

Office of Education Equity Achievement & Integration Plan

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What is the Achievement & Integration Program?

- This A&I program was established to:
 - Increase racial and economic integration
 - Reduce achievement disparities
 - Increase access to effective and diverse teachers
- 24-26 [Plan linked here](#)

How do districts get identified and receive revenue?

- **Racially Isolated (RI):** Enrollment of protected-class students districtwide is more than 20 percent, compared to the number of protected-class students in one of their adjoining districts.
- **Adjoining:** District physically adjoins a racially isolated district.
- **Racially Identifiable School (RIS):** Enrollment of protected-class students at a school is more than 20 percent, compared to the number of protected-class students within the district (for the same grade levels served).
- **Voluntary:** District participates voluntarily when geographically feasible. Participation must be approved by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE).

What is a racially identifiable school?

- When the difference of enrolled protected students at a school is more than 20 percent when compared to the district's average for students in the same grade levels, the school with the higher percentage is considered a racially identifiable school (RIS).

**Districts that are racially isolated or have a racially identifiable school are required to be in the A&I program.*

What does the phrase “protected class students” refer to?

- When determining which districts are eligible for this program, protected class students means students who self-report as being in one of the race and ethnicity categories used by school districts and MDE to track student enrollment. These categories are African/Black Americans, Asian/Pacific Americans, Chicano/Latino Americans, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and multi-racial.

Is Achievement and Integration revenue provided through a grant?

- Achievement and Integration revenue is not administered as a grant.
- It is a 70 percent aid, 30 percent levy appropriation.
- A&I aid payments are made to districts through the state's education IDEAS aid system.

How is A&I funding calculated?

$$\frac{\$350 \times \text{district's adjusted pupil units for the current year} \times \text{Ratio of district's enrollment of protected students (previous school year)}}{\text{Total Enrollment (previous school year)}}$$

What do districts need to spend funding on?

Strategies aligned with Minnesota Department of Education
Achievement and Integration Program Goals:

- Increase racial and economic integration
- Reduce achievement disparities
- Increase access to effective and diverse teachers

Parameters for Achievement & Integration funding

- Alignment with Minnesota Department of Education Achievement and Integration goals
- Up to 80% Student Supports
- Up to 20% Professional Development
- Up to 10% Administrative Costs

A&I Plan Input

- Per state statute, the A / I plan developed through input from the community (Minn. R. 3535.0160, subp. 2, and 3535.0170, subp. 3).
 - Community collaboration council
 - Education Equity Advisory Council
 - American Indian Parent Advisory Committee
 - Staff and families at Racially Identifiable School - Myers Wilkins Elementary School

Achievement & Integration

District Wide Strategies & Supports

- Coordinator & Administrative Assistant - Office of Education Equity
- 12 Integration Specialists
- Social Emotional Learning Specialist
- Family Engagement Programming
- Ojibwe Language Teacher & Coordinator
- Office of Education Equity Recruitment & Retention program
- Office of Education Equity Professional Development offerings

Strategy #1 - Integration Specialists

- Role and Responsibilities: Integral part of Duluth Public Schools' efforts in Cultural & Racial Integration, Increasing Graduation Rate, Academic Proficiency, and Family Engagement.
- Team Size: Twelve (12) full-time Integration Specialists to support elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, District Treatment Centers, Residential School sites, and Arrowhead Juvenile Center.
- Student Support: Each Specialist manages a roster of students, providing one-on-one check-ins (MTSS Tier 3) focusing on Attendance, Academics, Behavior, Goal Setting, and College/Career Readiness.
- Data-Driven Support: Develops student rosters based on assessment data (MCA, Benchmark), attendance rates, behavioral referrals, and staff/administrator input to reduce achievement disparities.
- Interventions and Enrichment: Conducts small group MTSS Tier 2 and 3 interventions focusing on Cultural and Racial Identity development, integrated learning sessions, and academic/behavioral support during intervention/enrichment periods.
- Family Engagement: Acts as a liaison between home and school, building intentional relationships with families/caregivers to support diverse family engagement based on site-specific needs.
- Programs and Initiatives: Provides culturally responsive after-school and in-school programs, supports college and career readiness, and develops Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) for each student.
- Cultural Learning Opportunities: Offers integrated cultural learning opportunities aligned with MTSS interventions/enrichments to promote increased racial and economic integration.
- Collaboration and Team Involvement: Participates in school leadership teams (e.g., Student Support Team, Continuous Improvement Team) and collaborates with students, families, and staff to facilitate the Family Engagement program.

Strategy #2 - Social Emotional Learning Specialist

- District-wide Programming and Supports: Contributes to developing culturally responsive resources and strategies for Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) across all grade levels, Ensures MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) interventions for Social-Emotional Behavior (SEB) are culturally responsive and tailored to individual student needs, Collaborates with community engagement initiatives and district committees focused on equity.
- Culturally Responsive Approach: Utilizes culturally responsive strategies, resources, and materials when working with students and staff & Provides Tier 1 SEL support for staff, coordinates co-located mental health services, and offers Mental Health Crisis support to students.
- Direct Supports to Schools: Primary support role at Lowell Elementary School, with additional support for other elementary schools as required, Embeds SEL opportunities in K-5 classrooms through consistent, meaningful learning activities, Offers short-term Tier 1 extension opportunities and Restorative Conflict Resolution as needed.
- MTSS and Team Collaboration: Leads Tier 1 activities within the school's MTSS Social Emotional Behavior Team, Provides guidance on Tier 2 SEB interventions and best practices, Partners with families and community providers to address attendance barriers for protected class students.
- Community Partnerships and Programs: Coaches the PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) Team and contributes to the school attendance team, Continues partnerships with community organizations to expand access to supportive services for families (e.g., Kid's Closet, Second Harvest Backpack Program).

Achievement & Integration Recruitment & Retention

Achievement & Integration Recruitment & Retention Program. Strategy #3

Type of Strategy: Recruitment and retention of racially and ethnically diverse teachers and administrators.

The focus of the Recruitment & Retention program is to assist in the racial diversification of our staff.

This will be done through the following strategies:

- The Office of Education Equity is currently working on identifying diverse staff through district wide self identification surveys to continue to develop and create Affinity groups, as well as share information/opportunities
- Affinity Group development and events/opportunities to discuss Climate dynamics and build a sense of community and networking for interested diverse staff within the district (currently staff of color and folks within the LGBTQIA+ community)
 - First one this year was on December 12, with 30 folks self identified and 17 participants
 - Second one was scheduled for Monday, March 25th but cancelled due to a snow day
 - Rescheduled to Monday, April 29th
 - 40 folks invited, who have self identified
- Provide Staff of Color with access to the Professional Development being offered each year
 - Information shared through affinity groups, Integration Specialist teams, American Indian Home school Liaisons, immersion teachers, and with teachers/staff as they have reached out to OEE
 - Hiring of the new professional development coordinator will support increased PD access for all staff

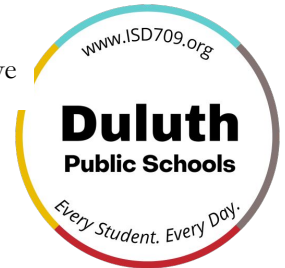


A&I - Recruitment & Retention - continued

Recruitment & Retention Program. Strategy #3

Continued

- Provide additional support and resources for Staff of Color throughout a year such as interracial conflict resolution
 - Case by case basis as staff reach out or get referred to the Office of Education Equity
- Offer Mentorship to interested Staff of Color
 - The plan is to identify interested participants and develop this program at upcoming Affinity group meetings
- Anti-bias training for Human Resource staff
 - Achievement Integration Goal of 90% of HR staff trained this year.
 - HR has reported that 100% of their staff has taken the 4 hours, self guided Kirwan Institute Implicit Bias Training ([LINKED HERE](#)) and received Implicit Bias Certifications
 - Goal is for the OEE to develop a Culturally Responsive Hiring Strategy training that HR staff can receive by the end of the 2023-2024 school year

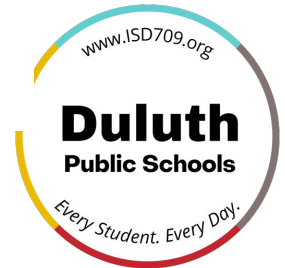


A&I - Recruitment & Retention - continued

Recruitment & Retention Program. Strategy #3

Continued

- Continued the development of a “Racial Diversity Recruitment Team” that assists in job postings, serves on screening/interview teams, attends job fairs and sets up recruitment table at diverse community events, such as Juneteenth Celebration and area Powwows - Office of Education Equity will contract with individuals and/or offer compensation for current Staff of Color to serve on the team to ensure a diverse team.
 - There is currently 12 employees on the diverse screening/interview team.
 - There is a written directive for leaders to utilize this list for all hiring processes.
 - To date, the HR team has participated in five job fairs this school year attended by diverse candidates,.
 - The HR team is already scheduled to attend the Juneteenth Celebration with a job interest table..
- Staff using preferred name
 - HR has revised the badging process to allow for employees to use their preferred name and is working with the technology team to address preferred name related to email, computer logins, etc.



Other Equity R&R initiatives

- Applied for the Come Teach in Minnesota Grant
 - Teachers must immediately qualify for a Tier 2 or higher Minnesota license
 - Have moved to Minnesota from out of state
 - Belong to a racial or ethnic group that is underrepresented among teachers, compared to students in the district or school
 - Eligible employers may offer a hiring bonus up to \$5,000 for eligible teachers.
 - Additionally, if a teacher who received a hiring bonus successfully completes four years of service in the hiring district or charter school, that teacher can receive a retention bonus equal to their hiring bonus.
 - A teacher must have a Tier 3 or Tier 4 Minnesota teaching license to qualify for the second half of the bonus.
- Supported the district and HR department's application to Grow Your Own Grant by providing written narratives to identified questions
 - HR department facilitated the GYO application with limited support from OEE
 - Grant award notifications going out March, 2024
- HR Department, in partnership with CareerForce, applied for and received the Drive for Five grant.
 - Grant specifically intended for supporting individuals to work in educational services.
 - Focuses support for low-income households and BIPOC individuals.
 - Focuses on diversity, equity, inclusion and retention training of staff to increase the understanding of welcoming and retaining a diverse workforce.



Strategy #4 - Family Engagement

- Designed to bring together staff, parents, caregivers, students, and community
- Objectives:
 - Gain access to district, school, and classroom resources
 - Increase communication with school staff
 - Enhance staff understanding of cultural differences
 - Foster educational learning environments at home
- Support provided:
 - Food
 - Childcare
 - Transportation support to increase access and participation from all communities

Strategy #5 - Professional Development

- Primary PD program: SEED - Seeking Education Equity & Diversity - training - 24 hours covering:
 - indigeneity and two-spirit persons
 - Racism, classism, ageism
 - race and culture studies
 - ethnocentrism vs holism
 - monolingualism
 - English-first language and how to meet various language needs in schools
 - inequity and inequality in education
 - class and housing, socioeconomics
 - sexuality and gender studies;
 - sexism, phobias, transgenderism
 - allyship and creating a safe, welcoming space
 - students with physical disabilities and/or neurodivergence
 - religious discrimination
 - reflection on -isms and their systemic relevance within education
- Incentives:
 - CEUs, Substitutes, Stipends, and/or Lane Change Credits, Cultural Competency requirements
- Participants to integrate principles into instruction, grading practices, and/or curriculum
- Expected outcomes:
 - Increased culturally responsive teaching and learning
 - Reduction of achievement gaps in classrooms and schools

Strategy #6 - Middle & High School Ojibwe Language Teacher/Coordinator

- Provide in person instruction in Ojibwemowin 1 and 2 & 3 CITS courses at East & Denfeld
- Goal: Boost enrollment and retention, collaborate with Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College.
- Conduct weekly WIN Enrichment sessions around Ojibwe language and culture
- Facilitate integration of Ojibwe Language programming in our high schools by working with school counselors and staff to reduce stereotypes.
- Promote courses to increase enrollment (target: 18+ students per class)
- Collaborate with principals, administration for Ojibwe Language revitalization sign project
- Serve students in grades 6-12.

Achievement & Integration

Strategies & Supports for Racially Identifiable School (RIS)

Myers-Wilkins Elementary School

- Enrichment Coordinator & Young Scholars Program Facilitator
- Social Emotional Learning Specialist
- Integration Specialist (1 of the 12)
- 3 Reading Interventionists (1 at Lowell to support Equitable Enrollment/School Choice)
- 1 Math Interventionist
- 2 KG classroom assistants
- Intervention Materials
- Professional Development
- In school learning opportunities and field trips
- Afterschool and summer school programming
- 2 Ojibwe Immersion classroom assistants (At Lowell to support Equitable Enrollment/School Choice)

RIS Strategy #1 - Reading Interventionists

- Role: Skilled teacher specializing in reading and literacy interventions.
- Target Students: Grades Kindergarten to 5th identified in "Strategic" or "Intensive" ranges of MTSS (Tier 2).
- Methods:
 - a. Utilizes culturally responsive strategies and materials that validates students' cultural and racial identities.
 - b. Uses data-driven decision-making to collaborate with teachers and support staff.
- Goal: Improve academic proficiency in reading and literacy through targeted interventions.

RIS Strategy #2 - Ojibwe Immersion Classroom Assistant

- Responsibilities: Assist teachers and staff in implementing the Ojibwe Language Immersion curriculum, support the achievement and integration goals of the program.
- Program Objectives: Improve academic performance based on national research on language immersion programs, address integration needs by providing Ojibwe Immersion programming in Duluth Public Schools.
- Collaboration: Collaboration between Lowell Elementary and Myers-Wilkins Elementary (RIS) to implement the Ojibwe Immersion program. Aim to decrease racial and economic enrollment disparities at RIS.
- Equity Measures: Ensure equitable access to educational resources and programming.

RIS Strategy #3 - In school learning opportunities and field trips

- Hands-On Learning: Provide students with hands-on learning experiences aligned with the curriculum and community service learning opportunities. Trips to out-of-school learning centers and visits from representatives of these centers in classrooms.
- Family Engagement: Hold Family Nights to connect school learning with families. Aim to strengthen the connection between school content and student families.
- Cultural Validation: Utilize culturally responsive strategies and curricular materials to validate students' cultural and racial identities.
- Accessibility: All Family Nights will be free of charge. Transportation will be provided for families who require it to attend these events.

RIS Strategy #4 - After school and summer programming

- Program Objectives: Provide culturally responsive, safe, nurturing, and enriching experiences for students. Build academic, creative, and life skills among students.
- Organizers: Programs are organized by the Myers-Wilkins Community School Collaborative (MWCSC) in collaboration with school principal and staff.
- Inclusivity: Ensure intentional efforts to include Protected Class students in cooperation with RIS and MWCSC staff. Participation rates of Protected Class students will reflect the percentage of enrolled students at RIS.
- Focus Areas: Programs align with school goals; Academics, Cultural and racial identity, School pride, Engagement, Opportunity

RIS Strategy #5 - Professional Development

- Purpose: Improve student achievement and enhance culturally responsive teaching.
- Offerings: Workshops, training, and resources for district staff.
- Focus Areas: Culturally Responsive Practices, Undoing Racism, Curriculum Development & Integration, Racial Identity Development.
- Incentives: CEUs, substitutes, stipends, and/or lane change credits for participants.
- Outcomes: Integration of strategies into instruction, grading practices, and curriculum.
- Impact: Increase in culturally responsive teaching and learning, leading to reduced achievement gaps among students.

RIS Strategy #6 - Math Interventionist

- Role: Skilled mathematics teacher specializing in interventions.
- Target Students: Grades Kindergarten to 5th identified in "Strategic" or "Intensive" ranges of MTSS (Tier 2).
- Methods:
 - a. Utilizes culturally responsive strategies and materials.
 - b. Validates students' cultural and racial identities.
 - c. Uses data-driven decision-making to collaborate with teachers and support staff.
- Goal: Improve academic proficiency in mathematics through targeted interventions.

RIS Strategy #7 - Social Emotional Learning Specialist (SEL)

- Role: Full-time Certified School Counselor or Social Worker focusing on Social Emotional Learning (SEL).
- Intervention Model: Provides tiered support aligned with MN MTSS intervention model. Offers Tier 1 small-group therapeutic counseling, push-in SEL opportunities, and Restorative Conflict Resolution supports.
- Approach: Utilizes culturally responsive strategies and materials to validate students' cultural and racial identities. Leads SEL programming at Myers-Wilkins and conducts individual/small group check-ins for supplemental SEL support. Supports staff with SEL training and coordinates mental health referrals and crisis assessments for students.
- Responsibilities: Serves on the school MTSS Social Emotional Behavior Team as Tier 1 lead. Aims to reduce behavior referrals and suspensions while increasing consistent attendance rates for all students through SEL initiatives.

RIS Strategy #8 - Equitable Enrollment Option Transportation

- Purpose: Ensure equitable access to school enrollment choices and increase access to RIS for White, Non-FRP families from Lowell attendance area.
- Transportation Routes: Busing provided between RIS and neighboring Lowell Elementary to facilitate enrollment options.
- The district absorbed the costs for this strategy because it was having the opposite intended effect

RIS Strategy #9 - Intervention Materials

- Objective: Purchase reading and math intervention materials to support student learning in resource rooms and classrooms.
- Purpose: Ensure availability of culturally responsive, appropriately leveled resources. Increase student academic achievement, confidence, cultural identity, racial identity, and self-esteem.
- Components: Leveled books, manipulative materials, and web-based programs for individual and small-group instruction. Shared among interventionists and classroom teachers to support MTSS academic plans.
- Tools and Approaches: Utilization of Reading Diversity LITE (Teacher's Edition) to select diverse texts. Integration of diverse racial perspectives into core and intervention curriculums.
- Benefits: Supports diverse learning needs and interests. Facilitates personalized learning and accelerated interventions based on student levels and interests.

RIS Strategy #10 - Kindergarten Instructional Assistants

- Role: Address early learning disparities and kindergarten readiness measures in kindergarten classrooms.
- Objective: Utilize culturally responsive strategies and materials to validate students' cultural and racial identities.
- Approach:
 - a. Use data-based decision-making to collaborate with teachers and support staff.
 - b. Provide necessary interventions to improve academic proficiency and school readiness for kindergarten students.
- Staffing: Two full-time Instructional Assistants supporting three kindergarten classrooms.

RIS Strategy #11 - Site Enrichment Coordinator and Young Scholars Program Facilitator

- Role: Provide gifted and talented learning opportunities for accelerated academic growth for identified K-3 students at Myers-Wilkins.
- Objectives: Ensure equitable access and representation for Protected Class students in rigorous coursework. Collaborate with district-level and site staff to develop and implement the K-3 Young Scholars program.
- Approach: Use culturally responsive strategies and materials to validate students' cultural and racial identities. Facilitate Tier 1 and Tier 2 enrichment experiences for classrooms and the entire school.
- Collaboration: Work with district-wide gifted and talented staff to ensure successful transition of students. Coordinate STEM support and manage STEM resources at Myers-Wilkins.
- Community Engagement: Explore partnerships with community organizations and experts to provide enrichment opportunities. Collaborate with integration specialists, social workers, American Indian education staff, and community resources.
- Outreach: Share enrichment opportunities widely through district website, social media, and community engagement to attract new families and promote racial and economic desegregation at Myers-Wilkins.

Reflections & Questions?

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