Robin Davidson, Kathy Doyle, Jim Doyle, Bob Feyen, Diane Fitzgerald, Karen Perry, Geri Saari, Anne Skwira-Brown, Kevin Skwira-Brown, Marilee Tusken, Tom Tusken, Jennifer Wellnitz with contributions from countless others

### Verbal message shared with School Board 4-18-17

We are here representing the Community-Based School Equity initiative, a group of parents, school staff and community members concerned about equity in education. We come before you tonight with specific recommendations as you consider the budget for next year. Some may require simply making existing programs more effective; others would require expenditures that may seem daunting.

We held public meetings, gathered community input in person and online, surveyed Denfeld staff, and met with District administrators. These efforts point to specific inequities within our District and recommendations that will begin to address some of the inequity. Equity means applying resources relative to the need. On the other hand, equality means treating everyone as if they are the same. Equality, applied where disparities exist, only deepens the disparities.

We have identified 11 areas of inequity or need at the high school level. Some are no surprise – and have been discussed quite a bit in the past. Many apply to both East and Denfeld, such as those impacting students from lower income families. Others impact only Denfeld, based on the size and demographics of that school community.

We have provided you with the entire list. For now, as you consider the budget for next year, we ask that you include resources to address the following 4 priority issues.

- 1. Advanced academic opportunities at the high school level are determined by zip code, not interest or ability.
  - We recommend that a second section of each advanced course be offered at Denfeld; and allow
    East student to attend via telepresence. Offer one less face to face section at East, resulting in
    no net increase in the number of sections.
- 2. Suspension rates and Graduation rates for Students of Color are disproportionate
  - Enhance parent-teacher communication through a common communication tool.
- 3. Compensatory Education Funding intended to close the achievement gap is being used instead to meet general education objectives.
  - Direct less of the available Compensatory Education dollars to overall enrollment-based-distribution; instead, direct more to meet the needs of underprepared students in all schools.
     This will result in a shift of compensatory education funding to schools with greater numbers of underprepared students.
- 4. Transportation policy fails to recognize and respond to the social and economic variability across the District. Consequently it contributes to school absence and inequity of opportunity.
  - Provide seasonal bus service within the 2 mile radius using existing bus capacity or additional routes.
  - Time bus service to high school for zero hour arrival of all bused students. If zero-hour offerings are limited to those who can get themselves to school, that's an equity issue.

We recognize there are competing priorities for limited school funds. In Duluth we have a school funding issue: all of our schools need more money. We also have glaring inequities. It is not enough to say we know it exists. We ask you to lead us into a more equitable future with your concrete actions tonight and beyond. Thank you.

### **Equity Report**

The Community-Based school Equity Initiative began from a frustration that the opportunities for advanced classes at Denfeld were a fraction of what they were at East. The scope of our concern and commitment goes well beyond that.

### How we've come to our perspective

We have gathered the public on two occasions, collected input in person and online, surveyed Denfeld staff – both classroom teachers and intervention staff, and met with District administrators. We are naming real issues and proposing viable and concrete solutions, many that can be implemented immediately.

### The situation as it exists

The following unacceptable realities demand action by the Duluth ISD 709 administration and School Board.

- Advanced academic opportunities at the high school level are determined by zip code and not interest or ability.
- Students of Color and lower income students' graduation rates are significantly lower than their white and/or wealthier peers.
- The current transportation policy fails to recognize and respond to the social and economic variability across the District, contributing to school absences and inequity of opportunity.
- Compensatory Education Funding intended to close the achievement gap is being used instead to meet general education objectives.
- Promising interventions such as WIN, Professional Learning Communities, intervention classes, and SST are inadequately implemented due to a lack of training or support.
- Suspension and referral rates disproportionately impact students of Color.
- The math and reading Intervention labs are significantly underutilized and lack a standard curriculum.
- Staffing and curriculum reflect a racial and cultural bias.
- Staff lack the time it takes to implement professional development and collaborative efforts.
- Denfeld is seen as a less attractive option compared to other District/area high schools.
- District boundaries, program placement, and transfer policies contribute to high schools that are disproportionate in size and key demographics.

### Recommendations

For each of the following issues, we are stating a goal – and, more importantly, we are proposing concrete, realistic actions that can be taken immediately and in the long term to help achieve that goal.

### Advanced academic opportunities at high school level are determined by zip code, not interest or ability.

Make AP/CITS courses available to all.		Measurable outcome No qualified student denied enrollment
Immediate actions	Offer a second section at Denfeld of each CITS/AP course and allow East student to attend via telepresence. Offer one less face to face section at East resulting in no net increase in the number of sections. The only additional costs will be for the telepresence equipment. East students in this section can attend without in-room staff supervision. (Rationale: Denfeld staff is being directed to whittle down the list of students who will be allowed to register for advanced classes to avoid needing a second section.)	Increased enrollment in advanced courses.
Longer term actions	Reconfigure the school day to allow greater ability to move between high schools for courses.  Balance the size and makeup of the two schools by redrawing boundaries.  Explore an academy model at Denfeld to better serve all students including those who are college bound by offering a STEM program, fine art program etc.	Increased brand and attractiveness to attend Denfeld.  More even distribution of student populations.

Students of Color and lower income students' graduation rates are significantly lower than their white and/or wealthier peers.

Bolster service	ces to students whose graduation rates and MCA scores lag	Measurable outcome
their peers.		Reduce achievement & graduation gaps
Immediate actions	Increase the number of personnel serving in effective programs to increase the impact (i.e., integration specialists).	
	Remedy or eliminate programs that do not have the training, support or curriculum they need to be effective like math/reading intervention labs.	
	Direct additional Compensatory Education dollars to achievement gap services/programs.	r
Provide proper training, support and accountability for PLCs so they can achieve success as supported by the research. If done well, this initiative will support all students.		
	Bring credit recovery on site to the high schools to eliminate the inequity of a lack of transportation to and from ALC.	
	Reimagine WIN to provide more structure and accountability for the students who most need it and/or are least engaged, so they get the interventions they need. Allow WIN to become advisory for 1 day/week where teachers can check their student's' grades, attendance and behavior and communicate more with parents/guardians. If done well, this initiative will support all students.	
	Provide required resources to fully implement the BARR (Building Assets, Reducing Risks) research based program starting in the Fall of 2017 for all 9th graders at Denfeld High School which features grade level meetings. Look for ways to expand this to grades 10-12. This initiative will support all students if it is high functioning.	
Longer term actions	Build sufficient general fund revenue to achieve desired class sizes without using any Comp Ed dollars for that goal.	

Transportation policy that fails to recognize and respond to the social and economic variability across the District contributes to school absence and inequity of opportunity.

		Measurable outcome
Amend transportation policy to support equity in academic access.		Improved attendance/reduction in absences.
		Greater and more equitable utilization of zero hour.
Immediate actions	Provide seasonal bus service within 2 mile radius - using existing bus capacity or additional routes. Provide City bus passes to students on limited income within 2 mile radius. (Rationale: Students attending school who live within 2 miles are required to walk or if income and circumstances permit, drive or private pay the city bus to get to school.)	Improved attendance/reduction in absences.  Greater and more equitable utilization of zero hour.
	Time bus service to High school for zero hour arrival of all bused students. (Rationale: Zerohour offerings are only available to those who can get themselves to school. That's an equity issue.)	
Longer term actions	Explore the addition of an activities bus for students who stay after school to take advantage of academic support or for those who are participating in enrichment activities. This could be modeled after the activities buses provided at Lincoln Park Middle School.	Increased enrollments at Denfeld as course offerings are more robust.

### Compensatory Education Funding intended to close the achievement gap is being used instead to meet general education objectives.

		Measurable outcome
Direct Comp gap.	ensatory Education funding to close the achievement	Compensatory education money will be tracked to programs addressing the achievement gap
Immediate actions	Direct less of the available Compensatory Education dollars to overall enrollment based distribution; instead direct more to meet the needs of underprepared students in all schools. This will result in a shift of compensatory education funding to schools with greater numbers of underprepared	Reduction of the achievement gap.
Longer term actions	First, establish which existing measures best quantify "underprepared" and "lack of adequate progress". Then, determine the need at each building and the cost of delivering the services shown to address that need. Finally, disperse Compensatory Education funds to buildings accordingly.  Utilize a financial model that starts with the individual schools proposing the budgets they believe will best serve the needs of all students in their building rather than the other way around (the administration proposes the initial budgets). This would also help identify needs across the entire district and provide justifications for the following action as well.	Number and percent of 9th grade students entering high school at proficiency level in math and reading.
	Build a public case for not taking these targeted dollars and diverting them to general school funding. Participate in public pressure to increase school funding at the state level. Request a local levy to address general school funding shortfalls.	

Promising interventions such as WIN, Professional Learning Communities, intervention classes, and SST are inadequately implemented due to a lack of training or support.

		Measurable outcome
Build more tii	me in the day for professional development.	\$1.00 miles
Immediate actions	Provide more training so PLC's will function how they are intended. Need to have staff/teacher buy in that if done correctly these interventions will work.	Greater effectiveness of interventions manifest by program goals being met at higher levels.
	Coordinate the connection between high functioning PLCs with high functioning SSTs and reeducate staff on how to work through the PLC process to refer students to SST.	
	WINs with more coordination, enrichment and overall higher expectations especially with attendance due to its credit bearing nature.	
	Expand zero hour offerings at Denfeld. Even without additional FTEs this would open up regular times in the day for staff to engage in the Professional learning community and other cooperative peer professional development activities.	
Longer term actions	Yearly commitment to looking collaboratively at what is and what is not working well and why; then working to remedy or eliminate those that do not justify the expenditure of resources.	Resources utilized efficiently and cooperative relationship among professional stakeholders
	Coordinate all programs better so we know which students are being served and which aren't.	
	Encourage and support collaboration between programs to improve service delivery to students.	
	Ongoing mentorship for new staff coming into the school	

### Suspension and referral rates disproportionately impact Students of Color.

		Measurable outcome
Reduce suspension days for all students; especially for Students of Color		Overall numbers of suspended students will be reduced.
Immediate actions	Recognize fundamentally that students who have not experienced academic success for a variety of reasons are more likely to act out due to avoidance and frustration which leads to referrals and suspensions. If we don't address the skill deficits and achievement gap, it will be harder to address discipline.  Give students a way to inform school admin of peers in need of additional support.  Increase funding, expand training for Positive Behavior Intervention Services.  Enhance parent-teacher communication through a common communication tool.  Set class size based on collective need of students rather than number of students.	Overall numbers of suspended / referred students will be reduced.
Longer term actions	Increase connections between staff and students at risk for suspension.  Meet with families and survey them about their needs: housing, domestic, violence, food  Provide a space (WIN or Zero hour) and trusted school/community adults for students of color to receive support.  Identify and implement alternatives to suspension.	Overall numbers of suspended / referred students will be reduced.  Greater connection between schools and students/families currently involved in referral/suspension process.

### The Math and Reading Intervention Labs are significantly underutilized and lack a standard curriculum.

		Measurable outcome
Structure the school day to support students in enrolling in Lab Intervention courses.  Transform this from a great idea conceptually to an academically sound and effective reality.		Increased MCA scores in math and reading
		and graduation rates.  Reduce the achievement gap.
Immediate actions	Use zero hour to address the underutilization of the Lab Intervention courses. Provide transportation. Make this not only accessible, but also enticing for students needing this service.  Find or create a unified curriculum, provide additional	Increased participation/ enrollment and attendance in intervention courses.
	resources for class materials including texts and supplements that are high interest, provide a small number of Chromebooks per lab, hire licensed reading teachers for those labs.	
Longer term actions	Engage families and students to identify and address investment in and obstacles to lab intervention classes.	Reduce the achievement gap.

### Staffing and curriculum reflect a racial and cultural bias.

		Measurable outcome
Increase the diversity of staff, the inclusiveness of the curriculum and school environment		Demonstrate increased staff of color and inclusive curriculum and environment.
Immediate actions	Increase diverse presence both through community members and material.	
	Staff development in working with diverse individuals and families.	
	Staff time for work with Ojibwe & Clayton Jackson McGhie curriculum.	
Longer term	Build meaningful connections between	
actions	families, students and school staff as	THE PROPERTY OF THE PROPERTY O
	envisioned by the Full-Service Community Schools model.	
	Grow our teachers by encouraging students	
	of color to go into teaching starting early in high school.	
	Job shadowing for students to promote more educators.	
	Bolster recruitment, hiring and retention of diverse staff.	

### Staff lack the time it takes to implement professional development and collaborative efforts.

Increase staff collaboration time.		Measurable outcome
Immediate actions	Restructure staff development days to emphasize collaboration and application of initiatives.	Greater collaboration and congruency of efforts.
Longer term actions	Lengthen school day.  Set aside allocated time for collaboration for staff/counselors/administration to check in on program efficacy and problem solving.	
	Shorten periods once a week/month for a meeting time. Students could have other activities at this time.	

### Denfeld is seen as a less attractive option compared to District/area high schools.

Bolster Denfe	ld's brand.	Measurable outcome Fewer Denfeld eligible students enrolling in alternatives within or beyond the District.
Immediate actions	Identify why families living in Western School Neighborhoods decide to send their students to other schools.  Create an advantage to enrolling at Denfeld for students with varying reasons for choosing elsewhere.  Eliminate real and perceived disadvantages to enrolling at Denfeld - more limited class schedule, greater collective need/lower collective academic proficiency in an average classroom, too many disruptions to the learning environment and lack of academic rigor.	Fewer Denfeld eligible students enrolling in alternatives within or beyond the District.
Longer term actions	Balance the size and demographics of the two high schools through boundaries and transfer policy.	

### District boundaries, program placement and transfer policy contribute to high schools that are disproportionate in size and key demographics.

Create greater balance in each high school.		Measurable outcome
		Denfeld student population will increase
Immediate actions	Augment East SPED services to remove the need for SPED transfers to Denfeld.	Proportional allocation of SPED programs and population throughout district.
	Reallocate selected SPED and general education programing to maintain enrollments while making them more proportional.	
Longer term actions	Redraw boundaries and reset transfer guidelines to be less flexible.	Greater balance between school populations.
	Utilize program placement to balance school enrollments and demographics.	

### **Appendix**

### **Compensatory Education Funding**

This is MN State funding. It is given to Districts, yet determined on a per building basis to meet the needs of "underprepared" students and those failing to make "adequate progress". Basically this is funding to address the achievement gap. The state uses the number and concentration of students eligible for free or reduced lunch (a measure of income) to decide how much money each school generates. This is a poor, even stereotype driven means of estimating the level of need in a school. Districts are allowed to redirect up to 50% of the money a school generates to other buildings in the district. Still, the MN statute states that money must be used to support qualifying students. The statute, 126c.15, can be found here: https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=126c.15

ISD709 distributes compensatory education funds in two parts. The first goes to all buildings (elementary, middle and high school) based roughly on enrollments. The aim is to reduce class sizes across the district. The second, called Compensatory Education Discretionary funds goes only to buildings with high rates of students eligible for free or reduced lunch. The numbers below are for total Compensatory Education funds per building.

### For the current 16-17 school year

School Generate	d Received	
Denfeld \$852,007	· \$684,128	
East \$136,555	· \$518,2 <b>1</b> 2	
ALC \$753,000	) \$90,000**	some students identified as Area Learning Center
		ces at the two high school.
Lincoln Park \$973,19	2 \$496,264	-
Ordean East \$203,57	'8 \$436,741	
Congdon \$95,56	7 \$400,548	
Homecroft \$79,62	22 \$295,671	
Lakewood\$70,21	.2 \$181, 315	
Lester Park \$65,50	6 \$324,110	
Lowell \$287,33	30 \$440,228	
Laura MacArthur \$849,44	¥5 \$503,071	
Myers-Wilkins \$971,00	00 \$574,000	
Piedmont\$715,13	8 \$532,207	
Stowe\$446,99	4 \$402,512	

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March 7, 2017

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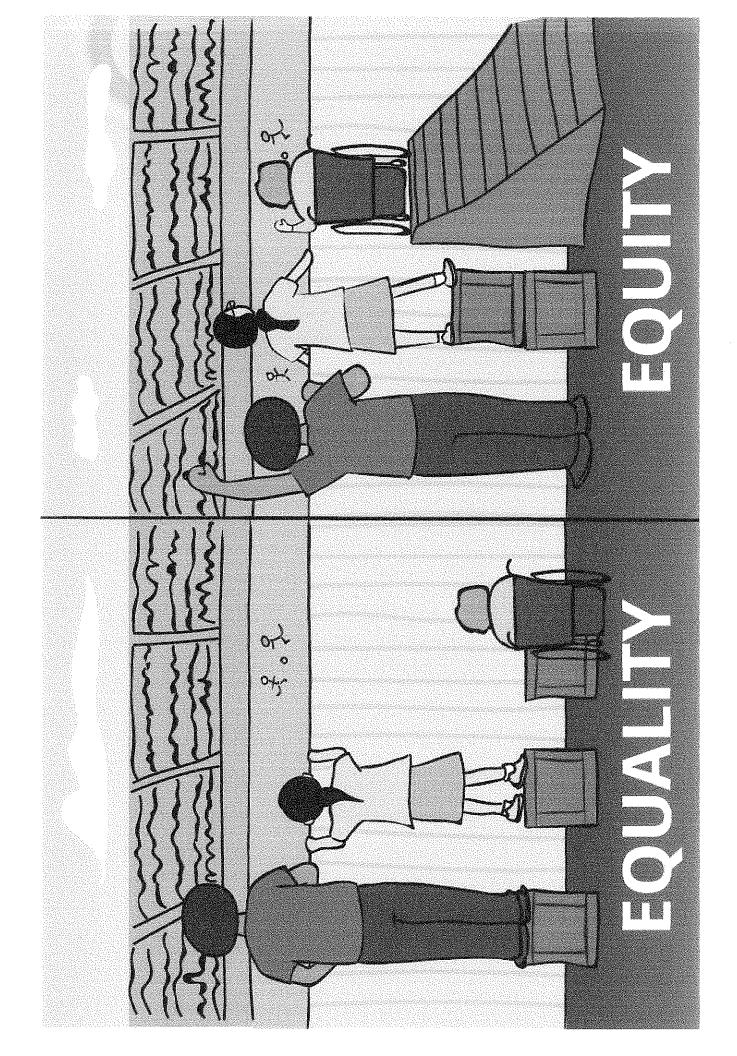
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inequity within the ISD 709 public school communities with We are a collection of school parents, district employees and Duluth residents concerned about the perceived a current focus on high schools.

Our mission is to highlight needs and advance equity for students and school communities.

## Goals and Process for tonight

- Provide context regarding equity and disparities
- Introduce a framework for building an equitable approach to
- Share initial data regarding student needs and school community 7 0 0 0 0 0
- Collect stories and examples of needs of students and school communities - in small groups or electronically
- No large group testimony
- No Q & A with school administration or School Board



### 

What is equity in education?

If EQUALITY means giving everyone the same resources, resources they need to learn and thrive regardless of EQUITY means giving each student access to the individual characteristics and cultural identities. To achieve equity in education we must acknowledge the uneven playing field that still exists for many students in practices to address this without sentencing anyone to the education system and implement policies and failure because of "boxes they may check

## Achieva Educational Eduity

"It is about what we do, not just what we have to do it with."

Beyond the distribution of resources

Work to reframe deficit thinking and move to strength-based 

Focus on the possibilities for all students to learn and thrive

Equity is the vision! Culturally Responsive Education is the States:

# Assumptions regarding educational needs

A stidents deserve to take their edicational reacts may

Takes more and different resources to exercise systemic disappearance.

Tests are considered and the school consider

## Understanding Student Needs

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Sold Day Operation of the state of the state

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Student Academic needs - (frequency/ type of classes, teaching methods, cassroom size and teacher/student ratio Student Enrichment needs - (access and support for school sponsored clubs, 

Stident School Readiness needs - (things that impact readiness learn)

### The Needs of Students

Classrooms with adequate teacher to student ratio

Material that reflects their lives and identities

Students of

Color

Appropriate class size for learning

Access to challenging course material and courses

Physical representation in schools (e.g. teachers, administrators, counselors)

Students receiving

accommodations

egai

(SPED & 504

Plans)

Strategies to keep students in class and on task

Curriculum and content that validates their existence

Safe spaces and people they can trust

School environment that values truth and diverse perspectives

Students living

near or in

poverty

Staff trained in trauma-informed practices

Material support such as school supplies

Students experiencing homelessness

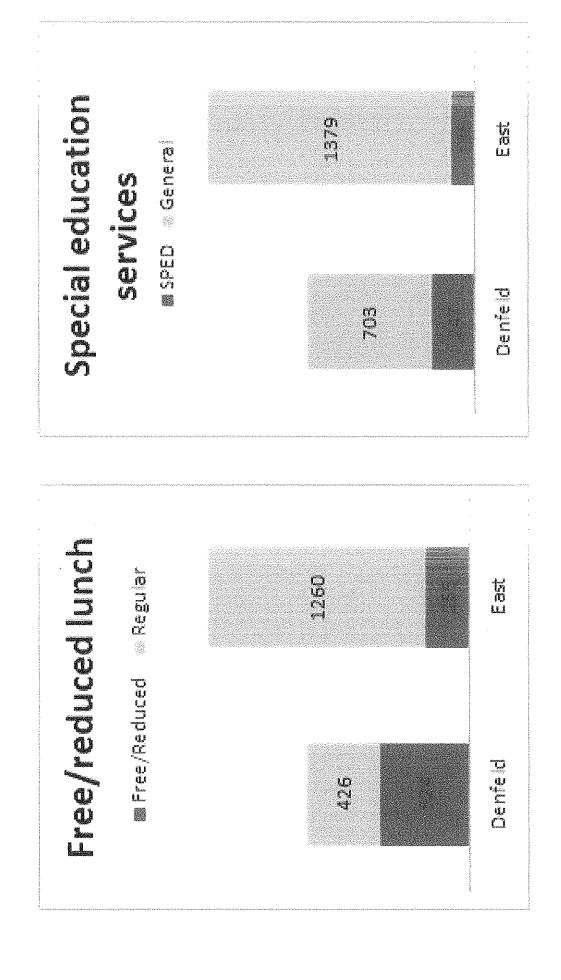
Students testing at grade level

Students testing below grade level

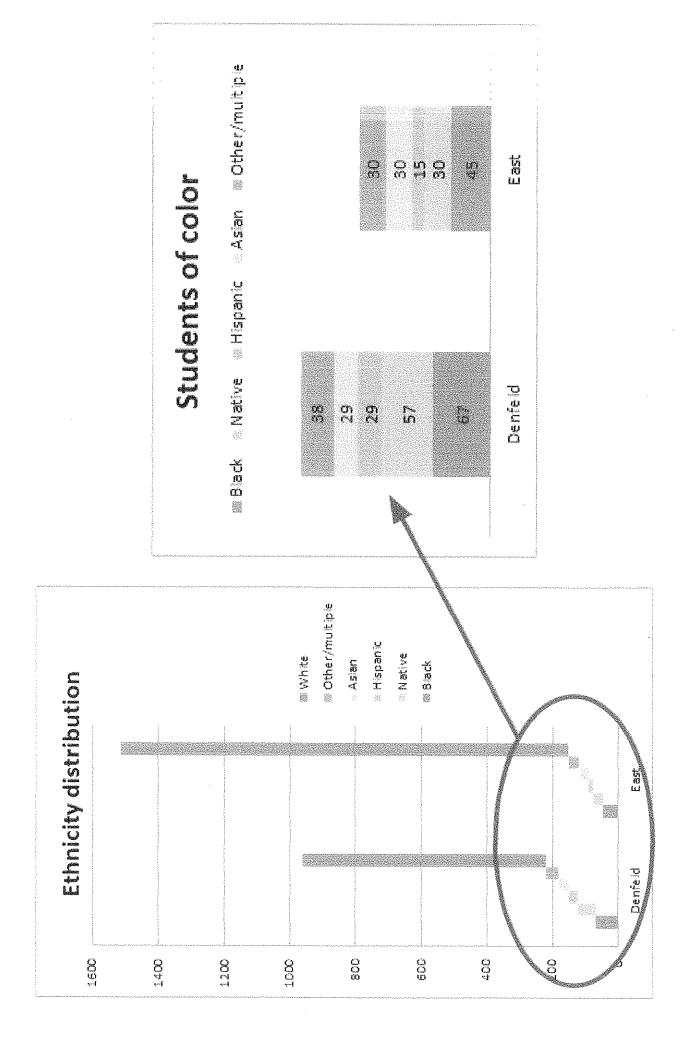
Students testing above grade level

# Understanding Needs of a School Community

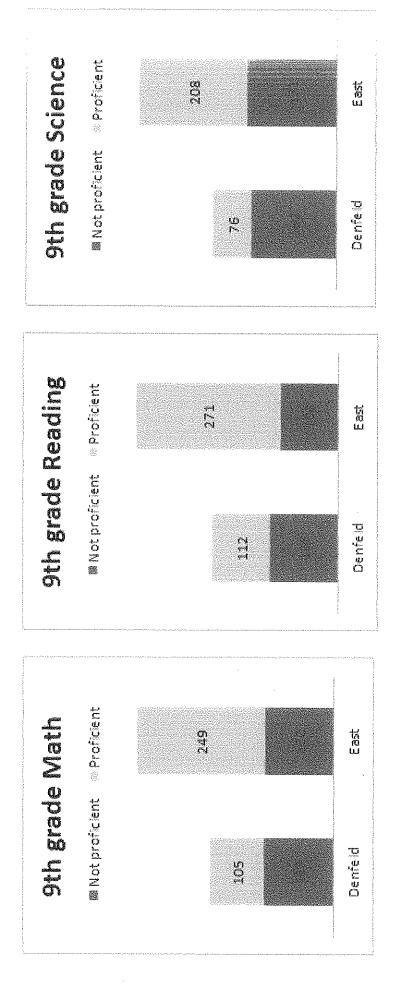
School Community Non-District needs



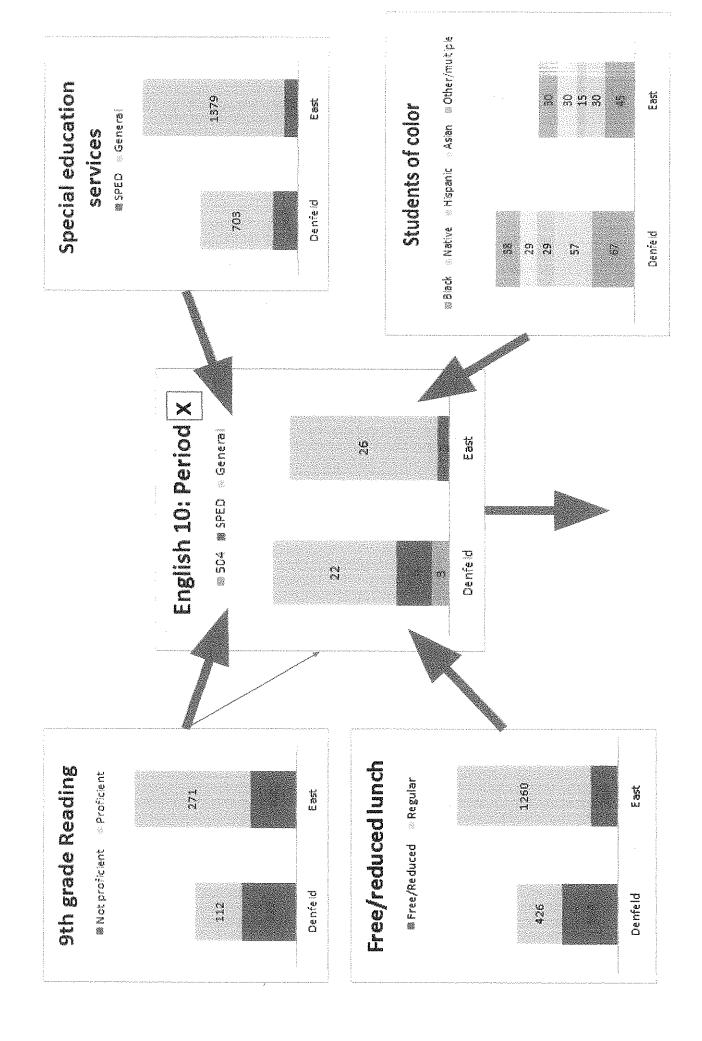
## Understanding the needs



## Understanding the needs



## Understanding the needs



### Does not meet a Partially meets a Meets Exceeds 2015 Graduation rates (%) MCA reading standards 뙲 in Vi 202 (1) (1) Denfeld # East 2013 501 Denfeld CT (~) က က 2013 ្ត 8 5 8 Ö 0 2 2 0 Understanding the needs ■ Does not meet = Partially meets = Meets = Exceeds over for up to four years and: Repeat that bated over and MCA math standards S 00 M E ast (n) Denre id 69 24 un On Pu

# How to respond to differences in outcomes

Begin with differences in opportunity and experience

Resident of the second of the

Accept that we didn't have to create it, to be responsible to respond to it I am responsible for the house which I did not build but in which like." Dorothee Soelle

### Opportunities to add your insights, stories and experiences regarding needs

Next public meeting April 13, Denfed Media Center 7-8:30pm

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School Board Meeting April 18, presentation of recommendations to School Board 

# Additional Opportunity to Contribute

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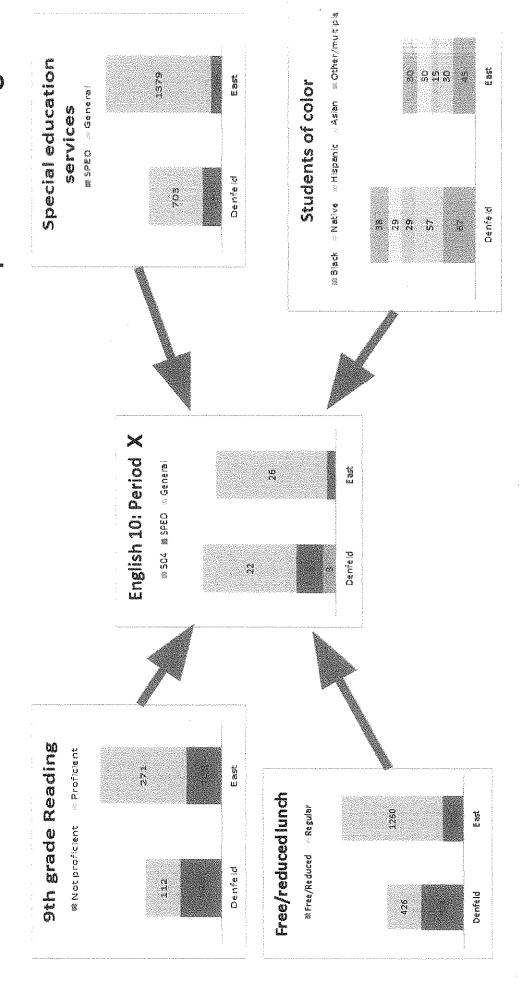
## No We are and our mission

inequity within the ISD 709 public school communities with We are a collection of school parents, district employees and Duluth residents concerned about the perceived a current focus on high schools.

Our mission is to highlight needs and advance equity for students and school communities.

### Agenda

Recall that all schools have factors that impact learning...



## ...and these factors create uniquely different needs

- © STICT GADOYGES
- Business representatives
- Other (students, concerned citizens, etc.)

## Students and the school community have needs in

### Classes/curriculum

Smaller class sizes
Practical access to academic supports
Scheduling flexibility/options (e.g., CITS)
More instructional time

Educate, celebrate differences
Diversity within staffing (role models, etc.)
Integrate different perspectives into courses

Partnerships with faith-based groups
Opportunities with business re: careers
Overcoming negative perceptions
Keeping students at their "home" school

Food, clothing and housing Medical, dental, mental, emotional Transportation options (e.g., DTA) Trauma support services

# There are challenges in meeting the needs:

#### 

- Lack of Ciffing a warmess (200, Socioescorofics) (4)

- Advancing students to next grade even if not academically prepared (3)

## but the challenges can be overcome.

#### Communication

Two way Balanced At and across each level Requires listening Demonstrated at all levels
Allocate time, staffing, other resources
Followup and adjust, if needed
Get the message out

Empowered to initiate at all levels Occurs at and across each level Includes external partners

Can succeed despite myriad constraints Involve external partners At and across each level Encouraged and rewarded

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#### 

Front office staff - per building type

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- Classroom staff plus counselors, media specialist
- Second Se

- **S**
- Wers-Wikins qualifies for Title funds for the District 0
- Funding level based on District population of SoC. 0
- o M-W receives \$600,000 of 1.6 million.
- Each HS receives \$30,000 for Ojibwe language courses (East from Indian Inducation Tunds not are to collars, 0

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- Corpersatory Education (Foldes Discretionary Conductional Conductions of the Conduction of the Condu
- State funding: F&R per building to meet the needs of "underprepared" students
- o Districts can redirect 50% to other buildings.
- Distributed in two parts: total building enrollment and to buildings with high F&R rates

### For the current 16-17 school year

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8	70 70 20 00	Deceived
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	8073,08	
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- Teds via state, buildings with 40% + T&R rates.
- District funds capped.
- Desta qualities yet issuit designation
- Denfeld has greater rates of F&R than some buildings that are designated 0

# 

- Daring. Going toward both will charge 475/ear
- East generated \$28,000 in parking permit fees. Lot expense of \$2,500 Ō
- Surblus treated as discretionary funds for the building, Oreater everage wealth a Denteld generated \$3,00. Received \$900 from Community Health Community Health Community Health Community 0

Seate Tours of the pulcipal and the particular and the properties of the pulcipal and the properties of the pulcipal and the properties of the pulcipal and the

# Summary of Programs to meet needs of Students

# Summary of Programs to meet needs of Students

# Summary of Programs to meet needs of Students

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## Community Input process

- Share with a passon per to so to be to so the state. The same series is the same of the same series is the same series in the same series in the same series in the same series in the same series is the same series in the s
- STATE OF THE STATE
- 4. Prioritize the top three strategies you want addressed. Dot activity

#### Next steps

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