



**Final Report Elk River ISD 728 Equity Action Planning
November 2019**

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How do you define Equity?

Aguilar Definition:

In its most simplistic definition, equity means that every child gets what he or she needs in schools – every child, regardless of where she comes from, what she looks like, who her parents are, what her temperament is, or what she shows up knowing or not knowing... Equity is about outcomes and experiences – for every child, every day. (Elena Aguilar, 2013)

Independent School District 728 Elk River-Otsego-Rogers-Zimmerman Final Report Summary of Results and Recommendations

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Preface

In June 2019, Sankore Consulting met with District 728 cabinet members to propose a plan to increase educational and racial equity for their school district. Three parts were developed as a part of the Equity Action Planning:

Part I Focused Listening and Personalized Equity Iterative Learning

- Individual Listening Sessions
- Individualized Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI)
- Strengthsfinder
- Equity Strategies and Plans for Education and Systems Change Workshop

Part II Equity Audit: Policies and Plans

- Meet to set scope of audit/review plans and policies
- Review/Audit Agreed upon documents

Part III Insights and Recommendations Report

- All findings from the above activities will be compiled into a visual, share-ready report
- Meet to discuss recommendations

Acknowledgements

The Listening Sessions would not have been possible without the mutual support of the cabinet members and leaders of District 728. We sincerely appreciate their time, experiences, and multiple perspectives that each person shared in order for the sessions to be made possible. Many thanks to all of them for their honest and thoughtful responses.

Special Thanks To:

Dr. Daniel Bittman, *Superintendent*

Dr. Jana Hennen-Burr, *Assistant Superintendent*

Timothy Caskey, *Executive Director of Human Resources*

Format of the Report

This report includes the following summary sections

- Section One: Listening Sessions
- Section Two: Group Graph Results for the Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory
- Section Three: Strengthsfinder Results
- Section Four Equity Audit

SECTION ONE: LISTENING SESSIONS SUMMARY

Every time you state what you want or believe, you're the first to hear it. It's a message to both you and others about what you think is possible. Don't put a ceiling on yourself.

- Oprah Winfrey

[REDACTED]

Common Themes: (mentioned 2 or more times)

- Equity is not equal
- Equity is having diverse staff
- Equity meets the needs of all learners
- Equity is providing access to goods and services
- Equity is people being seen and heard
- Equity is understanding differences, diverse/multiple perspectives

Outlier Themes: (mentioned only once or things to highlight)

- Equity is fairness (no special treatment)
- Equity is beyond race, gender, role
- Equity is a choice to take advantage of opportunities
- Equity is looking at data and believing it

Opportunity for Growth:

- To have a shared definition of equity and racial equity district-wide
- Professional Development: Cultural Diversity and Equity
- Resources: Book Study or Framing Mechanism
- Historical Context

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Common Themes:

- All of my work aligns
- Technology access for students and teachers
- Opportunities to increase learning i.e. funding, mental health services, guidance and support, technology

Outlier Themes:

- Some programs accepted i.e. Special Education, while Indian Education and LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning or queer)

groups are not fully accepted

- Homelessness- a reality, but not fully understood
- Efforts are needed to increase accountability

Opportunity for Growth:

- Each department identify 2-4 tangible goals with measurable results to specifically align with Strategy #1 in the Strategic Plan

Common Themes:

- A strong sense that each individual's work is aligned with the equity goal
- Changes have occurred to create more equitable opportunities & access i.e. 1:1 technology access, license teachers for EL program, expanding postings to recruit diverse candidates, building relationships with AI program, etc.
- Areas of struggles/concerns: celebrating diversity ex. Gender neutral bathrooms, we say ALL learners, but we are not meeting ALL learner needs, consistent opportunities across 3 clusters i.e. funding, facilities, programming, etc.

Outlier Themes:

- Programming such as AVID is considered good enough to meet the needs of students (we don't need anything else)
-

Opportunity for Growth:

- Identify least served student groups to create and offer resources/programming specific to meeting their needs. (American Indian, LGBTQ, Religion Groups, African American)
- Culturally Responsive Teaching Strategies/Methods


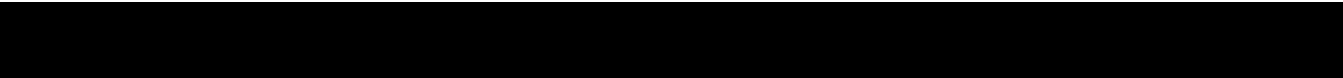
Common Themes:

- Identified needs: diverse working staff, gender neutral bathrooms, policy changes, honor/celebrate cultures, staff training- culturally responsive teaching
- Struggles/concerns: White equity specialists, over identified in 2 or more races for EBD, over identified in ELL with learning disabilities, limited resources, high school schedule not working, digital divide, gifted education not identifying diverse learners

Outlier Themes:

- Referendum and data will help to make equity decisions
- Pride interfering with being effective
- Bridging the multiple counties/districts competitive nature as an obstacle

Opportunity for Growth:

- Consider implementing Restorative Practices in all sites
 - Develop Critical Race Consciousness or Critical Race Theory
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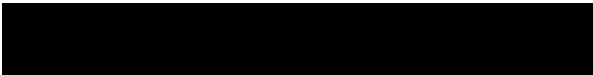
Common Themes:

- Specific examples: confederate flags, racial slurs, American Indian program subject to barriers, district cited by state for higher level of students identified EBD with students of color, pervasive Christian focus
- District is lacking: acknowledgement of white privilege, whiteness, teachers of color, onboarding for students new to the school system
- Concerns/struggles: The few teachers of color do not live in community and are not supported, a lot of fear in regard to people who are different from them, we are not welcoming and accepting of cultures, transportation inequities, **denial that racism** exists in the district
- No examples of racism, can't think of anything, have not noticed
- Needs: Training to handle cultural issues/concerns, respectful parameters for courageous conversations

Outlier Themes:

- Less about racism and more interest with sexual orientation
- We have mostly White women, but they are open-minded

Opportunity for Growth:

- Shared understanding of terms i.e. equity, race, racism, culture, white privilege, whiteness, etc.
 - Intent vs Impact understanding
 - Cultural awareness, culturally responsive pedagogy/teaching training
 - Cross-cultural norms, protocols, procedures to increase conversations around race and equity
 - Affinity support groups for students and staff of color
 - Policy to address racial infractions
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Common Themes:

- Examples of equity lens strategies:
 - Ask questions, talk to diverse administrators
 - Read books/articles
 - Webinar on gender, PBS, google
 - Reflection of my biases
 - Rely on diverse friends and how they call out equitable instructional practices
- Examples of PD opportunities to support equity lens practice:
 - Pacific Education Group (Courageous Conversations)
 - Gary Howard (whiteness)
 - Senn Delany (high performance cultures)
 - Microaggressions, windows/mirrors
 - Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)
 - Education courses

Outlier Themes:

- White privilege is hard to acknowledge, *involves going through 7 steps of grief*
- We/I start with equity journey, but then it goes away in the district and the equity journey stops altogether personally/collectively
- Relationships are key

Opportunity for Growth:

- Identify specific equity strategies to apply from learning experiences and relationships (the how is listed above, missing the what)
- Time and opportunity to have dialogue/discussions, and training about increasing an equity lens
- District-wide equity training
- Strategies to apply an equity lens in all aspects of work
- Positions devoted to equity (ex. specialists/coordinators) i.e. increase people of color holding these positions
- Strengthen district partnership with American Indian department, as well as, partner with local/state organizations devoted to racial equity
- To increase personal understanding of culture, to increase intercultural experiences beyond observing and listening, city trips, food examples

- Marzano's model for growth for all ISD staff groups
- Growth mindset instead of traditional performance reviews

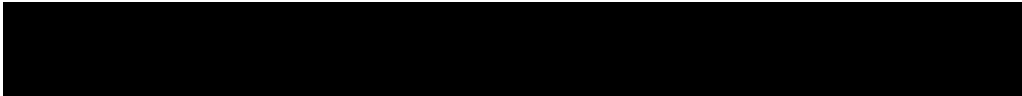
- Strategic plan all about equity access
- Reviewing data, having difficult conversations, confronting bias
- Consistency: PD for staff and teachers
- Embed all strategies i.e. equity, SEL, gender, racial
- Sharrokey Hollie PD
- Advocate for EL
- Distribute resources in an equitable way
- Collaborate 4 leadership meetings, school board, annual retreat, cabinet, departments to ensure we are all on the same page

Outlier Themes:

- Treat everyone the same, no favoritism
- Make differences as normal as possible
- Afraid to say/do the wrong thing

Opportunity for Growth:

- Increasing materials in different languages
- Training to developmentally move from monocultural to intercultural mindset
- To partner with equity specialists/parents to identify what is missing, to understand parents feelings and perspectives
- Review curriculum to be culturally relevant



Common Themes:

- Problem solver, ask questions- how can we figure this out? Change rules if needed, challenge people, influence managers to pull candidates of color
- It's about relationships, open growth mindsets, listening more than talking, proactive, walking with families
- Treat everyone fair, seek information from others, being consistent,
- Advocate, approachable, awareness
- Two positives to one negative approach
- Meet people where they are at, instead of pushing agenda
- A way of being (don't tolerate assumptions or be judgemental)
- Curriculum: AVID can't be a checklist, need curriculum adoption lens of equity
- Solution focused- not there yet, but planting seeds
- Use strategic plan- access for our kids
- Lead by example

Outlier Themes:

- Work personally on self, then reach out to others i.e. staff, students, families, community
- Embarrassed- not a priority, need to develop a mindset to notice and address their needs
- At meetings, need to do better to address equity
- We have four equity specialists

Opportunity for Growth:

- Create a protocol to develop a culturally relevant curriculum adoption tool
- **Develop an *equity leadership identity***
- **Prepare the environment for what you want to be there**

Common Themes:

- Staff reflects our students
- District recognizes differences
- Everyone is culturally competent
- Not afraid to talk about cultural differences
- Ideas and solutions address the needs of all our kids
- Rely on both White and staff of color to come up with ideas together
- More people of color choose our community to help change our district and make it better
- Everyone is honored, seen, ok to be different
- LGBTQ addressed to handle students transgender, gender neutral bathrooms
- Equity training for all departments and staff, learn from the Tribal Council about academic data
- Equity is the norm, diverse workplace, students and families have a sense of belonging and buy in, shared goals
- Representation for all children to have an adult that looks like them, beyond sticking a person of color on a brochure
- A Black family feels welcome and see themselves, their culture/history and not feel like an outsider or imposing
- Work on environment beyond potlucks
- Technology access 24/7
- Not afraid to try new things
- Representation at leadership level, more balanced leadership i.e. in ethnicity and gender
- We have the right people in place to make this a priority, we have been reactive, we have trust, now is the time.

Outlier Themes:

- The district office is not welcoming ex. Online registration, families a lot of color struggling to figure out how to register and no one is there to help them
- MN student survey common theme students that fall out of mainstream are more bullied (i.e. weight, looks, gender expression)
- Need to parcel students of color data (disaggregate students of color)
- Board room, get rid of white room/ diversify the board

Opportunity for Growth:

- Create an action plan to increase efforts to draw/attract staff and families of color to seek out Elk River

Common Themes:

- **Optimistic Thoughts:**

- We are ready as a system
- Courage to stand up for kids & families with no voice in the system
- We are doing great, but have a lot of work to do
- This is a good community, a lot of educated people, we can do things right to be inclusive and avoid alienation
- We need training of strategies to get to solutions sooner so that people can feel seen, heard, and treated fairly
- Find ways to get people to acknowledge differences to be celebrated and not feared, we want to do the right thing but don't know how
- Small community, high academics, even for students of color
- Everyone is good and well intentioned, more or less aware
- We need a reality check, don't be afraid to push us, don't coddle us
- I want to be bold and courageous
- Help us see what we don't know
- Need to be pushed and practice difficult conversations
- I am ready, let's shake things up

- **Issues/Concerns:**

- We are not welcoming for all
- Scarier than race is gender and sexuality, religion topics
- Missing sense of urgency
- Over five years since the last diversity/culture trainings, most recent focused on sexual orientation- identifying lens and common language revealed we have a lot of work to do
- Division between northern/southern parts of district in regard to resources and access (past hurts and bitterness current from issues 20+ years ago)
- We are perceived as higher, but gap is big- diversity is accepted as long as it fits in a certain trends

- **Questions/Wonderings:**

- A hard look at why people of color do not show up or come here
- Until things are different, how do we attract people here?
- I hear: *That's not who we are or how we have done it*
- What should the next steps be?
- How do we measure culturally relevant teaching?
- We want a diverse workforce, but are we ready if/when they come?
- Curious if the rest of the district staff and school board are ready for change?
- Demographics are changing, are we ready?

Sankore Consulting Live. Learn. Lead.

- How do we go deeper?
- What are our blind spots, how do we challenge our thinking?

Outlier Themes:

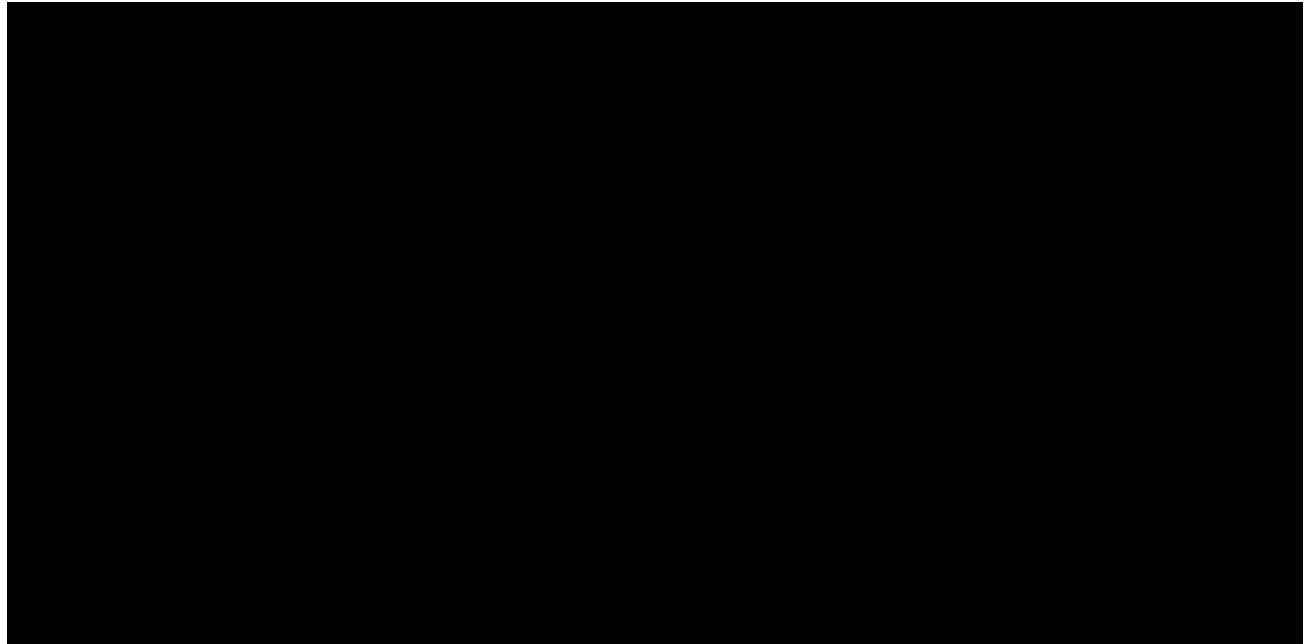
- Past Ruby Payne PD not good
- Restoring trauma informed vs. traditional practices
- Not a lot of culture here

Opportunity for Growth:

- Requested PD: Unconscious Bias, privilege, equity lens and support training (request has been denied due to past PD, AVID is mentioned, or directed to go to the cultural liaisons)
- Create a united culture between Elk River, Otsego, Rogers, Zimmerman

SECTION TWO: CROSS-CULTURAL ADAPTABILITY INVENTORY RESULTS

“Every human is like all other humans, some other humans, and no other human” – Clyde Kluckhohn



The results of the Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory indicate that while the ISD 728 Cabinet collectively has a strong emotional resilience, the group has an opportunity to grow within the flexibility/openness domain.

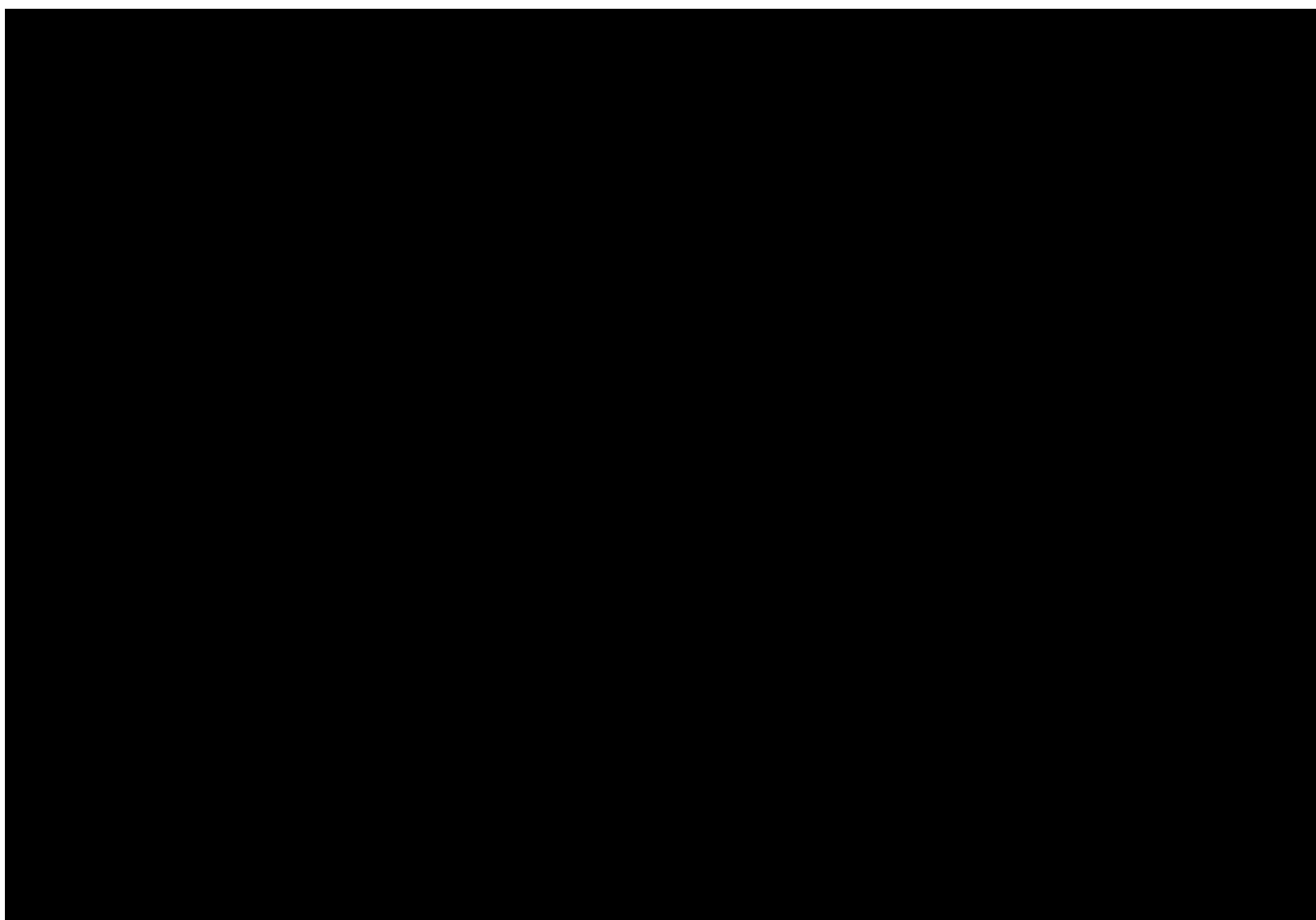
The CCAI measures four distinct areas of cultural competence with high statistical reliability and face, content, and construct validity. Published research also shows increasing evidence of predictive validity:

- Emotional Resilience: Measures how one balances emotions, navigates difficult feeling and maintains a positive outlook.
- Flexibility/Openness: Indicates how nonjudgmental and tolerant one can be towards new ideas and customs. This also measures how much a person enjoys encountering different ways of thinking and behaving.
- Perceptual Acuity: Measures how effective an individual is at discerning the subtle verbal and nonverbal cues in a cultural environment.
- Perceptual Acuity encompasses attention to detail, sensitivity to the feelings of others, and general awareness of nuanced interpersonal context.
- Personal Autonomy: Indicates how dependent one is on familiar cultural cues to form an identity. This dimension shows how strongly one retains his or her sense of self and values in any environment or culture. These dimensions tap into one's motivation to embrace new

cultures and confidence in one's ability to meet these challenges through the skills and attitudes associated with cross-cultural effectiveness

SECTION THREE: STRENGTHSFINDERS RESULTS

Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.



The results of the team profile StrengthsFinder indicates the team has considerable strengths in Executing and Strategic Thinking. However more opportunities for growth exist in the Influencing and Relationship Building domain.

What Is the Executing Domain of CliftonStrengths?

These themes answer the question "How do you make things happen?" They may help you turn ideas into reality.

When teams need to implement a solution, they look to people with Executing themes who will work tirelessly to accomplish the goal.

What Is the Influencing Domain of CliftonStrengths?

These themes answer the question "How do you influence others?" They may help you take charge, speak up and make sure others are heard.

When teams need to sell their ideas inside and outside the organization, they turn to people with Influencing themes to convince others.

What Is the Relationship Building Domain of CliftonStrengths?

These themes answer the question "How do you build and nurture strong relationships?" They may help you hold a team together.

When teams need to be greater than the sum of their parts, they turn to people with Relationship Building themes to strengthen their bonds.

What Is the Strategic Thinking Domain of CliftonStrengths?

These themes answer the question "How do you absorb, think about and analyze information and situations?" They may help you make better decisions and create better outcomes.

When teams need to focus on what could be, they turn to people with Strategic Thinking themes to stretch the team's thinking for the future.

SECTION FOUR: EQUITY AUDIT OVERVIEW

“Cultural differences should not separate us from each other, but rather cultural diversity brings a collective strength that can benefit all of humanity.” Also: “Intercultural dialogue is the best guarantee of a more peaceful, just and sustainable world.” -- Robert Alan

Purpose of the Equity Policy Audit

Perform an audit of key policies and plans for bias resulting in potential inequities. Identify opportunities to increase equity and inclusion via consultant recommendations for edits/revisions, staff development, and thought partnership.

Desired Outcome: Create a baseline understanding of potential changes and opportunities for improvements to launch equity strategy.

Rationale: A targeted review of ‘Policies’ will build on the affirming and safe individual interviews from ‘listening & learning.’ A review will allow consultants to identify significant levers for equity - and those that either advance or restrict diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). By reviewing this information, we can assure that moving forward, equity efforts are on target and maximize potential impact.

Task of Equity Policy Audit

1. Examine ‘diversity and inclusion’ policies are they as comprehensive as needed?
2. What are the policies that need an equity focus? i.e. Curriculum & Instruction
3. What other policies are needed? i.e. Equity and Diversity, Gender Diversity

Our process

- Read each policy and identified the following:
 - Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes.
 - Urgent Policies to be Addressed
 - Inclusion Statement and Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes.
 - Needed further development for language specificity
 - Posed Questions for Considerations
 - Noted specific shortcomings and recommendations

When appropriated we provided exemplars from the following districts:

- Minneapolis Public Schools
- Hopkins Public Schools
- Osseo Public Schools
- Robbinsdale Public Schools

School District (5) 100s [District Policies](#) Total 145 Policies

Policy	Recommendations
101 Legal Status of School	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes.
102 Equal Opportunity	Needs to be further developed with specific language regarding

	intent. This could be revised to be the Equity Policy Osseo Equity Policy Example Hopkins Equity Policy Example Robbinsdale Equity Policy
103 Complaints	Establish a process for more sensitive complaints related specifically to discrimination
104 Mission	Could add a sentence about 'paying particular attention to closing academic disparities'

School Board 200s (16)

Policy	Recommendations
201 Legal Status	Membership- reflect student Elk River student body
202 Officers	Include Officer Focused on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion or require school board DEI training
203 Operations 203.1 Rules of Order 203.2 Order of Meeting	Robert's Rules of Order, how can those rules be made apparent to those who are not familiar?
203.5 Meeting Agenda	'Loaded' Terms: timely manner, pertinent information, these are subjective, how can the be more objective terms
203.6 Consent Agenda	N/A- Clear Language Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes.
204 Board Meeting Minutes	Good "Such a summary shall be written in a clear and coherent manner and shall, to the extent possible, avoid the use of technical or legal terms not generally familiar to the public".
205 Open & Closed Meetings	N/A Clear Concise Language Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes.
206 Public Participation	Citizens? What about those that are residents but not citizens? Loaded Term Agenda Items #4-loaded language How would someone access translation/interpretation services?
207 Public Hearings	Some loaded Language
208 Development	Could Include Section III.C. viewing effectiveness via an Equity Lens
209 Code of Ethics	Add D. 5. Commit to Equitable Policy Development and Resource Distribution
201 Conflict of Interest	Straightforward/Strict

211 Civil Action	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes.
212 Board Development	School Board Members are required to take Cultural Competency Training
Travel	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes.

Administration 300s (6)

Policy	Recommendations
<u>301 School District Administration</u>	Needs to be further developed with specific language to define terms such as” effective, orderly fashion, sound management.”
<u>302 Superintendent</u>	Very vague-recommend to include recently learned equity leadership identity framework. See Minneapolis Public Schools Example
<u>303 Superintendent Selection</u>	Very vague-selection of superintendent primarily dependent upon the licensing standards of the MN Board of School Administrators. Recommend expanding to encompass the values of the district’s mission and demonstrated leadership in the areas of <i>diversity, equity, and inclusion.</i>
<u>304 Superintendent Contract, Duties and Evaluation</u>	Very vague-here is an opportunity to be specific in outlining expectations of demonstrated leadership. Identify and name the evaluation tool(s).
<u>305 Policy Implementation</u>	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes.
<u>306 Administrator Code of Ethics</u>	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes.

Personnel 400s (26)

Policy	Recommendations
401 Equal Opportunity Employment	Non Discrimination Policy Example MPS EOE Polic “this applies to” section, make explicit
402: Disability NonDiscrimination	Good “reasonable accommodation”
403 Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees	Add C. 13. Discriminatory Behavior
404 Background Checks	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes.
405 Veterans Preference	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes.

406 Public and Private Personnel Data	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes.
407 Employee Right to Know	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes.
408 Subpoena of of Employee	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes.
409 Employee Publications	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes.
410 Family Medical Leave Act	Good Includes Same Sex Marriage Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes.
412 Expense Reimbursement	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
413 Harassment and Violence	Digital Complaint Form Example MPS Name 'Hate Crimes'? Building Report Taker: disposition, training for 'sensitive matters'? A lot of power. Once submitted to HR or Asst. Supt what is the protocol for their response i.e. time frame?
414 Sexual Abuse	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
415 Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
416 Drug and Alcohol Testing	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
417 Chemical Abuse	Report Use-non discriminatory discipline practices
418 Drug Free Workplace & School	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
419 Tobacco Free Environment	Where do the smokers, smoke? Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
420 Communicable Disease	General Knowledge Sharing AIDS (is this really communicable?)
421 Gifts to Employees and Board	There may be cultural implications to gift giving. How to reconcile this?
423 Employee/Student Relationships	Community based interactions: i.e. church or civic club?
424 Licensing Status	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
425 Staff Development	Inclusion Statement and Focus evident . Satisfactory, no

	identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
427 Special Education Teachers	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
428 Teacher Transfer	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes

Students 500s (34)

Policy	Recommendations
501 School Weapons	“Zero Tolerance” Implications
502 Student Search	Include a statement about equitable application of policy and more defined terms for suspension
503 Attendance	Note Cultural Funeral Practices (the Hmong 7 day funeral)
504 Dress and Appearance	Inappropriate Clothing includes loaded terms, consider more objective descriptors. 2 D. inclusive language
505 Distribution of Non School-sponsored Material	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
506 - Student Discipline	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
507 - Corporal Punishment	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
508 Extended School Year for Certain Students	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
509 - Enrollment of Nonresident Students	Is there a process to ensure equitable admission process?
510 School Activities	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
511 Student Fundraising	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
512 School-sponsored Student Publications	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
513 Student Promotion Retention and Program	Is there a process to ensure equitable promotion process?
514 - Bullying Prohibition	Inclusion Statement and Focus evident . Satisfactory, no

	identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
515 - Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records	Concerned about 'Directory' Information in relationship to ICE. Does ISD 728 have a 'Safe Space' Policy?
516 - Student Medication	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
518 DNR-DNI Orders	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
519 Interviews of Students by Outside Agencies	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
520 - Student Surveys	Inclusion Statement and Focus evident . Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
521 - Student Disability Nondiscrimination	Is there a process to ensure equitable promotion process? Racial implications of IEP vs 504
522 - Student Sex Nondiscrimination	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
524 - Internet Acceptable Use and Safety	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
525 Violence Prevention	Violence as a result of unmitigated bullying? Restorative Practices?
526 - Hazing Prohibition	Racial based hazing?
527 Student Use and Parking of Motor Vehicles	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
528 - Student Parental, Family and Marital Status	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
529 Staff Notification of Violent Behavior by Student	Red Flag- what will the teacher do with this notice are extra support provided?
530 - Immunization Requirements	Inclusion Statement and Focus evident . Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
531 - The Pledge of Allegiance	Inclusion Statement and Focus evident . Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
532 - Use of Peace Officers and Crisis Teams to Remove	Why special policy for IEP student?
533 - Wellness	Inclusion Statement and Focus evident . Satisfactory, no

	identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
534 - Unpaid Meal Charges	Initiative to eliminate student lunch debt.

Education Programs 600s (24)

Policy	Recommendations
601 - School District Curriculum & Instructional Goals	Inclusion Statement and Focus evident 3F . Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statute “low-income and minority children” these terms should not be used as synonyms
602 - Organization of School Calendar and School Day	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
603 - Curriculum Development	Could the Advisory Committee be composed of individuals who represent Aspirational diversity?Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
604 Instructional Curriculum	Civics Test? Include Ethnic Studies requirement Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
605 Alternative Programs	How are “ at risk” indicators determined? How do the solve for racial inequity?
607 Organization of Grade Levels	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
608 - Instructional Services - Special Education	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
609 Religion	Inclusion Statement and Focus evident . Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
610 Field Trips	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
611 - Home Schooling	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
612.1 - Development of Parent and Family Engagement	Inclusion Statement and Focus evident . Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
613 - Graduation Requirements	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes

614 School District Testing Plan and Procedure	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
616 - School District System Accountability	Advisory Committee for Comprehensive Continuous Improvement of Student Achievement diverse group?
618 Assessment of Student Achievement	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
619 - Staff Development for Standards	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
620 Credit for Learning	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
623 Mandatory Summer School Instruction	Ensure equitable access to enriching programming
624 - Online Learning Options	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes

Non-Instructional Operations 700s (22)

Policy	Recommendations
701 Establishment and Adoption of School District B	Statement to allocate resources in alignment with the equity policy/framework/strategic plan.
701.1 Modification of School District Budget	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
702 Accounting	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
703 Annual Audit	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
704 Development and Maintenance of An Inventory	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
705 Investments	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
706 Acceptance of Gifts	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statute
707 Transportation of Public School Students	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statute
709 - Student Transportation Safety	Cultural Competency for Bus Driver/ Driver Behavior (recent

	example involving remarks regarding immigrant children)
710 Extracurricular Transportation	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statute
711 Video Recording on School Buses	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statute
712 Video Surveillance Other than on Buses	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statute
713 Student Activity Accounting	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statute
714 Fund Balances	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statute
720 Vending Machines	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes.
721 - Uniform Grant Guidance Policy	Establish and Equity in Procurement Policy/Procedure
Policy: Post-Debt Compliance	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statute

Buildings and Sites 800s (5)

Policy	Recommendations
<u>801 Equal Access to School Facilities</u>	Directly name that school facilities will not be allowed for any student gatherings related to racism, hate, bigotry, discrimination, or any other kinds of topics that promote/support potential harm to individuals and/or groups.
<u>802 Disposition of Obsolete Equipment and Material</u>	Aligns with MN statutes. Wonderings: What funds do the sales go to? It is mentioned that the superintendent authorizes the decisions, can options such as looking at donations, recycling, etc. be inserted before final decisions of disposal are made?
<u>805 Waste Reduction and Recycling</u>	Aligns with MN Statutes. Is there an audit to measure current waste/recyclables and to implement percentage goals to reduce even more?
<u>806 Crisis Management</u>	Recommendations: Insert a culturally specific plan to support students district/building-wide. Keep in mind students with language barriers, trauma, disabilities (mental, physical) that may bring forth triggers to these procedures. For example- how does the police department use de-escalation strategies when responding to student crises? In the event of a crisis, how will parents/guardians be notified, communicated with (be inclusive and use multiple modalities-for example everyone does not have internet access). Designate a time that early school closures final decisions will be made (keeping in mind that some families need to

	work even if the school is closed, provide ample time to make alternative childcare arrangements.
807 Health and Safety	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes.

Community Relations 900s (7)

Policy	Recommendations
901 - Community Education	Inclusion Statement and Focus evident . Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
902 - Use of School District Facilities and Equipment	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes.
903 - Visitors to School District Property	Parent visits 3 days in advance invites suspension , Cultural Considerations
904 - Distribution of Materials on School District	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes.
905 - Advertising	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes.
906 - Community Notification of Predatory Offenders	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statute
907 Rewards	Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes.

SECTION FIVE: INSIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The progress of the world will call for the best that all of us have to give.

– Mary McLeod Bethune

The Equity Action Planning Process has yielded several high level recommendations with details and parameters suggested within.

To create a more equity learning experience for the students and staff, we recommend ISD728 do the following:

- **Develop Equity Framework: An Equity Framework** “Equity Framework reinforces the mission of the schools and aligns student success and educational equity as the cornerstones of the work. The framework embodies the District's philosophy on equity and outlines the District's beliefs, values, priorities, and practices. It guides our understanding of where we must continue to grow and where we must embrace change and provides opportunity for reflection and to practice collective accountability.”
 - **Equity Framework Examples:**
 - [Minneapolis Public Schools](#)
 - [Hopkins Public Schools](#)
 - [Duluth Public Schools](#)
 - Establish a Common Language and Understanding of:
 - Shared Definition of equity and racial equity district-wide
 - Historical Context of Inequity in the US and MN
 - Develop Critical Race Consciousness or Critical Race Theory
 - Shared understanding of terms i.e. equity, race, racism, culture, white privilege, whiteness, etc.
 - High Leverage Strategies, Outcomes and Metrics related to the following
 - How to apply an equity lens in all aspects of work
 - Each department identify 2-4 tangible goals with measurable results to specifically align with Strategy #1 in the Strategic Plan
 - Identify least served student groups to create and offer resources/programming specific to meeting their needs. (American Indian, LGBTQ, Religion Groups, African American)
 - Consider implementing Restorative Practices in all sites
 - Affinity support groups for students and staff of color
 - Positions devoted to equity (ex. specialists/coordinators) i.e. increase people of color holding these positions
 - Strengthen district partnership with American Indian department, as well as, partner with local/state organizations devoted to racial equity
 - To partner with equity specialists/parents to identify what is missing, to understand parents feelings and perspectives
 - Create an action plan to increase efforts to draw/attract staff and families of color to seek out Elk River

- Create a united culture between Elk River, Otsego, Rogers, Zimmerman
- Professional Development: Cultural Diversity and Equity (see below for details)
- Develop an *Equity Leadership Identity*
- **Craft and Implement a District Equity and Diversity Policy**
 - [Osseo Equity Policy Example](#)
 - [Hopkins Equity Policy Example](#)
 - [Robbinsdale Equity Policy](#)
- **Address Recommendations highlighted in the Equity Policy AuditX~See Appendix for Condensed List**

- 102 Equal Opportunity
- 801 Equal Access to School Facilities
- 806 Crisis Management
- 103 Complaints
- 104 Mission
- 201 Legal Status
- 202 Officers
- 203 Operations
- 203.1 Rules of Order
- 203.2 Order of Meeting
- 203.5 Meeting Agenda
- 203.5 Meeting Agenda
- 206 Public Participation
- 207 Public Hearings
- 208 Development
- 209 Code of Ethics
- 212 Board Development
- 302 Superintendent
- 303 Superintendent Selection
- 304 Superintendent Contract, Duties and Evaluation
- 401 Equal Opportunity Employment
- 403 Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees
- 417 Chemical Abuse
- 419 Tobacco Free Environment
- 420 Communicable Disease
- 421 Gifts to Employees and Board
- 423 Employee/Student Relationships
- 501 School Weapons
- 502 Student Search
- 503 Attendance
- 504 Dress and Appearance
- 509 - Enrollment of Nonresident Students
- 513 Student Promotion Retention and Program
- 515 - Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records
- 521 - Student Disability Nondiscrimination
- 525 Violence Prevention

- 526 - Hazing Prohibition
- 529 Staff Notification of Violent Behavior by Students
- 532 - Use of Peace Officers and Crisis Teams to Remove
- 603 - Curriculum Development
- 604 Instructional Curriculum
- 605 Alternative Programs
- 616 - School District System Accountability
- 623 Mandatory Summer School Instruction
- 701 Establishment and Adoption of School District B
- 709 - Student Transportation Safety
- 721 - Uniform Grant Guidance Policy
- 805 Waste Reduction and Recycling
- 903 - Visitors to School District Property
- **Leadership Book Study** Suggested Equity Themed text for Education Leaders
 - *Culturally Responsive School Leadership* by Khalifa
 - *Culturally Proficient Leadership: The Personal Journey Begins Within* by Terrells/Lindseys
 - *Excellence Through Equity* by Blankstein, Noguera
 - *White Fragility* by Diangelo
 - *Multiplication is for White People* by Delpit
- **Equity Professional Development for the following groups in the following order:**
 - Cabinet
 - Principals/Directors
 - School Board
 - Instructional Coaches
 - Then Teachers

Elements of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Professional Development could include:

- Culturally Responsive Teaching Strategies/Methods
- Unconscious Bias, Privilege, Equity Lens
- Intent vs Impact understanding
- Cultural awareness, culturally responsive pedagogy/teaching training
- Cross-cultural norms, protocols, procedures to increase conversations around race and equity
- Training to developmentally move from monocultural to intercultural mindset
- Review curriculum to be culturally relevant: Create a protocol to develop a culturally relevant curriculum adoption tool

In conclusion, it has been an honor and pleasure to work with the leadership team at IS728. The team showed a remarkable willingness to hear and learn about the complex topics of Equity Diversity and Inclusion. Sankore Consulting wishes you the very best on your continued Equity Action Planning Leadership Journey. If we can be of service to ISD 728 in the future, please do not hesitate to call on us.

Appendix

Urgent Policies to be Addressed	
102 Equal Opportunity	Needs to be further developed with specific language regarding intent. This could be revised to be the Equity Policy Osseo Equity Policy Example Hopkins Equity Policy Example Robbinsdale Equity Policy
806 Crisis Management	Recommendations: Insert a culturally specific plan to support students district/building-wide. Keep in mind students with language barriers, trauma, disabilities (mental, physical) that may bring forth triggers to these procedures. For example- how does the police department use de-escalation strategies when responding to student crises? In the event of a crisis, how will parents/guardians be notified, communicated with (be inclusive and use multiple modalities-for example everyone does not have internet access). Designate a time that early school closures final decisions will be made (keeping in mind that some families need to work even if the school is closed, provide ample time to make alternative childcare arrangements.
801 Equal Access to School Facilities	Directly name that school facilities will not be allowed for any student gatherings related to racism, hate, bigotry, discrimination, or any other kinds of topics that promote/support potential harm to individuals and/or groups.
Priority Policies to be Addressed	
103 Complaints	Establish a process for more sensitive complaints related specifically to discrimination
104 Mission	Could add a sentence about 'paying particular attention to closing academic disparities'
201 Legal Status	Membership- reflect student Elk River student body
202 Officers	Include Officer Focused on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion or require school board DEI training
203 Operations 203.1 Rules of Order 203.2 Order of Meeting	Robert's Rules of Order, how can those rules be made apparent to those who are not familiar?
203.5 Meeting Agenda	'Loaded' Terms: timely manner, pertinent information, these are subjective, how can the be more objective terms

206 Public Participation	Citizens? What about those that are residents but not citizens? Loaded Term Agenda Items #4-loaded language How would someone access translation/interpretation services?
207 Public Hearings	Some loaded Language
208 Development	Could Include Section III.C. viewing effectiveness via an Equity Lens
209 Code of Ethics	Add D. 5. Commit to Equitable Policy Development and Resource Distribution
212 Board Development	School Board Members are required to take Cultural Competency Training

302 Superintendent	Very vague-recommend to include recently learned equity leadership identity framework. See Minneapolis Public Schools Example
303 Superintendent Selection	Very vague-selection of superintendent primarily dependent upon the licensing standards of the MN Board of School Administrators. Recommend expanding to encompass the values of the district’s mission and demonstrated leadership in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion .
304 Superintendent Contract, Duties and Evaluation	Very vague-here is an opportunity to be specific in outlining expectations of demonstrated leadership. Identify and name the evaluation tool(s).

401 Equal Opportunity Employment	Non Discrimination Policy Example MPS EOE Polic “this applies to” section , make explicit
403 Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees	Add C. 13. Discriminatory Behavior
417 Chemical Abuse	Report Use-non discriminatory discipline practices
419 Tobacco Free Environment	Where do the smokers, smoke? Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
420 Communicable Disease	General Knowledge Sharing AIDS (is this really communicable?)
421 Gifts to Employees and Board	There may be cultural implications to gift giving. How to reconcile this?
423 Employee/Student	Community based interactions: i.e. church or civic club?

Relationships	
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501 School Weapons	“Zero Tolerance” Implications
502 Student Search	Include a statement about equitable application of policy and more defined terms for suspension
503 Attendance	Note Cultural Funeral Practices (the Hmong 7 day funeral)
504 Dress and Appearance	Inappropriate Clothing includes loaded terms, consider more objective descriptors. 2 D. inclusive language
509 - Enrollment of Nonresident Students	Is there a process to ensure equitable admission process?
513 Student Promotion Retention and Program	Is there a process to ensure equitable promotion process?
515 - Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records	Concerned about ‘Directory’ Information in relationship to ICE. Does ISD 728 have a ‘Safe Space’ Policy?
521 - Student Disability Nondiscrimination	Is there a process to ensure equitable promotion process? Racial implications of IEP vs 504
525 Violence Prevention	Violence as a result of unmitigated bullying? Restorative Practices?
526 - Hazing Prohibition	Racial based hazing?
529 Staff Notification of Violent Behavior by Student	Red Flag- what will the teacher do with this notice are extra support provided?
532 - Use of Peace Officers and Crisis Teams to Remove	Why special policy for IEP student?

603 - Curriculum Development	Could the Advisory Committee be composed of individuals who represent Aspirational diversity? Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
604 Instructional Curriculum	Civics Test? Include Ethnic Studies requirement Satisfactory, no identified recommended changes. Aligns with the Minnesota Statutes
605 Alternative Programs	How are “ at risk” indicators determined? How do the solve for racial inequity?
623 Mandatory Summer School Instruction	Ensure equitable access to enriching programming

701 Establishment and Adoption of School District B	Statement to allocate resources in alignment with the equity policy/framework/strategic plan.
709 - Student Transportation Safety	Cultural Competency for Bus Driver/ Driver Behavior (recent example involving remarks regarding immigrant children)
721 - Uniform Grant Guidance Policy	Establish and Equity in Procurement Policy/Procedure

<u>802 Disposition of Obsolete Equipment and Material</u>	Aligns with MN statutes. Wonderings: What funds do the sales go to? It is mentioned that the superintendent authorizes the decisions, can options such as looking at donations, recycling, etc. be inserted before final decisions of disposal are made?
<u>805 Waste Reduction and Recycling</u>	Aligns with MN Statutes. Is there an audit to measure current waste/recyclables and to implement percentage goals to reduce even more?

903 - Visitors to School District Property	Parent visits 3 days in advance invites suspension , Cultural Considerations
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