



## Minnesota Department of Human Rights and Independent School District 196 Semi-Annual Report September 1, 2018

This is Independent School District 196’s first semi-annual report to the Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MDHR) pursuant to the Collaboration Agreement entered into by the parties on June 27, 2018. This report provides information concerning District 196’s progress implementing the Collaboration Agreement and District 196’s local plan to address disparities in student discipline.<sup>1</sup> The report will address each strategy in the local plan including intended outcomes, implementation steps taken in the reporting period, metrics to measure effectiveness and any responsive changes implemented in light of the results in the reporting period. A spreadsheet with de-identified suspension data is also attached to this report as required by the Collaboration Agreement.<sup>2</sup>

### I. Periodic Review of District Discipline Policy

**Intended Outcomes** – To improve the fairness and objectivity of District 196’s discipline policy, provide alternatives to suspension and allow community engagement in the development of the policy.

**Implementation Steps** – District 196’s annual process for making changes to its discipline policy begins in the winter when the district seeks school and community input on needed changes. Recent changes approved by the school board in May of 2018 have included providing principals with greater authority to adjust disciplinary consequences and allowing for restorative practices as a disciplinary alternative. District 196 families were notified of the revised policy over the summer.

**Metrics** – The effectiveness of all strategies will be measured, in part, by District 196’s suspension data. This strategy will also be measured by the amount and quality of suggested policy changes.

**Responsive Changes** – Due to the timing of the annual discipline policy review and the recent effective date of the Collaboration Agreement, responsive changes have not occurred since the finalization of the Collaboration Agreement, although policy changes made in the spring have

---

<sup>1</sup> Each semi-annual plan is required to report progress under the Collaboration Agreement and local plan over the preceding six months. Due to the fact that the Collaboration Agreement was approved only two months ago, and school has not been in session since before the Agreement was approved, this first report will be necessarily limited in scope.

<sup>2</sup> The Collaboration Agreement requires suspension data from the preceding six months to be submitted along with the September and February semi-annual reports. Because suspensions typically occur during the nine months of the school year, and because September and February are not spaced six months apart, the District has designed its suspension reports to split the school year in half. Accordingly, the February report will provided data for the first half of the school year beginning with summer school and ending on the January 15<sup>th</sup> before the February report. The September report provide data on the second half of the school year beginning on January 16<sup>th</sup> and ending with the end of the school year. The September report will also include additional data on those students who were suspended in both halves of the year, consistent with paragraph 2 (j) of the Collaboration Agreement.

been communicated to the school community. Improvements to the district’s anti-bullying regulation and procedure were made in August in response to recent community input.

## II. Data Review

**Intended Outcomes** – To increase awareness of the effect of current suspension practices on students.

**Implementation Steps** – The data review is scheduled to occur three times per year near the end of each trimester at three separate tiers (school, task force<sup>3</sup> and cabinet). Data has been informally reviewed at all levels, but the review contemplated by the strategy will begin following the first trimester of the 2018-19 school year.

**Metrics** – The effectiveness of all strategies will be measured, in part, by District 196’s suspension data. This strategy will also be measured by the fidelity of all schools to the data review process.

**Responsive Changes** – Past disciplinary data has been reviewed and the district looks forward to the data review scheduled to occur after the first trimester. Responsive changes and implementation steps described throughout this report were made, in part, due to disparities evident in the data that has been reviewed to date. Due to the timing of the three data review periods and the June effective date of the Collaboration Agreement, more responsive changes will occur once the district’s plan has been in place for a greater period of time.

## III. Alternatives to Suspension

**Intended Outcomes** – To develop alternatives to suspension in order to reduce the use of suspension for student misconduct that is nonviolent and unrelated to drug possession, sale or use.

**Implementation Steps** – The district has established a student attendance and behavioral intervention task force which has been renamed the “Student Support and School Climate Team.” The purpose of the team is to meet to review districtwide disciplinary practices and alternatives to suspension, as well as other matters related to student engagement, attendance and school climate. The Team has met several times and additional Team members have been added.

**Metrics** – The effectiveness of all strategies will be measured, in part, by District 196’s suspension data. The effectiveness of this strategy will also be measured by the frequency of the Team’s meetings and the initiatives recommended by the Team.

**Responsive Changes** – Due to the June effective date of the Collaboration Agreement, few responsive changes have occurred since the finalization of the Collaboration Agreement, although policy changes were made in the spring to allow for more alternatives to suspension and recent changes have been made to the name and composition of the Student Support and School Climate Team.

## IV. School Climate Initiatives

**Intended Outcomes** – To reduce disciplinary incidents and improve student engagement and inclusion through school climate initiatives.

**Implementation Steps** – The district has identified and began to implement various school climate initiatives including REACH, Responsive Classroom (restorative practices) and Conscious Discipline. Individual schools also implement various forms of school specific climate initiatives. The district has also provided staff training on trauma informed practices, and

---

<sup>3</sup> The task force identified in the strategy has been renamed the “Student Support and School Climate Team.”

presented a workshop to all administrators by Jimmy Casas, the author of *Culturize*, on the importance of a healthy school community for all students.

**Metrics** – The effectiveness of all strategies will be measured, in part, by District 196’s suspension data. This strategy will also be measured by the twice annual reports by the schools regarding their school climate initiatives.

**Responsive Changes-** Due to the timing of the two annual school climate reports and the recent effective date of the Collaboration Agreement, responsive changes have not occurred since the finalization of the Collaboration Agreement other than the implementation steps identified above.

## V. Professional Development for Staff

**Intended Outcomes** – To develop a workforce of culturally proficient staff attuned to the social/emotional learning of students.

**Implementation Steps** – The district has identified and offered learning opportunities to staff including some of the trainings identified above in strategy IV. In addition, the district is offering cultural proficiency training to all staff during the course of the 2018-19 school year.

**Metrics** – The effectiveness of all strategies will be measured, in part, by District 196’s suspension data. This strategy will also be measured by the number of professional development offerings concerning cultural proficiency (including implicit bias) and student social/emotional learning.

**Responsive Changes** – Due to the recent effective date of the Collaboration Agreement, few responsive changes have occurred since it was finalized, however the planned cultural proficiency training has recently been sharpened to allow for more in-depth dialogue and self-directed learning. The district has also contracted with trainers on topics concerning social emotional learning.

## VI. Consultation

**Intended Outcomes** – To improve the district’s understanding of needed equity work through consultation with the Midwest & Plains Equity Assistance Center and the Center of Excellence.

**Implementation Steps** – The district has meet with the consultant three times between December 2017 and September 2018. The meetings are web-based with a cohort of school districts.

**Metrics** – The effectiveness of all strategies will be measured, in part, by District 196’s suspension data. This strategy will also be measured by the number of consultations conducted.

**Responsive Changes** - Due to the recent effective date of the Collaboration Agreement, few responsive changes have occurred since the Agreement was finalized other than the implementation steps identified above.

## VII. Staff Review of Policy

**Intended Outcomes** – To improve staff understanding and awareness of District 196’s anti-discrimination and anti-bullying policies.

**Implementation Steps** – Policy review is conducted in the fall of the year. The 2018 policy review has been distributed to all sites for review with staff. It includes a review of the anti-discrimination and anti-bullying policies.

**Metrics** – The effectiveness of all strategies will be measured, in part, by District 196’s suspension data. This strategy is also measured by the fidelity of all buildings to the policy review requirement.

**Responsive Changes** – The 2018 policy review included particular emphasis on making staff members aware of who the identified anti-bullying contact person is at each school site. This emphasis was in response to community feedback that the contact person is not widely known at each building.

## **VIII. Family and Community Engagement**

**Intended Outcomes-** To improve community engagement and voice.

**Implementation Steps** – The district has scheduled and conducted various meetings with community engagement groups. This will continue with even greater frequency once the school year begins.

**Metrics** – The effectiveness of all strategies will be measured, in part, by District 196’s suspension data. This strategy will also be measured by the number of key community engagement meetings held districtwide.

**Responsive Changes** - Due to the June date of the Collaboration Agreement, responsive changes have not occurred since its finalization, however meetings are taking place as stated above.

## **IX. Reimagine Minnesota**

**Intended Outcomes** – To enhance inter-district collaboration on the issue of equity.

**Implementation Steps** – District 196 has and will continue participate in available Reimagine Minnesota activities. Key district level administrators have reviewed the organization’s action plan.

**Metrics** – The effectiveness of all strategies will be measured, in part, by District 196’s suspension data.

**Responsive Changes** - Due to the recent effective date of the Collaboration Agreement, and the unique nature of this strategy, responsive changes have not occurred except as described above in the implementation steps.

## **X. Use of School Resource Officers**

**Intended Outcomes** – To limit the role of school resource officers (SROs) in school discipline in order to minimize the criminalization of school misconduct.

**Implementation Steps** – District 196 has ensured that limiting language concerning the role of school resource officers is contained in school district policy and in the SRO contracts. The SRO contracts with the cities have not yet been finalized for 2018-19 school year.

**Metrics** – The effectiveness of all strategies will be measured, in part, by District 196’s suspension data. This strategy will also be measured by the policy and contract language.

**Responsive Changes** – District 196 is currently finalizing its contracts for school resource officers, but the contracts will contain the limiting language as they have in the past. This year, District 196 has asked SROs to participate in the cultural proficiency training offered to staff.

## **XI. Culturally Inclusive Curriculum**

**Intended Outcomes** – To ensure the inclusivity of curriculum and academic offerings in District 196.

**Implementation Steps** – The District has a curriculum review process in place. As curriculum comes up for review, administrators will use an equity lens when examining the suitability of curriculum for District 196 students. The Phy Ed/Health curriculum and the Performing Arts curriculum are scheduled for review in the 2018-19 school year. In addition, in recent years the District has looked for ways to open access to honors and Advanced Placement classes to

students from underrepresented groups and also to offer academic classes, such as AVID, which are designed to enhance the education of underrepresented groups. These efforts are ongoing.

**Metrics** – The effectiveness of all strategies will be measured, in part, by District 196’s suspension data. This strategy is also measured by the participation of students of color in AP classes and by overall participation in the AVID program.

**Responsive Changes** – While school has not been in session since the Collaboration Agreement was signed, the district has continued its progress on this strategy as described in the Implementation Steps above. The district will provide a reflection rubric to teacher teams that they can use to assess their curriculum and resources through an equity lens.

## **XII. Mental Health Support**

**Intended Outcomes** – To meet the needs of students with mental health needs.

**Implementation Steps** – The district is in the process of entering into contracts with outside mental health providers to provide co-located mental health support to students. The district has also maintained its staffing levels for school-level support personnel such as social workers, counselors, psychologists and nurses.

**Metrics** – The effectiveness of all strategies will be measured, in part, by District 196’s suspension data. This strategy is also measured by the number of buildings served by collocated mental health providers.

**Responsive Changes** – The District has reorganized the assignment of buildings to co-located mental health providers in order to provide greater student access to mental health support. The district is currently in the process of finalizing contracts with mental health providers.

## **XIII. State Diversion Committee**

**Intended Outcomes** – To generate best practices to address disparities in student disciplinary outcomes.

**Implementation Steps**- The district has identified District 196 representatives to serve on the Diversion Committee and has participated in all meetings to date.

**Metrics** – The effectiveness of all strategies will be measured, in part, by District 196’s suspension data. This strategy will also be measured by the number of diversion committee meetings attended by District 196 representatives.

**Responsive Changes** – District 196 has identified additional representatives to participate in future Diversion Committee meetings. Further responsive changes are expected once the Committee has an opportunity to develop best practice recommendations.