

## STEPS FOR INTER-DISTRICT PLANNING

The process outlined below is based on the Integration Revenue Statute (Minn. Stat. 124D.86) and the School Desegregation/Integration Rule (Minn. Rule 3535.0110-.0180).

### Statutory Integration Goals

*Integration Revenue must be used for students to have: 1) increased and sustained interracial contacts and 2) improved educational opportunities designed to close the achievement gap (Minn. Stat.124D.86 Subd. 1).*

#### 1. Form a Multi-District Collaboration Council (MDCC).

An MDCC represents multiple school districts and is created to provide input and direction on cross-district planning designed to improve integration.

- a. Staff in the racially isolated, adjoining, and voluntary districts should appoint individuals to participate in the multi-district collaboration council in order to develop an integration plan. The council should be comprised of the following:
  - i. A reasonable representation of each participating district's diversity.
  - ii. One member from each district's American Indian parent committee, if applicable.
- b. Participating districts that are members of joint powers boards that have advisory councils or an existing committee whose composition reflects these membership requirements may use that instead of creating a new council.
- c. A district already participating in one multi-district collaborative as an adjoining or as a racially isolated district is not required to participate in more than one multi-district collaborative.
- d. The racially isolated district must be involved in all phases of planning for the funding generated for inter-district integration.

#### 2. Convene MDCC meetings.

- a. After forming the MDCC, planning meetings should take place with the intent to create an inter-district integration plan designed to address the statutory integration goals: increased opportunities for interracial contact between students from the racially isolated district and students from adjoining and voluntary districts which provide educational opportunities designed to close the achievement gap.
- b. The MDCC shall establish goals for the collaborative's integration plan which reflect the needs of their communities.
- c. The MDCC shall also identify programming or initiatives that support both the collaborative plan goals and the statutory goals.

#### 3. Inter-district integration plan components.

- a. **Identify integration issues.** Based on their familiarity with their communities, the MDCC members should identify integration issues that are relevant to the statutory integration goals. For example, MDCC members might determine that students from adjoining districts might benefit academically from greater access to a specific academic program in the racially isolated district.

Within the plan, describe the relevant integration issues identified by the MDCC.

- b. **Establish goals for addressing integration issues.** After identifying and exploring relevant cross-district integration issues, the MDCC should develop specific measurable goals corresponding to a set of key integration issues.
- c. **Create an inter-district plan for supporting goals.** After identifying and exploring all relevant integration issues, the MDCC should consider how to address these issues in ways that directly support the integration goals. A plan should describe how the goal of greater opportunities for interracial contact between students will be met and describe the inter-district integration efforts the districts plan to implement. All plans must be educationally justifiable and contain options for inter-district integration.

While MDE recognizes that every district and collaboration council has different needs and constraints, the following is a list of inter-district initiatives that could be implemented to enable the district to make progress in realizing the goals in its plan:

- i. Cooperative transportation between districts to balance racially isolated districts;
- ii. Incentives for low-income students to transfer to districts that are not racially isolated;
- iii. Magnet programs designed to increase racial balance in the affected districts;
- iv. Other programs with inter-district and academic components designed to improve racial or socio-economic balance, such as:
  - Implementing research-based programs to improve the performance of protected students with lower measured achievement on state or local assessments. For example, adding programming to the regular school day or school year to help students at risk of not passing the basic skills tests, e.g. cross-district summer credit recovery programs.
  - Bolstering faculty ability to reach all learners by providing staff development or hiring teachers with background and training in cultural competency.
  - Creating inter-district extra-curricular opportunities with clear academic value for students when geographically feasible.
- d. **Acknowledgement of the community outreach that preceded the plan.** Within the plan, acknowledge the MDCC's role in developing the plan.
- e. **Evaluation.** The integration plan should establish valid and reliable measures to use in demonstrating the amount of progress made by the district in realizing its goals. Districts are required to report to MDE in writing about the extent to which the integration plan goals were met.

#### **4. Obtain school board approval for the integration plan.**

Once the joint planning process is completed, each district's school board can approve, modify, or reject the proposed integration plan. Each district may then create a detailed budget to support implementation of the plan. At this point, if an adjoining district's board rejects a plan put forward by the MDCC, the district is not obligated to create and submit an integration budget and is considered a non-participating district.

#### **5. Budget**

The budget linked to the integration plan should reflect the following:

- a. How revenue expenditures will be used specifically to support increased opportunities for inter-district interracial contact and for closing the academic achievement gap.

- b. Specific allocation amounts categorized by goal and listed by UFARS code.
- c. If plans are proposed to enhance existing programs, the total budget for the current program must be included and an indication of the district's integration revenue allocation should be separately itemized.

Plan to confer with MDE if questions arise when developing your integration budget. Several documents are available to support this detailed process.

## **6. Timeline**

MDE must receive board approved integration plans and budgets by March 15 of each year in order to meet the annual deadline for certifying levy limitations to school districts. A budget cannot be approved unless it is part of an integration plan approved by the district or by the Multidistrict Collaborative Council (Minn. Statute 124D.86, Subd. 1a, (1)).

Once a final inter-district plan is submitted to MDE, it will not need to be renewed for *four* years. Integration budgets are submitted annually to MDE by March 15.

## **7. Obtain assistance from MDE throughout this process.**

MDE is available to provide technical assistance to districts as they develop inter-district integration plans. We look forward to working with you.

For additional information on this process and other aspects of the integration revenue program, MDE strongly encourages districts to read the Desegregation Guidelines on the School Finance > Integration page.