



A Collective Education Plan of Action

A commitment to create lasting equity and excellence in education for all students

December 2017



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Plan Background

Reimagine Minnesota PURPOSE

A commitment to create lasting equity and excellence in education for all students.

Ensure the constitutionally guaranteed right to an adequate education of all students by creating a comprehensive collective action plan to address integration, access, opportunity, and educational achievement.

Reimagine Minnesota PROCESS

Call to ACTION: *District leaders commit to building a collective plan for change*

March - December 2016

In March 2016, a group of metropolitan superintendents gathered together to discuss the future of education in the State of Minnesota. Specifically, the superintendents acknowledged that ensuring equity and excellence for all students is the most pressing issue in education today. They also recognize that the demographic composition of our state is rapidly changing and that Minnesota will have an older, more diverse population throughout the state in the coming years. Our K-12 education system is the foundation for the upcoming workforce yet our educational data and statistics show that schools and districts need to improve all of the educational markers that serve as benchmarks of success in the current educational system.

All students and all Minnesotans will reap enormous benefits when we create lasting equity, integration and excellence in our education system. Aside from fulfilling the moral and constitutional imperative of equal opportunity for all, ensuring an equitable, integrated and excellent education for all students will secure the highly skilled workforce Minnesota needs to compete in the rapidly changing global economy. A November, 2014 report from the Center for American Progress estimates that the U.S. economy will need nearly 83 million new workers by 2030 to fill the jobs created by projected economic growth and to replace the large number of Baby Boomers who will be retiring. It is imperative that we create an education system that allows all students the opportunity to reach their full potential if we are to address our workforce needs.

In October 2016, 17 superintendents and educational leaders asked the Association of Metropolitan School Districts (AMSD) to form an Ad hoc Committee to develop a Collective Education Action Plan to address integration, access, opportunity and educational excellence for all students. The Ad hoc Committee was sanctioned by the full membership of the Association of Metropolitan School Districts (AMSD) and updates about the work of the committee were presented and discussed at AMSD's monthly meetings. With support from AMSD, the superintendents worked together to collect community voice that would inform the work of the committee as it created a plan and recommendations for new local and statewide policies and practices in the hope of creating a model of education designed for the success of all students.

Engaging the COMMUNITY: *Broad-based conversations to identify shared goals*

January – May 2017

From January through May 2017, parents, students, cultural representatives, community members, business leaders and other education stakeholders, were invited to Reimagine Minnesota and conceptualize a new model of education that's designed for the success of all students. Each participant was welcomed, honored and respected for who they are and the contributions they offered.

The World Café convening model was chosen to host community conversations. The World Café is a method for creating a living network of collaborative dialogue around questions that matter in real life situations. Prior to each World Café event, students were trained and volunteered to be table hosts. It was important to have students included and visible in the process. The table hosts were responsible to help set the context; create a hospitable space; explore questions

that mattered; encourage everyone's contribution; cross-pollinate and connect diverse perspectives; listen together for patterns, insights, and deeper questions; and help harvest and share collective discoveries.

At each World Café, the environment was set up like a café, with tables for six or eight participants, tablecloths covered by poster paper, colored markers and light refreshments. Participants sat at a table and conversed over three powerful questions lasting from 20 to 30 minutes each. After each round of questions, the table host remained at the table, while others traveled to different tables. Table hosts welcomed newcomers to their tables and shared the essence of that table's conversation. The newcomers related any conversational threads which they carried with them – and then the conversation continued, deepening as the rounds progressed. The process repeated for a third time until a harvesting of information commenced during the last half hour of each World Café.

Three powerful questions were developed to query participants regarding the most effective ways to achieve educational equity, integration and excellence.

Question #1

Describe your vision of an equitable, integrated and excellent education for all students. What does it look like, feel like?

Question #2

As you think about the challenges we will face to build an equitable, integrated and excellent education for all students, what is at the heart of the matter for you?

Question #3

What are the most urgent changes we need to make so that all students have the best chance of being successful? What barriers do we need to move out of the way so that our work has the best chance of being successful?

Two preparatory World Cafés and 12 official World Cafés were held during the community convening process. Over 2,000 students, parents, community members, and K-12 education stakeholders attended the convenings garnering over 10,000 responses, suggestions and community-based comments related to what could and should be done to ensure all students in Minnesota receive an equitable, integrated and excellent education. The information received through the collective dialogue helped inform the superintendent committee as they forged a path to build a Collective Education Action Plan that ensures success for all students.

During the World Cafés, several forms of harvesting took place: graphic recording; posting of table notes; and large facilitated conversations after all three table conversations were completed. Videos and photos along with individual interviews also captured the participant experience.

One of the most important events was the student conference consisting of over 300 students from all districts involved. The student conference process called *Open Space Technology*, allowed students the opportunity to lead and facilitate conversations that are important to them. The goal was to create time and space for students to engage deeply and creatively around issues that mattered to them. The agenda was set by the students and resulted in a transformative experience for everyone involved. The conference was powerful and brought student voice to the work.

In addition to the World Café convenings, a Business & Cultural Community Leaders' luncheon was held at the University of Minnesota, McNamara Alumni Center. The luncheon was held to gather input from metropolitan area business partners, leaders and representatives from various cultural communities, government partners, community organizations and universities and colleges. During the luncheon, a modified World Café that included the original two questions plus two modified questions directed to the business and community partners was discussed.

Following the convenings, the districts participated in one of the most, if not the most, important elements of a World Café; large group harvesting of the themes, ideas and insights that emerged. The insights, once hidden, became visible through the harvesting process. This was accomplished during half-day synthesizing sessions involving representatives

from each school district. Participants reviewed and prioritized ideas from the World Cafés, student conference and business luncheon.

The overwhelming response from four synthesis workshops that reviewed 12 World Cafés convenings of more than 2,000 participant voices and a student conference of more than 300 high school students can be summed up by the following statement “SEE ME”. Three overarching recommendations emerged:

1. Effective, diverse stakeholders who use trusting relationships to create welcoming classrooms, schools and communities that meet the needs (hopes & dreams) of all students and families.
2. Personalized relevant education and youth development that guarantees access to rigorous learning and eliminating predictability based on race.
3. Equitable resources (time, talent, funds) aligned to student needs (hopes & dreams) that enable every district to "see all" and "serve all."

Drafting the PLAN: *Inter-district work sessions to determine action priorities*

May – November 2017

In response to the education goals identified by the school community stakeholders, superintendents and their teams joined together to develop a plan for achieving the goals to SEE, SERVE and SUPPORT ALL students. First, they met in several district cluster work sessions to propose concrete actions for each goal. Next, over 150 school leaders were invited to five planning sessions to review the action ideas from the cluster meetings and determine realistic directions for creating lasting equity and excellence in education for all students. They analyzed the key barriers to ensuring education equity and excellence for all students and identified a system of strategies required to achieve the shared education goals. This is a report of the collective education plan for action.

Next STEPS: *Launching the system-wide work to activate a plan*

December 2017 and Beyond

The proposed plan will be shared with school stakeholders and partners in order to refine the directions and build broad-based support for the collective work. Action planning meetings will be convened at the system and district levels to develop the specific steps, roles, capacity, measures, support systems, accountability and steering mechanisms needed to initiate and sustain unified plan implementation.

Plan-At-A-Glance: A Collective Education Plan of Action


Reimagine Minnesota: A commitment to create lasting equity and excellence in education for all students.
 Ensure the constitutionally guaranteed right to an adequate education for all students by creating a comprehensive collective action plan to address integration, access, opportunity and educational achievement.



The STRATEGIES



The Underlying BARRIERS



The GOALS

TEACHING and TEACHERS

- A. *Develop, sustain and evaluate cultural competence for teachers***
- B. *Prioritize and ensure personalized education with emphasis on acceleration vs. intervention***
- C. *Develop and implement culturally inclusive standards, curriculum and comprehensive system of assessment***
- D. *Develop teacher preparation, recruitment and retention for staff of color***

STUDENT and FAMILY SUPPORT

- E. *Elevate student voice and leadership and improve/ensure inclusiveness in the school culture and environment***
- F. *Eliminate disproportionality due to adult behaviors and policies; provide growth-oriented student support***
- G. *Build bridges between school and community***

SYSTEM FUNDING AND LEADERSHIP

- H. *Create and sustain consistent shared understanding of equity and high level of skill application for leaders at all levels***
- I. *Statewide funding that ensures equity, access and opportunity for all students***

- A. *Gap in adult knowledge and skills in understanding academic reciprocal relationships; design and delivery of instructional practices; academic identity and belief in students; and creating accountability systems and support***
- B. *Need for racially conscious pedagogy***
- C. *Lack of assessment systems for equitable measuring of student success***
- D. *Racially-biased educator preparation, recruitment, hiring and retention systems***
- E. *Dominant culture perpetuates the status quo***
- F. *Need for a student-centered, equitable alignment of policies and actions***
- G. *System rigidity at all levels - teacher/classroom, building, district, state***
- H. *Inequitable resources for meeting the needs of all students***

A commitment to create lasting equity and excellence in education for all students

SEE ME
SEE ALL
 Effective, diverse stakeholders who use trusting relationships to create welcoming classrooms, schools and communities that meet the needs (hopes & dreams) of all students and families

SERVE ALL
 Personalized relevant education for all students that guarantees access to rigorous learning and eliminating predictability based on race

SUPPORT ALL
 Equitable resources (time, talent, funds) aligned to student needs (hopes & dreams) that enable every district to "see all" and "serve all"

Reimagine Minnesota: The GOALS

What do we seek to achieve?



A commitment to create lasting equity and excellence in education for all students - SEE ME

SEE ALL

Effective, diverse stakeholders who use trusting relationships to create welcoming classrooms, schools and communities that meet the needs (hopes & dreams) of all students and families

We Must:

- Value and respect all students
- Value and respect parents, families, family structures and caring adults
- Value education team members
- Value and respect diverse cultures
- Hire and support an effective and diverse staff
- Provide robust and relevant teacher training, preparation and evaluation
- Build trusting relationships
- Provide opportunities to include student, community & parent voice in decision making
- Create community, family, alumni collaboratives that are valued as assets and included in education decision making process
- Provide and incorporate positive and empowering images from diverse populations in everyday learning settings.

SERVE ALL

Personalized relevant education for all students that guarantees access to rigorous learning and eliminating predictability based on race

We Must:

- Provide a personalized education plan for all students
- Guarantee rigorous course offerings for all students
- Create learning experiences that provide relevant skills and knowledge for the workforce and/or higher education
- Develop meaningful, culturally competent curriculum and instructional programs in all subjects
- Require multiple learning opportunities and curricula regarding differing cultural, social and historical narratives
- Eliminate bias and predictability based on race
- Create school schedule that accommodates personalized learning plans: i.e.: experiential and applied learning programs-- time of day, length of teacher day, holidays, calendar year
- Develop a plan that identifies opportunities for family and adult development that supports student success

SUPPORT ALL

Equitable resources (time, talent, funds) aligned to student needs (hopes & dreams) that enable every district to "see all" and "serve all"

We Must:

- Provide equitable funding formulas that support all students and districts regardless of geography and community affluence
- Provide equitable resources, facilities and technology to support student excellence and achievement
- Establish non-political governance of education, including development of standards, etc.

Reimagine Minnesota: The Underlying BARRIERS



What is preventing achievement of the goals?

- A. Gap in adult knowledge and skills in understanding academic reciprocal relationships, design and delivery of instructional practices, academic identity and belief in students and creating accountability systems and support**
Need to define the purpose of relationships with families and students and teachers and frame them in terms that test standards of engagement; need to build understanding about depth and authenticity of academic relationships and other ways of meeting academic needs of students who may learn differently from “me”
- B. Need for racially conscious pedagogy**
Need curriculum that includes absent narratives, collective identity (individual, interpersonal, community) and accountability (align teacher preparation and professional development with a historical understanding of current context; expectations that all students will pass)
- C. Lack of assessment systems for equitably measuring student success**
Need to choose a non-biased state assessment that informs curriculum and instruction that increases expectations for “ME”
- D. Racially-biased educator preparation, recruitment, hiring and retention systems**
Racially conscious systems do not exist to encourage, train, recruit, retain and support teachers and educators of color
- E. Dominant culture perpetuates the status quo**
The entrenched values, beliefs, assumptions and mindsets of the dominant culture perpetuate the status quo and inequity in our educational system
- F. Need for a student-centered, equitable alignment of policies and actions**
Action initiatives within our internal structures and systems need to be unified and focused on supporting each learner
- G. System rigidity at all levels - teacher/classroom, building, district, state**
Need to remember that "we" are the system and responsible for addressing the rigidity by incorporating the student voice, sanctioning healthy risk to encourage creativity and innovation and making a structural commitment to professional development in an interconnected way so that equity *is* the plate vs. something *on* the plate
- H. Inequitable resources for meeting student needs in all districts**
Need for restructured statewide education funding with emphasis on providing resources that ensure equity, access and opportunity for each student

Reimagine Minnesota: The Action STRATEGIES

What initiatives or directions are needed to address the barriers and implement the goals?



TEACHING and TEACHERS

Strategy A:

Develop, sustain and evaluate cultural competence for teachers

Related directions recommended in inter-district work sessions:

- Build equity education into professional development, licensure and teacher prep degree programs
- Analyze and develop education standards and student evaluation using an equity lens
- Provide time, professional development and wellness resources to support and sustain teachers' work
- Build expertise and competence through teacher collaboration
- Train for culturally competent teaching approaches and school-wide practices

Strategy B:

Prioritize and ensure personalized education with emphasis on acceleration vs. intervention

Related directions recommended in inter-district work sessions:

- Adopt personalized, student-centered teaching
- Create post-secondary paths for all learners -- connect education to life and career
- Personalize instruction and learning support to meet diverse needs
- Focus on getting to know each learner and building relationships with students
- Build supportive scheduling and technology for personalized student learning
- Provide academic support and rigorous, relevant education for all learners
- Provide life-skills education and post-secondary pathways preparation
- Meet the academic needs for all with personalized, student-centered instruction
- Assure the best teachers who can effectively teach each learner

Strategy C:

Develop and implement culturally inclusive standards, curriculum and comprehensive assessment system

Related directions recommended in inter-district work sessions:

- Embed equity competencies and content into curricula
- Hold high expectations for all and remove practices and beliefs that marginalize learners
- Use equity lens to examine and develop curriculum that is culturally relevant
- Develop inclusive standards/success measures for students and create pathways for achieving them
- Ensure more racially and culturally inclusive curricula
- Develop inclusive standards, success measures and supports for student progress

Strategy D:

Develop teacher preparation, recruitment and retention for staff of color

Related directions recommended in inter-district work sessions:

- Structure and support robust pathways and strategies to increase staff of color
- Institute holistic strategies/systems for diverse teacher development, recruiting, hiring and retention
- Build systemic strategies for recruiting and retaining staff of color

Reimagine Minnesota: The Action STRATEGIES Continued

What initiatives or directions are needed to address the barriers and implement the goals?



STUDENT and FAMILY SUPPORT

Strategy E:

Elevate student voice and leadership and *improve/ensure* inclusiveness in the school culture and environment

Related directions recommended in inter-district work sessions:

- Foster and catalyze inclusive and respectful school environment and school community practices
- Build inclusiveness in the school culture and environment
- Work to eliminate bias in the student community
- Empower student voice and leadership in school life and education issues
- Promote student engagement, leadership and connections between kids and kids
- Provide culturally inclusive social and physical school environment

Strategy F:

Eliminate disproportionality due to adult behaviors and policies; provide growth-oriented student support

Related directions recommended in inter-district work sessions:

- Increase and strengthen support and mentorship for under-served students within and out of school
- Increase student support services/staffing - emotional/physical health, language, cultural liaisons, etc.
- Review discipline and other school policies for equity
- Review and revise student behavior and other policies with a race and cultural-conscious lens

Strategy G:

Build bridges between school and community

Related directions recommended in inter-district work sessions:

- Expand and support proactive parent and family engagement
- Examine adult beliefs in school and community through training, honest dialogue, affinity groups, etc.
- Build stronger family partnerships and build capacity to support students
- Address life challenges faced by families -- housing, immigration, etc.
- Institute more services to support health, life and language needs
- Build strong education partnerships between the school, families and community

SYSTEM FUNDING and LEADERSHIP

Strategy H:

Create and sustain consistent shared understanding of equity and high level of skill application for leaders at all levels

Related directions recommended in inter-district work sessions:

- Continue and intensify equity-related training for all school stakeholders
- Unify accountable system-wide planning and action in school, districts, across districts, statewide
- Educate to assure equity-aware decision-making by school boards and/or leaders
- Build school boards representative of the community with equity decision-making lenses & practices
- Implement proactive district/inter-district strategies and metrics that disrupt racial bias in the education system
- Seek school board leaders that support education equity goals

Strategy I:

Statewide funding that ensures equity, access and opportunity for all students

Related directions recommended in inter-district work sessions:

- Re-evaluate and re-structure statewide school funding
- Identify funding needs and shortfalls and strategize ways to ensure sufficient funding for educating all learners
- Build a unified legislative platform supported by all advocacy groups and policy stakeholders
- Advocate for an equitable and sufficient school finance system that enables quality education for all learners

Action Plan Elements



Examples of Action Steps		Desired Outcomes
In Phase I	In Phase II	
TEACHING AND TEACHERS		
Strategy A: Develop, sustain and evaluate cultural competence for teachers		
<p>A. Integrate cultural competency and practices into TDE</p> <p>B. Prioritize professional learning plans focused on equity</p> <p>C. Embed cultural competence in pre-service teacher education</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Who we are (different from what we do); see our institutional identity is one of cultural competence
Strategy B: Prioritize and ensure personalized education with emphasis on acceleration vs. intervention		
<p>A. Create a common definition and vision of personalized learning</p> <p>B. Advocate for personalized learning in state content standards/system</p> <p>C. Establish a model for building relationships with students</p>	<p>D. Provide technical assistance and support for personalized learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Unified definition and vision of personalized learning ❖ Personalized learning embedded in state academic content standards and system ❖ Practical guide for relationship building ❖ Practical guide for implementing personalized education
Strategy C: Develop and implement culturally inclusive standards, curriculum and comprehensive assessment system		
<p>A. Create equity rubric for culturally-inclusive curriculum, instruction, assessment and grading</p> <p>B. Reinstate Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (T + I) licensure</p> <p>C. Begin process to review and revise standards to be culturally inclusive and relevant</p>	<p>D. Re-evaluate the standardized assessments used for inclusion and appropriate rigor</p> <p>E. Conduct audit for equity-based curriculum, instruction, assessment, and grading in districts</p> <p>F. Include growth measurements with proficiency measures in system evaluation</p> <p>G. Provide PD to support culturally-relevant, standards-based teaching</p> <p>H. Eliminate tracking and use of data and assessments that is perpetuating racial segregation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Shared understanding and commitment to all kids ❖ Trained, knowledgeable leaders ❖ Culturally relevant standards ❖ Assessments appropriately aligned ❖ Understanding of growth opportunities ❖ Comprehensive view of assessment system change ❖ Culturally –relevant, standards-based teaching ❖ Equitable growth and improvement opportunities for all
Strategy D: Develop teacher preparation, recruitment and retention for staff of color		
<p>A. Encourage and recruit students to enter the profession</p> <p>B. Establish affinity groups for teachers of color</p> <p>C. Add questions related to cultural competence and racial consciousness in hiring interviews</p> <p>D. Activate reflection on the message of careers in education at all levels</p>	<p>E. Engage higher education in expanding teachers of color and tap into colleges as partners</p> <p>F. Change the narrative and expand proactive messages to promote careers in education</p> <p>G. Gain headway in alternative pathways for teacher licensure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Larger pool of candidates ❖ Support for retaining of teachers of color ❖ Hiring of all teachers that are culturally competent ❖ System-wide awareness and collaboration in increasing teachers of color ❖ Teacher training committed to increasing teachers of color ❖ System-wide awareness and collaboration in increasing teachers of color ❖ Expand the ranks of teachers and staff of color

Action Plan Elements Continued



Examples of Action Steps		Desired Outcomes
In Phase I	In Phase II	
STUDENT and FAMILY SUPPORT		
Strategy E: Elevate student voice and leadership and improve/ensure inclusiveness in the school culture and environment		
<p>A. <i>Initiate</i> a 2020 Reimagine MN Strategy Group on school culture initiative</p> <p>B. <i>Create</i> structures (surveys) to gather many student voices about school climate</p> <p>C. <i>Encourage</i> sharing of student and staff narratives</p> <p>D. <i>Create</i> opportunities for students to share with staff and leaders to speak</p> <p>E. <i>Develop</i> shared agreements for a trusting and accountable environment</p>	<p>F. <i>Continue</i> to evaluate climate with student and parent feedback loops</p> <p>G. <i>Continue</i> to have students participate in opportunities as student group changes annually</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Emphasis and innovation in system-wide school environment ❖ Annual climate plan with baseline data ❖ Increased “seeing and listening” of all school community members ❖ Visible student leadership role ❖ Schoolwide support to enrich the environment ❖ Continuing improvement of the annual climate plan with baseline data ❖ Institutionalized systems for elevating student voice year after year
Strategy F: Eliminate disproportionality due to adult behaviors and policies; provide growth-oriented student support		
<p>A. <i>Implement</i> a culture change in adult perspectives and behaviors</p> <p>B. <i>Review</i> our discipline policies through an equity lens and remove subjective language</p> <p>C. <i>Hold</i> adults responsible and track behavior by adults’ send-outs from class</p> <p>D. <i>Build</i> leadership capacity in the district from the school board on down</p> <p>E. <i>Transform</i> curriculum to support high student engagement</p>	<p>F. <i>Develop</i> a teacher rubric emphasizing relationship-building and student engagement</p> <p>G. <i>Develop</i> practices for hiring school staff who believe in growth-oriented student support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Equal access to classes and reduction in suspension in school ❖ Uniformity and equity in student behavior standards and support ❖ Behavior policies enforced and disproportionality eliminated ❖ Unified support for growth-oriented student support vs. punitive approaches ❖ Culturally relevant curriculum system-wide ❖ Collective (40+ districts) to support lasting change for students
Strategy G: Build bridges between school and community		
<p>A. <i>Assure</i> consistent certification expectations for intercultural specialists</p> <p>B. <i>Work</i> with community education to build “whole child” supports</p> <p>C. <i>Build</i> services partnerships to provide wrap-around support for students/families</p>	<p>D. <i>Require</i> parent affinity groups in school districts based on demographics</p> <p>E. <i>Require</i> parent affinity groups to vote concurrence or non-concurrence</p> <p>F. <i>Advocate</i> for funding to provide flexible academic support programs in/out of school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Consistent expectations for intercultural specialists ❖ Community/school whole child support ❖ Holistic access to support services for students and families ❖ Family, parent and community participation in district decision-making ❖ Youth development and enrichment during and outside school
SYSTEM FUNDING and LEADERSHIP		
Strategy H: Create/sustain consistent shared understanding of equity & high level of skill application for leaders at all levels		
<p>A. <i>Develop</i> an equity definition by engaging all education associations and stakeholders</p> <p>B. <i>Provide</i> school boards opportunities to build and grow their equity knowledge/beliefs</p>	<p>C. <i>Build</i> local PD and T&L plans aligned with the statewide equity definition</p> <p>D. <i>Identify and promote</i> MN district-approved teacher and principal preparation programs</p> <p>E. <i>Tie</i> tenure/Q-comp to cultural competencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Statewide definition of equity endorsed by these associations and stakeholders ❖ Personal mind shifts/changed practices ❖ Cultural competency embedded in teachers’ PD requirements ❖ Cultural competency embedded in teacher education and evaluation
Strategy I: Statewide funding that ensure equity, access and opportunity for all students		
<p>A. <i>Convene</i> a Reimagine MN finance team to evaluate and re-structure statewide school funding to educate all learners</p>	<p>B. Reduce the need for local levy by indexing state aid to inflation</p> <p>C. <i>Fund</i> what is mandated</p> <p>D. <i>Ensure</i> a system with revenue & taxpayer equity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Equitable funding plan for ALL students and school districts ❖ Taxpayer equity ❖ Funding for all mandated programs