



Association of Metropolitan School Districts

REIMAGINE MINNESOTA

Collaborative strategies to provide an equitable and excellent education for all Minnesota students.



The spark:



2015 Lawsuit:
Cruz-Guzman
vs.
State of Minnesota

https://www.mncharterschools.org/_uls/resources/Integration_Lawsuit_1.pdf

Why is this work critical?

- Demographic composition of our state is rapidly changing. In the coming years, we will have an older, more diverse population across our state.
- K-12 education is the foundation for our upcoming workforce, and this coming reality makes it incumbent that our students are ready to support the growing needs of an aging, more broad-based population.
- At the same time as the demographic profile of our state is changing, educational data and statistics inform us that we need to improve in all of the educational markers that serve as benchmarks of success in our current educational system.

Process of beginning ‘Reimagine’:

- 12 Distinct Community Conversations, hosted by high school students.
- “World Café” style conference, more than 300 students from metro area schools.
- Students created the agenda.
- The adults hosted the space.
- The students facilitated the conversations.
- Students spoke their truth with their hearts.
- We need to listen to students.
- Harvest data collected.

Purpose statement:

“Our purpose is to ensure the fundamental right to an adequate education of all students by creating a comprehensive collective educational plan to address integration, access, opportunity and educational achievement.”

Community Questions:

- Describe your vision of an equitable, integrated and excellent education for all students. What does it look like, feel like?
- 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?
- What are the most urgent changes we need to make so that all students have the best chance of being successful?

Business Questions:

- What is changing in our communities and in the greater business communities that requires a change in the way we educate our students? How will these changes affect our local economy and community?
- What barriers can our business and community partners help the school districts move out of the way to create lasting equity, integration and excellence in school for all Minnesota school children?

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Anne Gomez, Graphic Recorder



Top 10 Student Priorities

1. Racial Diversity
2. Achievement Gap
3. LGBTQ Issues
4. Teach us about our cultures
5. Equal distribution of resources
6. Standardized testing
7. Courses should better reflect the diverse classroom that they are being taught in
8. Policing and pipeline to prison
9. Personalized learning
10. Safe spaces

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the goals:

SEE ALL

SERVE ALL

SUPPORT ALL

The Roadmap

9 KEY STRATEGIES

CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Develop, sustain and evaluate cultural competence for teachers

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Develop and build systemic strategies for recruiting and retaining staff of color

COMMUNITY BRIDGES

Build bridges between school and community

PERSONALIZED EDUCATION

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

STUDENT VOICE

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

SHARED UNDERSTANDING

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

CULTURAL INCLUSIVITY

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

ADULT BEHAVIORS

Eliminate adult behaviors and policies that lead to disproportionality; provide growth-oriented support

STATEWIDE FUNDING

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

Expanding Partnerships:



- Minneapolis Foundation
- University of Minnesota

https://www.minneapolisfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Report_ReimagineMinnesota_Full_Report_Final.pdf

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RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Develop and build systemic strategies for recruiting and retaining staff of color

What We Know: National Research

- Teachers of color tend to have **higher academic expectations for students of color**, which can result in increased academic and social growth among students.
- Students profit from having among their teachers individuals from their own racial and ethnic group who can serve as **academically successful role models and who can have greater knowledge of their heritage culture**.
- Positive exposure to individuals from a variety of races and ethnic groups, especially in childhood, can help to **reduce stereotypes, attenuate unconscious implicit biases and help promote cross-cultural social bonding**.
- All students benefit from being educated by teachers from a variety of different backgrounds, races and ethnic groups, as this experience better prepares them to succeed in an increasingly diverse society.

Success in Districts

Many of the strategies can be designed and applied in districts of all types:

- Creating and supporting affinity groups.
- Training school leaders on hiring bias and retention strategies.
- Enhancing onboarding.
- Refocusing teacher and school leader professional development and coaching around racial equity.
- Offering exit surveys and reflection sessions to teachers leaving the district.
- Emphasizing issues impacting recruitment and retention in teacher negotiations.

Districts can leverage additional funding sources to support this work:

- Integration funding.
- Q-Comp (if available).
- State funding for residency programs.
- Title II for racial equity professional development.

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CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Develop, sustain and evaluate
cultural competence for teachers

Cultural Competence Strategy

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.

Cultural Competence

Barriers:

- Lack of a racially conscious pedagogy

Need curriculum that includes absent narratives, collective identity (individual, interpersonal, community), and accountability. Need to align teacher preparation and professional development with a historical understanding of current context and expectations that all students will pass.

- The dominant culture perpetuates the status quo

Need to address the entrenched values, beliefs, assumptions and mindsets of the dominant culture that perpetuate the status quo and inequity in our educational system.

Outcomes:

- Who we are (different from what we do); see our institutional identity is one of cultural competence

Cultural Competence Teaching Strategies

Use of Vocabulary, Literacy, Attention Signals, Discussion, Movement and Responding.

- Uses individual student data to guide instruction.
- Integrates resources from multiple perspectives, including race, ethnicity, and culture.
- Chooses from and implements multiple strategies (traditional, responsive, and/or culturally responsive).
- Students are treated equitably in terms of their respective cultures.
- Teachers implement culturally responsive strategies.

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CULTURAL INCLUSIVITY

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

Again, these strategies were designed so they can be applied in districts of all types and adjusted to each district's specific needs. Anoka-Hennepin, for example, responded with these strategies:

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

Anoka-Hennepin Examples of Strategy Implementation:

- Create magnet opportunities at all levels across the district.
 - Allow all high school students to “Enrich by Choice” in rigorous coursework.
 - Provide multiple supports for students taking on a more challenging course through programs like “College Possible” or “AVID.”
 - Create opportunities for underrepresented students like the “Young Men’s Science Program.”
- Use student voice to enhance course offerings:
 - US History (Curriculum Enhancements)
 - World Drumming
 - African American History
 - Developmental Basketball
 - Native American Language

Measures of Success

- AHISD has increased the percentage of students of color by 1 to 2 percent annually AND increased the graduation rate by a similar amount.
- The gap between white students and non-white students for graduation rates has been eliminated at some sites.
- Champlin Park HS graduation rate for Black students is 89.9 percent, the state average for that group is 67 percent.
- 75 percent of Anoka Hennepin graduates have taken two or more college or career preparation courses.

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STATEWIDE FUNDING

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

Funding is a significant barrier

- Lack of sufficient, stable and equitable funding leads to instability.
- Lack of consistent formula increases to cover even the cost of inflation leaves districts an inability to plan for what have been projected to be year-over-year cost increases.
- The special education funding shortfall forces districts to divert money meant for general education to cover mandated costs to provide special education.
- The English-learner program is significantly underfunded. Additional resources are required to support non-English speaking students and the State is not providing those resources. Here again, districts must use funding meant for general education instruction to cover the shortfall.
- Referendum equalization: The differences in tax bases leads to an uneven calculation/apportionment of resources. Costs in metropolitan districts are also higher and state funding does not adjust for this.

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Funding is a significant barrier

- Insufficient funding requires districts to divert money from their general fund to pay for these services.
- The funding shortfall makes it a challenge to invest in the strategies outlined in the Reimagine Minnesota plan.
- If the Legislature provided adequate, equitable and consistent funding, school districts could better implement the strategies outlined in the Reimagine Minnesota plan.

AMSD Superintendents did this together. We listened to our students and our communities. We were not mandated to do it. Change doesn't happen overnight but working together, we are starting to see success.

Where do we go from here?

- The COVID-19 pandemic has presented challenges
- While some students have thrived in distance learning, it has been extremely difficult for many.

The good news:

- The Reimagine Minnesota Plan is flexible.
- Reimagine Minnesota allows districts to address the needs of their students and their communities.



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Strategy A:

CULTURAL COMPETENCE
Develop, sustain and evaluate cultural competence for teachers

Strategy D:

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION
Develop and build systemic strategies for recruiting and retaining staff of color

Strategy G:

COMMUNITY BRIDGES
Build bridges between school and community

Strategy B:

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

Strategy E:

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

Strategy H:

SHARED UNDERSTANDING
Create and sustain consistent shared understanding of equity and high level of skill application for leaders

Strategy C:

CULTURAL INCLUSIVITY
Develop and implement culturally inclusive standards, curriculum and comprehensive system of assessment

Strategy F:

ADULT BEHAVIORS
Eliminate adult behaviors and policies that lead to disproportionality; provide growth-oriented support

Strategy I:

STATEWIDE FUNDING
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Learn more:

View the original full reports, videos of events and professional development, the full Reimagine Minnesota plan and more on the Association of Metropolitan School Districts website:

- <https://www.amsd.org/reimagineminnesota>
- [LINK: View an overview document](#)