

Appendix A

Educational Program

The Alliance School of Milwaukee

In October of 2015, ~~Alliance High School~~ the Alliance School of Milwaukee was named one of the forty-one most innovative K-12 schools in America by Noodle, the most comprehensive website for education information and resources. Alliance was commended for its innovation, due to being the first school created expressly as an anti-bullying institution, with the aim of educating students in a safe, accepting environment. The mission of The Alliance School is to provide a safe, student-centered, and academically challenging environment to meet the needs of all students. Another part of what makes Alliance innovative is its utilization of ~~a democratic~~ democratic governance, which creates an environment where students and teachers are empowered to make the school the best place it can be.

The Alliance School ~~is started as~~ a small, democratically run Instrumentality charter school that opened in 2005, as the first school in the nation to start with a mission of reducing bullying. At our inception, we were at the forefront of providing a safe educational space for LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual and Ally) youth. Our work has continued to this day, and we continue to lead the way in gender inclusive practices locally and nationally. Additionally, we are often consulted to share our expertise in gender inclusive practices, trauma-informed care, ~~student led learning,~~ and restorative practices both within the district and beyond. ~~Many~~ In fact many of the practices we have successfully implemented from our inception are recognized as best practices across the nation in educational settings. From the beginning, we have ensured that students have access to gender neutral bathrooms and ~~are identified by their~~ preferred/self-identified self-identified single gender facilities. ~~both by staff and students alike.~~ We have utilized restorative ~~practices~~ justice in place of more punitive disciplinary models and structures and created a restorative practices community and climate that promotes greater understanding of and education on others' and own cultural norms and practices, effective communication, effect of choices, and alternate solutions to problems, that educates. ~~We have worked to create a climate where educators are educating~~ the whole student, and are cognizant of prior trauma. ~~We also have adopted a mentoring approach to building relationships with students and their families to increase connectivity to school, education, goal setting and achievement, and planning for the future. And we have prided ourselves on striving toward student-led~~

~~instruction and decision making.~~ Many of these local actions we have taken are now being adopted both within the district and beyond.

Approximately 50% of the students at Alliance self-identify as LGBTQIA -and over ~~40%~~ 30% of students at Alliance are students with disabilities. These two groups have a higher than average risk of victimization in traditional school settings, and since most of the students who come to Alliance experience this victimization before attending the school, The Alliance School has a unique challenge of addressing the educational and emotional delays created by these past experiences of victimization and serves an invaluable purpose within the Milwaukee Public School community. The school community is committed to helping students develop a trusting relationship with school while at the same time preparing students to meet the academic and socioemotional skills needed for post-secondary education and life.

Governance Structure at Alliance

The Alliance School uses a democratic model of leadership, where ~~the administrative responsibilities and~~ decision-making is shared among the staff. This shared leadership creates a greater sense of ownership, responsibility and buy-in from teachers and staff and ensures that all staff members maintain strong connections with students, families and the community. We utilize the following practices and principles to guide our governing structure:

- *Administrative Led and Democratically Governed*

~~Beginning with~~From the 2018-2019 school year ~~and forward~~, The Alliance School ~~has been~~ will be administratively led ~~by~~ with ~~with~~ This shared is shared ~~staff decision making with the staff for the betterment of the school and community. The School Support Teacher will be assisting in administrative duties including but not limited to: instructional coaching, behavior referrals and management, programming, parent conferences, professional development, staff mentoring and observations, busing, etc. As an administrative team, Ms. Smith~~ The administrator will ensure ensures that the school community ~~are~~ is abreast of district expectations and directives, provides updates on the educational program. ~~and meets~~ the administrative responsibilities of the district. The democratic governance structure ensures that teachers and staff are engaged in decision-making for the school through a consensus model.

- *Staff Professional Development*

Establishing a strong environment for learning and growing ~~as well as~~ and creating authentic spaces for staff to collaborate and connect is essential to maintaining the culture of Alliance. This is why the dedicated time once a week for a half day ~~Tuesdays~~ for staff professional development is a necessity. ~~Below is a~~ sample calendar of our staff professional development for Tuesdays:

Each staff member will have committee responsibilities and collaborate with other staff members to increase academic success and meet school goals. All staff committees will meet weekly and other committee with meet one time per month with the opportunity to change and adjust the membership and schedule if needed.~~be on two. Every other week they will meet with their content area teachers and/or collaborate and work with other AP teachers. We have the following Administrative Committees one of their committees and collaborate.~~The weekly committees include school events, graduation, Restorative Practices, assessment, curriculum and social emotional learning.~~The committees are:~~

All Week Committees (all staff)~~1. Testing and Assessment~~

~~— Events~~

~~— GRIP~~

- ~~1. a. Coordination of testing schedules: ACT Aspire, STAR, ACT, ACCESS~~
- ~~2. b. Academic interventions and progress monitoring~~
- ~~3. c. Data analysis of testing and incentive programs~~
- ~~4. 2. Events Committee~~
- ~~5. a. Homecoming~~
- ~~6. b. Prom~~
- ~~7. c. Graduation Celebration~~
- ~~8. d. Family Events: Thanksgiving, Christmas Party, Family Unity Nights, etc.~~
- ~~9. e. Fundraising~~
- ~~10. 3. PBIS and Discipline~~
- ~~11. a. PBIS initiatives and incentives~~
- ~~12. b. Restorative Practice, Repair Harm Circles, Peer Justice Councils~~
- ~~13. c. Detention Coordination~~
- ~~14. d. Attendance~~
- ~~15. e. Behavior interventions and supports~~

A Week Committees

~~1. — Events~~

~~2. — BIT Academic~~

~~3. — PBIS~~

B Week Committees

~~1. BIT Behavior~~

~~2. Learning Team~~

We have the following Think Tanks:

~~1. Literacy~~

- ~~a. Design and implement the Alliance Literacy Plan~~
- ~~b. Facilitate writing across the curriculum~~
- ~~c. Lead and develop, Write Days, Issues Fair, Advanced Research Paper~~
- ~~d. Collaborate with staff to create school-wide ACT style writing prompts~~

~~2. Math~~

- ~~a. Develop cross-curricular materials to implement targeted math skills~~
- ~~b. Aligning math skills with literacy skills~~

~~3. Restorative Practices~~

- ~~a. Oversee school-wide practice and implementation of Restorative Practices~~
- ~~b. Embed Restorative Practices within academic discipline~~

- *School Engagement Council*

The Alliance School Engagement Governance Council is a group of parents, community members, staff members, and students who actively participate in the decision-making for the school. The Council meets monthly and is made up of at least 51% parent representation, at least one student, community representatives, staff members, and the administrative team. The School Engagement Governance Council is open to any parent, student, or staff member who seeks to participate on the Council. All families are informed about the meetings of the Council, and there is no limit to the number of participants. The School Engagement Governance Council reviews ~~and approves~~ the budget, ~~makes~~

~~recommendations for staffing positions to be added, and provides feedback to~~ is authorized to approve the educational program at the school.

- ~~*Student Leadership Team*~~

~~The Student Leadership Team is a group of students elected by classmates to represent the student voice in decision-making, advocacy, and activity planning. There will be two student per grade level elected to the leadership team and the elections will take place each year within~~

~~the first month of the school year. The team works with a staff advisor and meets twice once a month~~

~~with the administrative team and share concerns about the community, proposed changes, additions to the school practice or policies, and participates in the Charter review process.~~

- Student Governance Counsel

The student governance counsel is a group of students, who have elected to take a leadership role and represent the thoughts and opinions of the students. The voices on this counsel are diverse in their gender, race, sexual orientation, progress and engagement in school, background, and opinions. The Student Governance Counsel advises the school on events and concerns that affect the students body, as well as is consulted about how to better the Alliance School of Milwaukee. The students that volunteer are also given leadership roles with the school.

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement ~~in school activities, decision making, and academic achievement~~ is an integral part of the Alliance program. The school maintains an open-door policy for family involvement and encourages families to participate regularly in school activities, offered virtually and in-person. The addition of a Parent Coordinator has increased the school's ability to engage families in the school community. Parental ~~satisfaction~~ involvement and input is a high priority for the school, so family concerns and questions will receive thoughtful and timely responses, and the school will work in partnership with families to ensure that all students receive the best educational program possible. ~~Beginning in the 2017-2018 school year the administrative team will implement a pre and post survey to parents and community members on the governance council to gage family satisfaction. Additionally, since the 2014-2015 school year o~~Our parent coordinator has had open communications with a comment and suggestion box for parents and guardians in order to share to submit concerns, questions, and suggestions. Alliance uses several modes of communication to engage families in the school community, including direct mailings, text messaging, ~~apps such as~~ Remind School Communication, personal phone calls, progress monitoring through Edgenuity, etc. Our Parent Coordinator conducts circles with parents, offers instructional and informational meetings about financial literacy, resume writing, and how to use Infinite Campus, to further connect with parents. We look forward to continuing the traditions of including families in student-centered activities and events such as our Thanksgiving Feast, parking lot parties, talent shows, staff and student basketball games, etc.

Educational Program

The educational program at The Alliance School is based on a number of research-based practices and is designed with the goal of enabling students to attain the educational goals listed in Wis. Stat. 118.01. The educational program includes instruction in all content areas, including common core subjects, as well as instruction in the liberal arts, sciences, restorative practices, visual arts, physical education, social justice, and elective subjects. The Alliance School is committed to the belief that all students can achieve great academic success. The school community holds students to high academic expectations and works hard to ensure that students at all levels of learning are challenged to reach their full ~~otentials~~potential. ~~Intervention time progress~~ Intervention time and progress monitoring ~~are is~~ built into each class period, so that all students receive academic and/or behavioral supports as needed. ~~monitoring is built into the school day, so that all students receive academic and/or behavioral enrichment interventions, as needed,~~ and ~~T~~he school also uses online learning, community partnerships, learning journey, and and college partnerships and with preparation opportunities to ensure that all students have the best educational experiences possible.

The educational program at The Alliance School ~~has been and will continue to be~~ is based on the following ~~six~~ core constructs:

1. *Safe Learning Environment*

Safety is one of the most important components of any productive, educational environment. Students will not be able to learn or take the risks needed to learn if they feel that their safety is threatened. The Alliance School places safety as a top priority, knowing that our students often come from unsafe environments in which bullying and harassment occurred.

— According to

SPEAK (Suicide Prevention Education Awareness for Kids), a leading organization that promotes the prevention of youth suicide, ~~concluded:~~

- ~~It has been conservatively estimated~~ Conservative estimates say that ~~the~~ 1,500 Gay and Lesbian youth commit suicide every year.
- ~~Suicide is the leading cause of death among Gay and Lesbian youth nationally.~~
- ~~30% of Gay youth attempt suicide near the age of 15.~~
- ~~Gays and Lesbians are two to six times more likely to commit suicide than Heterosexuals.~~
- ~~Almost half of the Gay and Lesbian teens state they have attempted suicide more than once.~~

~~With these sobering statistics in mind,~~ The Alliance School continues to provide a safe and inclusive environment for students who are often bullied or harassed because of their sexual orientation, gender, abilities, appearance and/or beliefs. At the Alliance School normally, marginalized groups are statistically over represented with over 40% of students having a diagnosed disability, over 80% of students facing economic disadvantages, 15% of students being in Out of Home Care, 18% enrolled in the Homeless Education Program (HEP), etc. Over the past four years, the Alliance School has conducted more risk assessments per capita than any of the other 141 MPS schools. Alliance typically conducts many risk assessments to determine appropriate supports for students. Students have expressed that Alliance for certain students is the most stable factor in their lives. One of the reasons for starting the school was that research showed that approximately 10% of students who drop out of school drop out because of repeated bullying or harassment. The issue of bullying and harassment is still a pervasive issue in schools. According to data from the website www.stopbullying.gov, 20% of high school students experience bullying, and bullying decreases academic achievement (GPA and standardized test scores) and school participation. Students who have experienced bullying are more likely to miss, skip, or drop out of school. Students who transfer to Alliance, on the other hand, show increased attendance, fewer incidents and suspensions, and a higher GPA, ~~according to our school impact summary.~~

~~According to the School Impact Summary from 2016 students who transferred to Alliance showed the following growths:~~

~~Listed Attendance Rate: 79.7% Previous Attendance Rate 76.1%~~

~~• % Attendance Increase: 4.7%~~

~~Listed Incidents per 100 Days: 0.45, Previous Incidents per 100 Days: 1.47~~

~~• % Reduction in Incidents per 100 Days: 69.4%~~

~~Listed Suspensions per 100 Days: 0.16, Previous Suspensions per 100 Days: 0.33~~

~~• % Reduction in Suspensions per 100 Days: 51.5%~~

~~Listed GPA: 1.83, Previous GPA: 1.18~~

~~• % Increase in GPA: 55.1%~~

~~Listed Credits Earned per 100 Days: 2.06, Previous Credits Earned per 100 Days: 1.65~~

~~• % Increase in Credits Earned per 100 Days: 24.8%~~

Students who identify as LGBTQIA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer) face an even greater risk of bullying than their straight peers. The 2011 GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Educators Network) National School Climate Survey reports that in the nation's schools: 63.5% of students surveyed felt unsafe because of their sexual orientation; 81.9% were verbally harassed in the past year because of their sexual orientation; 38.3% were physically harassed because of their sexual orientation; 18.3% were physically assaulted because of their sexual orientation. The report also found that: 29.8% of students skipped a class at least once in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable; 31.8% missed at least one entire day because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable. LGBTQ students are well-accepted members of the Alliance community. The Alliance school strives to create an environment where students feel safe and accepted, and because of that they are able to thrive in high school rather than just survive. We achieve this safe environment through multiple practices including but not limited to:

~~Prior to families completing an application, they complete a questionnaire and answer questions about The Alliance School's community and practices then have a conversation with a staff member to ensure that they understand the nature of the school and community and believe the school will be a good fit for them.~~

- Full inclusion for students with special needs
- Gender neutral bathroom and gender specific bathrooms
- ~~• The use of a year roundschedule to meet the social emotional and academic needs of~~
- ~~students~~
- A full-time social worker
- A school psychologist
- A supervised area, outside of the School Social Worker's office, that can support students Social Emotional Needs and/or a private meeting space to discuss issues and needs.
- ~~• The use of first names amongst students and teachers to create a collaborative learning~~
- ~~• environment~~
- ~~• Daily advisories for continual student check-ins~~ Mentoring students
- ~~• Bullying report forms~~
- Open door policy of all staff, including the administrator, to discuss issues, suggestions for improvement, mediate conflict, etc.
- Honoring student voice and choice through the Student Leadership Team, student voting, student-led instruction, and other opportunities
- A tight knit community of caring educators that is flexible, willing to work with all students, and will meet students where they are at academically and behaviorally.
- Established community partnerships

Established community partnerships

In order to further facilitate a safe learning environment and accurately measure socio-emotional experiences and growth in our student population, The Alliance School will create a tool to assess student need based upon students' experiences, prosocial skills and address student strengths. We will begin the implementation of this tool in the 2017-2018 school year. After the assessment, the student will work with the support staff to create an Alliance care plan, if needed. This tool will:

- Be sensitive to changes in students' behavior and allow for follow up to see growth in prosocial skills
- Be administered within small groups to the Freshmen cohort and student need will be addressed using appropriate support staff
- Be created using research on student ACEs, The Hope Survey, The Devereux Student Strengths Assessment Comprehensive System (DESSA), and the Social Skills Improvement System (SSiS), Brief Impairment Scale, Child and Youth Resilience measure
- Identify students at risk due to previous history and allow for support staff to create an Alliance care plan and work with the community to address student need

The first cohort of Alliance students developed a set of six agreements that guide our practice. The Six Agreements are:

1. Schoolwork comes first.
2. Keep a positive reputation. We must represent ourselves well.
3. Leave it better than you found it (clean up after yourself).
4. Respect everyone's differences because we're all equal.
5. Be committed to each other and Alliance by respectfully offering encouragement and listening to each other.
6. Be here on time, every day for every class.

These agreements help to build a safe and respectful learning environment, so that all students are able to grow and learn in a thriving learning environment. They also help to frame and support the restorative practices at Alliance.

2. Restorative Practices

The Restorative Practices are fundamental in the operation of the school. We begin each

staff meeting with a connection and hold quarterly staff circles led by different staff members. Students in the Restorative Practices classes create and facilitate quarterly, school-wide circles to build connections within the school community. We also utilize the circle process to solve problems, address staff and student discipline issues in the circle, and we teach in circle. The school also offers parent circles to engage families. All of these practices work together to help build the strong school climate that Alliance is known for.

The Restorative Practices Program at Alliance integrally facilitates the creation and sustainment of a safe space by building community and mediating conflicts. The program also facilitates teaching and collaborating between the disciplines. All staff members are trained in restorative practices and new staff are on-boarded through summer trainings and other trainings offered throughout the school year. This culminates in the new staff facilitation their own staff circle. This training is led by our restorative practices teacher and supported by students. We are currently offering two restorative practice classes each day, a beginning class and an advanced class; these classes cultivate critical ELA skills while focusing on leading a variety of circles within our school, as well as facilitating circles with and teaching people from the local, national, and international communities.

We are working toward creating a semester-long class that all sophomores will take in order to understand the basic principles of Restorative Practice through literature and circle keeping. They will facilitate circles for the freshmen,

During the 2016-2017 school year, the students in our advanced class traveled to Harvard University to facilitate a workshop at The Alumni of Color Conference where they shared The Alliance School model of Restorative Practices via a video that they created and facilitated circles with students, educators, activists, and artists that culminated in participants leaving the workshop with a plan to address structural oppression in their lives and work. The students have and will also share and teach the circle process to young people from Milwaukee at The Youth Social Justice Forum and schools like Milwaukee Collegiate Academy and Highland Community School.

During the 2015-2016 school year, Alliance became an Arts@Large school. In the 2017-

~~2018 school year, the students in the restorative practices classes will work with a professional video producer and a web designer to create a web site to support their work in the community.~~

Restorative Practices (RP) is inherent in the Alliance School's mission, policies, and practices. We value relationships as well as shared decision-making and continue to cultivate a community of practice which is a hub for teaching and learning Restorative PracticesRP as well as collaboration within our city and within the country. Each member of our community experiences and has the opportunity to learn and engage in RP. We value our young people's ability to facilitate Restorative PracticesRP, so we create opportunities for them to develop as RP practitioners. Therefore, the Alliance School of Milwaukee staff and students continue to make the commitment to embed Restorative Practices into our classrooms and culture. This approach is vital for fostering a strong and supportive community, developing positive relationships, and ultimately enhancing social capital, achieving social discipline, and improving human behavior. Additionally, we firmly believe that restorative practices play a crucial role in repairing relationships, addressing harm, reducing the need for disciplinary intervention, and reducing violence, and bullying in schools and broader community. Students on the Student Advisory Committee will be trained as circle keepers who will lead four school-wide circles each school year. The Climate and Culture Committee will research best practices and connect with MPS' restorative practices department to provide up to date professional development for all staff. The administrator will facilitate monthly staff circles to maintain a strong educational team committed to meeting the needs of all students. Teachers will utilize restorative practices in the classroom by facilitating two times per week community building circles as well as employing a restorative approach to classroom discipline to foster a strong school community.

juniors create and facilitate community building circles four times a year for the entire school, hold circles with new students, engage in repair harm work, and teach the process to young people and adults from the local, national, and international communities. The senior class builds on all that they have learned, supports the junior-level students as they learn, holds peer council circles, creates their own projects, and shares their work outside of the school. In past years, the seniors have created and facilitated workshops at places such as Harvard University for The Alumni of Color Conference as well as Northwestern Pritzker School of Law to teach how youth-led RP can be a way to dismantle structural oppression and interrupt the adultification of youth. The seniors have also been to smaller communities such as Viroqua, Wisconsin, where they led school wide circles for the students and facilitated a circle for the staff and the local community, so they could illustrate how young people can lead communities

through change. Further, the seniors were collaborators in a participatory action research study where they co-created and published a model that illustrates the strengths that young people bring as RP practitioners. Additionally, during the spring of the 2022 school year, they will be creating a music video in collaboration with local artists to encourage young people around the country to learn and practice RP.

Learning Restorative Practices is an essential part of our onboarding process and is an important aspect of everyday at the Alliance School. Twice a week, we formally check in with students and engage in conversations with students in need of support to be proactive in meeting their needs and to work with the student to solve issues and allowing them to have a voice in solutions. Additionally, Pparents and community members also have the opportunity to engage in Restorative Practices RP-work when they enter the school and as they participate in gatherings.

Restorative Practices RP is woven into the school's discipline practices as well in the form of Restorative Justice Circles. StudentsCircles. Students have the opportunity to request repair-harm circles. They are also invited to participate in repair-harm circles that are facilitated by student practitioners or a staff member if they have been involved in a conflict. Repair-harm circles are also used between adult community members as well as between adults and students. We seek to understand why our community members are causing harm to themselves and/or others, so we may offer pathways that support healing and the transformation of relationships.

Finally, students re-entering the school community after long absences such as incarceration, inpatient mental health treatment, etc. will participate in a meeting with administration and/or support staff to help them reacclimate to the school community and put together a plan that will empower and support the student as they transition into the school community.

3. Inquiry-based learning

Since the 2017 school yearOver the last four years, Alliance has incorporated inquiry-based learning as an essential teaching practice in science and our general curriculum. Inquiry learning is "the process of active exploration by which [students] use critical, logical, and creative thinking skills to raise and engage in questions of personal interest" (Llewellyn, 2013 p. 15). Inquiry-based learning is a best practice connected to: 1) increases in science-content understanding, process skills, and higher pass rates on the statewide test (Geier et. al, 2004); 2) increases in content mastery when paired with peer teaching

(Schunk, 2012); and 3) increases in ELL and SPED content mastery using “mechanisms of learning by modification by association” (Green, 2012). ~~Specifically, over the last two years we have used inquiry-based learning to develop an aquaponics system at Alliance. Students first model our large aquaponics system and propose ideas for how fish and plants grow together without a physical filter. Then, students engage in discussions, map-making activities, and field trips related to food deserts, nutrition, and nutrient cycling to critique aquaponics as a sustainable food source in an urban environment. This example also highlights the use of student-driven solutions to problems that matter to students and are emotionally relevant (as we apply the concepts of food deserts to Milwaukee and connect to Milwaukee’s history of institutional segregation and racism), which is related to higher engagement in STEM classrooms (Fischer, K., Immordino-Yang, M.H., and Matthew H. Schneps, 2010). The last step in this process is group-driven designs for small-scale aquaponics systems that could be applied in the classroom and homes. In this stage, students incorporate 3D drawings and designs, budgeting, and fish/plant/materials research to ensure the system provides nutritional value that is safe for human consumption.~~

~~During the 2016-2017 school year, Biology teachers focused on incorporating models into the classroom to help facilitate student learning for difficult concepts in biochemistry, DNA replication, and cell processes. We are specifically utilizing materials from the Milwaukee School of Engineering to follow an “activity before content” (ABC) strategy with introduction to new material for our students. In the ABC model, students are given hands-on learning opportunities to analyze natural phenomena before teachers introduce content. In this way, students are accessing prior knowledge and re-evaluating previous mental constructs about a specific subject in a self-guided, differentiated manner. Teachers are comparing previous averages on Biology content tests to tests given in this year to evaluate the incorporation of ABC teaching strategies in science. The Biology teachers plan to continue using these DNA models in the upcoming school years. Many of our courses, such as social studies and English, utilize a blend of the Socratic Method and open-ended questioning to facilitate students' exploration of the subject matter. Additionally, our math and science courses encourage students to analyze data and develop their own questions and conclusions, granting them greater autonomy over their learning experience while still meeting specific educational standards.~~

- **Experiential learning**

In addition to inquiry-based learning, experiential learning is an essential cornerstone of our teaching practices. Experiential learning is sometimes defined as “hands-on” learning. Our teachers utilize experiential learning to give students authentic learning experiences where they apply theoretical and conceptual understandings to real world problems and situations (Wurdinger & Carlson, 2010). Experiential learning allows students to learn real world applications, motivates students through authentic and relevant learning opportunities (Ambrose, et.al., 2010), and creates self-sufficient and independent learners.

Alliance has implemented experiential learning in a variety of content areas. For example, through our partnership with Arts@Large, our chemistry and physics classes applied concepts they learned in class about matter, chemical reactions, and light to a glassblowing workshop, resulting in an installation piece for the school. Additionally, many of our classes regularly engage in learning projects with a real world lens, such as public service announcements tackling social inequities within the Milwaukee community, student created infographics about the effects of human trafficking, and conducting interviews within the community about social justice issues.

4. *Service Learning*

In service learning, ~~much like experiential learning~~, students learn through the experience of impacting their communities. Service learning is an underlying goal and principle of all of the teaching and learning at Alliance. The staff hold a strong belief in the power of young people to impact their communities, and they provide regular opportunities for students to use this power through their academic experiences.

~~The restorative practices classes train adults and youth from other schools and organizations; the art classes host gallery events to exhibit their works; the social studies classes engage in community efforts to inform people of their rights, etc. In previous years, the Student Leadership Team even planned and participated in a weeklong service trip to New York City, where students spent a week working in food pantries, soup kitchens, and homeless shelters and then reflected on their work and what it means to be of service to others. Students participated in service learning in the community, working with people in and outside of Milwaukee at food pantries, shelters, and other schools. Currently, service learning focuses on issues that impact the student’s lives, such as bullying and the rise in vaping amongst teenagers. Student also participated in serving the at risk in the community through food packing, this year. Service learning has always been part of the foundation of Alliance and continues to be discussed~~

as part of the curriculum in terms of the impact of making positive changes in their lives and serving in their community. (When you lift someone/community up, all are lifted with them.)

5. *Blended Learning*

The staff at Alliance has been at the forefront of teaching and learning through the use of technology and blended learning. ~~While some might think blended learning is solely a combination of technology and traditional classroom instruction, the true definition of blended learning goes beyond that concept. In a blended learning classroom, teachers utilize a mixture of web-based technologies and combine a variety of pedagogical approaches to create an optimal learning environment (Driscoll, 2002). Within a blended classroom, one might see a lesson built through a constructivist lens, while also noting a teacher delivering direct instruction, followed by students using an innovative web-based program meant to reinforce learned skills. During our previous District Instructional Walks, team members observed a high level of student led engagement through the use of technology. During the debriefing they continually noted the remarkable use of technology in every classroom they visited. With blended learning, teachers are able to easily differentiate learning, make learning global, and allow for student application of skills. Through the use of programs like Khan Academy, students are able to practice their algebraic equations from their phones. With the utilization of Google Classroom during our school-wide "Write Days," students and teachers were able to submit, edit, and converse about their essays in every single classroom, with every single teacher.~~

~~Through the use of Edgenuity, Achieve 3000, and Newsela, we are seeing students recover credits, improve their Lexile levels, and annotate and discuss articles on current events. With the read and write google tool, we are seeing students who have struggled with writing in previous educational settings develop thoughtful and analytical essays through the help of these revolutionary tools. Whether students are participating in a video conference with a cartoonist from across the country, fighting for the right answer in a competitive game of Kahoot, or developing their own definition of a "memoir" through research, blended learning allows for a differentiated and rigorous classroom setting. Blended learning has enabled educators to effectively customize learning experiences, expand the global reach of education, and facilitate practical application of skills for students. The significance of blended learning heightened during the quarantine period and extended school closures due to the increased prevalence of mental health concerns among students, leading to missed classes or requiring additional learning~~

time. Furthermore, there was a rise in skill gaps and deficits resulting from disrupted instructional time, as well as an increased demand for online resources to enhance the curriculum.

The majority of Alliance teachers utilize Google Classroom and the Google suite of applications to provide students with comprehensive tools, including Google Read Write, dictionary, various calculators, ensuring that learning is accessible to students of all proficiency levels. Families can also monitor task completion, learning progress, and view real-time grades from home, fostering greater parental involvement. Additionally, Google Classroom and the suite, are used for schoolwide learning events, such as write days, promoting uniform access to materials, collaborative opportunities among stakeholders, and enabling teachers to assess student work and provide feedback.

Alliances also enriches our courses with the integration of online learning programs and applications, such as Adobe Express and the Art of Education University for visual arts, MIT App Inventor for mobile apps-telepresence, DESMOS for math, NewsELA, and Jamboard/FigJam, among others. Moreover, the use of Edgenuity has proven beneficial in helping overaged and uncredited students recover credits, improve their Lexile levels, engage in article annotation and discussions on current events, and gain exposure to online learning.

Over the years, Alliance has collaborated with other schools to broaden course offerings through telepresence, thereby diversifying the curriculum and increasing student communication and technology skills, leading to enhanced learning outcomes and reduced class sizes.

Whether students are participating in interactive sessions with professionals from diverse fields, engaging in educational games such as Kahoot, or conducting independent research to define "memoir," blended learning fosters a flexible and challenging classroom environment adaptable to the varied learning needs of students.

6. Literacy Focus

As a school we believe the most essential skills our students will need for the 21st century is the ability to read, write, and communicate effectively and clearly. Employers from around the city and beyond are looking forward employees with communication and writing skills. We want to prepare our students and

ensure they have access to future employment. In doing so, we have ramped up our focus on literacy across the curriculum. In the 2015-2016 school year Alliance introduced its first literacy initiative. The literacy plan has become a cornerstone of our educational mission and is embedded in every discipline. We continue to expand the initiative by fostering more writing across the curriculum, continuing to host school-wide Write Days, reading and comprehending informational texts, and strengthening grammar and conventions school-wide. Our literacy initiative has been highly successful and resulted in the first district-wide literacy walk-through of the 2016-2017 school year, the implementation of analytical writing skills such as the PEE Chain (Point, Evidence, Explain) in every classroom, and various student driven writing intensive projects such as the freshmen research project and Issues Fair. We believe that literacy is not just the responsibility of ELA teachers but something all disciplines should honor and teach. We are committed to authentic writing and disciplinary literacy.

7. *Building Strong Relationships and Increasing proficiency in Socio Emotional Learning (SEL)*

Alliance has a long history of teaching and practicing SEL skills. The skills are part of the six agreements, restorative practices, and the entire foundation of the school. Students that have not had success or felt repressed at other educational institutions often feel freer to express themselves physically, verbally, and emotionally. The open door policy and honesty of the school staff presents a path for students to be more authentic and open about their concerns, successes, etc. and forge a foundation and pathway to greater success in developing proficient SEL skills, as well as greater academic achievement.

In a small community like Alliance, both staff and students are well-acquainted with one another. The staff members have worked with or currently work with most of the students, and it is rare for any student to go through their high school years at Alliance without having at least one interaction with each teacher. This familiarity enables the staff to better support students at their social, emotional, and academic levels. They are attuned to students' normal behaviors, able to recognize signs of concern, and are well-equipped to inspire and foster success.

Additionally, Alliance adopted a mentorship program to more intensely monitor student progress and help those students to find success and graduate with their cohort. Students were chosen based on risk factors, such as being over age and/or under credit, having behavior emotional concerns that precluded them from the school in the past or present, being from a [statistically more vulnerable](#)

population with high incidence of dropping out or not accumulating credits at a similar rate to their peers. This program has had success for students with 60% of better attendance and according to last year's results, has made students feel special and seen, as well as gotten the students closer to graduating.

Additional Practices and Future Implementations

The Alliance School attributes the current growth in attendance rates, academic achievement, and behavior improvements to the following practices in addition to the core constructs:

- ~~The use of a co-teaching model between special education teachers and regular education teachers, which makes it possible for RTI to be implemented in the classroom environment;~~
- ~~The focus of creation of small freshmen cohort classes, which builds community, allows for the strengthening of skills, and nurturinge young students in their first year of high school;~~
- ~~A commitment to the limiting of class sizes to under thirty students in most any core academic courses;~~
- ~~A strong sense of commitment, collaboration, and ownership amongst staff members, which leads to rigorous teaching and learning, reflective practice, and effective innovation;~~
- ~~The creation of Advisories provide guidance to address pressing issues as attendance, GPA, behavior, and graduation in a small group that encourages students to be accountable and work on goals~~
- ~~Embedded interventions in classes with progress monitoring to ensure students are attaining goals and objectives~~
- Field trips play a crucial role in providing students with alternative learning environments. Past excursions to colleges in Wisconsin, Illinois, Georgia, and Alabama, explorations of potential careers, and visits to venues such as the Milwaukee Film Festival expand students' learning beyond the confines of the traditional classroom.
- Students with disabilities are encouraged to participate in career exploration programs (ex. CATP) and on-the-job training (OJT) to develop interpersonal and employment skills, thereby enriching their educational experience.
- Encouragement to enroll in courses at UWM, Mount Mary University, or MATC to gain exposure to college-level curriculum and chart a path toward their future careers or interests.
- Engagement in comprehensive Financial Literacy workshops and supplementary activities, with the Alliance's Financial Literacy curriculum setting an influential standard that is incorporated across MPS.

Graduation Requirements:

The Alliance School will ~~hold students to the~~ following MPS graduation requirements. ~~(the MPS graduation requirements) and will issue diplomas consistent with the attainment of these measures:~~

- ~~4.0 units of English/Language Arts~~
 - ~~3.0 units of Mathematics (including courses at or above the level of Algebra 1)~~
 - ~~3.0 units of Science (1.0 life science course, 1.0 physical science course, 1.0 additional course in life, physical, earth or space science, or district approved, science equivalent engineering or technology course)~~
 - ~~3.0 units of Social Studies (1.0 U.S. History, 1.0 World History/World Geography/World Studies/AP Human Geography, 1.0 Citizenship OR American Government and Economics~~
 - ~~1.5 units of Physical Education (a waiver for final 0.5 credit in physical education during the junior or senior year of high school may be an option for a student, based on participation in an organized sport or athletic program in accordance with district procedures developed by the Superintendent)~~
 - ~~0.5 units of Health~~
 - ~~1.0 units of Fine Arts)~~
 - ~~2.0 units of World Language~~
 - ~~1.0 units of College and career readiness coursework (Advanced Placement, Career Technical Education Courses, Personal Finance, Other Business courses International Baccalaureate diploma, or Project Lead the Way~~
- ~~22 credits for graduation~~

Schedule and Courses

~~Starting in the 2017-2018 school year, The Alliance School will closely align to the district early start calendar, with the only exception being two additional Professional Development (non-student attendance) days in the month of October. See attached calendar for specifics.~~

Weekly Schedule

~~The school will continue to use block to provide students with extended learning opportunities that focus on deep engagement with content. Block scheduling also allows for smaller class sizes, opportunities for experiential and service learning activities within and outside of the classroom, and the opportunity to offer additional elective and Advanced Placement (AP) courses. The schedule will follow~~

~~an A Day/B Day block schedule, with students attending four block classes a day, four days a week, and four class periods on alternating A Day/B Day Tuesday afternoons.~~

Programming Scope and Sequence

Alliance's programming will continue to follow ~~the district's a new rigorous~~ scope and sequence ~~that~~ ensuringes students will experience grade-level expectations and academic development. The ~~new~~ scope and sequence ~~at~~ Alliance will include but are not limited to: math and English for freshmen, recommended classes in Restorative Practices and Advanced Placement, and if student desires dual enrollment of students in ~~MATC and UWM college~~ programs. ~~The following is a basic outline of the scope and sequence for the Alliance standard programming.~~

Freshmen:

- ~~English 9~~
- ~~World Language~~
- ~~Algebra~~
- ~~Health~~
- ~~Comprehensive P.E.~~
- ~~Biology~~
- ~~Citizenship~~

Sophomore:

- ~~English 10 English~~
- ~~World Language~~
- ~~Geometry~~
- ~~Fine Arts~~
- ~~Restorative Practice & Lit~~
- ~~Fit for Life~~
- ~~Electives~~
- ~~Chemistry~~
- ~~U.S. History / AP Human Geography~~

Junior:

- AP / Advanced English (AP Language, AP Literature, Advanced Composition) or Upper Level English
- Algebra II & Trigonometry
- Science ● Skills for Life (optional)
- World History / ● Creative Movement

Physical Education

- Electives

Senior:

- Advanced English (Advanced Composition)
- Advanced Science (Physics, Human Anatomy & Physiology, AP Environmental)
- World History / AP U.S. History
- Electives (Art, Restorative School Foundations of Restorative Practices & Lit, AP Psychology, Advanced World Language, etc.)

Senior:

- AP/Advanced English (AP Language, AP Literature, Advanced Composition)
- Advanced Mathematics (Precalculus, Calculus, AP Statistics)
- Advanced Science (Physics, Human Anatomy & Physiology, AP Environmental)
- Advanced Social Studies (AP U.S. History, AP Human Geography, AP World History, Economics/American Government)
- Electives (Art, Restorative Practices, AP Psychology, Advanced World Language, etc.)
- Youth Options

Enrollment

The school will work to actively welcome and retain a student body diverse in race, language, economic status, and special education needs reflective of the school district population.

Special Education

The Alliance School is committed to a full inclusion model in the least restrictive environment of special education students. All students enrolled at The Alliance School participate in regular education classes with their grade level peers and receive supports and interventions from special education staff. The special education staff develop individual education plans (IEPs) in collaboration with students and families and will ensure that the special education needs of students, as outlined in the IEPs, are ~~met~~. The special education teachers also work together to create a schedule to ensure that the students receive the support that they need based on their IEPs.

The Alliance School ~~will comply~~ complies with all of the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Alliance School provides a free appropriate public education to children with disabilities, including, but not limited to, identifying, evaluating, planning educational programs, and implementing placements in accordance with those Acts. The Alliance School strives to be a place where students with disabilities feel safe, welcome, and challenged to achieve at their highest levels. Our anti-bullying mission at Alliance ensures that all students are accepted as unique individuals, and this creates a space where the unique qualities and abilities of our students with disabilities are celebrated.

Transportation Policy

Transportation may be provided to students residing in the city of Milwaukee by the school using yellow bus transportation according to Citywide High School district transportation policy and budgetary means.

Uniforms

Alliance does not require that students wear uniforms.

Community Partnerships

The relationships that we have built with community agencies and organizations help us to provide a continuum of services to students. In the past ~~two~~ years, we have partnered with the following organizations, as well as many others:

- ~~Arts @ Large, partners with us to engage students in experiential and arts-infused~~

learning.

- The Black Health Coalition of Wisconsin to address health and wellness issues for youth
- Pathfinders of Milwaukee, to address the issue of homelessness and counseling services for families
- The Milwaukee LGBTQIA+ Community Center, to provide opportunities for LGBTQIA+ youth to engage in activities outside of school
- Riverside University High School for athletics
- UWM, for observation opportunities for social workers in training
- The International Peace Studies Program, to share information about restorative practices in schools
- The ACLU of Wisconsin, to provide opportunities for youth to become civically engaged
- Diverse and Resilient, to provide information and resources on Healthy Relationships, HIV, STI, and alcohol abuse
- National Alliance for LGBTQ+ Schools
- College Access Centers
- Black Health Coalition
- Highland Community School
- MIAD
- Project Q
- UWM LGBT Center
- Diverse and Resilient
- The Gay Sports Network
- Cream City Foundation Challenge Party
- International Institute of Restorative Practice
- Brett Timmerman/Patrick Mutsune
- Arts@Large
- Diverse and Resilience
- Youth Initiative High School
- Georgetown Center on Poverty and Inequality
- Media Makers, Inc.
- Northwestern Pritzker School of Law
- Sojourner Truth House

- The Black Health Coalition of Wisconsin to address health and wellness issues for youth
- Pathfinders of Milwaukee, to address the issue of homelessness and counseling services for families

- ~~The Milwaukee LGBTQ Community Center and Project Q, to provide opportunities for LGBTQ youth to engage in activities outside of school~~
- ~~Riverside University High School for athletics~~
- ~~The Wisconsin Innovative Schools Network, to provide and participate in trainings on restorative justice and other best practices in education~~
- ~~Illinois State University, Alverno College, MATC, and UWM, for observation opportunities for teachers in training~~
- ~~The International Peace Studies Program, to share information about restorative practices in schools~~
- ~~The ACLU of Wisconsin, to provide opportunities for youth to become civically engaged~~
- ~~The Medical College of Wisconsin, to provide nurse practitioner services for students~~
- ~~Diverse and Resilient, to provide information and resources on Healthy Relationships, HIV, STI, and alcohol abuse~~

These connections and many other intermittent partnerships create a safety net of resources for students and families, many of whom are dealing with hardships that extend beyond the school day.

Continued Plans for Future Success

The Alliance School has achieved extraordinary socio-emotional goals and has made significant academic gains over the course of the contract terms and is committed to meeting the educational goals listed in Wis. Stat. 118.01. With this goal in mind, there are several continued plans for future success:

Freshmen Cohort: The freshmen courses at Alliance in the first 9 years had some of the largest class sizes. Given these trends, the school decided to focus efforts on the freshmen experience by creating smaller cohorts. This made the class sizes smaller than ever before, a practice that has proven to be one of the best methods for increasing academic achievement. In addition, the freshmen courses are taught by a team of teachers – the content area teacher and a special education teacher or paraprofessional. The school community believes that this additional academic support for ninth grade students, coupled with the smaller class sizes, will have a great impact on academic achievement in the coming years. ~~Additionally, our Freshmen cohort takes “extended” Math and English blocks that meet every day. We believe these two course are foundational to their success in future years and want to ensure our~~

freshmen have a strong grasp in these content areas. This has led to a high promotion rate for 9th graders, which we anticipate will lead to a higher graduation rate and lower failure rate overall.

GRIP: In the 2023-2024 school year, Alliance proudly launched the GRIP program to significantly boost our graduation rates and provide targeted support for students who need it most. Each identified student is paired with one or two mentors from our dedicated staff, encompassing everyone from the school secretary to the administrator. Together, the mentor, mentee, and their support network from home establish clear goals and engage in meaningful discussions about the strategies for achieving those goals, while also tracking grades and progress toward graduation. Mentors and mentees typically meet every other week, though many choose to meet even more frequently. Last year's GRIP cohort demonstrated outstanding success, with participating students making remarkable gains. This year, we are excited to revamp the cohort to concentrate on maximizing the success of our freshmen in high school.

Guidance

School Counselor and Programming: In the first 8 years, the school did not have a guidance counselor on staff. In the past two years, a part time guidance counselor position has been added to our program. The school community predicts that the addition of the guidance counselor will lead to greater attendance, college acceptance, and graduation rates. We have already seen an increase in students enrolled in dual enrollment credits and attaining college credit prior to high school graduation. Now, we have a full-time Our guidance school counselor has also signed out to be our who is also our career champion. Our guidance school counselor focuses on programming to ensure students are in courses they need for graduation and are following the Alliance scope and sequence. The counselor will works with the students and provides college and pre-college field trips for the students while also discussing credit attainment and enrollment in dual enrollment programs with many of our students.

Aspire Assessments: The district adoption of the Aspire assessments will lead to increased academic achievement. These assessments are aligned to the ACT assessments, which are assessments that students value because of their connection to post-secondary opportunities. The use of aligned assessments will lead to an increase in student assessment participation, student achievement, high school graduation rates, and postsecondary enrollment.