



ANNUAL REPORT

and Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report

2024-2025

Discovery Public School of Faribault | discovery@isd4081.org

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SCHOOL INFORMATION

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Discovery Public School of Faribault is a charter school in Faribault, MN serving students in grades 6-12.

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Discovery Public School of Faribault is to provide students in grades 6-12 a learning environment and social structure that gives them the tools and knowledge necessary to lead satisfying and productive lives upon graduation.

OUR VISION

The vision of Discovery Public School of Faribault is to meet the current and future needs of middle and high school students by providing a stable and consistent environment in which each student builds necessary social, academic, personal, and career skills for a satisfying and productive life.

To reach this vision, the school integrates the following methods in its instructional program:

- ◆ A variety of instructional strategies to engage students
- ◆ Small class sizes
- ◆ Student established short- and long-term goals
- ◆ Career assessment and exploration of post-secondary options
- ◆ Integration of technology in core classes

Discovery Public School of Faribault is a sixth through twelfth grade public school that provides a free educational alternative for students and parents in the Faribault community and beyond. It is operated independently from the Faribault School District and governed by a board of directors made up of parents, teachers, and community members elected by the school

community. School board meetings and elections are open to the public. School board meetings are held the third Thursday of each month, and elections are held during the month of May. For more information regarding meeting times or dates, and/or regarding school board vacancies and voting information, please contact the school at 507-331-5423 or visit our website at isd4081.org.

As a charter school, Discovery Public School of Faribault is open to all students who apply, according to our lottery policy. The school's current enrollment is approximately 50 students. Class sizes range from 15-20 students, with a 1 to 9 teacher to student ratio. It is our firm belief that all students can be successful, but many need smaller class sizes and more one-on-one attention to achieve their potential. A main area of concentration for the school is raising student attendance rates and preparing students for success after school – whether that is college or career.

AUTHORIZER INFORMATION

Osprey Wilds Environmental Center (formerly The Audubon Center of the North Woods) has been authorizing Discovery Public School of Faribault since 2011. The school's current three-year contract with Osprey Wilds was extended by one year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This extended contract ran from July of 2019 through June of 2024, and has been renewed for another five years as of June 2024.

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

The authorizing vision of Osprey Wilds is to authorize a portfolio of high performing charter schools that instill a connection and commitment to the environment in their school communities, while working towards a healthy planet where all people live in balance with the Earth.

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IMPLEMENTATION OF STATUTORY PURPOSES

The primary purpose of Discovery Public School of Faribault is to improve student learning and student achievement. At Discovery Public School we aim to have all students graduate with the following skills and attitudes:

- ◆ Proficiency in basic reading, writing, and math skills
- ◆ Knowledge, skills, and ability to be college and/or career ready
- ◆ Knowledge and skills to be productive citizens
- ◆ Proficiency in using technology
- ◆ A willingness to hold themselves accountable for their decisions
- ◆ Resilience and self-advocacy

A key strategy we use to increase the level of student engagement and learning is encouraging teachers to use a variety of instructional models. When each teacher has a unique approach, students get variety throughout the day, making each class novel when compared to all teachers implementing the same strategies. Teachers are also encouraged to differentiate instruction as much as possible. By focusing on the unique needs of the student in our instruction we can fill gaps in prior learning and ensure an equitable learning experience for all students, with the goal of closing the racial and economic achievement gap.

Another purpose we address is the use of different and innovative teaching methods. At DPS, teachers use many innovative teaching methods. Teachers are encouraged to think outside the box and try new approaches in each subject. The school has been exploring different activities involving Environmental Education, such as a school-wide recycling, food waste, and composting program. We are also implementing more technology in the classroom. Students use Google Classroom for assignments in various classes. Math classes are taught with an integrated math curriculum and collaborative learning which has been shown to increase student learning. Math students also use online graphing tools and Khan Academy to be ready for a technological world. Science classes are taught using hands-on learning in a project-based learning model. Our science classes have also begun raising trout for the Trout in the Schools program. This has been a successful collaboration, with students preparing the aquarium, caring for the hatchlings, and releasing them in a trout stream in the spring. This year we also collaborated with River Bend Nature Center for an Earth Day field trip. Students planted trees and experienced some upcycling activities.



Another statutory purpose of Discovery Public School is to increase learning opportunities for students. DPS is constantly trying to create new learning opportunities for students. We offer independent study options to some of our most advanced students to further challenge them. We have plans to explore new electives, and we are also encouraging students who are eligible to participate in PSEO to earn college credit while still in high school.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND DEMOGRAPHICS

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Enrollment at DPS generally fluctuates between 50 and 65 students. Enrollment has dropped over the past few years, originally due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Decreasing enrollment has been a trend across the country as parents are choosing options other than traditional public schools to provide an education for their children.

Student Enrollment by Grade

STUDENT ENROLLMENT BY GRADE	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Grade 6	3	0	0	3
Grade 7	6	7	3	0
Grade 8	5	8	6	4
Grade 9	11	11	8	11
Grade 10	8	9	14	8
Grade 11	8	8	10	9
Grade 12	9	6	7	10
Total	50	49	48	45
Total ADM (average daily membership) for year	48.11	48.04	51.02	47.07

DEMOGRAPHICS

The student population at Discovery Public School of Faribault remains relatively consistent. Our population is somewhat diverse. Approximately 29% of our students are from diverse backgrounds. We have a high percentage of students of low socio-economic status. Students who qualify for free or reduced lunches make up approximately 84% of our population. We also serve many students receiving special education services. These students make up nearly 60% of our student population.

Student Demographics

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total Enrollment	50	49	48	45
Male	34	33	33	32
Female	16	17	15	13
Special Education	22	25	23	26
English Language Learners	0	0	0	0
Free or Reduced Lunch	27	41	37	38
Black (not of Hispanic origin)	1	0	0	0
Hispanic/Latino	8	14	9	11
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	1	2	0
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0
White (not of Hispanic origin)	38	33	35	34
Two or more races	2	2	2	0

STUDENT ATTENDANCE, RETENTION, AND MOBILITY

Retaining students and keeping our enrollment as high as possible is an important goal of Discovery Public School. We aim to make Discovery a safe place so that students enjoy their time in school and experience academic success.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Attendance is a challenge we face at Discovery Public School. Many of our students come to us with a history of poor attendance. It is our goal to help them improve attendance. Our staff provides more personal attention to attendance. Parents are called consistently when a student is absent in hopes that making the parent aware of the absence in a timely fashion will motivate both parent and students to attend school regularly.

MDE has moved away from the traditional attendance rate to consistent attendance to evaluate student attendance. Consistent Attendance is the percentage of students who were present at least 90% of their scheduled school days.

Consistent Attendance

STUDENT CONSISTENT ATTENDANCE	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Consistent Attendance <i>(percentage of students who were in attendance at least 90% of the days enrolled)</i>	39.47%	37.16%	36.50%

To meet the attendance challenge, our school has a No Credit policy. If a student misses a class more than 7 times in one quarter, they receive No Credit (NC) as a grade for that class, if they had completed enough work to be passing the class despite the absences. Students may earn back the credit in those classes by improving their attendance the following quarter.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we have been unable to fully implement our NC policy in recent years, as it could unfairly impact students who choose to quarantine. Last year we began to re-implement our NC policy, while making exceptions for students with known long-term illnesses. This year we continued to implement the policy with discretion.

Moving forward, we may adjust our No Credit policy to encourage students to miss fewer than seven days in a quarter. We are also working on building stronger relationships with students to improve attendance rates.

STUDENT RETENTION

Retention of students from year to year is an important factor in education. At Discovery Public School, typically over 70% of students continue with us from year to year. We also have many students start at DPS in the spring and continue to the following year. Compared to last year, we noticed a decrease in student retention from spring to the following year and in the percentage of students who stayed with us from October 1, 2023 to October 1, 2024.

We have also noticed that students who initially transferred to Discovery because they struggled academically, but who have become good students in their time here, are leaving Discovery. These students have been transferring back to traditional high schools looking for more opportunities and elective options. We are proud of these students and sad to see them go.

Student Retention

STUDENT RETENTION	2022-23
Percentage of students who were continuously enrolled between October 1, 2023 and October 1, 2024	61.36%
Percentage of students who continued enrollment at DPS from Spring 2024 through October 1, 2024	70.45%

STUDENT MOBILITY

We generally see relatively low student mobility. This year we started the year with relatively low enrollment, but gained several students over the course of the year. Student mobility at DPS has increased slightly over the past few years (the number of students enrolled for most of the year has decreased). Fortunately this year mobility was in our favor. Our ADM was larger than our student count at the beginning of the year.

Student Mobility

School Year	Number of students enrolled ≥ 95% of school days	Number of students enrolled on October 1	Percent
2020-21	44	55	80.0%
2021-22	39	51	76.5%
2022-23	37	49	75.5%
2023-24	34	48	70.8%
2024-25	34	46	73.9%

EDUCATIONAL APPROACH AND CURRICULUM

The vision of Discovery Public School is to meet the current and future needs of middle and high school students by providing a stable and consistent environment in which each student builds the necessary social, academic, personal, and career skills for a satisfying and productive life.

Students come to Discovery for a variety of reasons. The goal of the school is to help them graduate and prepare them for life after high school. We use several strategies to meet this goal. We are a small school, which is often the main reason a student begins at Discovery. Our smaller total population and small class sizes – fewer than 25 in any given classroom – provide a more stable environment for students. Many students come to us because they have been unsuccessful in a traditional public-school environment and are thus behind in credits. One of the first steps we take with a new student is to look over their transcript and then meet with the student to develop a graduation plan. Our flexibility in scheduling allows us to make changes or offer independent study courses to make sure each student can meet the graduation requirements as quickly as possible. We also meet with every current student multiple times a year to discuss their credits and set goals to keep them on track to graduate.

All teachers align their curriculum to the Minnesota State Academic Standards. All students must meet the graduation requirements set forth by the Minnesota Department of Education. Our graduation requirements are as follows:

Graduation Requirements

SUBJECT	CREDITS REQUIRED
English	4.0 credits
Social Studies	3.5 credits (including 0.5 in economics)
Science	3.0 credits (including at least 1 credit in biology)
Math	3.0 credits
Physical Education	1.0 credits
Health	0.5 credits
Fine Arts	1.0 credits
Elective	6.5 credits (extra subject credits are applied as elective credit)
Total	22.5 credits

In addition, all seniors take a Career Readiness class in which they explore potential careers and the pathways required, financial management, personal management, technology use, and create an annual yearbook. The Freshman Seminar class is similar to the Career Readiness class. Freshmen work with seniors on the yearbook and community service. They also work through all four School Connect modules. School Connect is a social-emotional learning curriculum that we were able to purchase with a grant from Faribault Youth Investment. Our first years of this class have been very successful. Our ninth-grade students tend to be on track to graduate at the end of the year, and they seem to be a little more focused on school than some of the other grades. This was our fourth year, and results were good. Most of the students took the class seriously and really excelled throughout the year. This was also our first year where the seniors taking Career Readiness had also taken Freshman Seminar. The seniors seemed to be better prepared at the start of Career Readiness, even though many of them were still undecided on their future plans.



Curriculum mapping and lesson planning are required of all teachers at DPS to ensure that each curriculum aligns to state standards. Teachers can use any format for their lesson planning, but

must, at minimum, show a daily learning target and activities or assignments students will be expected to complete.

As much as possible, teachers are encouraged to use different and innovative teaching strategies to meet the standards in their subject area. Science is approached through an environmental lens to support our environmental goals and incorporates a large amount of hands-on and project-based learning. Mathematics is taught using an integrated curriculum and research-based methods to give students a deeper understanding of problem solving than



many traditional curricula require. English is taught using a teacher-developed curriculum that is aligned to both MN State Standards and Common Core Standards. Social Studies is taught using many research projects to allow students to explore subjects through their personal interests. Accelerated students are usually challenged in the regular classroom but have also been allowed to work at an accelerated pace somewhat independently. Remediation is also included in the regular classroom when possible, or by including students in a lower grade-level class in addition to their regular grade level class in areas where remediation is necessary. Math Intervention and Reading Intervention classes have also been added for students with specific needs in those subjects.

The Special Education Program plays a big part in the success of the school. The school employs one full-time special education teacher and three

paraprofessionals. Due to a lack of applicants we continue to supplement our Special Education Program with a licensed teacher who works with students virtually through Teleteachers. This arrangement has worked well overall, and the virtual teacher we worked with was very effective and professional. Paraprofessionals work with students in the regular education classroom or in the special education resource room, depending on each student's needs. The

most recent MDE Compliance Review determined that the school's current special education programs are conducted consistently with state and federal laws and rules.

The school did not have any English Language Learners during the 2024-25 school year but has a plan in place in the event an ELL student enrolls.

Discovery Public School offers two summer school sessions. These sessions are mainly in place to help students that are behind in credits, although summer school is available to all 9th through 12th grade students. Summer school is individualized to meet the credit recovery needs of students, to keep them on track to graduate.

The 2024-25 school year ran from August 26, 2024 to May 29, 2025. Our original calendar included 166 instructional days. Our daily schedule is from 8:15 am to 3:00 pm.

This year we offered three after-school options. Sports Club is one of our after-school activities for students. They meet once a week to socialize and participate in activities. Most of the activities are physical in nature, but occasionally they do quieter activities. This is a beneficial program for our population. Some of our students do not have a lot of time outside of school to spend with their friends. This gives them that opportunity, and the opportunity to make new friends. Our second offering this year was Engineering Club. Students meet once a week to design and build a supermileage car. The students entered the car in the supermileage competition at Brainerd International Raceway in the spring.



Our third after-school option was a Dungeons and Dragons club that met once per week. Students in this club had a lot of fun and built some strong relationships with each other and the teacher adviser.



INNOVATIVE PRACTICES AND IMPLEMENTATION

Discovery Public School is unique in that we can offer students a more personalized approach to learning. Our small size allows staff to get to know students better than at a larger school. Administration also knows students on a more personal level. Knowing students well allows us to better adapt instruction to meet their unique needs. In some cases this means adjusting the schedule of a student who needs more credits in a specific subject, encouraging students to take college level classes through the PSEO program, or adjusting daily lessons to meet the needs and interests of each student. Having access to technology increases this potential by providing varied options for students. Some students work better with technology, some work better with pencil and paper. Understanding our students and having this flexibility gives us an innovative approach to teaching.

In past years students have successfully completed college courses through the PSEO program. Many of these students would not have been offered this opportunity in a larger, traditional public school, but our staff recognized the potential of these students and encouraged them to enroll. Several seniors earned required credits through independent study courses that they were able to complete outside of the regular classroom. This year teachers used Chromebooks frequently in their classrooms to vary the lessons to meet a variety of learning styles.

Despite this flexibility, many students still struggle with attendance and motivation issues. To address these challenges, we offer a Freshman Seminar class that includes a Social Emotional Learning element to teach students the non-academic skills they need to be successful both in school and beyond. Our hope is that by helping students begin high school with the skills they need they will maintain their motivation to graduate all through high school. In addition to the Freshman Seminar class, we also offered additional pay to our Freshman Seminar and Career Readiness teachers to take the time to meet with students more



frequently, especially through tenth and eleventh grade, to keep them on track between Freshman Seminar and Career Readiness, which is taken senior year.

The school's Strategic Plan includes a focus on academic proficiency and growth, supporting all students through graduation, preparing all students for college and/or career, improving attendance, increasing enrollment, and encouraging community partnerships.

Activities from this year that supported our Strategic Plan include:

- ◆ Continued focus on innovative teaching methods with increased use of technology to provide individualized practice and engaging lessons.
- ◆ Career Readiness and Freshman Seminar classes to support students in staying on track to graduate and prepare them for college and/or career.
- ◆ Mrs. Hansen and Ms. Luthé met with all students after NWEA testing to set individual goals for students, and continued to check in with them regularly about credits.
- ◆ Relationship building with students to improve school culture and attendance.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: GOALS AND BENCHMARKS

Meeting our academic goals is a priority at Discovery Public School of Faribault. The Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on the academic proficiency of our students, but despite setbacks, our students appear to be gaining proficiency.

Academic growth in reading dropped significantly this year, but students in math and science have shown average growth. Students in math have also shown signs of closing the socio-economic achievement gap. Students who received free/reduced priced lunch have performed as well or better on math assessments than all students combined for the past few years.

INDICATOR 1: MISSION RELATED OUTCOMES

Goal: Over the period of the contract, students at Discovery Public School (DPS) will demonstrate satisfactory progress toward graduation. This goal is measured by calculating each student’s credits at the end of each year. Students who will be able to earn 22.5 credits by the end of senior year are counted as “on track.”

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by This Goal: This goal addresses the WBWF goal area that all students graduate.

Key Measures and 2024-25 Results

Measure 1.1 [CCR] – From FY24 to FY28, the aggregate percentage of students in grades 9-12 who will be on-track to graduate will be equal to or greater than 70%.

2024-25 Results: In FY24, out of 41 high school students (grades 9-12), 31 were on track to graduate on time (75.6%).

This measure increased over last year.

INDICATOR 2: ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The school does not have a contractual goal in this indicator area as it does not serve a significant population of English Language Learners.

INDICATOR 3: READING GROWTH

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

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by This Goal: This goal addresses the WBWF goal area that all racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.

Key Measures and 2024-25 Results

Measure 3.1 [CCR]: In aggregate, from FY24 to FY28, 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 percentage.

2024-25 Results: The percentage of students whose achievement level improved was 0.0% (0/16 students).

Measure 3.2 [CCR]: In aggregate, from FY24 to FY28, 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.

2024-25 Results: The percentage of students whose achievement level decreased or stayed "does not meet standards" on statewide reading assessments was 62.5% (10/16 students).

Measure 3.3 [CCR]: From FY24 to FY28, the aggregate percentage of students in grades 6-12 who meet their fall to spring NWEA RIT expected growth target as measured by the NWEA MAP Reading assessment will be at least 50%.

2024-25 Results: The percentage of students who met their fall to spring NWEA RIT expected growth target in reading was 54.1% (20/37 students).

After last year's results, our English teacher implemented more independent reading as a counter measure to help ensure that students continue to grow in reading. Growth improved tremendously this year, confirming that last year's results were an anomaly.

INDICATOR 4: MATH GROWTH

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

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by This Goal: This goal addresses the WBWF goal area that all racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.

Key Measures and 2024-25 Results

Measure 4.1 [CCR]: In aggregate, from FY24 to FY28, 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.

2024-25 Results: The percentage of students whose achievement level improved was 0.0% (0/16 students).

Measure 4.2 ([CCR]: In aggregate, from FY24 to FY28, 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.

2024-25 Results: The percentage of students whose achievement level decreased or stayed "does not meet standards" on statewide math assessments was 100.0% (16/16 students).

Measure 4.3 [CCR]: From FY24 to FY28, the aggregate percentage of students in grades 6-12 who meet their fall to spring NWEA RIT expected growth target as measured by the NWEA MAP Math assessment will be at least 50%.

2024-25 Results: The percentage of students who met their fall to spring NWEA RIT expected growth target in math was 56.8% (21/37 students).

Students have consistently shown greater than average growth over the past few years. We believe this is the effect of changing to an integrated math curriculum. Integrated math has been shown to improve outcomes for all students, including disabled students and students who struggle in a traditional math classroom.

INDICATOR 5: READING PROFICIENCY

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

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by This Goal: This goal addresses the WBWF goal area that all racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.

Key Measures and 2024-25 Results

Measure 5.1 [CCR]: From FY24 to FY28, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in grades 6-8 & 10 will be greater than the aggregate average of alternative schools in Minnesota for the same grades.

2024-25 Results: The aggregate proficiency index for students in grades 6-8 & 10 for state reading assessments was 31.6.*

Measure 5.2 [AGC]: From FY24 to FY28, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch group will be greater than that of alternative schools in Minnesota for the same group and the same grades (6-8 & 10).

2024-25 Results: The aggregate proficiency index for students who received free or reduced priced lunch in grades 6-8 & 10 on state reading assessments was 29.4.*

Reading proficiency for students receiving free or reduced priced lunch has been comparable to reading proficiency for all students for the past few years.

Measure 5.3 [AGC]: From FY24 to FY28, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Special Education group will be greater than that of alternative schools for the same group and the same grades (6-8 & 10).

2024-25 Results: The proficiency index for students who received special education services in grades 6-8 & 10 on state reading assessments was 25.0.*

Reading proficiency for students receiving special education services has been consistent or increasing over the past few years. Proficiency for this group of students is approaching that for all students combined. We feel we are making progress in this area.

*The proficiency index is a percentage calculation based on the number of students scoring in each of four achievement levels: exceeds, meets, partially meets, and does not meet expectations. Each student who meets or exceeds counts 1 point, each student who partially meets counts 0.5, and each student who does not meet counts 0. Points are totaled, divided by the total number of students assessed, and represented as percentage.

INDICATOR 6: MATH PROFICIENCY

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

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by This Goal: This goal addresses the WBWF goal area that all racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.

Math proficiency has increased since the pandemic. This year our proficiency rate more than doubled last year’s rate and nearly reached our pre-pandemic proficiency rate.

Key Measures and 2024-25 Results

Measure 6.1 [CCR]: From FY24 to FY28, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in grades 6-8 & 10 will be greater than the aggregate average of alternative schools in Minnesota for the same grades.

2024-25 Results: The proficiency index for students in grades 6-8 & 11 for state math assessments was 9.1.*

Measure 6.2 [AGC]: From FY24 to FY28, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch group will be greater than that of alternative schools in Minnesota for the same group and the same grades (6-8 & 11).

2024-25 Results: The proficiency index for students receiving free or reduced priced lunch in grades 6-8 & 11 for state math assessments was 9.1.*

Students receiving free or reduced priced lunch have demonstrated proficiency in math that is consistent with all students combined. This shows that our integrated math curriculum is working well to support all students in learning mathematics and close the achievement gap.

Measure 6.3 [AGC]: From FY24 to FY28, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Special Education group will be greater than that of alternative schools for the same group and the same grades (6-8 & 11).

2024-25 Results: The proficiency index for students receiving special education services in grades 6-8 & 11 for state math assessments was 5.0.*

Students receiving special education services are still not demonstrating proficiency in math as frequently as all students combined, although there was a slight increase this year. We find that the struggles they have in the classroom, whether behavioral or academic, make it difficult for them to achieve proficiency as measure by the MCAs. We have seen strong growth in math from several students in this population, but unfortunately not enough for them to reach full proficiency.

*The proficiency index is a percentage calculation based on the number of students scoring in each of four achievement levels: exceeds, meets, partially meets, and does not meet expectations..

INDICATOR 7: SCIENCE PROFICIENCY (AND GROWTH)

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

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by This Goal: This goal addresses the WBWF goal area that all racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.

Key Measures and 2024-25 Results

Measure 7.1 [CCR]: From FY24 to FY28, the school’s aggregate proficiency index score for students in grades 6-8 & HS will be greater than the aggregate average of alternative schools in Minnesota for the same grades.

2024-25 Results: The proficiency index for students in grades 8 & 10 for state science assessments was 9.4.*

Measure 7.2 [CCR]: From FY24 to FY28, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch group will be greater than that of alternative schools in Minnesota for the same group and the same grades (6-8 & 11).

2024-25 Results: The proficiency index for students receiving free or reduced priced lunch in grades 8 & 10 for state science assessments was 11.5.*

The new Science MCA assessment was implemented in the 2024-25 school year. We saw a large decrease in proficiency this year with the new test based on updated standards. These results cannot be compared to previous years.

Measure 7.3 [CCR]: From FY24 to FY28, the aggregate percentage of students in grades 6-12 who meet their fall to spring NWEA RIT expected growth target as measured by the NWEA MAP Science assessment will be at least 50%.

2024-25 Results: The percentage of students who met their fall to spring NWEA RIT expected growth target in science was 45.7% (16/35 students).

*The proficiency index is a percentage calculation based on the number of students scoring in each of four achievement levels: exceeds, meets, partially meets, and does not meet expectations. Each student who meets or exceeds counts 1 point, each student who partially meets counts 0.5, and each student who does not meet counts 0. Points are totaled, divided by the total number of students assessed, and represented as percentage.

INDICATOR 8: WRITING PROFICIENCY

Goal: Over the period of the contract, students at DPS will demonstrate proficiency in writing as measured by the 2010 MCA GRAD Writing Rubric.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by This Goal: This goal addresses the WBWF goal area that all racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.

Key Measures and 2024-25 Results

Measure 8.1 [CCR]: From FY24 to FY28, the aggregate percentage of students in grades 6-12 who achieve a score of at least 3.0 on a five-paragraph essay as measured by the MCA GRAD Writing Rubric will be at least 80%.

2024-25 Results: Of students in grades 6-12, 79.5% (31/39 students) scored at least a 3.0 on a five-paragraph essay.

INDICATOR 9: POST-SECONDARY READINESS

Goal: Over the period of the contract, students at DPS will demonstrate readiness for post-secondary success.

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by This Goal: This goal addresses the WBWF goal area that all students are career- and college-ready before graduating from high school.

Key Measures and 2024-25 Results

Measure 9.1 [GRAD]: From FY24 to FY28, the aggregate 6-year graduation rate will be at least 67.0%.

2024-25 Results: Graduation rates lag by one year. The six-year graduation rate for FY23 was 75.0% (6/8 students).

Our six year graduation rate is recovering from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. We expect our graduation rates to show more consistency or improve over the next few years.

Measure 9.2 [CCR, LL]: From FY24 to FY28, the aggregate percentage of 12th graders who score at least 70 out of 100 on the school-developed rubric for their Life Plan project will be at least 70%.

2024-25 Results: Out of 9 seniors completing a full year at DPS, 9 of them (100.0%) scored 70% or greater on their Life Plan Project.

Measure 9.3 [CCR, LL]: From FY24 to FY28, the aggregate percentage of 12th graders who earn a Job Skills Certificate will be at least 80%.

2024-25 Results: Out of 9 seniors completing a full year at DPS, 8 of them (88.9%) earned a Job Skills Certificate.

INDICATOR 10: ATTENDANCE

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

WBWF Goal Areas Addressed by This Goal: This goal addresses two WBWF goal areas, that all students graduate from high school and that all students are career- and college-ready before graduating from high school.

Key Measures and 2024-25 Results

Measure 10.1 From FY24-28, the average of the school's annual consistent attendance rates is equal to or greater than that of the aggregate of alternative schools in the state.

2024-25 Results: Our Consistent Attendance rate for FY23 was 36.5. These results are lagged by one year.

FEDERAL AND STATE ACCOUNTABILITY

High Quality Charter School Status: Discovery Public School of Faribault has not been identified as a High Quality Charter School.

ESSA Identification: Discovery Public School of Faribault has been identified for support under ESSA.

ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC DATA

Our school has many success stories that are not evidenced in the academic data provided above. On a daily basis we see students succeed where they have failed at previous schools. Many of our students develop skills at Discovery and then take those skills on to a larger school before they graduate. Students who remain at Discovery frequently participate in the PSEO program, earning college credit before they graduate. Much of the success we observe is not easily quantified or tracked. We get excited when a student applies math learned in a previous math class to solve a problem, or when a student who struggles with behavior stays out of the office for two weeks straight. We especially know our success with these students when they tell us they think we are awesome teachers. Our alumni and current families frequently recommend Discovery to those they know. To us, that is why our school is needed in this community.



COMPREHENSIVE ACHIEVEMENT AND CIVIC READINESS STRATEGIC PLAN REPORT

At Discovery Public School, we strive to educate our students effectively and equitably. Our small size gives us a distinct advantage in understanding the needs of each individual student. Many of the students that come to Discovery are academically behind because they have failed classes at their previous school. We begin by looking over each incoming student's transcripts to determine a plan to get them back on track, both academically and credit-wise.

ASSESSING STUDENT PROGRESS AND INSTRUCTIONAL STRENGTHS

Students' progress toward meeting state academic standards is evaluated through standardized testing, including the MCAs and NWEA MAP Growth assessments. Students take the NWEA assessments in the fall and again in the spring to determine their growth over the course of the year. Students also take MCAs in the spring, as required by the state of Minnesota.

Student data is disaggregated into three categories: all students combined, students eligible for free or reduced lunch, and students receiving special education services. Data on these groups is presented as part of our contractual goals with our authorizer. Average progress across these groups should be comparable to show our school's educational effectiveness for each of these groups. Recent data at DPS shows that these groups are performing at comparable levels, so we feel we are addressing the achievement gap well.

Discovery does not have a gifted and talented program. Our school population is similar to an ALC, so most of our students come to us because they were struggling in school. We do have students who need more challenges in the classroom. We provide them with differentiated learning and encourage these students to participate in PSEO to further challenge them.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION REVIEW SYSTEM

Student progress toward proficiency as well as toward graduation are the primary data we use to evaluate the effectiveness of our instructional program. Teachers are also observed and evaluated by our director as part of our program. We use all of this data to inform our board and the community about our effectiveness.

Another part of our program is that students are college and career ready. To evaluate our effectiveness in this area, we report on our 6-year graduation rate and our senior College and Career Readiness class. Seniors in this class develop a Life Plan Project and also earn a Job Skills Certificate. These projects as well as our academic proficiency levels help us evaluate.

Teachers at Discovery are evaluated based on the DPS Teacher Development, Evaluation, and Peer Support Model. New teachers will be formally observed by the Executive Director a minimum of twice a year during their first two years. The Executive Director also conducts Points of Contact, which are informal, brief observations, frequently during the school year. Teachers who have been teaching at DPS for more than two years are formally observed by the Executive Director at least once per year. Points of Contact are also conducted with all teachers, but may be less frequent with seasoned teachers.

Each year all teachers create an individual growth and development plan that includes areas for growth, at least one professional goal based on the Performance Standards for Teacher Practice (as articulated by Danielson), and activities for professional development, resources to meet goals, and evidence that will be used to evaluate goal achievement. In the spring of every year, teachers will complete a self-assessment to reflect on their progress toward their individual goals.

Our school board reviews our Strategic Plan annually and evaluates our director. During this review, the board is presented with feedback on our director from staff, parents, and students. Our director evaluates teachers annually and provides feedback on areas of improvement. We are aware that our teaching staff is not as diverse as our student population. We struggle to find qualified teachers of any ethnicity when we have an open position. We strive to at least provide qualified teachers who are a good fit when working with our population of students.

IMPROVING INSTRUCTION AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Improving proficiency rates is an ongoing challenge at Discovery with so many students who are behind academically when they start. We have examined our curriculum in math and English to address this need. In English we have implemented Read 180 in our Reading Intervention class, which includes most of our middle school students. Read 180 is a research-based curriculum designed to improve students' reading skills. In math, an integrated mathematics curriculum was implemented at the high school level. Integrated mathematics programs are designed to improve students' problem-solving skills. Research has shown that for students who are behind academically, integrated mathematics improves student learning better than traditional high school math pathways. Integrated mathematics programs have also been shown to improve learning in diverse populations, especially those whose needs are not met in a traditional math course.

Technology use has also been encouraged to personalize learning for students. Teachers use it to individualize learning to fill academic gaps, to engage students with interactive lessons, and as an assessment tool. Technology is also used in the classroom to ensure students leave DPS with proficiency in using technology. Seniors are required to demonstrate proficiency in technology as part of their Job Skills Certificate in College and Career Readiness.

The school’s regional representative from the Continuous Improvement Team at the Southeast Service Cooperative has provided professional development to improve our instructional strategies, including sessions on cultural competence and student engagement. The school also provided professional development on student mental health, understanding challenging behaviors, and strategies to improve academic performance.

We have not had any ELL students for the past several years. With the implementation of the Read Act, we will be instructing teachers on implementing reading strategies to support all learners, that will also support any ELL students that we enroll. As a small school we are able to quickly adapt to changes in our population, much quicker than a larger school would be able to.

EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF TEACHERS

Equitable access to the most effective teachers on our staff is not an issue in school as small as Discovery. All of our students have the same teacher for each subject. The only exception is for some students with Individualized Education Plans who are required to get extra support in core subjects from the qualified Special Education teachers on our staff.

	Licensed	3+ Years Experience	Working in Licensure Area	Advanced Degrees	Racially/ Ethnically Diverse
Teachers	100%	100%	71%	17%	0%
Administration	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%

When hiring new teachers, we seek the most qualified applicants to interview. We also seek teachers who are comfortable working with our population of students and are a good fit in our program. Our current staff is a very good fit with our students. Building a more diverse staff has been a challenge as we get very few applicants for any open positions. We feel the consistency of our current staff is a strength as well.

EDUCATION EFFECTIVENESS PRACTICES

The school’s foundational approach to educational effectiveness is differentiated learning. Teachers are encouraged to meet students’ needs at any academic level. Differentiation is also

used to identify and support students with learning gaps from their prior educational experiences.

The curriculum used in each core subject is chosen to be the best educational approach for that subject based on research. Our school uses curriculum that is naturally unbiased toward race. For example, traditional math instruction, in which students are expected to sit quietly and complete practice problems, has been found to be inherently biased against cultures that are non-white. Many students from a variety of cultures do not learn as well in a highly structured classroom. Our math classes are taught using integrated math that encourages group discussion and a variety of approaches to solve problems. Science classes are taught using hands-on methods and tend to be very active, supporting students with disabilities as well as students from a variety of backgrounds, including those of low socio-economic status and students of color. English is taught more explicitly, as research shows that explicit instruction is the best method for teaching reading. The books and stories used in English are chosen to represent a large variety of cultures, representing many of our students and exposing them to cultures and ideas that are different from their own. This is why our teachers are encouraged to use a variety of instructional methods.

Our small group of teachers is encouraged to be highly collaborative. Team teaching has been used often and is relatively easy for us to implement when teachers propose a new idea for a cross-curricular elective. Our Career Readiness and Freshman Seminar classes are taught collaboratively as well. Seniors and Freshmen work together on many aspects of the two classes, including community service projects and yearbook. Staff communicate and collaborate often in unstructured ways to form a tight-knit community. Teachers frequently mention that they feel supported and enjoy working at our school. The biggest challenge we face in retaining quality and ethnically diverse teachers is our budget and the applicants who apply.

STUDENT AND PARENT SATISFACTION

Each year, parents and students complete School Satisfaction Surveys. Parents are invited to complete the survey during Spring Parent/Teacher Conferences. Students normally complete a survey at the end of the year, but this year we had the opportunity to survey students with the help of the COMPASS Southeast Service Cooperative. They completed a student voice survey in which all students were interviewed to really understand how students feel about the school.

2024-25 PARENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

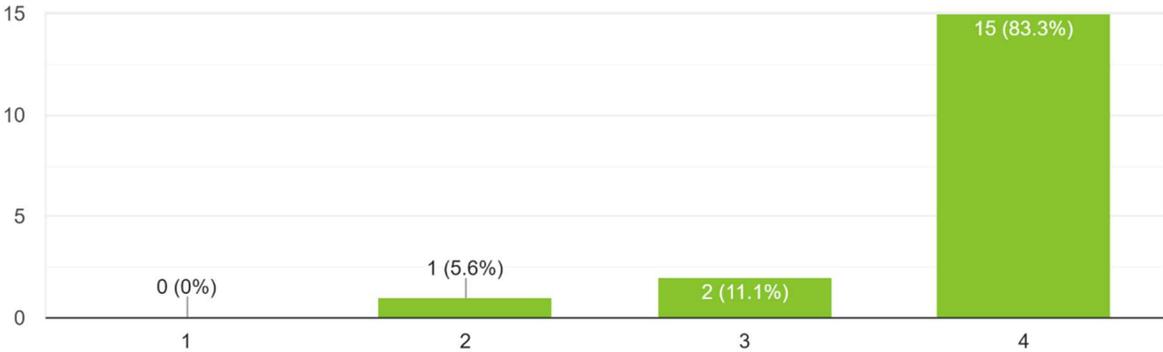
- ◆ 94.4% (17/18) of parents say that this school is a good place for their child to learn (3 or 4 on a 4-point scale)
- ◆ 88.8% of parents say that they feel like their child is safe at this school (16/18)

Most parents who completed the survey are satisfied with their student’s academic progress (3 or 4 on a 4-point scale). Only 2 out of 18 (11.1%) responded less than satisfactory (1 or 2 on a 4 point scale).

SPRING 2024-25 PARENT SURVEY

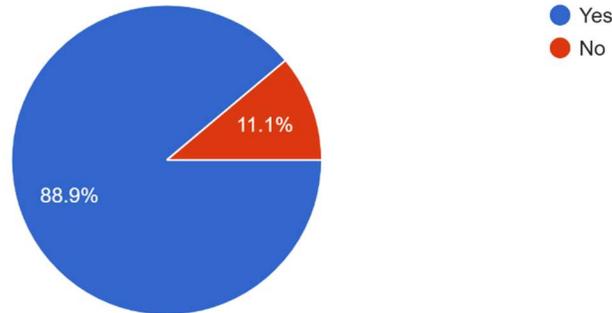
Overall, do you feel that Discovery Public School of Faribault is a good place for your child to receive an education?

18 responses



Do you feel that Discovery is a safe place for your child to attend school?

18 responses



2024-25 STUDENT VOICE SURVEY

In February of 2025, students were interviewed for the Student Voice Survey. Students were asked about how their experience at Discovery Public School compares to previous schools, how comfortable they feel at our school, and how we can improve. Overall, most felt that Discovery was a great learning experience.

How does your learning experience at DPS compare to your previous school?

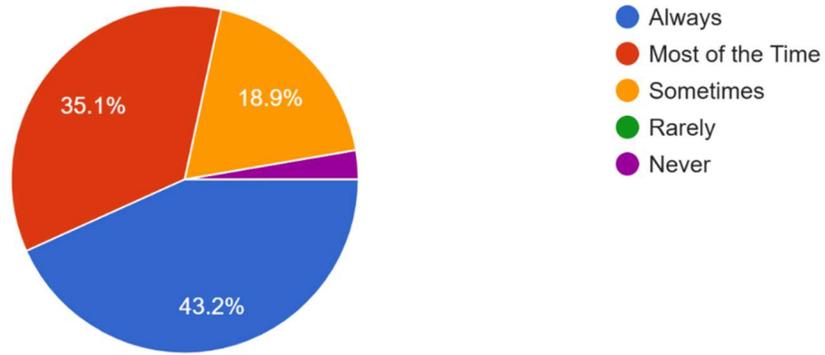
32 responses



Students were also asked about how comfortable they felt being themselves at Discovery.

Do you feel comfortable being yourself at school? At DPS, are your personal differences honored? (race, gender, culture, physical appearance...)

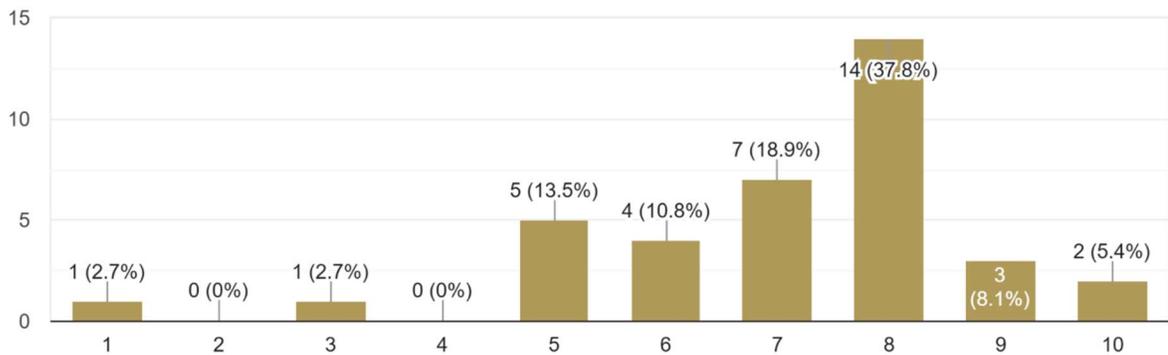
37 responses



When asked how they would rate Discovery overall, student responses were mostly positive.

1. Let's start with Discovery overall—on a scale of 1-10, how do you feel about being a student here? What would make that number go up by 2 points?

37 responses



The results of the follow up question, “What would make that number go up by 2 points,” were helpful in thinking about how our school could improve the learning experience for students.

Strengths:

- ✔ **Safe to Be Themselves** – Some students feel **comfortable expressing their identity**, noting that being “weird” is accepted and that they generally feel good at school.
- ✔ **Positive Teacher & Classroom Experiences** – Certain subjects or teachers help students feel more comfortable and engaged.

Opportunities for Growth:

- ◆ **Peer Interactions & Social Climate** – Several students **struggle with unkind behavior from peers**, describing **meanness and mischief** across grade levels. Some suggested **more 1:1 conversations with adults** to help address conflicts.
- ◆ **Teacher-Student Interactions** – A few students mentioned feeling **singled out by teachers**, including comments on **appearance or identity**.
- ◆ **Different Comfort Levels in Different Settings** – Some students are more **outgoing at home but reserved at school**, suggesting that their sense of belonging varies **by environment, time of day, or social group**.

Overall, while many students feel comfortable, **peer behavior and teacher interactions** significantly shape their sense of belonging. Strengthening **positive relationships, inclusivity, and supportive conversations** can enhance students’ comfort and connection to the school.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

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



Environmental Education is a strong focus at Discovery Public School. We try to encourage environmental literacy in all classes. As a school we encourage recycling in every classroom and throughout the school. Students also maintain a food waste program that includes composting food waste from our lunch program that can be composted. This year students planted a school garden in the spring. Juniors and seniors wrote emails to their representatives as part of an action project on environmental issues.

Students made maple syrup as part of their Biology class. Students enjoyed learning about the process of tapping the maple trees in front of our building, collecting the sap, and cooking it down to make syrup. They also learned about ice fishing through a partnership with the MN Department of Natural Resources.

All of our students participated in the Trout in the Classroom program this year. The chemistry class was in charge of preparing the aquarium for the trout eggs that we received in January. Students in other classes helped with hatching and raising the trout until they were large enough to release. The entire school then delivered the trout to Whitewater State Park in April to release the trout into an established trout stream. We plan to continue this program for as long as we can.

Students spent many hours exploring the Straight River Trail. They observed and studied the life cycles and food chains of various species. They are beginning to understand the impact of invasive species and human activities on the natural environment. In Physical Education, students also frequently participate outdoors. When they go for walks, they pick up any trash they notice.



Seniors and freshmen are expected to participate in our Adopt-a-Highway program as part of their Career Readiness and Freshman Seminar classes. By cleaning up the highway, they gain an appreciation for taking care of the environment and have a personal experience to show that individuals can work collectively to make a difference.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The primary focus of the School Board is to provide oversight, to be strategic in planning and decision making, and to provide the necessary resources to help the school achieve its mission and prepare students to be successful in life. The school board works closely with Creative Planning to make sure the school stays in good financial shape. The board also works with our authorizer, Osprey Wilds Environmental Center, to be sure it meets all contractual and legal requirements.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP IN FY25

Name	Position	Affiliation	Most Current Date Elected	Most Current Date Seated	Term End Date	Email Address
Russ Kennedy	Chairperson	Community Member	May 15, 2025	July 1, 2025	June 30, 2028	cenneidighinc@gmail.com
Jim Severson	Vice Chair	Community Member	May 2024	June 20, 2024	Resigned February 20, 2025	jseverson@isd4081.org
Sam Macklay	Secretary/ Treasurer	Community Member	May 16, 2024	June 20, 2024	June 30, 2027	smacklay@msn.com
Sharon Hansen	Vice Chair	Teacher #466610	May 16, 2024	June 20, 2024	June 30, 2027	shansen@isd4081.org
Cody Hanson	Member	Teacher #468908	May 18, 2023	June 15, 2023	June 30, 2026	chanson@isd4081.org
Brooke Rindahl	Member	Parent	Appointed February 20, 2025	March 20, 2025	June 30, 2027	rindahl.brooke@gmail.com
Ally Luthe	Member	Teacher #508014	May 15, 2025	July 1, 2025	June 30, 2028	aluthe@isd4081.org

Sarah Hammer	Member	Parent	May 18, 2023	June 15, 2023	June 30, 2026	sarah.hammer71@gmail.com
Dan Weisser	Ex-Officio	Ex-Officio (Director)	N/A	N/A	N/A	dweisser@isd4081.org

SCHOOL BOARD TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The DPS School board is committed to effectiveness in our oversight of Discovery Public School. The board is diligent about ensuring that all School Board members complete the required annual training in board operations. We also try to include some board training at each meeting to continue our development as a board. The table below documents the initial training dates for each board member in the areas of Board’s Role and Responsibilities, Employment Policies and Practices, and Financial Management. The next table documents the annual training received in FY25.

INITIAL BOARD MEMBER TRAINING

Board Member Name	Original Date Seated	Board’s Role & Responsibilities	Employment Policies & Practices	Financial Management
Russ Kennedy	1/2005	6/19/2010	6/19/2010	6/19/2010
Jim Severson	9/2018	6/19/2010	6/19/2010	6/19/2010
Sam (Steven) Macklay	10/2011	10/1/2011	10/1/2011	10/1/2011
Sharon Hansen	8/2018	8/7/2018	8/7/2018	8/7/2018
Cody Hanson	4/2019	8/6/2019	8/6/2019	8/6/2019
Brooke Rindahl	3/20/2025	3/10/2025	3/10/2025	3/10/2025
Sarah Hammer	6/2022	8/2/2022	8/2/2022	8/2/2022
Ally Luthe	4/2024	7/12/2024	7/12/2024	7/12/2024

ANNUAL BOARD TRAINING FOR FY24

Training Title/Presenter/Date	Russ	Kennedy	Jim	Severson	Sam	Macklay	Sarah	Hammer	Sharon	Hansen	Cody	Hanson	Brooke	Rindahl	Ally Luthe	Dan	Weisser
OW Sounding Board – “What the Board Needs to Know About Academics” July 18, 2024	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N/A	N	Y							
OW Sounding Board: MN Government Data Practices Act. August 15, 2024	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y	Y							
OW Sounding Board: “Financial Oversight” September 19, 2024	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y	Y							
The Financial Audit Presentation October 24, 2024	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y	Y							
OW Sounding Board - Disseminating Information About the School January 16, 2025	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y	Y							
OW Sounding Board – “Public Comment” February 20, 2025	Y	N/A	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y	Y							
Finance – Budget Overview April 17, 2025	N	N/A	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y							

BOARD EVALUATION

The board completed our annual board evaluation on July 17, 2025. Overall, the board is doing a good job fulfilling its role at Discovery Public School of Faribault. Results are summarized by category.

2.1 Board Composition and Capacity

The board meets all compliance requirements and effectiveness practices in this area, although regular attendance could be improved. The board could also develop a more robust plan for individual board member training.

2.2 Board Decision-Making and Oversight

Overall the board is compliant with the requirements in this area and is completing the effectiveness practices. They could develop a clearer plan for policy review and be sure to review Exhibit S periodically.

2.3 School Leader Management and Accountability

The board meets compliance requirements and effectiveness practices in this area, but recognizes that they could develop a better evaluation for director evaluation that places more emphasis on our contractual goals with our authorizer.

Financial Performance

The board's financial performance is compliant and effective. The board's biggest challenge financially is accurately predicting enrollment within 5%.

MANAGEMENT

Discovery Public School of Faribault is managed by an Executive Director, Dan Weisser and an Instructional Leader, Sharon Hansen. Our management team has remained stable over the past six years. Our school board oversees the director's progress annually at our annual meeting. Our instructional leader is evaluated by our director.

The biggest challenge we faced this year was student behavior issues. We did our best to address these issues with understanding. The ninth-grade students seemed to have fewer behavior problems compared to other grade levels. We hope that is a direct result of the social-emotional curriculum that is included in the Freshman Seminar class.

ADMINISTRATION IN FY25

Leader	Title	Roles/Responsibilities	Qualifications
Dan Weisser	Executive Director	Communicate with school board and attend all meetings Manages all personnel, including conducting teacher evaluations and regular staff meetings Oversees all school finances Communicates with parents and community	Licensed teacher 12 years experience as assistant director, plus instructional leader experience 6 years experience in director role
Sharon Hansen	Instructional Leader	Conducts informal teacher observations Oversees curriculum mapping for all classes Conducts PLC meetings with staff Mentors teachers	Licensed teacher 6 years experience in instructional leader role

DIRECTOR’S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Dan Weisser, Executive Director

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

As Director at DPS, I plan to continue to try and build more connections between the school and the community. The school has a good relationship with South Central College and we take field trips there. We also regularly take students to the Straight River trail to clean up trash. DPS will continue to Coop with Bethlehem Academy for Sports. I will also be coaching football at Bethlehem Academy during the 2025 football season while we continue to Coop with them. For the past few years we also partnered with River Bend Nature Center to create a Haunted Trail Community event. We are planning to continue this event moving forward.

This has led to other activities and community involvement with the Nature Center as well as South Central College. We plan to continue working with these organizations and possibly add others if the opportunity arises.

Activities Completed

Date	Presenter	Title	Clock Hours
8/20/24	DPS Training (Sharon Hansen)	Executive Functions: Strategies to Improve Student's Academic Performance"	2 hours
9/18/24	OW training	"Building Your School Budget"	1.5 hours
9/18/24	OW training	"What Boards Need to Know About Employment Policies and Practices"	1 hour
9/18/24	OW training	"Data Practices Law"	1 hour
9/18/24	OW training	"What Boards Need to Know About Public School Funding and Financial Management"	1.5 hours
9/17/24	OW training	"What Boards Need to Know About Their Roles and Responsibilities"	1 hour
9/17/24	OW training	"What Boards Need to Know About the Charter School Contract"	1 hour
9/17/24	OW training	"What Boards Need to Know About Open Meeting Law"	1 hour
9/27/24	DPS Training (Sharon Hansen)	"Addressing Challenging Behaviors: Understanding the Acting Out Cycle"	2 hours
2/7/25	DPS Training (Sharon Hansen)	"Getting Started with MAP Growth: Class Profile Report"	1 hour
2/7/25	DPS Training (Sarah Mikkelson Zeigler)	"Student Voice and Agency: Data Analysis"	1 hour
4/18/25	MN Charter Board Training	"Approve and Publish an Annual Report"	1 hour
4/18/25	MN Charter Board Training	"Conduct an Annual Public Meeting"	1 hour
4/18/25	MN Charter Board Training	"Follow the Bylaws"	1 hour
4/18/25	MN Charter Board Training	"Retain and Maintain Records"	1 hour
4/18/25	MN Charter Board Training	"Adopt a Budget"	1 hour
4/28/25	MN Charter Board Training	"Safeguard Student Data"	1 hour
4/28/25	MN Charter Board Training	"Adopt a Strategic Plan"	1 hour

4/28/25	MN Charter Board Training	“Maximize Revenue with Reimbursements”	1 hour
5/6/25	MN Charter Board Training	“Take Minutes”	1 hour
5/6/25	MN Charter Board Training	“Close a Board Meeting”	1 hour
5/8/25	MN Charter Board Training	“Negotiate the Charter Contract”	1 hour
5/8/25	MN Charter Board Training	“Conduct Open Meetings”	1 hour
5/8/25	MN Charter Board Training	“Prevent Audit Findings in Internal Controls”	1 hour
5/8/25	MN Charter Board Training	“Safeguard Personnel Data”	1 hour
5/8/25	MN Charter Board Training	“Prevent Audit Findings for Misstatements”	1 hour
6//25/25	MDE	2025 COMPASS Summer Institute - Day 1	5 hours
6/26/25	MDE	2025 COMPASS Summer Institute - Day 2	5 hours

STAFFING AND LICENSURE

In addition to the Director, Discovery employs five general education teachers, one full time special education teacher, three paraprofessionals, and an office manager. This allows Discovery to achieve its mission of keeping class sizes small and providing students with individual instruction. Class sizes, on average, are between 12 and 20 students. Special Education students receive paraprofessional assistance in general education classes, or they have the option to work in the Resource Room, depending on their Individual Education Plan. When hiring new staff, Discovery looks for applicants who will be a good fit for the school and our students. We want staff who are professional, qualified, caring, patient, experienced, and who have an interest in teaching at Discovery and working with students who are behind academically or who have other needs that require a different approach. Discovery’s staff is composed of people who truly have a desire to see students succeed, both in school and after they graduate.

2024-25 LICENSED TEACHING STAFF

Name	File Folder #	Assignment	Years Employed	Returning for 2025-26?
Sharon Hansen	466610	Instructional Leader/ Math Teacher	8	Yes
Cody Hanson	468908	Physical Education/ Health/Art	8	Yes
Alexandra Luthe	508014	Social Studies Teacher/ Senior Adviser	7	No
Garret Bitker	372807	Science Teacher	3	Yes
Pamela Hanson	364758	English Teacher	6	No
Maria Palmer	513737	Special Education Teacher	5	No
Percentage of Licensed Teachers from 2024-25 not returning in 2025-26 (non-returning teachers/total teachers from 2023-24 x 100)				50.0%

2024-25 TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Professional Development Activity/ Presenter	Date
School Health and Safety Training/ Navigate Care Consulting	August 19, 2024
Mandated Reporter Training/ MDE	August 19, 2024
“Executive Functions: Strategies to Improve Student’s Academic Performance”/ Sharon Hansen	August 20, 2024
Addressing Challenging Behaviors: Understanding the Acting Out Cycle	September 27, 2024
Getting Started with MAP Growth Data: Class Profile Report/ Sharon Hansen	February 7, 2025
Student Voice and Agency: Data Analysis/ Sarah Mikkelson Zeigler	February 7, 2025

TEACHER RETENTION

The teacher turnover rate has been very low, especially through the pandemic. We have a team of teachers and paraprofessionals that work well together and work well with our students. Unfortunately, at the end of this year we had three teachers not returning for 2025-26. We look forward to building relationships with new teachers next year.

2024-25 NON-LICENSED STAFF

Name	Assignment	Years Employed	Returning for 2025-26?
Karen Natole	Office Manager	11	Yes
Sonia Flores	Paraprofessional	11	Yes
Yvonne Ackmann	Paraprofessional	13	Yes
Madison VanErp	Paraprofessional	4	Yes

OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Overall operations at the school are performing well. The school continues to work with Faribault Public Schools for lunch and breakfast. The school continues to work with Faribault Transportation Bus Company for transportation of students.

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to health and safety. The school has a clear focus on safety in the school, including a no tolerance policy regarding bullying. New cameras and a secure entrance were installed in 2018 to monitor the entrance and hallway spaces. The student handbook outlines Discovery's policies and procedures related to medications. Medication is administered by the office manager, Karen Natole. A nurse has been contracted to work with our office manager on health-related issues, including diabetes management.

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the school facilities, grounds, and transportation. Student transportation is provided by the Faribault Transportation Bus Company.

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the admission and enrollment rights of students, including, but not limited to, policies and practices related to admissions, lottery, waiting lists, and fair and open recruitment. The school publishes on its website a Student Admissions and Lottery Policy. This policy outlines a fair and open enrollment process as well as lottery procedures consistent with state statute.

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the due process, privacy, and civil rights of students. The Discovery Public School Student Handbook outlines student rights and responsibilities, including policies and practices indicated above to ensure due process and privacy. The handbook is available on the school's website, as is a grievance policy and other policies related to student rights. The handbook also includes the school's background check policies for staff, board members, and volunteers.

The school disseminates information about our offerings and enrollment procedures on our school website. Materials in Spanish are provided to our current Spanish speaking families. Materials are available in languages other than English upon request. The school employs a Spanish Liaison for translation services to Spanish. We hire translators of other languages as needed. Our director shares information about our school at a local food shelf, and flyers are distributed at a local supermarket and River Bend Nature Center. The director also speaks with the administration at the ALC and Rice County Social Services to support the enrollment of at risk students.

FINANCES

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

Name: Adam Hewitt
 Position: Outsourced Controller
 Contact info: adam.hewitt@creativeplanning.com
 Phone: 952-250-8524
 Email: adam.hewitt@creativeplanning.com

Creative Planning provides accounting services for Discovery Public School of Faribault.

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	Total all funds
Total Revenues	958,148.15	21,978.04	\$980,126.19
Total Expenditures	1,022,006.67	21,960.56	\$1,043,967.23
Net Income	-63,858.52	17.48	\$(63,841.04)
Total Fund Balance	149,462	17.48	\$148,479.48

OVERVIEW

DPS had a revised budget with a projected deficit of approximately \$53,811 for FY25. Unaudited numbers show a deficit of approximately \$63,841, slightly worse than projections. DPS had stable enrollment, ending FY25 with an ADM of approximately 46 compared to last year at about 50.

REVENUES

State funding for FY25 was 2.0% over the prior year. FY26 is projected to be 2.74%. State funding continues to be a primary source of funding for the district. Other allocations include Federal Title and Special Education grant awards.

EXPENSES

Payroll, benefits, and special education continue to be the largest expenses that the school has incurred this year and projects to continue into future years. Facility expenses remain a large portion as well, but revenues received from the State in the form of Lease Aid reduces this expense by 90%.

DPS did participate in the Food Service program in FY25, requiring a transfer from the general fund in the amount of \$1,887.

NET SURPLUS OR DEFICIT AND FUND BALANCE

The projected net deficit is approximately \$63,841 for FY25. The projected balance out through FY26 shows a fund balance percentage less than 20%. Some ongoing concerns for FY26 are that inflation and costs are continuing to increase. Staffing demands are putting pressure on wage growth. Salary growth by teachers across the state may increase faster than state aid projections, which will make it challenging for a small school like DPS to offer competitive wages and employ highly qualified teachers.

COMPREHENSIVE ACHIEVEMENT AND CIVIC READINESS ANNUAL BUDGET

The school allocated \$4000 from General Education toward their Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness plan. Most of this money was spent on stipends for the teachers of Freshman Seminar and Career Readiness to provide more support to students outside of class to set goals, track progress, and encourage them to succeed. A small portion was spent on supporting students with workbooks and planners, and to provide transportation to college visits and community service activities.

FUTURE PLANS

Going forward, Discovery Public School of Faribault will continue to improve our school culture and the academic proficiency of our students. We have made great progress in developing our educational program, and students typically show growth in academic achievement. We plan to add a homeroom period next year in response to student survey data. This period will give students the opportunity to build stronger relationships with staff, provide a short mental break in the morning, and give students time to complete unfinished class work.

The addition of our Freshman Seminar class to target our ninth-grade students as they enter high school has also been a success. This class includes social-emotional learning, career research, discussions on the importance of earning credits and graduating, and more school involvement and decision making, with the goal of increasing student motivation through high school and decrease the number of older students that give up and drop out. We plan to continue this class given the apparent success after our first three years of implementation.



Going forward we plan to maintain a 1 to 1 ratio of students to Chromebooks, which gives us the ability to have all students using technology at the same time.

We also have plans to increase our social media presence to encourage more students to enroll at Discovery. We are highlighting student success and activities as frequently as possible to show the community that we are improving and providing a much needed alternative for education in Faribault.

