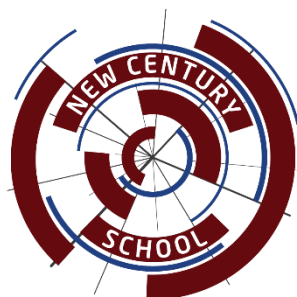


# **New Century School**



## **Annual Report 2019-2020**

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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**

New Century school has completed its three years 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-7 students during the 2018/19 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 2018 and spring 2019 formal visits. Representatives from VOA-MN attended 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 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 had a strategic planning retreat on March 18, 2019 and developed short- and long-term plans and programs.

All board members received training on various topics. The trainings were provided by the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MACS) and BergenKDV. Other members attended individual trainings and education in other relevant fields. The following table list some of the trainings attended by the member.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Trainer/Training</b>
6/15/20	School Finance Training	BerganKDV
2/10/20	School/Board Governance	Nancy Dana
2/13/20	Employment Matters	Nancy Dana
6/18/19	Employment	MACS

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 2018/2019 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	2021	Sitting
Jessica Tallman	Secretary / Teacher	Education	2020	Sitting
Ahmed Anshur	Treasurer / Community Member	Finance	2021	Sitting
Fadumo Khalif	Board Member/Parent	Parent Involvement	2021	Resigned
Isse Abdi	Board Member/Comm unity	IT. Youth Development	2022	Sitting

Abdalla Nuno	Board Member/Parent	Parent Involvement	2023	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, PBIS, Parent education, 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 Manager	Sana Amin	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.

**2019/20 Teaching faculty**

NAME	NCS GRADE ASSIGNMENT	FILE FOLDER #
Anisa Awale	K	5007775
Khadr Abdullahi	K	509004
Jessica Tallman	1st	482243
Hamdi Ali	1st	511658
Alexis Scanlon	2nd	509169
Roda Osman	2nd	513910
Ashley Wade	3rd	46310
Ifrah Mohamud	3rd	515951
Kevin Railsback	4 <sup>th</sup>	508745
Fahmo Osman	4 <sup>th</sup>	509772
Katarina Intermont	5-8 (Math/Science)	493108
Takuma Shimoyama	ELA	475154
James Seegebarth	MS Social Studies	502737

Feysal Ibrahim	Math	511067
<b>SPECIALISTS</b>		
Alexandra Butler	Reading/Title I	507294
Timiro Aden	SPED	405724
Omar Ali	K-8	996400
Ali Ali	K-8	502598
Breanna Heichert	K-7 (PE/Health)	510636
Nimco Ali	Elementary/Social Skills	512636

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.

**NEW CENTURY SCHOOL  
Professional Development**

<b>WEEK ONE</b>		
Dates/time	Topic	Facilitator
08/14 (Wednesday) 8:30-10:30	Breakfast Introduction & Welcome Remarks: School Admin, Board, Authorizer, Guest; School Calendar outlook, Academic year goals, plans, and programs	Dr. Ali, Ms. Holte, Dr. Kotile Ms. Magstadt
10:30-12:00	Admin overview, School Resources, and Operations HR/Payroll & Benefits	Dr. Ali, Ms. Ismail, Mr. Panek
12:00-1:00	Lunch	
1:00-2:00	Technology Training & Expectations	Mr. Leonel
2:00-4:00	Classroom Prep	
08/15 (Thursday) 8:30-10:00	Reading Curriculum overview	Ms. Magstadt
10:00-12:00	Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support (PBIS)	School Team
12:00-1:00	Lunch	
1:00-3:00	Health and wellness First Aid, CPR, and Bloodborne Pathogens	Ms. Meyer
3:00-4:00	Classroom Prep	
08/16 (Friday) 8:30-10:00	Reading Assessment resources overview	Ms. Magstadt
10:00-12:00	ELL Overview Training	ELL Team, & Muhidin



12:00-1:00	Lunch	
1:00-4:00	Classroom Prep	
<b>WEEK TWO</b>		
08/19 (Monday) 8:30-10:30	Cultural Competency	TBD (NCS Team)
10:30-12:00	Math Envision-Overview and assessments	NCS Team, Ms. Magstadt
12:00-1:00	Lunch	
1:00-2:00	The first week of school prep planning, tasks, and assignments	NCS Team, Ms. Magstadt, Dr. Ali & Dr. Kotile
2:00-4:00	Classroom Prep	
08/20 (Tuesday) 8:30-10:00	FOSS Science-overview and approach	NCS grade level team, Ms. Magstadt
10:00-11:00	SPED Training	Ms. Foster
11:00-12:00	Teacher Resources, Class Schedule, Assignments and daily routines	Ms. Magstadt, Dr. Kotile
12:00-1:00	Lunch	
1:00-4:00	Classroom Prep	
08/21 (Wednesday) 8:30-12:00	Engineering/STEM/Robotics Program Overview	Dr. Blue, Feysal
12:00-1:00	Lunch	
2:00-4:00	Classroom Prep	
08/22 (Thursday) 8:30-12:00	Classroom Management Training Teach To's	Dr. Kotile
12:00-1:00	Lunch	
2:00-4:00	Classroom Prep	
08/23 (Friday) 8:30-12:00	NWEA Assessment, Data, and Measurement, Lesson plans, and weekly expectations	Dr. Kotile/Ms. Magstadt
12:00-1:00	Lunch	
1:00-4:00	Open House, classrooms ready for parents' visit, orientations, etc.	

Other Trainings:  
Component of Classroom management: Refocus

- ❖ Component of Classroom management: Self-Control
- ❖ Component of Classroom management: Classroom arrangement
- ❖ NWEA: Understanding and Using the Data for instructions  
Component of Classroom management:Unconditional Positive Regard
- ❖ Setting High Academic Expectations:Tips
- ❖ WIDA Session 4: Understanding Uses of Academic Language
- ❖ WIDA Session 5: Using Supports to Connect Language and Content
- ❖ Structuring and Delivering Your Lessons:Tips
- ❖ Engaging Students in Your Lessons: Tips
- ❖ Staff Development (FOSS, IXL, or Other) TBD
- ❖ Using the Mn Report Card and Local Assessment Data for Accountability  
Supporting Students' Academic Language and Literacy Development

**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 kindergarten through eight 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 295 students in the 2018/19 school year and our students enrollment number increased to 362 students during the 2019/20 year. About 90% of the students who attended the school in 2018/2019 returned to school in 2019/2020.

2019/20 Student enrollment

Year	KG	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
2019-2020	46	50	45	47	35	50	31	29	27

**VIII. School Academic Performance.**

**Academic Data**

Our academic performance improved every year as Lexia data show. Due to COVID-19, we did not administer the regular standardized test such as the MCA.

In the previous year, New Century School (NCS) students demonstrated major academic growth as evidenced in various standardized assessments. According to the 2018/19 North Star Accountability report, many of our students have shown considerable academic growth in math and science. For the second year in a row, NCS had one of the highest academic growth in math. Once again, NCS's Science data indicate that our students' performance was higher than the statewide average.

The results for English Language Proficiency (progress towards English language proficiency) indicate that NCS's performance was higher (67.7%) than the statewide average (61.4). Also, when data of students meeting EL target was analyzed, NCS scores were better (47.2%) than the state-wide (40.1%) scores.

### **Lexia Data**

Many of the students in all grade levels met their projected growth. The projected growth rate for Kindergarten to third was 75%.

## **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, 2020.

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.

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. While investing in quality school programs, facilities and staff, the school also grew a healthy fund balance. NCS exceeded (26%) the VOA recommended fund balance of 20% in FY20.

NCS has sufficient cash flow to meet its regular operations despite MDE's withholdings. NCS is current on all its financial obligations without using a line of credit, loan or other cash borrowings. Moreover, each year, NCS has received the School Finance Award, awarded annually by the Minnesota Department of Education, Division of School Finance, to recognize schools for meeting statutory deadlines for submission of audited fiscal financial data and reporting criteria.

Achieving and maintaining a strong fund balance allows flexibility in financing the proposed expansion. Proper 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.

During the first operational year, the school's fund balance was 6.5% and it increased to 11% during its second year. The fund balance was 17% during the 2018/19 year, and was exceeded VOA's recommended fund balance rate (20%) during the 2019/20 year. The school has adequate resources for student learning and its overall operation and has no debts.

NCS has adequate cash flow to pay its payroll, vendors and other financial obligations in a timely manner. The school's cash flow allows for making all financial payments without holdback and loans.

## X. Innovative Practices

### STEM

As a STEM school, New Century School is equally committed to closing the achievement gap in Science, a gap that is wider in Minneapolis and St. Paul. All NCS students were given a device during the 2019/20 academic year as part of a blended and online learning model. NCS developed a unique Makers Space, the Design & Innovation Lab. Community partnerships were critical to the development of the Lab. Concurrently, NCS made significant progress in the efforts to strengthen the STEM and personalized learning initiatives.

NCS scholars had a unique opportunity to practice what they have been learning in classrooms in a science camp for three days. NCS believes in creating unique programs and opportunities for its students. The success of the programs are 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 (DOD US Airforce) 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.

In 2019-2020, NCS participated in the [FIRST LEGO League Challenge \(FLL\) and FIRST LEGO League Jr. Challenge \(FLL Jr.\)](#). FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) was founded in 1989 to inspire young people's interest and participation in science

and technology. Based in Manchester, NH, the 501(c)(3) not-for-profit public charity designs accessible, innovative programs that motivate young people to pursue education and career opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and math, while building self-confidence, knowledge, and life skills. FIRST participation is proven to encourage students to pursue education and careers in STEM-related fields, inspire them to become leaders and innovators, and enhance their 21 st century work-life skills.

The [FIRST LEGO League Challenge \(FLL\)](#) is an annual robotics event. Students build, test and program autonomous robots using [LEGO® MINDSTORMS®](#) technology to solve a set of missions. The local (Minnesota) sponsor of the robotics tournaments is [High Tech Kids](#). With generous support from benefactors (including 3M, Boston Scientific, Seagate, Stratasys, etc.), middle-school teams compete at regional and state tournaments. In 2019-2020, NCS will register two teams.

The [FIRST LEGO League Jr. Challenge \(FLL\)](#) is also an annual robotics event. Younger students build, test and program autonomous robots using [LEGO® WeDo](#) technology to solve a set of missions. The local (Minnesota) sponsor of the robotics tournaments is [High Tech Kids](#). With generous support from benefactors (including 3M, Boston Scientific, Seagate, Stratasys, etc.), elementary teams compete at regional and state tournaments. In 2019-2020, NCS will register two teams.

### **Awards/Recognitions/Opportunities**

As summary of some Achievements and Accomplishments are outline below:

- Beating the Odds School ([Star Tribune](#), 2019)
- Engineering Awards (Engineering Machine Design Contest, Minnesota State University, 2019): 3<sup>rd</sup> Place, 5<sup>th</sup> 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)
- School Finance Award (2017, 2018, 2019): MN Department of Education
- Bush Foundation Grant Award (2019)
- North Star Report: Recognized for being in the top 5% of schools on one of the multiple measures of success (2018)

NCS believes in community partnerships. NCS students are provided with opportunities to participate in off-site programs and activities such as Minnesota State University's (Mankato) Engineering Center of Excellence, STARBASE Minnesota's (DOD US Air force) 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. We plan to take leadership in creating a healthy environment and planet.

The Service Learning Leadership team provided training for staff, students and parents. Students participated in various activities such as neighborhood cleanup, tutoring and mentoring, recycling training and development, and foodstuff donations.

## **XII. Future Plans**

NCS will continue to improve the quality of its programs and expand the grades offered. 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 parents in school committees, programs and activities.

NCS added a preK program this year and possibly start high school next year. The high school addition will involve adding one grade each year. We also plan to add another primary site for students in grades PreK-3. We will acquire additional facility for STEM and extracurricular activities. We will have expanded academic staff for the Pre-K-8 programs so as to meet the needs of our students. We will expand our SPED program in order to serve the needs of our students with special needs.

We will explore an option of providing online learning 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.