

**Independent School District 279
Osseo Area Schools**

Final Report and Recommendations of the

**District Planning
Advisory Council**

**To the Superintendent and
School Board**

2016-2017

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2016-2017 Membership

Parents

Birch Grove Elementary.....
Basswood Elementary Lisa Gordon
Cedar Island Elementary Kevin Anderson
Crest View Elementary
Edinbrook Elementary Stacey Yurcek
Elm Creek Elementary..... Robin Dolan
Fernbrook Elementary Jeremy Dehn
Fair Oaks Elementary.....
Garden City Elementary
Oak View Elementary Thomas Brooks
Oak View Elementary Jonathan Charpie
Oak View Elementary Marty Cohen
Park Brook Elementary.....
Palmer Lake Elementary
Rice Lake Elementary..... Heather Ayer
Rice Lake Elementary..... B. Davila
Rice Lake Elementary..... Kristy Deike

Rush Creek Elementary.....
Woodland Elementary Brian La Rose
Weaver Lake Elementary
Zanewood Elementary..... Marjorie Holmes
Brooklyn Middle School Celeste Miller
Maple Grove Middle School..... Antonia Tsoukatos
Maple Grove Middle School..... Karen Kieser
Maple Grove Middle School..... Lisa Gordon
North View Middle School..... Esther Almeida
Osseo Middle School..... Robin Dolan
Osseo Middle School..... April Tatur
Maple Grove Senior High April Tatur
Osseo Senior High Robin Dolan
Osseo Senior High Thomas Brooks
Park Center Senior High..... Teri Nemeth
Park Center Senior High..... Derrick Strom
Osseo Area Learning Center

Students

Matthew Nemeth - PCSH
Holly Dolan - OSH
Gigi Wilkins - OSH

Community

Lisa Berglund
Pam Paulsen

ESC Staff

Jeremy Willey
Jill Lesné
Don Pascoe

School Board

Robert Gerhart
Heather Douglass

2016–2017 Steering Committee Membership

Marty Cohen, Chair	Brian La Rose
Jeremy Willey	Heather Ayer
Jill Lesne	Robin Dolan
Don Pascoe	Holly Dolan

Subcommittee Membership

Achievement & Evaluation

Don Pascoe
Kevin Anderson
Lisa Berglund
Thomas Brooks
Marty Cohen
Celeste Miller
Pam Paulsen

Student Services

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Heather Ayer
Brian La Rose
Matthew Nemeth
Teri Nemeth
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B. Davila
Jeremy Dehn
Holly Dolan
Robin Dolan
Heather Douglass
Robert Gerhart
Marjorie Holmes
Karen Kieser
April Tatur
Antonia Tsoukatos
Gigi Wilkins

**Final Report and Recommendations of the
District Planning Advisory Council
2016-2017**

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the District Planning Advisory Council is to assure community-school cooperation in setting improvement goals, evaluating progress toward meeting annual objectives and in reporting of findings and recommendations to the entire school community. Membership of the District Planning Advisory Council includes parents/guardians, community members, senior high students, classroom teachers, administrators, staff and School Board members. The council meets on a regular basis with no fewer than eight meetings. The major functions of the Council are listed under Board Policy 616 – World’s Best Workforce as follows:

The school board will adopt a comprehensive long-term strategic plan to support and improve teaching and learning. In adopting the long-term strategic plan, the school board will consider the superintendent’s recommendation based on the input of the school district’s strategic planning process, the District Planning Advisory Council, and school site teams. The plan will be aligned with creating the world’s best workforce and include performance measures designed to determine each school’s progress in striving to create the world’s best workforce.

The school district will establish an advisory committee. The advisory committee will recommend to the school board rigorous academic standards, student achievement goals and measures designed to fulfill the school district’s mission.

The work calendar of the District Planning Advisory Council during the 2016-2017 school year was guided by the provisions of Board Policy 616. The Council’s bylaws directed its internal operations.

In accordance with the aforementioned policy and procedures, the District Planning Advisory Council submits this annual report and recommendations for the instructional improvement plan for the next school year to the Superintendent of Schools and Board of Education.

PROGRESS TOWARD ACHIEVEMENT OF RECOMMENDATIONS MADE IN 2015-16 FOR IMPLEMENTATION IN 2016-17

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE

Recommendation 1 (Elementary Science)

We recommend the district devise a multi-facet approach to bringing science scores, as reflected by 5th grade Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) results, to a level consistent with the district average for our highest needs schools.

Progress

In 2016, 47.1% of all 5th grade students reached proficiency on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) for science. This level of proficiency represents an increase of 3.2% overall, across our district, from the previous year (2015) and is the highest level of proficiency reached in Osseo Area Schools since the 2012 science standards adoption. From 2015 to 2016, six (6) elementary sites raised their percent proficient between 1% - 5%, while five (5) elementary sites raised their percentage proficient by more than 5%. In addition, individual elementary sites have increased their focus on science in terms of what they offer students. Two sites have added a licensed teacher to provide students with science/STEM-focused instruction for the 2016-2017 school year (Palmer Lake and Zanewood Elementary).

Recommendation 2 (Enhanced Communication Plan for Students & Families)

We recommend the district ensure a comprehensive alignment of communication at each high school to families regarding key information related to each individual high school year.

Progress

Significant efforts have taken place, recently, to enhance communication for families and provide consistent information. Registration brochures have been revised to provide students and families with accurate information regarding course offerings, graduation requirements, and contact information for families to access. Each of the aforementioned brochures has a consistent appearance and format, and images of the school site and students are present. In addition, revisions to individual school websites have been made. District webmasters have worked to develop standards for similar items that appear on all school websites so that a common language has been developed for what items are called. The overall format of each high school website is consistent in appearance, overall design, and formatting.

Recommendation 3 (Consistent Programming in Advisory)

We recommend the district establish consistent programming experiences in advisory for students across all middle school and high school sites.

Progress

Each of our four middle school sites has been involved in the implementation of an advisory component for all students in grades 6-8 throughout the 2016-2017 school year. The primary curriculum resource that is being utilized is the Ramp Up to Readiness Program, a tool developed by the University of Minnesota. Through the facilitation of the Coordinator of Career and College Readiness, a subgroup of middle school leaders has worked, throughout the spring of last year and last summer, to refine individual lessons, activities, and offerings for students to more effectively meet the diverse needs of our student population. Every unit, at each grade level 6-12, has been organized in Schoology to make them more easily accessible for teachers and materials have been revised and improved upon to more effectively engage learners. Teachers at each of our four middle school sites utilize these materials once or twice a week to ensure that students have consistent programming experiences in advisory.

ACHIEVEMENT AND EVALUATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Recommendation

We recommend that the district expand high school course options that satisfy state and district requirements for graduation and also, that all students have access to the courses across district high schools. We also recommend that options are developed that allow students to earn credits more efficiently, thus creating elective space in their schedules to enable our students to better explore their dreams.

Progress

Three approaches have been implemented to expand student scheduling flexibility. At Park Center High School a seven period day was implemented in 2014-15 providing students with increased opportunities to engage in International Baccalaureate (IB) and the specialized courses. District high schools have also implemented zero hour, and offered additional online and blended classes. Also, in 2016 the high schools explored using a “standards based” make up model. This allows students who did not receive credit in a class to earn credit by successfully completing the standards that they had previously been unsuccessful rather than completing the entire 12 week class. The district is also exploring a high school “embedded health” model that would provide additional scheduling flexibility by providing a non-course based approach to deliver required health standards (see the Program Assessment and Review Subcommittee report recommendation one). This alternate delivery approach would remove one required course.

STUDENT SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE

Recommendation 1

We recommend the district continue the commitment to equitable student achievement by training all staff on racial equity and cultural responsiveness.

Progress

Progress continues on the recommendation to continue emphasis on reducing disproportionality issues within the district EBD rate as well as the suspension rate for black students; the disproportionality in the discipline of black students still needs improvement. Between 2012-2017, suspension rates of all students have dramatically decreased, however, the Suspension Disproportionality Gap has continued to increase for our most marginalized group of students (black males) 2.88, 2.90, 2.92, 2.97, 2.94 respectfully.

This year 268 employees were trained in the “Beyond Diversity One” formal classes. An additional 60 employees were trained in the “Beyond Diversity 2” and 260 employees attended Equity Booster meetings in October of 2016 and March of 2017.

Recommendation 2

We recommend the district expand the scope and sequence of the Common Sense Digital Citizenship Curriculum (CSDCC) to begin at kindergarten and continue through grade twelve. Further, we recommend age-appropriate lessons at each grade level throughout the school year. Additionally, for year 1, we recommend implementation of a cross-discipline “Summer Writing Team” to review the CSDCC and develop the scope and sequence for each grade level.

Progress

In addition to the Common Sense Digital Citizenship Curriculum new materials were developed tailored to Osseo Area Schools students needs. A boot camp was implemented at both the elementary and middle school levels to give students a boost of introductory lesson focusing on how to use their i-Pad responsibly. Finally, as misuse of technology surfaced, staff responded with additional lesson and instruction.

Recommendation 3

We recommend the district continue the commitment to trauma-informed practices consistently throughout our district. The goal of this is to decrease behavioral referrals and increase students’ capacity to become efficacious learners. We further recommend that trauma-informed practices training be expanded to include general education and support staff.

Progress

From yoga to deep breathing instruction, trauma-informed practices are being promoted by staff across the district. Student Services has committed to providing training and support during all system staff development days during the 2016-17 school year.

Sandy Buechel, School Social Worker at Osseo Senior High shared how these practices are supporting students at OSH.

- A calm room was developed where students can practice various strategies for calming their Central Nervous Systems. The calm room has low lighting, beanbags, fidgets, art projects, coloring books, guided imagery, positive messages, yoga poses, and music suggestions. Applications to try for breathing, exercise ideas, punching bag and essential oils are utilized as well.
- Mindful mornings with students
- All groups start with mindful practices
- Psycho-education with students about trauma
- Psycho-education with staff about trauma via presentations
- Development of a Schoology page with resources for students

Drew Hamilton, School Social Worker at North View Middle School shared:

- Provided staff development training and informing teachers best practices on Trauma
- Restorative practices
- Mindfulness moments

Paige Young, School Social Worker at Rush Creek Elementary shared:

- Staff inquire about trauma in special education evaluations
- Incorporating mindfulness into lessons helps address some of the flight/fight overdrive issues that trauma exposed brains can experience
- MindUp is taught, when applicable, which teaches kids about how memory and experiences can influence their brain and how calming techniques can help them stay regulated

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION in 2017-18

2016-17 HIGH PRIORITY DISTRICT PLANNING ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION IN 2017-18

Each subcommittee identified and considered a set of objectives. The full set of objectives considered is contained in the Subcommittee Reports. The seven high priority recommendations are listed below.

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE

Recommendation 1

We recommend that the district develop, integrate, and implement an embedded health education model for students at the senior high level across the district.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that the district investigate and adopt a comprehensive curriculum resource to effectively meet the individual learning needs of each student in mathematics at the elementary level.

ACHIEVEMENT AND EVALUATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Recommendation 1

We recommend that the district transform our staffing system to:

1. assure that high needs schools are equitably staffed with skillful and experienced ESPs, teachers, and administrators, and
2. stabilize staff at high needs schools to support site training and culture building in order to provide students with the best opportunity achieve equitable achievement.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that the district establish expectations for staff to use culturally responsive strategies and provide robust training and support for staff to develop the necessary skills.

Recommendation 3

We recommend that the district implement specific culturally responsive programming for black students, the ethnic group with the largest and most persistent performance gaps.

STUDENT SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE

Recommendation 1

We recommend the district continue the commitment to trauma-informed practices consistently throughout the district.

Recommendation 2

We recommend the expansion of training and use of restorative practices at all levels across the district.

**PROGRAM ASSESSMENT & REVIEW
SUBCOMMITTEE
FULL REPORT**

2016 – 2017
PROGRAM ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT
DISTRICT PLANNING ADVISORY COUNCIL

Osseo Area Schools
Independent School District 279

Subcommittee Membership

Jeremy Willey, Robin Dolan, Holly Dolan, Bob Gerhart, Marjorie Holmes, Karen Kieser, April Tatur, B Davila, Antonia Tsoukatos, Jonathan Charpie, Gigi Wilkins, Jeremy Dehn, Heather Douglass

SECTION I: Committee Activities

The Program Assessment and Review Subcommittee engaged in a variety of activities throughout the course of the 2016-2017 school year. The primary focus of this group, this year, was to examine a new delivery model for health education to better serve the student population at the high school level across Osseo Area Schools. The subcommittee researched the Embedded Health model adopted by the Minnetonka Public Schools, and invited an educator – and one of the program’s founders – to present to the group and learn more information. In addition, the subcommittee also invited the Secondary Curriculum Coordinator for Osseo Area Schools to discuss health education standards and the process and/or efforts involved in developing a similar model for instruction within our school district.

The second focus of the Program Assessment and Review Subcommittee was to review the curriculum resource, utilized at the elementary level, for math instruction with students. This resource, Math Expressions, is a tool that has been utilized in Osseo Area Schools for over a decade. Upon engaging in conversation around math resources as a subcommittee, the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, & Educational Standards (CIES) shared the work that this department has engaged in, over the past year, to provide professional learning for educators around best practices in mathematics instruction and explore different curriculum resources that could potentially be utilized in Osseo Area Schools. This subcommittee examined student achievement data in elementary math and invited the Elementary Curriculum Coordinator to learn more about the work to date.

SECTION II: Data Summary

A. Data Reviewed

Health

- Embedded Health Education 9-12 Informational Packet from Minnetonka Public Schools
- Minnesota State Standards and Benchmarks for Health & Physical Education
- 7th Grade Health and Wellness Course Outline & Unit Planner

Math

- Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) Trend Data for 3rd, 4th, 5th Grade (2012-2016)
- MCA Proficiency by Elementary Site (2016)
- % Change in MCA Math Proficiency from 2012-2016 by Elementary Site
- MCA Growth Z Score by Racial Group (2016)

B. Summary of Evaluation Data (Math)

Strengths

- 3rd grade student proficiency increased by 0.7% in 2016 while the state average proficiency decreased by 1.3%.
- Eight (8) elementary sites, in 2016, met or exceeded the state average of 59.5% proficient.
- Four (4) elementary sites, since 2012, have increased in their average percentage of proficient students.

Areas for Potential Improvement

- The district trend average for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade is below the state average.
- Since 2012, the 3rd grade average percentage of proficient students has been a minimum of 5.5% below the state average.
- Since 2012, the 4th grade average percentage of proficient students has been a minimum of 3.9% below the state average.
- Since 2012, the 5th grade average percentage of proficient students has been a minimum of 1.8% below the state average.
- Five (5) elementary sites, in 2016, were a minimum of 15% below the state average percentage of proficient students.
- Seven (7) elementary sites, since 2012, have decreased in the average percentage of proficient students at a rate of at least two times greater than the district average of -2.4%.
- Hispanic and Black students grew at a disproportionately slower rate than the state's projection.

SECTION III: Listing of Subcommittee High Priority Recommendations

A. Recommendation 1

We recommend that the district develop, integrate, and implement an embedded health education model for students at the senior high level across the district.

B. Rationale

Traditionally, health education is delivered over one trimester during one year of a student's high school experience in Osseo Area Schools. The embedded model would provide a unique approach to health class, where students would receive ongoing health instruction throughout their time at Maple Grove, Osseo, and Park Center Senior High Schools.

We believe that an embedded model of health education can engage students in a lifetime of learning when health becomes a relevant, ongoing learning sequence across the four-year high school experience. The program (or model) itself is founded on the idea that students will benefit from comprehensive support in the areas of health and wellness throughout high school. In addition, an embedded model such as this provides an opportunity for students to contribute to community with the potential of obtaining CPR certification at the completion of the program in 12th grade. In return, the community can contribute to student learning across Osseo Area Schools as guest speakers can play a role in this instructional model.

The embedded model for health education allows for more flexibility in meeting individual student needs as this program utilizes a module approach, incorporates flexible scheduling, and has the ability for students to engage in blended learning experiences. Another benefit to this program is that it has the potential for students to have a common service provider throughout his/her high school experience. Since this model truly is embedded within core subject areas, students can also gain another space to engage in an elective offering of his/her choosing for one trimester during his/her high school career.

Finally, health education has the opportunity to become responsive in its approach to addressing timely situations that may occur during a student's high school experience as current topics can be examined more closely within the embedded seminars in this model. The content and curriculum of the program is focused on the developmental needs of high school students and is presented at age-appropriate intervals. Health education state standards can be divided across the four-year high school sequence so as to allow educators to more effectively address the needs and/or issues students face.

C. Strategies for Improvement

Strategies May Include:

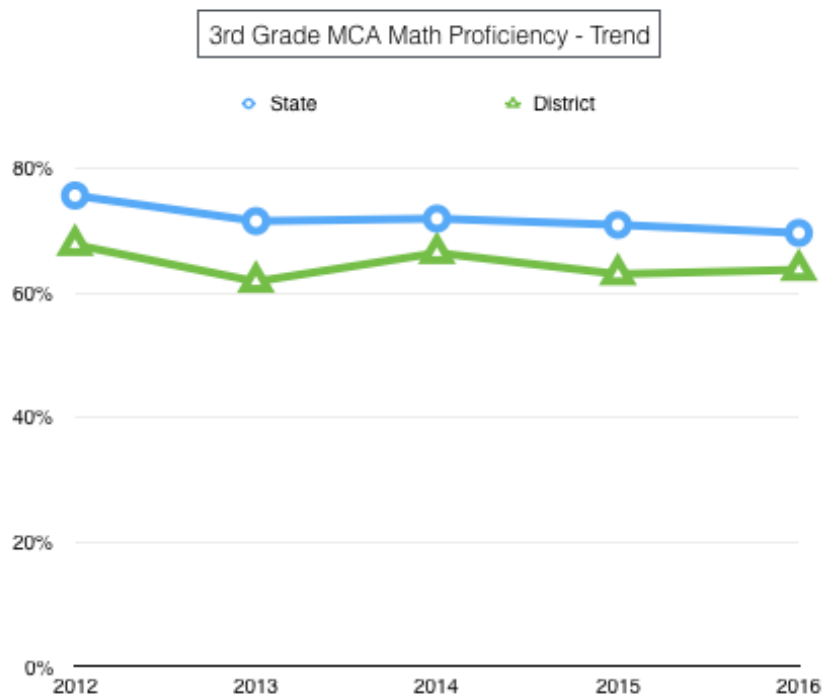
1. Develop an embedded health education model for students in 9th – 12th grade across all Osseo Area Schools high school sites.
2. Implement this new model beginning with 9th grade and expand each subsequent year by adding one additional grade level.
3. Collaborate with Minnetonka Public Schools and Osseo Area Schools health education educators and district curriculum specialists to develop the model.
4. Consider accommodations for students who may not attend a high school in Osseo Area Schools for the duration of their high school experience.

D. Recommendation 2

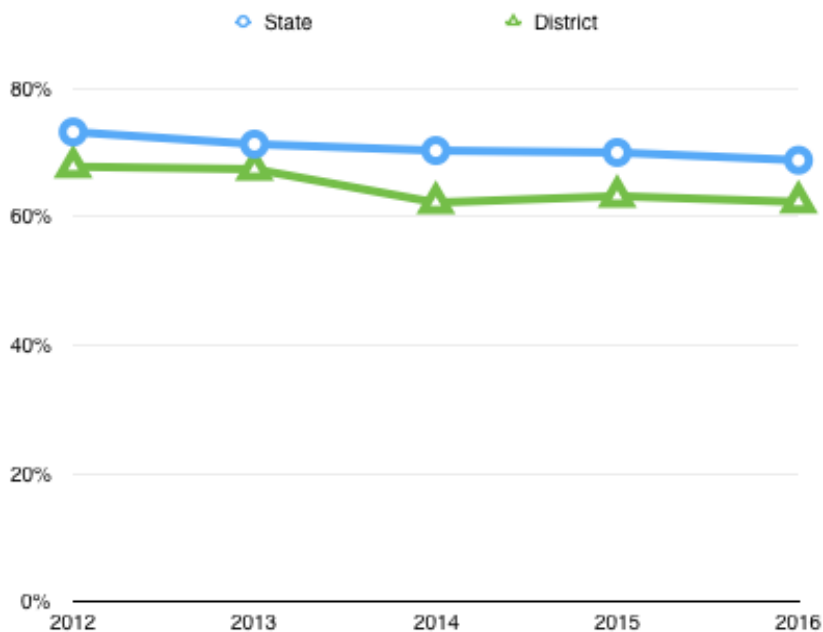
We recommend that the district investigate and adopt a comprehensive curriculum resource to effectively meet the individual learning needs of each student in mathematics at the elementary level.

E. Rationale

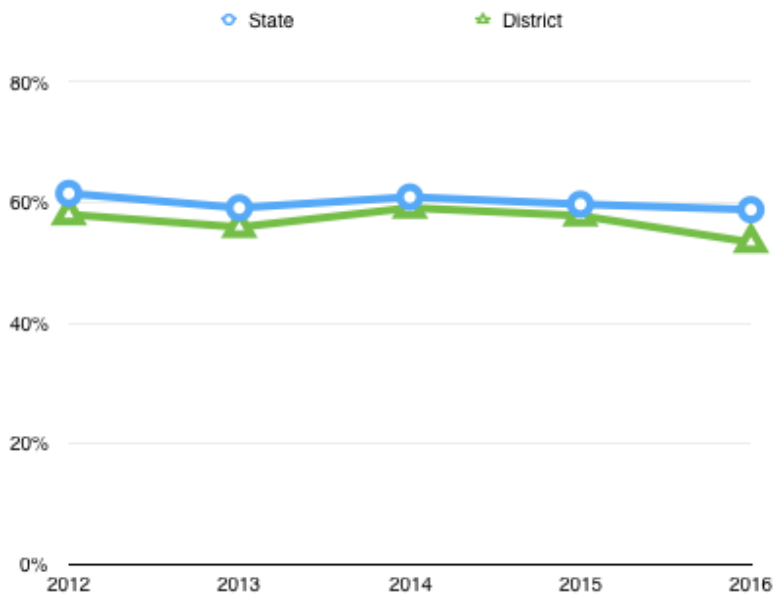
As we began the process of reviewing student achievement data, we wanted to look at, specifically, how each grade level (3rd, 4th, and 5th grade) performed on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) for mathematics over time. In the first three graphs provided below, you will see the grade level average percentage of proficient students across the state of Minnesota as compared to our district. At first glance, it is evident that the district, at each of the aforementioned grade levels, is performing at a level below the state average on a consistent basis over the last five (5) years.



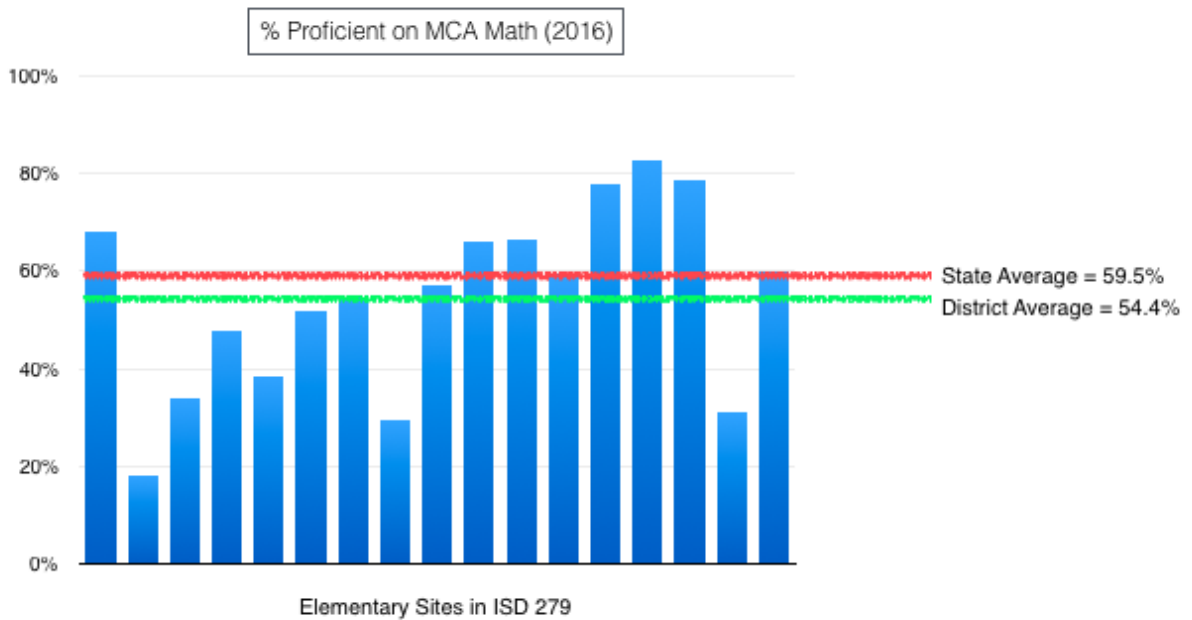
4th Grade MCA Math Proficiency - Trend



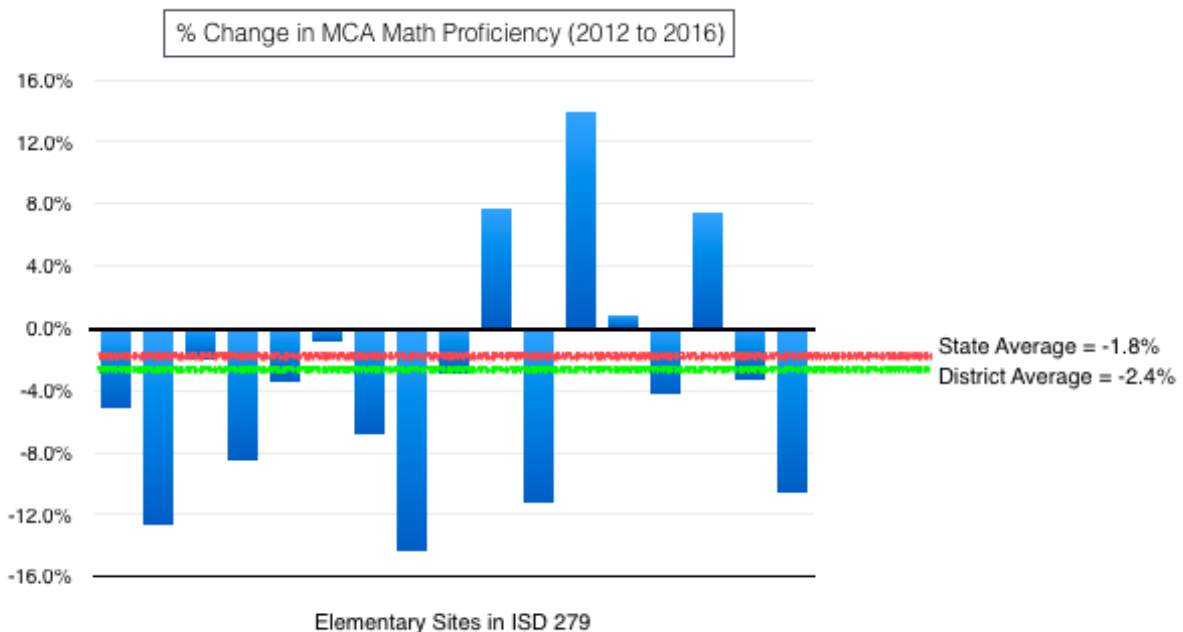
5th Grade MCA Math Proficiency - Trend



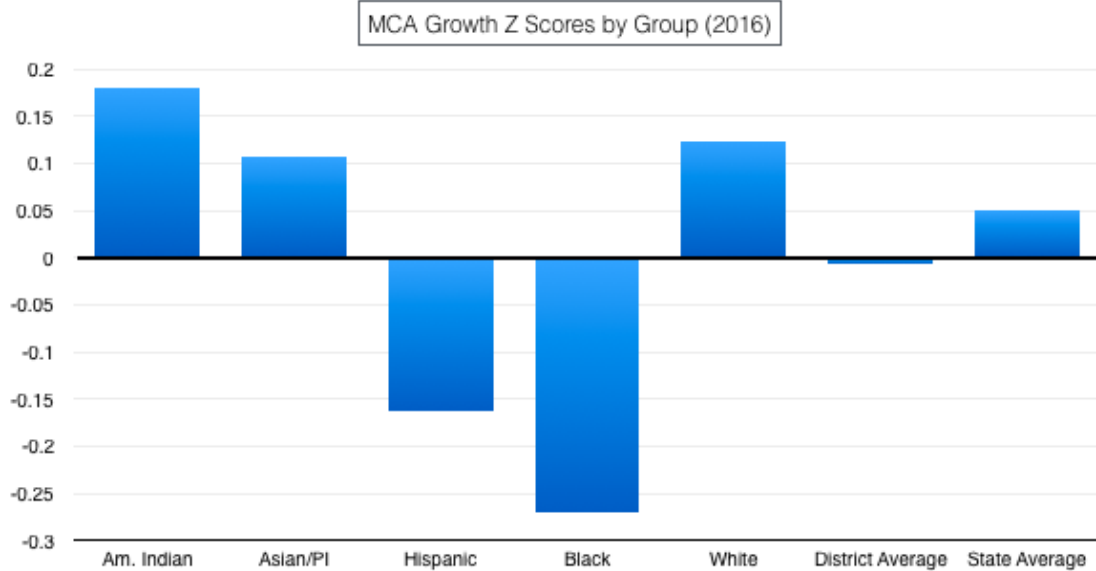
This next graph (below) shows each of the seventeen (17) elementary sites in Osseo Area Schools and their respective proficiency levels on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment in mathematics in 2016. The red horizontal line indicates the state average percent proficient (59.5%) and the green horizontal line indicates the district average percent proficient (54.4%).



The following graph (below) shows the overall change in the percentage of proficient students by each of the seventeen (17) elementary sites from 2012 to 2016. The 0.0% midline across the horizontal center of the graph indicates no change in percent proficient over time. The red horizontal line indicates the state average change in percent proficient (-1.8%) and the green horizontal line indicates the district average change in percent proficient (-2.4%).



This final graph (below) shows the MCA growth Z scores by race in mathematics in 2016. The 0.0% midline across the horizontal center of the graph indicates that a group has made exactly the projected growth as determined by the state.



F. Strategies for Improvement

Strategies May Include:

1. Schedule meetings with various publishing companies to examine different curriculum resources for elementary math instruction.
2. Engage educators at all elementary sites in continued professional learning on research-based mathematics teaching practices designed to advance student learning in mathematics.
3. Offer professional development opportunities around best practices in mathematics instruction.
4. Participate in math-focused mentoring - networking with other local school districts.
5. Engage in the evaluation of various curriculum resources for elementary math instruction with a focus on racial equity and cultural responsiveness.

ACHIEVEMENT AND EVALUATION SUBCOMMITTEE FULL REPORT

2016 – 2017
ACHIEVEMENT AND EVALUATION SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT
DISTRICT PLANNING ADVISORY COUNCIL

Osseo Area Schools
Independent School District 279

Subcommittee Membership:

Don Pascoe, Kevin Anderson, Lisa Berglund, Thomas Brooks, Marty Cohen, Celeste Miller, Pam Paulsen

SECTION I: Committee Activities

The committee reviewed the District Testing Plan and the characteristics and purposes of the assessments administered by the District.

The committee reviewed assessment results from 2015-16. These results were primarily found in five areas:

- District developed Excel data analysis tools
- District developed improvement planning data reports
- District Balanced Scorecard
- State Department of Education web-based data analysis system
- State accountability reports

SECTION II: Data Summary

A. Data Reviewed

The committee reviewed results from the district balanced scorecard including:

State Tests:

- Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA III) Grades 3-11
- State Multiple Measure and Focus Reports (MMR and FR)

District Tests:

- Northwest Evaluation Association Achievement Level Tests (NWEA) Grades 2-8
- ACT Scores

Graduation data:

- 4, 5 and 6 year graduation rate patterns

Course taking patterns:

- High school course taking patterns

Teacher demographics:

- Experience and education of staff

B. Summary of Evaluation of Data

1. District Strengths:

- Growth for students was generally higher than national average growth.
- Scores on the NWEA were above typical national scores.

- By grade four, students who have been in the district for two years consistently perform about one year's growth above the national average.
- Graduation rates have improved for all groups over the last six years.
- Graduation rates for all ethnic groups, except Hispanic, are about the state average.

2. Areas of Concern:

- Some schools have persistently lower growth and achievement scores.
- Gaps between student subgroups (ethnic, socio-economic and program) continue to persist on all tests and in graduation rates.
- Schools with concentrations of high needs students tend to have teachers that are less experienced and have a lower rate of advanced degrees.
- Students in grades 6- 8 math and grade 7 reading grew at a lower rate than expected.
- New students tend to start out significantly behind students already in the district. This gap is higher when students enter in a later grade. New students entering in grade eight, on average, are three years behind established district students.
- Graduation rates have remained relatively stagnant for Hispanic students, below the state graduation rate in 2016. Graduation rates for black students have remained stagnant in the low 70s for three years.
- ACT scores have remained static.

SECTION III: Listing of Subcommittee High Priority Recommendations

Osseo Area Schools has large and persistent achievement gaps. The Assessment and Achievement subcommittee is recommending three actions to support equitable student achievement.

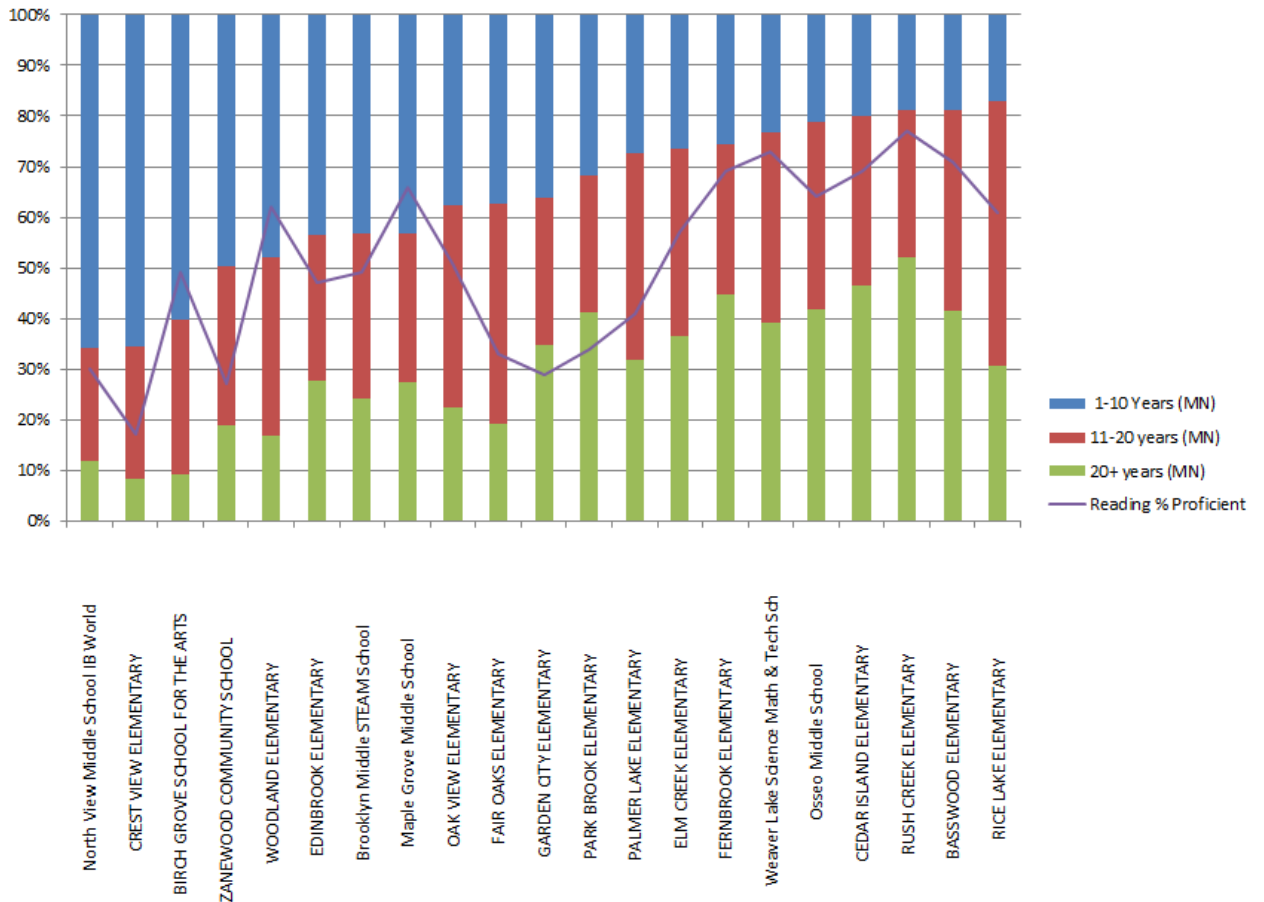
A. Recommendation 1

We recommend that the district transform our staffing system to:

1. assure that high needs schools are equitably staffed with skillful and experienced ESPs, teachers, and administrators, and
2. stabilize staff at high needs schools to support site training and culture building in order to provide students with the best opportunity to achieve equitable achievement.

B. Rationale

Under our current hiring, incentive, and transfer system experienced and skillful staff have become inequitably distributed across our sites. The chart below shows the experience level of licensed teachers at each site along with each sites 2016 Reading MCA percent proficient. This distribution also parallels the reading accountability scores of our sites.

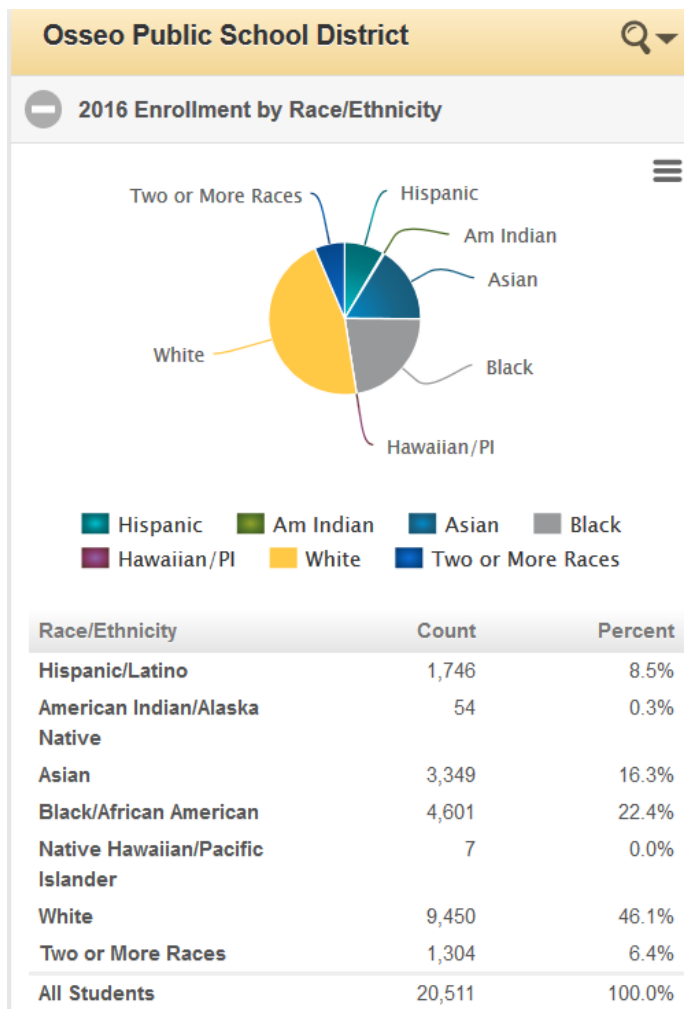


C. Recommendation 2

We recommend that the district establish expectations for staff to use culturally responsive strategies and provide robust training and support for staff to develop the necessary skills.

D. Rationale

Our student population has rapidly shifted becoming very diverse in race, ethnicity, culture and needs. In order to produce equitable achievement all staff must operate in a culturally responsive manner. To support this effort the district has embarked on a journey toward culturally responsive instruction. The CLEAR model has been introduced as a framework and is being used to shape district work. Initial support has included the Summer Institute National Urban Alliance High Operational Practices training (400 attendees) and during the year follow-up through school cohorts, booster offerings, and regular curriculum staff site meetings.



This is just the beginning of this work. Specific expectations and long term plans need to be established to continue the momentum.

E. Recommendation 3

We recommend that the district implement specific culturally responsive programming for black students, the ethnic group with the largest and most persistent performance gaps.

F. Rationale

Across indicators found on the district balanced scorecard including test scores, graduation rates, and suspensions black student's results are consistently among the lowest. Nearly all of the efforts to close those gaps have been ethnic or race neutral. These efforts have tended to improve the performance of all groups, but have had limited success in closing the performance gaps. Below is the most recent data in each of these indicators for black students.

Reading MCA- 37.4% proficient – lowest ethnic group

Math MCA-30.4% proficient - lowest ethnic group

Science MCA-23.5% proficient- lowest ethnic group

Graduation rate- 72%- third lowest ethnic group and stagnant over the last four years

Out of school suspension disproportionality-3.02/1- highest ethnic group

STUDENT SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE FULL REPORT

2016 – 2017
STUDENT SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT
DISTRICT PLANNING ADVISORY COUNCIL

Osseo Area Schools
Independent School District 279

Subcommittee Membership

Heather Ayer, Brian La Rose, Teri Nemeth, Matthew Nemeth, Stacey Yurcek, Jill Lesné

SECTION I: Committee Activities

This year, the Student Services Committee was interested in expanding on the groundwork laid by the previous committee recommendation on trauma-informed practices. The team met with several organizations, including Beth Bailey, Executive Director of Community Mediation & Restorative Services (CMRS). CMRS was part of the limited summer training for roughly 150 Osseo Area Schools employees in August 2016. Each district secondary site received services from CMRS one day per week to help support restorative practice use and implementation.

Last year, the Student Services Committee recommended increasing the use of trauma-informed practices in schools. The use of trauma-informed and restorative practices in schools should result in decreased use of exclusionary practices. Students that have experienced a traumatic event respond well to a structured environment. The use of restorative practices provides a predictable community and a consistent response to behavior through the use of circles, conferencing and repair for not only the offender, but also the victim.

As said by the founder of the International Institute for Restorative Practices, Ted Wachtel:

“The fundamental premise of restorative practices is that people are happier, more cooperative, and more likely to make positive changes when those in positions of authority do things *with* them, rather than *to* them or *for* them.”

Some common values and principles of restorative practices include:

- Equity of voice
- High expectations and support = doing things “WITH” one another and not “TO” or “FOR” them
- Positive relationships
- Inclusive decision making
- Community building and sustaining
- All members of the community are valued
- Authentic listening and sharing
- Non-punitive response to wrong-doing

Restorative practices are used in other districts across the nation including the San Francisco Unified School District. Locally, restorative practices became part of Minneapolis Public Schools district-wide discipline policy in August 2014, and six St. Paul schools are piloting the practice in 2017. In 2016 the St. Paul teachers' union recommended the use of restorative practices as the district struggled with student behavior problems. The March 2017 edition of the Minnesota Educator focused on moving from exclusionary to restorative and trauma informed practices followed by the March 2017 EPIC report which recommended Minnesota schools need to:

- Promote trauma-informed schools and restorative practice
- Reduce exclusionary interventions
- Change zero-tolerance mindsets

SECTION II: Data Summary

Data indicate (see tables 1 and 2 below) progress on the identification, placement and suspension of Black students receiving special education services. Black youth are still disproportionately represented at a higher rate; although this is the first year in six years that the district has not been cited for disproportionate representation by the Minnesota Department of Education. However, as depicted in table 1, per October 1st enrollment, Black students make up roughly 27% of the student body and 80% of all out of school suspensions.

In restorative schools, punitive actions are replaced with high levels of accountability, but more importantly, high levels of support. Restorative schools focus on building community and the repair of harm in the place of exclusionary practices.

Table 1.

All Students-Out of School Suspension Ratio

	Number of OSS		Oct 1 Enrollment		OSS/Enroll		Ratio
	All	Black	All	Black	All	Black	Black/All
2012-13	1293	919	20181	4951	0.06	0.19	2.90
2013-14	900	671	20280	5093	0.04	0.13	2.97^
2014-15	579	438	20398	5189	0.03	0.08	2.97
2015-16	1124	862	20511	5225	0.05	0.16	3.01
2016-17*	938	737	20527	5481	0.05	0.13	2.94

^Balanced scorecard reported value=2.92, likely based on a different enrollment file.

Table 2.

Special Education Students-Out of School Suspension Ratio

	Number of OSS		Oct 1 Enrollment		OSS/Enroll		Ratio
	All	Black	All	Black	All	Black	Black/All
2012-13	492	362	2988	1138	0.16	0.32	1.93
2013-14	333	266	2914	1127	0.11	0.24	2.07
2014-15	247	176	2824	1093	0.09	0.16	1.84
2015-16	485	361	2768	1000	0.18	0.36	2.06
2016-17*	380	276	2743	1017	0.14	0.27	1.96

Examples of the use of restorative practices in Osseo Area Schools:

Restorative Practices in Policy

The Osseo School District Board recently approved PROCEDURE 101 RACIAL EQUITY IN EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT, which in section III D specifies, "School district employees will make use of positive behavior intervention strategies, restorative justice practices, and other culturally responsive methods."

Restorative Practices at the Elementary

Principal Toni Beckler on Restorative Practices at Woodland Elementary:

"What we are finding is the RP circle is the perfect way for staff members to learn about others, build stronger relationships, and reflect on practices. We are using a circle at every staff meeting in order to provide those opportunities. By being in mixed level groups, speaking from our inner self, and using reflection questions about our practices, we are growing as a staff and family."

Restorative Practices at the Middle Level

Teachers from North View Middle School speaking on their experience with the use of Restorative Practices:

"It was great to hear a student speak his truth and say that circle was a time of sharing, getting to know and showing trust in others in the circle."

"My students were engaged and very serious about letting us know who they were and what that meant to them. The circle format is perfect; they are using the talking piece appropriately. Overall, it is a great exercise in listening and taking turns."

"It was a nice way for me to get to know more about the students, for them to get to know about each other and for them to get to know more about me."

"Students liked doing the circle. I thought everything went smooth and students were engaged. I loved the circles because it helped me get to know my kids better, and some of the kids told me that they enjoyed it because they got to know me and other students better."

"I thought it was a good way to introduce students to circles that are for other purposes than just to repair harm. My hope is that by continuing to expose students to circles, both students and staff will feel more comfortable participating."

"Students reported enjoying the mindfulness moment and at the end many shared that they felt more calm and relaxed than when they came in. The process rounds elicited insightful responses and many students reported liking the structure and experience of group. The circle and expectations provides a safe space for all voices to be heard. The more students practice this, the more comfortable they will become with the structure. We can share the circle plan if others are interested. I am excited to do more and hope others who are trained sign up to spend a day doing this as well. It is a great way to get to know our kiddos better."

SECTION III: Listing of Subcommittee High Priority Recommendations

A. Recommendation 1

We recommend the district continue the commitment to trauma-informed practices consistently throughout the district. From "Helping Traumatized Children Learn 2: Creating and Advocating for Trauma-Sensitive Schools (2013):"

A trauma-sensitive school is one in which all students feel safe, welcomed, and supported and where addressing trauma's impact on learning on a school-wide basis is at the center of its educational mission. In a trauma-sensitive school, adults:

- **Share an understanding** of how trauma impacts learning and why a school-wide approach is needed for creating a trauma-sensitive school
- **Support all students to feel safe**—physically, socially, emotionally and academically
- **Address students’ needs in holistic ways**, taking into account their relationships, self-regulation, academic competence, and physical and emotional well-being
- **Explicitly connect students to the school community**, providing them with multiple opportunities to practice newly developing skills
- **Embrace teamwork** with a sense of a shared responsibility for every student
- **Anticipate and adapt** to the ever-changing needs of students and the surrounding community

B. Rationale

Fight, Flight, and Freeze are natural human responses caused by trauma-induced stress. Trauma-informed practices provide teaching methodologies to identify, anticipate, and ease reactions to trauma-triggers. Trauma in the mind and body alters brain chemistry, which changes behavior and decreases the ability for learning. Trauma-informed practices would build on the ongoing Positive Behavior supports as well as the mental health work of District 279 in expanding the capacity of staff to respond appropriately to students. The goal of this is to decrease behavioral referrals and increase students’ capacity to become efficacious learners. We further recommend that Trauma-Informed Practices training be expanded to include general education and support staff.

C. Recommendation 2

We recommend the expansion of training and use of restorative practices at all levels across the district.

The use of restorative practices naturally compliments the previous recommendation of continuing the use of trauma-informed practices. In their 2016 book “The Little Book of Restorative Justice in Education”, Evans & Vaandering describe Restorative Practices as being made of three interconnected components:

- Creating just and equitable learning environment
- Nurturing healthy relationships
- Repairing harm and transforming conflict

Currently there are small pilot programs in a number of buildings, including Woodland Elementary and North View Middle School. These programs should be expanded full-scale in all secondary buildings and further piloted in high-need elementary buildings.

D. Rationale

Data indicate (See tables 1 and 2) progress on the identification, placement and suspension of Black students receiving special education services. Black youth are still disproportionately represented at a higher rate; although this is the first year in six years that the district has not been cited for disproportionate representation by the Minnesota Department of Education. However as depicted in table 1, per October 1st enrollment, Black students make up roughly 27% of the student body and 80% of all out of school suspensions.

In restorative schools, punitive actions are replaced with high levels of accountability, but more importantly, high levels of support. Restorative schools focus on building community and the repair of harm in the place of exclusionary practices.

**2016-17 DISTRICT PLANNING ADVISORY COUNCIL
Meeting Calendar**

Date / Time	Group	Room
Monday, 9/19/16 7:00 – 9:00 PM	Full DPAC Meeting	Board Room
	Program Assessment & Review Subcommittee	N10
	Special Services Subcommittee	Board Room
	Achievement/Evaluation Subcommittee	W41
Monday, 10/3/16 7:00 – 9:00 PM	Full DPAC Meeting	Board Room
	Program Assessment & Review Subcommittee	N10
	Special Services Subcommittee	Board Room
	Achievement/Evaluation Subcommittee	W41
Monday, 10/17/16 7:00 – 9:00 PM	Full DPAC Meeting	Board Room
	Program Assessment & Review Subcommittee	N10
	Special Services Subcommittee	Board Room
	Achievement/Evaluation Subcommittee	W41
Monday, 11/14/16 7:00 – 9:00 PM	Program Assessment & Review Subcommittee	N22 - Library
	Special Services Subcommittee	Board Room
	Achievement/Evaluation Subcommittee	W41
Monday, 12/12/16 7:00 – 9:00 PM	Program Assessment & Review Subcommittee	N10
	Special Services Subcommittee	Board Room
	Achievement/Evaluation Subcommittee	W41
Monday, 1/9/17 7:00 – 9:00 PM	Program Assessment & Review Subcommittee	N10
	Special Services Subcommittee	Forum Room
	Achievement/Evaluation Subcommittee	W41
Monday, 1/23/17 7:00 – 8:30 PM	Program Assessment & Review Subcommittee	N10
	Special Services Subcommittee	Board Room
	Achievement/Evaluation Subcommittee	W41
	8:30 – 9:30 PM	Steering Committee
Monday, 2/27/17 7:00 – 8:30 PM	Full DPAC Meeting	Board Room
	Program Assessment & Review Subcommittee	N10
	Special Services Subcommittee	Board Room
	Achievement/Evaluation Subcommittee	W41
8:30 – 9:30 PM	Steering Committee	N10
Monday, 4/3/17 7:00 – 9:00 PM	Full DPAC Meeting – Final Approval of Report Draft	Board Room
Tuesday, 4/18/17 6:00 PM	School Board Presentation of Final Report	Board Room
Monday, 5/1/17 7:00 – 8:00 PM	Full DPAC Debrief and Celebration	Board Room