

# Linn Mar DEI Advisory Committee Recommendations

## June 12, 2023



## I. Statement of Commitment

"There have been ongoing discussions surrounding diversity, equity and inclusion within our school district. To have members of our community, our own students, state that they feel harassed or marginalized due to their race, gender, sexual orientation, or beliefs is hard to hear. At its core, Linn-Mar believes that every student should feel welcome and respected by all who surround them. The fact that this is not the case is simply unacceptable." –Board Statement on Equity and Inclusion

Board Statement on Equity and Inclusion – Linn-Mar Community School District

## II. Summary

The Linn-Mar Strategic Plan of 2019–2020 outlines key focus areas for the district to accomplish the mission of inspiring learning, unlocking potential, and empowering achievement. The district's commitment to the diversity, equity and inclusion journey helps to execute on these initiatives:

1. Destination Linn-Mar Action Plan: Diversity and Inclusion – “Linn-Mar employees and students will be treated with dignity and respect, feel valued, make meaningful contributions, and benefit from differing perspectives.”
2. Student Success Action Plan: “Every student will experience high quality instructional practices.”



The Board stated it is a top priority to create a safe learning environment for students and has begun efforts to address inclusiveness and belonging in schools. The Board commissioned the district leadership to address the increasing DEI issues. As a result, in 2020 we established a joint partnership with DEI consultants Sarika Bhakta of Nikeya Diversity Consulting (NDC) and Anthony Arrington of Top RANK Culture (TRC). Over the past three years we have made a lot of progress, and wanted to share some of the accomplishments of our journey thus far:

- NDC and TRC completed district-wide bias training in 2020.
- Reestablished the Equity Committee that had discontinued, and rebranded as the DEI Advisory Committee.
- NDC and TRC engaged education expert Kingsley Botchway, and they developed, conducted, and analyzed a school climate survey, which provided a deeper understanding and analysis of the state required Conditions for Learning Survey.
- Developed committee bylaws and purpose.
- Elevated and engaged with a variety of diverse stakeholders by holding focus groups to review student climate results and hear feedback.
- Increase the size and representation of the DEI advisory committee by focusing on representation from special needs, staff, and conservative perspectives.

### III. Recommendations

Below are the recommendations from the DEI Advisory Committee and our consultant team after a yearlong process of data review and focus group facilitation to be incorporated into the district's current and future strategic plan. We've provided the committee recommendations first. The consultant recommendations are also shared if they went into more depth than the committee recommendations or there was a difference between the committee and consultant recommendations.

#### Restorative Conversations & Practices

#### Committee Recommendations

- Provide professional development for staff to proactively engage with student behaviors through a culturally responsive lens.
- Provide restorative justice training to students and staff.
- Research and implement broadening interventions provided for 11th and 12th graders to 9th and 10th graders.

#### Consultant Recommendations

- Provide professional development for district leadership and school board on restorative justice training and evaluation at the three different levels of implementation: (1) systemic (2) institutional (3) interpersonal.

#### Building a Culture of Belonging & Respect

#### Committee Recommendations

- Collect school bullying data across multiple platforms and research best practices on how to support students, parents, and staff.
- Design a collaborative process to define appropriate school culture and other necessary key terms related to bullying.
- Use District communication resources to promote anti-bullying messages and mental health resources for students.



	<p>Consultant Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide professional development for students, parents, staff on anti-bullying and bystander training that builds on the previous bias/microaggressions training delivered in 2020.</li> </ul>
Strengthen Community Relations	<p>Committee Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Facilitate dialogue between a diverse group of stakeholders with various opinions on diversity, equity, inclusion to seek collective understanding and collaborative outcomes.</li> <li>● Hold a community forum with board and DEI committee representatives to present findings and have dialogue.</li> <li>● Communicate monthly to the District community about DEI Advisory Committee community building initiatives and outreach.</li> </ul> <p>Consultant Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create DEI Engagement Framework to increase family/school partnerships and provide mentoring opportunities.</li> </ul>

## IV. Next Steps & Timeline

Below are the next steps and timeline for continuing the work of the DEI Advisory Committee & implementation of recommendations.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Person/Group Responsible</i>	<i>Action</i>
June 2023	DEI Advisory Committee	Present DEI Advisory Committee findings to the school board and district community
July-August 2023	DEI Advisory Committee & Consultants	Planning for Phase 3 (Implementation & Evaluation)
September- October 2023	DEI Advisory Committee & Consultants	Implement recommendations based on school board and community input



## V. Conclusion

Creating a positive, safe, and supportive school climate can help students thrive in their social, mental, emotional, and physical development. Schools can create a positive school climate through a coordinated, purposeful effort.

Most students are experiencing a positive climate, however students with a socially marginalized identity often experience a more negative school climate. These recommendations seek to address these experiences and ensure equity and inclusion for ALL students. With the changing demographics of the school district, LMCS D must urgently address the inequitable experiences faced by marginalized groups.