

NORTHSHORE CLASSICAL ACADEMY

Private school eyeing fall 2025 opening

Organizers nearing their fundraising goal

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MEQUON — A group of Ozaukee County residents are one step closer to reaching their fundraising goal for their private school, hoping to open its doors in fall 2025.

NorthShore Classical Academy, a nonprofit, private Hillsdale Curriculum school to serve grades nine through 12, totaled more than \$450,000 in local donations last year and is partnering with the William S. Knight Foundation for a \$200,000 matching grant to kick off the second half of its NCA Founders Campaign for 2024, said to Cheryle Rebholz, president of NCA's board of directors. It would begin as a non-voucher school, meaning it would be supported by tuition and philanthropy.

"The positive response from our philanthropic community, business leaders and families looking for choice in their children's high school education has been amazing," Rebholz said. "Our Founders Campaign has exceeded our expectations, and we are nearly halfway to our goal of raising \$1 million by 2025. Now with this matching grant in hand, we are looking to our supporters in the local community who believe in our school to get their donations matched before June 30."

According to NCA, the Hillsdale Curriculum — used from the Christian conservative Hillsdale College in Michigan — is content-rich, balanced and strong, with emphasis on the four core disciplines of math, science, literature and history, with attention to music, art, physical education and ancient and foreign languages. If approved, it would be the first private high school in the county and the second in the state to utilize this type of curriculum.

"The curriculum also reimagines the traditional educational model by moving learning outside of the

Academy

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classroom on a regular basis through the World of Work," Rebholz said, noting that NCA will feature an 80/20 schedule, with 80% of the students' week spent in academic instruction and 20% doing experiential learning at area businesses.

"Students will have the opportunity to learn from experts and see education manifest in daily life."

Rebholz, a former Mequon-Thiensville School Board member and current owner of the boutique shooting range Bear Arms, originally proposed a charter school after she and three others failed to oust four Mequon-Thiensville School Board members in a recall election. The four cited declining test scores among students as one of the many issues.

"As you are undoubtedly aware, our country and the current education system are at dangerous inflection points. Public schools are in turmoil, curriculum does not align with the needs of the business community, basic proficiency in academic subjects is declining steadily, and parent and student rights are being

egregiously violated by many school boards and educators that value indoctrination over education," Rebholz said. "Parents are coming to us looking for better education alternatives for their high schoolers, a school that will foster learning, career readiness and good moral character. This is what NCA is all about."

Having Mequon in mind as its first location choice due to it being logistically in the middle of the five area school districts, Rebholz and organizers passed

the first stage of approval in April 2022, but the following December, were denied by the Wisconsin Office of Educational Opportunity Advisory Council due to a lack of detail in the school's application.

Rebholz said that since reapplying for charter school status was not viable because of the political climate and pressure not in favor of the school, they announced in April of last year that they would operate as a private entity.

"The state may have told

us 'no' as a charter school, but you, our children and our community have told us 'yes,'" according to the NCA board.

In addition to the \$450,000 already raised, Rebholz noted that NCA held several informational events attended by 300 families and donors, raised \$100,000 in in-kind donations, and formed business partnerships with eight local companies.

For additional information about NCA and how to get involved in the coming year, visit www.ncawi.org.



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