

**Becker Public Schools
Comprehensive Diversity Plan
July 2010 - June 2012**

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Community Overview

Becker is located 45 miles northwest of downtown Minneapolis and 20 miles southeast of St. Cloud. The school district community population is over 11,000 residents. The school enrollment is approximately 2800 students grades PK - 12 which is served in four buildings; two elementary schools, a middle school and a high school.

Approximately 96% of the student population is Caucasian, 2% is Native American, 1% is Asian and 1% is Hispanic. Cultural diversity in the district is enhanced by a relatively large population of first or second generation Russian immigrants, many of whom make up a large part of the district's ELL population. Unfortunately the teaching staff lacks diversity so the district's minority students have very little exposure to teachers of their heritage and culture. Teachers likewise have limited opportunities to interact and share ideas with colleagues from racially and culturally different backgrounds. The economically disadvantaged population of the district has recently increased to over 20%, the Special Education population is 13% and AYP attendance rate is 96% while the graduation rate is 99%.

Multi-District Collaborative

The Becker District is involved in the multi-district collaborative that includes the racially isolated district of St. Cloud and the adjoining districts of Sauk Rapids, Holdingford, Foley and potentially Annandale and Kimball. The Becker District will be guided by the current goals of the Collaborative and will be involved in the continuous improvement and updating of the goals moving forward. The current goals include:

Goal 1. Create, support, and encourage a welcoming environment that is respectful, integrated, and inviting for all.

Goal 2. Increase cultural competency of students, staff, and community in order to be full partners in the global marketplace.

Goal 3. Increase student knowledge, skills, and abilities to fully participate in the district, community, and global society - in the areas of academic, access, and student development.

Becker Public Schools Comprehensive Diversity Plan

District 726 has built a Comprehensive Diversity Plan that aligns with, and promotes, the mission, values and goals of the district.

Becker Public Schools Mission Statement

"While the teaching of the basic skills of communication and computation is a primary function of the school, we are also concerned with each student's personal and social development. We believe that as a fundamental outcome of education each person should possess the skills and understanding to be a purposeful and productive citizen."

Becker Public Schools Core Values

- Responsibility
- Excellence
- Safety
- Partnership
- Education
- Communication
- Trust

Becker Public School Goals

- The Becker Board of Education expects academic rigor K-12 with a focus on Core Curriculum.
- Build districtwide literacy capacity through collaborative coaching and implementation of strategies shared and implemented at each building site.
- Implement the RTI process districtwide to support the academic achievement of all students.
- Allocate time for staff to understand SMART goals and to impact formative assessment.
- Teach staff to use data to make educational decisions.
- Promote effective communications districtwide to deepen best practices related to walkthroughs, observations, peer mentoring and content coaching.

In summary the Comprehensive Diversity Plan of Becker Public Schools uses the following as a foundation for the development of its diversity plan goals.

- Mirrors the Multi-District Collaborative goals.
- Builds on the District's Mission and Core Values.
- Coincides with the District's goals.
- Provides culturally diverse opportunities to both students and staff.

Becker Public Schools Comprehensive Diversity Plan Goals

Goal #1: Develop partnerships that will promote greater cultural awareness and understanding which will allow all students to function effectively in a culturally and ethnically diverse world.

Goal #2: Promote the use of data to inform teaching and learning that will increase student achievement and advance district goals and objectives.

Goal #3: Enhance student awareness of and appreciation for cultural diversity by providing students opportunities to learn about and interact with diverse cultures through art and language.

Goal #4: Use technology to promote cultural interaction with partnered schools and to engage students in activities that provide them an opportunity to interact with racially and culturally diverse populations.

Goal #5: Develop intercultural competence in staff through cross-district partnership in which best practices are shared and staff development targeted to the goals of the district's Comprehensive Diversity Plan.

Goals and Outcomes

Goal #1: Develop partnerships that will promote greater cultural awareness and understanding which will allow all students to function effectively in a culturally and ethnically diverse world.

Outcomes:

1. Students will participate in cross-cultural experiences that will allow them to develop interpersonal and cross-cultural relationships.
2. Students and Staff will engage in activities that promote and create a welcoming environment for all.
3. Students will learn to communicate effectively and respectfully across race, ethnicity and culture.
4. Students will gain an understanding and knowledge of diverse cultures and will gain an appreciation of differences and

- similarities that exist between and among people throughout the world.
5. Staff will bring visitors of various ethnic backgrounds into the schools to interact with students.

Activities:

1. Partnered Classrooms: Through the use of technology classes K-12 will develop relationships with classrooms around the area, state, country and world.
2. Book Club: Intermediate classrooms grades 3-5 will engage with partnered classrooms within the Multi-District Collaborative to choose read and discuss a work of literature.
3. Cultures Acknowledged and Celebrated: Each quarter a different culture will be acknowledged and celebrated within the district. Recognition of the culture may include banners and signage, assemblies, curricular activities and art displays.
4. Summer Retreat: Working in conjunction with the racially isolated district of St. Cloud and the adjoining districts of Annandale, Kimball, Foley, and Sauk Rapids a one week summer retreat will be conducted for disadvantaged children with emphasis on literary and computational skills.

Goal #2: Promote the use of data to inform teaching and learning that will increase student achievement and advance district goals and objectives.

Outcomes:

1. Each building in the district will have a data coach.
2. Each data coach will be directed and supervised by the district data specialist who will manage the district data software and insure staff competency in the use of the software.
3. Each teacher will be responsible to collect, maintain and use data to monitor and adjust the education experience of their students.
4. Individual student achievement will increase as teachers are instructed and coached to use data to inform their teaching.

Activities:

1. The district shall purchase data management software for use by all staff. The selected software must track and merge student data from multiple K-12 assessment tools.
2. Staff will be in-serviced in the use of the purchased software by the data specialist and the data coaches.

3. The district will schedule staff development time for the purposes of training and in-service in data management and lesson design.
4. Data coaches will support and promote data driven instruction through staff development opportunities as well as through classroom instruction.

Goal #3: Enhance student awareness of and appreciation for cultural diversity by providing students opportunities to learn about and interact with diverse cultures through art and language.

Outcomes:

1. Staff will lead students in the examination of various traits of different cultures through visual arts education in the primary, intermediate and middle school buildings.
2. Increase middle school students' awareness and understanding of the Hispanic culture through the focused study of the Spanish language and culture.
3. Embed the study of ethnic diversity within the curriculum at the middle school and high school.
4. Staff will incorporate best practices that include culturally diverse cooperative learning teams.

Activities:

1. Arts Education: Elementary students will be exposed to culturally based art education for 45 minutes per week.
2. Staff will use comparisons in describing and analyzing traditions, events and institutions to help students know and appreciate cultural differences.
3. Each quarter elementary students will focus on a specific culture. They will study the identified culture through an inter-disciplinary approach that culminates in an artistic project displayed for the public.
4. Middle school students will be exposed to a world language (Spanish) which will be offered as a required course for all eighth grade students.
5. Students will be exposed to primary and secondary sources which will improve their knowledge and appreciation of ethnic groups and cultural diversity in American history, the arts and contemporary society.

Goal #4: Use technology to promote cultural interaction with partnered schools and to engage students in activities that provide them an opportunity to interact with racially and culturally diverse populations.

Outcomes:

1. Staff will use technology to work collaboratively in small cross-district learning teams on cooperative and project based learning related to standards based curriculum.
2. Staff will use technology to provide opportunities for students to have positive interpersonal relations with individuals of various ethnic groups.
3. Staff will use technology to provide innovative opportunities for intercultural relationship building.
4. Provide staff with continued training in the use of technology as a way to deliver a standards based curriculum that is ethnically diverse and sensitive.

Activities:

1. Create partnered learning opportunities with students from culturally diverse districts.
2. Develop partnerships via technology with classrooms around the globe.
3. Utilize technology (blogs, podcasts, worldwide web access, video-technology, Skype video conferencing, and digital storytelling) to interact with various cultures around the world.
4. Provide in-service time to work with staff on embedding the afore-mentioned technology uses into the classroom.

Goal #5: Promote intercultural understanding in staff through cross-district partnerships in which best practices are shared and staff development aligned with the goals of the district's Comprehensive Diversity Plan.

Objectives:

1. District staff development will focus on the technological skills needed to insure that the integration plan components, which require technology, will be delivered implemented.
2. The District staff development plan will insure that staff has training in the many uses of technology that can enhance student opportunities for an ethnically diverse education.
3. The District staff development plan will provide opportunities for staff involvement in inter-district partnerships.
4. The District Staff Development plan will include opportunities for staff to develop the skills needed to interpret and use data to improve student achievement.

Activities

1. The District will conduct a survey to assess staff awareness of cultural diversity and program delivery.
2. The opening workshop day for school year 2010-11 will be a kick off for the district's Comprehensive Diversity Plan.
3. Mini-sessions will be planned to address the various components of the Comprehensive Diversity Plan and will be targeted at age appropriate activities.
4. Technology integration specialists will train staff in the use of technology that will enable all staff to bring the world into their classrooms.
5. Data coaches will conduct large group training sessions and provide in classroom coaching.

Summary

Becker students will benefit from the many opportunities that this proposed Comprehensive Diversity Plan will provide. The chance to gain cultural knowledge and understanding will enhance their global awareness and prepare them to be collaborative members of our ethnically diverse community, state, nation and world. The opportunity to interact with children of different backgrounds will enrich their educational experience. Furthermore, this program and resultant funding will provide us with additional opportunities to impact our AYP status, and to improve the achievement levels of students of all abilities but particularly our students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The proposed plan will help our staff better use data to inform their instructional practices and to diversify their teaching as well. Becker Public Schools are committed to continuous improvement and to insure that all students have a successful educational experience.