

January 20, 2021

Commissioner Rebecca Lucero  
Minnesota Department of Human Rights  
625 Robert Street North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**Re: Osseo Area Schools  
Semi-Annual Report on Collaboration Agreement  
Winter 2020-21 School Year**

Dear Ms. Lucero:

Please accept this letter and the attached documentation as the Osseo Area School's ("District's") semi-annual report on the collaboration agreement reached with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights ("Department").

Since the District's last report, the ongoing pandemic has continued to dominate school district operations and educational programming. From mid-March of 2020 until present, the District has shifted in and out of various learning models across all K-12 schools. At the outset of the 2020-21 school year, all students/families were given the option of either attending their regular school of attendance (regardless of the learning model being implemented, i.e. in-person, hybrid or distance) or attending the District's Distance Learning Academy ("DLA") where they would receive distance learning instruction for the entire 2020-21 school year.

The District delayed the start of the 2020-21 school year for one week to prepare for the return of students. Then, for a two-week period, all students in the District began the school year in distance learning. On September 28, 2020, K-12 students who elected to continue in their school of attendance (i.e. non-DLA students), began hybrid instruction in their regular school of attendance. However, due to significant community spread of the virus in the District and consistent with state guidelines, the District moved all of its secondary students (i.e. 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade) to distance learning on November 9, 2020. By November 23, 2020, as the spread of the virus continued to increase, the District moved all elementary students (i.e. PreK to 5<sup>th</sup> grade) to distance learning. Most recently, on January 19, 2021, consistent with state guidance, the District returned elementary students in PreK to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade (except for those enrolled in the DLA) back to full, in-person learning. While the District has indicated that elementary students in 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade will return to full in-person instruction as of February 1, 2021, at this date students in grades 3<sup>rd</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade remain in distance learning.

As a result of the learning model shifts and a significant reduction in student interactions necessitating formal school discipline, the District has issued only two (2) out-of-school suspensions for the entire 2020-21 school year to date.

### Documentation of Compliance

What follows is documentation of the District's equity efforts and the District's discipline data for the fifth reporting period under the collaboration agreement.

1. *Efforts to comply with the provisions of the Agreement and to implement its Plan, including (a) intended outcomes for its Plan; (b) specific steps the District took to implement the strategies identified in its Plan; (c) metrics the District developed to measure the effectiveness of the strategies identified in its Plan; and (d) any changes implemented by the District in light of results in the reporting period. (Paragraphs 1, 3 & 4 from collaboration agreement).*

Response: In July of 2020, the District created a new cabinet position (Assistant Superintendent of Equity and Achievement) to prioritize student equity efforts. Also, this past summer, the District entered into an agreement with Midwest & Plains Equity Assistance Center ("the Center") to further identify and address racial and other disparities that exist within the District. The charge of the Center is to provide equity-focused technical assistance to the District that focuses on systemic improvements to ensure educational access, participation and positive outcomes for students who have been historically marginalized based on race, sex, national origin, or religion. To this point, District leaders and stakeholders have met with the Center advisors to identify current and future equity needs of the District. The District is currently engaged in Center's Equity Context Analysis Process ("ECAP"), which has the purpose of identifying areas of strengths and priorities for improvement with respect to equitable practices. The ECAP process will include classroom visits by the Center's technical advisors and a survey of District stakeholders to assist with equity planning priorities. (See Attachment A – Midwest & Plains Equity Assistance Center Agreement)

In response to the police killing of George Floyd this past summer, the School Board passed a resolution on July 21, 2020 that included: (1) an affirmation of the District's commitment to combating hate crimes and institutional racism, and to an education free from discrimination; (2) affirming the School Board's commitment to supporting Black, Indigenous, and other families, students and employees of color; (3) establishing a Black, Indigenous, and other parent/guardian of color partner committee with the power to address structural, racial inequity in the District; (4) implementing a student cabinet to provide feedback and input to the Superintendent and School Board that is reflective of the demographics of the District; and (5) committing to conducting listening sessions and engaging the school community to have difficult racial discussions and to reach solutions. (See Attachment B – July 2020 School Board Resolution)


In addition to the system wide efforts stated above, the District has continued to implement its Priority Result Work which includes: (1) use of culturally responsive positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) (including efforts to implement trauma informed and restorative practices); (2) integration of Pre-K programming with K-12 programming; (3) encouragement of family engagement; (4) use of culturally responsive instructional strategies; (5) implementation of best practices for multilingual learners; and (6) recruitment and retention of a diverse work force better reflecting District demographics. To support the priorities, the District has continued to provide principals and other building leaders, in-service/training on the following topics: Positive Behavior Interventions (PBIS); Family engagement; supports provided to students and staff by the Educational Equity Department; Black Lives Matter; and Developing Equity Consciousness and Anti-Racist Commitments. (See Attachment C – Relevant Training Presentations/Agendas)

2. *Aggregate de-identified suspension and expulsion data from reporting period. (Paragraphs 3 & 5 from collaboration agreement).*

Response: (See Attachment D -- Out of School Suspensions and Suspension Days for 2020 -21 school year as of January 6, 2020).

If you require clarification related to any of the data provided, please contact my office.  
Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Palmatier', written over a horizontal line.

Tim Palmatier  
General Counsel