



2023-2024 Annual Report

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School Mission:

"Rekindling our hope, exploring our world, seeking our path, while building our community."

Vision Statement:

Students enrolled at Northwest Passage High School develop self-confidence and academic skills through participation in a small learning community, where instructors are lifelong learners who model integrity, responsibility, and respect. Varied projects, field studies, and inquiry-based methods give students the opportunity to develop a greater sense of the world by engaging in challenging academics, structured real-world experiences, and service learning. Students take responsibility for their own educational plans and graduate with the tools to make informed decisions about their future.

Authorizer Information:

University of St. Thomas

30 South 10th St

Minneapolis, MN 55403

Liaison: Teresa Moffatt

Email: tmoffatt@stthomas.edu

The University of St. Thomas became the authorizer for Northwest Passage High School in 2021. The University of St. Thomas continues to support the school and its mission in many ways including: providing a liaison to the school board, technical support, student volunteers, and on-site reviews.

Governance:

Board Elections: The school held its annual election on October 17, 2023 at the annual meeting.

Name	Attend %	Email	Position	Start of Term	Training Requirement
Kurtis Heerema	90	kheerema@nwphs.org	Teacher	11/2023	Y
Jolene Stolpestad	100	jstolpestad@nwphs.org	Parent	11/2023	Y
Brandi Greer	90	bgreer@nwphs.org	Vice-Chair/ Teacher	11/2023	Y
Jason Olson	90	jolson@nwphs.org	Chair/Teacher	11/2022	Y
Alyssa Dahlke	65	adahlke@nwphs.org	Secretary/Teacher	11/2023	Y
Dr. Steven Rippe	80	srippe@nwphs.org	Community Member	11/2023	Y
Heidi Wold	100	hwold@nwphs.org	Parent	11/2022	Y
Jeff Schommer	90	jschommer@nwphs.org	Treasurer/ Teacher	11/2022	Y
Jessica Henrich	65	jhenrich@nwphs.org	Community Member	11/2022	Y
Terry Moffatt		tmoffatt@stthomas.ed	Ex-Officio/ Authorizer Liaison	N/A	N/A

Management:

The management team at the school consists of a Chief Financial Officer - Dona Fehr, Office Manager - Brandi Saba, Registrar - Regina Hill, Dean of Students - Anna Miller Sherman, and Executive Director - Peter Wieczorek

Staff Information:

The school continues to enjoy a great retention rate of professional teachers, despite some recent retirements and staff resignations. The average tenure of a NWPHS teacher is 11 years. Management continues to try to maintain competitive compensation and benefits that are typical of the geographic norms, and discussions continue on how to maintain competitive wages despite little increase in state aid.

Licensed Teachers

Name	File #	Licensure Area	# Years	Returning
Sara Anderson	420486	Social Studies	12	Yes
Theresa Bosijolie	425581	Special Education - EBD	25	No
Alyssa Dahlke	506354	Special Education	1	Yes
Brandi Greer	460779	Art	22	Yes
Jannika Gutzke	1027038	Special Education	1	Yes
Kurtis Heerema	485526	Social Studies	9	No
Eujeana Hinkle	1012326	Special Education	5	Yes
Chuck Hoppe	442179	Life Science	16	No
Megan Hughes	490325	Special Education - Academic	9	Yes
		& Behavioral Specialist		
Drew Klitzke	1003531	English Language Arts	2	Yes
Valerie Miller	409413	Special Education - EBD/	21	Yes
		SLD/MMI/ASD		
Jason Olson	458823	Mathematics	18	Yes
Dave Olson	475056	Special Education	7	Yes
Jeff Schommer	439004	Social Studies	6	Yes
Katie Watkins	491506	Chemistry	2	Yes
Peter Wieczorek	425983	Life Science	20	Yes

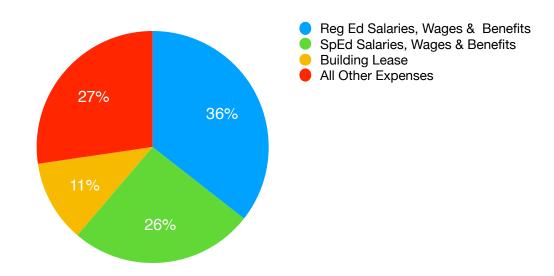
Name	Assignment	# of Years	Returning
Administrative Staff			
Dona Fehr	Finance Director	5	No
Regina Hill	Registrar	2	Yes
Anna Miller Sherman	Dean of Students	2	Yes
Brandi Saba	Office Manager	2	Yes
Peter Wieczorek	Director	20	Yes
Paraprofessionals			
Chloe Bosak	Paraprofessional	5	Yes
Isaiah Bucek	Paraprofessional	2	Yes
Swany Bundy	Paraprofessional	1	Yes
Nadine Collins	Paraprofessional	1	No
Mat Goeltl	Paraprofessional	8	Yes
Selena Orduno	Paraprofessional	3	Yes
Vashti Pearson	Paraprofessional	10	Yes
Meghan Retzlaff	Paraprofessional	5	No

Finances Summary

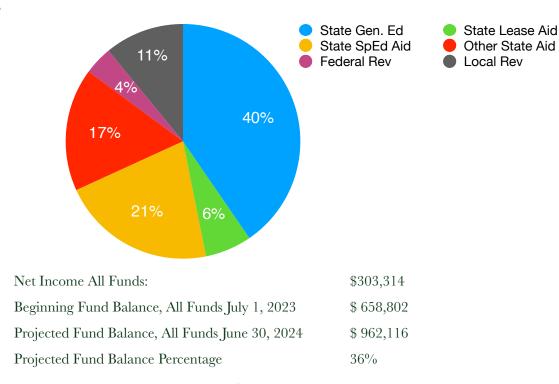
Finances:

The 2023-2024 audit conducted by Clifton, Larson, Allen returned a clean audit with no material weaknesses. The audit for this school year is scheduled for September and will be submitted prior to the December 31, 2024 deadline. The final unaudited financial statements for 2023-24: Total expenditures: **\$2,669,307** Total revenue: **\$2,972,621**. See CLA Audit Summary for details.

Expenses



Revenue



Innovative Practices:

As outlined in Minnesota State Statute 124E.01: The primary purpose of charter schools is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement. Additional purposes include to:

- (1) increase learning opportunities for all pupils;
- (2) encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
- (3) measure learning outcomes and create different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes;
- (4) establish new forms of accountability for schools; or
- (5) create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.

While we strive to continually meet all five purposes, NWPHS has focused on purpose 1) increasing learning opportunities for all students and 2) encouraging the use of different and innovative teaching methods. Listed below are a number of the innovative practices NWPHS has helped pioneer.

Overnight Learning Expeditions – NWPHS provides students the opportunity to complete three to four overnight learning expeditions before graduating. In 2023-24 NWPHS was able to offer 20 overnight learning expeditions, including 8 Level I, 9 Level II and 3 Level III trips accounting for 72 total days and 115 unique student opportunities. Level I trips included: Root River Biking Trail, Afton State Park, Wellness Retreat, GameFest, Duluth, Boulder Lake ELC, YMCA Camp Icaghowan Service Trip, & Soudan Underground Mine. Level II trips: MAAP Leadership Conference, Grand Marais and the North Shore; Winter Camping, Platte River Crane Migration, Model United Nations, MAAP STARS Retreat, Milwaukee Industrial Tour, Black Hills NSP. Level III expeditions: Louisiana Gulf Coast, Carlsbad Caverns National Park, and Washington D.C.

Off-Campus Field Experiences - Northwest Passage High School believes that learning happens best beyond the four walls of the school. Living up to our mission of "Exploring our World" NWPHS students participated in 99 Out of School Field Experiences that encompassed 1566 unique student learning opportunities.

Headwaters New Student Cohort - 2019-20 saw the introduction of the Headwaters 9th grade cohort designed to help incoming students successfully transition into high school. Headwaters program focuses on teaching students how to think and learn in a project-based learning model, as well as providing the necessary support to allow for a smoother transition into high school. Headwaters is built on the idea of scaffolded learning situations, exemplary project process modeling, and student risk-taking, all of which teach important life skills that are needed in the real world. In 2022, NWPHS was recognized by the Minnesota Association of Charter School as the Innovative School of the Year for the Headwaters cohort.

Graduation Focus Cohort - For 2021-22 NWPHS formalized a cohort to support students who have surpassed their graduation date and named it Delta. In 2023-24 Delta helped over 20 students remain in school and continue to work towards high school graduation, including 10 who received a diploma in 2023-24.

Student Innovator of the Month - Each month NWPHS recognizes a student Innovator of the Month. Innovators represent the value NWPHS places on student centered learning and supporting learning that is both academic and meaningful.

Staff Development - Staff development continues to be a strength of the school. NWPHS participated in the 2023 MN Association of Alternative Programs Annual Conference. For the 2023-24 school year the staff focused on the Psychology of Hope, deepening our understand the research on How People Learn, as well as, advancing our practices on the Science of Reading and applied mathematics. In 2023-24 NWPHS saw a 73% of full-time enrolled students grow in reading and 84% of students grow in mathematics.

Advisory Programs – NWPHS has an extensive advisory program. Each student is assigned an advisor when they enter our school who remains with the student for a minimum of one year. Ratios in advisory are kept to a maximum of 16:1. Advisors track progress and perform project management for students' individual projects. All students now have a Personal Learning Plan as well as Digital Portfolios.

Cohort Groups - On the first Friday of every month students meet with Cohort Advisors from their grade level to work on grade specific post-secondary planning in order to meet the requirements of the Minnesota World's Best Workforce initiative. Each grade level has a specific goal for the year. 9th grade focuses on the transition to high school and being successful in all aspects of high school. In 10th grade students focus on career exploration which includes career panels (often with NWPHS alumni), visits to job sites and career inventories. 11th grade examines post-secondary options including four-year universities, community college, technical colleges, internship and apprenticeship programs, the military and moving directly into the workforce. In 12th grade students spent time understanding post secondary living including: loans, interest rates, banking, insurance, budgeting and other adulting skills.

Four-Day School Week - NWPHS has maintained a four-day school week since opening in 1999. Four-day school weeks provide students with additional opportunities for both academic as well as non-academic pursuits.

Project Based Learning - Project Based Learning continues to be the primary learning model at NWPHS. Project Based Learning is used in both student directed projects and teacher led afternoon seminar courses. NWPHS has develop a project based learning cycle that includes: brainstorming; research and content; prototyping, rough drafts and project tuning; drafts, products and curation; presentations and curation.

Multi-Disciplinary, Team-Based Teaching - NWPHS teachers utilize a theme based cross-curricular teaching methodology that mirrors real-world learning. Using research-based project based learning strategies and Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning, students engage in extensive field studies with authentic assessment. This part of the program is rich in its use of community experts and local resources.

Clubs and Opportunities - NWPHS students are offered a wide variety of clubs and opportunities both during the school day and after school. These opportunities include: Prom Committee, Gay/Straight Alliance, Bonsai Club, Advisory Voice, Yearbook and Ecology Role-Play Club - an afterschool partnership with Three Rivers Park District. New for 2023-24 was competing in the Annual Solar Boat Regatta.

Service Learning — Service learning and service to others continues to be an important component of the NWPHS model. Students provided more than 50 hours of service to 10 different community organizations - including Boulder Lake Environmental Learning Center, Philly Farms, YMCA Camp Icaghowan, Elm Creek Park Reserve, Feed My Starving Children, Toys for Tots, and Wild Rivers Conservancy.

PSEO – 10% of seniors participated in Post Secondary Education Options. Students were enrolled at North Hennepin Community College, Anoka Technical College, Anoka-Ramsey Community College, and Anoka STEP Program.

Student Expos - On the first Friday of every month students participate in peer reviewed Project Expos. Students present the project work they have been working on in advisory to their peers and the community to share knowledge and receive feedback.

May-Term - May-Term was held the last two weeks of school and included: Art Tour; Fish & Fisheries; Service Learning YMCA Camp Icaghowan; Wellness; Pollinator Gardens; Geology; Comic Book History, Theater; and Senior Cohort.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS:

Projects, Pedagogy and Play Conference - In May of 2024 NWPHS hosted the fourth Projects, Pedagogy and Play Conference in partnership with Terra Nova Charter School and Headrush Learning Systems. Over 150 participates from 8 states and 2 countries participated in the one day conference.

Leaders in Progressive Education - NPWHS staff are connected with a wide variety of opportunities beyond their work at NWPHS, including the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools, Minnesota Association of Alternative Programs, Teacher Powered Network, EdVisions, Innovative Schools Network, Minnesota Learner Centered Network, Minnesota Department of Education - Charter Leaders Network, and Youth Intervention Prevention Association.

Minnesota Association of Charter Schools:

- 2023 Innovative School of the Year
- 2017 Innovative School of the Year

Minnesota Association of Alternative Programs

- 2024 MAAP School of the Year
- 2023 Teacher of the Year Brandi Greer
- 2020 Teacher of the Year Val Miller
- 2018 Teacher of the Year Theresa Boisjolie

HOPE Survey

· 2023-24 HOPE Demonstration School

Building Hope Impact Awards

• 2023-24 National Innovative School of the Year

Innovative Schools Network

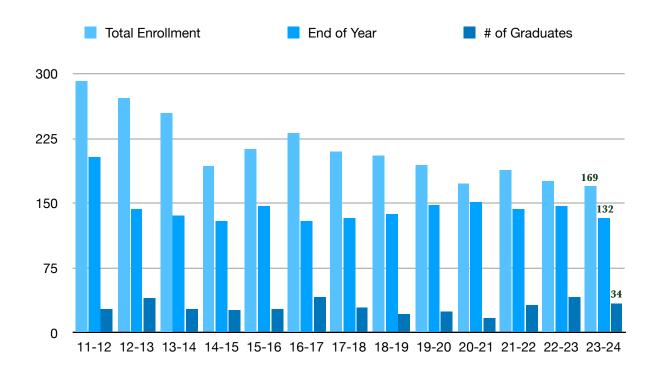
· Lab School



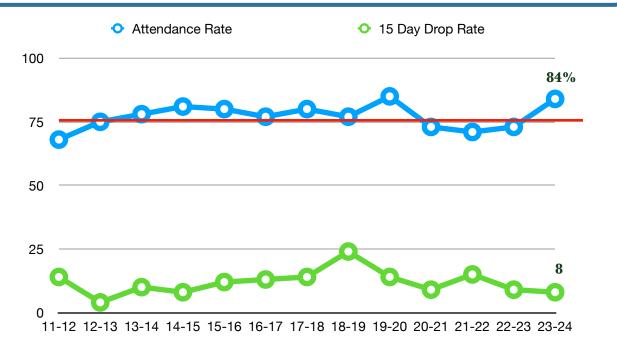




Enrollment Data:



Attendance Information:



Academic Goals

The school continues to focus on two value-added academic goals. By using Northwest Evaluation Association's (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), growth assessment for Mathematics and Reading. we are able to monitor what effect instruction has on students' math and reading skills as outlined by the University of St. Thomas authorizer contract.

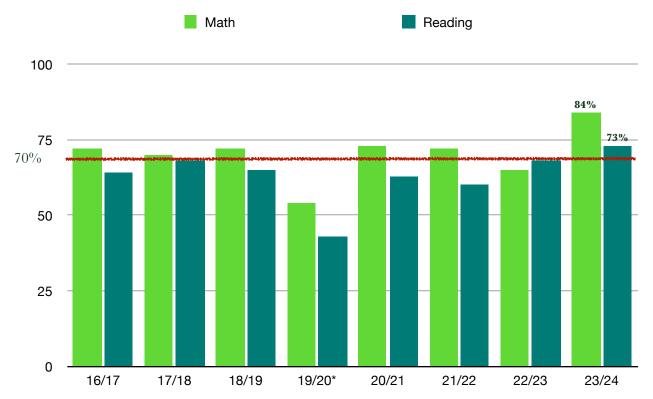
- 1. **Student Performance Goal:** At least 70% of students enrolled for the entire year will improve their NWEA MAP assessment in Math. **84% of continually enrolled students demonstrated growth.**
- 2. **Student Performance Goal:** At least 70% of students enrolled for the entire year will improve their NWEA MAP assessment in Reading. **73% of continually enrolled students demonstrated growth.**

Data Collection:

NWEA MAP testing was conducted in the fall of 2023, winter of 2024 and spring of 2024. Students included in the data set displayed below are students who were enrolled on September 10th, 2023 and were still enrolled on June 6th, 2024. Any student enrolled was given the NWEA test, but for the purposes of measuring improvement, only data from students enrolled the entire year were analyzed.

Data Analysis:

In non-adjusted gains the school showed gains of 5 points in reading and 19 points in math compared to the previous year, and met both of its academic goals. Math and reading groups continue to be implemented across all grade levels.



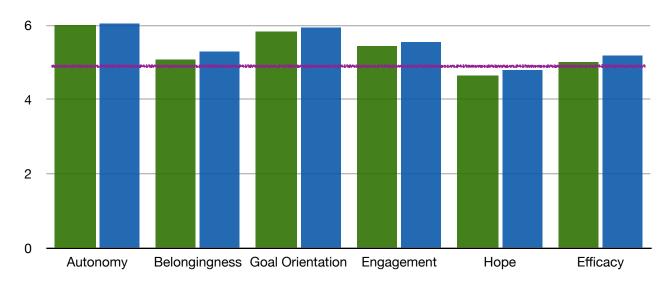
Percentage of students enrolled for the duration of the school year who demonstrated growth on the NWEA MAP assessment test.

Non-Academic Goals

8

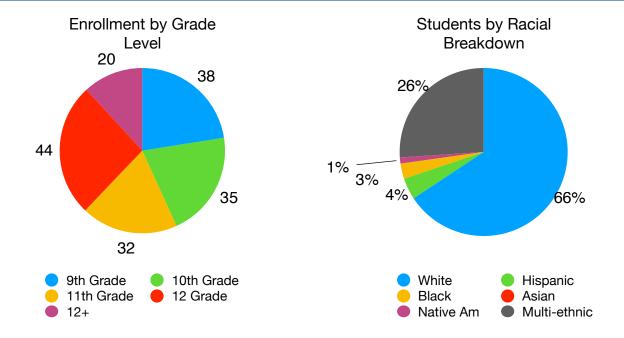
The school will focus on attendance, the HOPE study, and Senior Portfolios to measure non-academic goals.

- 1. **Student Performance Goal:** Average daily attendance will continue to be above 75%. Average Daily Attendance reached **84%** in 2022-23.
- 2. **Student Performance Goal: Hope Survey covers six aspects of Autonomy, Belongingness, Goal Orientation, Engagement, Hope & Efficacy.** Starting in 2022-23 NWPHS will report growth data from fall to spring. The Hope Survey uses an eight point scale, anything above a 5 is consider a strong Hope score.
- 3. **Student Performance Goal:** 80% of graduating seniors will complete a Senior Portfolio. In 2023-24 **94%** of the graduating seniors completed showcase portfolios.
 - HOPE Survey: Average of composite scores in 6 aspects of responses from Fall 2023
 HOPE Survey: Average of composite scores in 6 aspects of responses from Spring 2024



Students indicated moderate growth in all six aspects of the Hope Survey from fall of 2023 to spring of 2024.

Student Demographics



Enrollment by Resident District

District	# Students	District # Students
1	2	281 3
2	0	283 2
11	129	286 2
12	3	424 1
13	4	466 1
15	5	621 2
16	3	728 2
270	1	831 4
279	3	911 2

- 34% of students are eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch.
- 37% of students receive Special Education Services.
- 17% of students have a 504 Plan
- 37% of students use Northwest Passage H.S. transportation options.

Parent Satisfaction Survey Results

Question	% Strongly Agree or Agree
Teachers and staff care about my student(s)?	94%
My student's school is safe?	92%
Teachers provide help for my student when needed?	96%
I feel welcome as a parent/guardian at my student's school?	92%
The teachers challenge my student to do their best work?	96%
The teachers communicate regularly with me about my student's progress?	92%
Is the information in the school newsletter useful and relevant?	85%
All staff support my student(s) as individuals at Northwest Passage High School?	92%
Northwest Passage High School provides a variety of in and out of school opportunities for my student(s)?	96%
As a parent/guardian I appreciate all of the out of school field trips and expeditions that NWPHS provides for my student(s)?	88%
Northwest Passage High School is living up to our mission of "Rekindling our hope, exploring our world, seeking our path, while building our community."?	92%
Overall, Northwest Passage High School provides quality education for my student(s)?	92%

World's Best Workforce

Northwest Passage High School #4049

In accordance with 2013 Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11, Northwest Passage High School is pleased to submit this report to the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education, summarizing:

- The district's comprehensive, long-term strategic plan to support and improve teaching and learning that is aligned with creating the world's best workforce;
- Progress toward improving teaching and learning and striving for the world's best workforce, including current rates of:
 - O Students attaining career and college readiness before graduating from high school;
 - O Students graduating from high school; and
- Information about best practice strategies that were implemented and that are showing evidence of improving student outcomes and working toward creating the world's best workforce in Minnesota.

Identified Needs Based on Data

In 2021-22, Northwest Passage High School was once again identified through the federal Every Student Succeeds Act and the Minnesota NorthStar Report because of insufficient graduation rates. NWPHS was required to collaborate with the Regional Centers for Excellence to develop an evidence based practice to improve graduation rates.

Northwest Passage High School (NWPHS) uses Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) assessments. Over the past five years between 40-48% of students newly enrolling in NWPHS are behind at least one grade level in reading and between 45-60% are behind by at least a year in math.

Northwest Passage High School enrolls students in grades 9-12+ throughout the school year from surrounding school districts including district 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 279, 286, 621, 728 and others.

In 2022-23 50% of enrolled NWPHS students received special education services, including 504 Plans.

Over the past ten years more than 60% of students who enroll at Northwest Passage High School after their ninth grade year are at least 3 credits behind their cohort peers at the time of enrollment.

The Northwest Passage High School Board established the following goals through our Strategic Plan:

Evidence Based Practices to Improve Graduation Rates

- A. Development of a comprehensive reading and math program to support all learners and all grade levels. NWPHS hired a full-time Reading & Math Specialist and partnered with the Regional Centers for Excellence (RCE) to design curriculum and strategies and to train general education and special education teachers, plus paraprofessionals.
- B. In 2019 NWPHS added a cohort specifically to support the graduation and post-secondary goals of students who have surpassed their graduation date.
- C. In 2021-22 NWPHS implemented a strategy to increase overall attendance rates. In 2022-23 NWPHS hired a full-time Dean of Students/Interventionist to further support this goal.
- D. Data collection demonstrating the effectiveness of the 9th grade Headwaters cohort.

Staff Development Plan for NWPHS Director:

Peter Wieczorek has been the Director of NWPHS since 2012 and has taught at the school since 2004. He holds a Master's Degree from Goddard College in Education, an undergraduate degree in Outdoor/ Environmental Education from the University of Minnesota and has graduated from the St. Thomas University Leadership Development program. Mr. Wieczorek continues to participate in leadership training programs through MN Department of Education Charter Leaders Program and is the past board chair for the MN Association of Charter Schools. In addition, Mr. Wieczorek provides trainings for a number of schools through the Minnesota Association of Alternative Programs, Innovative Schools Network, EdVisions Cooperative, Teacher Powered Network, MN Learner Centered Network and Wisconsin Resource Center for Charter Schools. Peter graduated from the Minnesota Principals Academy through the University of Minnesota in June of 2023 with an action research project on the Science of Hope.

School Admissions:

DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the School Board of Charter District No. 4049 to comply with applicable federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination to the end that no person protected by such law shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, age or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any educational program; or in employment or recruitment, consideration, or selection, thereof, whether full time or part-time, under any education program or activity operated by the district for which it received federal financial assistance.

Nonprofit Status: Active.

2024 Graduates

Abdulrahman Al Azzawi Shiloh Blake **Benjamin Dean** Whitney Nicole Ensign Andrew T. Fosselman Benjamin G. Glendenning **Nathan Grace** Tristin Q. Gullickson **Taylor Nicole Hamilton** Flora Michelle Hepokoski Cassandra Daegi Houglum Damien Christopher Juncosa Nora G. Karlstad Caleb A. Kerrigan Joseph Leo Knight **Trent Baker Koezly** Skylar Kay Kukowski Cole Learned Garrett M. Leisdon Andrew D. Marx **Gavin McDonald Zachary Scott Meyers Gunnar Frederik Miller** Lilliann M. Moen Ava Belle Muehlbauer Robert Mungia Jr. Mia H. Nestler **Bella Norlin** Hayden C. Olson **Britta Marie Sheehan** Lilyana Marie Shellito Ericca A. Walbon Isabella Frances Ware Miles Allen Wold







Rekindling Our Hope









Exploring Our World



Seeking Our Path



While Building Our Community















Respectfully Submitted by Peter Wieczorek, Director October 15, 2024