

Exhibit A

Cloquet ISD 94 Plan to Reduce Discipline Referrals and Suspension and Expulsion Rates

The Cloquet School District believes that reducing disciplinary referrals for our students is more than about focusing on discipline policies and consequences. Students need to feel a sense of belonging with school, experience social and emotional support, and have positive views of themselves, their peers, and their future. This will require a multi-faceted approach, community engagement, and consistent assessment of defined indicators to determine how well our community is achieving these goals.

The following list of activities and initiatives include those things we already are doing and additional initiatives we will implement. We will continue the programs in place and start working on additional reviews and programing. However, the specific goals, strategies, and measurements will require additional work and will need to include input and support from a new school superintendent and high school principal who will assume their duties on July 1.

We plan to communicate our programs and progress with MDHR, but we would like to commit to supplying MDHR with these specific program plans and anticipated achievement measurements by October 1, 2018. We have a long-term vision for our continued improvement and feel that the initial program goals, objectives and measurements should be well planned.

The focus of the MDHR communications to schools is focusing on disparate disciplinary consequences on a protected-class group of students. In our case, the protected-class of students mostly are Native American. We are committed to lower disciplinary referrals/consequences for our Native American students, but these initiatives will target all our students, so we can see positive results for students who are experiencing difficulties in school. We will continue to work with the unique cultural and other needs of our Native American students, and, as you will see below, this also will include staff development/training. The alternative school we host was selected as the MN alternative school of the year this year. This shows our district's commitment to provide support for all students to be successful, especially those who are facing challenges to experience this kind of success.

Below are listed categories of responses our district has in place now or will be adding in the future.

Discipline/Social Emotional Support

- Restorative Practices

Our district is recognized as a leader in these practices, and we are expanding these in our other schools. This summer we hosted a week-long statewide conference in Restorative Practices.

- PBIS

Our elementary schools have been PBIS schools for some time. We will continue this program and integrate it with other initiative described below.

- ACES and Trauma Training

Our teachers have been receiving this training and this training will be ongoing. Our county is actively engaged in working with our schools with this training as well.

- Supportive Discipline Responses and Centers in Elementary Schools

Students in need of additional support and training will have access to additional de-escalation support, counseling, and academic support. We will hire certified staff to provide this support. This staff also will help our professional learning communities identify where in the state standards to implement additional social emotional lessons. MDE has a guide available to help with this. Plans, objectives, and activities will include the following;

- Restorative Actions/Commitments
- Family Communications
- De-escalation environment
- Academic Support
- Individual and Group Therapy and Counseling
- Skill building/replacement skills
- Tiered behaviorally focused intervention
 - For instance, time in the center will be limited according to intervention required. Students' time in regular classrooms is to be maximized as is appropriate.
- Recordkeeping

Our school board authorized staffing for our elementary **and** secondary schools in our school district. The elementary and secondary schools will be working on different models to support our students at academic, social, emotional, or behavioral risk.

- CHS/CMS Alternative to Suspension Activities

Our high school and middle school already have started working with alternatives to suspension, but these schools are going to expand on this program. Program details, goals, and objectives will be forthcoming and will include the following:

- Restorative Actions/Commitments
- Academic Support
- Counseling/Therapy/Groups
- Family Communications
- Tiered behaviorally focused intervention
 - For instance, time in the center will be limited according to intervention required. Students' time in regular classrooms is to be maximized as is appropriate.
- Recordkeeping

- Review and Standardize Discipline Procedure and Records

- Review discipline policies
- Review recordkeeping and determine how to standardize categories and reporting
- Appoint person to Diversion Committee to work on upgrading DIRS reporting
- Standardize DIRS reporting within District
- Determine process/procedures/categories for tracking discipline
- Consider levels of behavior requiring certain interventions

- Plan Engagement Strategies to Review Disciplinary Policies and Procedures
 - Parent/Community Engagement
 - AIE Parent Committees
 - School Board
 - School Staff
 - Other
- Truancy Prevention
 - Review and standardize truancy response, records, correspondence among schools
 - Develop taskforce made up of school, City, County, and Tribal representatives to review truancy response and prevention procedures.
 - Develop procedures for tracking and recording truancy/reasons/student background influencing truancy/etc.
 - Parent education
 - Determine measurements to be tracked – quantity, responses, contacts, trends, etc.
- Consider Student Leadership Groups

We are not sure we will be starting more student leadership groups, but there are some programs we will wish to explore. Possibly, our Achievement and Integration (A&I) programming which becomes available to our school district for the 2019-2020 school year will help with this. The last time we work with A&I, student leadership training was one strategy planned. We were just eliminated from participation, after our plan was established, due to statistical calculations regarding our protected-class students eliminated us from the program. We are assured we will remain qualified for the program with this latest calculation qualifying us for implementation in 2019.

Social Individual and Group Support and Cultural Celebrations/Awareness

Following are programs we have in place. We will continue to expand and work with these initiatives.

- Morning Connections (Elementary Schools)
- Check and Connect for Native American Schools (K-12)
- After-School (AIE Program) – cultural and academic support and activities
- Annual School Pow-wow – cultural celebration and awareness/community activity
- Continue and expand Ojibwe/Anishinaabe Language
- Continue AIE Senior/Graduation Banquet
- Continue staffing five AIE liaison positions for student support and establishing quality school/family communications
- Work with two AIE parent committees – LIEC and JOM
- Continue to staff AIE Director to coordinate and write programs and grants to support cultural and academic programs.

Academic Support

Academic success will create a better school experience in school and a stronger sense of belongingness for our students. This will help lower behavioral and truancy issues.

- Continue strong AIE program staffed by AIE director, five AIE liaisons, academic tutors, certified teachers, and a Anishinaabe language/culture program.
- Staff ADSIS teachers to lower the need for special education referrals
- Continue credit recovery programs during the school day, after school hours, and during student breaks.
- OTHER: The following link will show the many programs and initiatives that the Cloquet School District has in place to support academic success: [Cloquet ISD # 94's World's Best Workforce Plan](#)

Social Emotional Education and Mental Health

- Continue to contract for 3.8 family school support workers (social workers networking school and county services and support)
- Over the years, our district has provided cultural training for our staff. We will use current staff expertise, bring consultants to our district, and hire new staff with appropriate backgrounds to provide consistent training and support for veteran staff and new staff in areas such as the following:
 - Cultural awareness and recognizing various levels of bias – implicit through explicit.
 - Trauma informed response.
 - De-escalation strategies.
 - Staff and provide cultural training for school social worker and counselors. These staff members will be able help train and educate students and school personnel.
 - Educational implications of working with diverse social/cultural/economic populations of students.
- Continue to network with local mental health agencies to provide assessments and therapeutic services – Northome, Fond du Lac Human Services, HDC, other
- Begin to work with our PLCs (Professional Learning Communities) to identify places in the Minnesota academic standards where we can implement social emotional education objectives which have been identified by the MDE.

Achievement and Integration Program

ISD 94 becomes eligible for over \$300,000 for Achievement and Integration programing during 2019 – 2020 school year.

The purpose of the Achievement and Integration (AI) program is to:

- Pursue racial and economic integration.
- Increase student achievement.
- Create equitable educational opportunities.

- Reduce academic disparities based on students' diverse racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds in participating schools and districts.

Given this purpose, developing the required three-year AI plan1 warrants using a strategic planning process grounded in educational equity.

The process is built around four research-based concepts, referred to here as equity criteria. The following equity criteria provide an equity lens, center student needs, and are intentionally used to steer the planning process:

- Access
- Representation
- Participation
- Outcomes

During the 2019 – 2020 school year, the district will develop a plan which will increase academic achievement and racial and economic integration through the following:

1. Integrated learning environments that prepare all students to be effective citizens and enhance social cohesion;
2. Policies and curricula and trained instructors, administrators, school counselors, and other advocates to support and enhance integrated learning environments, including through innovative, research-based instruction, differentiated instruction, and targeted interventions to improve achievement; and
3. Rigorous career and college readiness programs for underserved student populations, integrated learning environments to increase student academic achievement; cultural fluency, competency, and interaction; graduation and educational attainment rates; and parent involvement.

A major focus is to emphasize reducing the achievement gap in reading and math. We also would be able to do more cultural education for students and staff members.

Staff Development

As described above in some sections. These objectives will include staff development for our certified and non-certified staff. Beyond the specifics of programs such as Restorative Practices and PBIS, staff development will include cultural awareness, particularly as it relates to our educational programing and implementation. Topics also will include recognizing implicit bias and implementing trauma informed responses. As our school district creates and Achievement and Integration plan, this should support our staff development and perhaps expand it to adjoining school districts.

Communications

The effectiveness of initiatives such as we are developing with this plan will, in large measure, be dependent upon appropriate communications. Stakeholders need to feel part of the planning process. They also need to understand the reasons for the plan and how the components of the plan are being implemented. Additionally, stakeholders must believe that they are being heard and are receiving good communication during the implementation of the plan. Following are communication and communication supports we have in place and will be putting in place.

- American Indian Education (AIE) Program. MinnCan, the University of MN Mankato, and others have recognized that our school district has a very effective American Indian Education (AIE) Program. This program helps create equity of opportunity for success and does so with some very good communication tools as are listed below
 - Parent/Family surveys.
 - Academic supports at each school which communicates with parents and students about successes and struggles students may be having.
 - Monthly JOM and LIEC parent committee meetings – two AIE parent committee meetings.
 - Review programs and budgets.
 - Provide feedback on program operations.
 - Liaisons with district administration.
 - Indian Home School Liaisons at each school.
 - Provides emotional and other support for students.
 - Implement Check and Connect Program providing support and connections for students struggling with emotional and academic issues.
 - Be with parents and/or students during confusing or difficult issues – disciplinary, sped meetings, teacher conferences...
 - Help students access financial support for participating in extra- or co-curricular activities.
 - Presence at parent-teacher conferences.
- Achievement and Integration Program
 - In addition to the advantages listed above of participating in the Achievement and Integration Program, planning and implementing this program will require surveys and communications with our stakeholders.
 - Implementing the A & I program will involve at least one leadership team and a Multidistrict Collaborative Council (MDCC).
 - Leadership Teams. MDE suggests that, “the team should represent the ethnic, racial, linguistic, economic, and gender diversity of your community. By including voices from multiple perspectives, you will see more meaningful goals, more effective strategies, and have a greater impact on students. “
 - MDCC. MDE has the following requirements: “Districts are required to gather input from the Multidistrict Collaborative Council (MDCC), Community Collaborative Council (CCC), and American Indian Parent Committee when developing integration goals and activities⁷. Decide how to schedule and facilitate input from these groups, then convene them after conducting the comprehensive needs assessment.”
 - Needs Assessment. MDE has developed tools and guidance for a needs assessment to plan and measure effectiveness of the A&I program. This will fit quite well with our planning and communications regarding our agreement with MDHR. MDE’s guidance for these needs assessment tools says that, “A needs assessment helps the leadership team determine areas of inequity and systemic barriers to integration and positive outcomes for students. The team

collects, summarizes, and analyzes data from various data sources to be more strategic in your efforts to provide an equitable education for each student.”

- Parent-Teacher Conferences. We have, before school starts, parent-teacher conferences or open houses at all our schools. During the school year, we have two other parent-teacher conferences.
- Parent Portal. Families have access to Parent Portal, so parents/guardians can stay in touch with their children’s progress in school, usually close to real time.
- District website. Many communications and much information are available to families on our district’s website.
- Newsletters go home to parents discussing school activities, programs, schedules, events, academic programs, and the like.
- Our AIE program periodically surveys families regarding school programming.
- A very effective community communications event is the annual spring pow wow our AIE program hosts.
- Our AIE program sends home newsletters to families.
- ESSA requires that we meet and collaborate annually about our school programming and outcomes. For instance, during our last meeting, tribal officials emphasized the need to work together to lower truancy rates.
- Our Title VI Indian Education federal grant program requires that we have an annual meeting with our Native American community to discuss academic progress and other program goals.
- MN requires that our LIEC annually determine if our school district is meeting the educational needs of our American student. The LIEC then delivers a Transmittal Resolution of concurrence or non-concurrence. A Resolution of Non-concurrence, though would not be a positive thing to happen, would require additional communications to determine how to better meet the needs of our Native American students and families.