**Minnesota** Department of
**Education**

# ACHIEVEMENT INTEGRATION PROGRAM
# PLAN GUIDE

Every three years, school districts that participate in Minnesota's Achievement and Integration program (AI) submit an AI plan to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE).

This guide gives you the process, resources, and tools you will need to develop, implement, and monitor your district's AI plan so that it aligns with the law and reflects the purpose of the program. You will learn who should be involved in creating an AI plan, what steps should be taken, and why.

In addition to this guide, we offer online resources and ongoing technical assistance.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This guide and its related resources were created in partnership with staff from the Great Lakes Equity Center (Center), one of ten regional Equity Assistance Centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education under Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Minnesota is one of six states working with the Center on a variety of resources and supports related to equity, civil rights, and systemic school reform focused on issues related to race, gender, and national origin.

The Center provided extensive technical assistance and guidance to MDE and developed the equity-driven processes described in this guide. In addition to providing the framework for the planning process, Center staff created the data collection activities, the data analysis rubric, leadership team resources, and established the equity criteria.

As such, this guide represents a collaborative effort between the Center and MDE to design an equity-oriented planning and evaluation process customized for Minnesota's Achievement and Integration program. This work would not have been possible without the Center's deep knowledge of educational equity, its collaborative approach to providing technical assistance, as well as extensive input and guidance from its highly skilled and dedicated staff.

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Achievement and Integration (AI) program is to:

- Pursue racial and economic integration.

- Increase student achievement.

- Create equitable educational opportunities.

- Reduce academic disparities based on students' diverse racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds in participating schools and districts.

Given this purpose, developing the required three-year AI plan[1] warrants using a strategic planning process grounded in educational equity.

The process is built around four research-based concepts, referred to here as equity criteria. The following equity criteria provide an equity lens, center student needs, and are intentionally used to steer the planning process:

- Access

- Representation

- Participation

- Outcomes

Plans built on a framework of equity are more likely to see positive results. This guide will help you consider how programs and practices in your district may inadvertently privilege some students over others. By addressing these issues, your plan is more likely to produce meaningful, sustained results for your students.

All districts are required to develop a World's Best Workforce (WBWF) report, a strategic plan listing the goals and strategies districts will use to increase positive outcomes for students. Districts in the AI program must align their AI plan with their annual WBWF plan[2]; this will help districts coordinate efforts to make sure these two plans are working in concert to increase student performance.

Several WBWF requirements are similar to those for the AI program. Rather than duplicating your efforts, think about how to build on the work your district has already done for WBWF. For example, if your district has a leadership team in place for WBWF, use this team to develop and actively manage the AI plan. Consider how your district's WBWF advisory committee could
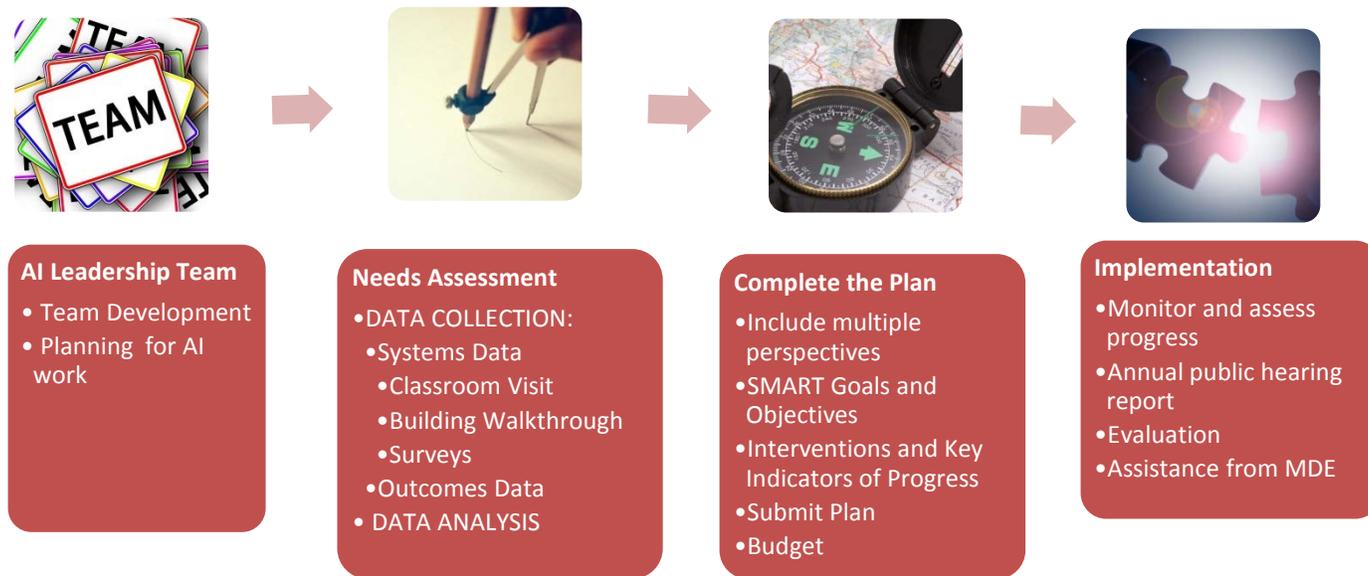
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[1] Minn. Stat. § 124D.861, subd. 2; Minn. School Desegregation/Integration Rules 3535.0160 and 3535.0170 , subp. 6

[2] Minn. Stat. § 124D.861, subd. 2 (a)

provide input on your AI plan. How could your WBWF goals and activities could be enhanced or supported by the goals and activities in your AI plan?

The process for creating an AI plan consists of the four stages illustrated here:



**AI Leadership Team**

• Team Development
• Planning for AI work

**Needs Assessment**

•DATA COLLECTION:
  •Systems Data
    •Classroom Visit
    •Building Walkthrough
    •Surveys
  •Outcomes Data
• DATA ANALYSIS

**Complete the Plan**

•Include multiple perspectives
•SMART Goals and Objectives
•Interventions and Key Indicators of Progress
•Submit Plan
•Budget

**Implementation**

•Monitor and assess progress
•Annual public hearing report
•Evaluation
•Assistance from MDE

## STAGE ONE: AI LEADERSHIP TEAM

### Organizing and preparing a leadership team

Districts are strongly encouraged to create AI leadership teams to develop, actively manage, and evaluate the district's AI program. Once convened, the team will complete a needs assessment, facilitate required input on the plan, use this input to develop the plan's goals, and select relevant AI interventions. When your plan has been approved by the school board and by MDE, the team will oversee its implementation, progress monitoring, and evaluation. Use the Leadership Team Organizer to help keep track of tasks, timelines, and other aspects of the team's work.

Those districts that must implement cross-district activities with adjoining districts and also have a racially identifiable school (RIS) may want to have an additional leadership team working directly with that school to manage the RIS portion of their district's AI plan. This RIS-specific leadership team would report to the AI Leadership Team on needs and processes specific to the RIS(s).

**AI Leadership Team Configuration** The leadership team may be an existing team such as your district's World's Best Workforce team, or it may be convened specifically to manage your district's AI program. This team isn't meant to be an advisory group, but should be actively

involved in the daily operation of the AI program.[3] Leadership teams will vary from district to district depending upon the roles and responsibilities of team members, district priorities, and how the team is set up to support those priorities. When assembling your team consider the characteristics for effective team members listed below:

> • Knowledge and understanding of equitable practices that will help to prevent marginalizing particular student groups.[4]

> • Adequate time to support the implementation of AI interventions and improvement strategies.

> • Expertise on effective, research-based interventions.

> • Knowledge of how to guide program development from early exploration to sustaining full implementation.

> • Skills for involving community members in meaningful ways.

> • The authority to act without having to leave the room to get permission.[5]

In order to bring an inclusive perspective to the planning process and to have an effective plan, the team should represent the ethnic, racial, linguistic, economic, and gender diversity of your community. By including voices from multiple perspectives, you will see more meaningful goals, more effective strategies, and have a greater impact on students. Include leaders from the racially isolated schools in your district, if applicable.

Remember: the leadership team is NOT the same group(s) you are required to convene to provide input on your AI plan. See the AI FAQ entry on establishing groups to provide plan input and the plan input section below.

Many districts have established *integration collaboratives* to manage cross-district integration activities. These groups are typically comprised of staff from a racially isolated district and its adjoining AI districts. Though these collaboratives are not required by law, they play an important role in making sure the cross-district student activities in your plans—which *are* required[6]—are implemented and run as intended. Your team will want to consider how it will interact with your integration collaborative, if you choose to have one.

**AI Leadership Team Orientation** Once you have formed your leadership team, use the Leadership Team Orientation handout to conduct an orientation session. The purpose of this session is to:

• Norm the team's understanding of the AI program.

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[3] National Implementation Research Network, 2013-2016

[4] Skelton, 2015

[5] National Implementation Research Network, 2013- 2016

[6] Minnesota School Desegregation/Integration Rule 3535.0170, subp. 6

- Inform team members of the foundational concepts supporting the AI program and the planning activities. Key documents for this conversation include the AI program framework, equity criteria, and the program's FAQ.

- Present the AI leadership team's role and responsibilities.

- Walk through each stage of the AI planning process and related tasks using the Leadership Team Organizer.

- Schedule the team's future planning meetings.

## Preparing for Plan Input from Collaborative or Community Partners

Districts are required to gather input from the Multidistrict Collaborative Council (MDCC), Community Collaborative Council (CCC), and American Indian Parent Committee when developing integration goals and activities[7]. Decide how to schedule and facilitate input from these groups, then convene them after conducting the comprehensive needs assessment.

The MDCC includes members of a racially isolated district *and* its adjoining districts. The group helps identify cross-integration opportunities between the isolated and adjoining districts and helps develop integration goals. The CCC helps establish plan goals and activities *within* a district that has one or more racially identifiable schools (RIS). Both councils must include representatives from the district's American Indian Parent Committee if there is one.

Districts and schools should establish these councils or use existing groups that are representative of the diversity of the community. Consider using your district's WBWF advisory committee. Invite community members who don't typically attend school and community meetings. For example, those who are not frequent parent volunteers, a president of student council, or a board member of a prominent corporation.Those who are struggling within a system are often underrepresented or absent from conversations about changing that system.. Cross-district activities recommended by these councils should align with goals in the racially isolated and adjoining districts' respective plans.

## STAGE TWO:  NEEDS ASSESSMENT

**Planning for the AI Needs Assessment.** A needs assessment helps the leadership team determine areas of inequity and systemic barriers to integration and positive outcomes for students. The team collects, summarizes, and analyzes data from various data sources in order to be more strategic in your efforts to provide an equitable education for each student.

Begin by mapping out and coordinating data collection activities and assigning data collection roles and responsibilities. Use the Leadership Team Organizer to help with this. One person on the leadership team should be assigned the role of AI data manager who ensures that data collection is carried out according to plan.

**Data Collection**

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[7] Minnesota School Desegregation/Integration Rule 3535.0160, subp. 2, and 3535.0170, subp. 2

Your team will collect and analyze data using tools based on the **four equity criteria**—*access, representation, participation*, and *outcomes*. Detailed instructions are included in the Data Collection Instructions. The needs assessment results will provide the baseline data for your district's goals, objectives, and key indicators of progress.  Following these instructions, you will gather and review two types of data: **systems data** and **outcomes data**.

**Systems Data** Systems data includes policies and practices enacted by adults that impact student learning. You will collect systems data by observing classrooms and buildings and entering your observations into a survey by the deadlines given in the [Data Collection Instructions](). These surveys are available to download as PDFs. If you would like a copy of one or more of the surveys as Word documents, please contact [mde.integration@state.mn.us](). There are three systems data collection activities:

1. [Building Walkthroughs]()
2. [Classroom Visits]()
3. Stakeholder Surveys ([Parent-Caregiver]() and [School Staff]()).

**Outcome Data** Outcome data reflects the results of policies and practices created and enacted by adults. Your team will gather your outcome data from MDE's Data Analytics website and from your district. Read the [Data Collection Instructions]() for more details. These instructions provide step-by-step guidance and links for each data report below.

1. [Student Enrollment Trends]()

2. [Proficiency on All State Accountability Measures]()

3. [Four-Year Graduation Rate]()

4. [Teacher Demographics, Experience, and Credentials]()

5. [STEM Course Offerings]() and [Student Enrollment]()

6. [School Enrollment Choices ]()(local data)

7. [Exclusionary Discipline]() (local data)

8. [Chronic Absenteeism]() (local data).

Your team's data manager should prepare data summaries as described in the [Data Collection Instructions]() and provide copies to the team for review before and during team planning sessions.

**Data Analysis**

The leadership team will meet to conduct an in-depth review and analysis of data using the [Data Analysis Rubric](). This tool was designed to help analyze the data listed above and is critical for an equity-oriented analysis. The rubric is organized around seven areas: *Climate, Environment and Resources, Leadership and Governance, Continuous Improvement and Inquiry, Instruction and Assessment, Student Engagement and Outcomes, Family and Community Partners*. Each

area is derived from research on culturally responsive education, positive school climate, and continuous improvement—important aspects of educational equity.

Under each area are two or more indicators representing aspects of a school system that influence or reflect equitable practices. Use the indicators to consider how the systems in your schools support—or don't support—the four equity criteria.

A four-step process for analyzing data is included in the rubric. Use this simple process to identify and address systemic inequities. Consensus Decision-Making has suggestions for helping your team make data-based decisions.

Based on how you've ranked indicators in your three prioritized areas, think about what actions are constraining your systems' ability to realize educational equity in these areas. What policies or practices are in place that may have generated the data you used to rate this indicator? The interventions you eventually include in your AI Plan should address these policies or practices.

## STAGE THREE: COMPLETING THE PLAN TEMPLATE

After completing the needs assessment, your leadership team uses information from the data review and analysis to complete the AI plan.

You will now develop goals and objectives and then select intervention and the key indicators of progress. Each piece of the plan is key to intentionally pursuing academic achievement and racial and economic integration.

In general, what things should your team consider including in the plan? The law requires AI districts to increase academic achievement and racial and economic integration through the following[8]:

1. Integrated learning environments that prepare all students to be effective citizens and enhance social cohesion;

2. Policies and curricula and trained instructors, administrators, school counselors, and other advocates to support and enhance integrated learning environments, including through magnet schools, innovative, research-based instruction, differentiated instruction, and targeted interventions to improve achievement; and

3. Rigorous career and college readiness programs for underserved student populations, integrated learning environments to increase student academic achievement; cultural fluency, competency, and interaction; graduation and educational attainment rates; and parent involvement.

**Facilitating Input from Collaborative Partners: Multidistrict Collaborative Council, Community Collaborative Council, and American Indian Parent Committee**

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[8] Minn. Stat. § 124D.861, subd. 1 (c)

During stage one, you established these councils or contacted existing ones to provide input on your plan. How you provide data to and facilitate input from the councils is very important. The AI Facilitation Guide provides more information on this step. Drawing on this input, your team will generate SMART goals, objectives, key indicators, and interventions. Below is a general description of the process for drafting this part of your plan. Refer to the AI Goal, Objective, and Intervention WebEx for detailed instructions and examples.

**SMART Goals** Develop goals to address student needs, based on the results of your needs assessment. You must have goals for reducing achievement disparities and for increasing racial and economic integration[9].

Use the prioritized areas you chose during step four of your data analysis to create at least two goal statements. The goals should be written as general statements that address the barriers to equitable conditions that you discussed and should align with your World's Best Workforce plan.

Write your general goal statements as SMART goals and enter them into the goal sections of the plan template. If your district has one or more racially identifiable schools, you'll need to complete the section of the plan template for racially identifiable schools.

**Objectives** Describe how the goal(s) will be accomplished. Objectives are statements of *what* will be accomplished, *when,* and *how*. They provide the basis for selecting interventions. Think of this section of your plan as action-oriented. Develop action statements such as "to develop," "to establish," etc.

**Interventions** are the actions or activities students and staff will do to meet plan objectives and reach your goals. Select research-based interventions from those listed in the plan's drop-down menus. These are the types of interventions that may be included in an AI plan and funded with AI revenue[10]:

1. Innovative and integrated pre-K-12 learning environments.

2. Family engagement initiatives to increase student achievement.

3. Professional development opportunities focused on academic achievement of all students.

4. Career/college readiness and rigorous coursework for underserved students, including students enrolled in alternative learning centers.

5. Recruitment and retention of racially and ethnically diverse teachers and administrators.

6. Equitable access to effective and more diverse teachers.

Include a brief description of the activities you will use to implement your selected intervention(s).

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[9] Minn. Stat. § 124D.861, subd. 2(a)

[10] IBID

**Narrative** In the narrative section, write a brief description of the changes in knowledge, skill, action, and conditions that will result from implementing the intervention. These critical features are the observable and measurable adult behaviors your team will monitor to make sure the intervention is being delivered as designed and intended[11].

**Formative Assessment(s) and Research-based** Cite research that documents each intervention's potential to improve student achievement; identify the formative assessments that will be used to inform instructional or programmatic decisions[12].

**Key Indicators** Develop key indicators of progress for each intervention. The indicators define what evidence you will use to document how well each intervention is being implemented and whether or not it's helping bring about the intended outcomes for your students. You will use these key indications to assess your progress and to determine where or how you might change what you're doing.

The key indicator should include measures—the type and source of evidence—and targets—projected magnitude of change—for each intervention.

For interventions that focus on school enrollment options such as magnet schools at least one of the key indicators must measure enrollment disaggregated by race/ethnicity and free or reduced priced lunch (FRPL).

**Creating Efficiencies** Explain how your interventions will create efficiencies and eliminate duplicative programs and services[13]. **Example**: an intervention that provides rigorous coursework to a racially identifiable school and another school in the district. Students from each school enroll in and attend the same class taught by the same instructor; they learn from and work with each other in an integrated setting.

**Role of the School Board** Your district's school board must approve the plan and align it with their district's World's Best Workforce Plan[14]. The plan template also includes a section for signatures from the school board chair and superintendent.

**Submitting the Plan** Before submitting your plan, use the plan submission checklist to make sure each section is completed as described in this plan guide. In order for MDE to approve it, your plan must meet requirements included in statute and rule. By doing this quick check, you'll avoid having to make corrections later and save much time.

Submit the completed three-year AI Plan to MDE by March 15 for review and approval[15]. Save the plan as a word document and email it to MDE.integration@state.mn.us. Scan the signature page and attach it as a PDF.

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[11] National Implementation Research Network, 2013-2015.

[12] Minn. Stat. § 124D.861, subd. 2(b)

[13] Minn. Stat. § 124D.861, subd. 2(c)

[14] Minn. Stat. § 124D.861, subd. 3(a) and subd. 4.

[15] Minn. Stat. § 124D.861, subd. 4.

**Budget Development** AI revenue may be used only for the interventions listed in *Stage Three: Interventions* and included in your MDE-approved plan[16]. For instructions on completing the AI budget worksheet, review and follow the [AI Budget Requirements](#) closely.

Work with your business office to provide the detail needed for the budget narrative. Use the aid estimates for that fiscal year found in the Minnesota Funding Report section of MDE's School Finance page.

## STAGE FOUR: IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, EVALUATION

**Implementing Plan Activities** Your leadership team must ensure that program activities are carried out as intended and support continuous improvement efforts. Consider designating team members to guide and support implementation.

You must also ensure that your district's staff, students and community are adequately informed about plan activities, and that they receive all the help they need to implement them. Communication is key.

**Monitoring Plan Implementation** Make sure that the appropriate key indicators are collected, summarized, and analyzed during scheduled improvement cycle meetings. This is your progress monitoring data. Review your data regularly to ensure that interventions stay on track; make changes as needed.

Meet at least quarterly to discuss progress towards meeting your goals and any observable, measurable changes in adult practices and student performance.

Ask yourselves the following questions:

- Are we implementing the plan as designed?

- To what extent are we making progress toward meeting our goals? If there is progress, what aspects of the plan are contributing to it? If there is little or no progress, what adjustments need to be made?

- What were the observable changes in adult practice? To what extent were the changes in practice significant and meaningful?

- Was the magnitude of change in student performance significant and meaningful?

**Annual Progress Reporting** Every year, your board must hold a pubic hearing to report on progress toward your AI goals[17]. For details, see the AI Program Guide. You must also send a progress report to MDE which is the primary means of evaluating your ability to meet plan goals. The annual report to MDE will be submitted on a form provided by MDE and be based directly on your plan goals, objectives, and key indicators.

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[16] Minn. Stat. § 124D.862, subd. 7

[17] Minn. Stat. § 124D.861, subd. 3

**Year Three Evaluation** In your year three progress report, you will be asked to provide a summary of data and a narrative describing whether the anticipated changes in adult practices and student outcomes were realized as a result of implementing your plan. In other words, you will document and address whether there is greater *access, representation, participation, and outcomes* for all students—the four equity criteria—as a result of implementing your plan. MDE will provide a form for you to use.

Using this and your progress reports from the two previous years, MDE will evaluate how effective your plan was at reducing disparities in academic performance and realizing racial and economic integration. We will do this by reviewing data from your progress reports to determine if your plan goals have been met[18]. We will report the results to the Minnesota State Legislature every odd-numbered year.

For help with any aspect of your plan development, contact MDE's Office of Equity and Innovation at mde.integration@state.mn.us. Thank you for your work on your district's AI plan. Your efforts are important and will have a positive impact on many students for years to come.

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[18] Minn. Stat. § 124D.862, subd. 8