

# **New Century School**



## **Annual Report 2017-2018**

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**II. Report Introduction**

New Century School met most of the Minn. Stat 124E.statutory purposes. However, the school focused on the following statutory purposes: improve student learning and student achievement, increase learning opportunities for pupils and close the achievement gap. The school’s operation have been guided by its mission and vision.

**School Mission**

The Mission of New Century School is to provide a high quality education to nurture and inspire a community of learners through an innovative, holistic approach to education that embeds science and technology.

**School Vision**

The vision of NCS is to create a model that provides an education that is vibrant and alive, and acknowledges and maintains our students’ backgrounds while preparing them for their lives as successful members of our diverse and technologically advancing society.

## **Brief History**

The school completed its second year of operation. After several years of planning, the school founders applied to the Volunteers of America – MN for authorization. The school was authorized to serve students in Kindergarten through eighth grade. However, to build quality, the first year of the school provided services to students in k-5 with a plan of adding a grade each subsequent year. We served students K-6 students during the 2017/18 school year.

### **III. Authorizer**

Our Authorizer has been using the contractual agreement to engage the school, providing oversight and extensive support. The Senior Manager of the VOA-MN's charter authorizing program, Stephanie Olsen, conducted several formal and informal visits, including the fall 2017 and spring 2018 formal visits. Representatives from VOA-MN attended three board meetings as well as many face-to-face meetings with the board chair and school leadership. The following are Ms. Olsen's primary contacts:



#### **Volunteers of America of Minnesota**

Main Contact: Stephanie Olsen, Senior Manager  
VOA Charter School Authorizing Program  
VOA-MN Education Center  
924 – 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55404  
Phone: 612-270-1998  
E-Mail: [solsen@voamn.org](mailto:solsen@voamn.org)

### **IV. School Board Governance**

The School's Board of Directors provide governance and general oversight of its management. The board consists of individuals with diverse experience and backgrounds. We had an active board that provided school oversight as well as guidance for the school leadership.

The board had a strategic planning retreat on February 8, 2018 and developed short- and long-term plans and programs. Topics covered during the retreat include financial management, MDE revenue generation process and UFARS system.

All board members received a minimum of full board training on school finance. The training was provided BergenKDV. Other members attended individual trainings and education in other relevant fields. The following table list some of the trainings attended by the member.

Date	Activity	Trainer/Training
10/12	UFARS 101 Training October (Board Treasurer)	MN Dept. Of Education
02/08/18	School Board Finance Training (All board members)	BerganKDV
11/8/2017	Charter School Director Evaluations  (Board Chair)	The Nest
2/15/2018	Charter School Finance  (Board Chair)	Clifton Larson Allen

The board met at least one a month and meetings of the Board of Directors and all Standing and Ad Hoc Committees complied with the Minnesota Open Meeting Law. The board had five committees that facilitated and supported its work. The board committees and their responsibilities are as shown:

*Budget and Finance* - The responsibility of the Budget and Finance Committee is to assure a financially sound and stable future for the school.

*Governance* - The Governance Committee is responsible for supporting the effective performance of the board by designing needed board policies to ensure legal compliance with all applicable statutes. It is also the function of this committee to identify new board members, educate, mentor, and evaluate new and current members. The Committee recommends policies to the board of directors regarding the operation of the school.

*Development* - The Development Committee shall be responsible for supporting the school by ensuring strong marketing and recruitment efforts, seeking out extra resources (financial and other), and building strong community partnerships.

*Curriculum* - The Curriculum Committee is responsible for ensuring that overall curricular policy remains faithful to the Corporation’s mission, for reviewing specific curriculum choices on a regular basis and making recommendations to the Board of Directors on adoption of curriculum materials, and such other duties as are deemed appropriate and necessary by the Board of Directors.

*Facilities* - The Facilities Committee is responsible for identifying suitable facility/facilities for the school, researching and recommending building and maintenance contracts, and developing strategies to address future facility needs – short and long term.

The following were members of the board of directors during the 2017/2018 year:

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Area of Expertise</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Status (sitting or new)</b>
Ellie Holte	Board Chair/ Community Member	Education	10/2015 – 10/2018	Sitting
Jessica Tallman	Secretary / Teacher	Education	05/2017 – 06/2019	Sitting
Ahmed Anshur	Treasurer / Community Member	Finance	10/2015 – 10/2018	Sitting
Jacqueline Iribarren	Board Member / Community Member	Education	06/2014 – 07/2017	Completed term
Mohammed Mursal	Board Member / Community Member	Marketing/Recruitment	07/2014 – 06/2018	Sitting
Fatuma Khalif	Board Member/ Parent	Parent Involvement	06/2018-06/2021	Sitting
Dr. Ahmed Ali	Executive Director	School Administration		Ex-officio

## V. **School Management**

The school management was led by an Executive Director, Dr. Ahmed Ali, and was assisted by a team led by an Academic Director, Dr. Dido Kotile. The following were the individuals involved in providing leadership and administrative services and support.

Executive Director	Dr. Ahmed Ali	Overall school leadership
Academic Director	Dr. Dido Kotile	Instructional leadership and daily school management
Lead Teacher	Jessica Tallman	Assist the director and provide overall curriculum coordination and teacher support
Dean of Students	Amal Sharif	Coordinate student behavior, transportation, food and other services
SPED Director	Noreen Foster	Provide oversight of the Special Education services and programs
IT Manager	Leonel Leon	Provide IT services and support
Office Administrator	Abdirahim Abdalla	Manage office

The role and responsibilities of the Executive Director included overall school leadership and supervision , organizational management/planning & oversight, overall fiscal management ( development, implementation & oversight of approved school budget), human resources and personnel management, and Board of Director governance relations. As the Academic Director, Dr. Kotile provided instructional leadership for the school. Some of his duties included curriculum development, assessment, professional development, teaching staff supervision, and instructional planning.

The executive director was reviewed through the following process. The Board’s governance committee had a mid-year meeting with the Director in December to discuss school and Director progress. The Board administered a survey of the Director by the admin staff in May. The board shared a copy of the staff survey with the Director and had a meeting with the director to review the survey results. The board also reviewed the overall school report and the survey.

**VI. School Staffing Information and Professional Development.**

The school recruited qualified and experienced staff despite the statewide teacher shortage. We hired licensed teachers with different experiences and qualifications. Our teaching faculty numbers increased this year due to increased enrollment and the ability of the school to provide more coursework for students. However, some of the teachers did not return this year as some moved to big school districts with more resources and others were not recommended for re-hiring.

### 2017/18 Teaching faculty

Teachers	Grade	File Folder Name
DeAubrey Johnson	KG	480059
Jessica Tallman	1A	482243
Phillip Menge	1B	499094
Hani Wahab	2	996019
Charles Bush	3	356511
William Green	3	996180
Ashley Perez	4	492573
Toria Collins	5	391230
Robert Bridell	6	446079
Raphael Lucas	6	361119
Omar Ali	FL/PE	996400
Shukri Bashir	SPED	483951
Ali Ali	ELL	502598

During the last year, the school provided extensive professional development for teachers. instructional staff participated in trainings for two weeks before school opened, and ongoing trainings were conducted throughout the year.

Dates/time	Professional Development (08/14/17 – 08/25/17)	Facilitator
8/14 (Monday) 10:30- 12:00	Technology Training	Mr. Leonel
8/15 (Tuesday) 10:00-	JMC Training	Mr. Freid

12:00		
1:00-3:00	MN Standard Alignments	Mr. Nyembwe
08/16 (Wednesday) 8:30-12:00	Understanding and Deconstructing MN Standards	Mr. Nyembwe
1:00-3:00	Mindset in the classroom	Mr. Nyembwe
08/17 (Thursday) 8:30-9:30	ELL Training	Mr. Muhidin
9:30-10:30	SPED Training	Ms. Foster
10:30-12:00	Cultural and diversity training	Mr. Adam
08/18 (Friday) 8:30-9:30	Health and wellness First Aid, CPR and Bloodborne Pathogen	Ms. Gerber
9:30-10:30	SIOP	Ms. Loverude
08/21 (Monday) 8:30-10:00	PBIS	Ms. Shariff, Ms. Tallman, Ms. Wahab
08/23 (Wednesday) 8:30-9:00	Math Curriculum	
9:00-3:00	Envision curriculum	Pearson staff
08/24 (Thursday) 8:30-9:00	Reading and STEM curriculum	Ms. Spaan
9:00-3:00	Read IT and STEM	Ms. Spaan

08/25 (Friday) 8:30- 9:30	Classroom management strategies	Dr. Kotile
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#### Other Trainings

##### DATE TOPIC/

11/29/2017	WIDA: Professional Learning Session 1: Building Asset-Oriented school classroom practices
12/1/2017	NWEA: Understanding and Using the Data
12/8/2017	Session 2: Leveraging Students' Assets
12/13/2017	Session 3: Understanding Students' Academic Language Development
12/15/2017	Classroom management Strategies Series: Self-Control, Refocus & Classroom arrangement
1/3/2018	Setting High Academic Expectations: Tips
1/5/2018	Session 4: Understanding Uses of Academic Language
1/11/2018	Charter School-Data Driven Approach
1/17/2018	Session 5: Using Supports to Connect Language and Content
1/19/2018	Structuring and Delivering Your Lessons: Tips
1/24/2018	Engaging Students in Your Lessons: Tips
1/26/2018	Staff Development (FOSS, IXL, or Other) TBD
2/6/2018	Using the Mn Report Card and Local Assessment Data for Accountability
2/9/2018	Session 6: Supporting Students' Academic Language and Literacy Development
2/16/2018	Staff Professional Development (TBD)
2/21/2018	Session 7: Scaffolding Complex Texts
3/9/2018	Session 8: Putting It All Together

## VII. School Enrollment and Student Attrition.

The school has an admission policy that complies with charter school policies. Policy 536 ensures that there is fair admission and enrollment process, including use of lottery. The policy can be found in the office and on the school website.

We served students in kindergarten through sixth grade. Majority of our students were in the lower grades. A review of our student demographics shows that our students were mostly from immigrant families around the twin cities although we had students from other nearby cities. 99% of our students qualified for free and reduced lunch and majority needed ELL services.

We had 104 students in the 2016/17 school year and our students enrollment number increased to 208 students during the 2017/18 year. About 85% of the students who attended the school in 2016/2017 returned on 2017/2018.

2016/17 and 2017/18 Student enrollment

Year	KG	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
2016-17	29	20	18	17	8	12	
2017-18	33	48	26	35	29	17	20

**VIII. School Academic Performance.**

New Century School uses data for instructional and overall program planning and development. At New Century School, some of the assessment tools and strategies that we used include:

- a) NWEA fall test for academic growth
- b) OLPA (MCA) tests, for students to familiarize themselves with online testing and provide teachers with information to target instruction before the mathematics (MCA - Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment) test used for accountability in the spring,
- c) W-APT Results, and home language survey at the beginning of the year was used to determine the students who might need ELL services,
- d) WIDA Access 2.0
- e) MCA Spring Tests (3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>) in math and reading (3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>) and science (5<sup>th</sup> grade),
- f) NWEA spring tests (to determine the growth),
- g) Bi-weekly assessment of students to determine reading levels,
- h) Weekly quizzes (Friday quizzes): Students in all grade levels are assessed every Friday on the materials covered during the week. The results of the assessments data will be shared with the Director and instructional coach during the weekly meetings. The data was tracked to assess the success of the instructions, and benchmarks covered. As students moved through the curriculum, the teachers provided interventions and followed students' progress.

Academic interventions were also provided as need arises: The school has subscribed to IXL-Math program where students were assigned specific task based on the standards covered during the week.

- a) Title 1: This was a schoolwide service program. The criteria used for selection of students was based on the assessments conducted at the beginning of the school year. The four areas assessed were: Speaking, writing, listening and reading. The composite scores of all the four areas were identified for each student, and used as a selection process for the Title 1 services.
- b) Academic help: In addition to Title 1 service, New Century School established year-round academic support for students who were academically struggling.
- c) A-Z Learning (Reading Program): This is a reading program, with all resources accessible online and also available in printable, projectable, and digital formats.

**2018 North Star Report/MCA Data and NWEA (2017/18)**

New Century School (NCS) students demonstrated major growth in all three areas in the MCA. Our reading, math and science growth indicates a major improvement from the previous year. The MN Department of Education (MDE) adopted the North Star reporting system this year in place of the previous structure that based student performance on the MCA test only. The statement by MDE stated “we are no longer releasing MCA results as a stand-alone release, because test scores on their own don’t tell a complete story. ESSA has allowed states to finally place testing in its proper context, as one of several measures of success we use to look at our schools.”

The North Star accountability system uses the following indicators: Academic achievement, Progress toward English language proficiency, Academic progress, Graduation rates and Consistent attendance. According to the 2018 North Star accountability, New Century School (NCS) is one of the “526 schools recognized for being in the top 5 percent of schools on one of multiple measures of success”. However, the recognition is not indication of success in all the areas. NCS has a lot of work to do for its students’ academic growth and success.

When we analyzed the statewide charter schools’ MCA growth for all students, the results show that NCA had the highest academic growth in reading and the fifth highest in math. NCS’s MCA science scores indicate that we have one of the highest science results in the state. Finally, regarding progress towards English Language Proficiency (progress ELL students made towards their target), our school’s performance (77.1%) was higher than the statewide average (67%). A review of the data of students’ meeting ELs Target has NCS scoring 53.2% compared to the statewide performance of 48.5%.

Although we are pleased with the progress NCS is making, our students proficiency levels in math and reading are below the statewide levels and this means we have to build on the strong foundation we laid the last two years. We have many students with academic, language and other challenges and we are working hard to sustain the growth curve we established. When we compared our students’ academic progress and proficiency in math, reading, science and EL with the neighboring schools in St. Paul as well as schools with similar demographics in Minneapolis and St. Paul, we are doing better than many of the comparison schools in science and at least math and reading.

### **NWEA fall 2017-spring 2018 Observed Growth**

All grade levels demonstrated growth rates of over 84% in both math and reading. Four of seven grade levels achieved 100% growth in reading and Four of seven grade levels achieved 100% growth in math.

Grade	Fall to Spring Growth (%)	Fall to Spring Growth (%)
	Math	Reading
Kindergarten	91%	100%
1st grade	100%	84%
2nd grade	100%	96%
3rd grade	100%	91%
4th grade	87%	100%
5th grade	92%	100%
6th grade	100%	100%

**IX. Finances**

The school developed policies and guidelines that guided its budgeting and financial management practices. The board developed the following policies: Policy 701 (Annual Budgeting Principles), Policy 701.5 (Procurement Policy), and Policy 715 (Internal Control). The board’s budget and finance committee met monthly with the accounting company and the school leader to review monthly the financial management and health of the school. The board contracted with a reputable and well-known accounting firm, BergenKDV, as the school’s financial manager and accountant. The school board created a strong foundation for creating sound and prudent financial management policies and practices with the goal of having a school with healthy financial resources. The school received a clean audit for the year ending June, 2018.

The school implemented effective financial management practices. The school ended the year with a healthy fund balance. The school revised the budget three times within the year to align its revenue with its expenses. NCS maintained its enrollment number above the projected student numbers and made great efforts to seek donations and volunteers for some of its programs. The school successfully applied for and received a federal grant (CSP). We also received in-kind donations.

**X. Innovative Practices**

New Century School integrated innovative teaching methods through the use of curriculums in Reading, Mathematics, and Science. The **reading curriculum (READ:**

**IT)** aligns with all five components recommended by the National Reading Panel-phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

Our **STEM** program incorporated coding with game activities, 3D printing projects, hands-on application activities for exploration, and challenge-based Rubrics and Journals. Our students use IPAD and Chromebook in a small group to access some of these activities in the class and at home. Our **Envision Math Curriculum** emphasizes technology learning in the classroom, while the **Foss Science Curriculum** provided all students with science experiences that are appropriate to students' cognitive development and prior experiences.

**XI. Service Learning**

New Century School sees its mission as broader than just education. Our goal is to raise responsible citizens who give back as much as they take from society. Therefore, we also focus on service learning, with emphasis on environmental education, particularly on the three "Rs" of reducing, recycling and reusing. We plan to take leadership in creating a healthy environment and planet.

During the 2017/18 school year, we implemented a school-wide recycling program using a grant from Ramsey county. All staff were trained in reuse and recycling. The school provided recycling containers in every classroom and office. To encourage environmental conservation, students participated in class competitions. Other service learning efforts included food drives for needy families, fund drives for students in need, neighborhood clean, and middle school students reading to young children.

**XII. Future Plans**

The improved academic performance, high enrollment and expanded facility demonstrates that our school will continue with its plans of implementing for high quality and rigorous academic program including but not limited to STEM education and a strong ELL program. Parent involvement will be strengthened by involving parents in school committees, program and activities. We almost doubled our enrollment this year.

During the 2017/18 school year, we served students in grades kindergarten through sixth. We added seventh grade this year and we plan to complete the middle school next year by adding eighth grade so that we are a fully functional k-8 program. However, with our anticipated expansion, we may have facility challenges that may limit the number of students that we can serve. We are also anticipating higher number of ELL students and with limited resources, it becomes difficult to provide quality programs for all students.