

Summary of Progress 2019-20

MNSAA SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN (2015-2021)

Objective 1: GAP School engages students in academic learning and vocational training leading to school success and self-sufficiency

Strategy 1: Align standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment across all disciplines

Strategy 2: Expand and enhance career pathways

Strategy 3: Utilize technology effectively in teaching and learning

Strategy 4: Focus on student growth in literacy

2019-20 Progress:

Our primary focus in the area of academic learning and vocational training pre-COVID was an effort to move more towards a competency-based educational model rather than credit or hour based. We engaged with the Minnesota Department of Education on two projects: 1) accepted application to become a provider of the Adult Diploma, a competency-based process for the earning of a high school diploma – we will begin training to be a provider of this service through Adult Basic Education in August 2020; and 2) participation in a Credit Recovery Networked Community Improvement process facilitated by Research Educational Laboratory Midwest (REL Midwest) with 3 other alternative school programs focused on weekly goal-setting with students to increase persistence to graduation.

With school closure due to the pandemic in March 2020, GAP School pivoted to distance learning as did most schools in the state. We had two goals in mind: EQUITY – all students would have access to learning and materials regardless of access to technology/internet and ENGAGEMENT – our main objective in all of our processes was to keep students and families engaged. Teachers and Trainers used all means available to them to teach and engage students – phone calls, texts, emails, use of on-line apps, facebook groups, etc. We have handed out lesson packets with weekly meal boxes, April-August.

Our plan for 2020-21 is to open in distance learning + support mode for Fall. We have secured funding for laptops and hotspots for students and have upgraded technology for teachers and trainers. We have identified TEAMS for Education as our learning management system and are providing training and support for teachers as they transition their curriculum to the on-line format.

We made the decision to terminate our Informational Technology Pathway due to lack of appropriate industry-recognized certifications for our student population. We have identified Property Maintenance as a career pathway that we will offer Fall 2020.

Objective 2: GAP School meets the health and wellness needs of students so that they grow and thrive

Strategy 1: Develop a comprehensive student health and wellness plan

Strategy 2: Address chemical health of students

Strategy 3: Address reproductive health and pregnancy/parenting needs of students

Strategy 4: Address depression, self-harm and suicidality of students

2019-20 Progress:

GAP School has developed and sustained health and wellness services that meet the needs of students in the areas of chemical health, reproductive health, support for pregnant and parenting students and on-site mental health. A Health & Wellness team meets monthly to monitor the plan and develop, implement and evaluate services. Social Work Interns from Metropolitan State University provides individual, group and family services to address basic needs. Mental health practitioners and professionals provide individual, group and family therapy for students facing emotional challenges.

Objective 3: GAP School gathers and maintains needed resources so that students and teachers are able to perform to the highest of their abilities

Strategy 1: Create, implement and evaluate a development plan

Strategy 2: Create, implement and evaluate a communications and marketing plan

Strategy 3: Increase collaborations and partnerships

2019-20 Progress:

GAP School is one of three service areas of Change Inc. (Guadalupe Alternative Programs merged with Change Inc. June 2019 with the merged agency taking the name Change Inc. and GAP School used to refer to the school and related programs.) Joint Board and Staff Development and Communications committees have been created and both are making good progress in their respective area. Development and Communications plans are operational and work in both areas has been highly effective – we have met fundraising goal, rebranded, created a new website and increased communications to stakeholders.

In the past year, we have increased collaborations and partnerships by joining Aspire, a mental health advocacy organization, by participating in professional development with other alternative schools and by joining a workforce development project with Project for Pride in Living. We continue to maintain robust partnerships at the district, county and state levels in mental health, education and workforce development circles.

Objective 4: GAP School attracts, supports, and retains world class academic, training and enrichment instructors so that students have the opportunity to learn from the best

- Strategy 1: Develop compensation plan based on current market data
- Strategy 2: Engage the board in succession planning and governance
- Strategy 3: Increase staff, volunteer and board diversity
- Strategy 4: Formalize human resources procedures
- Strategy 5: Provide quality professional development resources for all staff members

2019-20 Progress

In the past few years, we have had challenges retaining the HR Manager position. The current HR Manager was hired in October 2019 and has been doing a good job of formalizing human resources procedures including updating the compensation plan based on current market data. Retention of this key position and development of the HR Manager will result in more effective and efficient HR practices and procedures.

A lot of work has been done in the past year to strengthen the Board of Directors. New members were recruited resulting in increased diversity – 8 of 15 (57%) board members are BIPOC. A board manual was created as well as a board orientation. Board committees have been formed which increases opportunity for board members to be engaged in supporting our mission. A Governance Committee was created to continue to strengthen the board and to plan for succession.

We have also intentionally worked to increase and retain diversity of staff members. Currently, 39 of 78 (50%) staff members are BIPOC.

In 2019-20, GAP School staff were involved in a year-long project based on implementation science and focused on increasing credit earning of students in credit-recovery programs. This work will continue in 2020-21. We have also budgeted \$250 per staff member in support of quality professional development.

Assessment & Evaluation Data 2019-20

Literacy: GAP School exceeded national targets for Measurable Skills Gains for all levels of English as a Second Language

ESL Level	National (NRS) Target	GAP Measurable Skill Gain
ESL Level 2 (1 student)	56%	100%
ESL Level 3 (7 students)	51%	85.7%
ESL Level 4 (54 students)	45%	74.1%
ESL Level 5 (22 students)	37%	90.9%
ESL Level 6 (11 students)	26%	63.6%
Total	44%	77.9%

Statewide testing was suspended Spring 2020 due to COVID-19.

Demographics and Outcomes

Unduplicated Count: 221 students

Male 48%; Female 52%

Race/Ethnicity: Asian/Pacific Islander (48%); African American/ African (29%); Latinx (18%); White, Native American (total 5%)

County of Origin: US (32%); Burma (19%); Thailand (18%); Ethiopia (10%); Laos (7%); Somalia (5%); Nepal, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Dem. Rep. of the Congo, Guatemala, Kenya, Columbia, Honduras, Liberia, Vietnam (0-1%)

Home Language: Karen (37%), English (20%), Spanish (15%), Hmong (8%), Somali (7%), Oromo (7%), Nepali, Amharic, Tigrigna, French, Gio, Karenni, Vietnamese, Swahili (0-2%)

Earned a HSD: 72 students

Returning to complete high school/program 2020-21: 73

Earned an industry-recognized certificate: 64

Transitioned to full-time employment as of June 2020: 23

Average wage: \$13.49

Financial Performance

The GAP School budget is made up of three primary funding streams: 1) High School Graduation Incentive (HSGI) funding that supports education for students under age 21, 2) Adult Basic Education (ABE) funding which supports students ages 21-24 and 3) youth employment and training funding that supports the Career Pathways. Additional funding for support services also feeds into the GAP budget.

GAP School met projected enrollment numbers for 2019-20 and successfully secured funding for youth employment and training efforts resulting in a balanced budget for 2019-20 and realization of financial goals.