

Northwest Suburban Integration Project

**4-Year Plan
2008-2012**

**Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose School District
is a member of the
Northwest Desegregation Project**

Independent School District #877

**Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools
*Making a Difference!***



May 2008

Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Demographics

The 157 square mile area that makes up District 877 includes Buffalo, Hanover, Montrose and the surrounding townships. The district serves all or part of Buffalo, Hanover, Montrose and the surrounding townships. Our population mirrors national demographic trends in changing household composition (more two-person working households, more single parents). While diversity is increasing in the school district, we are still mainly a European American community.

With a district population of over 25,000 residents, over 5,600 students attend six elementary schools (grades K-5), a middle school (grades 6-8), a high school (grades 9-12) and an alternative high school (grades 10-12). BHM Schools employs over 700 licensed and support staff.

Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools offer a comprehensive elementary program that includes specialists in technology, music and physical education, along with programming for gifted and talent youth. Most classrooms are self-contained with multi-age grouping at select schools. To meet the needs and expectations of our sixth, seventh, and eighth graders, the middle school is organized into small groups for more personalized learning. The high school program offers a variety of required and elective courses. Foreign language, advance placement courses, college in the schools classes, Jobs for Minnesota Graduates (JMNG), and school-to-work internships are part of the course offerings at the high school. Students are offered block scheduling with a choice of more than 126 courses.

Phoenix Learning Center is available to sophomores, juniors and seniors. PLC allows students the extra flexibility they need to successfully work towards graduation while providing the necessary structure to prepare them for a future beyond the classroom.

The school district also has a highly respected pre-K-12 special education program.

Integration Background

NWSISD Background

The Northwest Suburban Integration School District #6078 (NWSISD) was created in 2001, in response to the State of Minnesota's Desegregation Rule. Specifically, NWSISD was established based on the identification of the Brooklyn Center and ISD 279 - Osseo Area Schools as racially isolated entities as defined by the Desegregation Rule.

NWSISD includes the member districts of Anoka-Hennepin, Brooklyn Center, Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose, Elk River, Fridley, ISD 279 - Osseo Area Schools, and Rockford. Geographically, it encompasses four counties and thirty-five municipalities. NWSISD features distinct urban, suburban and rural settings. The seven member districts represent approximately 85,000 students enrolled in 97 schools.

NWSISD provides strategies to promote student participation in educational programs that are multicultural, socially diverse, and racially integrated. NWSISD has implemented several programs and projects intended to assure the academic success and educational needs of member districts' students in an evolving, desegregated school setting. Additionally, as the demographics of the communities continue to change, the district will consistently implement programs to address learner needs. Without doubt, there is significant room for growth and innovation, due to the recent evolution of the district and its unique institutional character. However, there is also clear evidence of its success in program implementation and extensive outreach to students and families who bring racial, cultural, ethnic and socioeconomic diversity to the member schools.

BHM Schools Background

The State of Minnesota took a lead in planning for statewide integration on a voluntary basis. The intent of the July 1999 Minnesota Desegregation Rule is to provide strategies leading to racial balance that offers choices to all students and their families. State funds became available January 2001. The State identified Osseo School District as a racially isolated district because its enrollment of protected students exceeded the enrollment of protected students of any adjoining district by more than 20 percentage points. Protected students are those who identify as African/Black Americans, Asian/Pacific Americans, Latino Americans and American Indian or multicultural students having origins in more than one of the categories plus Caucasian.

On August 12, 2001, Lyonel Norris, Director of the Office of Equity, sent written notification to Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools. It stated, ***"We are writing to formally advise you that your district adjoins a racially isolated district, which is***

Osseo School District #279. As a consequence, your district must undertake cross-district integration planning with the Osseo School District to increase the opportunities for interracial contact for schools.” The following is an excerpt from the Board of Education’s official meeting minutes dated September 1, 2001: **The Board of Education of ISD 877, hereby, resolves to become a part of a Multi-District Collaborative Council to plan and actively participate in the Council’s work to identify and address integration issues. Motion passed 6-0.**

The Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose School District, which adjoins Osseo School District, was required to develop an inter-district integration plan in collaboration with the neighboring districts of Rockford and Elk River. Since Osseo was already participating in inter-district integration collaboration with Fridley School District, Anoka-Hennepin School District and Brooklyn Center School District, the new schools joined the Northwest Suburban Integration School District (NWSISD).

Mission Statement & Beliefs

NWSISD Vision & Mission

Vision: Northwest Suburban Integration School District envisions a global community learning and growing together.

Mission: Provide students, parents and staff educational opportunities that are multicultural, diverse and promote racial integration.

BHM Schools Mission

Mission Statement

Making a difference by preparing all students for a successful future in a changing world.

Core Values

- All students can learn, though at different rates and in different ways.
- We are in the business of lifelong learning. All of our actions must be measured by our success in achieving this goal.
- Maximizing learning requires innovation, risk-taking, and the ability to change.
- All staff has a critical role in enhancing student development.
- Honesty, integrity, fairness, and ethics in all aspects of the district.
- Continuous improvement is essential.
- Intolerance for anything short of the very best.

Key Results

- All students demonstrating academic growth and success
- Efficient and effective operations
- A safe, comfortable environment for everyone in our schools.
- Increase student learning and expand instructional strategies by implementing technology
- Provide more instructional options at the elementary and middle school level

Integration Goals

NWSISD Goals & Programs

Goal 1: Create a culturally inclusive learning environment.

- Global Arts Village
- Intercultural Professional Development Program
- Magnet Schools Program
- Multicultural Resource Center

Goal 2: Create inter-district interactions among students, staff and parents that improve intercultural competency and increase student achievement.

- Advancement via Individual Determination Program (AVID)
- Global Arts Village
- Family and Community Empowerment
- Intercultural Professional Development Program
- Jobs for Minnesota's Graduates
- Magnet Schools Program
- Multicultural Resource Center

Goal 3: NWSISD and member districts actively recruit candidates from racially diverse backgrounds for member districts.

- Future Educator's Club
- Intercultural Professional Development Program

BHM Schools Goal & Programs

Goal 1: Create a culturally inclusive learning environment.

- Buffalo High School Arts Magnet Program

Program Description: BHS Art Magnet Program

NWSISD provides a K-12 arts magnet strand for students in the 7 participating school districts of NWSISD. Students start their arts program at Rockford Elementary School in Rockford School District. To continue in the arts for middle school, they attend Fred Moore Elementary School in Anoka-Hennepin School District. And, they complete their high school art studies at Buffalo High School.

Imagine

Imagine a high school where a student can pursue their artistic passion, a place where they can approach learning from an artist's perspective. This place is the BHS Arts Magnet Program, within Buffalo High School.

Challenge

Students will complete a rigorous, standards-based curriculum that challenges them both intellectually as well as artistically and will prepare them for whatever post secondary future they choose. Each day they will engage in activities that support and encourage their development as an artist and push them to become the best they can be. Students can choose from four different arts majors—visual, performing, literary and media/technology. All incoming students will take an arts foundation course that will prepare them for an intensive study in the art major of their choice. Students will also be exposed to an academically focused program that will provide a solid education in an arts infused core curriculum (English/social studies and math/science). The magnet program will provide a challenging artistic environment that will prepare students for success in college, in the arts or in any discipline.

Create

A creative, inquiry based learning environment includes partnerships and resources from the surrounding community. The BHS Arts Magnet Program will provide students with the opportunity to interact with professional, working artists and arts organizations to enrich and enlarge their learning.

Excellence

The arts departments at BHS are known for their excellence. The music department is recognized as one of the best in the nation and was a major factor in the district being named one of the Best 100 Communities for Music Education in America. The school's theatre department is known for their outstanding quality; one-act play productions regularly win starred ratings at state competitions. Student artwork is regularly published in state and national journals, wins national awards and is exhibited in a variety of locations.

Core Academics

The Arts Magnet program at Buffalo High School takes a unique approach to teaching the core education programs. All students take the arts infused foundations course, which prepares them to select an art major. The core classes of English and social studies, as well as math and science, are integrated. The classes also infuse the arts into many of their assignments, giving students a more holistic appreciation for how the many disciplines interact.

Performing Arts

Band, choir, and orchestra are enjoyable classes on many students' agenda, and the one-act play program of BHS is an activity that regularly receives high state-wide ratings. These activities are now augmented by dance classes, musical theatre, and music listening. As a part of the Arts Magnet program, the performing arts are a group of activities that play a key role in our students' futures.

Visual Arts

The visual arts program is designed to meet the needs of students who are preparing for the competitive world of art schools and other art related fields. Students should demonstrate an intense interest in creating art and openness and enthusiasm for learning about art and artists. This intensive program stresses drawing and a variety of two and three dimensional activities. In addition, students gain an understanding of current and historic artworks and ideas through special classes, contacts with artists, and museum and gallery visits.

Literary Arts

The mission of creative writing is to cultivate students as creators, consumers and publishers of literature. This program develops creative writing in all writing modes including fiction and non-fiction. The focus is on the individual student's growth as a writer. Students experience a variety of writing forms—narrative, poetry, play writing, print and television journalism, and essay. Students master their skills through print publications, the student newspaper, literary magazine and yearbook, and media productions.

Media/Technology

The focus of the media technology arts program is on interactive arts. This major offers students a unique opportunity to integrate their learning in courses from several departments. Students begin with a firm

foundation in the visual arts; developing strong drawing skills and an understanding of the principals of design. Courses in animation, illustration, advertising, photography, interactive media, video and communication arts all enable students to gain experience in various media formats. Students at all levels master their skills through projects that will incorporate practical, real world applications.

Goal 2: Increase staff development and training opportunities regarding multicultural/diversity awareness that increases student achievement for the school administration, staff and student body.

Description: This includes evaluating curriculum for cultural bias and increasing learning opportunities for students by providing: a culturally competent curriculum and learning environment, information on issues and opportunities to discuss and explore diversity, integration and inclusion. Administrators, teachers and support staff and students will participate in ongoing-training and activities to enhance their knowledge and appreciate for diversity as an integral part of the education system.

Goal 3: Create inter-district interactions among students, staff and parents that improve intercultural competency and increase student achievement.

- District Cultural Liaisons

Description:

- Provide assistance to new families and students as they enroll in school, complete applications for services, new student orientation and other activities that help students and parent in the school community.
- Assist in conflict resolution or misunderstandings between students, parents, staff who are from diverse cultural, ethnic and economic backgrounds.
- Develop relationships between school and community resources.
- Act as an advocate for students of color and/or diverse backgrounds.

Buffalo Arts Magnet School Team 2009-10

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