

**Integration Revenue Replacement
Advisory Task Force
Recommendations**

February 15, 2012

**As required by
2011 First Special Session, Chapter 11**

Legislative Charge

INTEGRATION REVENUE REPLACEMENT ADVISORY TASK FORCE.

- (a) The commissioner of education must convene a 12-member advisory task force to develop recommendations for repurposing integration revenue funds to create and sustain opportunities for students to achieve improved educational outcomes. The advisory task force, among other things, must consider how districts may effectively narrow and close the academic achievement gap and foster academic success for students by:
 - (1) pursuing specific academic achievement goals premised on continuous adapting of best teaching practices and efficient use of resources, and;
 - (2) identifying variables to show annual progress toward achieving student, school, and district goals for student's academic success.
- (b) The funding allocation for the new program should ensure funding stability for districts between the current integration program and the new program. The money shall be used for the purposes recommended and forwarded by the task force and approved and appropriated by the Legislature.
- (c) The advisory task force is composed of: six members appointed by the commissioner of education, three members appointed by the speaker of the house, and three members appointed by the Subcommittee on Committees of the Committee on Rules and Administration. The commissioner must convene the first meeting of the task force and offer assistance to the task force upon request. Task force members must seek input from organizations and individuals whose expertise can help inform the work of the task force and must develop recommendations to improve the academic achievement of students.
- (d) The commissioner, on behalf of the task force, must submit a report to the Legislature by February 15, 2012, recommending how best to allocate funds previously allocated under Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.86, to achieve improved educational outcomes for students.

Task Force Members

Commissioner's Appointees

Helen Bassett, Golden Valley, Robbinsdale School Board Member

William Green, Professor, Augsburg College and Former Minneapolis Superintendent

Myron Orfield, Executive Director, Institute on Race and Poverty, University of Minnesota

Betty McAllister, Retired Middle School Principal, Nobles County Integration Collaborative

State Representative Carlos Mariani, representing St. Paul

Scott A. Thomas (**Task Force Co-Chair**), Educational Equity Coordinator for the Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan School District

House Appointees

Robert A. Erickson, Lakeville School Board Member

Katherine Kersten, Center of the American Experiment Fellow

Peter A. Swanson (**Task Force Co-Chair**), Attorney, Golden Valley

Senate Appointees

Reverend Robert Battle, Senior Pastor of Berean Church of God in Christ, St. Paul

Arthur Brown, University of Minnesota Family Development Research Associate, Minneapolis

State Senator Pam Wolf, representing Spring Lake Park and Blaine

Meetings and Information

The Integration Revenue Replacement Task Force met on November 15 and 29, December 13 and 20, January 10, 17, 24 and 31, and February 7.

The Task Force received written and oral submissions from parents, students, teachers, and concerned citizens. The Task Force also invited several experts and stakeholders to appear and provide information. The list of these presenters is as follows:

Minnesota Rule 3535

Anne Parks, Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Integration Specialist

Statewide Integration Revenue Program

Judy Randall, Office of the Legislative Auditor

Demographic Changes in the State

Tom Gillaspay, State Demographer

Education Finance

Tom Melcher, MDE Program Finance Director

Metropolitan Area Integration Collaboratives

Dan Jett, WMEP and Pat Gleason, Wayzata

Mark Robertson, NWSISD

Jerry Robicheau, EMID; Cristina Gillette, EMID Board Chair; Robert Rostron, former EMID student

Minneapolis and St. Paul

James Burroughs II, Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS); Jim Grathwol, MPS Lobbyist; Shana Olagbaju, Integration Coordinator, MPS

Valeria Silva, St. Paul Public Schools (SPPS); Michelle Walker, Chief Accountability Officer for SPPS; Mary Gilbert, SPPS

Greater Minnesota Integration Collaboratives

Sharon Johnson, Nobles County Integration Collaborative

2010-11 Integration Task Force Report and Recommendations

Kathy Griebel, Minnesota School Integration Council

Review of Integration Revenue

Teresa Graham

Legal Perspectives on Integration

Cindy Lavorato

Margaret Hobday and Daniel Shulman

Derek Black, Howard University Law School

John Brittain, District of Columbia Law School

Social Impact and Increase of Achievement through Integration

Linda Tropp, University of Massachusetts at Amherst
Thomas Luce, Institute for Race and Poverty, University of Minnesota
David Armor, George Mason University
Roslyn Mickelson, University of North Carolina–Charlotte

Literacy Programs

Christy Hovanetz, Florida's Foundation for Excellence in Education

Magnet Schools of Minnesota

Kim Rasch, President, Magnet Schools of Minnesota
Gretchen Peel, Principal, Weaver Lake STEM
Liesl Chatman, Director of Professional Development, Science Museum of Minnesota

AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination)

Maria Cobb, Minnesota State Director
Jill Ashley-Grochowski, AVID District Director, Northwest Suburban Integration School District
Barb Knudsen, Director of Teaching and Learning, Lakeville Public Schools
Stacy Wells, AVID District Director, Lakeville Public Schools

Partnering for School Success Cultural Guides

Pangjua Xiong
Victoria Campoverde
Nadifa Osman

Literacy Programs

Mike Savage, Eden Prairie Public Schools

Districts with Racially Isolated School(s) Receiving Integration Revenue

Jane Berenz, Superintendent, Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan School District

Voluntary District Receiving Integration Revenue

Eric Anderson, Equity and Integration Coordinator, Stillwater Area Schools

Districts Not Currently Receiving Integration Revenue

Keith Dixon, Superintendent, Centennial School District
Dan Huffman, Business Affairs, Centennial School District

Charter/Private Schools

Eric Mahmoud, Harvest Prep
John Alexander, Groves Academy
Mary Donaldson, Concordia Creative Learning Academy

Citizen Speakers

Eric Celeste, Dr. Jennifer Marker Johnson, Loren Towle, Sara Osman, Kristen Konop, Katie Radford, Sadia Ahmed, Eva Mitchell, Aneesa Parks, Ahmed Jama

Materials presented to and from the Task Force were posted following each meeting. These documents may be viewed at the following link.

<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Welcome/AdvBCT/IntegRevReplaceTaskForce/index.html>

Task Force Recommendations

Based on the information gathered and discussion at meetings, the Task Force recommends the following:

- 1. Create the “Achievement and Integration for Minnesota (AIM)” program funded through *existing categorical revenue* to address the concerns with the current program while focusing uses of the revenue in a manner that can be easily tied to student achievement. The new program must do the following:**
 - a. Develop a revised integration rule that is grounded in our state’s history and law, is sustainable, but also addresses a new vision that is measured beyond reading, writing and math and includes a more complete measure of achievement and access to opportunity.
 - i. Maintain language that prohibits intentional segregation in schools.
 - ii. Maintain current language defining racially isolated districts.
 - iii. Maintain current language defining racially isolated schools.
 - iv. All district plans must be locally developed and establish clear student achievement goals that address racial disparities, as well as other measurable goals to which they will be held accountable and report to their respective communities.
 - v. Reexamine the current exemption of Area Learning Centers (ALC’s) within the Rule.

- 2. Ensure accountability and oversight at the Department (MDE) to ensure districts are effectively using, reporting, and measuring the effectiveness of the revenue uses by doing the following:**
 - a. An adequate number of *AIM* staff (are available) to provide oversight, accountability and technical support for districts receiving *AIM* revenue.
 - b. Ensure progress monitoring, efficiency, and evaluate the effectiveness of the program overall.
 - c. Convene districts receiving revenue annually to facilitate training on uses, effective practices, and measurement of *AIM* revenue.
 - d. MDE will create an evaluation process that does the following:
 - i. Evaluate the successes and failures of current initiatives in order to provide feedback and support for improving districts use of *AIM* revenue to achieve goals.
 - ii. Evaluate the cost-effectiveness of districts use of *AIM* revenue to provide opportunities to achieve goals.
 - iii. Inform policy discussions at state and local levels by analyzing districts’ ability to efficiently and effectively use *AIM* revenue to achieve integration and achievement goals.
 - e. Require annual external evaluation and reporting to ensure progress monitoring of districts.
 - i. Districts must develop metrics in collaboration with MDE, to which their programs will be measured within their plans and have them approved by MDE.
 - ii. Metrics must include (at minimum) academic growth based on standardized assessments (i.e., NWEA, MCA), graduation rates, attendance, and parent surveys.

- iii. MDE will withhold money if districts are not making adequate progress towards goals as defined by standardized assessments and making progress in reducing disparate demographic enrollment between districts or schools.
- iv. Develop structures for support, feedback and intervention.

3. Clearly focus and define limited uses of AIM revenue. Districts must submit plans, develop measureable goals (consistent with 2e), and budgets that limit their use (districts may not supplant) within any of the following areas:

- a. ***Innovative and integrated learning environments***, including magnet schools, which promote *all* of the following: integration, achievement through innovative approaches to instruction and learning, and school choice for parents.
 - i. Resources can only be used for budget items related to the unique setting the school provides.
 - ii. Create opportunities to scale up innovative practices and interventions that increase achievement of protected-class students.
 - iii. Full-Day Kindergarten and preschool programming for families who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.
 - iv. Operating a "student choice" system, (i.e., applications, parent notices, placing students, etc.).
 - v. Transportation for programming/public school choice.
- b. ***Family engagement*** that promotes involvement in the academic life and success of the student. This includes:
 - i. Parent classes to support successful navigation of school systems that empower parents to be involved in the life of the school community and achievement of their students.
 - ii. Family Liaisons who help bridge the cultural divide between home and school environments.
 - iii. Recruiting and engaging parent leaders from underrepresented communities for leadership roles within schools and districts.
 - iv. Promotion of public school choice information.
- c. ***Professional development*** that is focused on increasing the achievement of students of color and low-income students. This *may* include the following:
 - i. Focused literacy instruction training.
 - ii. Culturally Responsive Teaching.
 - iii. Inquiry, differentiation, and assessment training.
 - iv. Focused Math Recovery training.
 - v. Training for instruction of rigorous (advanced-level) courses.
 - vi. Deliver formal and informal training to staff that prepares them to provide instruction across race and culture.
 - vii. Professional development programs which present multiple perspectives on issues and respect the right of conscience.
- d. ***Access to opportunity*** programming that is proven to increase access to rigor, and focuses on college and career readiness for underserved populations (including low-income). Funding would support programs *like, but not limited, to*:
 - i. Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)
 - ii. Dual Enrollment or College in the Schools
 - iii. ACT/SAT classes and test
 - iv. Gifted and Talented preparation programs (i.e., Young Scholars)

- v. Academic camps
 - vi. Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG)
- e. ***Increase the diversity of teachers and administrators.***
- i. Develop and implement recruitment and retention programs that attract candidates from diverse backgrounds, who have been admitted to a teacher preparation program, and provide support and cooperative training with earned financial assistance with the expectation that upon successful completion of the program, the individual would teach for at least two years in a Minnesota public school.
4. **Examine the merits of one collaborative *Metropolitan Integration School District* that folds in the services of the existing integration districts to create efficiencies and eliminate duplication of services. This Collaborative Metropolitan School District serves all metro-area districts within the seven-county area that receive integration revenue.**

Fiscal Principles for Recommendation

1. Cap the existing revenue program at the current level.
2. Level the fiscal disparities between demographically similar districts:
 - a. Reduce the disproportionality between tiers starting in FY 14.
 - b. Create incentives for districts to cooperate to reduce racial enrollment disparities using voluntary measures (public school choice).
3. Set aside .02 percent (%) of revenue to ensure oversight and accountability at the Minnesota Department of Education.
 - a. Consistent with 2, e, iii, MDE will withhold revenue for districts not making progress towards goals.
4. Create a fiscal model that is predictable over time and stable in two-year increments.
5. Define percentages of allowable expenditures in statute:
 - a. At least 80 percent (%) of revenue is spent on students.
 - b. Twenty percent (20%) spent on professional development and administration.
 - i. Administrative costs may not exceed 10 percent (%).

Integration Revenue Replacement Advisory Task Force Minority Report of Peter A. Swanson

Although I am co-chair of the Integration Revenue Replacement Task Force, this minority report represents my individual opinion. I voted against the final report and am submitting this minority report reluctantly, as I do believe the majority report represents improvements over the current system. The task force expanded its schedule to include additional meetings and was able to come to remarkable consensus on many issues before running out of time. The final report does include many of the ideas that I brought forward and with which I agree. Mindful of the many positive aspects of the final recommendations, I believe there are too many details left open to interpretation that could ultimately undermine the great work of the task force. For the following reasons, I respectfully dissent.

UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

The final recommendations include a fiscal principle that we should “level the fiscal disparities between demographically similar districts.” If the racial composition of a district (or adjoining district) continues to be the sole factor for determining how much per-pupil Achievement and Integration funding a district receives, there is a financial incentive to continue to be racially isolated. Even if racial composition is used to set the initial tiers for per-pupil funding in FY 14, districts should not be punished financially for reducing racial enrollment disparities as the funding levels continue to flatten and equalize over the years.

When encouraging districts to cooperate to reduce racial enrollment disparities, care should be taken that districts do not use Achievement and Integration funds to enact non-voluntary, race-conscious enrollment rules. This is true even if such measures are generally allowed by statute, rule, or court decisions. Achievement and Integration funding should not result in a student being denied admission to the school of their choice because of the student's skin color.

Finally on the issue of unintended consequences, the final recommendations suggest a number of metrics, but only the lack of progress on two of them result in the Minnesota Department of Education withholding Achievement and Integration funds – standardized assessments and reducing disparate demographic enrollment. Including these two different goals should not water down the focus on one of them, namely achievement. A district should not be able to make up for a lack of progress on academic achievement and retain full funding by making progress only on reducing racial isolation.

DEFINING FUNDS SPENT ON STUDENTS

Current Minnesota Department of Education budget guidelines provide that “[a]t least 60 percent of a district’s proposed budget must have direct student value through initiatives such as research-based programs to improve the performance of protected students with lower measured achievement on state or local assessments or out-of-school time programs that have clear academic value.” The increase to 80 percent in the task force final recommendations is a very positive development, provided that “direct student value” is codified in statute and means what it says. The “innovative and integrated learning environments” described in paragraph 3a appear to include both direct student value and administrative costs. All of the programs described in the majority recommendations should be categorized in statute as either direct student value, professional development, or administrative expenditures.

BUSING

The percent of Achievement and Integration funding that districts spend on transportation should be scrutinized and capped in statute. If busing is deemed to be spent “on students,” that could significantly reduce the portion of the 80 percent of funding that is spent on achievement. Moreover, there is a difference between 1) a district containing a racially isolated school, and 2) an entire district that is racially isolated. It makes some sense for the former, within limits, to bus students within the district. When the entire district is racially isolated, intra-district busing makes less sense. It is important to note that The Choice is Yours program, which buses students between districts, is a separate budget item and is not funded with Achievement and Integration funds.

MISSION CREEP

Through the work of the task force, along with the 2005 report of the Legislative Auditor, it is clear that Integration Revenue under the old program means many different things to different people. Presentations to the task force included positive results from programs ranging from Girls in Science to special education. It was often stated that students need to prepare to compete in a “global environment.” Programs designed to sensitize Caucasian students were funded with Integration Revenue ostensibly because the programs make a more welcoming environment for minorities, which, in turn, is supposed to increase integration and shrink the racial achievement gap. It is important to note that these programs are thankfully not included in the majority's recommendations. Districts may choose to fund such programs with other dollars, but programs potentially of benefit to all students (we all have to compete in a global environment, for example) should not be funded with revenue that is only available to certain districts at disparate levels.

DO NO HARM

People have a right to choose to associate with whatever groups they want. When government steps in to encourage more interaction between the races, at least it should not make the situation worse. Programs and curricula that are targeted at a single race should not be funded with Achievement and Integration revenue. This is true even if it is currently permitted by statute, administrative rule, and court precedent, or if the programs are nominally open to all races. Such programs can create a “school within a school” that gives the outward statistical appearance of integration, but actually lessens the interaction between races. If the programs are legal and desirable, districts can fund them with other dollars.

FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE

The final recommendations include provisions that would prevent individual teachers from being forced to attend one-sided, ideological presentations under the guise of professional development. This protection of Freedom of Conscience should be included in the Achievement and Integration legislation.

Integration Revenue Replacement Advisory Task Force Minority Report of Katherine Kersten

Minnesota's racial and ethnic academic learning gap is a disaster. In fourth grade reading, our state's black and Hispanic children lag three years behind their white peers—reading at essentially a first grade level. In recent years, only Washington, D.C. has consistently had a wider gap in this respect. At higher grades, the story is even worse.

On the 2011 MCA-II's, 55 percent of our state's white eleventh grade students were proficient in math—hardly impressive—while only 16 percent of black students and 22 percent of Hispanic students scored proficient. In high school science, 61 percent of white students were proficient, but only 21 percent of black students and 27 percent of Hispanic students performed at that level. Ninety-five percent of our white students graduate from high school in five years. Tragically, only half of our black and Hispanic students do.

In 2012, the lives of tens of thousands of Minnesota children are blighted by their inability to read, write, do math and master the rudiments of science. In today's "information society," academic deficiency of this kind will confine these young people to the lower rungs of our society. It will constrict their life chances, bar them from self-sufficiency and prosperity, and prevent them from joining the middle class. In short, it will keep them from achieving "the American Dream."

As Minnesotans, we need to confront the toll that educational failure of this kind imposes:

- 43 percent of Americans with the lowest literacy skills live in poverty, while only 5 percent of those with strong literacy skills do, according to the National Institute for Literacy.
- 70 percent of Americans with the lowest reading skills have no job or only a part-time job.
- 70 percent of inmates in our prisons can't read above a fourth-grade level.

The Integration Revenue Replacement Advisory Task Force was charged with addressing the urgent crisis this learning gap represents. Yet the Task Force never made the gap its priority. In fact—though we heard presentations on many topics (including a whole morning devoted to potential lawsuits against the State of Minnesota)—we never had a presentation on the nature and extent of the learning gap.

The reason: Many task force members had a different priority. Their passion—their sense of urgency—centered on putting our state's students in racially balanced settings. This is a good thing. But it pales in comparison with the difficult, classroom-centered work required to help struggling youngsters master reading and math.

The learning gap springs from socioeconomic and family risk factors that leave many poor, minority youngsters deficient in the skills and knowledge required for academic success. These children need multi-faceted, classroom-centered educational reform to learn more effectively. They need an intense emphasis on fundamentals; targeted assessment and intervention; and a school climate that emphasizes order, discipline, high expectations, accountability and incentives for success.

In fact, these are the very traits associated with “beat the odds” schools like Harvest Preparatory School in Minneapolis and Concordia Creative Learning Academy in St. Paul, which have achieved remarkable results with poor and minority students.

For decades, Minnesota’s education establishment has taken a different approach to improving these youngsters’ academic performance. It has adopted strategies that view children—and education—through the lens of race and racial balance. This approach has a dismal track record of failure in terms of boosting academic achievement. For example:

- Schoolchildren in Minneapolis and St. Paul were bused on the basis of race for many years at great expense, yet *in both districts the learning gap remains a yawning gulf*. Just last year, the St. Paul public schools rejected a policy of racial balance, after a year-long study determined that minority students perform as well or better at neighborhood schools than at expensive magnet schools.
- Low-income Minneapolis students who attend school in ten suburban districts through “The Choice Is Yours” program have *scored lower* on state tests than their low-income peers who remained in Minneapolis public schools.
- The track record of Twin Cities-area “integration districts”—set up to create racially balanced magnet schools that would reduce the learning gap—is so disappointing that the Minneapolis school district recently announced its intention to withdraw from one (WMEP), and some suburban districts have pulled out of another (EMID). In January 2012, EMID leaders proposed a budget that would remove all integration funding from EMID’s two magnets—Crosswinds and Harambee—because these schools’ academic performance has failed repeatedly to meet expectations.

This litany of failure is powerful evidence that policies inspired by the same, race-based vision---as the Task Force’s is---will do little for struggling children in the future.

The Task Force report includes some positive elements. For example, it provides more specificity about how districts can spend the funds than in the past. It also includes provisions aimed at leveling funding differences between districts. These are both good things. In general, however—given the reality of the way the public education establishment works—the recommendations represent a perpetuation of the status quo, with a few bells and whistles.

The Task Force report creates an aura of accountability. For example, it provides that “MDE will withhold money if districts are not making adequate progress” towards goals the districts choose themselves. However, the report provides that MDE will judge school districts’ performance in terms of both academic goals *and* racial and ethnic balance goals. The reality is that racial and ethnic balance in schools—misabeled “integration”—is one of MDE’s primary objectives. As a result, the department is likely to make this the controlling variable in doling out funds, unless the legislature requires that improved academic achievement be the centerpiece.

The Task Force report creates an illusion of accountability. It includes neither standards nor enforcement mechanisms that MDE must use to evaluate school district performance and eligibility for

funds. As a result, MDE will choose its own criteria for deciding whether a district should continue receiving money. The department's track record in this regard—i.e, withholding money from districts that fail to improve academic achievement—offers little grounds for hope that the MDE will make real academic progress a condition for receiving funds. On the contrary, MDE's natural reaction is often to award *more* money to a failing district.

The Task Force's recommendations to the legislature are—to put it mildly—a tepid response to Minnesota's catastrophic learning gap and the educational crisis it represents. Yet perhaps this is not surprising.

As I said at one task force meeting, “We need to remember that the voices in this meeting room are those of the ‘haves’. The ‘have-nots’—the children in desperate need of serious reform—are not represented here.” (Neither were the voices of school districts that currently receive no integration funds.)

The fact is, almost everyone in the Task Force meeting room—including the ever-present lobbyists—represented the educational status quo, the “powers that be.” Little is likely to change as a result of the Task Force's recommendations. The establishment's favorite programs and approaches are likely to continue—and so is our failure to move the needle on academic achievement enough to give poor, minority children the hope of a better life.

The Task Force's inability to manifest a sense of urgency proportional to the seriousness of the gap may shed light on why our state has such a monumental gap in the first place. We are good at averting our gaze from a fundamental truth: If we want young people to have meaningful inter-racial experiences, the most effective way to do this is by empowering them academically.

In this respect, it's important to remember the words of Minneapolis Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton in her 1996 State of the City address. At the time she spoke, the Minneapolis School District was spending \$8 million each year to cover the costs of school desegregation.

“Every day, Minneapolis children are bused a total distance equal to a trip to the moon,” Sayles Belton declared. But the city's children, she advised, would “be better served if we spent the money on strategies that would get them, at age 18 or 21, not to the moon but to the door of a well-paying employer.”