17	3	7
4	10	4	12
5	11	5	7
6	12	6	5
Total = 100 K-6 = 81 PreK = 19		Total = 80 K-6 = 60 PreK = 20	

Sent out a letter to all parents about reaching out to the Executive Director and what bullying is and isn't. The climate of the school is feeling good.

There are conflicts at Rec because of our playground equipment.

7. PTO Policy

- a. The state minimum that was updated in the PTO policy unintentionally reduced the PTO allotted to non-licensed staff
- i. Change language in "Sick and Paid Time Off" Policy 5.19 for non-licensed staff from "1 hour of paid time off for every 30 hours worked" to "1 hour of paid time off for every 25 hours worked".
1. This change will equal about 7 days/school year of PTO, which is equivalent to what was being earned previously.
- b. Hard to calculate because of hours worked by EA. It is easier to do hours instead of whole days.
- c. Motion to change the language in Sick and Paid time Off policy 5.19 for non-licensed staff. M/S Rebekah/Emma M/S Rebekah/Dawn. Chasidi- yes, Denise-yes, Matt-yes, Emma-yes, Ashley-yes, Dawn-yes, Rebekah-yes. Motion passed.

8. School Security Update

- a. See Proposal
- b. Is there a contract?
- c. There is a grant to help us with the cost of switching.
- d. Is it part of the Whittier Capital Group? We need to check with them before switching.
- e. Do we have to have a bid from several businesses? Check the procurement policy.
- f. Failsafe in case the Executive Director is gone. Have other people be able to talk to the security company.
- g. Motion to table until we have more information. M/S Emma/Rebekah Motion passed.

9. Switch to Parent Square for Payment Vendor (Current Vendor is RevTrak)
- See Quote
 - There is a budget line for non-instructional software.
 - JMC connects to MARSS. We can't get rid of JMC and go with Parent Square.
 - It is the change for RevTrak.
 - Motion to table until we know the cost savings and procurement of the building is finalized and a contract with RevTrak. M/S Emma/Rebekah. Motion Passed.

10. Review board goals and Calendar

- [Board Goals 2025-2026](#)
- [Board Calendar:](#)

Current Month:

OCTOBER

- Accept Annual Report (Due November 1)
- Review progress against contractual academic/environmental goals and outstanding obligations
- Policy review

Next Month:

NOVEMBER

- Review and accept the audit
- Review Comprehensive Achievement & Civic Readiness (Due November 30)
- Preview the annual policy review schedule

Next Board Meeting: November 20, 2025

Next Board Work Meeting: October 30, 2025

Meeting adjourned by Emma at 6:36pm. M/S Emma/Rebekah Motion passed.

Board minutes submitted by Ashley Gangestad