

**Recommendations to the Integration Revenue Replacement Task Force**

**Proposed January 31, 2012**

**By**

**Scott A. Thomas**

**Legislative Recommendations:**

1. Create the “**One Minnesota: Integration, Achievement, & Equity for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**” program funded through *existing categorical revenue* that address the deficits of the current program while focusing uses of the revenue in a manner that can be easily tied to student achievement. The new program must do the following:
  - a. Develop a new and modern integration rule that is grounded in our state’s history and law, is sustainable, but also addresses a new vision that is measured beyond reading, writing and math and includes a more complete measure of achievement and access to opportunity.
    - i. Maintain language that prohibits intentional segregation in schools.
    - ii. Maintain current language defining racially isolated districts.
    - iii. Maintain current language defining adjoining district status and *require* inter-district collaboration focused on student achievement and voluntary integration.
    - iv. Maintain current language defining racially isolated schools.
    - v. All district plans must be locally developed and establish clear student achievement goals that address racial disparities, as well as other measurable goals to which they will be held accountable and report to their respective communities.
    - vi. Eliminate exemption of Area Learning Centers (ALC’s) within the Rule.
2. Ensure accountability and oversight to ensure districts are effectively using, reporting, and measuring the effectiveness of the revenue uses by providing the Department (MDE) that will ensure the following:
  - a. An adequate number of *One Minnesota* staff to provide oversight, accountability and technical support for districts receiving *One Minnesota* revenue.
  - b. Ensure progress monitoring, efficiency, and evaluate the effectiveness of the program overall.
  - c. Convene districts receiving revenue annually to facilitate training on uses, effective practices, and measurement of *One Minnesota* revenue.
  - d. Require annual external evaluation and reporting to ensure progress monitoring of districts.
    - i. Districts must develop metrics to which their programs will be measured within their plans and have them approved by MDE.
    - ii. MDE may withhold money if districts are not making progress towards goals.
    - iii. Develop structures for support, feedback and intervention.
3. Clearly focus and define limited uses of *One Minnesota* revenue. Districts must submit plans, develop measurable goals, and budgets that limit their use (districts may not supplant) within any of the following areas:
  - a. ***Innovative & integrated learning environments***, including magnet schools, that promote *all* of the following: integration, achievement through innovative approaches to instruction and learning, and school choice for parents.
    - i. Resources can only be used for budget items related to the unique setting the school provides.
    - ii. Create opportunities to scale up innovative practices and interventions that increase achievement of protected class students.
    - iii. Targeted 4-5 year old literacy programs that use research based approaches to literacy instruction.
    - iv. Full-Day Kindergarten & pre-school programming for families who are low-income.
    - v. Operating a "student choice" system, i.e. Applications, parent notices, placing students, etc

- i. Transportation for programming/ public school choice.
- b. **Family Engagement** that promotes involvement in the academic life and success of the student. This includes:
  - i. Parent classes to support successful navigation of school systems that empower parents to be involved in the life of the school community and achievement of their students.
  - ii. Family Liaisons who help bridge the cultural divide between home and school environments.
  - iii. Recruit and engage parent leaders from underrepresented communities for leadership positions within schools and districts.
  - iv. Promotion of public school choice information.
- c. **Professional development** that is focused on increasing the achievement of students of color and low-income students. This *may* include the following:
  - i. Focused literacy instruction training
  - ii. Culturally Responsive Teaching
  - iii. Inquiry, differentiation, and assessment training
  - iv. Focused Math Recovery training
  - v. Training for instruction of rigorous (advanced level) courses
  - vi. Establish partnerships with higher education, business, and non-profits to deliver high quality cultural competency training to staff.
- d. **Access to opportunity** programming that increases access to rigor, and focuses on college and career readiness for underserved populations (including low-income). Funding would support programs *like but not limited to*:
  - i. Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)
  - ii. Dual Enrollment or College in the Schools
  - iii. ACT/SAT classes and test
  - iv. Gifted & Talented preparation programs (i.e. Young Scholars)
  - v. All Day Kindergarten & academic camps for students of color.
  - vi. Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG)
- e. **Increase the diversity of Teachers and Administrators** .
  - i. Develop and implement recruitment and retention programs that attract candidates from diverse backgrounds, who have been admitted to their teacher preparation program, and provide support and cooperative training with earned financial assistance with the expectation that upon successful completion of the program, the individual would teach for at least two years in a Minnesota public school.

4. **Establish one collaborative Metropolitan Integration School District** that folds in the services of the existing integration districts to create efficiencies and eliminate duplication of services. This Collaborative Metropolitan School District serves all metro-area districts within the seven county area that receive integration revenue, compels them to participate, and assumes the following responsibilities:

- a. Develop and operate a choice program similar to the *Choice is Yours* that promote public school choice *and* integration across the metropolitan area.
  - i. Evaluate the program and make recommendations for modifications.
- b. Operate existing magnet schools (FAIR, Harambee, Crosswinds, etc.) that function under one administrative structure (Admin, Human Resources, Finance etc.).
- c. Efficiently plan for future regional magnet schools in cooperation with metro districts.
- d. Develop a regional transportation structure that is efficient and maximizes choice within the seven-county metropolitan area.
- e. Review and approve transportation plans of districts for the purposes of integration.

- f. Coordinate and provide high quality service for:
  - i. Professional development
  - ii. Conducting research and collect data for metro-area schools on the uses of *One Minnesota* revenue.
  - iii. Become a “Center of Excellence” for best practices of integration, equity, and achievement and support districts with training.
  - iv. Transportation services to choice schools.
- f. Facilitate school choice lotteries for inter-district magnet schools.
- g. Establish a governance structure using the open appointments process for an initial school board that will develop the long-term governing structure.