



# YEAR-END BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORT

2017-18

## **BOARD COMMITMENT**

Resource allocation, policy, and practice is designed to close the opportunity gap to ensure equitable educational access for all students, with a specific focus on achieving an equitable system for students in poverty, students with disabilities, and students of color.

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

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# Goal One

*Provide leadership for equity and opportunity to ensure coordinated and aligned efforts from birth through college and career with specific attention to underserved and underperforming students in Washtenaw County.*

## **Early Literacy Birth-3rd Grade**

The Study of Early Literacy (SOEL) is a network of educators focused on developing teachers' deep knowledge of best practices in literacy instruction. The professional learning is done through book studies, teacher-action research, and working with experts in the field of early literacy. SOEL has hosted a variety of early literacy professionals, SOEL participants presented their experiences at a statewide conference, and conducted an early literacy teacher efficacy survey.



The SOEL network conducted two summer institutes in July and August, adding 80 educators to the network for a total of 120 educators engaged in this study. The group is comprised of classroom teachers, literacy coaches, interventionists, speech and language pathologists, and special educators across five districts in Washtenaw County and four in Livingston County.

SOEL is organized into three cohorts, aligned with the WISD equity, inclusion, and social justice emphasis and anchored in the Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy. SOEL 1 concentrates on deliberate and research-informed efforts to foster literacy motivation and engagement within and across lessons. SOEL 2 focuses on an equitable, inclusive and holistic approach to teaching reading in small groups and individual instruction. SOEL 3 focuses on an equitable, inclusive and holistic approach to research and standards-aligned writing instruction. A year-end showcase of learning occurred in May. The presentations are available online at: <https://tinyurl.com/ydynlr5p>

Entering year six, SOEL will continue with the three cohorts and will add a PreK-SOEL network to accommodate the growing number of preschool teachers seeking professional learning.

## **Responsive Math**

The Responsive Mathematics Institute consisted of seven 6-hour professional development sessions and two 3-hour community forums. Most of the participants were educators from Washtenaw and Livingston counties. However, educators from across the state were also in attendance including



Michigan Department of Education, Eastern Michigan University, University of Michigan, and other school districts in Oakland and Wayne counties. The institute focused on providing educators a forum to examine their own racial identity and biases. This critical examination was necessary to help educators begin to recognize how their personal biases may result in inequities within their learning environments. The presenters were renowned scholars in

culturally responsive pedagogy including: Dr. Pedro Noguera (UCLA), Dr. Christopher Emdin (Columbia University), Dr. Erica Walker (Columbia University), Dr. David Stinson (Georgia State University), Dr. Chezare Warren (Michigan State University), Dr. Dena Simmons (Yale University), Dr. Ernest Morrell (University of





Notre Dame; a SOEL presenter that was part of a collaboration), and Dr. Richard Milner (University of Pittsburgh).

The institute began in August 2017 with approximately 60 people, and by the March session, nearly 200 participants were in attendance. A few of the institute dates included a collaboration between math and literacy teachers, with Dr. Ernest Morrell presenting to both groups.

The community forums provided an opportunity for community members to learn about culturally responsive pedagogy and how it can positively impact the learning environment. The first community forum was facilitated by Dr. Richard Milner in collaboration with the Ann Arbor District Library. Nearly 40 community members were in attendance. The second community forum was done in collaboration with Ypsilanti Community Schools with almost 60 educators in attendance. Dr. Chezare Warren from Michigan State University and Marnise Roberts facilitated the conversations.

*“The Responsive Mathematics conferences have been absolutely phenomenal. The speakers are incredible, and have really made me think about my teaching practices, and how to be genuinely more aware of the individual needs and norms of students. The entire year of Responsive Mathematics was incredible.”*

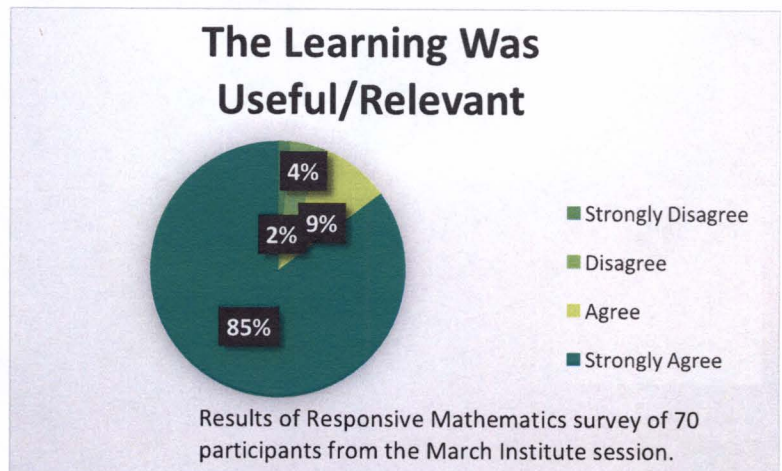
*“Responsive Mathematics Institute changed how I ask questions across all subjects, how I interact with my students, and asking what they notice before I start teaching anything new.”*

### **Ten/80 Race Car Challenge**

Dr. Jennifer Banks from the Washtenaw ISD and Lynne Settles, Art Teacher at Ypsilanti Community High School (YCHS), partnered together to pilot the Ten80 Race Car Challenge at YCHS, and re-start the National Society of Black Engineers Jr. (NSBE) team at YCHS.

Community support, including the WISD, made it possible for the team to attend the 44th Annual NSBE national conference in Pittsburgh, PA March 20-25, 2018. During the conference, the team participated in the Ten80 Race Car Competition, competing against nearly 50 teams from across the country. The team came in 5<sup>th</sup> place in the fastest lap race, 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the most laps in under 5 minutes, and 1<sup>st</sup> place in the endurance race.

This was the team’s first time attending a national conference and participating in the competitions. The team was featured in *MLive* and *Concentrate*, as well as, on the Lucy Ann Lance Radio Show on WLBY1290 AM. They also received a proclamation from the Washtenaw Board of Commissioners for their outstanding performance in Pittsburgh, PA.





The impact of this work on students is most evident in the students' personal reflections about their participation in NSBE Jr. and attending the national conference. A few of their words include "It was amazing," "Words cannot describe how awesome it was," and "Unbelievable."

### **Washtenaw My Brother's Keeper**

Washtenaw County My Brother's Keeper (WMBK) is in full swing with a newly minted mission to "empower multiple generations, build community, and shape innovative change" for boys and young men of color in Washtenaw County. Highlights of the year include:

- WMBK established a 3-year agreement and memorandum of understanding between Washtenaw County Government and Washtenaw Intermediate School District.
- WMBK secured 3-year financial commitments from Washtenaw County Government, WISD, Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office, and Ypsilanti Community Schools, totaling at least \$240,000
- WMBK created a preliminary outline of metrics to be used to measure the initiative's success.
- WMBK hired Tabitha Bentley as Director of Strategy.
- WMBK hosted its first Saturday breakfast in April with approximately 25 men in attendance. The breakfast served as a space for multiple generations of men of color and community members to connect, build relationships, and network.
- The first countywide graduation celebration for young men of color took place June 13<sup>th</sup> at Washtenaw Community College. Community partners, families, and friends gathered to celebrate those who had received their high school diplomas. The program included music, remarks from WCC President Dr. Rose Bellanca, and a keynote address from Dr. Eddie Connor. Graduates were presented with pins and certificates from the office of Congresswoman Debbie Dingell. The event was sponsored by Washtenaw County Government, Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office, Washtenaw Community College, and WMBK.
- WMBK's Young Brother's Program wrapped up the year with its final in-school mentoring session at YCHS. EMU mentors and YCS mentees also teamed up for two end-of-year events, including volunteering together at the annual Touch-a-Truck event, and joining 20 middle school young men from the Eastern Washtenaw Basketball League for a career development session and game of basketball.
- WMBK continues to convene monthly meetings with its intergenerational all men of color steering committee. The 20-person committee has met five times this year to prepare a community engagement plan that they'll lead during and after WMBK's October relaunch.
- WMBK is finalizing its partnership with Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation to amplify a media project aimed at elevating the narratives and experiences of boys and young men of color in Washtenaw County. The partnership will provide an additional \$45K for media production, as the project will feature a series of video conversation starters that will be pivotal to WMBK's October relaunch event.
- WMBK received a mini-grant from Brown Chapel AME Brotherhood Banquet to support the Young Brother's mentorship program.
- WMBK submitted a grant application to the Obama Foundation for the nationwide MBK Community Challenge. The competitive grant process required collaboration between WMBK leaders and five additional community partners. If selected, WMBK will receive significant resources from the foundation to accelerate impact for boys and young men of color through its programming.





## Justice Leaders and Youth Diversity Forum



In an ongoing effort to support educators in the equity, inclusion and social justice work, the WISD supported four new cohorts in the *Justice Leaders: Core Course*, for a total of six cohorts operating over the last 18 months. The course is a 4-day intensive professional learning series for educators who want to make changes in themselves, their practice, and their schools or districts. Three of the cohorts were comprised of teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals from Saline, YCS, Dexter, Ann Arbor, WEOC, WAVE, Lincoln, and Milan. In addition, a fourth cohort was offered specifically for WISD

employees. Participants are required to do a substantial amount of readings, journal reflections, and additional homework activities outside of the sessions to deepen their learning. Topics range from learning the difference between equity, equality, inclusion, diversity and social justice to learning about privilege and intersectionality.

In February, the *Justice Leaders: Advanced Course* for educators was launched and open to those who completed the Core Course and wished to continue the work of making their practice more socially just. In total, over 175 people have engaged in the Core and Advanced Justice Leaders courses.



All Advanced Course graduates will be invited to participate in the Justice League—a group of educators who will meet quarterly to sustain themselves and advance their EISJ practice.



This year marked the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual WISD Youth Diversity Forum. The forum took place over three days in partnership with the Neutral Zone. Every high school program in the county was invited to participate. Students met diverse peers from across the county and discussed social identities, environmental racism and the Flint water crisis, and Christopher Columbus and the silencing of Native Americans. Students and teachers from 17 programs participated for a total of 131 students and 31 adults.

In addition to the Annual Youth Diversity Forum, we supported school-based Diversity Councils in partnership with the Neutral Zone. Three high schools- Ann Arbor Skyline, Saline, and Washtenaw International High (WIHI) were part of the Diversity Council network. These schools will participate in one additional forum and will receive site visits from Neutral Zone staff to help them create projects to affect change in their schools. Our vision is to continue growing this work so that every high school in the county has a strong group of students working on issues of equity, inclusion, and social justice.

Finally, the EISJ Film Series for educators and the community debuted in February. The films *13<sup>th</sup>*, *I Am Not Your Negro*, and *Kumu Hina* were screened during three different weeks at the WISD. After the films, a community conversation took place.



### **Implementation of Birth-Three Michigan Mandatory Special Education (MMSE) Services**

WISD's Early Intervention team worked to implement the Washtenaw Superintendents' Association (WSA) decision to transition the coordination of countywide special education services for children ages birth-three from the local districts to WISD. Currently, our MMSE team is almost fully staffed with speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, early childhood special education teachers, school social workers, and physical therapists. Referrals have increased from 730 last year to 860 this year. The increase resulted in a recent posting for an additional speech and language pathologist and school psychologist.



To assist with the transition, we have implemented an Early Intervention Professional Learning Community (PLC) that includes all WISD and Ann Arbor early intervention staff and incorporates Adaptive Leadership strategies. The WISD team has created written processes and an onboarding system for new early intervention staff. The focus this past year has been on professional and team development along with compliance and blending rules and regulations for Early On and Michigan Mandatory Special Education.

System changes are already showing significant impact on program outcomes. Families from across the county are receiving more consistent access to evaluations and services regardless of their home district or zip code. In addition, for the first time in 10 years, WISD met the state target for serving the percentage of children birth-three. There has also been a significant increase in the number of children ages birth-three served who qualify for more intensive Michigan Mandatory Special Education Services.

### **Academic Behavior Team**

The countywide Academic Behavior Team (ABT) has refined and created the process for requesting and initiating ABT assistance in local districts, Public School Academies, and WISD programs. The ABT has continued to build relationships with local teams, directors, and WISD staff to collaborate on future ABT involvement. To better serve the stakeholders, the team created surveys for local special education directors to complete to collect data around professional development needs, feedback regarding ABT involvement, and the needs of the Special Education continuum across Washtenaw County. This data will be used in long-term planning for the team. Following is a first-year overview:



- Received 26 requests for assistance for the 2017-2018 school-year, of these cases 17 have been completed, six remain active/support requested for the transition to 2018-2019, two are on the waitlist, and one request has been submitted to begin Fall 2018.
- Supported 11 classrooms by modeling and coaching staff on the use of evidence-based practices.
- Trained and supported staff on the use of augmentative communication/CORE vocabulary with 14 students.
- Trained and supported staff on the creation of Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans for 10 students, in a variety of districts.
- Received two requests for professional development that were implemented in the 2017-2018 year. One request was for districtwide paraprofessional training and the other request was for a school-based team training on Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans.



- The ABT remains current on best practices by continuing to attend professional development to best serve staff and students with varying needs. The focus this year has been on restorative practice, meeting protocols, language intervention, and current WISD achievement, inclusion, equity, and social justice initiatives.

**Trusted Advisors Project – Success by 6 Great Start Collaborative**

Success By 6 Great Start Collaborative (SB6GSC) received funding from the Michigan Department of Education Race to the Top grant to develop a network of trusted advisors. Trusted advisors are parents from local communities who are trained in a community organizing model with the intention of reaching out to parents of children 0-5 living in low-income neighborhoods who are not involved in early childhood programs.

The goal of Trusted Advisors is to share with parents the importance of early childhood learning and to help connect them to resources and supports, including early educational and intervention services. We worked with Community Organizing and Family Issues (COFI), a parent focused community organizing organization in Chicago, to train our Trusted Advisors. Trusted Advisor Parent Leaders are paid for their time in both training, as well as community canvassing activities.



In March 2018, a second 6-month grant was received to train an additional cohort of parents to continue the work through September 2018. We have one staff member who is now trained as a trainer in this model and partnered with our parent leaders from COFI for the second training session. We have integrated several Washtenaw County Sheriff’s Office Interrupters into this second cohort to explore working together on upcoming community organizing projects.

In the first 6 months (October – March) of the Trusted Advisor Program our Trusted Advisors:

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| <b>Knocked on doors in the Ypsilanti area</b>  | <b>1,864</b> |
| Number of people home with children 0-5 who received information about the importance of early childhood learning (11% of doors knocked) | 206          |
| Number of families who asked for additional information about programs or community services   | 128          |
| Families still in the follow-up process  | 52           |
| Families referred to early learning programs (Early Head Start, Parents as Teachers, Head Start, GSRP, Early On)                         | 53           |
| Families connected to other community services (housing, food access, health care, free car seats, furniture and other household items)  | 36           |

**Mental Health/Social Emotional Learning**

Washtenaw ISD and Washtenaw Alliance for Children and Youth (WACY) collaborated with Washtenaw County Community Mental Health (CMH) and U-M Depression Center to provide numerous networking and professional learning sessions this year. The chart below shows the number of participants. A second series is currently under development for next school year.

| Session Type  | # of Participants | # of Districts |
|---|-------------------|----------------|
| SafeTALK  | 15                | 6              |
| LGBTQ 101 & Local Resources   | 12                | 6              |
| Cybersafety & Cyberbullying   | 17                | 7              |
| Youth Mental Health First Aide  | 21                | 6              |
| Dialectical Behavior Therapy  | 39                | 8              |
| Critical Incident Stress Management                                     | 32                | 5              |
| Supporting Our Youth Community Forum                                    | 20                | 3              |
| 24 Hour CMH Mobile Crisis Support & Columbia Suicidality Scale Training | 35                | 8              |

With funding from The Flinn Foundation, Washtenaw ISD and U-M Depression Center also launched the first cohort of Transforming Research into Action to Improve the Lives of Students (TRAILS) training. The grant is designed to increase access to evidence based practices by training school professionals in a defined set of core skills grounded in Cognitive Behavioral Theory (CBT) and Mindfulness – two leading, skills-based approaches to managing child and adolescent mental health difficulties. The TRAILS professional development model is unique in that didactic instruction is paired with follow-up coaching from a clinical expert to promote uptake and sustainability of key skills. All secondary buildings across Washtenaw County will have an opportunity to participate in the training over the two-year life of the grant.

The Washtenaw Cradle to Career Collaborative led an effort to draft millage recommendations to submit to the Community Mental Health Advisory Committee for consideration. Among these recommendations, which were inclusive of both prevention and intervention strategies, were;

- Infant Mental Health/Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP)
- Parents As Teachers home visiting
- Trauma-focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)
- Expansion of CMH services for youth & families
- Mom Power implementation
- Expansion of Handle With Care
- Additional school counselors & school social workers
- Community-based services implementing mental health services and supports



### **Inclusive Schools/Restorative Justice**

Based on the recommendations from the Washtenaw High School Principals' Association, a small steering committee was formed with experienced practitioners of restorative justice from our community to work on a county vision and sequence of trainings for fall 2018. The committee met twice and has committed to a full-day work session in July to outline next steps to obtain additional feedback from county leaders. Below is the number of participants in the trainings offered this year:

| Session Type                               | # of Participants   | # of Districts |
|--|---------------------|----------------|
| Introduction to Restorative Justice-Nov    | 28                  | 3              |
| Introduction to Restorative Justice-Jan    | 20                  | 4              |
| Restorative Justice Circles Training -Nov  | 11                  | 2              |
| Restorative Justice Circles Training - Jan | 17                  | 4              |
| Restorative Justice Circles Training-Feb   | 9                   | 7              |
| Site Visits to Skyline Skysquad            | 4 area high schools | 4              |



### **Washtenaw County Jail Educational Services**

Community and School Partnerships (CSP) has been working with the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) administrative team to implement education and transition services for school age youth and young adults incarcerated in the Washtenaw County Jail.

Our team worked with Ann Arbor Public Schools (AAPS) to transition Title I, Part D, Section 107 Adult Education and county general funds to WISD; this allowed our team to provide transition services during the 2017-18 school year. Effective fall 2018-19 school year, WISD will operate all education services, including delivery of special education for youth age 17-22.

The CSP team assisted WCSO with the development of clear processes for identifying young people entering the facility who may be entitled to special education services. In addition, the team worked with both WCSO and AAPS to develop an agreement clearly outlining how each of the entities would work together to implement services. Jennifer Monahan was hired in January as our Youth Transitions Manager and has been assisting incarcerated youth with developing long-term education plans. Here are the following outcomes:

- Between February 1 and June 15<sup>th</sup>, a total of 87 young adults were offered educational and transition services. Of the 87 young adults, 52% have received special education services, 65% are African American, 5% are Hispanic, and 92% are male.
- Worked with local LEAs to offer high school completion to youth who were close to meeting graduation requirements.
- Between February and June, a total of eight young people worked on high school completion, six earned their high school diploma. Two of these students are enrolled for fall term at Washtenaw Community College, utilizing a Department of Corrections scholarship to prevent recidivism.
- Enrolled 29 students in GED classes; three students earned their GED.
- Coordinated with Michigan Rehabilitation Services, University of Michigan, and Skill and Ability Education to offer twice weekly pre-employment training inside the jail and post-release employment transition services starting June 2018.



Beginning Fall 2018, we will partner to operate educational programming that includes high school completion, GED, special education services and "up skilling" for individuals who need literacy and numeracy remediation.

*"I wanted to say thank you so much for advocating for me and helping me ... I swear I would have never thought I would graduate from high school! You pretty much made the impossible possible! It's been a VERY long journey for me since high school. I greatly appreciate you."*



*"I just had to let you know what a wonderful graduation ceremony it was. Thank you for all that you did for Zak. You gave him back a moment he almost missed out on, his high school graduation. I know it meant more to us as his parents, but I think he appreciated it too."*

### **Washtenaw County (WC) Youth Center Educational Services (Court Involved Youth program)**

In 2017-18, Court Involved Youth (CIY) had 269 (duplicated) admissions from June 8, 2017 through June 7, 2018. As a result of the 2016 school improvement process (SIP) with staff from the WC Youth Center, WISD, juvenile court, and local schools, a new position to oversee supervision, program re-design and transitions was created and funded.



Internally, with the WC Youth Center, the focus has been on communication and equity, inclusion and social justice work. WISD teachers and WC Youth Center staff participated in shared professional development. Additionally, two WISD teachers participated in the advanced Social Justice Network with Dr. Shayla Griffin. We continued building on the original SIP work, with a focus on how we frame our work, and support healthy and just practices. Improved communication with partners, increased school visits (over 30 from nine schools and programs this year), and increased graduation and GED completers (from one in the previous three years to six this year) were some of the successes realized.

**Demographics:**

| RACE                   | AGE           | GENDER       |
|------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| African American (66%) | 11 – 13 (20%) | Female (33%) |
| White (26%)            | 14- 15 (40%)  | Male (67%)   |
| Hispanic (3%)          | 16 -17 (40 %) |              |
| Two or more (5%)       |               |              |



**Outcomes:**

|                             |                           |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Graduates                   | 4                         |
| GED completions             | 2                         |
| Credits obtained            | 73% of eligible students* |
| On-site transition meetings | 26                        |

*\*eligible student criteria where the student was present during at least 14 days of school programming and were working towards high school completion*

**School Safety Partnerships: Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office and WISD**

In a response to public requests after the Parkland school shooting, we expanded our partnership and leadership with our colleagues at Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) to rapidly respond to emerging needs. Some of the spring deliverables included:

- Convened several communication and planning meetings to support our community with the youth voice and school walkout activities between principals, youth, and law enforcement
- Convened a small work team to review a threat assessment protocol to be used to review critical cases of concern
- Re-convened the joint police chiefs and county superintendents to discuss school safety and committed to meet annually
- Worked towards grant submission for the Michigan State Police school safety grant funds for fall 2018
- Built a webpage for Active Shooter/Aggressor trainings and worked to schedule refresher trainings for almost all districts fall 2018
- Rollout of Handle With Care (HWC), expanding the number of law enforcement agencies participating. Notices will continue throughout the summer and data summary for February 1 through June 11, 2018 is below:
  - 62 incidents reported by law enforcement via HWC, involving 113 students which affected:
    - 8 school districts (36 separate school buildings)
    - 2 public school academies
    - 2 private schools



- Worked with the team to rollout Adverse Childhood Experiences Master Training throughout the community
- Included the flyer “Everyday Gestures,” which explains how to build resilience in youth, as well as signs and symptoms of trauma in children, in the WCSO Interrupters door to door campaigns, reaching over 3,000 homes
- Submitted planned funding request with WCSO to county government to visit the Harlem Children’s Zone to explore implications for implementation in our community to address some of the root causes of crime and violence



## Goal Two

*Cultivate an organizational culture of equity, inclusion, and social justice through education, engagement, and action.*

### **AdvancED Accreditation**

Washtenaw ISD hosted an Accreditation Engagement Review to maintain our accreditation through AdvancED. The review was designed to examine the organization against a set of research-based standards to determine how well we are meeting the needs of our learners. Washtenaw ISD was successful in earning accreditation.

This process occurs every five years, and was recently redesigned. Washtenaw ISD was one of two Michigan ISDs to utilize this new approach to the accreditation review. The new approach is very intentional in focusing on the organization’s own strategic plan and goals to structure the engagement review. For this reason, we decided to have the engagement review team use the lens of equity, inclusion and social justice when looking at our programs and partnerships. This focus on equity, inclusion and social justice (EISJ) was first named in our Washtenaw ISD Long Range 2020 Plan as a core “big idea.” Three years ago, the EISJ efforts became more explicit and organized.



The engagement review team spent four days on site with us and talked with 45 stakeholders including board members, superintendents, administrators, instructional staff, support staff, parents and community partners. They visited programs (High Point, DHH, Local-based classrooms, Young Adult classrooms, Forest School and CIY), local districts (Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor), and community partner locations (such as United Way and EMU). They used an observation protocol to evaluate classroom practices at High Point and in the Court Involved Youth (CIY) program. In the end the team provided feedback in the form of 1) scores and narrative from the classroom observations, 2) scores on a diagnostic tool aligned with research-based standards in the areas of Leadership Capacity, Learning Capacity, and Resource Capacity and 3) narrative and recommendations on specific opportunities for improvement and powerful practices that should be sustained.

Some of the feedback from the engagement review team included:

#### Classroom Observations

- When observing classrooms our highest scoring areas were *Equitable Learning* (learners engage in differentiated learning opportunities, have equal access in the classroom activities and are treated in a fair and consistent manner) and *Supportive Learning* (learners take risks and are actively engaged)
- When observing classrooms our lowest scoring area was digital learning.



Standards Review across the three Domains

- The overall score was 338.82, considered very high for an educational service agency.
- 35 standards across the three domains were scored and the results are in the table below.

| Rating               | Number of Standards |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| Needs Improvement    | 0                   |
| Emerging             | 8                   |
| Meets Expectations   | 8                   |
| Exceeds Expectations | 19                  |

Powerful Practices

- Powerful Practice #1: Washtenaw ISD has cultivated relationships with community partners, which have resulted in commitments of funding, staff, and programs that benefit students throughout all nine districts and the community.
- Powerful Practice #2: Washtenaw ISD Achievement Initiatives staff oversees and implements professional development for all nine districts in the county. They create and implement professional development that is timely and meets both the districts’ needs while weaving WISDs mantra of “equity, inclusion and social justice” throughout their learning opportunities.



Improvement Priority

- Define and document clear processes and procedures for continued improvement for all levels and departments of the organization

**Intercultural Development**

The Washtenaw ISD cabinet-level leadership team has been working on its intercultural development—as individuals and as a group. Each member completed the *Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)* prior to the start of the school year, received individual coaching support, developed and worked on individual goals, and then retook the inventory at the end of the school year. This process was designed to provide reflection, coaching, and learning opportunities at the individual level. In addition, early in the year our cabinet team engaged with a team of equity and inclusion-focused consultants to better understand our collective intercultural development level. We will revisit this work at our retreat this summer.

**Courageous Conversations**

The Pacific Education Group (PEG) held its National Summit for Courageous Conversations this year in Detroit. This national group and initiative provides a framing for holding conversations about race. We had a significant group of participants attend all or part of the Summit. The two-day pre-summit sessions “Beyond Diversity” and “Racial Equity Leadership” were attended by six WISD staff members and two board members. The conference was attended by 15 Washtenaw ISD staff and board members.

The purpose for sending such a large group to the conference was to deepen our understanding of racial equity and the ways that we can strengthen our own work and initiatives. We were also exploring whether this approach would be a valuable way to extend our equity work in Washtenaw County.





We are considering options to partner with neighboring ISDs to further develop our capacity to hold courageous conversations.

### **White Privilege Conference**

The White Privilege Conference (WPC) took place this year in Michigan. This conference focuses on empowering and equipping individuals to work for equity and justice through self and social transformation. A small team from Washtenaw ISD attended the three-day conference and learned more about systems of privilege, intersectionality, and ways to create change by committing to action in an intentional way.

### **EISJ Core Team and Expansion Planning**

In 2016-17 we formed a small internal core team to plan and discuss our ISD direction around equity, inclusion, and social justice work. To strengthen the group, clarify our purpose, and adjust our direction we've contracted with Phi Delta Kappan and Gislaine Ngounou, specifically, to facilitate the team as they engage in this work. The group has learned new tools and identified areas of attention for our internal organizational work. They have also decided to expand to a larger and more organizationally representative group in the 2018-19 school year.

### **Internal Focus Groups**

To better understand the experience around the equity, inclusion, and social justice work within the organization as well as gain insight on how to engage going forward, staff focus groups were conducted. The information collected was used in the AdvancEd engagement review process and will also be used by the Core Equity Team during the team expansion process.

### **Equitable Budgeting**

The WISD Board, as part of its annual goals, made the following commitment statement: Resource allocation, policy, and practice are designed to close the opportunity gap to ensure educational access for all students, with a specific focus on achieving an equitable system for students in poverty, students with disabilities, and students of color. The purpose of this [document](#) is to identify areas in the General Education budget that display the Board's commitment regarding resource allocation towards areas of equity, inclusion and social justice.



Beginning in 2016-17, the Board of Education engaged in the process of analyzing the WISD budget to determine how the organization was living up to its commitment to allocate resources in alignment with its equity, inclusion and social justice (EISJ) focus. By definition, the entire \$110,000,000 Special Education Fund budget provides direct services to students with disabilities or provides support to staff providing those services. It also provides funding to our districts to provide direct services to students with disabilities.

In 2018-19, the General Education budget has \$12,686,547 allocated to EISJ-related efforts, an increase of \$87,510 over the prior year.

### **Hiring Through an Equity Lens**

During the 2017-18 Fiscal Year, the Human Resources posted 151 positions in Applitrack, with a few duplications due to re-posting some positions. All interview questions are reviewed for content by the Executive Director of Human Resources. Questions related to equity, inclusion, and social justice have been added to the slate of questions





to gauge the candidates' understanding and/or interpretation of the WISD focus. Questions regarding the WISD's Vision and Mission Statements, which are also included on each posting, have been added to the interview process.

The goal is to have a Human Resources representative on all first and second round interviews, and to compose interview panels that are diverse in ethnicity and gender. A diverse team helps to bring different perspectives to the post-interview discussions and to formulate the final decision as to the most qualified candidate to fill the opening.

## Goal Three

*Advocate for policies that support equity and inclusion on the local, state, and national levels.*

### **Early Literacy and Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA)**

Planning for the implementation of the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA, also referred to as the Michigan Kindergarten Entry Observation or MKEO) is progressing. The first large-scale administration



of the tool will take place this fall in every kindergarten classroom within Prosperity Regions 4, 5, and 9, covering 21 ISDs. Melissa Brooks-Yip, in partnership with Johns Hopkins University, facilitated multiple trainer and data manager trainings in each region during April and May with a final set of trainings scheduled for August 2018. Teacher kits, with all the required materials necessary for implementation, have been distributed to each of the participating ISDs ready for the fall administration. In addition, Melissa has developed a

listserv for trainers and district administrators. The listserv provides regular updates and guidance on training opportunities as well as information on aligning KRA student data with instructional classroom practices.

Alan Oman and Superintendent Menzel worked closely with MAISA and lobbyists to support the expansion of the KRA. An additional \$1.5 million in funding for the implementation of the KRA in the FY2019 School Aid Budget has been successfully secured. These funds will support the administration of the KRA in all kindergarten classrooms in Prosperity Regions 2,3,4,5,6,7,8, and 9, which includes two-thirds of the state's kindergarten students, in the fall of 2019.

Assistant Superintendent Naomi Norman continued to chair the MAISA Early Literacy Task Force (ELTF) which has focused on the activities related to early literacy coaching, instructional practice, and school-wide and center-wide organizational practices. The focus has been on the access to research-based practices to every classroom for every student in the state. The task force has worked closely with MDE to adopt a statewide theory of action for the early literacy work. In this role, Ms. Norman presented to the Michigan State Board of Education on the work of the task force and the support needed across the state.

Ms. Norman served with a group of education professors and practitioners on the MDE action team that drafted the new Michigan standards for literacy for preservice teacher programs. Those standards are going through a statewide review process and are scheduled for adoption by the state board of education later in the summer. These new standards are significantly different than the previous standards and include increasing the number of credit hours for preservice teachers to engage in literacy learning. They are also aligned to the Early Literacy Instructional Essentials.



Melissa Brooks-Yip served as the chair of the General Education Leadership Network (GELN) English Language Arts state leadership group. In this role, Ms. Brooks-Yip provided leadership around the use of literacy instructional practices statewide across all ISDs.

As the vice-chair for the Governor's PreK-12 Literacy Commission, Asst. Superintendent Norman has been actively involved in developing the commission's strategic plan and communicating the needs around early literacy to various state-level groups. She presented to the House Education Committee on the work of the commission as well as the work of the Early Literacy Task Force.

#### **The Statewide Finance Study**

Dr. Menzel served on the Michigan School Finance Collaborative Project Steering and Technical Committee, part of the Statewide Finance Study. The WISD board contributed \$15,000 toward the research study that yielded important funding with respect to what it costs to educate all students to meet Michigan standards. Additional costs for meeting the needs of student in poverty, English Language Learners, and students with IEPs were identified.

#### **Science and Math Center Transition**

The Michigan Legislature eliminated the long-standing Math and Science Network initiative in favor of a new funding and structure model for a MI-STEM network. This means the Livingston and Washtenaw Math and Science Network is being phased out this year. In its place will be a six-county collaborative around Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). Our region includes the six counties in our MAISA region and Prosperity region: Livingston, Lenawee, Washtenaw, Hillsdale, Jackson, and Monroe. Washtenaw ISD has been selected as the fiscal agent for the region and we took the lead in submitting our transition plan. We formed a Region 2 MiSTEM Steering Committee, contracted with Karen McPhee to engage in the initial phase of strategic planning with the group, and identified our six-county organizational and accountability structure. Plans are underway to hire a full-time MiSTEM Region 2 director by October 1 to lead the next phase of strategic planning.

#### **Other Noteworthy Accomplishments for 2017-18**

- The Special Education renewal proposal was successfully approved by voters in November 2017.
- Identifying and signing leases for two new educational sites. The Young Adult Red Oak facility and Progress Park (formerly Forest School) will open in the fall.

