

**Executive Director of Student Services**  
**Board Update**  
**October 2024**

**Collaboration:** Working together to achieve more collectively.

- Ukeru at CASE: The CASE program at AEC is piloting the Ukeru approach this fall. Ukeru is a non-restrictive approach to student crisis prevention and intervention that stresses staff using a trauma-informed mindset and relying on tools such as verbal and non-verbal de-escalation techniques, strategic body positioning, and the use of blocking pads and shields to keep everyone safe. The staff at CASE have successfully implemented multiple aspects of Ukeru and have already started to shift to using body positioning and blocking in place of physical holding and seclusion for many of their students. They are determined to give Ukeru their all and Kate Hulse would like to recognize each and every one of them for their integrity, communication, collaboration, innovation, and empathy. They are truly living our ISD 917 core values and unlocking new possibilities for how we can better support the students we serve!

**Empathy:** Considering and respecting the perspective and needs of member districts, students, families and staff.

- Waitlist update: Recently I had the opportunity to meet with both member district directors of special education and superintendents. I shared a [short presentation](#) with both groups on the status of our waitlist as well as intakes since July 1, 2024. A summary of intakes for the 2024-2025 school year is below:

*Setting IV*

- AEC - IDEA/SUN - 6 Intakes ( 4 more scheduled)
- SUN (CEC & Cedar) - 4 Intakes ( 1 more scheduled)
- LEC - TEA/ECSE-TEA - 8 Intakes (3 more scheduled)

*Setting III*

- TESA - DCTC/BTC - 4 Intakes - (1 More scheduled)
- 1 on hold due to student residence - (student referred in 23-24 SY)

**Innovation:** Ongoing improvement of programs and services.

- MDE program monitoring: This year Intermediate School District 917 is scheduled to undergo program monitoring for special education with the Minnesota department of education. We have a new program monitor this year and will be meeting with them this fall to review the process and timelines. If you are interested in learning more about program monitoring, you can review [this presentation](#).

**Stewardship:** Managing financial and human resources carefully and responsibly.

- **Perform:** This school year, the department of human resources has assumed management responsibilities for Perform, the system we use to manage evaluations for our staff. The HR team has been working closely with the department of teaching and learning and specifically, Dr. Peterson, to learn about the system and processes in place to ensure it runs efficiently. We believe this transfer of management responsibility will streamline the tracking of evaluations among the many employee groups.

**Communication:** Multi-dimensional, transparent conversation focused on sharing information and creating a positive learning and working environment.

- **Smores:** We continue monthly communications districtwide and to our member districts. You can find our September District Update [here](#).

**Integrity:** Aligning our actions with our values and beliefs.

- **READ Act-OL&LA Training:** Many licensed staff members are working through the required READ Act training, OL&LA. Here is a breakdown shared with staff as a helpful tool for staying on track to complete the training:
  - Module 1 – August 26, 2024 – September 10, 2024
  - Module 2 – September 11, 2024 – September 27, 2024
  - Module 3 – September 30, 2024 – October 15, 2024  
Live Session 1: October 16
  - Module 4 – October 17, 2024 – November 12, 2024
  - Module 5 – November 13, 2024 – December 19, 2024
  - Module 6 – December 20, 2024 – January 24, 2025  
Live Session 2: January 27, 2025
  - Module 7 – January 28, 2025 – February 17, 2025
  - Module 8 – February 18, 2025 – March 20, 2025
  - Module 9 – March 21, 2025 – April 10, 2025  
Live Session 3: April 11, 2025

Staff have time built into their schedule each week in place of PLCs. For those staff that are not completing READ Act training this year, they will continue to participate in PLCs during the time others are completing their training.

**Personalization:** Building on the strengths and addressing the unique needs of individual students.

- **CEC:** Amy Swaney, principal at Concord Education Center, has been sharing many photos documenting the start of the school year. CEC is off to a great start!



**Equity:** Intentionally providing opportunities while removing barriers at all levels of the organization.

- Due process: This year we have moved forward with three projects related to due process with the goal of streamlining and simplifying systems. Dr. Peterson worked with a team of staff over the last year to create a [Google site](#) for our due process manual. Maintaining our procedures and guidance this way eliminates duplication as well as use of outdated materials. Additionally, Dr. Peterson convened a committee over the last year to move the district to a mostly paperless record keeping system for our due process files. We are now using SpEd Forms as the official record, with uniform directions for both special education and cumulative records that must be kept in paper format. Finally, we are moving forward with electronic signatures in SpEd Forms with our families to streamline the process of obtaining signatures for various steps in the evaluation and IEP processes.

**Diversity:** Appreciating and valuing everyone's unique selves.

- Student updates from DCALS: Chris Devine has provided some updates from our 2023-2024 students based on exit interviews and connections with students at the beginning of this school year:

*DCALS-Main*

- 24% of all graduates from main went on to training programs, 2 year or 4 year college
  - Of that 24%, 16% are attending DCTC
    - We educated and supported the students on the North Star Promise and FAFSA, we are not privy to the information about their utilization of these benefits
- EMC/PSEO
  - 6 students took college classes in the 23/24 school year (2 dropped mid semester, 4 were successful)
    - 2 students attended full time for the entire year

- 1 graduated from Hennepin Tech with an Associates degree in HVAC in May
- 1 attended DCTC in the Civil Engineering program and is completing his Associates degree this year
- The other students took general classes
- 3 students are attending DCTC in the 24/25 school year
  - 1 full time in Autobody
  - 1 began with generals and plans on full time PSEO next year in Graphic Arts
  - 1 is taking generals

*DCALS-North*

- 25% of students of graduates had transcripts sent to two year colleges in the metro.
- 3 students are in training programs including JobCrops, Barber School, and a manager trainee program (Menards).
- 2 students start their own roofing business