

# Special Education Design Team

- Racial Equity Purpose Statement
  - Introductions
- Why is this work important?
  - Phase 1 work so far



**St. Louis Park  
Public Schools**

Personal, Local, Immediate -  
Keep a Spotlight on Race -

Gather Multiple Perspectives -  
Establish Parameters -

Establish A Racial Equity  
Transformation Plan -

**PHASE I:  
LOOKING INWARD**  
*KNOW THYSELF*

- Teacher Self-Reflection
- Examine Disaggregated Data
- Hear and Reflect upon Students Voice and Community Input
- Unpack Standards
- Driven by R.E.P. Statements
- Intersection of IB, AP, & Immersion & CRP
- Engage in Courageous Conversation

**PHASE II:  
LOOKING AROUND**  
*DISTINGUISH KNOWLEDGE FROM  
FOOLISHNESS*

- Research and Visit Regional, National, and International Exemplars
- Engage Scholars of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Content Specific Pedagogy and Tech Enrichment
- Establish Criteria for Adopting New Materials (Pilot Curriculum)
- Engage in Courageous Conversation

**PHASE III:  
LOOKING  
OUTWARD**  
*BUILD FOR ETERNITY*

- Develop Content Area Belief Statements
- Adopt New Curriculum with Fidelity or Engage in Curriculum Writing
- Establish Collaborative Team and PD Plans
- Develop 3, 5, and 8 year benchmarks
- Engage in Courageous Conversation

---

*curriculum and instructional development timeline*

**2019-2022**

**Math**  
**Gifted/Talented**  
**World Languages**

**2022-2025 (Phase III)**

**Music**  
**Student Services**  
**International Baccalaureate**

**2026-2029 (site based?)**

**BARR**  
**Advanced Placement**  
**Immersion**

**2020-2023**

**Science**  
**Language Arts & Literacy**  
**Multilingual Learning**

**2024-2027 (Phase I)**

**Career/Tech.Ed.**  
**Summer School**  
**Special Education**

**2027-2030**

**Math**  
**World Languages & Cultures**

**2021-2024**

**Social Studies**  
**Phy Ed /Health**  
**Progress Reporting**

**2025-2028 (Winter 2025)**

**Media/Digital Learning**  
**Art/Design**  
**Review Process\***

**2028-2031**

**Science**  
**Multilingual Learning**

**2029-2032**

**Language Arts & Literacy**  
**Talent Development**

---

# Special Education Design Team

- Racial Equity Purpose Statement
  - Introductions
- Why is this work important?
  - Phase 1 work so far



**St. Louis Park  
Public Schools**

# Racial Equity Purpose Statement

At St. Louis Park Public Schools, every student, regardless of race, gender, socioeconomic status or neurodiversity, deserves the opportunity to thrive as empowered leaders and advocate for their individual needs. Our commitment as anti-racist educators is to challenge the status quo and “excavate deep-seated racism within the public school system.”<sup>1</sup> (Mayes)

We embrace neurodiversity and recognize the unique strengths and perspectives of our Black, Indigenous, Latine, Asian, and People of Color (BILAPOC) as well as neurodiverse students. St. Louis Park Public Schools upholds an inclusive environment where *all* students feel valued, heard, and equipped with the tools necessary to advocate for themselves throughout their lives.

We hold ourselves accountable for fostering advocacy, inclusion, and high expectations for *all* students. Together, we transform special education practices to ensure that every student has the opportunity to succeed, thrive, and lead with confidence in their identities.

1. Professor Keith Mayes's recent book *the unteachables: Disability rights and the invention of Black Special Education*. Professor Keith Mayes's recent book *The Unteachables: Disability Rights and the Invention of Black Special Education* | Institute for Diversity, Equity and Advocacy. (n.d.). <https://idea.umn.edu/professor-keith-mayess-recent-book-unteachables-disability-rights-and-invention-black-special-0>



# Introductions

## (Why this work is important to us)

Alex McGue (she/her) - Our special education students are brilliant, creative and exceptional individuals. Who are deserving of equal opportunities, including access to culturally relevant, rigorous curriculum, a strong voice in our school system, and inclusive community-building in all spaces at St. Louis Park.

Kristina Doyle (ella/she/her) - As an Afrolatina and bilingual speech-language pathologist, this statement embodies actions that will address the root of special education as a system that has historically oppressed the most marginalized.

Blair Okey (she/her) - The hearts of our students are the most important part of my why. I value each student's story and believe they show up authentically to our doors each day. It is our responsibility as educators to recognize and teach to their brilliance. Racial equity work requires that we engage in continuous self-reflection and learning. It means listening to our students, acknowledging their lived experiences, and creating spaces where they can engage in honest and meaningful dialogue about race, power, and privilege.

Meghan Settingsgard (she/her) - We have a responsibility as racially conscious educators to provide the best education possible to create lifelong learners. Historically special education was created to continue segregation within school and our current reality is that there is a disproportionate representation of students of color within the special education system. Special education students deserve the same opportunities to show their brilliance free of labels and biases. This requires us to review who, why and how students are entering our special education system at Saint Louis Park.

Christine Tvrdik (she/her) - I want to ensure that every student I work with has access to a rigorous curriculum, opportunities to build meaningful connections within a supportive community, and the chance to experience a sense of belonging in our schools.



# WHY IS THIS WORK IMPORTANT?

As a district, we intend to:

- Address the persistent divide between general and special education, ensuring that all students have equitable access to resources and opportunities; knowing that,
  - The current system often treats students in special education as an afterthought, perpetuating racially and neurodiversity-predictable outcomes that reinforce systems of oppression.
  - We need to center the identities of our students and empower them to advocate for their individualized needs
- Make a commitment to challenge these inequities, dismantling oppressive structures, and fostering an inclusive educational environment where every student is valued and supported.



# Phase 1 work so far...

- We have created our racial equity purpose statement
- We've begun to read the *Unteachables* by Keith A. Mayes to gather information on the history of special education
- We have gathered parent, teacher and paraprofessional feedback
  - Student data will be obtained in the future via listening sessions
- Kristina Doyle has disaggregated special education enrollment data by primary disability, free/reduced priced lunch, school, race and gender.







# Questions?



**St. Louis Park  
Public Schools**