

Willmar Public School Schools-Independent School District 347-Case # 68093

Discipline Disparity Reduction Plan

Final Status Report

June 28, 2021

Submitted by Dr. Jeff Holm, Superintendent

Status Updates

The District will implement and enforce a system for schools and administrators to track office referrals, suspensions, including in-school suspensions, expulsions, and exclusions at each school site.

- The Alternatives to Suspension Committee has met monthly and examined the District's discipline data. The Committee includes a Behavior Intervention Specialist who has expertise in behavioral issues and behavior data analysis. The committee did not meet during the distance learning period.
- The Alternatives to Suspension Committee had representatives who participated in the Minnesota Department of Education's cohort on student discipline.
- The Alternatives to Suspension Committee began work based on their experiences with MDE's cohort training, which included beginning work on schools' codes of conduct.
- Willmar Public School District has operated with elementary students receiving in-person instruction through mid-October, at which time they switched to hybrid instruction, and in late November to distance learning. Secondary schools have operated in hybrid until late November, and distance learning since then. All schools will return to hybrid learning on January 18th. The District returned to the in-person model of instruction in February. These shifts in learning models have resulted in disruption to the Committee's work, however, the typical behavioral issues for students have significantly diminished in these models, due to the limited movement of students required to maintain social distance. Members of the committee have met with local county family service staff to discuss how to mitigate attendance issues. Students seem to have shifted to disengagement instead of many of the typical behavior issues that arise when students are learning in-person with fewer restrictions.
- The Committee will reconvene in the fall of 2021 to consider how to support students' behavioral needs.

The District will consult with students, parents, and teachers concerning the Plan and will provide the Department with information on the District's engagement efforts and how input from students, parents, and teachers, if any, was or was not utilized.

- Parent meetings were conducted in the fall of 2020 in each school to establish relationships between students' families and the teachers. Orientation meetings were held both in-person, with safety protocols established, and virtually. There was a recognition of the challenges the pandemic has created in building a foundational relationship among teachers, students, and students' families. The orientation meetings offered an opportunity for teachers and parents to develop a mutual understanding of expectations and classroom routines.
- District Policy requires annual opportunities for input from stakeholders. The School District notified parents of the opportunity to participate in an online survey to identify their concerns or suggestions related to District Discipline Policy and student handbooks.
- The Board Policy Committee reviewed the input from online survey and considered the suggestions and comments offered by staff, parents, or others. No revisions resulted from the input received.

Improvement of all staff members' cultural competence-

- The District established a committee to explore cultural competence. Committee members have taken the IDI and have received feedback.
- The Committee began work to explore various professional development opportunities related to culturally responsive strategies, with the goal of providing wider training to all staff, until the pandemic disrupted the work. Members of the Committee have met to discuss including additional committee members to replace some who have left the committee due to retirement or health issues.
- Dr. Manny Scott provided a virtual keynote address to all staff in September. Scott is a well-recognized speaker and was featured in the movie Freedom Writers, which highlighted his experiences with racial injustice and inner city violence as a youth. Dr. Scott pointed out the need for staff members to humble themselves and become a student of our students to seek to develop deep and supportive relationships with them. He pointed out that while institutional racism is not the fault of white people, which is the vast majority of the School District's staff, it is their responsibility to disrupt the injustice sustained through implicit bias and cultural incompetence. He emphasized that all staff members play an important role in the lives of our students, and that we must seek to understand the cultural differences, which exist in our system.
- The Committee reconvened in June of 2021 to reboot our efforts. Several new members, many of whom are working as Bilingual Paraprofessionals or Cultural Liaisons were welcomed as new members. The group will be working with the District Professional Development Committee to determine how to improve intercultural competence among all staff members.
- The ISD 347 Achievement and Integration plan was revised to include the following goals related to developing greater cultural competence of staff members:

Strategy Name: Instructional Coaches

Type of Strategy: Career/College Readiness and Rigorous coursework for underserved students, including students enrolled in ALC (*this language is from MDE - it is from a dropdown menu on their A&I plan template*)

Narrative Description of this Strategy:

The instructional coaches will provide instructional support for students and teachers that will decrease racial and economic achievement disparities in the content areas. This will include modeling of cultural competency and literacy strategies with students that will affect student achievement. Coaches will also type up and sort data reports from various sources (secure reports, Viewpoint, Pearson, etc.) to share with staff members to monitor achievement disparities.

Location of Services: Every Building in the District

Key Indicators of Progress (KIP):

List key indicators of progress for this strategy and annual targets for each indicator. Choose indicators that will help you know if the strategy is creating the outcomes you want to see.	Target 2021	Target 2022	Target 2023
Students' perceptions of safety and engagement will increase as reported on student survey results	0%	25%	50%
Based on post-training surveys, teachers will report expanded use of cultural competency and literacy strategies.	0%	25%	50%

Strategy Name: Instructional Coaches

Type of Strategy: Equitable access to effective and more diverse teachers. (*this language is from MDE - it is from a dropdown menu on their A&I plan template*)

Narrative Description of this Strategy:

Instructional coaches will provide long term and sustained intercultural professional learning and coaching for teachers and staff in order to increase student engagement and learning, especially for students from traditionally underserved groups. In year one, instructional coaches will participate in a year-long professional learning experience designed to increase their understanding of their own culture and the impact it has on their work and interaction in school. They will explore general culture information and use culturally inclusive strategies. They will become familiar with research supporting this pedagogy. In years two through three, they will provide professional learning opportunities for teachers. Our district's cultural competency committee will support the instructional coaches to use culturally inclusive strategies in staff meetings and coaching sessions in order to encourage other teachers to adopt these strategies. . They will also support teachers with professional development and coaching of effective instructional practices.

Location of Services: Every Building in the District

Key Indicators of Progress (KIP):

List key indicators of progress for this strategy and annual targets for each indicator. Choose indicators that will help you know if the strategy is creating the outcomes you want to see.	Target 2021	Target 2022	Target 2023
Increase percentage of teachers who have access to professional learning.	0%	50%	100%
Based on post-training surveys, teachers report expanded use of culturally responsive strategies in their classrooms	0%	25%	50%

The District will select a representative or representatives to attend and participate in the meetings of the Diversion Committee that was organized and facilitated by the Minnesota Department of Human Rights-

- The District has participated in each of the meetings, either through the superintendent’s, or designee’s, physical attendance at the meetings, or virtual attendance through the web. The Superintendent has participated in the Implicit Bias subcommittee, which has begun a book study.

The District Will Define Cultural Liaisons’ Roles-

- The committee met in the 18-19 school year and, reviewed, revised job descriptions for the Cultural Liaisons. (Completed)

The District will reiterate to all stakeholders and School Resource Officers, that School Resource Officers are not involved in recommending or determining student discipline or investigating student discipline issues that do not involve a crime...

- The Superintendent has communicated the role of school resource officers to the public through the website on an annual basis.
- In negotiating a contract with the Willmar Police Department for the 2021-2022 school year, the Superintendent and Chief of Police engaged in a discussion about the role School Resource Officers being limited to dealing with criminal offenses that occur on campuses, establishing a positive relationship with students, and providing on-site security support. There was conversation about the School Resource Officers not being authorized to address school disciplinary measures unless a potential crime was committed.

Summary Data

Summary Data- As of 06/09/2021, the following discipline data was compiled using Infinite Campus, the District’s student information system. The following chart shows the total numbers of in-school and out of school suspensions during the 2020-2021 school year by building. . There were no reported suspensions at Lakeland Elementary, Roosevelt Elementary, or the Area Learning Center. There were no expulsions, and no exclusions during this time

School	Resolution	Number
20-21 Kennedy Elementary	Out-of-School Suspension	7
20-21 Kennedy Elementary Total		7
20-21 Willmar Middle School	Out-of-School Suspension	6
20-21 Willmar Middle School Total		6
20-21 Willmar Senior High	Out-of-School Suspension	13
20-21 Willmar Senior High Total		13
Grand Total		26

The following data indicate in-school and out-of-school suspensions from September 2020 until June 4, 2021 by building, event, and race. The data was likely impacted by the COVID—19 pandemic, which resulted in the District utilizing in-person instruction, hybrid learning, and distance learning in all schools at various points during the year.

School	Race	Event Name	Total
20-21 Kennedy Elementary	Black	Assault	4
	Black Total		4
	Hispanic	Assault	1
		Other	1
	Hispanic Total		2
	White	Weapon	1
White Total		1	
20-21 Kennedy Elementary Total			7
20-21 Willmar Middle School	Black	Fighting	3
	Black Total		3
	Hispanic	Fighting	3
	Hispanic Total		3
20-21 Willmar Middle School Total			6
20-21 Willmar Senior High	Asian	Fighting	1
	Asian Total		1
	Black	Disruptive	1
		Insubordination	1
		Weapon	1
	Black Total		3
	Hispanic	Fighting	1
Harassment		1	

		Illegal Drugs	1
		Peer Conflict	1
	Hispanic Total		4
	White	Disruptive	2
		Illegal Drugs	1
		Insubordination	1
		Tobacco	1
	White Total		5
20-21 Willmar Senior High Total			13
Grand Total			26

The following data indicates the special education status of the students who experienced suspensions from September 2020 until June 4, 2021. It is reported by school. A “Y” indicates the student is eligible for special education, an “N” indicates the student is not eligible for special education, and an “E” indicates the student was receiving an evaluation for special education eligibility at the time of the suspension.

School	SpEdStatus	Total
20-21 Kennedy Elementary	N	3
	E	1
	Y	3
20-21 Kennedy Elementary Total		7
20-21 Willmar Middle School	N	3
	Y	3
20-21 Willmar Middle School Total		6
20-21 Willmar Senior High	N	5
	Y	8
20-21 Willmar Senior High Total		13
Grand Total		26

Summary-

ISD 347 Willmar Public School District will continue to work to mitigate disparities in discipline, as well as other disparities experienced by students. The District’s mission statement is “Inspiring and preparing **ALL** learners for their future in our community and world”. We are committed to ongoing improvement to meet that mission and ensure that “all” means “all”.