NOTICE OF MEETING
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17

Notice is hereby given of a Board of Education meeting of School District No. 17, in the County of Douglas, which will be held at 7:00 p.m. on **Monday, June 9, 2008** at 5606 South 147th Street, Omaha, Nebraska.

An agenda for such meetings, kept continuously current are available for public inspection at the office of the superintendent at 5606 South 147th Street, Omaha, Nebraska.

MIKE KENNEDY,
Secretary

6-6-08

THE DAILY RECORD
OF OMAHA
RONALD A. HENNINGSEN, Publisher
PROOF OF PUBLICATION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
  The State of Nebraska,
  District of Nebraska,   } ss.
  County of Douglas,
 City of Omaha,

J. BOYD

being duly sworn, deposes and says that she is

LEGAL EDITOR

of THE DAILY RECORD, of Omaha, a legal newspaper, printed and published daily in the English language, having a bona fide paid circulation in Douglas County in excess of 300 copies, printed in Omaha, in said County of Douglas, for more than fifty-two weeks last past; that the printed notice hereto attached was published in THE

DAILY RECORD, of Omaha, on _____

June 6, 2008

That said Newspaper during that time was regularly published and in general circulation in the County of Douglas, and State of Nebraska.

Publisher's Fee $ 13.40
Additional Copies $ _____
Total $ 13.40
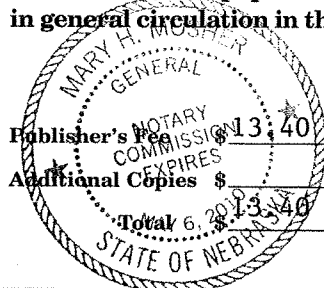
Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me this _6th_ day of _June_ 20 _08_

Notary Public in and for Douglas County,
State of Nebraska

BOARD COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

JUNE 9, 2008

NAME: **REPRESENTING:**

Gina Rudloff

Angela Gipp

Millard
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

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JUNE 9, 2008

MILLARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The Board of Education Committee of the Whole will meet on Monday, June 9, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. at the Don Stroh Administration Center, 5606 South 147th Street.

<mark>The Public Meeting Act is posted on the Wall and Available for Public Inspection</mark>

Public Comments on agenda items - <u>This is the proper time for public questions and comments on agenda items only. Please make sure a request form is given to the Board Vice-President before the meeting begins.</u>

A G E N D A

1. Curriculum Management Audit Update

2. Alternative Education Report

3. Budget Discussion

4. Superintendent's Work Assignments

Public Comments - This is the proper time for public questions and comments on <u>any topic</u>. <u>Please make sure a request form is given to the Board Vice President before the meeting begins</u>**.**

Minutes
Committee Meeting
June 9, 2008

The members of the Board of Education met as a Committee of the Whole on Monday, June 9, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. at the Don Stroh Administration Center, 5606 South 147th Street. The evening agenda included an update on the Curriculum Management Audit, a report on Alternative Education, budget discussion, and a review of the Superintendent's work assignments for 2008-2009.

> PRESENT: Brad Burwell, Mike Pate, Jean Stothert, and Dave Anderson
>
> ABSENT: Mike Kennedy and Linda Poole

The follow-up audit has nine continuing recommendations and numerous sub-points to each requiring the collective efforts of not only Educational Services, but also, Human Resources, Planning and Evaluation, the Business Office, Technology, General Administration, and the Superintendent. Review and implementation of these nine recommendations, where appropriate, is a multi-year project.

The board would like to see a policy and rule developed about reviewing policies and rules every seven years, instead of it being an understood directive.

The Educational Services Division assembled an Alternative Education Task Force that met in January and February 2008. The Task Force reviewed current programs and program evaluations, discussed district and student needs, and reviewed the literature on alternative education best practices. Sub-groups then set forth specific findings to be applied to District Alternative Education programs.

Dr. Feldhausen explained that the first recommendation was to put a definition to what would describe the Millard Public Schools Alternative Program, which would then help provide the direction to be followed.

Brad Burwell explained his emphasis would be on providing a facility for students who have been expelled or suspended from school. The students who are in these categories need more class time than what is currently the practice.

Dr. Lutz explained that the increase of the budget is 7.4%, which equates to $13,096,107. The estimated revenue increase is $5,433,030, so that leaves a shortfall of $7,663,077. Options that have been considered to balance out the shortfall is using two million from the special building fund, reduce the cash reserve by three million, transfer $1.5 million from the employee benefit fund, borrow $1.5 million from the employee benefit fund, and increase the levy by one-cent, which would generate $900,000, which would also leave a balance of a little over $1.2 million.

There will be continued discussion on the budget.

Dr. Lutz, and the Board members present, reviewed, revised, and clarified their expectations of Dr. Lutz's 2008-2009 work assignments.

_____
CHAIRMAN

AGENDA SUMMARY SHEET

AGENDA ITEM: Curriculum Management Audit Update

MEETING DATE: June 9, 2008

DEPARTMENT: Educational Services

**TITLE AND
BRIEF DESCRIPTION:** Curriculum Management Audit Update

ACTION DESIRED: __X__ Information

BACKGROUND: The original Phi Delta Kappa sponsored Curriculum Management Audit was conducted in the Spring of 1998. In the Spring of 2007, the Board commissioned a follow-up Curriculum Management Audit to determine the progress that had been made over the preceding nine years and to identify those areas in further need of attention. The follow-up audit has nine continuing recommendations and numerous sub-points to each requiring the collective efforts of not only Educational Services, but also, Human Resources, Planning and Evaluation, the Business Office, Technology, General Administration, and the Superintendent. Review and implementation of these recommendations, where appropriate, is a multi-year project.

RECOMMENDATIONS: NA

STRATEGIC PLAN REFERENCE: None

TIMELINE: On-going

RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S): Dr. Mark Feldhausen, Assoc. Supt. for Ed. Services

SUPERINTENDENT'S APPROVAL: _____
                                        (Signature)

BOARD ACTION:

Curriculum Management Audit (CMA) Update Summary

The following actions have been taken under each of the CMA Continuing Recommendations:

Continuing Recommendation 1: Establish a cycle of board policy review. Continue to revise current policies or adopt new policies to provide for local curriculum management and quality control.

- The Superintendent continues to direct that all policies and rules should be reviewed every seven years. The Director of Administrative Affairs is tasked with tracking Policy/Rule updates. This requires that 78 be reviewed and updated per year; 54 have been so updated this school year. (Addresses Rec.1.1 & 1.6).

- Rec. 1.3 calls for Board approval of primary resources contained in Curriculum Frameworks. This is addressed by Rule 6130.1 rather than 6120.1.

- Although all Curriculum Policies/Rules (6000 series) were reaffirmed or revised in 2005 and 2006, each 6000 series policy and rule is currently under review based on CMA recommendations.

Continuing Recommendation 2: Revise the Table of Organization and Job Descriptions to reflect current expectations, roles, and responsibilities.

- Recommendation 2.1 calls for the creation of a Pre-K-12 Curriculum Director and a redesign of the MEP Facilitator positions to have Pre-K-12 responsibilities. As described in comments in Recommendation 4, the Language Arts process has been adjusted to address these Pre-K-12 concerns. In addition, the current open position for a replacement MEP Facilitator notes responsibility for Pre-K-12 curriculum development.

- HR is in the process of posting job descriptions (non-Admin) to District Intranet in response to communications and curriculum alignment issues cited in Rec 2.1.

- Job descriptions for building administrators (2100.51, .52, .53, .54, .55, .56, .57) were revised and presented to the Board on January 21, 2008, in response to Rec 2.3.

- Job description for classroom teacher has been reviewed and redrafted to reflect CMA recommendations and alignment with Rule 6200.1—Taught Curriculum: Instructional Delivery. (Rec 2.3)

Continuing Recommendation 3: Revise curriculum management planning to address audit recommendations.

- Recommendation 3.3 calls for the re-examination of the MEP Facilitator's Job Description requiring content expertise for each curricular area with K-12 responsibility. Educational Services is making adjustments to the MEP process to

make it more of a K-12 process, but it does not believe that this recommendation can be fully implemented without a significant increase in the number of MEP Facilitators especially if this is to be interpreted as one content expert per discipline. At this time, no further action will be taken on this recommendation.

Continuing Recommendation 4: Develop and initiate a program and student assessment plan that includes the PDK/CMSi Characteristics of a Comprehensive Student and Program Assessment Plan. Include the development of formal assessments that support district curricular offerings.

- Action on the Assessment System was postponed in anticipation of legislative decisions regarding State Assessments
- Newly created data retreats have been conducted for numerous buildings, Educational Services, and the Language Arts MEP Phase 1 team. The date retreat will become an integral part of the MEP curriculum development process and will be incorporated into Rule 6120.1

Continuing Recommendation 5: Continue to focus the staff development program to: provide connectivity between curriculum design and classroom delivery, provide linkage to goals and district long-range plans, provide staff development based on identified needs, and foster improved teacher performance and student achievement.

- In response to recommendation 5.1, a Comprehensive Staff Development Plan was assembled and presented to the Board as a report on March 3, 2008. This Plan aligns the initiatives of the District and focuses the staff development activities as recommended in the audit.
- The Comprehensive Staff Development Plan addressed issues found in Recommendations 5.2, 5.4, and 5.5

Continuing Recommendation 6: Continue efforts to develop an articulated and coordinated Pre-K-12 curriculum and to provide consistency in curriculum implementation

- Language Arts Phase I has been a K-12 effort consistent with the CMA recommendations.

- Subsequent core curriculum will be approached from a K-12 perspective

Continuing Recommendation 7: Continue to refine the program budgeting process with decisions based on performance or results. Determine the cost benefit of programs to determine whether or not programs should continue, be modified, or terminated.
- No action taken at this time.
- Loss of state aid and its impact on Program Budgeting may negatively impact 7 year curriculum cycle.

Continuing Recommendation 8: Continue to prioritize the revision and development of

quality curriculum documents that are congruent with audit criteria and support the instructional methodology desired by district leaders.

- In response to Rec 8.3, alternative electronic document management systems are under review for curriculum management. Such systems would replace the use of the District's Intranet static PDF documents.

Continuing Recommendation 9: Continue to align new programs and initiatives with board policies, strategic planning priorities, and the curriculum. Control the number of district and building initiatives implemented. Provide staff development, support, and follow through over several years to increase the likelihood of success.

- Only initiatives derived from the District's Strategic Plan or the Board's Goals for the Superintendent have been undertaken this year as identified in Rec 9.1.
- Rec 9.3 calls for the review of the High Ability Learners (HAL) program. MEP/Cadre Kim Rice has lead this effort with recommendations for identification and program change forthcoming.
- Rec 9.4 was addressed in July 2007 in Rule 10,000.1
- Rec 9.6 is being addressed by the implementation of the data warehouse and Growth Path Analytics software. This was approved by the Board on January 21, 2008.
- Continued work on elementary report cards and the implementation of K-1 standards based report card next year in Infinite Campus address (Rec 9.6).

Post-Audit Continuing Recommendations

Recommendation	ES	HR	P/E	Tech	Bus/ Fin	Gen Adm	Supt	Exec Cabt	Policy/Rule Reference	Action to be Taken	Timeline
						Responsible Party					
1: Establish a cycle of board policy review. Continue to revise current policies or adopt new policies to provide for local curriculum management and quality control.											
1.1: Develop and adopt a policy that provides direction for a full scope of long- and short-range district planning. The policy should address development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, relationship to the budget planning process, and public reporting procedures.						X			*Policy 10,000*	The Superintendent continues to direct that all policies and rules should be reviewed every seven years. The Director of Administrative Affairs is tasked with tracking Policy/Rule updates. This requires that 78 be reviewed and updated per year; 54 have been so updated this school year.	Rule 10,000.1 modified to include references to shor term and long-term planning. Board approve on June 2, 2008.
1.2: Develop and adopt a policy that requires a seven-year cycle of board policy review. The cycle should be developed so that the core curricular areas of English/language arts, math, science, and social studies are not reviewed in the same year.	X								*(Seven year curriculum cycle 6120 & 6130, 6130.1 and BOE Policy review cycle 8110 are different issues. Watch for undue stress on teachers at given level)*		
1.3: Strengthen Board Policy 6120.1 to require that primary instructional resources and textbooks, aligned to the curriculum guides, are adopted by the board as part of the review cycle.	X								*6120.1 (Align with 6010.1 Review parallel language or reference each to the other)*	This is addressed by Rule 6130.1 rather than 6120.1.	Done
1.4: Develop and adopt a policy that establishes time allocations for instruction in the core content areas.	X								*(Rule 6031.1?? Provide ranges for elem that corresponds to Rule 10 and state reporting—create rule or add to current—add pacing to K-12 curriculum guides)*		

Post-Audit Continuing Recommendations

Recommendation	ES	HR	P/E	Tech	Bus/ Fin	Gen Adm	Supt	Exec Cabt	Policy/Rule Reference	Action to be Taken	Timeline
				Responsible Party							
1.5: Develop and adopt a policy that establishes program budgeting procedures to ensure that planning priorities are reflected in budgeting and spending.					X				*(Fossen and Program Budgeting 3110 & 3110.1)*	embed program budgeting process into Rule 3110.1	
1.6: Establish a calendar of systematic policy review so that board policies keep pace with current board expectations. During the reviews, update terminology, job titles referenced in policies, and legal requirements as needed.							X		*(Supt. and Ex. Cabinet, BOE 8110)*	Supt. requires all BOE Policies and Rules to be updated every 7 years. Matrix and calendar maintained by Dir. Of Admin Affairs	On-going
2: Revise the Table of Organization and Job Descriptions to reflect current expectations, roles, and responsibilities.											
2.1: Revise the organizational chart to meet audit criteria listed in Exhibit 2.2 and to support Pre-K-12 articulation of the curriculum.							X		*(Supt. for organizational chart) (PK12 articulation to ES Rule####)*		
- Create and staff a Pre-K-12 Curriculum Director position. (This is an additional position in contrast to combining Directors of Elem and Secondary—perhaps a coordinator to maintain consistency and documentation, etc. Would need a job description.)	X						X			No action planned at this time.	
- Redesign the MEP Facilitator positions to have Pre-K-12 curriculum responsibilities.	X								*(Review current job description of ES MEP's)*	Most recent posting assumed a K-12 posture for MEP responsibilities	
- Address the span of control for the Superintendent, Associate Superintendent of Educational Services, Elementary and Secondary Directors.	X						X				
- Clarify reporting relationships when job descriptions list more than one supervisor.		X							*(HR—All job descriptions that are not a part of Section 2000 should be available on the Intranet even if security 5 level)*	HR is in the process of posting job descriptions (non-Admin) to District Intranet	
- Address scalar relationships and full inclusion.	X	X					X		*(see page 33 for definitions)*		

Post-Audit Continuing Recommendations

Recommendation	ES	HR	P/E	Tech	Bus/ Fin	Gen Adm	Supt	Exec Cabt	Policy/Rule Reference	Action to be Taken	Timeline
								Responsible Party			
2.2: Establish a practice for annual review and modification of the table of organization to reflect current district operations.							X				
2.3: Develop job descriptions for all positions that are accurate, complete, and comply with audit principles described in <u>Exhibit 2.3.</u>											Done
- Establish a timeline for the creation of job descriptions that meet audit criteria for every position in the system; review at least every two years for updating and adjustment. Develop a board policy based on this directive.		X					X				
- Ensure that no position reports to more than one supervisor. If the nature of the duties performed requires coordinating with more than one administrator, the job description needs to clarify the roles of multiple supervisors. The final authority should be the person who evaluates the employee.		X							*(HR—realistically some positions may not be able to avoid this)*		
- Update job descriptions for principals and assistant principals to include expectations for monitoring the delivery of the curriculum in the classroom.	X	X								Job descriptions for building administrators (2100.51, .52, .53, .54, .55, .56, .57) were revised and presented to the Board on January 21, 2008	Done (Changes to Board January 21, 2008)
Strengthen the job descriptions to reflect current expectations: teaching the adopted curriculum; implementing the Millard Instructional Model expectations for the delivery of the curriculum (such as differentiation, active engagement, etc.); maintaining alignment of the written, taught, and tested curricula; and using achievement and other data to assess performance and adjust instruction.	X	X								Draft to HR from Ed Services for review	Done --April 24, 2008
3: Revise curriculum management planning to address audit recommendations.											
3.1: Revise the current plan in the area of assessment, adding or revising the following:											

Post-Audit Continuing Recommendations

Recommendation	Responsible Party								Policy/Rule Reference	Action to be Taken	Timeline
	ES	HR	P/E	Tech	Bus/ Fin	Gen Adm	Supt	Exec Cabt			
- Make statements regarding the purposes and use of assessment more specific, adopting a more formative focus and providing specific examples of how assessment data will be used in an ongoing fashion in every phase of the curriculum cycle.	X		X								
- Specifically link the curriculum management plan with the newly-developed student and program assessment plans (see Recommendation 4).	X		X								
3.2: Revise the current plan in the area of curriculum development, adding or revising the following:											
- Add a step in the phase that requires all objectives and outcomes be evaluated for quality, rigor, measurability, and vertical alignment/spiraling. This evaluation is termed a quality "screening" process, and ensures that all objectives and outcomes are valid, up-to-date, applicable to real-life contexts, and are rigorous. It also ensures that all curriculum is vertically aligned and that content is connected and spirals uninterrupted from one level to the next.	X										
- Require that all ELO and course objective development be conducted from a K-12 perspective, always beginning with the end in mind, to ensure that rigor is maintained.	X										
- Revise the sequence of steps in the first phase of the curriculum cycle to place resource selection and piloting after the development of Essential Learner Outcomes, student objectives, and guides.	X										
- Add a step that requires the solicitation of input from external evaluation sources (never publishers) regarding the quality and alignment of possible resource adoptions.	X										

Recommendation	ES	HR	P/E	Tech	Bus/ Fin	Gen Adm	Supt	Exec Cabt	Policy/Rule Reference	Action to be Taken	Timeline
					Responsible Party						
3.3: Review the job descriptions of MEP facilitators. Consider requiring content area expertise and assigning Pre-K-12 responsibility (see Recommendations 2 and 6.)	X	X								Educational Services is making adjustments to the MEP process to make it more of a K-12 process, but it does not believe that this recommendation can be fully implemented without a significant increase in the number of MEP Facilitators especially if this is to be interpreted as one content expert per discipline. At this time, no further action will be taken on this recommendation.	On-going
4: Develop and initiate a program and student assessment plan that includes the PDK/CMSi Characteristics of a Comprehensive Student and Program Assessment Plan. Include the development of formal assessments that support district curricular offerings.										Action on the Assessment System was postponed in anticipation of legislative decisions regarding State Assessments	Post-poned
4.1: Develop a student and program assessment plan with components that meet the PDK/CMSi characteristics of a comprehensive program and student assessment plan. Obtain Board of Education approval for the plan.	X		X								
4.2: Continue to develop and initiate end-of-course assessments that can be centrally managed and used to determine student competency in the specific course.	X										
4.3: Develop and implement initiatives with a goal of increasing student performance on nationally nonmed achievement tests.	X		X						*(Strat Plan Objective #1 & Parameter #6)*		
4.4: Provide ongoing district-level training on the use of student assessment data to make decisions to increase student achievement.	X		X								

Recommendation	Responsible Party								Policy/Rule Reference	Action to be Taken	Timeline
	ES	HR	P/E	Tech	Bus/ Fin	Gen Adm	Supt	Exec Cabt			
4.5: Improve program assessment procedures to include specifications for the data to be collected and the provision of information on the effectiveness of programs. Use these data to make decisions on program continuation, modification, or termination. Require that program evaluations be reported to the Board of Education on an annual basis.			X								
5: Continue to focus the staff development program to: provide connectivity between curriculum design and classroom delivery, provide linkage to goals and district long-range plans, provide staff development based on identified needs, and foster improved teacher performance and student achievement.											
5.1: Include in Board Policy 6400 the requirement of a written, comprehensive staff development plan. Add this responsibility to the Director of Staff Development's job description (Board Policy 2100.28).	X									A Comprehensive Staff Development Plan was assembled and presented to the Board as a report on March 3, 2008. This Plan aligns the initiatives of the District and focuses the staff development activities as recommended in the audit.	Done
5.2: Provide staff development that is based on student needs and weaknesses as determined by the use of disaggregated student assessment data and teacher appraisal information.	X		X							Comp Staff Dev. Plan	Done
5.3: Develop a systematic and consistent staff development program evaluation process that is based on the criteria listed in Board Policy 6400.1.	X										
5.4: Provide a system that is designed to ensure the institutionalization of district-wide staff development initiatives. Future staff development initiatives should be limited until institutionalization of existing programs has been achieved.	X									Comp Staff Dev. Plan	Done
5.5: Include differentiated staff development for all employees.	X	X								Comp Staff Dev. Plan	Done

Recommendation	ES	HR	P/E	Tech	Bus/ Fin	Gen Adm	Supt	Exec Cabt	Policy/Rule Reference	Action to be Taken	Timeline
						Responsible Party					
5.6: Place all staff development efforts including the New Teacher Induction Program under the leadership of the Director of Staff Development.	X	X									
6: Continue efforts to develop an articulated and coordinated Pre-K-12 curriculum and to provide consistency in curriculum implementation.											
6.1: Structure and operate the Educational Services division from a Pre-K-12 perspective (see Recommendation 2).	X									Language Arts Phase I has been a K-12 effort consistent with the CMA recommendations. Subsequent core curriculum will be approached from a K-12 perspective	On-going
− Continue with Pre-K-12 curriculum development.	X										
− Establish a Pre-K-12 curriculum director position and K-12 MEP facilitator positions. Continue to vertically align and coordinate program initiatives, such as IB, AP, etc.	X						X				
6.2: Improve the quality of curriculum documents so they provide vertical articulation and the specificity needed to guide teaching and learning (see Recommendation 8).	X										
− Develop a scope and sequence for all curriculum guides.	X										
− Include instructional strategies and sample model lessons in curriculum guides.	X										
6.3: Continue to use Professional Learning Communities as a vehicle for increasing articulation and coordination within schools.	X										
6.4: Clearly state and align expectations for monitoring the curriculum in board policy, administrators' job descriptions, and appraisal instruments.	X	X									

Post-Audit Continuing Recommendations

Recommendation	ES	HR	P/E	Tech	Bus/ Fin	Gen Adm	Supt	Exec Cabt	Policy/Rule Reference	Action to be Taken	Timeline
− Support the revision of administrative priorities to ensure focus on classroom visits and related practices and to promote instructional leadership and coaching among principals and assistant principals at all grade levels.	**X**										
− Hold administrators accountable for monitoring the delivery of the curriculum, conducting classroom walk-throughs, and providing constructive feedback to teachers. Link administrative evaluations to effective curriculum monitoring practices.	**X**										
− Continue to do joint walk-throughs, and provide the next level of training in classroom walk-throughs.	**X**										
6.5: Specify and align expectations for instructional practices in board policy, the teacher's job description, and the appraisal instrument.	**X**										
− Focus district professional development on expected instructional strategies (e.g., use of technology in the classroom, differentiated instruction and student needs identified through assessment data analysis). Such training should be required of all administrators and teachers, with follow-up procedures established.	**X**										
− Develop a commonly understood model for differentiated instruction in the Millard Public Schools to meet the diversity of learner needs. Include strategies and model lessons in curriculum guides.	**X**										
7: Continue to refine the program budgeting process with decisions based on performance or results. Determine the cost benefit of programs to determine whether or not programs should continue, be modified, or terminated.										No Action Take at this Time. Loss of state aid and its impact on Program Budgeting may negatively impact 7 year curriculum cycle.	Post-poned
7.1: Continue to review budget development policies and rules to provide ongoing direction for the program based-budgeting process.					**X**						
7.2: Evaluate the program-based budgeting process annually to determine if changes should be made					**X**						

Post-Audit Continuing Recommendations

Recommendation	ES	HR	P/E	Tech	Bus/ Fin	Gen Adm	Supt	Exec Cabt	Policy/Rule Reference	Action to be Taken	Timeline
						Responsible Party					
7.3: Incorporate the tenets of criteria in the budget development process that are recommended by the CMSi/PDK auditors. Specifically focus on the use of student performance and program data to make budgetary decisions.			X		X						
7.4: Review the staffing allocation process to determine if resources are being allocated to schools with identified needs.		X									
8: Continue to prioritize the revision and development of quality curriculum documents that are congruent with audit criteria and support the instructional methodology desired by district leaders.											
8.1: Clearly define, with references to professional or other literature used in staff development trainings, what quality instruction looks like in the classroom, particularly in world-class schools. Include in this description the type of strategies and approaches district leaders expect to see in every classroom, regardless of the grade level or content area. These descriptions should be detailed in the written curriculum documents, and stand apart from the suggested approaches or strategies that form a component of the guides. This piece is intended to define what instruction (the delivery of curriculum) should look like; the suggested strategies are intended to provide teachers with specific ideas on how to teach an objective or skill. Include examples of effective differentiation for different learning styles and skill levels, congruent with former trainings.	X										

Post-Audit Continuing Recommendations

Recommendation	ES	HR	P/E	Tech	Bus/ Fin	Gen Adm	Supt	Exec Cabt	Policy/Rule Reference	Action to be Taken	Timeline
						Responsible Party					
8.2: Revise the current policy for curriculum format and components, requiring guides to meet criteria more than just beyond the minimum components. Also, require the needed levels of specificity for each component and specify that the components themselves be internally aligned. For example, while the objectives specifically define the content and standard of performance of instruction, the suggested lessons and strategies, along with exemplary student assignments and practice activities, define the context and cognitive rigor of instruction. All parts should work in concert, assisting teachers in their task of facilitating and eliciting each child's learning. While alignment of the written, taught, and tested curriculum is desired in the implementation of the educational program across the district, similar alignment is desired within the curriculum documents themselves: objectives with suggested strategies, and these in turn with the assessment instruments.	X										
8.3: Streamline the electronic document management system for curriculum documents. Discuss the needed format; reorganize so components are grouped in appropriate sections. For example, rather than placing everything under "resources" or "documents," group everything under "curriculum," then organize curriculum by content area, course, and/or grade. For each curriculum, design a format whereby one can go to each component of the guide, such as:	X									Alternative electronic document management systems are under review for curriculum management. Such systems would replace the use of the District's Intranet static PDF documents.	
− Descriptions of model instruction for that grade level/content area, with video clips of master teachers;	X										
− Any pertinent and relevant information from best practices, including philosophy and belief statements regarding how children best learn this content and in what kind of environment;	X										
− ELOs, standards and benchmarks, and enabling objectives;	X										

| Recommendation | Responsible Party | | | | | | | | Policy/Rule Reference | Action to be Taken | Timeline |
	ES	HR	P/E	Tech	Bus/ Fin	Gen Adm	Supt	Exec Cabt			
− Sample assessment items, links to formative assessment instruments, and end-of-course assessments or other tests;	X		X								
− Suggested strategies and/or lesson plans, with any resources or materials needed;	X										
− Suggested "mastery-level" student performance activities/projects, with accompanying rubrics. These assignments are designed to serve as authentic assessments, and provide students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the target concepts, knowledge, or skills. Using rubrics, the results of these performance-based assess-ments can be collected for analysis and used for both grading and instructional decision making.	X										
8.4: Link suggested strategies to specific units and/or weeks. Have an "overview" page for every course within a content area that shows how content is organized into thematic or conceptual units or by units of time, and provide the links to suggested lessons/strategies. From those strategies or lessons, provide links to the available student activities.	X										
8.5: Revisit with all MEP facilitators as well as future curriculum development committees what quality, specific, and measurable enabling objectives look like. Ensure that all committees and facilitators involved in the development process have high quality sample guides from which to glean ideas for the guide under revision, and require all guides to be screened for quality (by designated persons, always the same ones) before they are disseminated to teachers and schools.	X										
8.6: Revisit, by content area, what differentiation looks like in the classroom. Integrate this content with the training in expectations for instructional delivery; this should all form a major part of the MIM training and reinforce district efforts to seamlessly unite curriculum and teaching.	X										

Post-Audit Continuing Recommendations

Recommendation	ES	HR	P/E	Tech	Bus/ Fin	Gen Adm	Supt	Exec Cabt	Policy/Rule Reference	Action to be Taken	Timeline
9: Continue to align new programs and initiatives with board policies, strategic planning priorities, and the curriculum. Control the number of district and building initiatives implemented. Provide staff development, support, and follow through over several years to increase the likelihood of success.											
9.1: Prioritize and limit the number of initiatives introduced at the district and school levels each year.							**X**	**X**		Only initiatives derived from the District's Strategic Plan or the Board's Goals for the Superintendent have been undertaken this year as identified in Rec 9.1.	
− Establish a district leadership level clearinghouse to prioritize and monitor the number of new programs and innovations developed to address the goals of the Strategic Plan.							**X**	**X**			
− Expect that school improvement teams consider district initiatives, new curriculum, and assessment requirements when adding additional school-based programs.							**X**				
9.2: Require systematic evaluation of both district level and school programs.			**X**								
9.3: Evaluate and revise the HAL program so as to provide a high quality, consistent educational program to meet the needs of gifted and talented students.	**X**									Rec 9.3 calls for the review of the High Ability Learners (HAL) program. MEP/Cadre Kim Rice has lead this effort with recommendations for identification and program change forthcoming.	Done

Post-Audit Continuing Recommendations

Recommendation	ES	HR	P/E	Tech	Bus/ Fin	Gen Adm	Supt	Exec Cabt	Policy/Rule Reference	Action to be Taken	Timeline
						Responsible Party					
9.4: Revise and update the Technology portion of *Board Policy 10000.1: Site Based Planning and Shared Decision Making* to reflect district level decisions that include assistance with the integration of technology into the curriculum and district level technology staff development.						X	X		*Policy 10000.1*	Rec 9.4 was addressed in July 2007 in Rule 10,000.1	
9.5: Establish measurable criteria for the evaluation of the technology program in terms of supporting teaching and learning and increased productivity in district operations.			X	X							
9.6: Continue to refine technological procedures to facilitate instructional decision making. Among the areas that need attention are the following:	X		X	X							
− Efficient access to the curriculum online	X		X	X							
− Assessment and data reporting of ELOs	X		X	X						Rec 9.6 is being addressed by the implementation of the data warehouse and Growth Path Analytics software. This was approved by the Board on January 21, 2008.	Done
− Infinite Campus	X		X	X							
− Elementary report cards	X		X	X						Continued work on elementary report cards and the implementation of K-1 standards based report card next year in Infinite Campus address (Rec 9.6).	Done
9.7: Assist teachers and administrators in the implementation of recent initiatives so these efforts are mutually supportive. For example, Professional Learning Communities can be used as a vehicle to promote articulation and coordination of the curriculum; make decisions on pacing, reteaching, etc. based on assessment data; and sharing ideas on differentiation of instruction.	X										

Millard Public Schools
Alternative Education Programs
Report and Recommended Framework
May 1, 2008

Background

In August 2007, the Millard Public Schools Board of Education gave the superintendent, Dr. Keith Lutz, his annual goals. Goal #4 stated:

> "The Superintendent will review the current Alternative Middle School, High School and New Frontier programs and redesign and/or develop a comprehensive Alternative Program for Grades 6 - 12 and also determine the future needs of this type of program and develop a Framework for its implementation including curriculum and facility requirements."

To this end, the Educational Services Division assembled an Alternative Education Task Force (Appendix A—Task Force Members) that met in January and February 2008. The Task Force reviewed current programs and program evaluations, discussed district and student needs, and reviewed the literature on alternative education best practices. Sub-groups then set forth specific findings to be applied to District Alternative Education programs. Subsequently, all Task Force material has been reviewed, synthesized, and summarized by Educational Services. Following the Alternative Education Framework is a complete narrative summarizing the research on Alternative Education Best Practices and the work of the Task Force (All research, needs analyses, program reviews, and sub-group recommendations may be found in Appendix B).

Alternative Education Recommended Framework

Based upon a synthesis of the research and the work of the Task Force, the following are submitted:

1. That Millard Public Schools definition of Alternative Education be:

   > Alternative Education will include, but not be limited to, full-time, multi-year, educational programs for all students. These programs will provide more individualized instruction, an innovative and rigorous curriculum, and a caring, structured environment. Alternative Education programs will also address the needs of those students who have dropped out, who are in danger of dropping out and who wish to earn their diplomas, those students who have not met the District's Essential Learner Outcome assessment requirements for graduation, and students who have been expelled or subjected to a long-term suspension. Students participating in an Alternative Education program will have either an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) or an Individual Education Plan

(IEP) that identifies their academic and career pathways, needed support services, and transition experiences.

2. That the definition of Alternative Education be placed in District Policy and Rule as approved by the MPS Board of Education.

3. That in accordance with the District definition of Alternative Education, each student will have an ILP or IEP that will:
   a. Define the student's course of study for both academic and career pathways,
   b. Identify needed support services, and
   c. Provide transition plans for next level of education or alternative education program placement.

4. That the MPS Alternative Education Program consist of, but not be limited to:
   a. The Middle School Alternative Program (MSAP).
   b. School-within-a-school programs that provide transition services between levels for students who may be at risk and that they be provided at each high school as warranted (e.g., New Frontier).
   c. The Millard Learning Center/Millard Horizon High School.
   d. A revised Night School program and Credit Recovery program.
   e. A specific off-campus (i.e., store-front) program to provide long-term suspended and/or expelled students with opportunities that might allow them to acquire sufficient credits so as to stay on track for graduation.
   f. Additional programs for students seeking innovative or challenging curriculum outside the scope of traditional instructional methodology and courses correlated with career and world of work concepts/issues.

5. Middle School Alternative Program (MSAP)—That the basic function and structure of MSAP remain as is with the following considerations:
   a. Given the research recommended staff/student ratio of 1:15, a program capacity of 45 students is appropriate.
   b. Review and clarify criteria for MSAP assignment/entrance and the role of each stakeholder including the student in the process. Pay special attention to how early or late in the year 6th graders should enter MSAP.
   c. Provide common core area teacher planning time, whenever possible, while maintaining a traditional school day.
   d. Within the context of an ILP, exploratory options will be available for MSAP students. MSAP staff should work in conjunction with staff at the middle school site where MSAP is located to include MSAP students, as appropriate, in exploratory classes. It should be noted that for both programmatic and logistical reasons it may not be possible to provide MSAP students with the full array of exploratory courses.
   e. Mental health services, i.e., counseling and social services, should be provided with current staff and within current program design. In order to provide health education, MSAP staff members will be appropriately trained in Health 6-7, Know Yourself.

    f. MSAP students and families should continue to be directed to external services and agencies for needed clinical psychological services; Millard Public Schools does not provide such services.

    g. Transportation will be reviewed and a cost effective means will be recommended to provide transportation to/from MSAP in order to provide students a program that includes a traditional school day schedule.

    h. Clarify roles of all MSAP personnel--Administrative, department head, clerical support, interventionist, social worker, disciplinary, etc.

        (The MSAP program design does not include a department head position; however the Behavior Interventionist is currently receiving the Department Head stipend. The Behavior Interventionist should be working with students as originally designed and Department Head responsibilities should not interfere with the primary role of Behavior Interventionist. Alternative means to accomplish the tasks identified as the role of the Department Head, i.e., obtaining substitutes, should be identified, i.e., staggered para schedules to accomplish clerical tasks, building administrators handling administrative functions. Scheduling meetings, arranging student schedules, etc. are appropriate Department Head activities.)

    i. Utilize current MPS procedures for club and activity approval through the Office of Activities and Athletics.

    j. The MPS Office of Staff Development is open to the unique needs of individual buildings and programs and will work with the Building Administrator to develop and implement additional professional development plans.

    k. Clarify the purpose and importance of the community service project as part of the MSAP program and its relationship to the defined MPS middle school curriculum.

6. School-within-a School Transition Programs

    a. Each middle and high school should develop a plan of services/programs within their building to meet the needs of at-risk learners with special emphasis on transition grades.

    b. A formal, comprehensive evaluation of MSHS's New Frontier program should be conducted in the fall of 2008-2009. The evaluation should then be used to address the needs of students at MSHS relative to the opening of Horizon High School the following year.

    c. School-within-a-school transition programs should be structured and funded within the building budget and building staffing points systems as developed by the District.

7. Millard Learning Center (MLC)/ Millard Horizon High School (MHHS)

    a. Begin activities and program modifications necessary to promote a smooth transition to Millard Horizon High School.

    b. Consider changes to the daily schedule and yearly calendar to better address the needs of at-risk students.

    c. The application process and accompanying student buy-in/commitment to the program is strongly recommended; however, there may be infrequent times when

IEP Teams or similar District/building designed teams, such as MIT or MSAP ILP, may make a recommendation for student placement at MLC/Horizon HS.

d. Implement a 9th-12th grade program that would address student needs for a smaller, personal, structured environment and replace MLC. This program would serve an estimated 240 students.

e. Enrollment in grades 9 – 12 will be tiered with each grade enrolling a larger number of students. Example: 9th – 20; 10th—45; 11th—75; 12th—100 (includes 5th year seniors).

f. Provide sixteen classrooms (includes art, two science labs), and media center, multi-purpose room and wellness room, and separate 9th grade wing.

g. Support sufficient programs to meet graduation requirements including technology, fine arts, and P.E. as well as core academic requirements.

h. Include three to four career academies accessible by all students from all buildings including alternative education programs. Have access to all MPS career academies including those offered at HHS or the other three high schools.

i. Provide necessary transportation services for students.

j. Offer courses at HHS utilizing a more hands-on approach with emphasis on application in the world of work. Tie course offerings to dual enrollment and other programs that provide transition to post-secondary education opportunities.

k. Focus curriculum and instruction on issues of student engagement and relevancy while promoting program rigor.

l. Provide Special Education services for eligible students.

m. The redesign and implementation of the Horizon HS program is not yet complete and the assumption that some students will not be successful at HHS and that an additional program needs to be designed is premature.

8. Other Alternative Education Programs

a. Investigate and recommend an off-campus (i.e., storefront-type) program to provide services beyond those currently being provided through the homebound program to students who have been long-term suspended/expelled.

b. Examine the need for an off-campus (i.e., store-front) site to provide special education services to high school students whose conduct prevents them from being successful at other MPS school sites (including MHHS); recommend a site and service delivery model if warranted.

c. Investigate a system of credit that is not defined by seat time, but rather by the student's competence/achievement for use in Credit Recovery and Night School programs.

d. Revise current Night School packets/study materials.

e. Identify and acquire a technology delivered alternative education curriculum/courses of study for use by expelled and credit recovery students.

f. Alternative Education program curriculum, resources, and materials are aligned with current District curriculum and reflect best practices in the field.

g. As the Millard Education Program process for curriculum review is applied to each of the secondary disciplines, all Alternative Education Programs should be considered.

9. ALL alternate education programs should undergo a regularly scheduled and ongoing cycle of formal evaluation.

10. Funding/Staffing
    a. SPED Flex funds are intended to target support for at-risk students. These funds are already used to finance a portion of the staff for MSAP and MLC. It is recommended that the use of this funding source be maximized especially for staffing. This will require the reallocation of funds within this area.
    b. Review grant opportunities for at-risk program development and maintenance.

11. Logistics/Facility Needs
    a. Off campus facilities (i.e., store-front) will be needed for an alternative education program that would address the needs of long-term suspended and expelled students beyond homebound program services; examine whether it is feasible for this site to also be used to meet the needs of high school students whose conduct prevents them from being successful at other MPS school sites (including MHHS).
    b. Enrollment caps for MSAP and Horizon High School should be monitored with program growth and domino impacts reported yearly.

Current MPS Alternative Education Programs

Alternative Education in the Millard Public Schools has grown over the last 10 years to include the Middle School Alternative Program (MSAP), the Millard Learning Center (MLC), Millard South High School's New Frontier, and a Night School program. Historically, these programs have been supported by general fund monies, SPED flex funding, and grants.

The Middle School Alternative Program was created in 2000 and is housed in the Central Middle School annex. It addresses the needs of specific at-risk students from all six middle schools, grades 6-8. Primary emphasis is placed on attendance, discipline, and academic issues. Enrollment at MSAP is 33 (March 2008).

The Millard Learning Center's current enrollment is 81 eleventh and twelfth graders (March 2008). All current MLC students must have applied for and been accepted into the program. In addition, many of these students were recommended for placement at MLC by high school IEP teams or by building counselors and administrators. The primary purpose of MLC is credit recovery and high school graduation. All students at MLC are at significant risk of either dropping out or not completing their high school graduation requirements. Also, all MLC students, having been unsuccessful in the District's traditional 2000+ student high schools, have found that they need a smaller, structured environment in order to be successful. MLC currently provides that support.

Millard South High School's New Frontier program, begun in 1998-1999 as the result of receiving a competitive state lottery funds grant, addresses the needs of identified ninth and tenth grade students from the Millard South attendance area. The current enrollment of New Frontier is 45 (24—9th, 21—10th; March 2008).

In addition, the District has supported a Night School program and a limited homebound program. The Night School program enrolls about 100 students per semester and is used by students in need of making up specific academic credits. The homebound program, in addition to Special Education Other Health Impairment classification, is used to address the requirements of state statute 79-266 as adopted and promulgated by the Nebraska Department of Education Administrative Rule 17. Rule 17, section 002.04 defines an Alternative School, Class or Program as ". . . that special category of schools, classes, or programs required by law to be provided for expelled students."

Research Summary of Best Practices

One of the dilemmas faced by the MPS Alternative Education Task Force was the lack of a District definition for alternative education. As presented in the previous section, the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) has an exceedingly limited definition. NDE Rule 17 limits alternative education to "expelled students" only. District practice exceeds this definition.

A review of the literature indicates that the typology of Alternative Education is usually divided into three types of programs or schools (Aron 2006, p.4):

> Type I—schools or programs "offer full-time, multi-year, education options for students of all kinds, including those needing more individualization, those seeking an innovative or challenging curriculum, or dropouts wishing to earn their diplomas. A full instructional program offers students the credits needed for graduation. Students choose to attend. Other characteristics include divergence from standard school organization and practices (deregulation, flexibility, autonomy, and teacher and student empowerment); an especially caring, professional staff; small size and small classes; and a personalized whole student approach that builds a sense of affiliation and features individual instruction, self-paced work, and career counseling. Models range from schools-within-schools to magnet schools, charter schools, schools without walls, experiential schools, career focused and job-based schools, dropout recovery programs, after hours schools, and schools in atypical settings like shopping malls and museums."

> Type II—"the distinguishing characteristic is discipline, which aims to segregate, contain, and reform disruptive students. Students typically do not choose to attend, but are sent to the school for specified time periods or until behavior requirements are met. Since placement is short-term, the curriculum is limited to a few basic, required courses or is entirely supplemented by the home-school as a list of assignments. Familiar models include last-chance schools and in-school suspension."

> Type III—schools or programs "provide short-term but therapeutic settings for students with social or emotional problems that create academic and behavioral barriers to learning. Although Type III programs target specific populations—offering counseling, access to social services, and academic remediation—student can choose not to participate."

Based upon this typology the Millard Public Schools alternative education program is a combination of Type I and Type II options with the primary emphasis on Type I.

Research Summary: Factors that Place Students At Risk
The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (http://www.doe.mass.edu/alted/about.html?section=factors) identifies a wide-range of factors that may place a student at risk. These include school, student, family, and community related issues.

> Student Related:
> - Attendance/truancy
> - Behavior/discipline problems
> - Drug abuse

- Poor peer relations
- Suspension/expulsion
- Friends have dropped out
- Illness/disability
- Pregnancy/parenting

Family Related:
- Low socioeconomic status
- Dysfunctional home life
- Low parental involvement
- Low parental expectations
- Non-English speaking homes
- Domestic violence

School Related:
- Conflict between home and school culture
- Ineffective discipline system
- Lack of adequate counseling
- Negative school climate
- Lack of relevant curriculum
- Passive instructional strategies
- Inappropriate use of technology
- Disregard of student learning styles
- Suspension/expulsion
- Low expectations
- Lack of language instruction

Community Related:
- Lack of community support
- Lack of community support for schools
- High incidence of criminal activity
- Lack of school/community linkage
- High mobility / homelessness

Millard Public School Alternative Education programs focus on school and student related factors. District social workers do address some family and community related issues.

Research Summary: Alternative Education Program Common Elements
Research from programs in Oklahoma, Michigan, Kentucky, Massachusetts, and numerous other locations found common themes in effective alternative education schools and programs. These included:

- Low ratio of students to teachers (10:1 common ratio in literature)
- Highly structured schools and classrooms with behavioral management

- Individualized behavioral interventions
- Intense academic monitoring with high academic standards linked to future learning and work opportunities
- Social skills instruction
- Specialized staff development
- A caring faculty committed to alternative education
- Clear reason for existence (mission, vision, reason for existence)
- Flexibility and autonomy in terms of schedule, school day, interventions, and meeting specific student needs
- Strong sense of community and belonging fostered and developed by the school
- Attempts to build student confidence and dignity (e.g., peer mentoring, public speaking)
- Attempts to help students change negative behavior patterns (e.g., conflict resolution, problem solving, teamwork, self-sufficiency skills)
- Sense of community (service learning)

MPS Alternative Education Programs Task Force Proceedings and Findings

The Millard Public Schools Alternative Education Task Force, facilitated by Jane Pille and Tracy Logan, consisted of teachers and administrators. In its first meeting on January 17, 2008, the Task Force was:

A. Given its charge (Superintendent's Goal #4),

"The Superintendent will review the current Alternative Middle School, High School and New Frontier programs and redesign and/or develop a comprehensive Alternative Program for Grades 6 - 12 and also determine the future needs of this type of program and develop a Framework for its implementation including curriculum and facility requirements."

B. Provided parameters for existing alternative education programs.
- MSAP will remain at CMS.
- Horizon HS will encompass MLC and add grades 9 & 10.
- Millard Horizon HS will house Career Academies as will North, South, & West.
- Credit Recovery, Night School, New Frontier, Continuing Ed for Expelled and Attendance Issues will be reviewed.

After reviewing alternative education program evaluations and discussing program concerns, a summary of programmatic issues were compiled. These included:

Attendance Issues
- We need more engaging instruction.
- Students are not getting necessary social rules/skills (life skills) to be successful in the real world.

MPS Night School
- There seems to be better ways to serve the needs of night school students.

MLC
- Transition between MLC and Horizon High School

MSAP
- MSAP needs to be considered its own entity, with regards to resources, curriculum, everything that relates to the program.

New Frontier
- Data not consistent; some years more effective than others.
- Difficulty in determining if NF students would have been as successful if not in the program.
- Need updated Program Evaluation – last one done 2003.

On February 7, 2008, the Task Force met again. Between the two meetings sub-groups had met, researched, and were now reporting on identified areas.

1. Alternative Program Design
   - Small classes – 1 teacher to 10 students
   - Computer-based learning
   - Hands-on activities
   - Real life connections
   - Interdisciplinary learning
   - Social skill development
   - Leadership programs
   - Career focus with adult role models from the community
   - Project learning based in the community (community service)
   - Health and wellness – health education; mental health services (counseling, psychological, and social services); "new" physical education – personalized health and fitness approach
   - Mentor programs
   - Support services – i.e. tutoring; reading recovery
   - Parent engagement – i.e. cultural specific parenting sessions
   - Contracts with students and parents; goal-setting
   - Structured reward/point system
   - Access to technology

2. Curriculum/Instructional Strategies as Used in Other Alternative Programs

   A. IDEAL Program at Papillion-LaVista
      - Evaluation
        – Purposeful, systematic, regularly administered
        – Reading assessment given to everyone
        – Progress Monitoring: Meet weekly with advisor
        – Pretested in math and reading
      - Rigor
        – All students expected to take Algebra
        – Given assessment; granted credit for what they know; held to high standard to complete what they don't know/must have
        – Expected to complete 25% of class every month
        – Must pass reading assessment at high school level in order to graduate
      - Relationships
        – Staff works hard to build relationships with students
      - Life Skills
        – Career Strategies, Age of Majority Curriculum
      - PE (Similar to Millard's Lifetime Fitness class)

   B. Westside Career Center
      - Evaluation
        – Students tested in reading

- District pays for drug & alcohol assessment of each student
- No D's or F's
- Meet regularly with advisor
- Use assignment notebooks
- Rigor
    - Program rigorous
    - Attendance policy strict
    - Senior project
    - Teachers use curriculum mapping
        - Relationships/Life Skills
            - Drug & alcohol counselor on staff (highly recommended)
        - Transportation/lunch
            - No transportation; sack lunch provided
        - Scheduling
            - 17-21 day units; Earn credits as they go
            - Block courses Tuesday and Wednesday in order to spend longer time; Mondays and Thursdays – regular schedule. In general, block schedule does not work; however, sometimes a longer period of time is necessary. Friday – last period everyone reads

C. Lincoln International HS – Minneapolis, MN
   - Immigrant Students
   - 21 credits to graduate (4 yrs) – includes PhysEd, Health, Dance/Music Ed., 4 yrs. math, English; 3 yrs. Science; 4 yrs. Social studies.
   - www.lincolnihs.org

D. Menlo Park Academy – Minneapolis, MN
   - 8-2 M-TH; 8-1 Fri
   - Focus on high-interest, hands-on, real life learning
   - Course offerings range from basic skills to college prep (8-20 kids/class)
   - Separate boys/girls PE; "art with Sister Wendy"; Astronomy; Basic Math
   - Each student assigned an advisor – tracks class credits, parent contact maintains, calls student if gone, helps w/ choices and goals; good problem-solvers w/job skills and family issues; liaison for students w/ other staff when a conflict
   - Smoke free; zero tolerance for fighting
   - Daycare provided
   - Senior year – special things w/ financial aid, scholarships, senior trip, etc.
   - Keep in touch beyond college

E. The City School – Minneapolis, MN
   - 12 semester credits Eng, SS; 9 semester credits math, sci; fine arts, health, PE – 3 sem credits; 13.5 credits elective
   - Mentor program

F. Cherry Creek, CO
- Cherry Creek Prep Alternative High School
  – Special Programs Center: PREP (11/12th gr) – 8:15-2:45
  – CARE (7/8th gr) 9-3:30
  – All get a mentor; stringent attendance policy
  – Strict visitor/parent visit policy
- I-Teams:
  – Off-campus facilities specially ID high school students not succeeding in regular classrooms. Services are provided in small-group setting w/teachers/counselors.

G. Full Circle H.S. – Sommerville, MA
- Standard (although adapted and individualized) high school curriculum that includes math, language arts, science, and social studies, in addition to electives.
  – Work with materials designed for their levels, proceed at own pace, develop strong person relationships
  – Credits awarded for attendance, academic performance, and participation in a comprehensive program of required curricula, student government activities, a work-study program, and counseling groups.
- 2 basic values:
  – Safe place for everyone
  – Every member of the school community must be treated with respect
- Parent involvement is crucial to students' success
- Goal: break patterns of rejection, failure, and isolation; "Therapeutic community"
- Does have a middle school component: "Next Wave"

H. KIND School – Indianapolis, IN
- Middle School, Lawrence Opportunity Program, and Credit Recovery program all included
- Individualized learning, small classes, high structure and counseling
- Attendance, academic achievement, and appropriate school behavior will allow transition back to home school.
- Credit Recovery: Must be 17-18 yrs. old; pay $25/class
  – 30 hrs. online (NovaNet)
  – Credit requires grade of "C" or higher
  – Lab time provided before/after school and Saturdays

I. Blue Valley Academy – Overland Park, KS
- 10-12th grade
- Core classes (Communication Arts, math, sci, social studies) =10-12 students/class; electives = 18-20 students/class
- Some take courses at home school and Academy
- Work release, "Quick-Step Program," independent study, and correspondence courses are offered as needed

- Same expectations as home school but have "a variety of choices, a special focus, and individualized instruction."
- 3 Key components:
  – Development of individualized and personalized student learning plans designed by student, teachers, and parents
  – Thematic project-based learning
  – Teaching across disciplines
- Learning styles, ability, interests, and personal development guide the program design for each student
- 8 am – 2:45 pm. A/B Modified Block schedule w/ a 25 min. "seminar" (study hall) each day

3. Alternatives to School Engagement
   - Relationships/Connectedness: One of the best predictors of students' effort and engagement in school is the relationships they have with their teachers. <u>Discussion points</u>: small schools and class sizes; block scheduling; advisory groups; mentoring programs; elimination of tracking; attentiveness to non-academic needs; see Wingspread Declaration on School Connections (Educational Leadership 2006).
   - Flexible Scheduling: Flexible scheduling allows alternative students to manage school with other (work) obligations. <u>Discussion points</u>: classes offered outside of the traditional school day; extended school day; longer class periods; block scheduling year round school; double-dosing (additional period in problem subject area); credit recovery options; seat time vs. mastery issues: students earning credit with acceptable demonstration of mastery.
   - Meaningful, relevant curriculum with high academic standards: When learning is meaningful and relevant tot heir lives, students develop a stake in their own education. <u>Discussion points</u>: experiential, hands-on learning; using technology; move away from rote memory and remediation of facts; reading specialists/literacy programs; personal growth class (drug abuse issues); career connections; application of learning to live situations.
   - Career Development/Business Partnerships: Students need to see the real world value in what they are doing. Business partners act as mentors who can help make those connections real. <u>Discussion points</u>: "apprentice feel" to the educational setting; mentor programs; internships; curriculum connections; Kilmer South High School, NTC Alternative High School examples.
   - Service Learning/Community Service: Studies have shown results of the impact of service learning. Alternative school studies have shown gains in state assessment scores, attitude toward school, grade point averages, school engagement, civic disposition. <u>Discussion points</u>; Plainfield Academy example.
   - Linking at-risk students and schools to integrated services: NAREN research recommends that to be effective, at-risk programs must involve

collaborative efforts with educational stakeholders: parents, business leaders, law enforcement, judicial system, social service agencies, higher education institutions, etc.

4. How are expelled and long-term suspended students handled by other schools and what are the attendance and success rate of these students?

A. How are expelled and long-term suspended students handled by other schools?
1a. Metro Area Schools

Nebraska schools located in the Metro area use a variety of ways to address the services extended to long-term suspended and expelled students. The information obtained from these schools ranged from providing services equal to what Millard currently offers, to providing a "special school" for those students who have been short-term suspended or those that have received an expulsion. Those schools that do have special programs or schools are well attended. Success and attendance rates are not tabulated by any of these schools.

1b. Schools outside of Nebraska

Schools outside of Nebraska have similar programs. In some cases a hearing officer or "team" of professionals determines the placement of the student who is facing an expulsion. All programs appear to offer "core curricular" subject matter only, and they also place an emphasis on life skills as well as compensatory strategies such as anger management. A point was made that only certified teachers work with these students, and there is a small student to teacher ratio. One school promoted the use of "restorative practices" or "restorative justice" which stresses correcting the harm rather than punishing the deed.

2. Attendance
−   Students who were expelled demonstrated attendance behavior that ranges from very good attendance to very poor. About half of all expelled students had "reasonable" attendance prior to their expulsions. Attendance for Long-Term Suspended students was not tallied due to the numbers. It is believed that the results are similar to that of expelled students.

3. Success Rates of Students Who Have Been Long-Term Suspended or Expelled
−   A review of the data relating to "expelled" students over the past three years indicated that about one third of these students do not finish school at Millard and have "transferred" or "dropped out." Another third are still in attendance and on track to graduate, while the final third graduated.

B. Should Every High School Have an Alternative School-Within-a-School?
- Three criteria are used to place students in a school-within-a-school program. Those criteria are poor attendance, behavior issues and lack of academic success.
- Information from each eighth grade class (six middle schools) was pulled from Infinite Campus to see how many kids would meet each of the three areas. (Only significant behaviors were extracted such as fighting, bullying, larceny, disruptive behavior, physical assault, threats, etc.)
- According to Infinite Campus data, few students met all three of the aforementioned criteria. Several students did meet the behavior and academic performance criterion.
- Middle school truancy referrals to the County Attorney during the 2006-07 school year were as follows: AMS=4, BMS=1, CMS=6, KMS=4, MNMS=2 and RMS=2. (The criteria for such a referral is 5 unexcused absences per quarter.)
- A survey of middle school principals that currently do not refer student to the New Frontier Program indicated they would suggest 12 to 15 students attend such a program at the next level.

C. Current New Frontier Attendance Trends
- This data was not extracted from Infinite Campus. It is believed that New Frontier has the most difficulty improving attendance of students in the program when compared to their goal of rectifying adverse behavior and grades. Attendance appears to be challenging even into the 11th and 12th grade. This may improve if the court system gets involved but it is unfortunately a slow process. Difficult attendance cases due to anxiety/school refusal seem more successful to remediate than those attendance difficulties due to truancy or delinquent behaviors.

5. What is working? What is not working in the alternative program (New Frontier)?

What is working?
- Communication with parents
  – Positive calls
  – Calls when homework is not done
  – Newsletter
  – Scheduled conferences
  – Positive and negative calls
  – Career day
  – Back to School Night presentation
  – Scheduled parent/teacher conferences with phone follow-up for those who do not attend
- Reinforcing the positive – student recognition
- Behavior model with positive and negative consequences
- Behavior expectations are high and clearly defined

- Field trips – team building
- Chance to make up work with lunch DT's – receiving a zero is a last resort
- Consistency among 4 teachers – students know what to expect (behaviors)
- Dedicated teachers who daily give up lunch time and plan period to work with students
- Office referrals – less to deal with in main office
- Provide career elective credit in addition to core
- Community service
- Group therapy
- Closure with sophomore sendoff
- College exposure
- Exposure to school with electives
- Small class size
  - More one on one
  - Differentiated learning styles
  - Pride times – increase awareness of own students' grades
  - Guided Study
  - Close peer connection

What could we change?
- Parental involvement
  - In school activities
  - Family activities
- Transition to Next Frontier
  - Mandatory study hall 1st semester of 11th grade
  - Peer tutoring (maybe for credit)
  - Structured Guided Study
- Increase awareness within the school of what NF is
- Add sophomores from general population at MS every other year (with signed parental support statement)
- Consistency between Middle School Alternative Program and New Frontier

What could we add?
- Mentoring program – within school or with community
- More connections to school – programs other than academic
- Required community service as career grade
- New Frontier summer courses or night school for lost credit

Application, Criteria for Entrance, Identification
- Application: The majority of research articles reviewed indicated that students were referred to alternative programs but in some cases also needed to interview for a place in the program. Alternative programs are best suited for students who voluntarily decide to apply to the program. Students are referred by administrators, teachers, guidance counselors, the school psychologist and social worker. Students and/or parents my complete an

application and interview with student, parent, current teacher, counselor and staff at alternative school.

- Criteria for entrance: The majority of alternative schools have criteria for entrance which range from academically unmotivated, truant, adjudicated, homeless, chemically dependent or other health or behavioral reasons. A common challenge for students is deficiency in credits. If students are in violation of their school's attendance policy or educational needs could be better served in an alternative setting, they may be referred to the smaller alternative/non-traditional programs.

- Candidates for referral: Many alternative schools are populated by students who have freely chosen to attend alternative educational settings. However, many other students were sent there due to the decisions of others. Many alternative schools are looked upon as solutions to the problems of disruption and alienation in "big schools," and it is the "big schools" that determine which students should go to alternative schools. Moreover, the alternative education candidates who are recommended for such placement face numerous challenges including behavioral and academic issues. Research indicates that these students are considered to be below average academically when compared to their peers. Instead, they are young people conventional high schools have given up on. The premise behind the transfer is that the sending school is not the problem; the student is the problem.

- Time of entry: Alternative schools sometimes have little control over when new students enter their programs. Enrollment in the school is often seen as a form of banishment from another school. Alternative schools solve a problem for standard schools: what to do with throwaway youths for whom the only other viable option is expulsion. As a matter of convenience to "sending schools," alternative schools may be asked to take students on a weekly or even a daily basis. Under such circumstances, it's difficult to keep entry from becoming a "routine," as though one is checking into a motel rather than moving into a new home.

  Orientation and a welcome to the school become a perfunctory process, no matter how much the experience is softened by a caring secretary or school director. When alternative schools accept these arrangements, they lose a wonderful opportunity to set expectations and build a sense of community. When students are not a part of the welcoming and orientation, an important opportunity to solidify the ethos of the school is missed. The school is a less complete place when these rituals of entry are pushed aside for someone else's convenience, and it takes new students longer to connect with their new school.

- Identification: Alternative schools are designed to target students who have not experienced success in the traditional high school programs. Students are

most commonly referred to as "at-risk" of not completing high school. Research indicates that lower academic performance, behavior and attendance problems play into the identification process. A student's lack of developmental assets, including connections to adults, feeling valued by their community, and being committed to learning have been linked to a number of factors that contribute to dropping out of school.

For many reasons, alternative schools are often widely misunderstood in their districts. Consequently, many people have no idea of the identity of these schools, and that includes even some students who have recently enrolled in them. Alternative schools contribute to the problem when they accept the idea that their proper clientele is a particular kind of student: at-risk students, pregnant girls, adjudicated youths, expelled students, or underachieving or unmotivated students. The need to serve these populations better was often the main reason that these schools were created, but they can serve many other students equally well. When alternative schools allow themselves to continue to be defined by a limited segment of students, they are pulling their punches.

6. Online Courses – Night School

Strengths
- Students could work at their own pace.
- Students could retake quizzes and tests.
- Students had access to the course at any time, from any place with Internet access.
- The course provided a different method of credit recovery at no cost.

Weaknesses
- Students needed more structure.
- Students needed an adult teacher/supervisor who ensured students were engaged in learning.
- Students frequently needed to be motivated and prodded. (Even with prodding, the one student who passed the class seldom spent more time than an hour online per week and often went for more than a week without being online. Other students were online very sporadically.)
- Students needed a teacher who could answer questions about content while the students were online. (Since the course was asynchronous, the online teacher answered questions, but not while students were online.)

Recommendations
- Determine the purpose for online courses.
- Self-paced, online classes do not seem to be a good match for students taking classes for credit recovery.
- Better selection criteria are needed.

- Online courses should be provided in a structured environment, one in which each student reports to a specific location for a certain amount of time on a regular basis.
- Possibly schedule meeting of all students in class at beginning and end of class and just before tests to provide "sense of community."
- Although students can work at their own pace, students should be required to attend the online class on a regular basis but allowed to complete the course ahead of time.
- Provide students with course timeline.
- An adult supervisor/teacher should be present while students work online. This person would monitor students, motivate them and answer questions.
- It would be best if this teacher were a content teacher who could answer students' questions.
- Since many students who need credit recovery courses have full schedules, offer these online courses outside the regular school day.
- Possibly offer online credit recovery classes in night school or summer school.

7. Effective Curricular Practices in Alternative Education

   Alternative school programs throughout the country exhibit many common characteristics. All programs emphasize relationship building and a focus on character skills. The following are specific curricular strategies used to maximize student learning and achievement:

   - Integrated Curriculum
     – Thematic Units
     – Curriculum Maps
     – Schoolwide focus on reading and writing
     – Core courses designed to reinforce career instruction
     – Pre-testing in math and reading
     – Appropriate placement in math classes
     – Remedial reading instruction for all students reading below grade level through programs like FAME

   - Alternate schedule for credit accumulation
     – Single credit units
     – Semester work "banked" in 25% increments

   - AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination)
     – 4-12th gr. Curriculum: WICR Method – writing, inquiry, collaboration, and reading
     – Writing: in all subjects; communicate thoughts/understanding
     – Inquiry: Cornell notetaking – tutorials – not lecture; Lessons built around asking questions – students must synthesize, analyze
     – Reading: Analyze, question, critique, clarify, comprehend material

- Places academically average students in advanced classes
- Is implemented schoolwide/districtwide
- Tutors are essential w/ electives
- AVID elective (1 hr/day): study skills/organization, critical thinking, probing questions, get help needed, etc.
- IDEAL Student: "B, C, D students who have the desire to go to college and the willingness to work hard . . . Short on potential, but capable."

The Task Force's final meeting was on February 28, 2008. At that time four sub-groups reported on multiple concerns identifying data/research that supported/validated specific solutions, options, or best practices. Each sub-group then identified specific recommendations applicable to the Millard Public Schools. The recommendations are listed by Focus Area and Issues/Concerns therein. All Task Force recommendations and comments have been provided—none have been edited.

I. Focus Area: Middle School Alternative Program (MSAP)

A. Issue/Concern: MSAP students do not benefit from all of the components of middle level education that best practice deems necessary. These include exploratory curriculum and health education.

Recommendations:
- Maintain common core area teacher planning time.

- Determine a plan for providing exploratory options for all students at MSAP. Exploratory options at the Millard middle schools include computer science, art, family consumer science, health, P.E., industrial technology, music, and world language. MSAP exploratory options could be tailored to fit the needs of the learners in that setting. Ensure that space and material needs (curriculum; technology) for this are met.

- Provide for the health and wellness for students at MSAP, including health education and mental health services- counseling, psychological, and social service.

B. Issue/Concern: To maximize student engagement, MSAP students require intentional programming designed to meet their unique needs. This includes integrated curriculum, real world application, service-learning, mentoring (relationship-building), technology, flexible scheduling, and curriculum support for all levels of learners.

Recommendations:
- Determine a staff to student ratio and caps per grade level to ensure that there is enough staff to teach all subjects for all three grade levels while meeting the students' individual needs. This includes relationship-building and mentoring.

- In order to allow for flexible scheduling and reading support for low level readers, MSAP needs the capability to have Read 180 classes in their building. This keeps them from being tied to the CMS schedule.

- Transportation is needed to allow MSAP students to experience community service projects and career field trips. This transportation is also critical to continuing the Take Flight program.

- Due to lack of "time out" space, MSAP students often end up at CMS for time out. Due to relationships built over time with MSAP staff, students are much more successful working through problems at MSAP than at CMS. It is recommended that there is an additional "time out" area at MSAP.

C. Issue/Concern: MSAP student transition disrupts the normal daily operation of the program.

Recommendations:
- Separate the department head and the behavior interventionist position at MSAP. The behavior interventionist would work with students all day every day. The department head could handle transition and day to day program operations (attendance, subs, budget, scheduling, parent meetings, etc.). As time allows, he or she could also assist with behavior intervention at the other middle school buildings.

D. Issue/Concern: MSAP students do not have access to after school programming options.

Recommendations:
- MSAP students, like all middle school students, benefit from after school programs for homework assistance and for clubs and sports. MSAP students are rarely successful in CMS after school programs because these programs are not part of the structure they are used to with the people whom they know well.

- It is recommended that MSAP teachers may be paid like other middle school teachers to sponsor after school programs for their students. These programs would be for career exploration, re-teaching, homework assistance, and special interest clubs.

E. Issue/Concern: MSAP teachers need professional development that addresses the uniqueness of their student population.

Recommendations:
- MSAP teachers benefit from the same professional development offerings as traditional teachers, but they also need opportunities for learning that are specific to their alternative setting. It is recommended that district staff development assists in determining opportunities that meet the professional learning needs of MSAP teachers.

II. Focus Area: Horizon High School (MLC Replacement)

A. Issue/Concern: HHS Course offerings: High academic standards with rigor and relevance.

Recommendations:

- Meaningful, relevant curriculum with high academic standards: When learning is meaningful and relevant to students' lives, they develop a stake in their own education.

- Literacy program that has purposeful approaches to improving literacy of all students.

- Offer curriculum in an integrated approach with emphasis on career connections, technology, hands-on learning, literacy focus, and personal growth.

B. Issue/Concern: Strong literacy program

Recommendations:
- Offer a strong literacy program with a reading specialist. Incorporate FAME, WRAT tests to determine course placement.

- Incorporate all class offerings with a strong integrated literacy component.

C. Issue/Concern: Focus on academic acceleration instead of remediation.

Recommendations:
- Identify numerous ways by which a student can demonstrate acceptable mastery of curriculum to receive credit.

- Design course offerings that offer rigorous curriculum that focuses on acceleration instead of remediation. Example: AVID; targets students in the academic middle—B, C, and even D students. These students are capable of completing rigorous curriculum but are falling short of their potential. AVID pulls students out of unchallenging courses and puts them on the college track: acceleration instead of remediation.

- Design a broad-based curriculum that includes personalized instruction, work experience, vocational classes, counseling, service learning and varied delivery systems.

- Flexible scheduling allows students to manage school with other obligations.

- A school that offers a flexible environment that provides an opportunity for student to be successful.

D. Issue/Concern: Design flexible options that address unique needs of students.

Recommendations:
- Identify numerous ways by which a student can demonstrate acceptable mastery of curriculum to receive credit.

- Offer courses that incorporate a system with competency based curriculum.

- Flexible scheduling may include: online courses, night school, credit recovery options, GED program, block scheduling, year-round scheduling

E. Issue/Concern: Offer career-oriented classes for Horizon High School students.

Recommendations:
- Vocational partnerships with area community colleges and the other three high schools.

- Horizon High School students have the opportunity to participate in career academies housed at Horizon.

- Offer curriculum in an integrated approach with emphasis on career connections, technology, hands-on learning, literacy focus, and personal growth.

- Provide opportunities for students to explore careers and gain meaningful experiences through on-the-job placement, guest speakers, field trips, classroom instruction and job shadowing opportunities.

- Offer a career development component. Horizon High provides an environment that focuses on career paths with relevant curriculum.

F. Issue/Concern: Design specific entrance program for Horizon High School.

Recommendations:
- Develop criteria for entrance into Horizon High School to include: application, interview, and orientation.

- Criteria to include: standards of behaviors that will aid positive moral, physical and emotional development and exhibit self-discipline and overcome obstacles by effective application of positive social and interpersonal skills.

G. Issue/Concern: Integrate co-curricular activities in which Horizon High School students must participate.

Recommendations:
- Career connected activities with business partners; service learning component and community service.

- Link integrated services with systematic collaboration, networking and linkages with community services.

III. Focus Area: Other Alternative Education Circumstances
   A. Issue/Concern: Students who are long-term suspended need academic and counseling support.

   Recommendations:

- Academic work – ½ day

- Connection with Community Agency (mental health, drug and alcohol, community counselor, GED, etc).

- Behavior intervention (mediation, conflict resolution, life skills, etc)

- Community Service component

- Linked with diversion program

B. Issue/Concern: What do we do with students who are not successful at Horizon High School?

   Recommendations:
   - Three levels of placement

   - Alternative student placement (application)

   - Millard Public Schools level 3

   - Millard Public Schools discipline program (mentioned above)

IV. Focus Area: 9-12 Alternative Education In MPS (Not Horizons HS)
   A. Issue/Concern: <u>Transition of "at-risk" middle school students to high school</u>
      Poor attendance, behavior and/or grades show poor transition/success in high school. Other difficulties such as emotional or mental health concerns need a smaller, more nurturing environment.

      Recommendations:
      - We recommend that all high schools implement these "best practices" within their high schools as would best fit their own individual high school.

      - The middle schools can already identify and recommend students for a program like this.

      - Grade levels (9th and/or 10th) to be included in such a program would be determined by each high school.

      - No matter what each of the middle schools and high schools decide to implement as part of their "school-within-a-school" program, all schools should use a consistent behavior skills model.

   B. Students need consistency and support to help them remain successful in high school after leaving an "at-risk" program.

      Recommendations:

- We recommend that each high school design a support model within its own school.

- These students need a group of core teachers to help give them support within their classes while they are being mainstreamed into the entire school population.

- A group of homeroom teachers would also be needed to lend support for students.

- Students, while in the program and after leaving the program, would have the same counselor/social worker throughout their 4 years in high school.

- Students would be pulled out for small group sessions to lend extra support.

- The program would lend itself to offer continued help to these students by offering computer lab or homework help during their study halls.

Alternative Education Questions & Answers

After reviewing the program recommendations and existing program content the following questions and answers have been posed.

1. Can a student attend both an Alternative Education program and a General Education program simultaneously?
   Yes, if grounded in the student's ILP.

2. Must a student attend the Alternative Education program for a full year?
   No. There will be application opportunities each semester/trimester at Horizon HS. Transitions at MSAP can occur each hexter.

3. GED—do we offer the program?
   Numbers/research don't seem to point that this is a current need.

4. Which typology (Type) applies to each program?
   Generally, programs are Type I with some students placed as the result of Type II conditions.

5. Does MPS need a Type III program (storefront for BD and conduct disordered, long term suspend/expulsion, etc.) (Wiebe property?)
   Type III program needs are contracted outside the District.

6. Should a single discipline management program be identified and adopted by the District for all Alternative Education programs?
   No. The MPS Life Skills and 40 Developmental Assets, as well as the MPS Code of Conduct, are already in place as a consistent standard of behavioral expectations across buildings and levels and should serve as organizational and programmatic guidelines.