

Incorporating Public Comments: Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)

In spring 2026, the Olmstead Implementation Office (OIO), in partnership with the Dendros Group, Inclusion Consultants, and state staff, held a public comment period. This included:

- Virtual meetings
- An online survey in multiple languages
- Individual interviews
- Submissions from organizations
- Email comments

This document includes themes from all public comment. Agency teams were asked to address how feedback was incorporated into their goals and strategies in the Olmstead Plan.

For more information about this feedback, please review the education public comment summary report.

Education Goal 1

Education Goal 1: More students with disabilities will learn in integrated classrooms

Feedback theme: Education for Deaf, Deafblind, Hard of Hearing Students

The Department of Education (MDE) updated Education Goal 1 based off this feedback. The agency team wrote:

Background: Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) special education regulations specifically require that, to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled (see 34 C.F.R §§ 300.114(a)(2)(i). In addition, IDEA specifically requires that the educational placement of a student with a disability is made by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, including the parents, and other persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options,

and that the placement is made in conformity with the LRE provisions of IDEA in §§300.114 through 300.118 ([see 34 C.F.R §§ 300.116\(a\) and U.S. Department of Education, 2025](#)).

MDE added strategies:

- Continue MDE support of the federal and state parent training and technical assistance center and providing parents with information about the availability of the Parent Training and Information Center (PTIC), information about education in the most integrated setting, and assistance, including:
 - *Special Education Placement Settings*
 - *Least Restrictive Environment*
 - *Free Appropriate Public Education and the Least Restrictive Environment*
 - *Guide to the IEP for Parents*
 - *Assistive Technology*
- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff and parents and caregivers of students with disabilities to learn about person-centered planning, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub.
- Disaggregate special education setting data by race/ethnicity and category of special education eligibility and analyze for opportunities to improve the continuum of alternative placements available for students with disabilities to increase education in more integrated settings.
 - Background: Federal IDEA special education regulations specifically require a continuum of alternative placements ([34 C.F.R §§ 300.115 and U.S. Department of Education, 2025](#)).

Feedback theme: Appropriate placement and more support for teachers/staff to allow successful inclusion

MDE updated their goal based on this feedback. The agency team added “cultural competence” or related terms to prior submitted strategies:

- Develop professional development and resources for school principals on effective practices for inclusive education, including cultural competence.
- Develop professional development and resources for teachers on tailoring instruction to meet student needs, e.g. differentiated instruction, co-teaching, cultural competence, and universal design for learning.
- Develop professional development and resources for paraprofessionals on supporting students to learn in the most integrated setting, including cultural competence.
- Support schools in using best practices for inclusive education, including cultural competence.
- Develop information and resources for students and school staff about disability and inclusivity, including cultural competence.

- This includes emphasizing that including and accommodating students with disabilities is everyone's responsibility.
- Improve outreach to families from underrepresented and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
 - This includes families who speak languages other than English, Hmong, Somali, and Spanish.

MDE added strategies:

- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff and parents and caregivers of students with disabilities to learn about person-centered planning, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub
- Disaggregate special education setting data by race/ethnicity and category of special education eligibility and analyze for opportunities to improve the continuum of alternative placements available for students with disabilities to increase education in more integrated settings.
 - Background: Federal IDEA special education regulations specifically require a continuum of alternative placements ([34 C.F.R §§ 300.115 and U.S. Department of Education, 2025](#)).
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on using federal and state funding for engaging with families in culturally-specific community settings.
- Scale up individual mentoring and school/family connection for American Indian and Black students with disabilities through expanding Check & Connect implementation in schools.
- Provide training on trauma-informed practices, de-escalation techniques, and culturally responsive classroom management.

Feedback theme: Concerns about goal measures being too low/limited

The MDE agency team added new strategies that, along with all the prior submitted strategies, can be the basis for more ambitious goal setting in the future if they prove effective. These added strategies include:

- Providing guidance to school districts and charter schools on how they can use their federal and state funds to make investments in professional development and implementation of effective practices in each of the Olmstead Plan education goals, including goals for education in the most integrated setting of choice.
- Develop resources for parents and caregivers about how assistive technology can be used as part of the IEP process to help students with disabilities be in more integrated settings, including information on where parents and caregivers can go for live real-time assistance.
- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff and parents and caregivers of students with disabilities to learn about person-centered planning, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub.

- Expand school-based behavioral health services, including coordination with county-based services and supports and behavioral health providers in communities.
- Continue MDE support of the federal and state parent training and technical assistance center and providing parents with information about special education, and assistance, including the *Guide to the IEP for Parents*, as well as materials and guidance available to parents in languages other than English, (e.g. Spanish, Somali, etc.).

Education Goal 2

Education Goal 2: Schools will better engage families of students with disabilities

Based off feedback, the MDE agency team added strategies:

- Continue MDE support of the federal and state parent training and technical assistance center and providing parents with information about special education, and assistance, including the *Guide to the IEP for Parents*, as well as materials and guidance available to parents in languages other than English, (e.g. Spanish, Somali, etc.)
- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff to learn about person-centered planning and how it improved engagement with families, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on available and federal and state funding to implement improved family engagement
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on using federal and state funding for engaging with families in culturally-specific community settings
- Scale up individual mentoring and school/family connection for American Indian and Black students with disabilities through expanding Check & Connect implementation in schools

Education Goal 3

Education Goal 3: Fewer students with disabilities will be suspended or expelled

Feedback theme: Supports for students needed

Using feedback, MDE's agency team added strategies:

- Expand school-based behavioral health services, including coordination with county-based services and supports and behavioral health providers in communities.
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on available and federal and state funding to implement prevention of suspensions and expulsions and implement alternatives to suspension and expulsion.

MDE is also adding:

- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff to learn about person-centered planning and how it improved engagement with families, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub.
- Develop professional development opportunities for special education teachers to facilitate students sharing their support needs with school staff through one-page profiles, e.g. “I feel best supported when my teachers ____” and “When I need help with my feelings, ____ is what helps me.” Students who need help with writing or need support with communication will be assisted by their school staff in sharing their needs and what helps them.

Feedback theme: Goal target too low

The agency team made changes using feedback. They added new strategies, and is adding two additional strategies that, along with all of the prior submitted strategies, can be the basis for more ambitious goal setting in the future if they prove effective. These added strategies include:

- Expand school-based behavioral health services, including coordination with county-based services and supports and behavioral health providers in communities
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on available and federal and state funding to implement prevention of suspensions and expulsions and implement alternatives to suspension and expulsion
- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff to learn about person-centered planning and how it improved engagement with families, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub
- Develop professional development opportunities for special education teachers to facilitate students sharing their support needs with school staff through one-page profiles, e.g. “I feel best supported when my teachers ____” and “When I need help with my feelings, ____ is what helps me.” Students who need help with writing or need support with communication will be assisted by their school staff in sharing their needs and what helps them

Feedback theme: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

The MDE agency team made changes based off feedback about Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

Background: Federal IDEA special education regulations specifically require IEP teams to consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies, to address behavior for any child with a disability whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others (see 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.320(a)(4), 300.324(a)(2)(i) and (b)(2)). For further discussion

on positive behavioral interventions and supports, see OSERS, [Dear Colleague Letter: Ensuring Equity and Providing Behavioral Supports to Students with Disabilities](#) (Aug. 1, 2016), ([Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 2016](#)).

In addition to the strategies that were added with PBIS expansion and that were previously submitted, MDE added strategies to this goal or its related education goals:

- Expand school-based behavioral health services, including coordination with county-based services and supports and behavioral health providers in communities

The agency team is also adding:

- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff to learn about person-centered planning and how it improved engagement with families, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub
- Develop professional development opportunities for special education teachers to facilitate students sharing their support needs with school staff through one-page profiles, e.g. “I feel best supported when my teachers ____” and “When I need help with my feelings, ____ is what helps me.” Students who need help with writing or need support with communication will be assisted by their school staff in sharing their needs and what helps them

The new strategies for education in the most integrated setting are also connected:

- Develop professional development and resources for school principals on effective practices for inclusive education, including cultural competence.
- Develop professional development and resources for teachers on tailoring instruction to meet student needs, e.g. differentiated instruction, co-teaching, cultural competence, and universal design for learning
- Develop professional development and resources for paraprofessionals on supporting students to learn in the most integrated setting, including cultural competence.
- Support schools in using best practices for inclusive education, including cultural competence.
- Develop information and resources for students and school staff about disability and inclusivity, including cultural competence.
 - This includes emphasizing that including and accommodating students with disabilities is everyone's responsibility
- Improve outreach to families from underrepresented and culturally and linguistically diverse communities
 - This includes families who speak languages other than English, Hmong, Somali, and Spanish
- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff and parents and caregivers of students with disabilities to learn about person-centered planning, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub

- Disaggregate special education setting data by race/ethnicity and category of special education eligibility and analyze for opportunities to improve the continuum of alternative placements available for students with disabilities to increase education in more integrated settings
 - Background: Federal IDEA special education regulations specifically require a continuum of alternative placements ([34 C.F.R §§ 300.115 and U.S. Department of Education, 2025](#)).
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on using federal and state funding for engaging with families in culturally-specific community settings.
- Scale up individual mentoring and school/family connection for American Indian and Black students with disabilities through expanding Check & Connect implementation in schools
- Provide training on trauma-informed practices, de-escalation techniques, and culturally responsive classroom management.

In addition, the new strategies added for family engagement are also connected:

- Continue MDE support of the federal and state parent training and technical assistance center and providing parents with information about special education, and assistance, including the *Guide to the IEP for Parents*, as well as materials and guidance available to parents in languages other than English, (e.g. Spanish, Somali, etc.).
- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff to learn about person-centered planning and how it improved engagement with families, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub.
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on available and federal and state funding to implement improved family engagement.
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on using federal and state funding for engaging with families in culturally-specific community settings.
- Scale up individual mentoring and school/family connection for American Indian and Black students with disabilities through expanding Check & Connect implementation in schools.

Feedback theme: Disproportionate discipline

MDE used feedback about discipline to update their strategies.

Background: MDE strategy for PBIS expansion includes family engagement (see [Center on PBIS information](#) and *Aligning and Integrating Family Engagement in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS): Concepts and Strategies for Families and Schools in Key Contexts*, Center on PBIS, 2017) and cultural responsiveness (see [PBIS Cultural Responsiveness Field Guide, Center on PBIS, 2021](#)).

The agency team added strategies:

- Expand school-based behavioral health services, including coordination with county-based services and supports and behavioral health providers in communities.
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on available and federal and state funding to implement prevention of suspensions and expulsions and implement alternatives to suspension and expulsion.

MDE is also adding:

- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff to learn about person-centered planning and how it improved engagement with families, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub
- Develop professional development opportunities for special education teachers to facilitate students sharing their support needs with school staff through one-page profiles, e.g. “I feel best supported when my teachers ____” and “When I need help with my feelings, ____ is what helps me.” Students who need help with writing or need support with communication will be assisted by their school staff in sharing their needs and what helps them

The new strategies for education in the most integrated setting are also connected:

- Develop professional development and resources for school principals on effective practices for inclusive education, including cultural competence.
- Develop professional development and resources for teachers on tailoring instruction to meet student needs, e.g. differentiated instruction, co-teaching, cultural competence, and universal design for learning.
- Develop professional development and resources for paraprofessionals on supporting students to learn in the most integrated setting, including cultural competence.
- Support schools in using best practices for inclusive education, including cultural competence.
- Develop information and resources for students and school staff about disability and inclusivity, including cultural competence.
 - This includes emphasizing that including and accommodating students with disabilities is everyone's responsibility.
- Improve outreach to families from underrepresented and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
 - This includes families who speak languages other than English, Hmong, Somali, and Spanish.
- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff and parents and caregivers of students with disabilities to learn about person-centered planning, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub.
- Disaggregate special education setting data by race/ethnicity and category of special education eligibility and analyze for opportunities to improve the continuum of alternative placements available for students with disabilities to increase education in more integrated settings.

- Background: [Federal IDEA special education regulations specifically require a continuum of alternative placements \(34 C.F.R §§ 300.115 and U.S. Department of Education, 2025\)](#)
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools with guidance on using federal and state funding for engaging with families in culturally-specific community settings.
- Scale up individual mentoring and school/family connection for American Indian and Black students with disabilities through expanding Check & Connect implementation in schools
- Provide training on trauma-informed practices, de-escalation techniques, and culturally responsive classroom management .

In addition, the new strategies added for family engagement are also connected:

- Continue MDE support of the federal and state parent training and technical assistance center and providing parents with information about special education, and assistance, including the *Guide to the IEP for Parents*, as well as materials and guidance available to parents in languages other than English, (e.g. Spanish, Somali, etc.)
- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff to learn about person-centered planning and how it improved engagement with families, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on available and federal and state funding to implement improved family engagement
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on using federal and state funding for engaging with families in culturally-specific community settings
- Scale up individual mentoring and school/family connection for American Indian and Black students with disabilities through expanding Check & Connect implementation in schools

Education Goal 5

Feedback for Education Goal 5: Fewer students with disabilities will experience maltreatment at school.

Feedback theme: Goal target too low and issues with goal measurement

The MDE agency team changed the goal to be zero students with disabilities for any and all years of the plan.

Feedback theme: Focus on underreporting and enforcement

Background: MDE previously submitted strategies to: 1) identify schools with multiple cases of maltreatment of students with disabilities for follow-up, including training and technical assistance; and 2) continue and expand training for school staff, including at the identified schools.

MDE added to the strategy for training, including at identified schools and as part of follow-up:

- Alternatives to restrictive procedures
- Effective conflict and crisis prevention, and deescalation
 - Evidence-based practices for effective student discipline
 - Anti-retaliation policies for staff who make reports

Education Goal 6

Education Goal 6: Fewer students with disabilities will experience restrictive procedures.

Feedback theme: Focus on the root causes and goal target too low

Using feedback, the agency team added strategies. These strategies can be the basis for more ambitious goal setting in the future if they prove effective. These added strategies include:

- Expand school-based behavioral health services, including coordination with county-based services and supports and behavioral health providers in communities
- Provide training on trauma-informed practices, de-escalation techniques, and culturally responsive classroom management
- Proactively support schools that approach high rates of restrictive procedures for students with disabilities
- Develop and deliver educator wellness information to schools and their staff as a strategy to lower restrictive procedure use
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on available and federal and state funding to implement prevention of student crises and implement alternatives to restrictive procedures
- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff to learn about person-centered planning and how it improved engagement with families and caregivers, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub
- Develop professional development opportunities for special education teachers to facilitate students sharing their support needs with school staff through one-page profiles, e.g. “I feel best supported when my teachers ____” and “When I need help with my feelings, ____ is what helps me.” Students who need help with writing or need support with communication will be assisted by their school staff in sharing their needs and what helps them

The new strategies for education in the most integrated setting are also connected to this goal as well:

- Develop professional development and resources for school principals on effective practices for inclusive education, including cultural competence.

- Develop professional development and resources for teachers on tailoring instruction to meet student needs, e.g. differentiated instruction, co-teaching, cultural competence, and universal design for learning.
- Develop professional development and resources for paraprofessionals on supporting students to learn in the most integrated setting, including cultural competence.
- Support schools in using best practices for inclusive education, including cultural competence.
- Develop information and resources for students and school staff about disability and inclusivity, including cultural competence.
 - This includes emphasizing that including and accommodating students with disabilities is everyone's responsibility.
- Improve outreach to families from underrepresented and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
 - This includes families who speak languages other than English, Hmong, Somali, and Spanish.
- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff and parents and caregivers of students with disabilities to learn about person-centered planning, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub.
- Disaggregate special education setting data by race/ethnicity and category of special education eligibility and analyze for opportunities to improve the continuum of alternative placements available for students with disabilities to increase education in more integrated settings
 - Background: [Federal IDEA special education regulations specifically require a continuum of alternative placements \(34 C.F.R §§ 300.115 and U.S. Department of Education, 2025\)](#)
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on using federal and state funding for engaging with families in culturally-specific community settings.
- Scale up individual mentoring and school/family connection for American Indian and Black students with disabilities through expanding Check & Connect implementation in schools.
- Provide training on trauma-informed practices, de-escalation techniques, and culturally responsive classroom management.

In addition, the new strategies added for family engagement are also connected to this goal as well:

- Continue MDE support of the federal and state parent training and technical assistance center and providing parents with information about special education, and assistance, including the *Guide to the IEP for Parents*, as well as materials and guidance available to parents in languages other than English, (e.g. Spanish, Somali, etc.).
- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff to learn about person-centered planning and how it improved engagement with families, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub.
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on available and federal and state funding to implement improved family engagement.

- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on using federal and state funding for engaging with families in culturally-specific community settings.
- Scale up individual mentoring and school/family connection for American Indian and Black students with disabilities through expanding Check & Connect implementation in schools.

General feedback themes for all education goals

These themes apply to the MDE goals and strategies generally.

Feedback theme: Schools need more and better resources to support students.

The agency team added new strategies including:

- Develop resources for parents and caregivers about how assistive technology can be used as part of the IEP process to help students with disabilities be in more integrated settings, including information on where parents and caregivers can go for live real-time assistance
- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff and parents and caregivers of students with disabilities to learn about person-centered planning, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on available and federal and state funding to implement greater inclusion of students with disabilities in more integrated settings of their choice
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on available and federal and state funding to implement improved family engagement
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on using federal and state funding for engaging with families in culturally-specific community settings
- Scale up individual mentoring and school/family connection for American Indian and Black students with disabilities through expanding Check & Connect implementation in schools
- Expand school-based behavioral health services, including coordination with county-based services and supports and behavioral health providers in communities
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on available and federal and state funding to implement prevention of suspensions and expulsions and implement alternatives to suspension and expulsion
- Develop information for school districts and charter schools on effective practices for preventing, and using alternatives to, restrictive procedures
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on available and federal and state funding to implement prevention of student crises and implement alternatives to restrictive procedures
- Continue MDE support of the federal and state parent training and technical assistance center and providing parents with information about special education and assistance

Feedback theme: Goals are not ambitious enough.

MDE changed the goal for student maltreatment to 0% (i.e. zero students with disabilities confirmed as having experienced maltreatment) each year.

The agency team added strategies that, along with all of the prior submitted strategies, can be the basis for more ambitious goal setting in the future if they prove effective. These added strategies include:

- Providing guidance to school districts and charter schools on how they can use their federal and state funds to make investments in professional development and implementation of effective practices in each of the Olmstead Plan education goals.
- Develop resources for parents and caregivers about how assistive technology can be used as part of the IEP process to help students with disabilities be in more integrated settings, including information on where parents and caregivers can go for live real-time assistance
- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff and parents and caregivers of students with disabilities to learn about person-centered planning, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub.
- Expand school-based behavioral health services, including coordination with county-based services and supports and behavioral health providers in communities.
- Continue MDE support of the federal and state parent training and technical assistance center and providing parents with information about special education and assistance, including the Guide to the IEP for Parents, as well as materials and guidance available to parents in languages other than English, (e.g. Spanish, Somali, etc.).

Feedback theme: Teachers and school staff need better training about disability.

The MDE agency team added strategies:

- Continue MDE support of the federal and state parent training and technical assistance center and providing parents with information about special education and assistance, including the *Guide to the IEP for Parents*, as well as materials and guidance available to parents in languages other than English, (e.g. Spanish, Somali, etc.)
- Develop information and resources for students and school staff about disability and inclusivity, including cultural competence.
 - This includes emphasizing that including and accommodating students with disabilities is everyone's responsibility
- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff and parents and caregivers of students with disabilities to learn about person-centered planning, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub

- Develop professional development opportunities for special education teachers to facilitate students sharing their support needs with school staff through one-page profiles, e.g. “I feel best supported when my teachers ____” and “When I need help with my feelings, ____ is what helps me.” Students who need help with writing or need support with communication will be assisted by their school staff in sharing their needs and what helps them

Feedback theme: Teachers and school staff need more support and resources

MDE added strategies:

- Support schools in using best practices for inclusive education, including cultural competence.
- Develop information and resources for students and school staff about disability and inclusivity, including cultural competence.
 - This includes emphasizing that including and accommodating students with disabilities is everyone's responsibility.
- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff and parents and caregivers of students with disabilities to learn about person-centered planning, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub.
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on available and federal and state funding to implement greater inclusion of students with disabilities in more integrated settings of their choice.
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on available and federal and state funding to implement improved family engagement.
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on using federal and state funding for engaging with families in culturally-specific community settings.
- Expand school-based behavioral health services, including coordination with county-based services and supports and behavioral health providers in communities.
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on available and federal and state funding to implement prevention of suspensions and expulsions and implement alternatives to suspension and expulsion.
- Develop and deliver educator wellness information to schools and their staff as a strategy to lower restrictive procedure use.
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on available and federal and state funding to implement prevention of student crises and implement alternatives to restrictive procedures.
- Develop professional development opportunities for special education teachers to facilitate students sharing their support needs with school staff through one-page profiles, e.g. “I feel best supported when my teachers ____” and “When I need help with my feelings, ____ is what helps me.” Students who need help with writing or need support with communication will be assisted by their school staff in sharing their needs and what helps them.

Feedback theme: Intersectionality

Community members said the state must address disparities based on other identities held by people with disabilities. These identities can include race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, socioeconomic status, language, and more.

The agency team added “cultural competence” or related terms to some prior submitted strategies:

- Develop professional development and resources for school principals on effective practices for inclusive education, including cultural competence.
- Develop professional development and resources for teachers on tailoring instruction to meet student needs, e.g. differentiated instruction, co-teaching, cultural competence, and universal design for learning
- Develop professional development and resources for paraprofessionals on supporting students to learn in the most integrated setting, including cultural competence.
- Support schools in using best practices for inclusive education, including cultural competence.
- Develop information and resources for students and school staff about disability and inclusivity, including cultural competence.
 - This includes emphasizing that including and accommodating students with disabilities is everyone's responsibility
- Improve outreach to families from underrepresented and culturally and linguistically diverse communities
 - This includes families who speak languages other than English, Hmong, Somali, and Spanish

MDE added strategies:

- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff and parents and caregivers of students with disabilities to learn about person-centered planning, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub.
- Disaggregate special education setting data by race/ethnicity and category of special education eligibility and analyze for opportunities to improve the continuum of alternative placements available for students with disabilities to increase education in more integrated settings
 - Background: Federal IDEA special education regulations specifically require a continuum of alternative placements ([34 C.F.R §§ 300.115 and U.S. Department of Education, 2025](#)).
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on using federal and state funding for engaging with families in culturally-specific community settings.

- Scale up individual mentoring and school/family connection for American Indian and Black students with disabilities through expanding Check & Connect implementation in schools
- Provide training on trauma-informed practices, de-escalation techniques, and culturally responsive classroom management.

Feedback theme: The goals need more focus on accountability and enforcement

The agency team added strategies:

- Disaggregate special education setting data by race/ethnicity and category of special education eligibility and analyze for opportunities to improve the continuum of alternative placements available for students with disabilities to increase education in more integrated settings.
 - Background: Federal IDEA special education regulations specifically require a continuum of alternative placements ([34 C.F.R §§ 300.115 and U.S. Department of Education, 2025](#)).
- Use family engagement survey results to inform local and statewide school improvement planning.
- Proactively support schools that approach high rates of restrictive procedures for students with disabilities.

Feedback theme: The plan should address the diversity of student needs

The MDE agency team added strategies:

- Develop professional development and resources for teachers on tailoring instruction to meet student needs, e.g. differentiated instruction, co-teaching, cultural competence, and universal design for learning.
- Develop resources for parents and caregivers about how assistive technology can be used as part of the IEP process to help students with disabilities be in more integrated settings, including information on where parents and caregivers can go for live real-time assistance.
- Develop professional development opportunities for school staff and parents and caregivers of students with disabilities to learn about person-centered planning, including Charting the LifeCourse at Disability Hub.
- Provide guidance to school districts and charter schools on using federal and state funding for engaging with families in culturally-specific community settings.
- Expand school-based behavioral health services, including coordination with county-based services and supports and behavioral health providers in communities.
- Develop professional development opportunities for special education teachers to facilitate students sharing their support needs with school staff through one-page profiles, e.g. “I feel best supported when my teachers ____” and “When I need help with my feelings, ____ is what

helps me.” Students who need help with writing or need support with communication will be assisted by their school staff in sharing their needs and what helps them.