

Committee of the Whole
Duluth Public Schools, ISD 709

Agenda

Monday, June 5, 2017

District Services Center

709 Portia Johnson Dr.

Duluth, MN 55811

4:30 PM

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Board and Administrative Response to Recommendations** **2**
 - A. CITS Offerings
 - B. Suspension/Graduation Rates
 - C. Distribution of Compensatory Education Funding
 - D. Transportation
4. **Board Questions/Discussion**
5. **Discussion with Equity Group** **5**
6. **Adjournment**

MEMO

To: School Board
William Gronseth, Superintendent

From: Douglas A. Hasler *DH*

Date: June 2, 2017

Re: Community-Based School Equity Initiative

I have been asked to provide financial information relevant to the Community-Based School Equity Initiatives relating to the expansion of AP/CITS course offerings, changes in Transportation policies, and the distribution of Compensatory Education revenues.

AP/CITS Courses

There are approximately 20 AP/CITS course offerings included in the high school master schedule. I have investigated the idea of making use of telepresence technology to increase the number of sections of AP/CITS courses available to ISD 709 high school students.

We have obtained a cost estimate for installation of telepresence technology in a total of 4 rooms at East and Denfeld. With this technology, a teacher and a classroom of students in one of these rooms at one of our high schools would be linked to a classroom of students in the other high school. This technology is not mobile, and would be installed into each of the four rooms in the two buildings. The first year cost, including acquisition and installation of the technology, and monthly fees, would be approximately \$180,500. In future years, annual licensing fees would cost about \$17,500. The current cost estimates allow us to project forward for a period of about 5 years. Beyond that point, it is likely that the technology would be obsolete and in need of replacement.

Each “telepresence” course would tie up two classroom spaces – one in each high school. I have not had a chance to determine the availability of classroom spaces to be used as “telepresence classrooms” in each of our high schools. Assuming that appropriate classroom spaces exist at each high school, these classrooms could facilitate a total of 12 class sections a day.

In addition to those technology costs outlined above, it may be necessary for additional staffing (perhaps in the form of a paraprofessional) to be assigned to supervise telepresence

classrooms (for those instances when the teacher is in the other high school). The annual staffing cost for a paraprofessional would be approximately \$50,000. If such supervision is determined to be necessary, two full-time paraprofessionals would be needed.

Transportation Policy Changes

The Community-Based School Equity Initiative proposes three changes to current transportation policy: (1) Provide seasonal bus service within a 2-mile radius of Denfeld; (2) Provide City (DTA) bus passes to students on limited income within a 2-mile radius; and (3) Time bus service to high school for zero hour arrival of all bused students.

It is not clear what “seasonal” bus service would mean. From an operational perspective, it would be very difficult to vary the provision of transportation services on a day-to-day basis as dictated by local weather conditions. Accordingly, the most realistic way to implement this proposal would be to establish start and end dates (such as December 1st to February 28th) during which additional transportation service would be provided.

Additional “seasonal” transportation services could be provided through a combination of buses finishing up bus runs for Lincoln Park Middle School in the morning, to contracting for additional buses in the afternoon. Not knowing how many students might take advantage of this transportation option, we are assuming that four additional bus runs would be provided in the morning and the afternoon. The daily cost for each combined morning/afternoon run would be approximately \$200 (4 additional runs per day would represent \$800). Assuming 60 days of “seasonal” transportation service would be approximately \$48,000.

Prior to implementation of “seasonal” transportation for Denfeld, additional study should be done. Data should be gathered to determine to what extent student attendance rates drop during periods of inclement weather. If it is determined that students from families in need have lower attendance rates during such times, we should consider whether additional transportation services should be added not only to the Denfeld attendance area, but Lincoln Park Middle School, East High School, and Ordean Middle School as well. Finally, if elementary students are expected to walk 7/10ths of a mile (for the elementary walk zone), is it appropriate for all secondary students (within Denfeld, and/or other secondary buildings) be eligible for “seasonal” transportation services?

As to the proposal to provide DTA bus passes to Denfeld students on limited income within a 2-mile radius, there are currently 164 Denfeld students who meet the eligibility criteria for free/reduced lunch. There are a range of bus pass options available through DTA. A 90 (consecutive) day teen bus pass costs \$108; a 180 (consecutive) day teen bus pass costs \$215. I am not providing a more definitive cost-out for this option as it is unclear whether the bus pass option is proposed to cover the full school year, or merely the winter months.

The proposal for zero hour transportation raises a number of significant issues. The School District does not have the capacity to transport all students to Denfeld (or both high schools) in time for what is now considered zero hour – we do not have a sufficient number of buses available at that time. Further, if all Denfeld (or all high school) students were transported to school in time for zero hour, students would either need to be enrolled in a zero hour class, or under supervision of school staff. Additional staffing costs for either of these contingencies is difficult to assess at this time.

Distribution of Compensatory Education Funding

The Community-Based School Equity Initiative proposes that Compensatory Education funding be directed to schools based on the number of underprepared students enrolled. It is not clear how to best identify “underprepared” students. The Compensatory Education Revenue funding calculation uses free/reduced lunch counts to determine funding amounts.

For the upcoming school year, Compensatory Education revenue will be allocated to schools for staffing support, and in the form of discretionary funds. For Denfeld, such funds will total \$461,758. For East High School, those funds will be \$474,014 (all for staffing support). For these two schools together, such funds total \$935,772. The FY 2018 Compensatory Education revenue calculation generates \$719,215.96 based on Denfeld (free/reduced lunch) student enrollment; \$118,675.60 based on East High School (free/reduced lunch) student enrollment (or a total of \$837,891).

If Compensatory Education funds were shifted such that Denfeld received \$719,215, an increase of \$257,458, it would be necessary to reduce the East High School staffing allocation by the same amount. With this shift of funding, a decision would need to be made as to whether the reduced staffing allocation for East High School would be replaced by General Fund support, or whether staffing at East High School would be reduced. According to current staffing cost measures, \$257,000 is equivalent to staffing FTE of approximately 2.7. Given current projections for General Fund expenditure and revenue levels, there is no surplus of available resources to increase General Fund staffing support for East High School if Compensatory Education funds were redistributed in the manner described above. If staffing at East High School were reduced by 2.7 FTE, there would be a corresponding increase in the classroom ratios at East. While I do not have a projection available for you at this time, I hope to have one available in time for our Monday meeting.

I hope that the financial information outlined in this memorandum is helpful. I will look forward to participation in the discussion of these, and other proposals, during the Monday Committee of the Whole meeting.

April 24, 2017

APR 28 2017

Office of the Superintendent

Dear Duluth ISD709 School Board and Administration,

Please accept these formally submitted documents to the School Board related to school equity on behalf of the Community-Based School Equity Initiative.

Enclosed you will find:

- Our School Equity Findings and Recommendations report, with two additions to the copies handed out on April 18th.
 - A copy of the verbal testimony from our group presented by Anne Skwira-Brown.
 - An appendix with the compensatory education funding generated and received by building/program.
- Slides from our March 7th public meeting.
- Slides from our April 13th public meeting.

We look forward to continuing to be engaged with you in crafting a more equitable educational experience for the students and families of ISD709.

Respectfully,

Robin Davidson, Kathy Doyle, Jim Doyle, Bob Feyen, Diane Fitzgerald, Karen Perry, Geri Saari, Anne Skwira-Brown, Kevin Skwira-Brown, Marilee Tusken, Tom Tusken, Jennifer Wellnitz

**Community-Based School Equity Initiative
Duluth, MN
Findings and Recommendations Report
April 18, 2017**

**Robin Davidson, Kathy Doyle, Jim Doyle, Bob Feyen, Diane Fitzgerald,
Karen Perry, Geri Saari, Anne Skwira-Brown, Kevin Skwira-Brown,
Marilee Tusken, Tom Tusken, Jennifer Wellnitz
with contributions from countless others**

Community-Based School Equity Initiative
Findings and Recommendations Report
April 18, 2017

Verbal message shared with School Board 4-18-17

We are here representing the Community-Based School Equity initiative, a group of parents, school staff and community members concerned about equity in education. We come before you tonight with specific recommendations as you consider the budget for next year. Some may require simply making existing programs more effective; others would require expenditures that may seem daunting.

We held public meetings, gathered community input in person and online, surveyed Denfeld staff, and met with District administrators. These efforts point to specific inequities within our District and recommendations that will begin to address some of the inequity. Equity means applying resources relative to the need. On the other hand, equality means treating everyone as if they are the same. Equality, applied where disparities exist, only deepens the disparities.

We have identified 11 areas of inequity or need at the high school level. Some are no surprise – and have been discussed quite a bit in the past. Many apply to both East and Denfeld, such as those impacting students from lower income families. Others impact only Denfeld, based on the size and demographics of that school community.

We have provided you with the entire list. For now, as you consider the budget for next year, we ask that you include resources to address the following 4 priority issues.

- 1. Advanced academic opportunities at the high school level are determined by zip code, not interest or ability.**
 - We recommend that a second section of each advanced course be offered at Denfeld; and allow East student to attend via telepresence. Offer one less face to face section at East, resulting in no net increase in the number of sections.
- 2. Suspension rates and Graduation rates for Students of Color are disproportionate**
 - Enhance parent-teacher communication through a common communication tool.
- 3. Compensatory Education Funding intended to close the achievement gap is being used instead to meet general education objectives.**
 - Direct less of the available Compensatory Education dollars to overall enrollment-based-distribution; instead, direct more to meet the needs of underprepared students in all schools. This will result in a shift of compensatory education funding to schools with greater numbers of underprepared students.
- 4. Transportation policy fails to recognize and respond to the social and economic variability across the District. Consequently it contributes to school absence and inequity of opportunity.**
 - Provide seasonal bus service within the 2 mile radius - using existing bus capacity or additional routes.
 - Time bus service to high school for zero hour arrival of all bused students. If zero-hour offerings are limited to those who can get themselves to school, that's an equity issue.

We recognize there are competing priorities for limited school funds. In Duluth we have a school funding issue: all of our schools need more money. We also have glaring inequities. **It is not enough to say we know it exists.** We ask you to lead us into a more equitable future with your concrete actions tonight and beyond. Thank you.

Equity Report

The Community-Based school Equity Initiative began from a frustration that the opportunities for advanced classes at Denfeld were a fraction of what they were at East. The scope of our concern and commitment goes well beyond that.

How we've come to our perspective

We have gathered the public on two occasions, collected input in person and online, surveyed Denfeld staff – both classroom teachers and intervention staff, and met with District administrators. We are naming real issues and proposing viable and concrete solutions, many that can be implemented immediately.

The situation as it exists

The following unacceptable realities demand action by the Duluth ISD 709 administration and School Board.

- Advanced academic opportunities at the high school level are determined by zip code and not interest or ability.
- Students of Color and lower income students' graduation rates are significantly lower than their white and/or wealthier peers.
- The current transportation policy fails to recognize and respond to the social and economic variability across the District, contributing to school absences and inequity of opportunity.
- Compensatory Education Funding intended to close the achievement gap is being used instead to meet general education objectives.
- Promising interventions such as WIN, Professional Learning Communities, intervention classes, and SST are inadequately implemented due to a lack of training or support.
- Suspension and referral rates disproportionately impact students of Color.
- The math and reading Intervention labs are significantly underutilized and lack a standard curriculum.
- Staffing and curriculum reflect a racial and cultural bias.
- Staff lack the time it takes to implement professional development and collaborative efforts.
- Denfeld is seen as a less attractive option compared to other District/area high schools.
- District boundaries, program placement, and transfer policies contribute to high schools that are disproportionate in size and key demographics.

Community-Based School Equity Initiative
Findings and Recommendations Report
April 18, 2017

Recommendations

For each of the following issues, we are stating a goal – and, more importantly, we are proposing concrete, realistic actions that can be taken immediately and in the long term to help achieve that goal.

Advanced academic opportunities at high school level are determined by zip code, not interest or ability.

Make AP/CITS courses available to all.		<i>Measurable outcome</i>
		No qualified student denied enrollment
Immediate actions	Offer a second section at Denfeld of each CITS/AP course and allow East student to attend via telepresence. Offer one less face to face section at East resulting in no net increase in the number of sections. The only additional costs will be for the telepresence equipment. East students in this section can attend without in-room staff supervision. (Rationale: Denfeld staff is being directed to whittle down the list of students who will be allowed to register for advanced classes to avoid needing a second section.)	Increased enrollment in advanced courses.
Longer term actions	Reconfigure the school day to allow greater ability to move between high schools for courses. Balance the size and makeup of the two schools by redrawing boundaries. Explore an academy model at Denfeld to better serve all students including those who are college bound by offering a STEM program, fine art program etc.	Increased brand and attractiveness to attend Denfeld. More even distribution of student populations.

Community-Based School Equity Initiative
Findings and Recommendations Report
April 18, 2017

Students of Color and lower income students' graduation rates are significantly lower than their white and/or wealthier peers.

Bolster services to students whose graduation rates and MCA scores lag their peers.		Measurable outcome
		Reduce achievement & graduation gaps
Immediate actions	<p>Increase the number of personnel serving in effective programs to increase the impact (i.e., integration specialists).</p> <p>Remedy or eliminate programs that do not have the training, support or curriculum they need to be effective like math/reading intervention labs.</p> <p>Direct additional Compensatory Education dollars to achievement gap services/programs.</p> <p>Provide proper training, support and accountability for PLCs so they can achieve success as supported by the research. If done well, this initiative will support all students.</p> <p>Bring credit recovery on site to the high schools to eliminate the inequity of a lack of transportation to and from ALC.</p> <p>Reimagine WIN to provide more structure and accountability for the students who most need it and/or are least engaged, so they get the interventions they need. Allow WIN to become advisory for 1 day/week where teachers can check their student's' grades, attendance and behavior and communicate more with parents/guardians. If done well, this initiative will support all students.</p> <p>Provide required resources to fully implement the BARR (Building Assets, Reducing Risks) research based program starting in the Fall of 2017 for all 9th graders at Denfeld High School which features grade level meetings. Look for ways to expand this to grades 10-12. This initiative will support all students if it is high functioning.</p>	
Longer term actions	Build sufficient general fund revenue to achieve desired class sizes without using any Comp Ed dollars for that goal.	

Transportation policy that fails to recognize and respond to the social and economic variability across the District contributes to school absence and inequity of opportunity.

Amend transportation policy to support equity in academic access.		<i>Measurable outcome</i> Improved attendance/reduction in absences. Greater and more equitable utilization of zero hour.
Immediate actions	Provide seasonal bus service within 2 mile radius - using existing bus capacity or additional routes. Provide City bus passes to students on limited income within 2 mile radius. (Rationale: Students attending school who live within 2 miles are required to walk or if income and circumstances permit, drive or private pay the city bus to get to school.) Time bus service to High school for zero hour arrival of all bused students. (Rationale: Zero-hour offerings are only available to those who can get themselves to school. That's an equity issue.)	Improved attendance/reduction in absences. Greater and more equitable utilization of zero hour.
Longer term actions	Explore the addition of an activities bus for students who stay after school to take advantage of academic support or for those who are participating in enrichment activities. This could be modeled after the activities buses provided at Lincoln Park Middle School.	Increased enrollments at Denfeld as course offerings are more robust.

Community-Based School Equity Initiative
Findings and Recommendations Report
April 18, 2017

Compensatory Education Funding intended to close the achievement gap is being used instead to meet general education objectives.

Direct Compensatory Education funding to close the achievement gap.		<i>Measurable outcome</i> Compensatory education money will be tracked to programs addressing the achievement gap
Immediate actions	Direct less of the available Compensatory Education dollars to overall enrollment based distribution; instead direct more to meet the needs of underprepared students in all schools. This will result in a shift of compensatory education funding to schools with greater numbers of underprepared students.	Reduction of the achievement gap.
Longer term actions	<p>First, establish which existing measures best quantify “underprepared” and “lack of adequate progress”. Then, determine the need at each building and the cost of delivering the services shown to address that need. Finally, disperse Compensatory Education funds to buildings accordingly.</p> <p>Utilize a financial model that starts with the individual schools proposing the budgets they believe will best serve the needs of all students in their building rather than the other way around (the administration proposes the initial budgets). This would also help identify needs across the entire district and provide justifications for the following action as well.</p> <p>Build a public case for not taking these targeted dollars and diverting them to general school funding. Participate in public pressure to increase school funding at the state level. Request a local levy to address general school funding shortfalls.</p>	Number and percent of 9th grade students entering high school at proficiency level in math and reading.

Community-Based School Equity Initiative
Findings and Recommendations Report
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Promising interventions such as WIN, Professional Learning Communities, intervention classes, and SST are inadequately implemented due to a lack of training or support.

		<i>Measurable outcome</i>
Build more time in the day for professional development.		
Immediate actions	<p>Provide more training so PLC's will function how they are intended. Need to have staff/teacher buy in that if done correctly these interventions will work.</p> <p>Coordinate the connection between high functioning PLCs with high functioning SSTs and reeducate staff on how to work through the PLC process to refer students to SST.</p> <p>WINs with more coordination, enrichment and overall higher expectations especially with attendance due to its credit bearing nature.</p> <p>Expand zero hour offerings at Denfeld. Even without additional FTEs this would open up regular times in the day for staff to engage in the Professional learning community and other cooperative peer professional development activities.</p>	Greater effectiveness of interventions manifest by program goals being met at higher levels.
Longer term actions	<p>Yearly commitment to looking collaboratively at what is and what is not working well and why; then working to remedy or eliminate those that do not justify the expenditure of resources.</p> <p>Coordinate all programs better so we know which students are being served and which aren't.</p> <p>Encourage and support collaboration between programs to improve service delivery to students.</p> <p>Ongoing mentorship for new staff coming into the school</p>	Resources utilized efficiently and cooperative relationship among professional stakeholders

Community-Based School Equity Initiative
Findings and Recommendations Report
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Suspension and referral rates disproportionately impact Students of Color.

		<i>Measurable outcome</i>
Reduce suspension days for all students; especially for Students of Color		Overall numbers of suspended students will be reduced.
Immediate actions	<p>Recognize fundamentally that students who have not experienced academic success for a variety of reasons are more likely to act out due to avoidance and frustration which leads to referrals and suspensions. If we don't address the skill deficits and achievement gap, it will be harder to address discipline.</p> <p>Give students a way to inform school admin of peers in need of additional support.</p> <p>Increase funding, expand training for Positive Behavior Intervention Services.</p> <p>Enhance parent-teacher communication through a common communication tool.</p> <p>Set class size based on collective need of students rather than number of students.</p>	Overall numbers of suspended / referred students will be reduced.
Longer term actions	<p>Increase connections between staff and students at risk for suspension.</p> <p>Meet with families and survey them about their needs: housing, domestic, violence, food</p> <p>Provide a space (WIN or Zero hour) and trusted school/community adults for students of color to receive support.</p> <p>Identify and implement alternatives to suspension.</p>	<p>Overall numbers of suspended / referred students will be reduced.</p> <p>Greater connection between schools and students/families currently involved in referral/suspension process.</p>

Community-Based School Equity Initiative
Findings and Recommendations Report
April 18, 2017

The Math and Reading Intervention Labs are significantly underutilized and lack a standard curriculum.

Structure the school day to support students in enrolling in Lab Intervention courses.		Measurable outcome Increased MCA scores in math and reading and graduation rates. Reduce the achievement gap.
Transform this from a great idea conceptually to an academically sound and effective reality.		
Immediate actions	Use zero hour to address the underutilization of the Lab Intervention courses. Provide transportation. Make this not only accessible, but also enticing for students needing this service. Find or create a unified curriculum, provide additional resources for class materials including texts and supplements that are high interest, provide a small number of Chromebooks per lab, hire licensed reading teachers for those labs.	Increased participation/enrollment and attendance in intervention courses.
Longer term actions	Engage families and students to identify and address investment in and obstacles to lab intervention classes.	Reduce the achievement gap.

Community-Based School Equity Initiative
Findings and Recommendations Report
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Staffing and curriculum reflect a racial and cultural bias.

Increase the diversity of staff, the inclusiveness of the curriculum and school environment		<i>Measurable outcome</i> Demonstrate increased staff of color and inclusive curriculum and environment.
Immediate actions	<p>Increase diverse presence both through community members and material.</p> <p>Staff development in working with diverse individuals and families.</p> <p>Staff time for work with Ojibwe & Clayton Jackson McGhie curriculum.</p>	
Longer term actions	<p>Build meaningful connections between families, students and school staff as envisioned by the Full-Service Community Schools model.</p> <p>Grow our teachers by encouraging students of color to go into teaching starting early in high school.</p> <p>Job shadowing for students to promote more educators.</p> <p>Bolster recruitment, hiring and retention of diverse staff.</p>	

Community-Based School Equity Initiative
Findings and Recommendations Report
April 18, 2017

Staff lack the time it takes to implement professional development and collaborative efforts.

Increase staff collaboration time.		<i>Measurable outcome</i>
Immediate actions	Restructure staff development days to emphasize collaboration and application of initiatives.	Greater collaboration and congruency of efforts.
Longer term actions	<p>Lengthen school day.</p> <p>Set aside allocated time for collaboration for staff/counselors/administration to check in on program efficacy and problem solving.</p> <p>Shorten periods once a week/month for a meeting time. Students could have other activities at this time.</p>	

Denfeld is seen as a less attractive option compared to District/area high schools.

Bolster Denfeld's brand.		<i>Measurable outcome</i>
		Fewer Denfeld eligible students enrolling in alternatives within or beyond the District.
Immediate actions	<p>Identify why families living in Western School Neighborhoods decide to send their students to other schools.</p> <p>Create an advantage to enrolling at Denfeld for students with varying reasons for choosing elsewhere.</p> <p>Eliminate real and perceived disadvantages to enrolling at Denfeld - more limited class schedule, greater collective need/lower collective academic proficiency in an average classroom, too many disruptions to the learning environment and lack of academic rigor.</p>	Fewer Denfeld eligible students enrolling in alternatives within or beyond the District.
Longer term actions	Balance the size and demographics of the two high schools through boundaries and transfer policy.	

Community-Based School Equity Initiative
 Findings and Recommendations Report
 April 18, 2017

District boundaries, program placement and transfer policy contribute to high schools that are disproportionate in size and key demographics.

Create greater balance in each high school.		<i>Measurable outcome</i>
		Denfeld student population will increase
Immediate actions	<p>Augment East SPED services to remove the need for SPED transfers to Denfeld.</p> <p>Reallocate selected SPED and general education programming to maintain enrollments while making them more proportional.</p>	Proportional allocation of SPED programs and population throughout district.
Longer term actions	<p>Redraw boundaries and reset transfer guidelines to be less flexible.</p> <p>Utilize program placement to balance school enrollments and demographics.</p>	Greater balance between school populations.

Appendix

Compensatory Education Funding

This is MN State funding. It is given to Districts, yet determined on a per building basis to meet the needs of “underprepared” students and those failing to make “adequate progress”. Basically this is funding to address the achievement gap. The state uses the number and concentration of students eligible for free or reduced lunch (a measure of income) to decide how much money each school generates. This is a poor, even stereotype driven means of estimating the level of need in a school. Districts are allowed to redirect up to 50% of the money a school generates to other buildings in the district. Still, the MN statute states that money must be used to support qualifying students. The statute, 126c.15, can be found here: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=126c.15>

ISD709 distributes compensatory education funds in two parts. The first goes to all buildings (elementary, middle and high school) based roughly on enrollments. The aim is to reduce class sizes across the district. The second, called Compensatory Education Discretionary funds goes only to buildings with high rates of students eligible for free or reduced lunch. The numbers below are for total Compensatory Education funds per building.

For the current 16-17 school year

<u>School</u>	<u>Generated</u>	<u>Received</u>
Denfeld -----	\$852,007	----- \$684,128
East -----	\$136,555	----- \$518,212
ALC -----	\$753,000	----- \$90,000** some students identified as Area Learning Center students attend and receive support services at the two high school.
Lincoln Park ----	\$973,192	----- \$496,264
Ordean East ----	\$203,578	----- \$436,741
Congdon -----	\$95,567	----- \$400,548
Homecroft -----	\$79,622	----- \$295,671
Lakewood -----	\$70,212	----- \$181, 315
Lester Park -----	\$65,506	----- \$324,110
Lowell -----	\$287,330	----- \$440,228
Laura MacArthur	\$849,445	----- \$503,071
Myers-Wilkins ---	\$971,000	----- \$574,000
Piedmont -----	\$715,138	----- \$532,207
Stowe -----	\$446,994	----- \$402,512

Community-Based School Equity Initiative

March 7, 2017

“The greatest blessing has been the birth of my son, my next greatest has been my ability to turn [other’s children] into children of mine.”

Maya Angelou

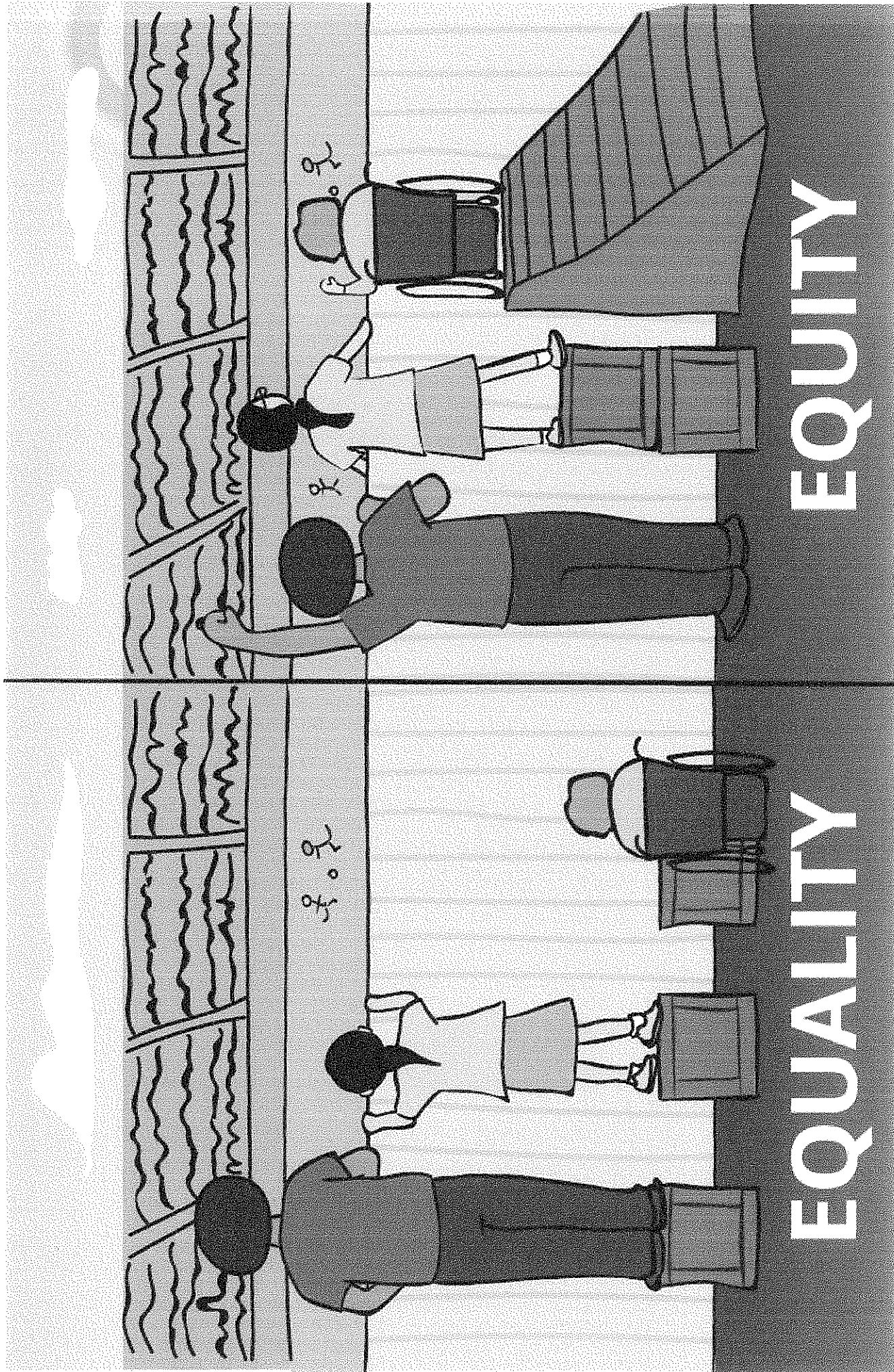
Who we are and our mission

We are a collection of school parents, district employees and Duluth residents concerned about the perceived inequity within the ISD 709 public school communities with a current focus on high schools.

Our mission is to highlight needs and advance equity for students and school communities.

Goals and Process for tonight

- Provide context regarding equity and disparities
- Introduce a framework for building an equitable approach to education
- Share initial data regarding student needs and school community needs
- Collect stories and examples of needs of students and school communities - in small groups or electronically
- No large group testimony
- No Q & A with school administration or School Board



EQUITY

EQUALITY

Equity in Education

What is equity in education?

If EQUALITY means giving everyone the same resources, EQUITY means giving each student access to the resources they need to learn and thrive regardless of individual characteristics and cultural identities.

To achieve equity in education we must acknowledge the uneven playing field that still exists for many students in the education system and implement policies and practices to address this without sentencing anyone to failure because of “boxes they may check

Achieving Educational Equity

“It is about what we do, not just what we have to do it with.”

Beyond the distribution of resources

Work to reframe *deficit* thinking and move to *strength-based* thinking

Focus on the possibilities for all students to learn and thrive

Equity is the vision! Culturally Responsive Education is the Strategy.

Assumptions regarding educational needs

All students deserve to have their educational needs met

It takes more and different resources to overcome systemic disadvantage

Specific needs require unique approaches

Needs are based on the individual and the school community as a whole

Understanding Student Needs

Utility and danger of our frameworks

Variability within and between groups

Similar needs with differing emphasis

Areas of Need:

Student Academic needs - (frequency/ type of classes, teaching methods, classroom size and teacher/student ratio)

Student Enrichment needs - (access and support for school sponsored clubs, teams, activities)

Student School Readiness needs - (things that impact readiness learn)

The Needs of Students

Classrooms with adequate teacher to student ratio

Material that reflects their lives and identities

Appropriate class size for learning

Access to challenging course material and courses

Physical representation in schools (e.g. teachers, administrators, counselors)

Strategies to keep students in class and on task

Curriculum and content that validates their existence

Safe spaces and people they can trust

School environment that values truth and diverse perspectives

Staff trained in trauma-informed practices

Material support such as school supplies

Students of Color

Students receiving legal accommodations (SPED & 504 Plans)

Students living near or in poverty

Students experiencing homelessness

Students testing at grade level

Students testing below grade level

Students testing above grade level

Understanding Needs of a School Community

Schools are entities - they have strengths, needs, resources and challenges

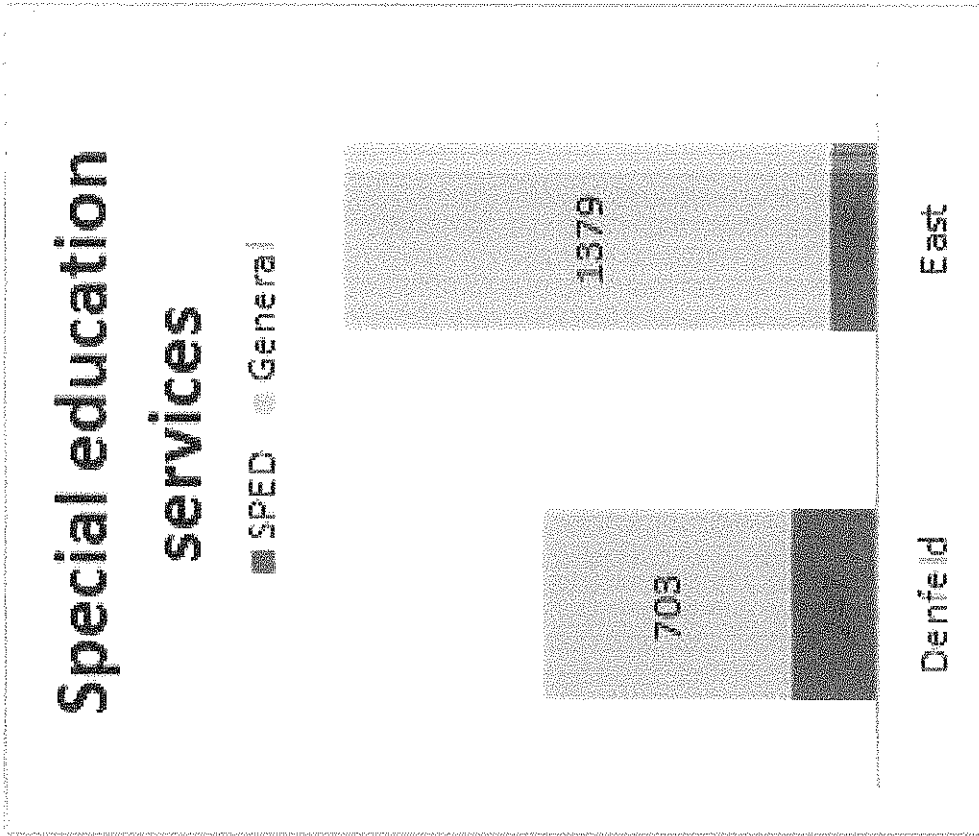
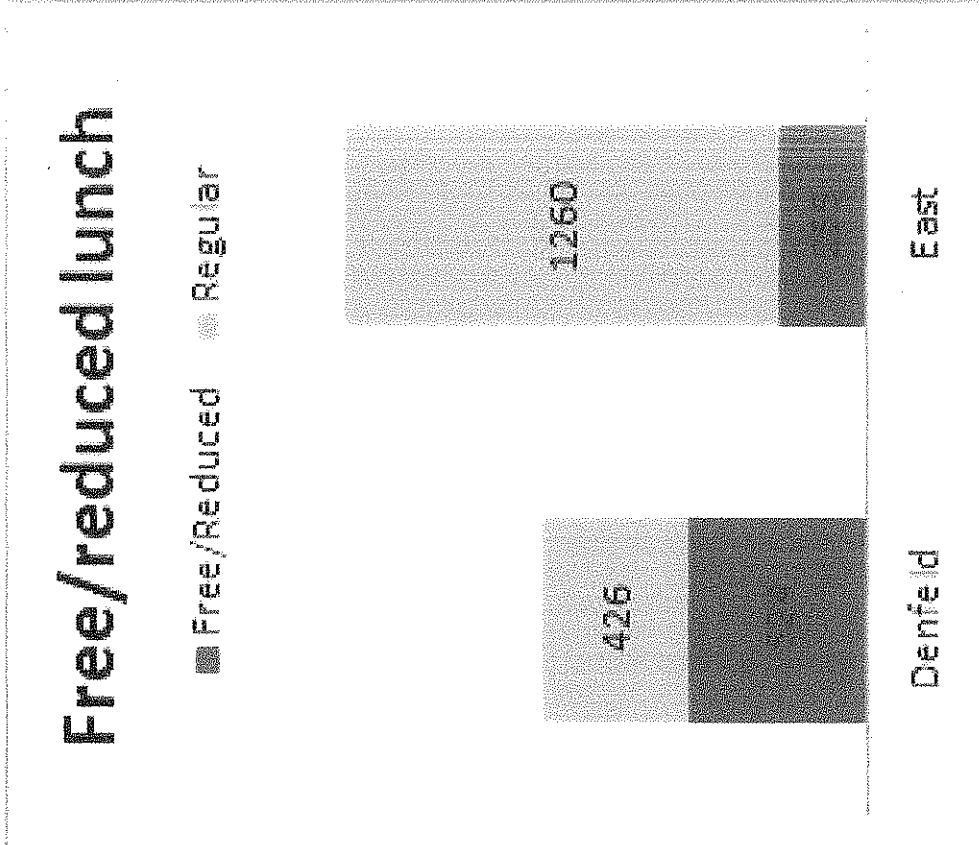
School Community District related needs

(Funding & staffing, support, training, ...)

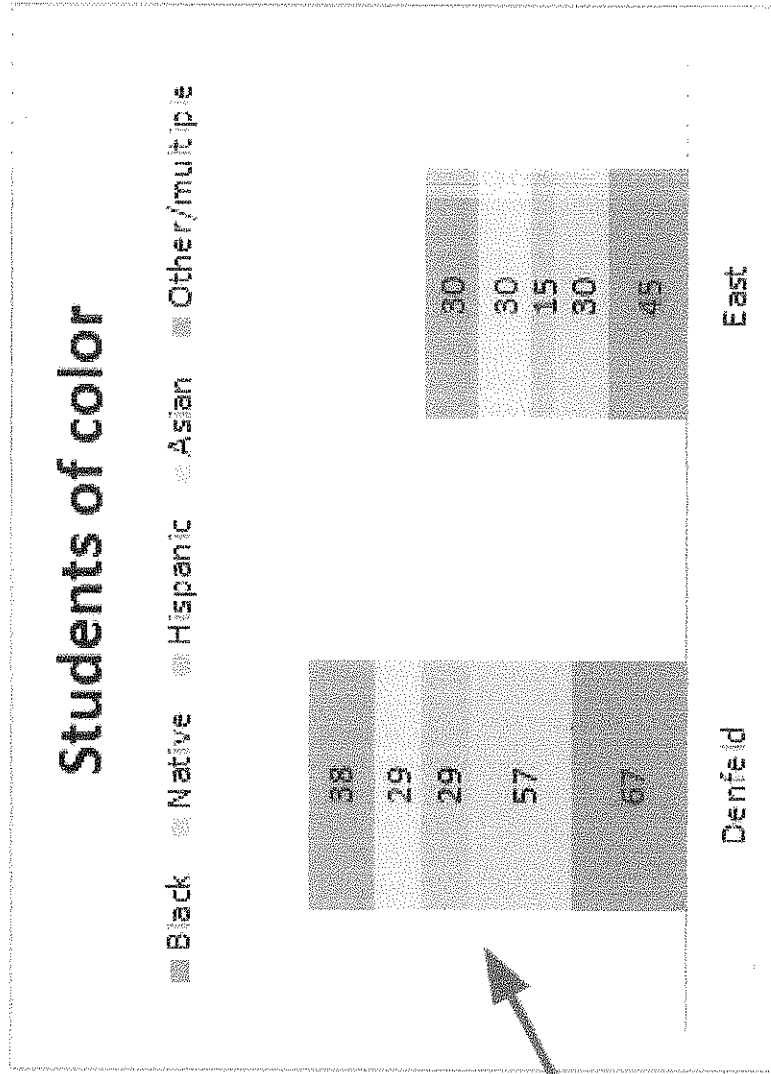
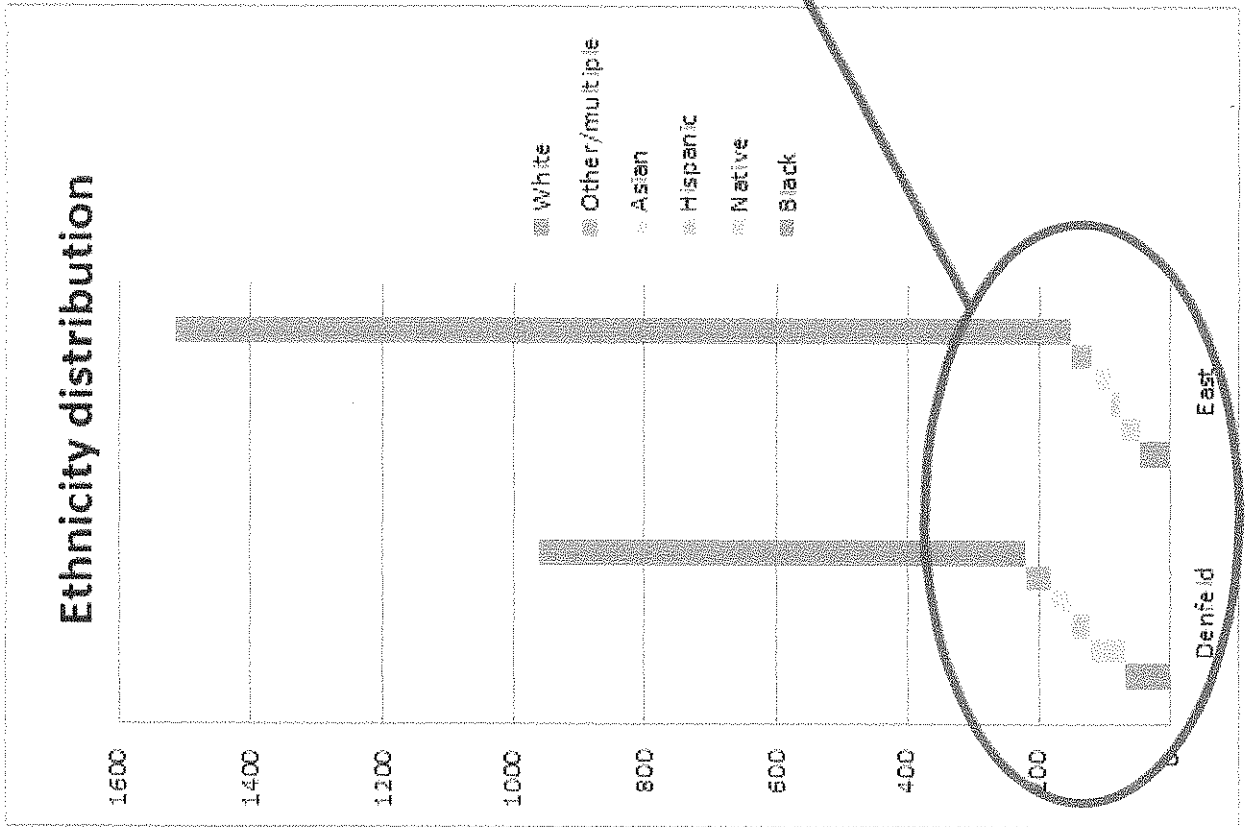
School Community Non-District needs

(family/community involvement, tutors, mentors,...)

Understanding the needs

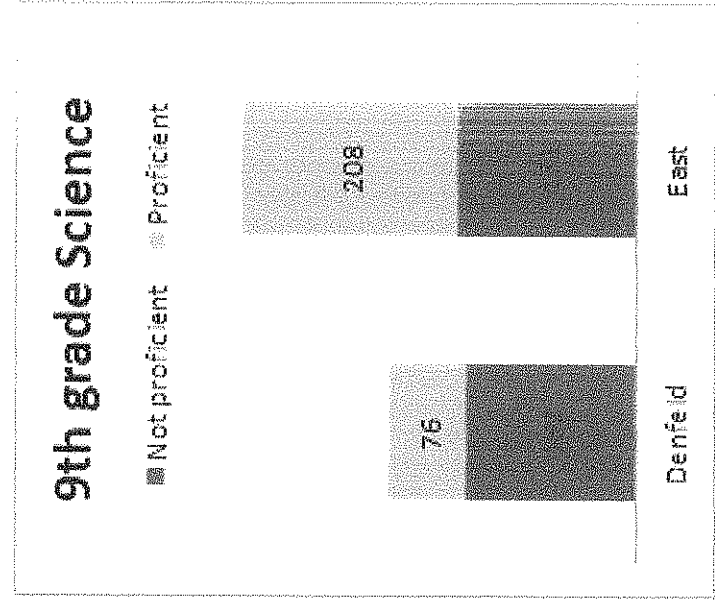
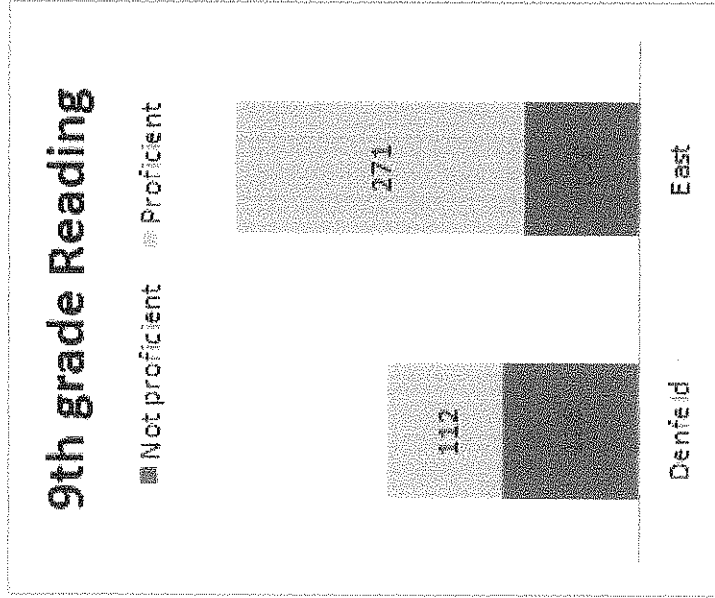


Understanding the needs

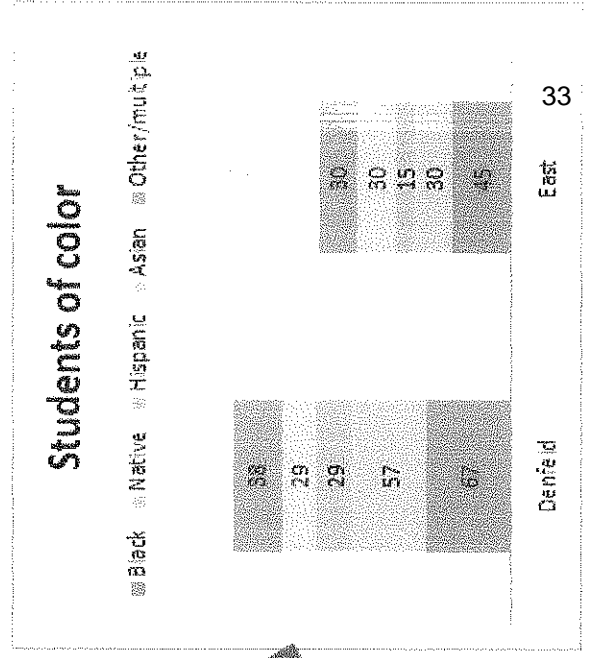
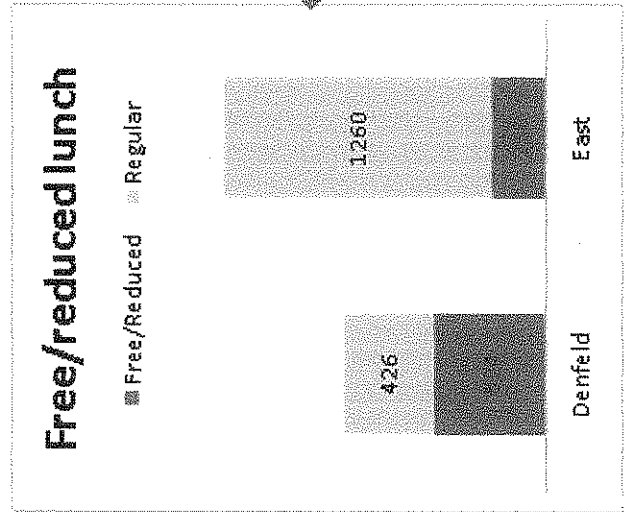
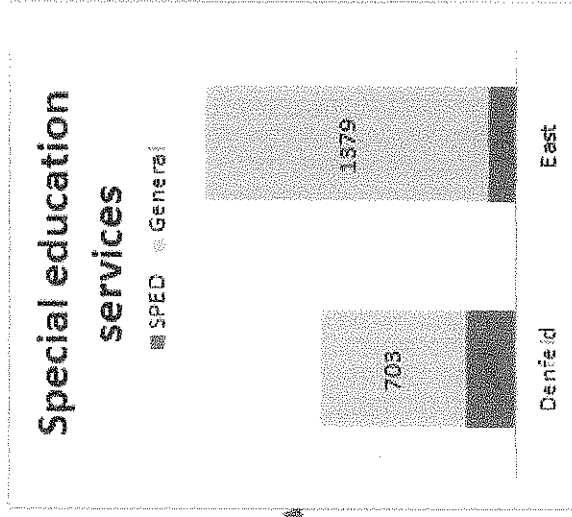
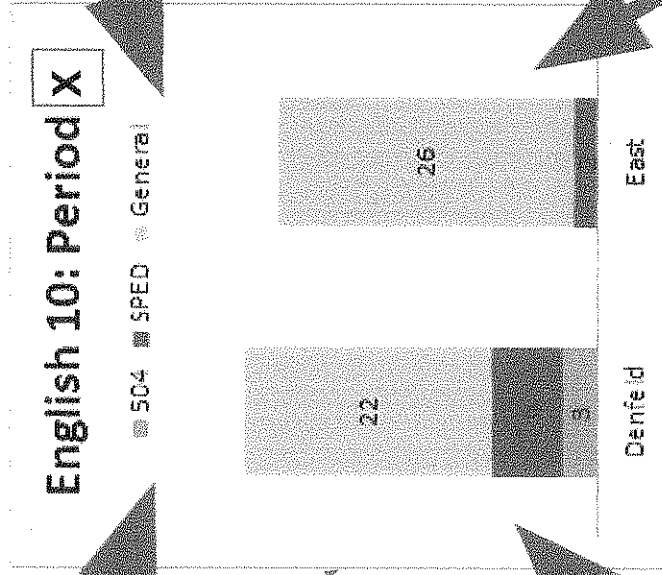
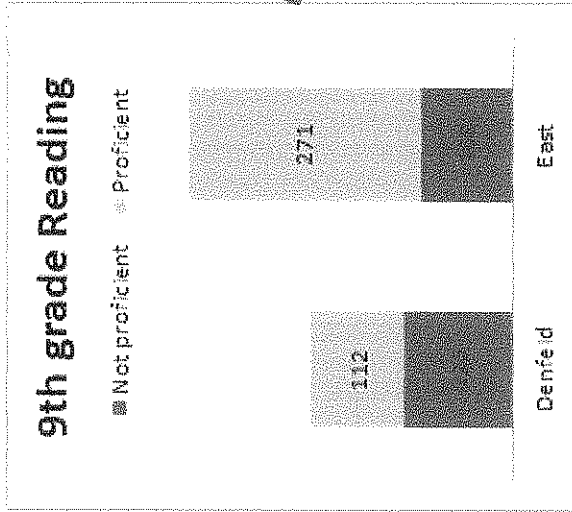


Understanding the needs

A large number of students enter both high schools without being proficient in one of these three key areas; but Denfeld has a much higher *proportion* of non-proficient students

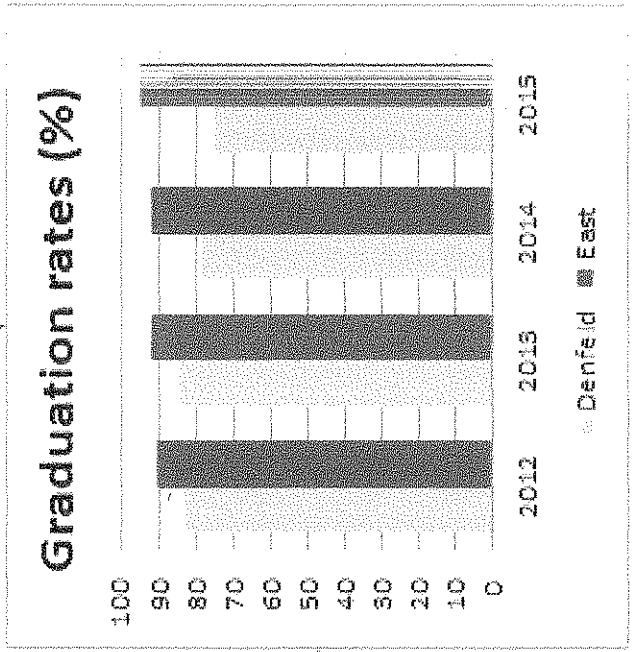
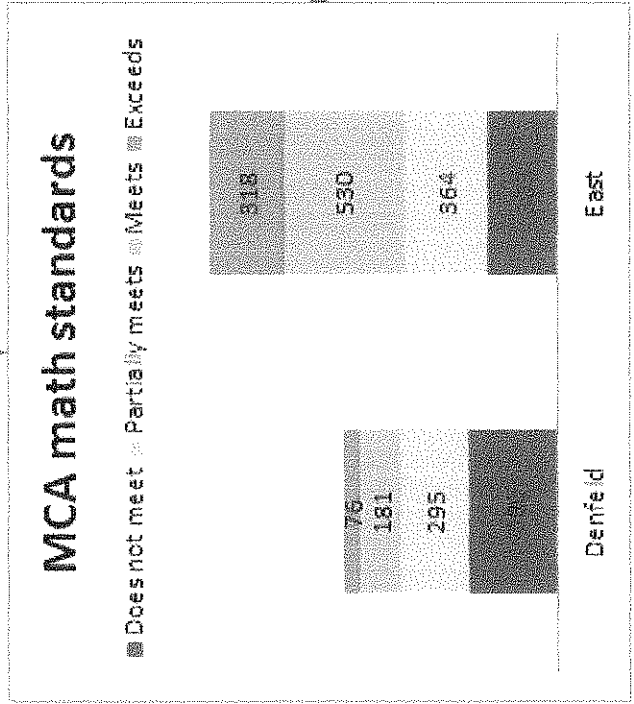
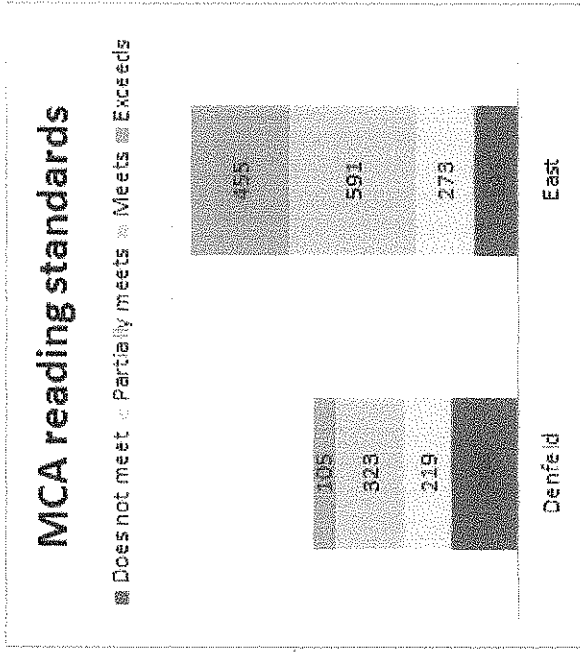


Understanding the needs



Understanding the needs

Repeat that pattern over and over for up to four years and...



How to respond to differences in outcomes

- Begin with differences in opportunity and experience
- Resist individualistic explanations based on stereotypes
- Accept that we didn't have to create it, to be responsible to respond to it

*I am responsible for the house which I did not build
but in which I live."*

Dorothee Soelle

Opportunities to add your insights, stories and experiences regarding needs

- Table recorders
- Chromebooks with online google form
- Link to Google form - to use and share @ www.facebook.com/duluthequity

Next public meeting April 13, Denfeld Media Center 7-8:30pm

- View results from community input
- Review existing strategies
- Add to interpretation and recommendations

School Board Meeting April 18, presentation of recommendations to School Board and Administration

Additional Opportunity to Contribute

Full-Service Community School Focus Groups

Led by GrayHall Consulting

Thursday, March 16th and Thursday, March 23rd 5-7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 14th and Thursday, March 30th 3:45-6:15 p.m.

Tuesday, March 14th and Thursday, March 30th 12:30-3:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 16th and Thursday, March 23rd noon-2:30 p.m.

All focus groups held at Denfeld High School

**Thank you for your
time
and**

**your commitment to
responsive education for
all of our kids**

Community-Based School Equity Initiative

April 13th, 2017

Who we are and our mission

We are a collection of school parents, district employees and Duluth residents concerned about the perceived inequity within the ISD 709 public school communities with a current focus on high schools.

Our mission is to highlight needs and advance equity for students and school communities.

Agenda

Why are you here?

Short summary of:

- Community needs input

- School funding

- District/School efforts at meeting needs

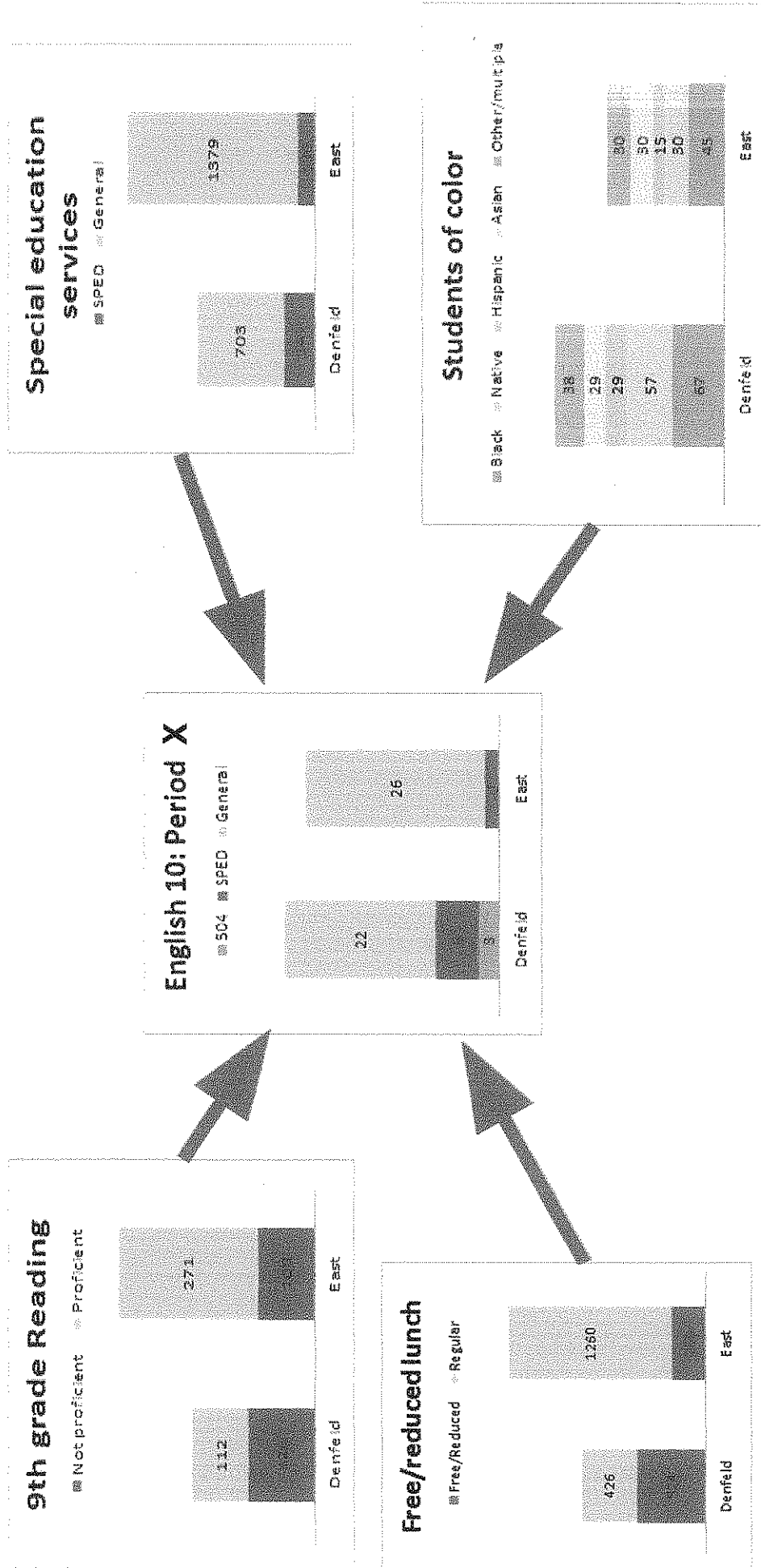
Community input

- Gaps/Opportunities

- Strategies/recommendations

Next steps

Recall that all schools have factors that impact learning...



...and these factors create uniquely different needs

To identify the needs at Denfeld, we asked the community for help:

- Individual interviews
- Group meetings
- Survey (62 respondents to date)
 - Parents
 - Community members
 - District employees
 - Business representatives
 - Other (students, concerned citizens, etc.)

So, what does the community believe are the needs?

Students and the school community have needs in four main areas

Classes/curriculum

Smaller class sizes

Practical access to academic supports

Scheduling flexibility/options (e.g., CITS)

More instructional time

Partnerships with faith-based groups

Opportunities with business re: careers

Overcoming negative perceptions

Keeping students at their "home" school

Educate, celebrate differences

Diversity within staffing (role models, etc.)

Integrate different perspectives into courses

Food, clothing and housing

Medical, dental, mental, emotional

Transportation options (e.g., DTA)

Trauma support services

There are challenges in meeting the needs...

Primary

- Budget/funding/economics (16)
- Poor or biased decision making by administration and/or school board (12)

Secondary

- Lack of cultural awareness (race, socioeconomics) (4)
- Teacher cuts (4)
- Inadequate transportation (4)
- Lack of course offerings and flexibility (4)
- Six period day (3)
- Advancing students to next grade even if not academically prepared (3)

...but the challenges can be overcome.

Suggestions for doing so fell into four main categories as well:

Communication

Two way
Balanced
At and across each level
Requires listening

Empowered to initiate at all levels
Occurs at and across each level
Includes external partners

Demonstrated at all levels
Allocate time, staffing, other resources
Followup and adjust, if needed
Get the message out

Can succeed despite myriad constraints
Involve external partners
At and across each level
Encouraged and rewarded

Summary of Funding

- **Admin**
 - Front office staff - per building type
- **General Education**
 - Classroom staff plus counselors, media specialist
 - FTEs based on enrollment numbers
 - Includes ALC intervention labs
- **Integration**
 - Feds.
 - Myers-Wikins qualifies for Title I funds for the District.
 - Funding level based on District population of SoC.
 - M-W receives ~ \$600,000 of 1.6 million.
 - Each HS receives \$30,000 for Ojibwe language courses (East from Indian Education Funds not Integration dollars).

Summary of Funding

- **Compensatory Education** - (includes Discretionary Comp Ed)
 - State funding: F&R per building to meet the needs of “underprepared” students
 - Districts can redirect 50% to other buildings.
 - Distributed in two parts: total building enrollment and to buildings with high F&R rates

For the current 16-17 school year

School	Generated	Received
Denfeld	\$852,000	\$684,000
East	\$137,000	\$518,000
ALC	\$753,000	\$90,000** many students attd HS buildings
LPMS	\$973,000	\$496,000
OEMS	\$204,000	\$436,000
Myers-Wilkins	\$971,000	\$574,000
Congdon	\$96,000	\$401,000
Homecroft	\$80,000	\$296,000

Summary of Funding

- **Title I -**
 - Feds via State. Buildings with 40% + F&R rates.
 - District funds capped.
 - Denfeld qualifies yet isn't designated
 - Denfeld has greater rates of F&R than some buildings that are designated
 - How is the need reflected in Denfeld's rates of F&R being addressed?
 - **Building specific funding - An example of equality vs. equity thinking**
 - Parking. Going forward both will charge \$75/year
 - East generated \$28,000 in parking permit fees. Lot expense of \$2,500
 - Denfeld generated \$3,000. Received \$900 from Community Health Ctr
 - Surplus treated as discretionary funds for the building. Greater average wealth = greater resources for the building. Equity would pool the parking money.
- Equity isn't about, Do all schools need more money?**
But instead, Is the money following the Need?

Summary of Programs to meet needs of Students

- **Intention and Reality of Execution**
- **Additional Staffing**
- **Transportation**
- **District Policy / Practice / Contracts**
- **Specified Student Populations**

Summary of Programs to meet needs of Students

Collaboration:

- Needed between programs
- -Staff could value some programs that support students more with release from class
- +Staff provide a bounty of referrals
- More opportunity to work with staff to integrate curriculum to reflect people of color etc.

Summary of Programs to meet needs of Students

Overall Coordination:

- How many students receive support?
- What students receive what programming?
- What students aren't receiving any additional support?
- Helpful if school staff knew all service providers, what they do and how they can be a resource

Evaluation and Data Driven Decision Making

Community Input process

1. Share with a person new to you tonight a gap or opportunity that you want met.
2. Identifying gaps or opportunities that exist at present. Large group sharing.
3. Identifying strategies or recommendations to meet gaps or opportunities.
Large group sharing.
4. Prioritize the top three strategies you want addressed. Dot activity

Next steps

Brief summary at Tuesday's April 18th School Board meeting. 6:30 in the Central Admin Building.

Summary Report available at that time.

Ongoing dialogue with School Board and Administration