

New Century School



Annual Report 2023-2024

I. Table of Content:

	Page
Report Introduction	1
Authorizer	4
Board Governance	4
School Management	6
Staffing and professional development	7
School Enrollment	12
Academic Performance	12
School Finance	14
Innovative Practices and Implementation	15
Service Learning	16
Future Plans	16

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 has been guided by its mission and vision.

New Century School (NCS) implements various quality programs that provide a foundation for our students to thrive and prepare them for college and careers. NCS creates instructional plans, policies, practices, and structures that support quality teaching and learning. Some of our programs include the following: Rigorous Academic Programs, Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Programs, College & Career Preparation, English Language Learning (ELL), Service Learning, and Extended day programs.

NCS is stable and growing. Student retention is high (91%) with daily attendance above 95%. Teacher retention is high at 88%. For the past years, academic proficiency gains and growth indicate promising and positive developments.

After VOA approved grade and site expansion, we started with 9th and 10th grades during the 2022-23 academic year and a new site during the 2023-24 year. Additionally, the number of students in the Early Learning Program (ELP) increased, thereby increasing the opportunity for underserved students and families. NCS is committed to continue to fulfill the Statutory Purpose: improve all pupil learning and all student achievement (Minnesota Statutes §124E.01).

Awards/Recognitions

As summary of some Achievements and Accomplishments are outlined below:

- Engineering Machine Design Contest Regional Contest 4th Place (Minnesota State University, Mankato), (April, 2024)
- Governance Award - VOA School Network (June 2024)
- Engineering Machine Design Contest Regional Contest 2nd Place (Minnesota State University), (March 2023)
- High Quality Charter School – MDE (February 2022)
- Engineering Machine Design Contest Champions (Minnesota State University), (May 2021)
- Finance Award – VOA School Network (June 2021)
- School Sparrow's Top 9 Elementary Schools in St. Paul (July 2020)
- Beating the Odds School (Star Tribune, 2019)
- Engineering Awards (Engineering Machine Design Contest, Minnesota State University, 2019): 3rd Place, 5th Place, and Above & Beyond Award
- Authorizer Award (2018): Most improved school in Reading, Math, and overall Academic Work
- Innovative Design Award (Minnesota Regional Tournament, FIRST LEGO League, 2019-2020)
- Judges Award (Minnesota Regional Tournament, FIRST LEGO League, 2019-2020)
- PBIS Cohort Award (State of Minnesota and Minnesota Department of Education, 2018-2020)
- Bush Foundation Grant Award (2023, 2022, 2019)
- North Star Report: Recognized for being in the top 5% of schools on one of the multiple measures of success (2018)

Enrichment Opportunities and Learning Experience

During the 2023-2024 academic year, the following enrichment opportunities and learning experiences were provided:

- Student academic recognition assemblies
- School wide spelling bee for grades
- Black-History month celebration
- Fall in the Forest, Pumpkin's Life, Apple Harvest (**MN Landscape Arboretum**)
- Children's Museum (Children's Museum)
- Apple Orchard (**Afton Orchard**)
- Mhirihiri Gallery (Mhirihiri Gallery)
- Second Harvest Heartland Community Service (**Second Harvest Heartland**)

- Junior Achievement Finance Park (**Junior Achievement North**)
- Scholastic Book Fair
- STARBASE Program
- Math Masters
- 3rd grade - MN Dot Bridge Building activity National DEAR Day Family Reading initiative
- Scholastic Book United States of Readers Program provided students with 10 books of their choosing
- Fall Field trips to Pumpkin Farm, apple orchards
- National DEAR Day Family Reading initiative
- Earth Day/Pie Day Celebrations
- Winter Field trips to Eagle's Nest, Stage's Theater, and Bakken Museum
- Spring Field trips to The Works Museum, Zero Gravity, Vikings Field Day
- Service Learning: Students participated in regular clean-ups of the playground, Feed My Starving Children, and making Cards for Hospitalized Kids
- Science Fair/Science Fair Awards
- Art Fair
- Pen Pals with Elderly
- Spirit week
- Preschool, Kindergarten 8th grades graduations
- 5th grade graduation party
- Annual Engineering/Rocketry Day
- Elementary Field Day
- Youth in Government
- Student Council
- "Y" Achievers
- Art class students will visit the Minneapolis Institute of Art
- Engineering students to the Amazon Fulfillment Center for a Technology and Robotics Tour (Shakopee)
- Engineering Exhibition, 5th Grade: Monster Jam Math (on display for conferences too)
- Presentation at STEM Day at the Capitol - Minnesota State Engineering Center of Excellence invitation (St. Paul State Capitol)

Family engagement and workshops were also conducted and it included:

- Workshops
 - Building effective school-community relations
 - Raising young learners: Preschool and KG families
 - All About Student Success: Understanding High Stakes Testing.
 - Social media and Internet Safety,
 - Mental health and well-being
 - Living successfully in a multicultural society
- Three parent teacher conferences
- Cultural Night
- PTO monthly meetings
- Scholastic Book fair
- Annual Meeting

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

After several years of planning, the school founders applied to the Volunteers of America – MN for authorization. New Century school has completed eight years of operation. The school is authorized to serve students in PreK through twelfth grade. However, NCS served students in PreK-10th grades during the 2023/24 school year.

III. Authorizer

Our Authorizer has been using the contractual agreement to engage the school, providing oversight and extensive support. For example, the Senior Manager of the VOA-MN's charter authorizing program, Stephanie Olsen made site visits. Representatives from VOA-MN attended board meetings. 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
9220 Bass Lake Rd Ste 255, New Hope, MN 55428
Phone: 612-270-1998
E-Mail: solsen@voamn.org

IV. School Board Governance

The School's Board of Directors provides 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 developed and approved a three-year strategic plan (SY 2023-2025).

All board members received training on various topics. The trainings were provided by various organizations and individual experts in board training. 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
6/13/23	Staff Automated Reporting (STAR) and Licensure Compliance	Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB)
3/26/24	School leaders as Instructional Leaders	Bondo Nyembwe
6/10/24	MSBA Charter School Board Workshop (Statutory Board Training)	Maria Shinabarger
6/11/24	Special Education: Supporting Student Success	Lavery, Mark Larson, Hannah Peterson
6/12/24	Fostering Engagement: Your Role as a Leader	Breanna Jacques, Shannnon Finnegan

The board met at least once 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 four 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 and Facilities – This Committee is responsible for supporting the school by ensuring strong marketing and recruitment efforts, seeking out extra resources (financial and other), and building strong community partnerships. The 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.

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.

The following were members of the Board of Directors during the 2023/2024 year:

Board Member	Role	Term End
Ellie Holte	Board Chair/ Community Member	2024
Jessica Tallman	Secretary / Teacher	2026
Ahmed Anshur	Treasurer / Community Member	2024
Isse Abdi	Board Member/Community	2025
Aaliya Khalif	Board Member/Parent	2025
Ahmed Ali	Executive Director/Ex-officio	School Admin

V. School Management

The school management consisted of a team with extensive and diverse professional experience and expertise. The following were the individuals involved in providing leadership and administrative services and support.

Executive Director	Ahmed Ali	Overall school leadership
Director	Tammy Maidi	Instructional leadership and daily school management
Director of Teaching and Learning	Maria Houck	Assist the director and provide overall curriculum coordination and teacher support
Director of Assessment	Alex Butler	Coordinate State Standardize and other tests and assessments as well as data
Dean of Students	Abdullahi Muhumed	Coordinate student behavior, PBIS, & related services
Multilingual Program Coordinator	Ann Bullard	Lead the English language learners program

SPED Director	Saido Abdirashid	Provide oversight of the Special Education services and programs
IT Manager	Leonel Leon	Provide IT services and support
Office Manager	Sana Amin	Manage office

The role and responsibilities of the Executive Director included overall school leadership and supervision, organizational management/planning & oversight, fiscal management (development, implementation & oversight of approved school budget), human resources and personnel management, and Board of Directors governance relations. The Director provided instructional leadership for the school. Some of the 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. We are pleased to report that over 90% of our teachers were retained and also chose to remain with the school. The following table has a list of the teachers.

2023/24 Teaching faculty

Teacher Name	Subject	Grade	File Folder #
OSMAN, HAYAT	Preschool	PreK	517713
MOHAMED, SULEKO	Preschool	PreK	1013329
AHMED, LUUL	ESE	K,1,2	512397
RAILSBACK, KEVIN	Reading Specialist	K-5	508745
Blais, Rachael	ELL	K-5	506046
REITSMA, PATRICK	PE	K-5	1011979
MADISON, LAURA	Intervention Program Coordinator	K-5	513288
CEDENO-ANDRADE, JEANETTE	SPED Coordinator	K-11	485680

BULLARD, ANNA	ML Coordinator	K-11	498683
MOHAMED, NAIMO	Kindergarten	K	1016821
OSMAN, RODA	Kindergarten	K	513910
BISHT, BIMI	Science	9,10,11	1026272
Dosunmu, Olugbenga	CTE + CCR	9,10,11	1006700
STRATTON ROBERT Jesse	HS ELA	9,10,11	1026905
TILLMAN, JENNIFER	Social Studies	9,10,11	473153
LUCAS, RAPHAEL	Science	7,8	361119
WHEELER, CHARLES	Social Studies	7,8	1011486
Mohamed, Hamda	ELA	7,8	500918
IBRAHIM, FEYSAL	Math	7,8	511067
Kotile, Lokho	Art	6,7,8	1009893
BLUE, BRAD	STEM	6,7,8	347477
ADAN, TIMIRO	ESE	3,4,5	482292
BORJI, SALAH	Math	9-11	517824
Garcia, Chris	ESE	6-11	484451
ALI, ELIAS	ELL	6-11	1005443
Harnett, James (Jim)	PE	6-11	466911
ANDERSON, NELSON	ESE	6-11	487699
BORJI, AMIN	Math and science	6	500226
Sundstrom, Joni	ELA/SS	6	375922
PEREZ, ASHLEY	ELA/science	5	492573
Sophia Mahmoud	4th grade	4	1002341
ROUSSELL, KAREN	3rd Grade	3	1014573
DENNEY, MICHELLE	3rd Grade	3	1003127
DILL, ELI	2nd Grade	2	330127
TALLMAN, JESSICA	2nd Grade	2	482243
Badri, Naima	1st Grade	1	1013815
Schluender, Alex	1st Grade	1	508926

Professional Development

We provided year-round professional development opportunities for our staff. Staff participated in a two-week intensive training before the students arrived for the new year. Ongoing professional development was provided throughout the year. The following table contains an outline of some of the training and workshops provided for our staff.

NEW CENTURY SCHOOL Professional Development 2023/24

This plan describes the efforts of New Century School to improve student achievement of Minnesota standards in all areas of the curriculum including areas of regular academic, applied, and experiential learning through the high-quality professional development of all educators.

Values:

1. Our mission drives our work of “providing a high-quality education to nurture and inspire a community of learners through an innovative, holistic approach to education that embeds science and technology”.
2. We strive to effectively meet the diverse needs of our student population, including students at-risk, children with disabilities, English learners, and gifted children.
3. We seek to provide an inclusive curriculum for racially, ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse student population, consistent with the state education diversity rule.
4. With this plan, we will improve staff collaboration and develop mentoring and peer coaching programs for teachers new to the school.
5. The Danielson Framework for Teaching is what we use as a basis for analyzing data for growth and development of teachers.


District Expectations:

1. Based on prior year feedback from the team, the initial August training is not comprehensive nor meant to give staff training in *every* area like we have done in the past. Compass has 9 days of Aug PD and NCS has 7 days of PD. Priority will be given to setting up everyone for success in the basics. Further PD throughout the year will go deeper. Curriculum focus for Aug is on SEL, literacy, and science. In Sept, math & supplemental programs.
2. Items that are scheduled by the district likely cannot be moved. Ask Maria Houck first.
 - a. Program directors are responsible for:
 - i. Scheduling all of their staff to be engaged in professional development or school preparations at all times.
 - ii. Scheduling their own professional development for the blank/open space on the schedule including the following:
 1. PD to support school-wide behavior management/discipline program.
 2. PD to support communication with parents.
3. Who will **communicate the PD schedules**?
 - a. Maria will share this District PD overview plan with the District level team.
 - b. It is expected that Dr. Dido will be responsible for sending out the Compass PD schedule and Tammy for the NCS PD schedule and managing the subsequent questions/interaction with their respective staff teams
 - i. Goal - send by Friday, Aug 11.
4. **Teachers will report** to school during normal business hours each day of the initial PD week
 - a. NCS Hours - 7:00-3:30
 - b. Compass Hours - 8:00-4:30
5. What is the **make-up plan** for teachers who miss sessions?
 - a. Sign-in for staff for each session - clipboard ready - Deema will ensure this is done by Laila and Sana.
 - b. Each teacher is responsible for communicating their planned/unplanned absence to their direct supervisor (program leaders) AND for communicating with the facilitators of any sessions missed to receive the materials/slides and making up any work missed.
 - c. After the initial training is complete, the instructional coaches will be responsible for onboarding new teachers who are hired and making sure they get the time/PD support needed.
6. **CEUs** will be provided by Maria Houck and made available to teachers in the shared drive - District Hub. I will go over this during the T&L session at both schools.
7. **Catered lunches** will be arranged by Lindsay Munro according to the schedule. Two per school.

- a. 10:30 - lunch arrives
 - b. 11:00 - lunch served
8. **Training spaces and presentation technology** will be set up by Lindsay Munro or someone from her team. It is expected that someone from her team will be present to do sound/technology checks 30 min before the sessions that involve a guest speaker.
9. Each session will have an **NCS facilitator** who is expected to greet any guest speakers, help them set up 30 min prior to their presentation, and introduce them as the speaker.

Shown below is a sample PD schedule that was implemented last year:

Sample Staff PD			
Time	Sessions & Locations	Facilitators	Attendees
7:00-7:30	Team Builder/Wake Up Call	Tammy Maidi	All Staff
7:30-8:45	Teaching & Learning Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation - Link - Intro to T&L Equation for 23/24* - Standards & Framework for Teaching* - Curriculum & Access* - Instruction & Lesson Planning* - Data, PLCs, & Assessment* - PD & Supports* 	Maria Houck Shelbi Pool Anna Bullard	All Teachers
9:00-9:45	Curriculum/Materials Check-Out (<i>Elementary gym</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TEs, SEs, science kits, manipulatives - (Signing/check out forms/expectations) 	Shelbi Pool	All Staff
10:00-10:45	K-3 MyView Literacy Curriculum - Part 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location: Ms. Tallman's classroom - Slides for presentation - Link here - Lindsay emailed teacher login info for Savvas - *CEU cert 	Jessica Tallman	K-3rd grade core teachers
10:00-10:45	4th-5th MyView Literacy Curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location: Ashley's 5th grade room - Presentation Slides - Link here - *CEU cert 	Ashley Perez	4th-5th grade core teachers
11:00-11:45	Lunch Break (on your own)	x	x

12:00-1:00	K-2 Handwriting Curriculum Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This is an independent, on-demand video training - Click here and scroll down to the appropriate training, click and register, and then watch the training videos  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PreK - ABC-123 - Grades K-1st - Zaner Bloser Handwriting - <i>*CEU cert</i> 	(Maria Houck)	PreK, Kind, 1st, & 2nd Grade teachers
12:00-12:45	3rd-5th Sondag Essentials Phonics Curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location: Gym - Training Slides - Link here - Kevin will have teachers use demo account - <i>*CEU cert</i> 	Kevin Railsback	3rd-5th grade core teachers
12:00-4:30	HR One-on-One Appointments (Room 302) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Note: use form Deema sent to sign up for appointments</i> - <i>Note: please do NOT double book yourself this afternoon</i> 	Deema Sorri	By Appointment
1:00-3:00	EA Fastbridge Training - How to administer earlyMath screeners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location: Gym - Virtual - Link here - Training materials - Maria will get all EAs into this platform before this session - <i>*CEU cert</i> 	Lauren Weissberg Laura Madison	EAs (Gen. Ed. and SPED)
1:30-3:30	Chemistry Teacher Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location: high school science room - Live session, Virtual - Link here - Virtual session password: Z5KK@&=g9 - Maria will get you access to the HMH curriculum platform before this session - <i>*CEU cert</i> 	HMH Trainer Jeannie Wilson (Maria Houck)	Bimi Bisht
12:00-3:30	Time to Work in Classrooms/Offices	x	All Staff

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 the use of lottery. The policy can be found in the office and on the school website.

We served students in Preschool through 10th 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.

During the 2023/24 year, 574 students attended NCS and 202 student attended Compass and this was more than the projected student enrollment. Over 89% of the students who were enrolled in the previous year returned.

VIII. School Academic Performance.

NCS Assessment Plan 2023-24

Assessment	Grade Levels	Purpose	Date Range	Grading & Reporting
<u>Pre-Las Screener</u>	PreK English language screener	Identify students who are English language learners.	Week of Sept 19-23	Student scores will be shared with families by the ML Coordinator.
<u>WIDA Screener</u>	Grades K-10th Only new kindergarteners and a few new students (without any previous ACCESS scores)	WIDA Screener is a brief English language proficiency assessment given only to new students in grades preK–10 who do not have previous ACCESS scores. The screener helps educators quickly identify whether or not they are English language learners (ELLs).	Week of Sept 12-16	Student report cards, progress reports, and transcripts will not reflect student scores. Student scores will be shared with families by the ML Coordinator
<u>WIDA ACCESS</u>	Grades K-10th • English Language Learners	Administered to English learners in order to measure progress toward meeting the WIDA English Language Development Standards adopted by Minnesota.	Jan 30-Feb 16 (3 weeks)	Student reports will be sent home by the DAC. Student report cards, progress reports, and transcripts will not reflect student scores.
<u>Fastbridge Screener</u> • Reading • Math • mySAE	All students in Grades K-10th	Administered to all students in order to: 1) Measure student skill levels and progress 2) Help plan instruction 3) screen students for intervention services.	Four times/year: • Sept • Oct • February • May	Student scores for elementary students will be shared with parents during the conferences. The score reports for middle and high school students will be sent home by the Title I Coordinator.

BRS				Student report cards, progress reports, and transcripts will not reflect student scores.
Fastbridge Progress Monitoring	Students identified as “high risk” in reading, math, or behavior and are receiving interventions.	Measures student progress as a result of targeted interventions	Weekly during the 6-8 week period the student receives interventions.	Student progress monitoring reports will be sent home/shared during conferences by the Title I Coordinator or Intervention teacher.
Grade Level Formative & Summative Assessments	All students in Grades K-10th	Assess student performance with respect to the curriculum and Minnesota state standards.	Formative Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily/Weekly Summative Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the end of each unit 	Student report cards, progress reports, and transcripts will reflect student scores. Grades in Infinite Campus will be updated every 1-2 weeks. Report cards will be sent home <i>quarterly</i> . Progress reports will be sent home <i>every 3-4 weeks</i> . Parent-teacher conferences are offered 3x/year. Are students graded on formative or (only) summative assessments? %s/grading policies?
Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA III) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading, Math Science 	Math: Grades 3-8 Reading: Grades 3-8, 10 Science: Grades 5,8, 10	Evaluates instruction against the MN State Standards in ELA, Math, & Science Meets state accountability requirements.	April 24-May 5 (two weeks)	Individual student score reports will be sent home by the DAC at the start of the following school year. Student report cards, progress reports, and transcripts will not reflect student scores.

Academic Data

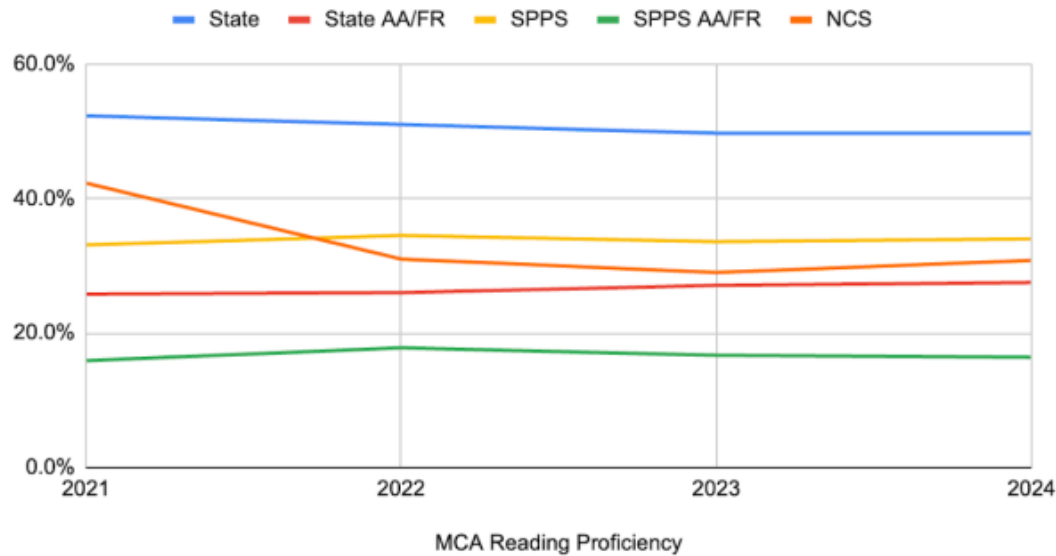
New Century School (NCS) uses various tools and programs to assess and evaluate student academic progress and competency including FastBridge, MCA, WIDA, and Lexia.

New Century School (NCS) implements quality programs that is the foundation for our students to thrive and develop academic proficiency. The 2023-24 FastBridge data shown below indicates that students made considerable growth in one year.

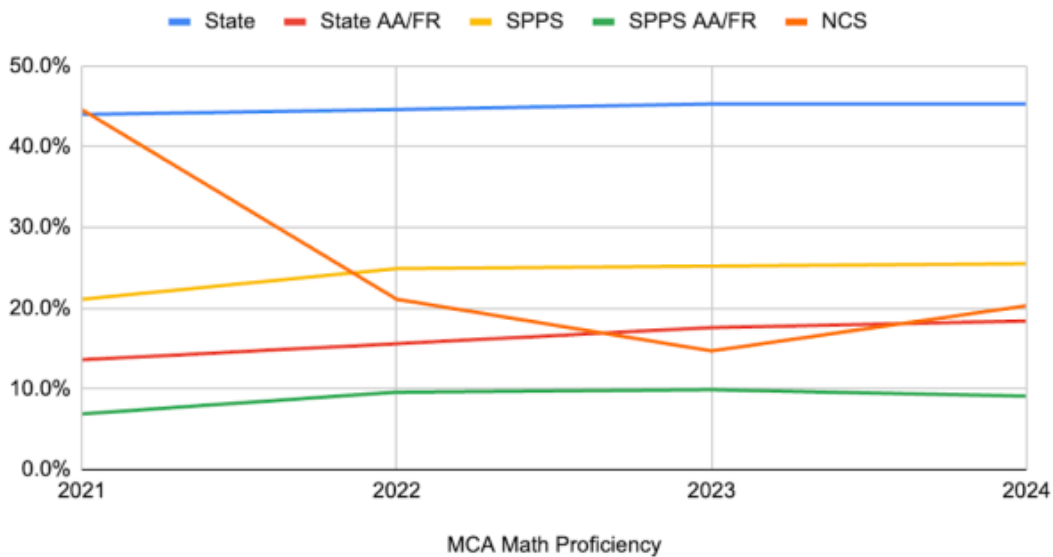
While NCS implemented various instructional and student support programs to deal with COVID-19 learning loss, the challenges of COVID-19 and the slow recovery had a major impact

on the 2024 MCA results. New Century School like many schools including those with similar demographics did not perform as much as we planned in the MCA. However, we saw a marked improvement from the previous year as shown below.

State, State AA/FR, SPPS, SPPS AA/FR and NCS



State, State AA/FR, SPPS, SPPS AA/FR and NCS



IX. Finances

The school has policies and guidelines that guide 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 to plan and review the school finances. The board contracted with a reputable and well-known accounting firm, BerganKDV, as the school's financial management and accounting firm. 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, 2023.

The school implemented effective financial management practices. The school ended the year with a healthy fund balance. The school revised the budget once 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.

NCS has adopted a sound budgeting and prudent financial management system. The school developed financial plans and practices that allowed for stable revenue generation such as reliable student enrollment and controlled expenditure. The school is compliant with state and federal financial reporting requirements. NCS has sufficient cash flow to meet its regular operations despite MDE's withholdings. NCS is current on all its financial obligations. Proper and conservative budgeting along with strategic purchasing decisions allow for proper cash management. NCS will also continue to pursue grants and donations to ease any possibility of strains on cash balances. The school has adequate resources for student learning and its overall operation and has no debts.

X. Innovative Practices

STEM

New Century School has reputable and innovative STEM programs and is equally committed to closing the achievement gap in Science, a gap that is wider in Minneapolis and St. Paul. All our students received STEM instruction and were provided with off-site STEM opportunities. NCS made significant progress in the efforts to strengthen the STEM and personalized learning initiatives. All NCS students had access to a device during the 2023/24 academic year as part of a blended and online learning model. Community partnerships were critical to the development of the engineering and STEM labs.

NCS believes in creating unique programs and opportunities for its students. The success of the programs is grounded in the following:

Flexible Learning Space: At New Century School, we believe that learning should be distinct and dynamic, student driven, and equitable. Students have access to unique learning spaces and a Design & InnoVation Lab in which the teacher's role has shifted dramatically. Rather than holders and distributors of knowledge, teachers are instructional facilitators. Some students

prefer to learn alone; others prefer a peer or group learning experience. The open platform of the lab afforded student voice and choice.

Tech Enabled: New Century School secures and assigns resources so that all students have access to learning, anywhere, anytime. Access is integral to equity. A 1:1 program is important for our students, most of whom are otherwise underserved and most often in low-income communities. All students are given iPads or Chromebooks for individualized and personalized learning. Student are given opportunities to enroll in online and blended learning. Instruction tools used include Smartboards and Smartscreens, and educational and productivity software.

Authentic Learning Experiences: New Century, Robotics is integral to the STEM program. More students have access and the opportunity to explore options, including coding, engineering, and research, bringing individual and collective skills sets to a challenge.

NCS believes in community partnerships. NCS students are provided with opportunities to participate in off-site programs and activities such as Minnesota State University (Mankato) Engineering Center of Excellence, STARBASE Minnesota's STEM learning, Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Program, Carnegie Mellon University's coding and engineering, University of Minnesota's Talented Youth Math Program (UMTYMP), FIRST LEGO's robotics program, and YMCA's youth leadership and governance program.

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.

The NCS students, staff and families actively participated in various service learning programs such as community clean-up activities, volunteerism, academic tutoring, fundraising and donations and community development. The Service Learning Leadership team provided training for staff, students and parents. The school secured a grant from Ramsey County to implement school-wide recycling program. NCS developed partnerships to extend its service learning programs.

XII. Future Plans

The NCS Board and leadership is constantly engaged in planning and developing short and long term goals for the School. The School's plans such as Strategic plan, School Improvement Plan (SIP), and Family Involvement Plan (SIP) have been used to guide its future development. NCS will continue to improve the quality of its programs and expand the grades offered. As the post Covid-19 educational landscape is experiencing transformation, we will align our programs with the changing needs and expectations of our society.

Effective student learning is the cornerstone of our programs. The improved academic performance, high enrollment and expanded facility demonstrates that our school will continue with its plans of implementing a 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 the NCS families in school committees, programs and activities.

With the successful implementation of the first year of Compass Academy and the expansion of the high school program, we will have accomplished the full implementation of our grade and site expansion plans. Due to high demand, NCS will respectively expand the high school and preschool programs by adding more grades and classes as needed. We will expand our SPED program to meet increasing enrollment needs and serve the needs of our students with special needs.

This year, we enrolled our first online students. As an approved online learning provider, we developed effective ways and provided flexible options for providing online instruction for students in middle and high school. A virtual program will be an added flexible opportunity for students' not able to enroll in our current program due to transportation and space limitation.

At NCS, we believe in innovating and creating new initiatives that are aligned with the School goals of preparing students for the new global society. The School Board and leadership will work towards developing new programs and opportunities for our students and families. We will expand existing programs such as AVID, native language and literacy, social emotional learning and health and Wellness. We plan to invest in more extracurricular programs and activities in the form of sports and enrichment. Due to the number of students with English language needs, we will invest in more ELL, afterschool and summer programming. We will develop partnerships with organizations and institutions that will promote the wellbeing and development of our programs.