



MADISON METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Special Education Plan

2023-2026



Purpose

Part One of this Special Education Plan identifies department priorities, in the form of Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART) goals developed based on data. The three priority areas include 1) Reducing Disproportionality in Special Education, 2) Expanding Inclusion, and 3) Improving Math and Reading Proficiency for scholars with an Individual Education Program (IEP). We believe these objectives are foundational to improving graduation rates and post-school outcomes, particularly for our Black/African American scholars. Data, metrics for tracking progress, and strategies for working toward the realization of department goals, are explained. This plan provides an overarching framework of our goals and ways of working to demonstrate strong commitment to educating scholars with identified disabilities. Common understandings, language, and commitments, including alignment with District and School Improvement Plans, and the District Strategic Framework, are embedded. Additional details regarding implementation of special education services are linked in a companion guide.

Part Two was designed to outline key areas of Student Services central office support to schools. Current methods for promoting staff and family collaboration, providing professional learning, and offering expertise as needed are described.

In addition to this plan, a Special Education Service Delivery Resource Guide was created as a companion document to provide details about special education processes and models for providing services designed to facilitate progress toward annual goals and grade-level standards. Each IEP team meets at least annually to determine the specific special education service type(s), amount(s), frequency(ies), and environment(s) necessary for adequate progress toward goals.

While comprehensive, we recognize no plan or document can include everything staff do to help scholars succeed, or what central office staff do to support staff, scholars, and families. We also acknowledge the plan and resource guide were written to explain the technical side of services, and yet the human side - the deep caring and relationship building that occurs daily between staff and scholars - serves as the critical foundation to all learning.

Throughout this plan, every effort has been made to emphasize the dedication of the district and individual staff to viewing and treating each scholar as the brilliant learner they are, with unique talents and strengths. Our mission is to consistently enact the vision of all scholars as general education scholars first, because they are. We sincerely hope our dedication to special education as a set of services acknowledging scholars with an IEP or 504 Plan as whole learners, each with extraordinary potential, comes across in this plan with the depth and breadth with which it is carried out in our day to day work. This includes strong collaboration among school and central office staff to meet any combination of disability-related, advanced learning, and English learning needs a scholar may have. Under the Teaching and Learning umbrella, shared understanding of our collaborative work, alignment of plans, and the provision of content and professional learning to staff in our schools is central to the work of Student Services, Student and Staff Support, Advanced Learning, Multilingual Programs and Services, and Curriculum and Instruction.



Table of Contents

Part One..... 3

 Background.....3

 SMART Goals..... 3

 SMART Goal #1.....4

 SMART Goal #2..... 13

 SMART Goal #3..... 17

 Alignment with District Strategic Goals..... 21

 Compliance Priorities.....22

Part Two.....24

 Central Office Supports Provided to Schools..... 24

 Professional Learning for Special Education Staff.....26

 Schools with Targeted Support (TSI) and Additional Targeted Support (ATSI) ESSA Designation..... 28

 Student Services Grow Our Own and Accelerated Licensure in Special Education (ALSE)..... 29

 Family Engagement Support..... 30

 Service Delivery Plans and Reviews..... 30

 Summer Planning Days.....31

 Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCI)..... 31

 Intensive Support Team (IST).....33

 Service Delivery Resource Guide and Supplemental Resources.....34



Part One

Background

The mission of the Department of Student Services is to ensure appropriate services are provided to students with disabilities, empowering all to reach their full individual potential to meet and exceed grade level academic and behavioral standards within inclusive educational environments. Access to the core curriculum, content, and connected learning activities are possible when scholars are included in general education classrooms. This plan, inclusive of the guidance of the WI Department of Public Instruction and MMSD Student Services leadership, stresses the need to ensure goals and services are designed to make progress in the general education curriculum and toward grade-level standards a reality for all scholars with an IEP.

While many MMSD students with an IEP have benefited from excellent inclusive educational experiences and realized positive postschool outcomes, others have not. This is especially true of our Black/African American scholars with an IEP. At the time of this plan development, MMSD was identified by the WI Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to have significant disproportionality in the areas of Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD), Other Health Impairment (OHI), Intellectual Disability (ID), Educational Environment (Inclusion), and discipline. This is not consistent with our mission, vision, or values.

The content and goals of this plan were informed by the previous district special education plan (2016 - 2019), and the special education evaluation completed by WestEd in spring 2021. Analysis of district special education identification, service delivery, discipline, and outcomes data from the past ten years was foundational to plan development. This included the data utilized by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction in identifying MMSD as being significantly disproportionate for Black/African American scholars in several categories. In addition, findings from peer-reviewed research regarding evidence-based practices to foster positive outcomes for scholars with an IEP were used in the writing of this plan.

SMART Goals

Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART)

Multiple sources of quantitative and qualitative data collected over four or more school years, in conjunction with results from the WestEd evaluation report, were synthesized for the development of the three interconnected Student Services SMART goals before the start of the 2022-23 school year. We firmly believe holding ourselves accountable for these goals is critical to facilitating more positive outcomes for scholars with an IEP. Through the consistent and adaptive implementation of the combination of strategies identified under each of the three SMART in this plan, in conjunction with regular school and district level data reviews we will evaluate progress. We will work diligently toward achieving more equitable, inclusive and academically successful educational experiences for scholars with an IEP through the 2025-26 school year and beyond by principle of implementation science to key strategies described.



SMART Goal #1

Decrease Disproportionality in Special Education in a) identification, b) educational environment (inclusion), and c) discipline (defined as: levels 3, 4, and 5 behavior referrals, restraint and seclusion, and out of suspensions) for scholars who are Black/African-American by at least 3% annually until gaps are closed.

Rationale

MMSD has had persistent disproportionality in special education identification for multiple years. This problem was identified in the 2016-2019 special education plan as well as the WestEd evaluation report. Disproportionality has consistently been specific to Black/African American students, and is directly related to the MMSD Strategic Framework goal highlighting the need for 4K through 12th grade educators to intentionally strive to help Black/African American scholars excel in school.. Disproportionate identification in special education for Black/African American scholars is a root cause of lowered expectations, segregated environments, reduced access to core content and instruction, modified work and grading, shifts to alternative graduation requirements, lower rates of college attendance, and ultimately lower overall lifetime income earning (Gingerich & Crane 2021).

The data below represent the percentage of White students who have been identified over the last ten years compared to the percentage of Black/African American scholars and placed in special education. Because placement in special education requires the determination of a disability, placement proportions should be similar, meaning without statistically significant differences, across racial/ethnic groups. Disproportionate rates indicate the need to examine implicit biases and evaluation processes.

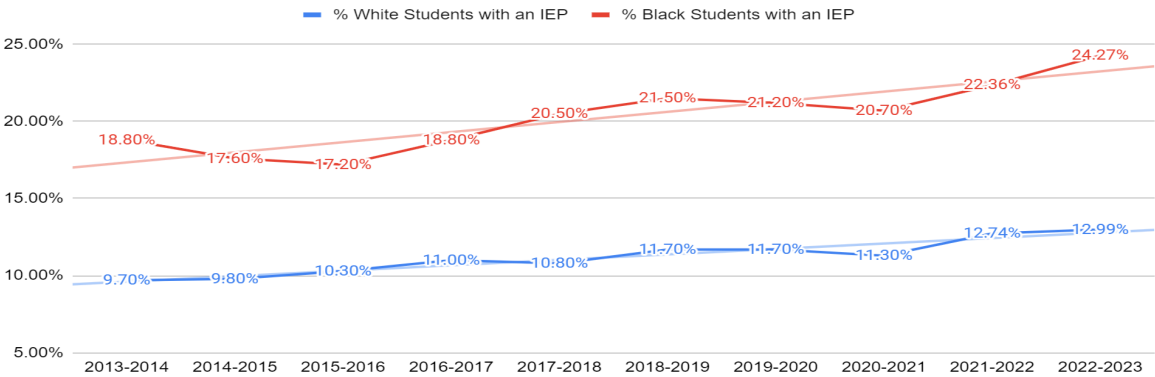
Data

Districtwide Disproportionality in Special Education 2013-14 through 2022-23:

% White Students with an IEP	9.7	9.8	10.3	11	10.8	11.7	11.7	11.3	12.74	12.99
% Black Students with an IEP	18.8	17.6	17.2	18.8	20.5	21.5	21.2	20.7	22.36	24.27



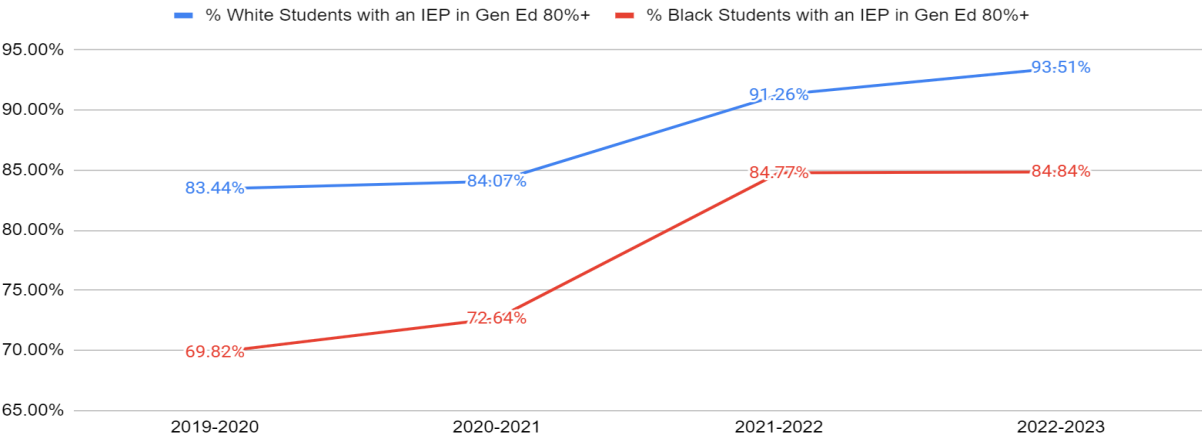
Disproportionality in Special Education 2013-14 through 2022-23



Districtwide Disproportionality in Inclusive Environment 2019-20 through 2022-23:

% White Students with an IEP in Gen Ed 80%+	83.44	84.07	91.26	93.51
% Black Students with an IEP in Gen Ed 80%+	69.82	72.64	84.77	84.84

Disproportionality in Inclusive Environment 2019-20 through 2022-23



As a district, we also review behavior referral and discipline data at least annually. There are disturbing trends in disproportionate use of restraint and seclusion, as well as levels four and five behavior referrals, for scholars with IEP. This issue of serious concern was prominent in the academic outcomes section of the WestEd

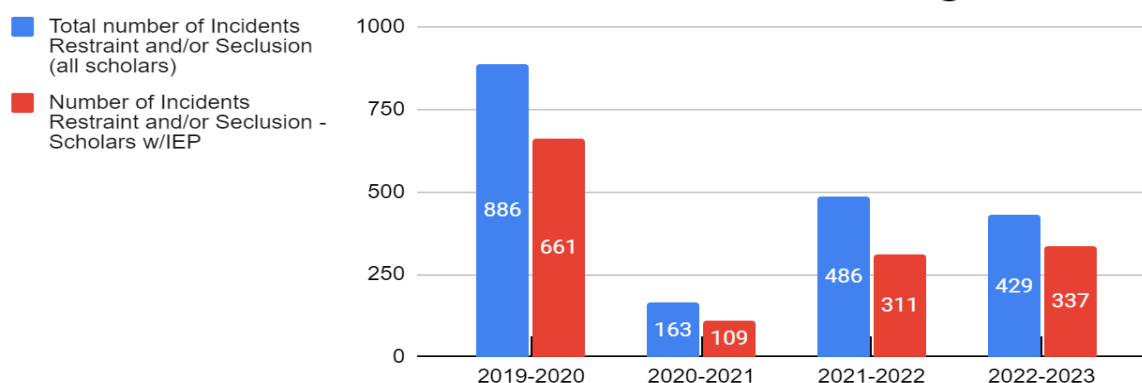


evaluation report. Our Black/African American scholars with an IEP are more likely than their White peers to be restrained, secluded, and receive discipline referrals.

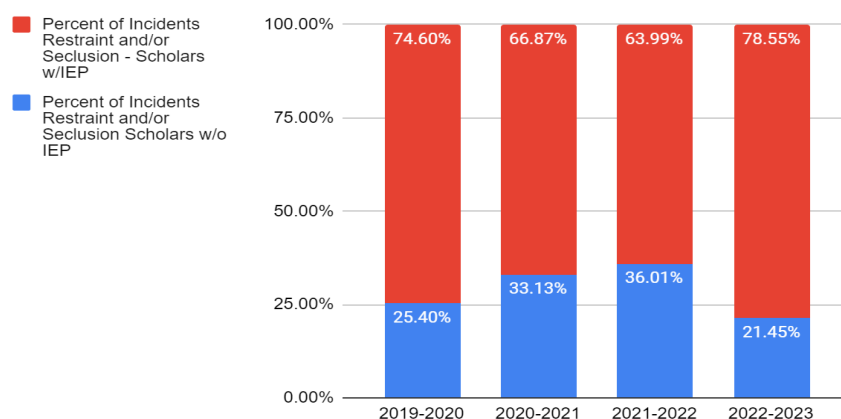
Disproportionality in Incidents of Restraint and Seclusion 2019-20 through 2022-23

# Total Incidents Restraint and/or Seclusion (all scholars)	886	163	486	429
# Incidents Restraint and/or Seclusion - Scholars w/IEP	661	109	311	337

Incidents of Restraint and Seclusion 2019-20 through 2022-23



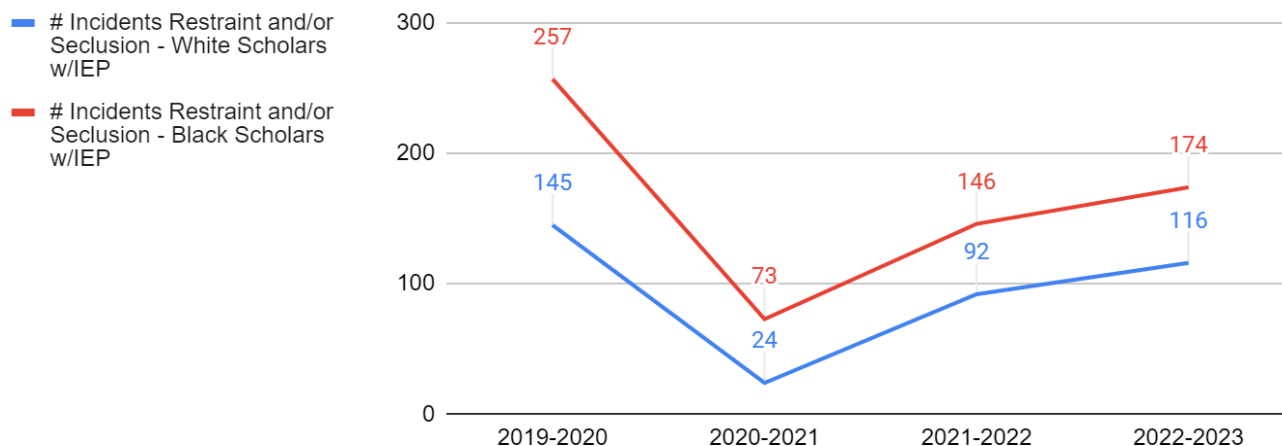
Percent of Incidents Restraint and/or Seclusion



# Incidents Restraint and/or Seclusion - White Scholars w/IEP	145	24	92	116
# Incidents Restraint and/or Seclusion - Black Scholars w/IEP	257	73	146	174



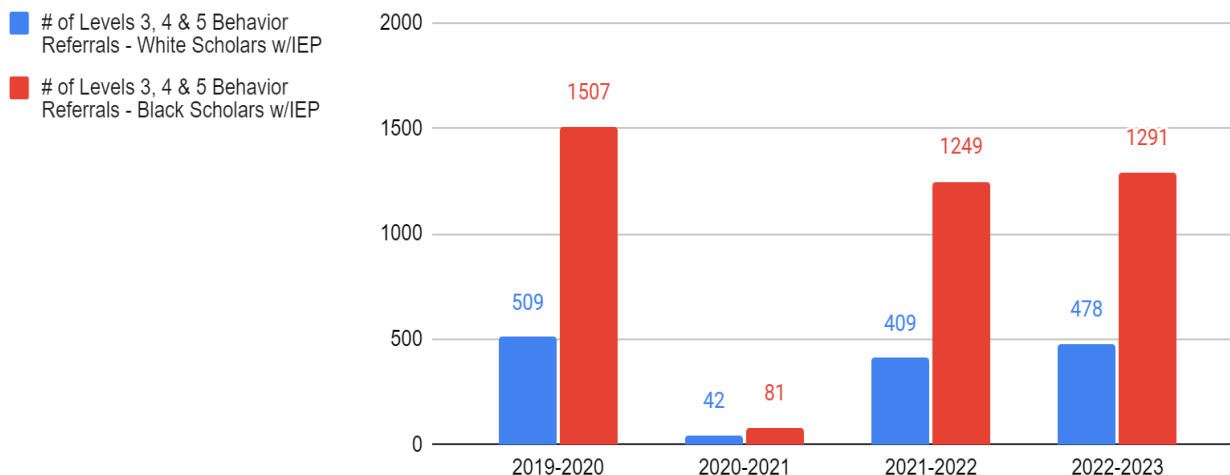
Incidents of Restraint and Seclusion for Black and White Scholars with an IEP



Disproportionality in Levels 3, 4 & 5 Behavior Referrals 2019-20 through 2022-23

# of Levels 3, 4 & 5 Behavior Referrals - White Scholars w/IEP	509	42	409	478
# of Levels 3, 4 & 5 Behavior Referrals - Black Scholars w/IEP	1507	81	1249	1291

Disproportionality in Levels 3, 4 & 5 Behavior Referrals 2019-20 through 2022-23



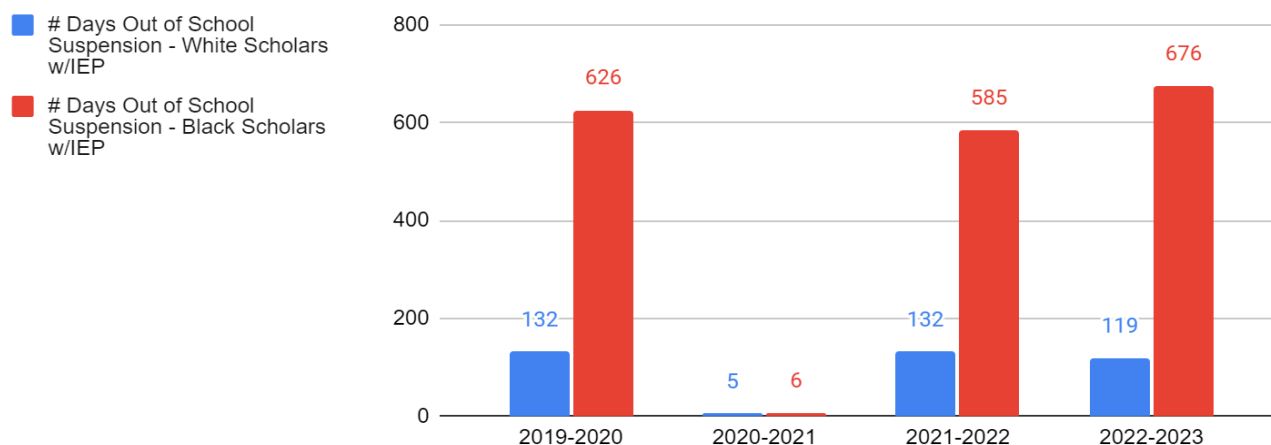
Disproportionality in Out of School Suspensions 2019-20 through 2022-23

(middle and high school only beginning in 2022-23)



# Days Out of School Suspension - White Scholars w/IEP	132	5	132	119
# Days Out of School Suspension - Black Scholars w/IEP	626	6	585	676

Disproportionality in Out of School Suspension 2019-20 through 2022-23



Each data point will be tracked by level and targeted efforts made to change disproportionate trends. The relationship to disproportionality, and the need to establish routines for data use and accountability in this area was described in the WestEd evaluation report. Student Services, and the District are working hard to establish and maintain data routines that will allow us to both determine when strategies are having the positive impact we hope for, and pivot to adjust strategies when they are not. In establishing data routines and evaluating efficacy of strategies, MMSD and Student Services will be applying principles of implementation science to this goal of reducing disproportionality.

We realize that an annual goal of 3% does not seem sufficient for this critically important work. Disproportionality is also addressed in School Improvement Plans, and schools with the most significant disproportionality are encouraged to set more ambitious change goals. We also recognize it is vitally important to ensure leaders and staff across the district understand the need to change mindsets and practices to reverse this trend and close disproportionality gaps.

Underlying Theory of Action Sub-Goals

- Strengths-based IEPs, clearly connected to grade-level standards, are essential to this work and emphasize both what scholars need to learn and also how educators will facilitate that learning
- Evaluations and IEPs that are intentionally anti-racist are necessary to combat disproportionality.
- Reduction in the number of scholars, especially Black/African American scholars, who receive behavior referrals and are restrained and/or secluded in our schools is a critical data point we will monitor and actively work to change. Reduction in overrepresentation in the special



education categories of Emotional Behavioral Disorders (EBD), Intellectual Disability (ID), Other Health Impairment (OHI), and Educational Environment (inclusion in general education) is a primary objective.

- d. Movement toward eliminating the existence of risk ratios for scholars of color, particularly Black/African American scholars, can be achieved by setting school benchmarks to reduce these in areas listed above.

Strategies for Addressing Disproportionality

Educator and assessment biases are known factors in the overrepresentation of Black/African American students in special education. Multiple years of providing implicit bias training alone have not worked to reduce our disproportionality. The need to take further action to address disproportionality was prominent in both the 2016-19 special education plan and the WestEd evaluation report. An emerging body of research suggests the need for concrete action steps and requirements are essential to address the problem of overrepresentation (Voulgarides et al., 2017). For this reason, MMSD Student Services launched an Anti-Racist IEP Initiative in the fall of 2021 to address biases and decrease disproportionality in special education. This work includes the implementation of Anti-Racist tools to be used by special education staff and IEP teams. Professional learning opportunities have been offered regularly since the project launched, and will continue on an ongoing basis. More specifically, professional learning will continue to be provided during summer offerings, Welcome Back week, monthly PST meetings, and monthly role-alike for CC Teachers and SEAs. This project is part of a set of targeted evidence-based improvement strategies being implemented to address the root causes of disproportionality.

Key Strategies:

Anti-Racist Evaluation (ARE) and IEP Processes and Professional Learning – [ARE and IEP Initiative Requirements](#) for improved fidelity in the use of evaluation processes and tools to foster strength-based, anti-racist evaluations and IEPs. These tools were developed for the purposes of fostering increased expectations and reducing disproportionality in special education placement rates for Black/African American students. The need to identify and employ concrete steps to address significant disproportionality in special education in MMSD was highlighted in both the 2016-19 special education plan and the WestEd evaluation report. Project components include:

- [Anti-Racist IEP Criteria 2023-24](#) - Utilized starting in the 2021-22 school year with directed use by PSTs and special education case managers and IEP teams when writing transfer, initial or annual IEPs. Use of this tool has expanded over the last two school years to IEPs for all scholars of color. This tool helps IEP teams, in conjunction with scholars and family members, to address differences found through qualitative analysis in the language used in IEPs of scholars of color compared to their peers who are white. This issue was noted in the WestEd evaluation report.
- [Anti-Racist IEPs Rubric & Reflection](#) - Google form developed to facilitate self-reflection regarding implicit bias on the part of special educators that comes through in the language used in IEPs. Directed use by special education case managers for at least one scholar of color annually to support self-reflection and knowledge of implicit bias that leads to negative



language in IEPs of scholars of color. The need to further address implicit biases was identified in the 2016-19 special education plan and the WestEd evaluation report.

- [Anti-Racist Evaluation Criteria](#) - for conducting review of existing data (RED) meetings. This resource was purposefully designed to assist the team during the early stages of the special education referral process. This tool will help teams consider and address potential areas of bias in initial and re-evaluations over time. Pilot implementation will take place the second semester of the 2023-24 school year, with expanded implementation planned in the 2024-25 school year.
- Resources and Professional Learning:
 - [ARIC Mission and Vision](#)
 - [ARE and II PL Scope and Sequence](#)
 - [ARE and II Slides January24](#)
 - [ARI Criteria Use Data](#)
 - To support professional learning opportunities, Student Services offers paid time outside contract hours with expert staff to support the utilization of these tools. Additional steps by Student Services/the Anti-Racist Evaluation and IEP Committee) AREIC team include:
 - Support for Staff - [ARE & I Initiative Open Labs](#) provide the opportunity for ongoing professional learning, including direct assistance during open labs, which are times available outside contract hours to utilize the project tools and complete the work.
 - Collaboration with general education scaffolds, multi-tiered systems of support, and interventions (collaboration with Curriculum and Instruction, Student and Staff Support, and State and Federal Programs).
 - [ARE and II Work Plan](#) to house evolving professional learning, data, engagement, and outcomes evidence.

Anti-Racist Evaluation and IEP Support for Family Members – educating and supporting family members will foster participation in processes and help family members understand the need for regular education-tiered interventions and anti-racist evaluation practices. With this knowledge, and based on a related recommendation from the WestEd evaluation report, Student Services hired multiple liaisons to serve as a resource and support for families from diverse backgrounds.

Social and Emotional Learning Skill Building Resources – lessons and interventions will foster the provision of general education-tiered interventions and data collection to reduce evaluations and placement in special education regarding emotional, behavioral disability. The need to provide more resources and professional learning to staff so they can effectively support scholars struggling to meet behavior expectations was noted in the WestEd evaluation report. For the two years prior to the



finalization of this plan, Student Services has worked collaboratively with the Student and Staff Supports department to develop new and improved social and emotional skills teaching resources.

Character Strong Adoption - as a component of social and emotional skill-building work, the district began the adoption of Character Strong, which offers curriculum and intervention materials and processes. This means Character Strong can be utilized as part of our multi-leveled system of support and when scholars are referred for potential need for special education services based on struggles meeting behavioral expectations. Character Strong is being used at the secondary level in the 2023-24 school year, with a pilot and expansion planned at the elementary level beginning in the second semester of 2024. More concretely and systematically addressing social and emotional skill development needs of scholars, and professional learning needs of staff, were listed as needs in the WestEd evaluation report.

Restorative Justice Modeling and Professional Learning – highly trained experts will model for staff and work directly with students to reduce behavior incidents, absenteeism, and referrals for initial special education evaluation. For the first time in the 2023-24 school year, Student Services is contracting directly with Natural Circles of Support (NCoS) to work with staff and scholars at several schools in the East attendance area. Expectations outlined for this work include reducing disproportionate referrals for special education evaluation, and increasing attendance/engagement and improvising literacy and math proficiency rates for Black/African American scholars. We will apply implementation science principles to gauge progress. Data, working from baseline, will be tracked at the schools where NCoS is present and implementing specific strategies.

Foundational Strategies:

Provision of High-Quality Early Childhood Options - MMSD staff engage in rigorous child-find activities with the Department of Health Services and numerous community partners. We have staff who provide early childhood special education services across Madison in-home and daycare settings. We host a service called Play and Learn for scholars with identified disabilities to be in schools and classrooms alongside peer partners before entering 4K. The district expanded full-day 4K in the 2023-24 school year. In addition, MMSD has three-year-old classrooms in three schools. Expansion of early childhood services in our schools supports the improvement of academic and social skill outcomes that are needed to reduce disproportionate special education referral and placement rates. Student Services staff have more time to advise implementation of Universal Design for Learning, and tiered strategies within the Multi-leveled System of Support prior to moving to special education referral for scholars who need time and explicit instruction to settle into school routines. This need to address gaps for our youngest scholars was noted in the WestEd evaluation report.

Districtwide Literacy Curricula for Elementary and Middle Schools - MMSD identified and responded to the need to provide rigorous core curricula in reading instruction and maintain high expectations and high levels of inclusion for scholars, particularly those who are Black/African American. Having high quality, science of reading-aligned curricula at the elementary and middle school levels will foster increased engagement in grade-level literacy instruction for scholars with an IEP. Through the provision of high quality core literacy instruction materials, we believe the achievement gaps, and coinciding increased special education referral rates, for Black/African American



scholars will be positively impacted. This need was noted in both the 2016-19 special education plan and the WestEd evaluation report.

Multi-Level Systems of Support - available to staff and co-supported with Student Services and other Teaching and Learning departments across elementary schools [K-5 MLSS Options Oct23](#). As noted in both the 2016-2019 special education plan and the WestEd evaluation report, MMSD central office departments needed to renew our commitment to providing resources and professional learning for staff in schools to understand and implement a strong multi-leveled system of support. By working together, the departments housed under Teaching and Learning are coordinating efforts to consistently employ both school and scholar-level problem-solving to address academic and behavioral skill development needs.

LETRS Training for teachers – teachers will gain an increased understanding of the science of reading and the percent of students scoring proficient or higher on standardized reading assessments will improve. Identified as a need in the work of the literacy council, the 2016-19 special education plan, and the WestEd evaluation report, MMSD helps to address disproportionate special education referrals through this professional learning for teachers. This training also meets one of the requirements outlined in Act 20.

General Education Reading Interventionists – general education interventionists will identify specific areas of needed skill development in reading for students and address those needs to prevent referral and qualification for special education services. Student Services will work in collaboration with Curriculum and Instruction to expand allocation for reading interventionists. Given new literacy curricula and LETRS training, we anticipate the efficacy of reading interventionists at the elementary and middle levels will increase.

District adoption of the Integrated Comprehensive Systems (ICS) Equity Framework - the ICS framework was developed to address disproportionality by changing school and district structures utilizing strategies aligned with all three Student Services SMART goals and the MMSD strategic framework. ICS Equity work includes: drawing from research, integrating equitable systems by supporting school teams, addressing the range of needs across all scholars, including staff working directly with scholars daily, and providing accountability measures to track necessary growth at both school and district levels

Targeted School Improvement Strategies – data-based decision-making will be applied to drive school and, ultimately, district change in areas of significant disproportionality. (school-level data to be provided regularly. Student Services leadership is committed to reviewing disproportionality data quarterly and including the data in quarterly updates with principals and program support teachers. This aligns with recommendations in the 2016-19 special education plan and WestEd evaluation report to improve data systems and improve collaboration with principals and other school leaders to facilitate changes in referral rates for scholars of color.



SMART Goal #2

Increase Inclusion, as measured by IEP code 80% + in general education, by at least 2% annually at each building level

Rationale

Students with an IEP are typically included in general education for less of their school day as they move up levels (from elementary to middle and middle to high) based on perceptions that they cannot be successful in general education classes as they get more academically challenging. Long-standing research refutes this way of thinking. In fact, students with an IEP have better academic and social-emotional outcomes when they are included in general education with peers who do not have an IEP for 80% or more of the day (Cole et al., 2021). This is because they feel more welcome and included in their schools and gain exposure to the same core content as their peers. No one can learn anything they do not have the opportunity to learn. This becomes particularly critical in high school because not earning Carnegie credit for any required courses changes the post-secondary options for students. Any student who does not earn Carnegie credit for a required class earns modified credit instead. Modified credit or any required class eliminates the possibility of applying to attend a four-year college or university straight out of high school (would require attending a two-year college first). These same concerns and recommendations were identified in the WestEd evaluation report, with graduation rates and postschool outcomes being addressed prominently, particularly for Black/African American scholars. Thus, increasing inclusion, especially for Black/African American students, is related to decreasing disproportionality in special education.

While our data indicate inclusion rates are higher than the state average, full inclusion is a long-standing evidence-based practice in fostering positive outcomes for scholars with an IEP. Research shows that scholars with an IEP have more positive academic outcomes, social and emotional learning outcomes and express a higher quality of life the more they are included. This also makes logical sense; we all want to be included and feel like we belong.

MMSD has a strong history of providing special education services in inclusive classroom environments. Our work with Integrated Comprehensive Systems (ICS) for Equity and the Program for Inclusive Neurodiversity Education (PINE) exemplify strong district commitment in conjunction to achieve and maintain high levels of inclusivity for our scholars with an IEP.

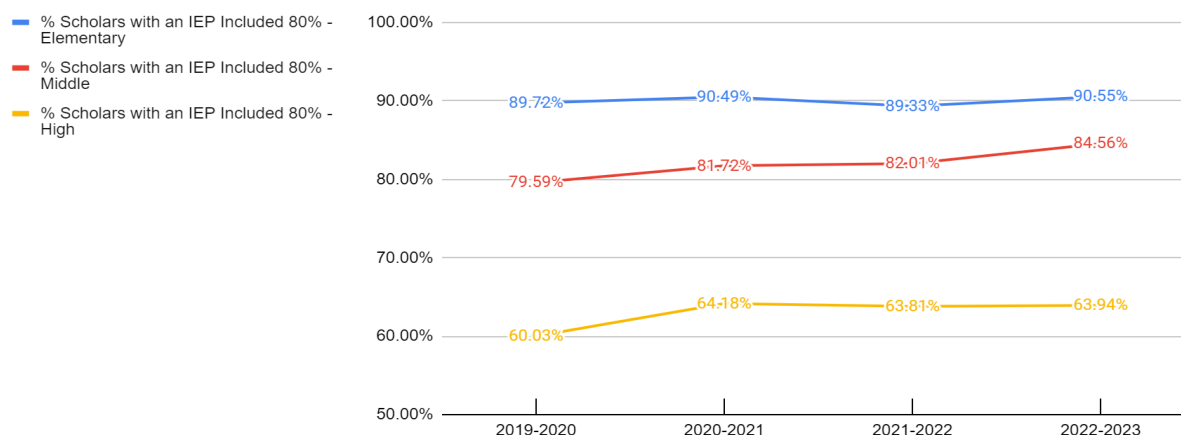
Data

Rates of Inclusion (Defined as 80% + in Gen Ed Environment) 2019-20 through 2022-23

% Scholars with an IEP Included 80% - Elementary	89.72	90.49	89.33	90.55
% Scholars with an IEP Included 80% - Middle	79.59	81.72	82.01	84.56
% Scholars with an IEP Included 80% - High	60.03	64.18	63.81	63.94



Rates of Inclusion (Defined as 80% + in Gen Ed Environment) 2019-20 through 2022-23



In special education, the IEP team determines types, amounts, frequencies, and setting for each service (special education or general education) for a scholar. Targeted professional learning is being used with PSTs, CC Teachers, and staff who serve as LEA representative at IEP team meetings to grow their understanding of the need for IEP teams to always consider full-time participation in general education first, adding only the amount of instruction in the special education environment for maximum educational engagement and learning. It is important to remember that the goal specifies increasing the percentage of scholars with an IEP who are included in general education 80% or more of the time, not 100% of the time. In each IEP, the level of inclusion must be identified (code = 80% of the time or more, code B = 40 - 79%, and code C = 39% or less). The special education case manager must also write a justification for the amount of time a student will not be in the general education environment.

This SMART goal for the department/district is intended to foster conversations among IEP team members about how engagement and success in general education to the greatest extent possible can be supported with special education services. The expressed purpose of special education services (in IDEA) is to facilitate progress toward grade level standards. This happens best in general education.

Underlying Theory of Action Sub-Goals

- Increasing scholar time in the general education environment through IEP team discussions about how supports and services can be sufficiently provided in inclusive settings is needed for optimal success, which includes improving graduation rates and postschool outcomes. (IEP teams make decisions about the location of services - general education or special education)
- Increasing participation in co-curricular activities is a component of inclusive opportunities.
- Reducing the number of scholars on a shortened school day schedule is an imperative aspect of inclusion.
- Addressing attendance concerns at school and in classes, for scholars with an IEP, is a core component within IEP team meetings if a scholar misses 10 days or more in a school year.



Strategies for Increasing Inclusion

Key Strategies:

IEP Services in the General Education Environment - LEA representative training now covers this topic more thoroughly. In successful inclusive schools, all students, including those with disabilities, lose neither services nor support, but gain the opportunity to have full membership and to grow in functional and meaningful ways in the social and learning contexts of their nondisabled peers.

Consistent Effort to Engage in Core - A successful inclusive learning community facilitates consistent access to core content alongside peers without identified disabilities, collaboration, problem-solving, self-directed learning, and critical discourse. For scholars who are determined by their IEP team to need specially designed instruction in one or more core content areas, professional learning provided to special education case managers and staff who serve as LEA representative includes the recommendation for such service(s) to be provided as a second engagement or “double-scoop” of the subject area content in addition to core.

Program for Inclusive Neurodiversity Education (PINE) Professional Learning – piloted with staff at five schools in 2022-23 and expanded to all elementary schools this year, PINE professional learning includes on-line modules, resources, and office hours. By engaging with PINE learning, educators will better understand neurodiversity, the benefits of inclusion, and strategies for serving students well in inclusive environments. Staff who have completed a portion of the PINE learning, and utilized resources, have provided positive feedback. Both ICS Equity and PINE provide enhanced opportunities for collaboration between general and special education staff, and address identified professional learning needs across the district. These issues were noted in the 2016-19 special education plan and the WestEd evaluation report.

Foundational Strategies:

Scholars with an IEP Not Singled Out - Co-Teaching is one of the most beneficial special education service delivery model options. This includes co-planning to ensure principles of universal design for instruction and differentiation of content.. Inclusive schools are designed to meet the educational needs of all their members within common, yet fluid, environments and activities.

Accommodations and Modifications in General Education - Inclusive schools and classrooms employ principles of Universal Design for Learning, Co-teaching, and Peer Support models to allow:

- (a) students with extraordinary gifts and talents to move at their natural learning rate,
- (b) students who progress at a slower rate move at the best of their ability (gaining learning strategies as well as remaining part of the exciting content of the themes and lessons), and
- (c) students with specific learning challenges receive creative and effective services and supports to maximize their success toward IEP and learning goals connected to general education grade-level standards..



Consistently High Expectations - This term incorporates efforts to maintain inclusion in general education for all scholars, and IEP and learning goals based on the grade-level learning standards. When teachers use what they know about students' strengths, they can provide culturally responsive and meaningful lessons that use students' prior knowledge as the building blocks for learning.

Collaboration with Advanced Learning Staff - guidance has been provided for special education case managers and advanced learning specialists to collaborate. This includes inviting each other to student meetings to ensure the needs of scholars with exceptionality in both areas are coordinated in general education classrooms. ICS Equity stresses push-in for both special education and advanced learning services, so our departments will work together to provide additional professional learning in this area.

SMART Goal #3

Increase Proficiency in Reading/English and Math(as measured by standardized assessment scores) by at least 3% annually at each building level

As we began implementation of this SMART goal in the fall of 2022, we recognized there were negative impacts from the COVID pandemic more detrimental to the learning and emotional well-being of some scholars than others. For this reason, some scholars with an IEP were provided Additional Services, primarily during the summer of 2021. However, as a school district, we know we must not consider the duty to help scholars return to positive engagement and optimal achievement in school and learning behind us. This clear and prominent daily objective remains our constant charge. Education begins in early childhood, with our youngest scholars, and continues through high school graduation. For some scholars with an IEP, transition services continue through the end of the school year during which they turn 21 years old. Teaching scholars reading/literacy and math skills is part of the IEP until graduation.

The WestEd evaluation report addressed the problematic academic outcomes of scholars with an IEP, beginning with young scholars who begin school behind their peers with regard to reading and math skills, and who remained behind grade level achievement throughout their educational careers. As a district, we know we must improve access to core instruction, accommodations and supports to engage meaningfully in learning activities, and ultimately achieve at or above grade level or scholars with an IEP.

Both special education and general education staff must be supported to adopt practices based on the philosophy that all scholars are general education scholars first and remain focused on improving academic outcomes based on general education grade-level standards. One way this is measured is through required standardized assessment results.

Data

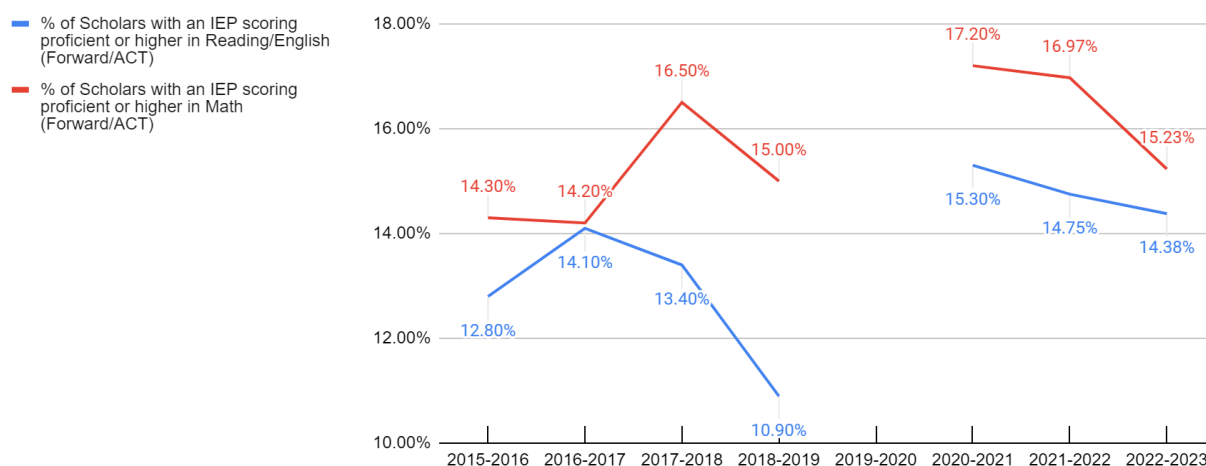
Reading and Math Proficiency Rates for Students with an IEP 2015-16 through 2022-23

% of Scholars with an IEP scoring proficient or higher in Reading/English (Forward/ACT)	12.8	14.1	13.4	10.9	--	15.3	14.75	14.38
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% of Scholars with an IEP scoring proficient or higher in Math (Forward/ACT)	14.3	14.2	16.5	15	--	17.2	16.97	15.23
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Reading and Math Proficiency Rates for Students with an IEP 2015-16 through 2022-23



Additional Recent Supporting Data (proficiency data for the two years previous to plan implementation, by building level):

Elementary

2021-22

2022-23

% of Scholars with an IEP scoring proficient or higher in Reading/English (Forward/ACT)	14.75	14.38
% of Scholars with an IEP scoring proficient or higher in Math (Forward/ACT)	16.97	15.23

Middle

2021-22 2022-23

% of Scholars with an IEP scoring proficient or higher in Reading/English (Forward/ACT)	9.03	12.96
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% of Scholars with an IEP scoring proficient or higher in Math (Forward/ACT)	8.45	10.39
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High**2021-22 2022-23**

% of Scholars with an IEP scoring proficient or higher in Reading/English (Forward/ACT)	12.33	18.31
% of Scholars with an IEP scoring proficient or higher in Math (Forward/ACT)	7.95	4.93

School and District Level Improvement Plans include goals for improving academic outcomes for all scholars. Data demonstrate a clear need to increase our focus on the instruction to scholars with an IEP in the key academic achievement areas of reading and math.

We know that annual IEP goals must be written to address gaps in reading and math skills when those exist for an individual scholar. Student Services has and will continue to stress the importance of writing IEP goals to foster progress toward grade-level standards in reading and math. IEP teams must pay attention to quarterly progress so services are adjusted if a scholar is not making sufficient progress.

We also acknowledge that daily and weekly progress monitoring and formative and summative assessments are key information for gauging learning. We have chosen to utilize standardized assessment data because these are consistent measures and the ones being tracked in School Improvement Plans.

Thus, the theory of action underlying this department's SMART goal is that when students have one or more goals written to foster progress toward grade-level reading and math standards, services are written to help students make progress toward their goals, and IEPs are implemented as written, reading and math proficiently rates will improve. A portion of the plan also describes the need for the IEP team to come together to discuss changes if a scholar does not make expected progress toward multiple annual goals.

Underlying Theory of Action Sub-Goals

- a. IEPs must be written with present level information and annual goals clearly written to foster growth toward grade-level academic standards and social and emotional learning competencies.
- b. Implementation of Special Education interventions and services with fidelity, and in the general education classroom to the greatest degree possible for each scholar, will yield the best academic and social and emotional outcomes for scholars.



- c. IEPs that foster growth towards annual goals and grade level achievement, must be reviewed and revised when data indicate insufficient progress toward goal attainment for two quarters in a row.
- d. Increasing the percentage of scholars with an IEP who participate in state and district-wide assessments will provide a more comprehensive set of data to drive more productive discussions around academic outcomes. Increasing the percentage of scholars with an IEP in elementary, middle, and high school who score proficient in grade-level reading/English and math standards (college-ready for high schools) will facilitate increases in the percentage of scholars with an IEP who graduate with a Carnegie credit diploma and who go on to postsecondary education.

Strategies for Increasing Math and Reading Proficiency Rates

Key Strategies:

Interim Assessment - For scholars with an identified gap between their present level of performance and grade level skills, targeted instruction to match areas of skill development need and ongoing progress monitoring is provided.

Formative Assessment - Embedded within access to core content instruction are opportunities to provide ongoing assessment and feedback pertaining to the knowledge and skills all scholars at the same grade level are expected to have.

Interventions - [Specific interventions](#) must be provided for scholars with identified learning needs (based on assessment data and compared to grade level standards).

Inclusive Services - Special education services that are provided in general education classes alongside peers without IEP. (key strategies for achieving SMART goal #2 apply).

Foundational Strategies:

Education Service Delivery - Scaffolds to materials, learning activities, assignments, and assessments; pre-teaching, re-teaching, accommodations, modifications, and assistive technology in the general education environment.

- **Accommodations** - changes to how a scholar meets expectations, but not the expectations (extra time, breaks, verbal vs, written answers, fewer questions, text to speech/speech to text).
- **Modifications** - expectations are changed to align with the current skills of the scholar.
- **Assistive Technology** - any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability. Assistive Technology can be high, medium, or low-tech.



Consistently High Expectations - similar to the goal of optimal inclusion, holding consistently high expectations is foundational to improving student academic proficiency. General and special educators must understand that scholars with an IEP can achieve grade level standards and beyond. Scholars with an IEP may be advanced learners in reading, writing and/or math. They may also be English language learners. For scholars who have an IEP and are advanced and/or English language learners, general, special, bilingual, and advanced learning educators must collaborate and coordinate to afford maximum learning and accomplishment for scholars with multiple exceptional learner strengths and needs.

Progress Monitoring - Data collected and analyzed at least quarterly for each student's annual IEP goals. Progress reports for every goal are written, saved in the district IEP system (GO IDEA), and sent to parents/guardians.

Alignment with District Strategic Goals

Student Services Department objectives, by design, align with District Strategic Priorities:

Goal 1 Every child is on track to graduate ready for college, career and community. (aligned with increasing math and reading proficiency for scholars with an IEP)

Goal 2 The district and every school in it is a place where children, staff and families thrive. (aligned with increasing inclusive opportunities for scholars with an IEP)

Goal 3 African American children and youth excel in school. (aligned with reducing disproportionality for scholar with an IEP who are Black/African American)

Alignment with Strategic Goals



The implementation of Student Services Department SMART goals strategies will be supported through a structure of special education leadership in collaboration with principals, families, and between special and general education staff. Administrators will track and review SMART goal and quality metrics data by school



and level or program area on an annual, monthly or quarterly basis, depending on the measure/frequency of data collection.

Application of Implementation Science principles will take place through professional learning offered to staff and reviews of data for the purposes of evaluating efficacy and making adjustments to strategies/practices. Professional learning will include active learning, leadership training, consultation, and system incentives (Powell et al., 2015). Through professional learning offerings and coaching to implement tools and interventions, we will work to systematically disseminate and implement key and foundational strategies (Cook & Odom, 2013). Data reviews will be completed working from baseline, tracking progress over time, and adjusting if data demonstrate lack of progress (plan, do, study, act cycle) (Fixen et al., 2013).

In addition to SMART goals baseline, strategy dissemination and implementation, and data reviews, Student Services tracks data related to required timelines and the implementation of particular strategies utilized to facilitate the delivery of high quality services and make progress toward our three SMART goals and beyond as a system. The following sections describe the combination of metrics and strategies we are using.

Compliance Priorities

As described above, strong, legally compliant, anti-racist IEPs that foster both growth and achievement of grade level learning standards leading to positive outcomes are essential. In order to achieve true equity and provide a rigorous, high quality education, we have a collective responsibility to uphold the rights of all scholars with an IEP and their families through compliance with federal and state timelines.

Compliance Data Points

- a. On-time IEPs.
- b. On-time evaluations.
- c. On-time progress reports (completed and sent to parents).
- d. IEPs that are implemented as written (service type(s), amount(s), frequency(ies), and setting(s) are provided as determined by the IEP team and by qualified staff).

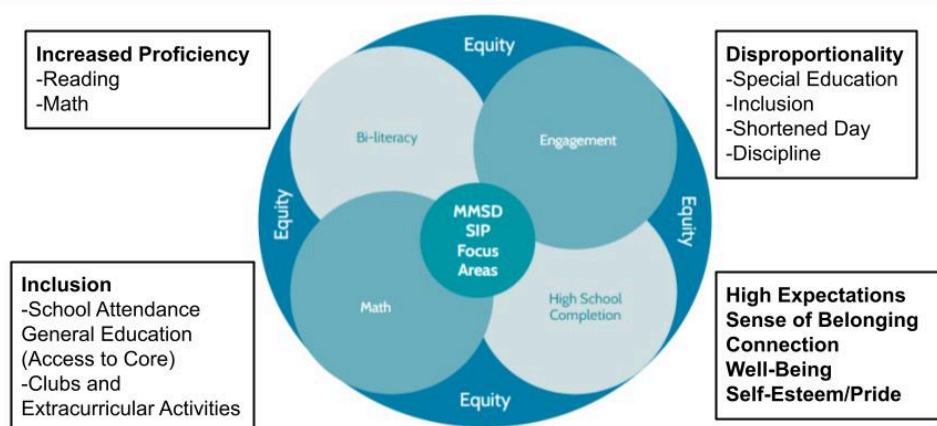
Strategies for Addressing Compliance

GoIDEA - MMSD Student Services utilizes a platform called GoIDEA to house all IEP and Section 504 Plan documents. Within this system, special education leaders and case managers utilize a master calendar system to schedule due dates by school and scholar. Alerts are also provided to staff to assist them in managing deadlines.

Program Support Teachers - The Student Services department is fortunate to have highly qualified staff who serve as Program Support Teachers (PSTs). PSTs allocation is provided to each school and program to assist staff directly with compliance and best practice requirements. PSTs serve as a key resource for cross-categorical special education teachers and principals.



District and School Improvement



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Part Two

Central Office Supports Provided to Schools

Partnership and Collaboration:

In order to provide each and every scholar with an IEP the best possible experiences in both general and special education, and accomplish the Student Services SMART Goals outlined above, principals, program support teachers, general education teachers, special education teachers, related services staff, special education assistants, and additional staff in our schools will work together to implement inclusive services, consistently applying Universal Design for Learning strategies within a multi-tiered system of supports. Outlined in this section are multiple ways Student Services Central Office and building staff work together to foster optimal success for scholars. This type of collaboration and communication was called out as an area for improvement in the WestEd evaluation report. During the 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24 school years, Central Office leadership has made concerted efforts to strengthen communication and partnerships with school-based leaders, families, and multiple other central office departments.

Assistant Directors:

MMSD has an Associate Superintendent of Student Services providing leadership and oversight to the district, schools, and Assistant Directors of Special Education and 504 Plan services. Assistant Directors are organized primarily by level and specialty area, with one overseeing Intensive Intervention Program services.

Support and Professional Learning for Program Support Teachers (PSTs): The Assistant Directors and the Associate Superintendent assist in developing and delivering professional learning for PSTs informally on an ongoing basis and formally on a monthly basis.

Connecting to Available Resources: Assistant Directors and the Associate Superintendent know and understand the resources available in the department and district, and help PSTs get connected to resources through professional learning and as needed.

Allocation Considerations: Assistant Directors and the Associate Superintendent work with PSTs and Principals to consider allocation needs for schools outside the workbook process, accessing IDEA flowthrough funds.

Time-Limited SEAs: Assistant Directors and the Associate Superintendent consider the provision of time-limited SEA support at a school in situations where new or unexpected needs arise.

School Level Problem-Solving: Assistant Directors meet with PSTs and principals on a monthly basis to share legal updates, problem solve issues, and review school data. The PST is a member of the school Student Support and Intervention Team (SSIT) and also completes all initial IEP evaluations with the team to ensure quality assessments in order to reduce disproportionality. Assistant Directors are



involved as the Local Education Authority (LEA) representative with complex IEPs meetings and provide ongoing support for any special education, parents of students with disabilities, and staff.

School Level Data: Assistant Directors review school-level data with the principal and PST at least one time per quarter.

Program Support Teachers (PSTs):

Student Services utilizes a special education leadership structure that includes the allocation of Program Support Teacher time to each school, program, and specialty area. This structure makes special education expertise consistently available to principals and staff within their building or program. High school PSTs work in one building, while elementary and middle school PSTs work across two buildings, splitting their time weekly to meet special education leadership needs at each. In addition, Student Services employs program support teachers for the areas of early childhood, Speech and Language Pathology, Occupational and Physical Therapy, Private and Parochial School obligations, Transition Services, Transportation, Manifestation Determinations, Alternate Assessments, IDEA Records and Compliance, and Professional Learning.

Work Daily in One (high school) or Two (elementary and middle) Schools: School-based PSTs work out of the building or buildings where they are assigned, serving as a regular source of support for principals, cc teachers, and scholars.

Initial Evaluations and Transfer Scholar Paperwork: PSTs are responsible for leading initial evaluations for the possible determination of special education service needs, and coordinating transfers into a school for scholars with an IEP.

Special Education Scheduling and Service Delivery Plans: PSTs lead summer planning days and help to determine the overall building special education service delivery plan and schedules for scholars and staff.

Assistance Obtaining Resources: PSTs understand the available resources within and outside of the district, and assist cc teachers, related services staff, principals, and families to connect to needed resources.

Cross Categorical (CC) Special Education Teachers and Special Education Assistants Support and Coaching: PSTs help CC teachers with planning and delivering instruction, preparing for and facilitating IEP team meetings, family communication, paperwork, and other assigned duties. PSTs also assist with scheduling and professional development for SEAs, in conjunction with Central Office Leadership.

Open Labs: PSTs run open labs outside contract time to assist cc teachers with required tasks (PSTs and cc teachers are paid for this time)

Role-Alike Professional Learning for CC Teachers: PSTs lead monthly role-alike sessions using the content developed by Assistant Directors and the Associate Superintendent, in conjunction with the Student Services Coordinator and PST of Professional Learning.



Professional Learning for Special Education Staff

Leadership:

Student Services employs an Assistant Director and a Coordinator of Professional Learning to share the responsibilities of planning, preparing, and delivering content. These staff are also responsible for ordering materials/licenses, to ensure program support teachers, PSTs, CC Teachers, and SEAs have high quality professional learning on topics necessary for their roles.

Program Support Teachers

Our Program Support Teachers are engaged in professional learning opportunities throughout the school year. Professional learning will occur once a month and will be led by the student services professional learning team, Assistant Directors, and the Associate Superintendent of Student Services. Professional learning topics covered for Program Support Teachers include, a) monthly data reviews (by school); b) procedural requirements (on an annual cycle and any required changes from WI DPI); c) Anti-Racist practice requirements and support; d) Program for Inclusive Neurodiversity Education (PINE); e) special education interventions; evidence-based and best practice instruction; adult education and coaching. Other topics are added as needed. The monthly set of slides provided to Program Support Teachers by Assistant Directors is also designed for use with cross categorical special education teachers, SEAs, and related services staff team members during monthly role-alike professional learning. The Assistant Director and Coordinator of Professional Learning work together to develop content and schedule offerings for staff on these topics.

Cross-Categorical Special Education Teachers

[PST and CC Teacher PL](#)

[Professional Learning Updates Jan2024](#)

Our Cross-Categorical Special Education Teachers will engage in professional learning throughout the school year, with optional professional learning opportunities being provided over the summer. Professional learning will focus on building the knowledge and skills needed to accelerate student learning.

Prior to the start of the school year, new Cross-Categorical teachers to the Madison Metropolitan School District will be provided individual time to meet with other new teachers, their building leadership team, and central office staff to learn about the systems and processes utilized in the Madison Metropolitan School District. Additionally, all Cross-Categorical teachers will participate in professional learning, led by central office staff, to learn about important updates specific to their roles and responsibilities.

During the school year, Cross-Categorical staff will participate in professional learning in their building Role Alike sessions. Role Alike sessions will be held on a monthly basis and will be coordinated by their building's Program Support Teacher. Program Support Teachers will meet with the Student Services leadership team, prior to Role Alike sessions, to assist in the development and dissemination of important topics and updates throughout the school year. Furthermore, Cross-Categorical staff will have the opportunity to participate in additional professional learning through the Open Labs structure. Open Labs are held on a weekly basis and are led by student service team members throughout the Madison Metropolitan School District. Open Lab



sessions may be focused on a particular topic or serve as general time for staff to collaborate and ask questions specific to their roles and responsibilities.

After the school year, Cross-Categorical staff will have the opportunity to participate in optional professional learning that is focused on specific curricula utilized in the Madison Metropolitan School District. These professional learning opportunities may be led by district staff with the knowledge and expertise needed to train others, or it may be led directly by the trainers of the specific curricula.

Special Education Assistants

[SEA PL](#)

Special Education Assistant (SEA) responsibilities include, but are not limited to, supporting the lesson plan of a properly licensed teacher, providing technical assistance to the teacher, and helping with classroom management. All newly hired SEAs receive a welcome letter describing professional learning structures designed for them, and all seasoned/veteran SEAs receive a professional learning opportunities document that provides detailed information for a given school year. The Student Services Professional Learning Site provides learning opportunities throughout the school year (Welcome Back, role-alike Monday afternoons, staff only days). Lastly, SEAs have access to 1:1 opportunities with the coordinator of professional learning throughout the school year.

The following are robust, anti-racist, anti-oppressive, culturally responsive professional learning topics that will enhance SEA's skills as professionals who support Scholars who have individualized education programs:

- a) Program for Inclusive Neurodiversity Education (PINE)
- b) Back Care and Safety
- c) Speech and Language Strategies
- d) Organizational Skills Part 1 and Part 2
- e) Mental Health: Trauma Informed Care
- f) Mindfulness Strategies
- g) Disability and Health Overview
- h) Social-Emotional Learning
- i) Dismantling Disability Stereotypes
- j) Core Competencies for SEAs
- k) Professional Learning Q&A
- l) Supporting Anti-Bullying
- m) High Leverage Practices & Special Education Professional Ethical Principles



n) Reflection on your practices

SEAs receive 15 paid professional learning hours outside of contract time from Student Services. SEAs are required to obtain permission from their principal and or assistant principal to attend optional learning. These hours can be used for attendance at Special Education Department meetings, and can be extended beyond 15 hours annually, if needed and approved by the building principal. Professional learning will include appropriate reading, writing, math, culturally responsive practices, anti-oppressive practices, and social/behavioral strategies. Professional learning will ensure SEAs are able to successfully support students with disabilities under the direct supervision of a licensed special education teacher. SEAs have access to the Student Services Coordinator of SEA Professional Learning, and the supervising Assistant Director, whenever professional learning needs arise.

Schools with Targeted Support (TSI) and Additional Targeted Support (ATSI) ESSA Designation

Student Services is committed to providing additional supports and resources needed, as identified in leadership meetings with principals, PSTs, and Assistant Directors. The key resources Student Services enhances for schools with TSI and ATSI designations include:

Allocation Decisions - Provision of funding for reading interventionists, tier 1, 2, and 3 resources and professional learning, and additional IDEA-funded special education staff allocation to support the delivery of high quality special education services.

Assistant Director Support - Frequent meetings with the principal and PST to ensure strong, equitable, and inclusive service delivery through the identification of who, when, and where services will be provided, guidance to IEP teams to consider fully inclusive services, and targeted strategies to foster improved academic outcomes using grade and age level standards for reading, math, and social and emotional skills as the basis for goals and services.

Principal Mentorship - Identification and deployment of veteran principals to meet with newer principals to help in developing inclusive special education service delivery systems for the purpose of utilizing staff and resources effectively and efficiently in ways that facilitate academic and social and emotional growth for students.

Anti-Racist Evaluation and IEP Processes Professional Learning - Provision of professional learning beyond that which is provided during Welcome Back week and Role-Alike time districtwide (through Open Labs and sessions offered at schools) to assist staff in engaging with the Anti-Racist Evaluation and IEP tools.

Verbal De-escalation Professional Learning - In order to better meet professional learning needs of staff and foster a reduction in behavior referrals and incidents of restraint and seclusion for students, targeted verbal de-escalation training was added to the scope of NVCI training in the 2023-24 school year.



Coordination with Student and Staff Support and SSIT Processes - PSTs serve on school SSITs to engage in discussions regarding tiers 1, 2, and 3 strategies and interventions employed, with response/progress evidence, prior to a referral for a special education evaluation. Examples of this cross-collaboration are the funding for reading interventionists, and funding and coordination of professional learning for academic and social and emotional learning interventions to be utilized prior to evaluation for potential placement in special education. This category of support also includes access to mental health resources for students and families, as well as individualized consultation and modeling in NCVI de-escalation strategies.

Student Services Grow Our Own and Accelerated Licensure in Special Education (ALSE)

Student Services Grow Our Own Overview:

The Student Services “Grow Our Own Teacher Dual Certification Program” is intended for MMSD general education classroom teachers or SEAs who are pursuing or wish to pursue a cross categorical special education certification and for cross categorical special education teachers who want to add bilingual certification. Related services (OT, PT, Speech) certification may also be eligible. This program exists because these are teaching areas of high need.

Selected candidates are eligible to receive a \$1,000 per each 3 credit course taken. There is no limit on the number of courses that can be reimbursed each semester, as long as each is required in your program plan and you achieve a grade of B or higher. The District will provide program recipients with a \$1000.00 tuition reimbursement after verification of tuition payment and successful course completion.

Two years ago, the Student Services Grow Our Own program expanded to offer tuition reimbursement to staff who do not yet have a bachelor’s degree in order to cast a wider net. This program is available to any MMSD staff interested seeking a license in a role that provides direct services to students with an IEP (cc teacher, OT, PT, SLP, psych, social worker).

Accelerated Licensure in Special Education (ALSE):

MMSD and the University of Wisconsin- Madison School of Education (UW-SoE) have collaboratively designed this program to support current MMSD Special Education Assistants (SEAs) or other non-instructional staff towards earning their special education certification and Master’s degree and becoming MMSD cross-categorical (CC) teachers. ALSE participants will become CC teachers with one year provisional licenses during their second year in the program and will have all UW tuition and segregated fees paid by the ALSE program. Individuals in ALSE Cohort 4 who have already earned a non-special education K-12 teacher licensure may begin ALSE year 1 as a CC teacher with one year provisional license and will have their UW tuition paid by ALSE from Sept. 2023-Aug. 2025.

ALSE is specifically designed to support MMSD CC teachers on provisional licenses with stipulations through coursework and supports that are integrated with the job responsibilities of CC teachers. To date, the ALSE program has welcomed over 60 participants into the program. Upon completion of the ALSE program, participants will serve as CC teachers in MMSD for three years post-certification, designed to intentionally meet the workforce needs of MMSD within special education to serve our scholars.



The ALSE program is a partnership with UW-Madison. Candidates of color are highly encouraged and this program has increased the number of licensed special educators in MMSD who identify as people of color. UW-Madison tracks data on participants.

Family Engagement Support

To engage students with disabilities in deep learning leading to college, career and community readiness, stronger family partnerships are needed. Improved communication systems need to be developed between teachers and parents of students with disabilities to increase the quantity and quality of two way family communication and engagement.

In order to achieve these goals, Student Services will provide a variety of different supports to engage and partner with families in our district. Family Resource Fairs and Learning Opportunities: Student Services, in collaboration with community partners, will host several resource fairs for families to gather information about community-based supports and services.

Family Ombudsperson - The Family Ombudsperson provides direct one to one support for our families that may have concerns about their child's educational programming or need additional support in connecting with community providers.

ARIC Parent Partners - The Parent Partner helps families better understand the ARIC IEP Criteria. Any family that requests this support will be connected via the Family Ombudsperson to one of our Parent Partners.

Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) - SEAC comprises 10-15 members that have a wide range of demographic, socio-economic and lived experience backgrounds. The council meets on a bi-monthly basis to work on improving outcomes for students with a disability through policy and programming recommendations. Each member will serve a two year term on the council.

Family Engagement Sessions - Will be hosted by the Associate Superintendent of Student Services every six to eight weeks throughout the school year. Beginning in the fall of 2023, these meetings are held in both English and Spanish (separate meetings). The Family Ombudsperson and other members of the Student Services Leadership team are invited. The purpose of these meetings is to share updates with family members and gather information about what our families experience in our district. Information will also be shared about different district initiatives, programs and learning opportunities.

Service Delivery Plans and Reviews

A Service Delivery Plan for a student is the implementation of the services listed in the program summary of the IEP. This includes part A) Supplementary Aids and Services, B) Specially Designed Instruction (SDI), C) Related Services, and D) Program Modifications. The Service Delivery planning process for a school is implemented as an essential component of School Instructional Design. This process is developed to assist schools in equitably allocating their resources to ensure all students with disabilities are receiving the



appropriate special education/related services in the correct educational environments. Service Delivery Plans are one data point used to determine distribution of IDEA-funded staffing allocation after July first annually. The Service Delivery process is also helpful in ensuring students with disabilities are scheduled into classes as heterogeneously as possible to reduce the use of clustering. Ideally, classroom densities would reflect the school's natural proportions. When a general education classroom approaches a density of 25 - 30% or higher students with disabilities, a service delivery analysis is triggered.

The analysis is conducted with the school principal, PST, and central office special education administrative staff to examine the context, circumstances, use of resources, and rationale. Ultimately, approval from special education administrative staff or key central office personnel is required for densities of 30% or higher. Service delivery for students with disabilities is an on-going process which evolves over the course of the year and changes to meet student learning needs. The service delivery process will also examine the scheduling of students who only receive speech and language services to ensure appropriate placement/balanced classrooms. Moreover, the service delivery analysis will also review and take into consideration dually identified students (English Language Learners and Advanced Learners) and those in highly restrictive placements.

[Service Delivery Process.](#)

Summer Planning Days

Over the past three years, the Student Services Department has made a large investment in starting the school year ready for scholars with IEPs. Each school in MMSD has two to three Summer Planning Days for cross-categorical teachers. The number of days depends on the size of the school. For example, elementary schools have two days and high schools have three days.

Our Program Support Teachers facilitate the days with the support of the administrator for special education at the school. The main objectives over Summer Planning Days is for cross-categorical teachers to learn about the scholars on their caseloads and contact families, special ed systems for the year, review special education data and IEPs, and develop the school service delivery with student, CC teacher and SEA schedules. These additional hours before the school year begins allow schools to build on the successful transition work from the previous spring. Related service providers are also invited to a portion of Summer Planning Days, in order to contact families, meet with team members, and start the successful transition to the school year. All Summer Planning Days occur outside of the teacher typical contract days, and we have had overwhelming success with teacher participation.

Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCI)

A. Purpose of Training

- a. Wisconsin statute 118.305 mandates that training in the use of restraint and seclusion is required for any school staff member prior to using physical restraint or seclusion. MMSD's Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NVCI) training is designed to assist staff in learning how to effectively prevent emotional and behavioral escalation as well as assist a person who has already escalated. Stages of emotional and behavioral escalation are described, and each stage



is paired with a positive action plan for educators and teams to prevent escalation or support an already escalated individual to de-escalate. The content emphasizes proactive interventions and supports the State of Wisconsin legal requirements, MMSD guidelines, and appropriate restraint and seclusion techniques. To better meet staff professional learning needs, specific verbal de-escalation training was added in the 2023-24 school year, starting with schools with the highest needs as identified through data and TSI/ATSI designation.

B. Mandated Staff

- a. Employees in the following job categories MUST complete the NVCI training
 - i. Building Administrator
 - ii. Behavior Interventionist or Behavioral Education Assistant (BEA)
 - iii. Psychologist
 - iv. Social Worker
 - v. Speech/Language Clinician
 - vi. Occupational Therapist
 - vii. Physical Therapist
 - viii. Visual Impairment Teacher
 - ix. Deaf and Hard of Hearing Teacher
 - x. Deaf and Hard of Hearing Interpreters
 - xi. Special Education Teacher
 - xii. Special Education Assistant
 - xiii. Substitute Special Education Assistant
 - xiv. Professional-Instructional (PR-Is) Instructional Coach
 - xv. Security Assistant
 - xvi. Nurse and Nurse's Assistant

C. Initial training

- a. This training is designed for staff who have not had prior training in NVCI or whose training has expired. Classes are limited to 15 staff per class. The course is a blended training, consisting of three components:



Components	Format	Time Commitment
Modules	Self paced-asynchronous	2-3 hours
Facilitated Learning	Synchronous-Zoom	1.5 hours
Physicals Skills	Synchronous-In Person	1.5 hours

D. Recertification Training

- a. This training is designed for staff who are current and set to expire with NVCI training. Classes are limited to 15 staff per class. The course is a blended training, consisting of three components: In MMSD staff are required to be recertified every 2 years. This training will occur throughout the year based on the expiration date of staff.

Components	Format	Time Commitment
Modules	Self paced-asynchronous	2-3 hours
Facilitated Learning	Synchronous-Zoom	1 hour
Physicals Skills	Synchronous-In Person	1.5 hours

E. Seclusion and Restraint Tracking

- a. Daily thresholds are sent to Proactive System Support leads, Assistant Director of Student services and Associate Superintendent of Student Services.
- b. Communication is sent to administrators once students reach their second incident of seclusion and/or restraint.

Intensive Support Team (IST)

The goal of the IST is to build staff capacity in responding to and supporting scholars with intensive needs. Emphasis is placed on understanding the whole child through a functional behavioral analysis and supporting the child through the lens of trauma-informed and resilience-focused strategies. The IST, in collaboration with the school team, will determine next steps. These may include, but are not limited to:

- A. Brief Consultation (1 or 2 short problem solving meetings)
- B. Student-Specific Professional Development



C. Short Term Stabilization (90-day service to include deep dive into scholar needs and programming)

The referral form can be found at mmsd.org/support and a member of the team will respond within one business week (48 hours if possible). IST requests are assigned based on building level, current capacity, and caseload. The need to offer behavior support instruction to both scholars and staff is identified in the WestEd report. The IST is a central office service available for this purpose.

Special Education Service Delivery Resource Guide

An additional resource designed to capture the range of special education service delivery processes and options was created during the development of this three-year special education plan. This resource was developed to address several key items of need which were also identified in the 2016-19 special education report and the WestEd evaluation report completed in March 2021.

Specifically, interviews and survey results from the WestEd evaluation report note that parents, general education staff, and district leaders did not always know the details of special education processes or the range of special education services available to scholars. Additionally, strategies used by special education staff to apply Multi-leveled Systems of Support and principles of Universal Design for Learning to engage and teach scholars were not previously comprehensively available in one place. Additional content of interest found in this resource includes special education interventions, progress monitoring tools and plans, professional learning and collaboration topics, and family engagement by level.

It is our hope that by making this resource publicly available, interested parties will be able to find the information they need to be full participants on IEP teams in our schools. Quarterly reviews of the content will be conducted to ensure MMSD Student Services. This resource can be accessed using the link below:

[Special Education Service Delivery Resource Guide](#)

Additional Related Special Education Resource Documents:

Dept one pager
Leadership Team
PST and Department Chair List
Special Education Implementation Guide 23-24
SS Dept Goals Data
Student Services Grow Our Own Program Overview
Special Education Interventions by Level Fall 2023
Special Education Interventions by Building Spring 2023