

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

This letter is an **invitation to join the Duluth Public Schools' Education Equity Advisory Committee (EEAC)**--partnering with ISD 709 and many other community organizations to break down silos, identify education equity opportunities worth pursuing, and ultimately **make recommendations and give advice to the Duluth School Board and district leadership on how to take specific action to support education equity within our community.**

Quick version:

In the message below, we explain the EEAC's history and trajectory. If, as we hope, you read it and realize you would like to partner with us in our efforts, here is what you can expect.

**A representative (or representatives) from your organization would attend the EEAC's monthly meetings at Lincoln Park Middle School from 5:00-8:00 p.m.** The upcoming meetings are as follows:

- Thursday, March 10
- Thursday, April 7
- Thursday, May 19
- Thursday, June 16

While the full meeting time is 5:00-8:00, the first half hour is dedicated to sharing a free meal and making connections, with the formal meeting beginning at 5:30. Virtual attendance is also an option, and a Google Meet link will be sent out for each date.

More context:

The EEAC strives to achieve participation from a diverse range of perspectives, communities and organizations and is intentionally designed for **active participants who are committed to eliminating structural and institutional barriers to educational opportunity for all students.** The EEAC recognizes that there are historical conditions and barriers that have prevented opportunity and academic success in learning for students based on race, culture, ethnicity, income, and other social conditions.

**The revitalization of the EEAC started in December 2021.** Around 30 passionate partners in education equity came together to build consensus and push forward new bylaws to the School Board. Partners included:

- The ISD 709 Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent, Director of Special Education, Coordinator of Office of Education Equity, Duluth Community School Collaborative, teachers, paraprofessionals, clerical staff, School Board members, and parents
- Representatives from the ISD 709 American Indian Parent Advisory Committee, the Department of American Indian Education, and the Gifted and Talented E-Squared and Families in Transition programs
- The local NAACP President and members of the NAACP Education Committee
- Representatives from the Education Equity Alliance, UMD, LSC, and more

This initiative to build consensus to pass new bylaws was successful. The new bylaws guide the function of the EEAC and allow for inclusive participation--**shifting the paradigm of what authentic community partnerships within education equity can look like.**

Our mission now is to engage community partners who are vested in the vision of equitable education opportunity for all students, **recognizing that it takes an entire community to raise a child.** By bringing together community partners in a massive and intentional way, we will start breaking down silos and identifying unique ways to collaborate and support the journey of all our students navigating education in our community.

What does this look like? Bringing people like you together to facilitate connections and create space for collaboration. **The next step is to start building subcommittees to tackle specific education equity work in specialized areas.** For example:

Mental Health	Indigenous Education Culture and Language Revitalization
Transportation and Childcare	Black/African/African-American Education and Culture
Youth Opportunity	Latinx and Hispanic Education and Culture
Post-Secondary Opportunities	Asian Pacific Islander Desi American Education and Culture
LGBTQIA+ and Gender Equity	Curriculum, Instruction and Education Strategies
Recruitment and Retention	Community Education and EEAC Participant Engagement
Media and Public Information	And more yet to be defined as we learn and grow together!

**The goal is to facilitate collaboration in a massive engagement—creatively collaborating with the community in supporting education equity in a way that has never happened before in the Twin Ports.** Let's get together a community of education equity allies and organizations to do the work and take action. Let's start raising our kids in our community, as a community.

What do we need?

We need engagement, participation, representation and authentic relationships with organizations that support our kids.

We need all of our partners to invest the time to build relationships with the school district and each other.

We need passion and enthusiasm—knowing our communities and schools can change, and it's possible for all kids to be successful.

**We need a massive shift in understanding, acknowledging and positively supporting the reality that the school district cannot do it all alone.**

We need to break down silos of community organizations doing great work supporting youth and partner together to collaboratively meet the educational needs of all students in our community.

We need to keep our eyes on the prize, knowing that if we work together, we can identify needs and specific pathways to achieve education equity for our youth.

We need your help. Our kids need your help.

**Will you join us on the profound journey of supporting every student's educational opportunity within our community?** Will you be a part of helping us change the world, starting right here, right now?

**Please reply to this email and/or contact Nathan Smith, the Coordinator of Duluth Public Schools' Office of Education Equity** ([nathan.smith@isd709.org](mailto:nathan.smith@isd709.org)), to let us know if you would like to partner with the EEAC or to ask questions about potential participation.

Looking forward,

Education Equity Advisory Committee