

*Nerstrand Elementary School  
Independent Charter School  
District #4055*



*2014-2015 Annual Report  
on Curriculum, Instruction  
and Student Achievement  
September 2015*

*Our Mission*

*Nerstrand Elementary School will empower students to be self-directed, lifelong learners by providing a nurturing, multiage environment that fosters cooperation and character development.*

# ***TABLE OF CONTENTS***

<b>Preface</b>	
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Sponsor/Authorizer Information.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>I. School Enrollment.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>II. Student Attrition.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>III. Governance and Management.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>IV. Staffing.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>V. Finances.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>VI. Academic Performance .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>VII. Operational Performance.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>VIII. Innovative Practices.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>IX. Future Plans.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>X. Board Training.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>XI. Director’s Professional Development Plan.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Closing.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>XII. Nerstrand Testing Information by Grade Level.....</b>	<b>19</b>

# Preface

## INTRODUCTION

This annual report is presented to Novations Educational Opportunities (NEO) in fulfillment of the requirement of public charter schools set forth by the Minnesota Department of Education. It is also intended to provide information to the staff and families of Nerstrand Elementary School, the Minnesota Department of Education, and the general public.

Nerstrand Elementary School is committed to providing a quality, child-focused educational program for all students. The staff collaboratively works to ensure that students receive a balanced education that includes academic achievement, physical growth, social education, arts programming, and character development.

Individual student progress is measured and documented through formal and informal classroom assessments and used as a tool to develop instructional strategies. Achievement is reported through documentation provided by the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs).

## SPONSOR/AUTHORIZER INFORMATION

Nerstrand Elementary School is pleased to have the opportunity to function under the authorization of NEO and we look forward to many years of successful operation under their auspices. We are proud to be the first Minnesota public school to have officially “converted” from regular district school status to charter school status. We have successfully completed sixteen years as a charter school and we are thankful for the support provided by the Administration and School Board of the Faribault School District during our first thirteen years and now – by NEO. We want to recognize the strong support we have received from the community of Nerstrand and the parents of Nerstrand School over the course of the last sixteen years. The sense of celebration that we experienced at the time of our chartering remains with us today as our community demonstrates its commitment to the vitality of the school in countless ways. We submit this Annual Report to NEO with gratefulness and in anticipation of many productive years to come.

## **I. SCHOOL ENROLLMENT**

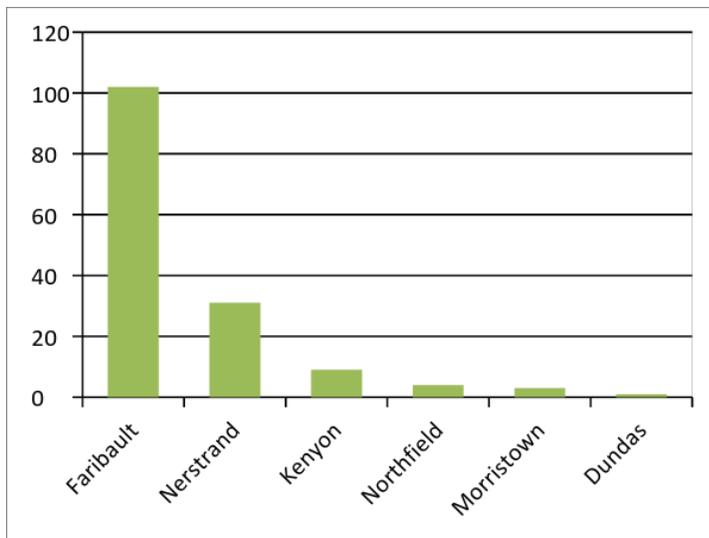
In 2014-2015 there were 150 students enrolled at Nerstrand Elementary School who were distributed into multiage core classes as follows:

<b><i>Core Name</i></b>	<b><i>Grade Level</i></b>	<b><i>Enrolled</i></b>
Prairie	Kindergarten – Grade 1	48
Savannah	Grades 2 – 3	51
Woodlands	Grades 4 – 5	51
Total Enrollment	Grades K-5	150

### **Grade Level Enrollment**

<b><i>Grade Level</i></b>	<b><i>Number of students</i></b>	<b><i>Number of boys</i></b>	<b><i>Number of girls</i></b>
Kindergarten	22	12	10
First Grade	26	10	16
Second Grade	24	9	15
Third Grade	27	15	12
Fourth Grade	25	10	15
Fifth Grade	26	11	15
Total	150	67	83

### **Enrollment by City**



As the above chart indicates, the vast majority of our students reside in the Faribault School District (this includes those with Faribault and Nerstrand addresses). Only 11% of our students reside outside of the Faribault School District.

The following chart provides demographic trends at Nerstrand Elementary School.

	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	155	154	155	150
<b>Male</b>	82	78	71	67
<b>Female</b>	73	76	84	83
<b>Special Education</b>	15	12	18	10
<b>African American</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Hispanic</b>	1	1	5	5
<b>Asian/Pacific Islander</b>	1	1	1	1
<b>White</b>	151	151	149	144
<b>American Indian</b>	2	1	0	0
<b>F/R Lunch</b>	22	24	24	24
<b>LEP</b>	0	0	1	0

## **II. STUDENT ATTRITION**

We began the school year with an enrollment of 154 students. The year ended with 150 students. Over time, we have experienced very little fluctuation in our enrollment during the course of the school year. We have consistently held our enrollment to 150 – 156 students every year since our chartering in 1999.

## **III. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

### **School Management**

The Administrative Team includes the Director, the Administrative Assistant and the Business Manager. A system of checks and balances has been established for the financial accountability of the school. The School received recognition for Financial Management.

Nerstrand Elementary School’s Board of Directors was established in May of 1999, when we opened our doors as the first conversion charter school in Minnesota.

The Board of Directors’ primary responsibility is to provide supervision of the school’s Director and their decisions focus on all dimensions of the school’s operation, including, but not limited to:

1. School philosophy, goals and objectives
2. School policy
3. Budget
4. Curriculum and instructional direction
5. Staffing
6. Long range planning
7. Communication (home, community, authorizer)
8. School enrollment and organization

The Nerstrand Elementary School Board of Directors consists of the following voting members:

1. Four teacher representatives
2. Two parent representatives
3. One community representative
4. One Ex-Officio member: building administrator
5. Seven voting members total

The members of the Board of Directors serve three-year renewable terms, with board elections taking place in May.

1. Every year, one (1) of the two parents' or the community member's term expires.
2. Every third year, two (2) teachers' terms expire; in each of the two years prior to the third year, one (1) teacher's term expires.
3. A representative may serve two consecutive terms, after which there must be a one-year hiatus before serving on the Board of Directors again.

The Board of Directors meets the second Monday of the month. Special meeting days and times, as determined by the Board of Directors, are publicly posted and announced to parents, staff, and community.

**2014-2015 Board of Directors**

<b>Chair:</b>	Mike Ross, parent 1101 Wellington Crescent Faribault, MN 55021 H 507-331-8752	Jan Boudreau, teacher 1931 16 <sup>th</sup> Street N.W. Faribault, MN 55021 W 507-333-6858
	Sarah Johnson, teacher 315 East 8 <sup>th</sup> Street Apt. 1 Northfield, MN 55057 W 507-333-6862	Tara Berndt, parent 15905 Foley Ave. Northfield, MN 55057 H 507-333-2165
<b>Clerk:</b>	Gayle Reuvers, community rep. 7197 Kenyon Blvd Faribault, MN 55021 H 507-334-5093	Heather Stanga, teacher 2812 Oak Lawn Drive Northfield, MN 55057 W 507-333-6857
	Carmen Bonde, teacher 16751 Kane Avenue Nerstrand, MN 55053 W 507-333-6868	<b>Director:</b> Lori Arndt 950 Winslow Ave West St. Paul, MN 55118 C 651-983-6917
<b>Admin. Asst.:</b>	Barb Grote 11492 East 200 <sup>th</sup> Street Kenyon, MN 55946 H 507-789-5369 W 507-333-6856	<b>Business Manager:</b> Keith Johnson 8704 Bagley Avenue Northfield, MN 55057 H 507-645-2870 W 507-333-685

## IV. STAFFING

### CERTIFIED STAFF

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>File Folder</i>	<i>Yrs. of Service at NES</i>
Arndt, Lori	Principal/Director	368969	2
Boudreau, Jan	Special Education Teacher	249690	14
Beithon, Melissa	Speech/Lang. Clinician	338237	2
Lubinski, Andrew	Gr. 4/5 Classroom Teacher	479984	1
Schilling, Angela	Gr. 4/5 Classroom Teacher	439061	1
Bonde, Carmen	Physical Education Teacher	317942	3
Shroyer, Paula	Gr. K/1 Classroom Teacher	332268	15
Stanga, Heather	Gr. K/1 Teacher	374074	2
Johnson, Sarah	Gr. 2/3 Classroom Teacher	404387	3
Van Roekel, Melodi	Music Teacher	289572	5
Vondrasek, Tara	Gr. 2/3 Classroom Teacher	408258	11

### NON-CERTIFIED STAFF

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Yrs. of Service at NES</i>
Amy, Lori	Paraprofessional	16
Bonde, Carmen	Special Education Paraprofessional	11
*Erickson, Michael	Custodian	
*Eul, Brenda	Head Cook	
Grote, Barb	Administrative Assistant	23
Isaacson, Margaret	Media Paraprofessional	28
Severson, Amy	Paraprofessional	1
*Jandro, Joan	Cook's Assistant	
Keller, Cheryl	Special Education Paraprofessional	7
Harris, Amy	Paraprofessional	1
Mullenmaster, Brenda	Paraprofessional	1
Keller, Annemarie	Paraprofessional	1

\*These individuals are employed by either the Faribault School District or Sodexo Food Service. Their services come to Nerstrand Elementary School as a result of agreements between the Boards of Directors of the respective schools/organizations.

Note: The years of service noted in the above charts include years prior to our chartering, when Nerstrand Elementary School was part of the Faribault School District. Including this information in this report demonstrates the commitment of staff members to the long-term success of the school.

### *Licensed teacher percentage turnover rate:*

2013-14 = 27%, 3 teachers

### *Staff Development*

Topics of focus for Early Dismissal Days and Curriculum Days were decided through consensus of the teaching staff. We continued to focus on our school-wide adoption of the Responsive Classroom (RC) approach. All classroom teachers participated in initial training during the summer of 2011, with RC trainers coming to the school in the fall of 2011 to provide paraprofessional staff with an abbreviated training experience. We brought RC trainers to the school in the fall of 2012 to work with certified and non-certified staff, alike, in reviewing the strategies employed in a successful RC setting. During the summer of 2013, the two classroom teachers who hadn't yet completed RC I training completed the course. The success of Responsive Classroom is heightened when all adults at the school have a working knowledge of both the philosophy and the strategies that result in enhanced student success. The Nerstrand Staff has collectively embraced the approach and worked hard - beginning with the 2011-12 school year and continuing through today - to reinforce the teacher/staff behaviors that promote student success. New teachers attended RC I training in 2014 and our newest teachers, Morgan Welborn and Matthew Kesely will be attending in December of 2015.

Jerry Burkhardt, Mankato Public Schools, Math Content Lead, presented an Everyday Math Workshop aligning the state math standards to Everyday Math benchmarks by grade level. Teachers worked collaboratively with consultant, Amy Erickson, to develop a teacher evaluation with peer review framework that would meet state statute requirements.

Classroom teachers also attended PRESS workshops in the summer of 2014. PRESS is a reading intervention program designed by the University of Minnesota. The Path to Reading Excellence in School Sites (PRESS) is a framework for Response to Intervention in reading for the elementary grades. The system includes four components: 1) quality core instruction, 2) tiered interventions, 3) leadership and professional development, and 4) data-based decision making. As new teachers are hired at Nerstrand they will participate in PRESS training as well.

## **V. FINANCES**

For fifteen years, Keith Johnson has served as our business manager. The Board of Directors is able to make informed fiscal decisions because of the guidance provided by him. Due to his thoroughness, we have been able to manage our fiscal tasks in-house, without the need to contract for outside services.

Payroll and insurance coverage for employees is managed by EdVisions Cooperative. They also provide us with access to NWEA materials, staff development opportunities, and human resources support. We view our relationship with the Cooperative as one of great value to our organization.

The audited Financial Statement for the year ending June 30th, 2015, shows revenues totaling \$1,468,712 and expenses in the amount of \$1,435,147 resulting in a net income of \$33,565. The annual financial audit resulted in no compliance findings, suggestions for improvement, or negative comments whatsoever.

## VI. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

*Reading Well by Third Grade using Data (Reading at grade level) Fountas and Pinnell-Spring 2015*

Grade	Number Students Proficient/total students	Percentage Proficient
Kindergarten	13/22	59%
Grade 1	18/26	69%
Grade 2	21/24	88%
Grade 3	24/27	89%

### ACADEMIC GOALS

#### **Goal #1: Reading**

To exceed the percentage of students achieving proficiency in reading statewide.

Indicator: The percentage of NES students in grades 3-5 attaining proficiency in reading will exceed statewide averages. By spring of 2017, 75% of students will attain reading proficiency.

Measurement: MCA III Reading Assessment

- Grades 3- 5
- Students attaining proficiency  
(meeting or exceeding grade level standard)

#### Results – Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) – Reading

As illustrated in the following chart, this goal was met at grade 4. In grades 3 and 5, the percentage of students achieving proficiency did not exceed the state average.

#### *MCA Reading\* Percentage at or above Level 3 Proficient*

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Minnesota</i>	<i>Nerstrand</i>	<i>Difference</i>
3	58.9	55.6	-3.3
4	57.9	68	+10.1
5	66.7	65.4	-1.3
3-5	59.5	62.8	+3.3

\*This was the first year Nerstrand School moved to an online testing environment. The 4-5 % decline was less than the impact that traditional schools experienced in the move to online testing.

As illustrated in the following chart, Nerstrand students performed above the National Grade Level Reading Norms, as measured by the NWEA MAP test, across all grades levels.

***NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)  
Reading Norms  
Mean RIT Values***

<i>Grade</i>	<i>National</i>	<i>Nerstrand</i>	<i>Difference</i>
2	184.2	186.3	+2.1
3	195.6	198.4	+2.8
4	203.6	211.5	+7.9
5	209.8	213.2	+3.4

**Goal #2: Mathematics**

To meet or exceed the percentage of students achieving proficiency in mathematics statewide.

Indicator: The percentage of NES students in grades 3-5 attaining proficiency in math will exceed statewide averages. . By spring of 2017, 75% of students will attain math proficiency.

Measurement: MCA III Mathematics Assessment

- Grades 3- 5
- Students attaining proficiency  
(meeting or exceeding grade level standard)

**Results – Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) – Math**

As illustrated in the following chart, this goal was met at grades 3 and 4. In grade 5, the percentage of students achieving proficiency did not exceed the state average.

***MCA Math\*  
Percentage at or above Level 3 Proficient***

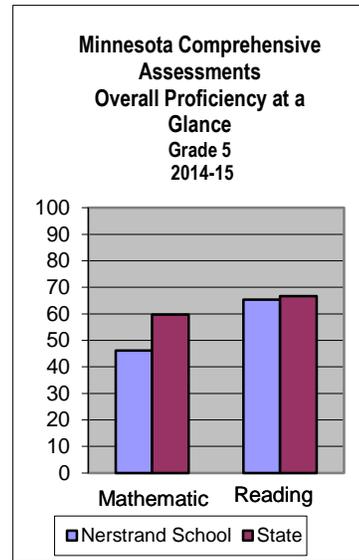
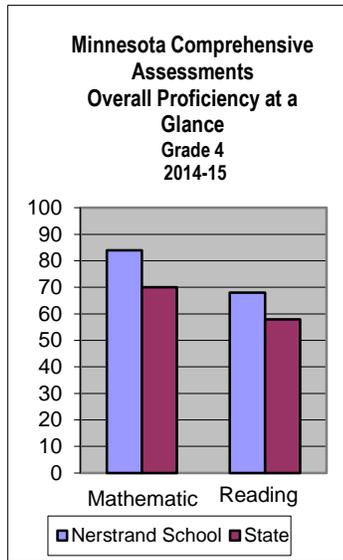
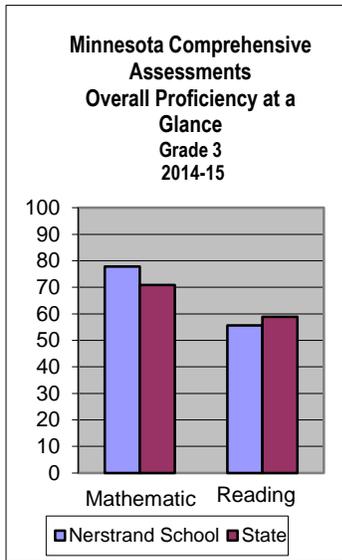
<i>Grade</i>	<i>Minnesota</i>	<i>Nerstrand</i>	<i>Difference</i>
3	70.9	77.8	+6.9
4	70	84	+14
5	59.7	46.2	-13.5
3-5	60.2	69.2	+9

\*This was the first year Nerstrand School moved to an online testing environment. The 4-5 % decline was less than the impact that traditional schools experienced in the move to online testing.

As illustrated in the following chart, Nerstrand students performed above the National Grade Level Math Norms, as measured by the NWEA MAP test, across all grades levels.

*NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)  
Math Norms  
Mean RIT Values*

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Minnesota</i>	<i>Nerstrand</i>	<i>Difference</i>
2	186.4	193.3	+6.9
3	198.2	205.8	+7.6
4	208.7	219.4	+10.7
5	217.2	222.1	+4.9



**Additional Data from MDE:**

**Grade 5 Science Proficiency**, as measured by the MCA: 53.8% Nerstrand as compared to a Minnesota state average of 59.3%.

**Multiple Measures Rating (MMR)**

Nerstrand Multiple Measures Rating (MMR) for 2014-2015 was 31.62%. Multiple Measurement Ratings, also known as MMR, represent an alternative accountability system that the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) presented to the U.S. Department of Education in order to opt out of the requirements of No Child Left Behind in 2011.

**NON-ACADEMIC GOALS**

**Goal #1:** Enhance the use of technology in the support of teaching and learning.

Indicators: Develop a Technology Plan  
Enhance classroom technology

Measurement: Staff meeting agenda including classroom technology items  
Log of participation in professional development  
Purchase of new equipment

Results: We are making progress in enhancing our use of technology by obtaining more iPads for classrooms. We look forward to using the iPads as enhancements to teaching and learning. We are committed to discovering new and dynamic ways to incorporate technology into our teaching.

**Goal #2:** Enhance the implementation of Responsive Classroom Strategies school-wide.

Indicators: Daily morning meetings  
Elevated student participation  
On-going modeling of appropriate behaviors  
Enhanced positive behavior  
Maintaining a focus on successful strategies  
Greater resources available to teachers  
Further training in RC strategies for all staff – certified and non-certified

Measurement: Observation of morning meetings throughout the school  
Observation of greater student participation and positive behavior  
Purchase of additional professional development RC resources  
Sharing of successful RC strategies throughout the year at staff meetings  
Posting of behavior expectations in locations throughout the school

Results: We achieved this goal in a wide variety of ways. Morning meetings take place in classrooms on a daily basis, creating a positive start to our day that involves all students. While we still consider ourselves a work in progress, the staff has become increasingly comfortable with using the terminology embraced by RC. We feel strongly that this shared language around behavior is a great help to students as we provide feedback that encourages them to make appropriate behavior choices.

## **VII. OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

### **Background Information**

Nerstrand Elementary School has successfully completed sixteen years as an independent public charter school – thirteen years under the sponsorship of the Faribault Public Schools and three years under the authorization of Novation Educational Opportunities (NEO). Nerstrand Elementary School is located in the small rural community of Nerstrand, approximately twelve miles from Faribault. The enrollment in 2014-15 was 150 students in Kindergarten through grade five. Nerstrand Elementary School is recognized for especially strong ties to its community. Academic success is only one reason families choose the school. The family atmosphere created through the multiage grouping – including the grade K – 5 homerooms that meet three times weekly – is often cited by parents as a particular draw to the school, along with

the high behavior standards that are established. Staff members work hard to ensure that students feel emotionally and physically safe. The longevity of our staff, with some of them being a part of the school for over 20 years (extending prior to our conversion to chartering in 1999), speaks to the stability of the program we offer our students.

### **Learning Environment**

We believe that learning is enhanced when students feel valued and safe. At Nerstrand Elementary School there are high expectations for school-wide behaviors where all students respect themselves, others and property. Each staff member makes a concerted effort to connect with each student as a means to establish a genuinely positive climate where students can comfortably take educational risks and enjoy learning. The Responsive Classroom approach has enhanced our success in establishing a nurturing and positive school environment.

### **Integrated Curriculum**

Many areas of the curriculum at Nerstrand Elementary School are thematic. Social studies, Science and Health are tied with literature-based reading, writing assignments, art and music. Throughout the school year and into the summer, staff members collaborate to develop and refine curriculum. Staff development opportunities throughout the school year reinforce the implementation of an integrated curriculum.

### **Regal Eagles**

The Regal Eagles Club is an after school child care program. Children are given the opportunity to explore their own interests, participate in crafts, games, science & nature projects, and socialize with their friends. Time is also made available to do homework. Regal Eagles has grown steadily over the years and parents express significant support and appreciation for this program offering.

### **A Strong Partnership with Parents and the Community**

Nerstrand Elementary School staff is committed to maintaining a strong partnership with parents and community members. The staff is committed to: optimal communication, volunteer opportunities, an “Open Door” policy for school visits, and reciprocal support through Service Learning programs.

The staff and administration are committed to clear communication with families and community members. The revised website provides an effective vehicle for the dissemination of information. Ongoing communication strategies include sending Weekly Peeks from classroom teachers and Family Updates from the school director in email format. These forms of communication provide information to parents about important school events and programs, enabling them to be supportive and involved. Other information is communicated through the school newspaper, “The Eagle’s Nest,” invitations to events, posters and personal calls.

### **Parent Survey**

Each spring, Nerstrand distributes a parent/family engagement and satisfaction survey to parents/guardians of Nerstrand students. Of the 103 total families at Nerstrand, 32 completed the survey for a response rate of 31%. Questions in the four domains were close-ended with five

response options (Strongly Agree, Agree, Don't Know, Disagree, Strongly Disagree). The survey was designed to measure four domains of parent satisfaction: (a) Community and Climate (6 questions) (b) Curriculum and Learning (4 questions) (c) Faculty and Staff (5 questions) (d) Governance and Administration (3 questions).

The results of the survey were very positive. There was overall positive response in all four domains: Community and Climate (94%), Curriculum and Learning (96%), Faculty and Staff (83%), Governance and Administration (90%).

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Proportion of Parents with and Average Positive Response (4.0 or higher)</b>
Community and Climate	94%
Curriculum and Learning	96%
Faculty and Staff	83%
Governance and Administration	90%

Comments:

*Nerstrand is the only school where I would send my kids. We're very happy with it.*

*We talk very highly of the school in our home. We believe the school is our partner in teaching our children and we have a role to assist with encouragement, making sure homework is done, and giving kids time to handle school challenges-academically and socially.*

*I appreciate the opportunities for project based learning, as well as, environmental learning (such as Discovery Day, Prairie Appreciation Day).*

*Nerstrand Elementary School is a wonderful, nurturing, and positive environment for learning. It provides many opportunities for children to grow and develop leadership skills. I love the hands-on learning opportunities that are presented to the children. I feel my children have become well rounded individuals because of the staff and curriculum that is being taught daily. I am thankful for the wonderful staff at the school. Together we are shaping children for the future.*

### **Parent-Teacher Organization**

The Nerstrand Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is an organization that contributes in a significant way to Nerstrand Elementary School. Through their fundraising efforts, special programs and opportunities are made available to all students. One example of their commitment to the Nerstrand students is the rotation of field trips to the Minneapolis Children's Theatre, the Minnesota History Center, the Ordway Theatre and the Science Museum of Minnesota. Traditional fundraisers include the Wreath and Swag Sale in December and the Seed Sale and the Carnival/Silent Auction in the spring. The "Eagle Open" golf tournament that takes place in June is another fundraiser that provides fun for families and community members while raising money for the school. . It was a very well attended event and is being held again in 2015. Each year, the Eagle Open advertises its event as a means to support the everyday daily instruction in music and physical education with certified specialists. This year's highly

successful primary fund-raising focus was classroom technology. In the fall of 2014 the PTO organized the first Nerstrand Night Out and Hog Roast. It was a very well attended event and is being held again in the fall of 2015.

### **Community & Parent Opportunities**

There are many opportunities for parents and community members to visit Nerstrand Elementary School including Community Coffees, Community Lunches, the fall Flu-Shot Clinic, Youth and Elders' Community Celebration in the spring, and Service Learning projects such as Community Clean-up days. Parents are always welcome to visit in classrooms, eat lunch with students, and observe special events such as "Student Spotlights."

### **Reciprocal Support**

We appreciate the ongoing support we receive from the townspeople of Nerstrand who have made our school the "heart of their community." Community members support the school in a variety of ways including: partnerships in Service Learning projects, volunteering at the school, and donating items for fundraisers such as the Carnival's Silent Auction. Community volunteers add a unique dimension to the programs at Nerstrand Elementary School. Some elders volunteer in classrooms during the school day, while other community members assist at special events. The Nerstrand Women's Club donates mittens, scarves, hats, socks, sweatpants, and underwear so that we have supplies for students who need them. Their help is greatly appreciated.

## **VIII. INNOVATIVE PRACTICES**

### **Multiage Benefits**

The multiage setting positively impacts the overall climate of the school by enhancing positive social interaction, reducing interfering behaviors, and strengthening a strong sense of community. The benefits of multiage education for student growth and development are many:

- Increased time on task
- Greater student self-direction
- Emergence of peer leadership
- Active participation of students
- Greater student ownership
- Enhanced learning through teaching others
- Increased willingness to take learning risks
- Enhanced self-discipline and self-confidence

### **Service Learning**

We define Service Learning as "a form of experiential learning whereby students apply content knowledge, critical thinking and good judgment to address genuine community needs." More simply, it is the "blending of both service and learning in such ways that both occur and are enriched by each other." Through Service Learning projects, interpersonal skills such as collaboration, civic engagement, and problem solving are developed while students' academic skills in reading, writing, science, art, math and social studies are enhanced through reflection and the projects themselves. The successful school-wide implementation of service learning for

the past sixteen years has enabled students, parents, and staff to engage in extensive service projects that benefit the school and the community.

The opportunities for service learning within the school are varied. Each day begins with the arrival of the “Early Bird Crew” who work together to prepare the building for the day by collecting paper to be recycled, cleaning boards and erasers, sharpening pencils, and washing classroom tables. Students also have opportunities to serve during the school day by helping with lunchroom clean up. Students also have leadership opportunities by serving on a variety of committees and task forces, including:

- Peace Garden Committee
- Learn and Serve Steering Committee
- Ambassadors
- School Spirit Task Force
- Behavior Plan/Playground Committee

Many of the established projects have become traditions at Nerstrand School. Favorite projects include the Community Celebration (where community elders are honored), the Holiday Sharing Project that enables students to contribute to worthy causes instead of purchasing gifts for school friends and staff. Service Learning projects that benefit community members include Community Lunches, Community Coffees, Community Clean-up, and Downtown Beautification.

### **Environmental Learning**

Other Service Learning projects have an environmental focus. For a number of years, Nerstrand School has worked in partnership with both the Nerstrand Big Woods State Park and Rice County's Caron Park where reforestation, landscaping, and prairie restoration efforts have been carried out with the help of community volunteer, Larry Richie. We also maintain and enhance the Peace Garden on the school grounds.

### **Responsive Classroom**

We have continued our successful implementation of this program with great success. We appreciate how using a shared language around behavior school-wide creates a supportive climate for students. No matter what adult is addressing them, the words addressing behavior are consistent. We have continued the RC training of staff both in-house and through participation in RC training in the metro. As new personnel join the Nerstrand staff we are committed to providing training for them.

### **Web-based Enrichment using Reading Eggs**

In the fall of 2011, with the help of the Nerstrand PTO, the *Reading Eggs* program was purchased to promote reading development at the K-1 level. Students use these online activities at home and at school to strengthen their skills.

## **IX. FUTURE PLANS**

Nerstrand School is in the process of acquiring more technology for student use. We are expanding the adoption of iPads by purchasing 5 per classroom. This expenditure is being made possible by money collected through the Eagle Open Golf Tournament and Nerstrand Night-Out Hog Roast. These are both events sponsored by our PTO.

As the future provides opportunities to examine student data and adjust instruction accordingly, we are hopeful that our academic achievement can be strengthened. The examination of our Literacy Program in the coming year, as part of our Curriculum Review cycle, will be thorough and will allow us the opportunity to address the varying needs of both our advanced and struggling learners.

The Responsive Classroom (RC) strategies that have proved to be successful both in terms of student behavior and achievement will continue to be a priority for teachers and support staff alike. The high standards for behavior that have been the hallmark of the school for decades are reinforced through this positive approach.

## **X. BOARD TRAINING**

<b><i>Name</i></b>	<b><i>Certification</i></b>	<b><i>Date Completed</i></b>	<b><i>Location</i></b>
Tara Berndt	Board Governance	12/10/2011	University of St. Thomas
Tara Berndt	Employment Law	12/10/2011	University of St. Thomas
Tara Berndt	Financial Matters	12/10/2011	University of St. Thomas
Gayle Reuvers	Financial Matters	8/9/2011	Beltz, Kes, Darling & Associates
Gayle Reuvers	Employment Matters	1/4/2011	Booth & Lavorato, LLC
Gayle Reuvers	Board Governance	1/4/2011	Booth & Lavorato, LLC
Mike Ross	Financial Matters	12/10/2011	University of St. Thomas
Mike Ross	Board Governance	8/16/2011	Booth & Lavorato, LLC
Mike Ross	Employment Matters	8/24/2011	Booth & Lavorato, LLC
Jan Boudreau	Financial Matters	11/13/2010	University of St. Thomas
Jan Boudreau	Employment Matters	5/22/2010	Ratwick, Roszak & Maloney
Jan Boudreau	Board Governance	5/22/2010	Ratwick, Roszak & Maloney

Sarah Johnson	Board Governance	10/11/2014	University of St. Thomas
Sarah Johnson	Employment Matters	10/11/2014	University of St. Thomas
Sarah Johnson	Financial Matters	10/11/2014	University of St. Thomas
Carmen Bonde	Financial Matters	11/13/2010	University of St. Thomas
Carmen Bonde	Employment Matters	5/22/2010	Ratwick, Roszak & Maloney
Carmen Bonde	Board Governance	5/22/2010	Ratwick, Roszak & Maloney
Heather Stanga	Financial Matters	4/18/2015	University of St. Thomas
Heather Stanga	Board Governance	4/18/2015	University of St. Thomas
Heather Stanga	Employment Matters	4/18/2015	University of St. Thomas

## **XI. DIRECTOR'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

1. Support the staff both professionally and personally to enhance their professional performance and growth.
2. Maintain appropriate communication with all stakeholders of Nerstrand Elementary School.
3. Work closely with the administrative team, teachers and staff to promote academic growth.
4. Collaborate with the Board of Directors to strategically plan for the future of Nerstrand Elementary School.
5. Coordinate the process for selecting staff members as positions may be vacated.
6. Work collaboratively with the administrative team members in monitoring the budget and exercising financial responsibility.

## **Closing**

After sixteen years of existence as a Minnesota Charter School, we are submitting our Annual Report for our third year with our authorizer – Novation Educational Opportunities (NEO). We do so with gratefulness for the trust you have placed in us to deliver a program of excellence to the students of Nerstrand Elementary School. The seeds of pride were planted when the school was established in 1887 and we continue to serve as the heartbeat of our small community to this day. We look forward to the opportunities for growth and enhanced success as we continue our partnership with NEO.

We continue to be grateful to the Faribault Public Schools for their thirteen years of charter school sponsorship and for their ongoing care and concern for the maintenance of our building. We appreciate their openness to our purchase of the following support services: custodial, food service, technology, and low incidence special education consultation. And though we are no longer sponsored by them, we look forward to a continued positive relationship with the district where the vast majority of our students will attend once they graduate from our school.

## **XII. NERSTRAND TESTING INFORMATION BY GRADE LEVEL**

### TESTING CALENDAR BY GRADE

#### **GRADE KINDERGARTEN**

Common Test Name	Formal Test Name	Test Subject	Purpose	When
ACCESS FOR ELL'S (WIDA)	Assessing Comprehension & Communication in English State-to-State for ELLs	Oral Reading Fluency	Results of these tests assist parents, teachers and administrators to know students English proficiency levels, set learning goals and determine the Annual Measurable Achievement Objective (AMAO) calculations for Title III	Early Spring
FAST	Formative Assessment System for Teachers from University of Minnesota	Early Literacy	Provides student performance data and reporting improvement to parents, teachers, and administrators to enable evidence-based evaluation and data-driven instruction	Fall, Winter, Spring
READING BENCHMARKS	Fountas & Pinnell	Reading	A benchmark assessment system is a series of texts that can be used to identify a student's current reading level and progress along a gradient of text levels over time. The word "benchmark" means a standard against which to measure something.	Winter, Spring
MAP	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) developed by Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)	Reading and Math	Measures each child's growth and general knowledge in reading and math skills. These tests track the progress, or growth, in basic skills. They let teachers know where student's strengths are and if help is needed in specific areas.	Winter

#### **GRADE 1**

Common Test Name	Formal Test Name	Test Subject	Purpose	When
ACCESS FOR ELL'S (WIDA)	Assessing Comprehension & Communication in English State-to-State for ELLs	Oral Reading Fluency	Results of these tests assist parents, teachers and administrators to know students English proficiency levels, set learning goals and determine the Annual Measurable Achievement Objective (AMAO) calculations for Title III	Early Spring
FAST	Formative Assessment System for Teachers from University of Minnesota	Early Literacy	Provides student performance data and reporting improvement to parents, teachers, and administrators to enable evidence-based evaluation and data-driven instruction	Fall, Winter, Spring
READING BENCHMARKS	Fountas & Pinnell	Reading	A benchmark assessment system is a series of texts that can be used to identify a student's current reading level and progress along a gradient of	Fall, Winter, Spring

			levels over time. The word “benchmark” means a standard against which to measure something.	
MAP	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) developed by Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)	Reading and Math	Measures each child’s growth and general knowledge in reading and math skills. These tests track the progress, or growth, in basic skills. They let teachers know where student’s strengths are and if help is needed in specific areas.	Fall & Winter

### GRADE 2

Common Test Name	Formal Test Name	Test Subject	Purpose	When
ACCESS FOR ELL’S (WIDA)	Assessing Comprehension & Communication in English State-to-State for ELLs	Oral Reading Fluency	Results of these tests assist parents, teachers and administrators to know students English proficiency levels, set learning goals and determine the Annual Measurable Achievement Objective (AMAO) calculations for Title III	Early Spring
FAST	Formative Assessment System for Teachers from University of Minnesota	Early Literacy	Provides student performance data and reporting improvement to parents, teachers, and administrators enable evidence-based evaluation and data-driven instruction	Fall, Winter, Spring
READING BENCHMARKS	Fountas & Pinnell	Reading	A benchmark assessment system is a series of texts that can be used to identify a student’s current reading level and progress along a gradient of levels over time. The word “benchmark” means a standard against which to measure something.	Fall, Winter, Spring
MAP	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) developed by Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)	Reading and Math	Measures each child’s growth and general knowledge in reading and math skills. These tests track the progress, or growth, in basic skills. They let teachers know where student’s strengths are and if help is needed in specific areas.	Fall & Winter

### GRADE 3

Common Test Name	Formal Test Name	Test Subject	Purpose	When
ACCESS FOR ELL’S (WIDA)	Assessing Comprehension & Communication in English State-to-State for ELLs	Oral Reading Fluency	Results of these tests assist parents, teachers and administrators to know students English proficiency levels, set learning goals and determine the Annual Measurable Achievement Objective (AMAO) calculations for Title III	Early Spring
FAST	Formative Assessment System for Teachers from University of Minnesota	Early Literacy	Provides student performance data and reporting improvement to parents, teachers, and administrators enable evidence-based evaluation and data-driven instruction	Fall, Winter, Spring
READING BENCHMARKS	Fountas & Pinnell	Reading	A benchmark assessment system is a series of texts that can be used to identify a student’s current reading level and progress along a gradient of levels over time. The word “benchmark” means a standard against which to measure something.	Fall, Winter, Spring
MAP	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) developed by Northwest Evaluation	Reading and Math	Measures each child’s growth and general knowledge in reading and math skills. These tests track the	Fall & Winter

	Association (NWEA)		progress, or growth, in basic skills. They let teachers know where student's strengths are and if help is needed in specific areas.	
MCA-III	Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment III (MCAIII) Required by State of Minnesota	Reading & Math	The state tests in reading and math meet the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. These tests are given every year to measure student performance on the Minnesota standards in reading and math. The reading and math tests are also used to determine whether schools and districts have made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) toward all students being proficient for NCLB.	Spring

#### GRADE 4

Common Test Name	Formal Test Name	Test Subject	Purpose	When
MTAS	Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS) Required by State of Minnesota	Alternate Achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities	Provides performance and growth data to parents, teachers, and administrators. Links assessment results to instruction. (Test is an alternate for the MCA-II/III) These tests are also used to determine whether schools and districts have made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) toward all students being proficient for NCLB.	Spring
ACCESS FOR ELL'S (WIDA)	Assessing Comprehension & Communication in English State-to-State for ELLs	Oral Reading Fluency	Results of these tests assist parents, teachers and administrators to know students English proficiency levels, set learning goals and determine the Annual Measurable Achievement Objective (AMAO) calculations for Title III	Early Spring
FAST	Formative Assessment System for Teachers from University of Minnesota	Early Literacy	Provides student performance data and reporting improvement to parents, teachers, and administrators enable evidence-based evaluation and data-driven instruction	Fall, Winter, Spring
READING BENCHMARKS	Fountas & Pinnell	Reading	A benchmark assessment system is a series of texts that can be used to identify a student's current reading level and progress along a gradient of levels over time. The word "benchmark" means a standard against which to measure something.	Fall, Winter, Spring
MAP	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) developed by Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)	Reading and Math	Measures each child's growth and general knowledge in reading and math skills. These tests track the progress, or growth, in basic skills. They let teachers know where student's strengths are and if help is needed in specific areas.	Fall & Winter
MCA-III	Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment III (MCAIII) Required by State of Minnesota	Reading & Math	The state tests in reading and math meet the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. These tests are given every year to measure student performance on the Minnesota standards in reading and math. The reading and math tests are also used to determine whether schools and districts have made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)	Spring

			toward all students being proficient for NCLB.	
--	--	--	--	--

## GRADE 5

Common Test Name	Formal Test Name	Test Subject	Purpose	When
MTAS	Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS) Required by State of Minnesota	Alternate Achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities	Provides performance and growth data to parents, teachers, and administrators. Links assessment results to instruction. (Test is an alternate for the MCA-II/III) These tests are also used to determine whether schools and districts have made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) toward all students being proficient for NCLB.	Spring
ACCESS FOR ELL'S (WIDA)	Assessing Comprehension & Communication in English State-to-State for ELLs	Oral Reading Fluency	Results of these tests assist parents, teachers and administrators to know students English proficiency levels, set learning goals and determine the Annual Measurable Achievement Objective (AMAO) calculations for Title III	Early Spring
FAST	Formative Assessment System for Teachers from University of Minnesota	Early Literacy	Provides student performance data and reporting improvement to parents, teachers, and administrators enable evidence-based evaluation and data-driven instruction	Fall, Winter, Spring
READING BENCHMARKS	Fountas & Pinnell	Reading	A benchmark assessment system is a series of texts that can be used to identify a student's current reading level and progress along a gradient of levels over time. The word "benchmark" means a standard against which to measure something.	Fall, Winter, Spring
MAP	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) developed by Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)	Reading and Math	Measures each child's growth and general knowledge in reading and math skills. These tests track the progress, or growth, in basic skills. They let teachers know where student's strengths are and if help is needed in specific areas.	Fall & Winter
MCA-III	Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment III (MCAIII) Required by State of Minnesota	Reading , Math & Science	The state tests in reading and math meet the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. These tests are given every year to measure student performance on the Minnesota standards in reading math and science. The reading and math tests are also used to determine whether schools and districts have made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) toward all students being proficient for NCLB.	Spring