

Executive Director of Student Services
Board Update
September 2025

Collaboration: Working together to achieve more collectively.

- I Love U Guys Foundation: A group of thirteen staff from ISD 917 attended a 2-day training on the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) and Standard Reunification Method (SRM) by the I Love U Guys Foundation, and organized by Dakota County Public Health. Staff from the district and building levels practiced assessing and responding to various crises, and engaged in role-playing a schoolwide evacuation and evidence-based protocol for reunifying students and caregivers in a safe and organized manner.

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

- Foundations: The first ISD 917 Foundations training course was completed on August 21st, 2025. With 22 new hires completing the course, the feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with numerous mentions of appreciation for district-specific lesson targets. Foundations was designed by an interdisciplinary team of teachers and BCBAs to address ISD 917's core values. Foundations addresses professional roles and culture in the workplace, building and maintaining relationships with students, understanding the basics of behavior, and best practices for working with students in the classroom. We look forward to building upon the strong start to the Foundations training by revising and further enhancing the experience for new staff to increase their efficacy starting on their first day.

Innovation: Ongoing improvement of programs and services.

- Career and Technical Education: Dr. Frank Herman, principal of secondary programs, has been developing materials to promote our career and technical education programs. You can access an example of his work [here](#).

Stewardship: Managing financial and human resources carefully and responsibly.

- Staffing: Staffing for the 2025-2026 school year is going well. We will have a delay in the arrival of our international staff and are expecting they will arrive in September or early October. With that said, all of our teaching positions with the exception of two teaching positions in the CASE program at Alliance Education Center are filled.

We have also had significant progress in filling our not licensed positions, specifically education support professionals (ESPs) and intervener support professionals (ISPs). I have developed a chart below to outline our open positions.

Program/Site	Role	Openings
DASH	ESP	3
	ISP	1
DHH	ESP	3
	ISP	2
IDEA/SUN-AEC	ESP	5
SUN-Cedar	ESP	9 (3 offers out)
SUN-CEC	ESP	17
TEA	ESP	4
TESA-BTC	ESP	1
TESA-DCTC	ESP	1

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

- District Update: Our first District Update of the 2025-2026 school year was sent to staff on the third Thursday of August. If you did not receive a copy, you can access it [here](#).

Integrity: Aligning our actions with our values and beliefs.

- Core values: At Concord Education Center, assistant principal/special education coordinator, Shae Elliott, has developed a bulletin board in the main office that will highlight one core value each month. You'll see the bulletin board for September below that highlights communication and how it applies in the workplace.



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

- ESP READ Act training: As shared previously, we have planned the READ Act Training for all of our Education Support Professionals over the course of the upcoming year. The training is about 8 hours long and will be led by members of the teaching and learning team. We are excited to provide this training with our own staff so that we can provide tools and strategies for supporting our learners. We anticipate having the schedule of training dates published in early September.

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

- New Staff Academy: We had an amazing New Staff Academy on August 19th and 20th facilitated by the teaching and learning team at Concord Education Center. We had 40 staff for day one (all new licensed staff) and 72 staff for day two (first and second year licensed staff). This year had some new engaging activities with make and take sessions, scavenger hunts, and choose your own adventure!

Diversity: Appreciating and valuing everyone's unique selves.

- Teacher evaluation rubric: For the 2025-2026 school year, Intermediate School District 917 will be implementing updated teacher evaluation rubrics. The state of Minnesota passed legislation that requires all schools to have teacher evaluation rubrics that reflect PELSB's Standards of Effective Practices (SEPs) and Culturally Responsive Practices (CRPs) by the 2025-2026 school year.

The SEPs are defined by PELSB as “essential knowledge and skills a teacher needs in order to be effective from “day one” in the classroom.” If you are interested you can read more about Standards or Effective Practices [here](#). Additionally, MDE states that “by embedding culturally responsive methodologies into teaching practices, we can create a more inclusive equitable classroom environment that leads to high achievement for all learners.” It is important to MDE and our team at ISD 917 that all of our students feel seen, heard, and empowered in all aspects of their education. If you would like to read more about Culturally Responsive Practices, you can do so [here](#).