



N^oBLE
ACADEMY

“Empowering Today, Leaders Tomorrow”

2011-2012
Annual Report
Curriculum, Instruction
& Student Achievement

Minnesota Charter School District #4171

Neal Thao, CEO/Founder

4021 Thomas Avenue North

Minneapolis, MN 55412

Office: (612) 522-4976

Fax: (612) 522- 9265

Annual Report to Our Community

Noble Academy is a K-8 charter school located in the city of Minneapolis, Minnesota. Opened in the fall of 2007, it currently serves a diverse student population in grades K through 8 from Blaine, Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Columbia Heights, Coon Rapids, Fridley, Spring Lake Park, and the greater Minneapolis areas.

The mission and vision of the school are embedded into the day-to-day activities at Noble. The mission of Noble Academy is to provide quality, relevant and multicultural education for all students. The unique framework is relevancy, which is a critical component for the learning process if and when the students can build their prior knowledge. Learning makes more sense and is more connected when students can relate to the content and/or topics being taught. The school will serve students in the metro areas.

Mission: The mission of Noble Academy is to provide quality, relevant and multicultural education for all students.

Vision: We believe that each student will reach his/her highest potential through an educational program guiding upon their learning styles, language development, life experiences, and cultural backgrounds. Each student will be able to identify with their own culture and its invaluable significance, resulting in the knowledge of who they are, where they come from and ultimately developing them into social and academic maturity in today's society.

Noble Academy focuses on the following cornerstones surrounding the educational philosophy of the school:

- A rigorous educational program focusing on core content areas and standards mandated by the state of Minnesota in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies
- Hmong Heritage (native) language and culture
- Responsive classroom/social curriculum

At Noble Academy, we believe that each student will reach his/her highest potential through an educational program built upon their learning styles, language development, life experiences, and cultural backgrounds. Each student will be able to identify with their own culture and its invaluable significance, resulting in the knowledge of who they are, where they come from and ultimately developing them into social and academic maturity in today's society.

Recognitions Received in 2012:

1. Celebration Academic Achievement Award by the Minnesota Department of Education
2. School Finance Award for Fiscal Year 2011 by the Minnesota Department of Education
3. The Study Island Honor Roll Campus Award for Achievement by Archipelago Learning

Teaching and Learning:

Noble Academy has adopted three primary building blocks of curricular design elements.

1. High Expectations for All Students:

We set high expectations for ourselves, our students, and our communities by allowing children to perform to their highest potential through research-based best practices and advancing differentiated instruction at all grade levels. This design element is met by having high expectations for all of our students, by providing content area learning through quality teaching, and offering parents the option of enrollment in the Learning Year Program for year-round schooling with allows for students to advance in grade levels upon demonstration of mastery of all standards through a rigorous accountability system.

2. Response-to-Intervention System using Responsive Classroom Techniques:

We utilize a balanced system of authentic, formative, and summative assessments aligned with the Minnesota State Standards to diagnose the academic needs of our students through the systematic use of assessment data to most efficiently allocate resources in order to enhance learning for all students. Assessment information is used to help inform teachers to plan the next steps in instruction and provide learners with critical, prompt, and descriptive feedback they can use to increase their achievement and improve the quality of their work leading toward mastery.

3. Teacher Cultural Proficiency and Effectiveness through Professional Development, Observational Data, and Student Assessment Analysis:

Noble Academy as a Quality Compensation (Q Comp) School has in place a teacher evaluation system that incorporates ongoing administrative evaluation, peer observation, and student data to inform teachers on their effectiveness in the classroom. Teachers receive job-embedded professional development by participating in professional learning communities (PLC) on a weekly basis which they receive mandatory clock hours for licensure renewal and may elect to receive graduate credit from Saint Mary's University. Teachers are observed a minimum of three times per year by a licensed administrator, a PLC lead teacher, and/or a mentor teacher which includes a pre and post observational conference to provide critical feedback and coaching. Teachers also receive timely data analysis and data coaching sessions on student achievement at least three times a year to inform their instruction and provide for individualized learning plans for every student to be successful through monitoring, interventions, and added instruction.

Job Embedded Saint Mary's University Graduate Level Courses Completed in 2011-2012:

1. Urban Teacher Leadership: Closing the Achievement Gap with Dr. Mai Yia Chang
2. Intercultural Understanding: Cultural Dynamics of the Hmong People with Mr. Neal Thao
3. Integrating Technology for 21st Century Instruction in K-12 Education with Mr. Randy Bergman

Environmental Education (EE) as Curriculum Component:

1. K Thematic Units: Season and Symbol, Trees, Liquid, Gas and Solid, Dinosaurs and The Places You Will Go
2. 1st Grade -8th Grade Thematic Units: Water Conservation, Planting a Garden, Rock, Animals and Environment, Renewable versus Non-Renewal Resources, and Earth Day Activities
3. K-8: Develop of the knowledge, skills and attitudes to support a sustainable, healthy environment daily best practices:
 - Recycle papers, cans, bottles
 - Turn off lights when leaving the classrooms
 - Turn off computers at the end of the day
 - Open windows instead of using air conditioning
 - Neighborhood cleanup
 - Water conversation

Annual Field Experiences to Learn about Habitats and Natural Resources:

4. Visit Como Park Zoo
5. Visit Science Museum of Minnesota
6. Visit Local Community Parks Near Noble
7. All Day Outdoors with Three Rivers Park District
8. Visit Apple Orchard
9. Minnesota History Center
10. Peter's Pumpkins and Carmen's Corn

Passing Forward Noble's EE Commitment:

11. Parent newsletter earth-friendly ideas and tips
12. Infuse Earth Friendly tips into Curriculum Night
13. Host an Earth Day Celebration

Teacher-led Earth-Friendly Outdoor Recreation:

14. Leaf observations near Memorial Drive in Minneapolis
15. Trip to swimming pool at Local School for physical exercise and observe of changing seasons and compare it to students' fall nature walk
16. Neighborhood walk for exercise
17. Students release frogs from Life-Cycle Unit into nearby pond for students to experience the living habitat of a frog's life in a pond

EE-Trained Teachers/Experts Used:

18. Leadership Team attend environmental related trainings
19. Administration attend Global Citizenship One Day trainings

Assessment Results:

Combining student performance over the past three years (2009-2010, 2010-2011, & 2011-2012) on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment across all grades test results show that Noble Academy students are making significant academic gains in all core content areas.

MCA-II Test	3 N=58		4		5		6		7		8	
	NP	P	NP	P	NP	P	NP	P	NP	P	NP	P
Reading	43%	57%	44%	56%	40%	60%	38%	62%	58%	42%	48%	52%
Math	28%	72%	40%	60%	30%	70%	47%	53%	62%	38%	32%	68%
Science												

Multiple Measures	Reading	Math
Student Proficiency	57.3% (+2.3%)	62.2% (+23.5%)
English Language Learners	51.59% (+2.1%)	61.5% (+20.1%)
Free/Reduced Lunch	56.0% (+0.3%)	61.7% (+17.3%)
Special Education	14.3% (+6.0%)	10.0% (-7.4%)

*Enrolled October 1st (growth) or (loss) from 2011

NWEA Annual Growth	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Reading	+80%	64.7%	59.7%	75.5%	51.3%	73.8%	90.6%	77.4%	84.2%
Language	X	X	54.3%	78.4%	58.3%	73.8%	73.0%	85.7%	58.3%
Math	+80%	60.4%	79.7%	76.6%	63.9%	88.1%	81.6%	71.4%	75.0%
Gen. Science	X	X	X	81.1%	70.5%	78.6%	89.2%	71.4%	65.2%
Science-Concepts & Processes	X	X	X	75.5%	63.9%	78%	58.3%	68.6%	78.3%

Noble Academy Testing Program 2011-2012 Test

Test	Grades/Student Population	Administration Time
WIDA	K-8 EL Students	Spring
MCA II- Reading	3,4,5,6,7,8	Spring
MCA III- Math	3,4,5,6,7,8	Spring (3 Attempts)
MCA III- Science	5,8	Spring
MTAS	3,4,5,6,7,8 Special Education	Spring
MAP/NWEA (Math & Reading)	K,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8	Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer
STAR READING	K,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8	Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer
Summative Assessments	K,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8	Annually
Read Naturally	K,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8	As Needed

2011-2012 School Year Charter Public School Board

The following served as Noble Academy’s governing board members 2011-2012:

Name	Board Position	E-mail
Ge Yang	Board Chair	ge.yang@farmersinsurance.com
Su Yang	Board Vice Chair	Su.yang@yangattorney.com
Neng Yang	Board Treasurer	cnengyang@hotmail.com
Koukhasha Lee	Board Secretary	Kkue@nobleacademy.us
Jose Quiroz-Ziebart	Teacher Representative	jziebart@nobleacademy.us
Neal Thao	Ex Efficio	nthao@nobleacademy.us

2011-2012 Authorizer Information:

Noble Academy’s is authorized as a public charter school by Audubon Center of the North Woods in Sandstone, Minnesota. Noble Academy shares in its mission through innovative instruction and technology: *“To instill a connection and commitment to the environment in people of all communities through experiential learning.”* Our School’s point of contact is David Greenberg, Charter School Lead Coordinator.

Authorizer	Phone	E-mail	Address
Audubon Center of the North Woods	1-888-404-7743 (612) 331-4181	dgreenberg@auduboncharterschools.org	PO Box 530 Sandstone, MN 55072

2011-2012 Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Hours:

All board members were trained on Oversight of Employment Matters, Board Governance, Oversight of Finance Matters with Booth & Lavorato LLC on November 19, 2011.

During the 2011-2012 school year the administration team completed CEU hours in the following: Minnesota Licensing Collaboration for Education administration (4 hours), Mental Illness (4 hours), Data Driven Instruction (12 hours), The 90/90/90 Schools Summit (15 hours), ACNW Networking & Sessions for Charter School Leaders (2 hours).

Staffing:

2011-2012 School Management and Faculty Information

POSITION	NAME	Years Employed by the School	Left During 11/12 N=No Y=Yes	Returning 12/13 N=No Y=Yes
CEO/Founder & Principal	Neal Thao	5	N	Y
Executive Director of Teaching/Learning	Katherine Chang	4	N	Y
Personnel/Administrative Specialist	Dianna Chang	4	N	Y
Curriculum Specialist	Bradley Tipka	3	N	Y
Curriculum Specialist	Randy Bergman	4	Y	Y
Student Account Specialist	Charlene Yang	5	N	Y
Student Services/Family Liaison	Tom Yang	3	N	Y
Kitchen Supervisor	Leena Lee	3	N	Y
Health Care Specialist	Annie Xiong	1	N	Y
Secretary	Anita Moua	2	N	Y
Library Specialist	Vang Ken Chang	1	N	Y

K-5 Classroom Teachers

POSITION	NAME	Years Employed by the School	Left During 11/12 N=No Y=Yes	Returning 12/13 N=No Y=Yes
Teacher-K	Nou Moua	3	N	Y
Teacher-K	Beth Sorensen	3	N	Y
Teacher-K	Kelsey Bennett	1	N	Y
Teacher-K	Elizabeth Kong	4	N	Y
Teacher-1	Maika Leier	1	N	N
Teacher-1	Brittany Wenzel	1	N	Y
Teacher-1	Anna Eberhardt	4	N	N
Teacher-1	Ana Ruiz	1	N	Y
Teacher-2	Zoua Vue	5	N	N
Teacher-2	Laura Miles	1	N	Y
Teacher-2	Dana Risler	3	N	N
Teacher-2	Paul Azen	1	N	Y
Teacher-3	Krystal Graber	1	N	Y
Teacher-3	Rajer Taoly	1	N	Y
Teacher-3	Shannon Siercks	5	N	Y
Teacher-4	Amanda Keller	3	N	Y
Teacher-4	Kelly Thyne	1	N	N
Teacher-4	Kelly Strasser	1	N	Y

Teacher-5	Nicole Neidermeier	4	N	Y
Teacher-5	Lindsay Fulmer	1	N	Y
Teacher-5	Nicole Lancette	1	N	Y

Middle School Teachers

POSITION	NAME	Years Employed by the School	Left During 11/12 N=No Y=Yes	Returning 12/13 N=No Y=Yes
Teacher-Math	Heather Sand	3	N	Y
Teacher-Language arts	William Thyne	1	N	N
Teacher-Science	Amanda Adolph	1	N	Y
Teacher-Social Studies	Adam Hennen	1	N	Y
Teacher- Non Fiction	David Muehe	2	N	Y

Licensed Specialists

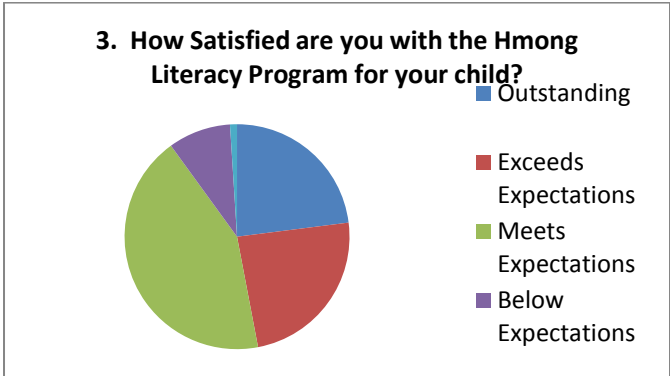
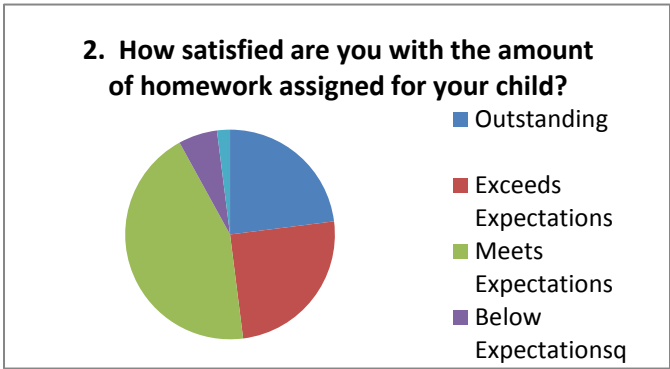
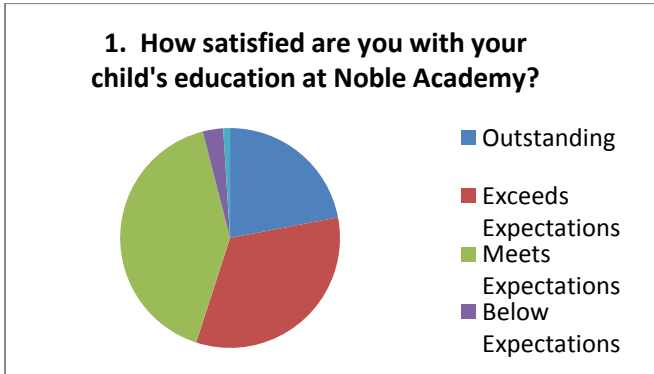
POSITION	NAME	Years Employed by the School	Left During 10/11 N=No Y=Yes	Returning 11/12 N=No Y=Yes
Teacher-Music/Math	Meghan Hoehn	1	N	N
Teacher-Physical Education	Jose Quiroz-Ziebart	5	N	Y
Teacher-Special Education-EBD	Deborah Heltzer	1	N	Y
Teacher-Special Education-LD	Alda Jensen	5	N	Y
Teacher-Special Education	Todd Solom	1	Y	N
Teacher-Special Education	Cutis Gustafson	1	N	Y
Teacher- Hmong Literacy/Culture	Youa Lee	1	N	Y

Support Staff

POSITION	NAME	Years Employed by the School	Left During 11/12 N=No Y=Yes	Returning 12/13 N=No Y=Yes
Technology Support	Michael Yang	4	N	Y
Web Designer/IT Support	Shashi Lo	4	N	Y
Engineer	Koua Thao	4	N	Y
CKK	Leena	3	N	Y
Engineer	Steve Lozowy	3	N	Y
Cook	Blia Xiong	2	N	Y
Cook	Susan Yang	3	N	Y

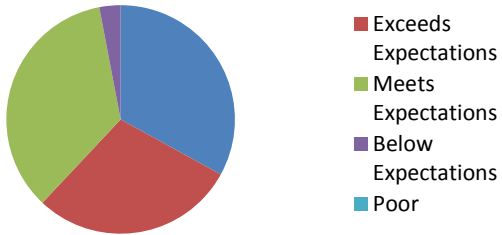
Noble Academy Parent Satisfaction Survey Results: Spring 2012

Academics:

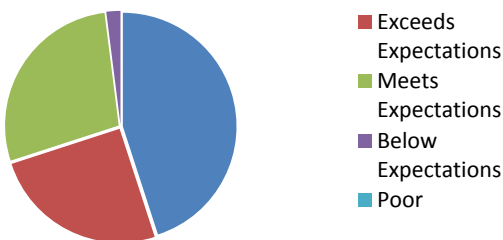


School Climate and Organization

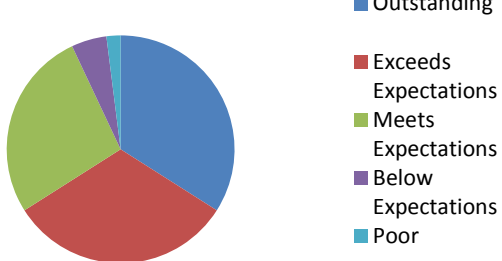
1. Does your child feel safe at Noble Academy?



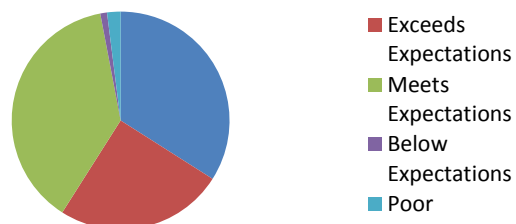
2. Does your child like attending Noble Academy?



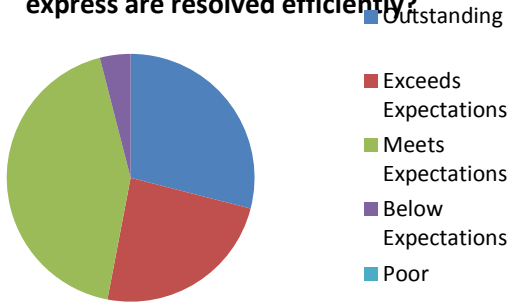
3. Do you receive weekly newsletters from your child's classroom teacher?



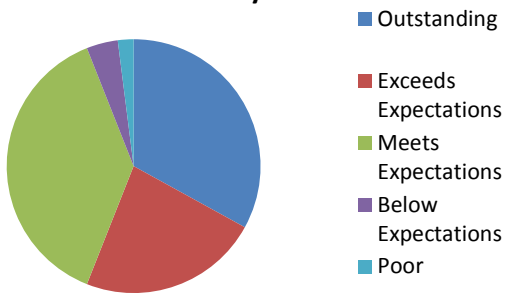
4. Do you believe this weekly newsletter is helpful?



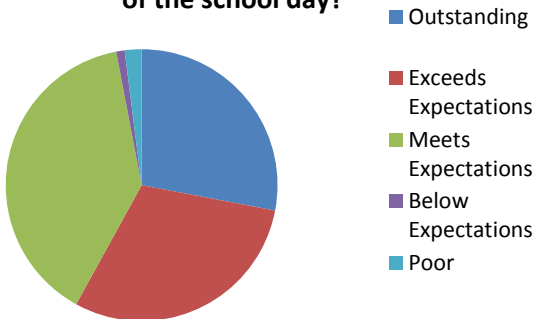
5. Do you believe that the concerns you express are resolved efficiently?



7. How satisfied are you with the school bus service for your child?

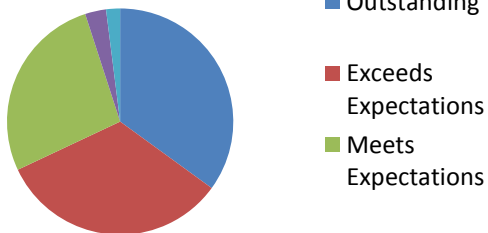


6. How satisfied are you with the length of the school day?

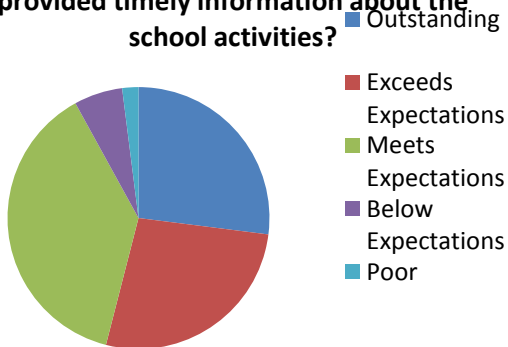


School Activities & Parent Involvement

1. Do you believe that the school activities (such as Hmong New Year, Book Fair, and Carnival) are important to your child's enrichment?



2. Do you believe that Noble Academy provided timely information about the school activities?



Student Enrollment

The student enrollment at Noble has been one of great success. We started in 2007 with 125 students. In 2011-2012 we ended the school year with 478 students enrolled for 2012-2013.

	Kinder- garten	First Grade	Second Grade	Third Grade	Fourth Grade	Fifth Grade	Sixth Grade	Seventh Grade	Eighth Grade	Total Enrolled
Returning Students	0	57	60	67	54	59	46	44	36	423
New Enrollement	43	2	0	0	5	1	2	1	1	55
Learning Year	38	18	21	22	24	18	19	11	11	184
Total	43	59	60	67	59	60	48	45	37	478
Maximum seats	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
Seats Available	17	1	0	-7	1	0	12	15	23	62

Summary	
Regular Year	294
Learning Year	184
Total Enrolled	478
Seats Available	62