

MMR Improvement Plan  
Recommended School Board Action October 10<sup>th</sup> in **Bold**

### High School

- The high school math curriculum was reconstructed in July. The MN Academic Standards, which are measured on the 11<sup>th</sup> grade MCA exam, were placed in the following courses, which are required for all students in grades 9-11: Algebra II, Geometry, and Algebra II/Probability, and Statistics. Course templates are being reconstructed for these courses and will be completed by October 19<sup>th</sup>
- The high school language arts curriculum was reconstructed September 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. The MN Academic Standards, measured on the 10 grade MCA exam, were placed in the following courses, which are required for all students in grades 9-10: Language Arts 9, and Language Arts 10. Course templates are being reconstructed for these courses and will be completed by October 19<sup>th</sup>.
- The high school administration, curriculum director, and superintendent have collaborated to better support the high school English and Math departments.

### Intermediate School

- **An assistant principal position should be added to the Intermediate School.** The principal currently spends the vast majority of time with student behavior issues, responding to student mental health situations, attendance monitoring and intervention, and other student related management duties. The principal also attends about 175 IEP meetings each year, as the only licensed administrator in the building. These responsibilities impede the principal's ability to act as an instructional leader, support staff members, and foster a positive school climate.

The assistant principal would be primarily assigned to the Intermediate School and be on call for assistance at the Primary School. This recommendation is also supported by the Examination Of Administrative Capacity, commissioned by the school board, and conducted by Dr. Greg Vandal in 2015.

A comparison of the Becker Schools is shown below:

Schools	Students	Principal	Asst. Principal	Principal Support Staff	Guidance Counselor
High	894	1	1	2	2 + 1 support staff
Middle	675	1	1	1.5	1
Intermediate	652	1	<i>1 recommended</i>	1.5	1 Social worker
Primary	646	1		1.5	1 Social worker

- PRESS (Path to Reading Excellence in School Site) is being implemented at the Intermediate School. Some teachers began on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. All teachers will begin by October 24<sup>th</sup>. PRESS is a framework that structures literacy achievement in grade K-5 within a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS). PRESS is a researched based intervention program, designed by the University of Minnesota, to ensure students become capable readers. Research by the U of M documented a 20% increase in the number of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students making one year's worth of growth as measured by NWEA. PRESS interventions address the essential reading skills of: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

The Data Specialist (funded by the Achievement and Integration Grant) will prepare the PRESS materials and assist teachers with implementation for grades 3-5.

- Mid-winter NWEA test results will be used to assess student progress. Students who are not on a trajectory to make one year of growth in reading and/or math will be identified and provided with intervention assistance.

#### All Schools

- **A District Reading Coach position should be added to assist teachers with reading instruction skills.** As a reading specialist, the Reading Coach would provide individual professional development for teachers to implement effective reading instruction practice. Many teachers are adept at identifying and monitoring deficit literacy skills yet lack the expertise to effectively intervene. The Reading Coach would work with teachers individually to develop and implement research based literacy instruction.

Studies show that along with possessing professional expertise, the success of this position is contingent upon building trust and relationships with teachers. Accordingly, the measurable results for this position should be expected over the long term.

The Reading Coach will work with teachers throughout the school district. The position will prioritize schools in the following rank order: Primary School, High School, Intermediate School, and Middle School.

- The title of the Director of Curriculum and Instruction Position was changed to Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. This affords the position line authority over the instructional staff for matters pertaining to curriculum and instruction.

#### Notes

- The recommendations above most efficiently leverage limited resources toward improving MMR scores. Additional recommendations could easily be justified to include a student dean position or assistant principal position at the Primary School and a second Reading Coach position.
- The district cost of \$206,000 (\$136,000 Intermediate School Assistant Principal, \$70,000 Reading Coach) would be included in the revised FY 17 general fund budget.
- The Assistant Principal and Reading Coaches have been advertised as vacancies. It is essential to enact this MMR Improvement Plan as soon as possible to impact Spring 2017 MMR scores. The positions will not be filled until the school board approves them.