

Appendix A

Educational Program The Alliance School of Milwaukee

In October of 2015, Alliance High School 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 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 a small, democratically run Instrumentality charter school 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 LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer) 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 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 gender both by staff and students alike. We have utilized restorative practices in place of more punitive disciplinary models and structures. We have worked to create a climate where educators are educating the whole student and are cognizant of prior trauma. 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 LGBTQ and over 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.

In 2001, a California student survey found that nearly one fourth of students, from elementary through high school, reported that they had been harassed or bullied on school property because of their race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or disability (2001-2002 California Student Survey) and ten years later, there is still a lot of work to do. According to a 2011 survey done by the National Center for Education Statistics and Bureau of Justice

Statistics, School Crime Supplement, between 1 and 4 or 1 and 3 students experience bullying at school and the rates are much higher for LGBT students, students with disabilities, and students who are perceived as different by their peers. In 2014, The Gay Lesbian & Straight Educators Network released its 2014 School Climate Survey. The survey shows that schools still have a long way to go before they can be considered safe places for LGBT youth. The following key findings were part of the report:

- **Schools nationwide are hostile environments for a distressing number of LGBT students.** Seventy-four percent were verbally harassed in the past year because of their sexual orientation and 55 percent because of their gender expression. As a result of feeling unsafe or uncomfortable, 30 percent missed at least one day of school in the past month.
- **A hostile school climate affects students' academic success and mental health.** LGBT students who experience victimization and discrimination at school have worse educational outcomes and poorer psychological well-being. Grade point averages for these students were between nine and 15 percent lower than for others.
- **Students with LGBT-related resources and supports report better school experiences and academic success.** LGBT students in schools with an LGBT-inclusive curriculum were less likely to feel unsafe because of their sexual orientation (35 percent vs. 60 percent). Unfortunately, only 19 percent of LGBT students were taught positive representations about LGBT people, history or events.
- **School climate for LGBT students has improved somewhat over the years, yet remains quite hostile for many.** Increases in the availability of many LGBT-related school resources, due in part to efforts by GLSEN and other safe school advocates, may be having a positive effect on the school environment. LGBT students reported a lower incidence of homophobic remarks than ever before—from over 80 percent hearing these remarks regularly in 2001 to about 60 percent now.

In traditional high schools, students hear anti-gay epithets 25 times a day, and teachers fail to respond to these comments 97 percent of the time (Gay Lesbian Straight Educators Network). According to the most recent survey, more than half of LGBTQ youth do not feel safe in the schools. This makes learning in a traditional school a nearly impossible feat for many students.

The staff at The Alliance School are committed to the belief that a successful educational program requires a safe, student-centered learning environment based on the needs of the students, service and experiential learning models, and democratic governance. Inclusion of students, parents and teachers, and community members in making decisions that affect them will ensure that these needs are being met.

In the ten years since The Alliance School opened, the data has shown the impact of how a safe learning environment can change outcomes for students, especially for students who have traditionally been bullied, ostracized, harassed, or discriminated against. When the school opened in 2005, many of the students were just barely attending school and post-secondary education was hardly a thought for them. The attendance rate was a dismal 66%, a reflection of the patterns of attendance for students who hadn't been attending for long stretches of time. As a community, the school had to change the minds and attitudes of a community of learners from one of surviving to one of thriving. This meant helping young people re-build trust in education,

develop attitudes of empowerment and accomplishment, and break away from community patterns of hopelessness.

—Over the years, we have seen the difference that this has made. Attendance rates and academic rates have steadily been rising (with some small dips in attendance that were caused by budget cuts that affected the school’s ability to offer busing), and we are offering more and more challenging courses each year.

Without a school like The Alliance School, it is likely that the attendance and academic trends for these students would remain where they were ten years ago. Instead, The Alliance School is changing outcomes for an entire community of learners, and the impact of that on the greater Milwaukee community cannot be measured, but can certainly be felt.

Governance Structure at Alliance

The Alliance School community is committed to using democratic principles, such as those practiced at the Summerhill School in England and those described in John Dewey’s book of educational philosophy—*Democracy and Education*. These principles have had a tremendous impact on the development of a positive school culture and school wide commitment to academic achievement. These principles and practices are:

The Alliance School uses a democratic model of leadership, where the administrative responsibilities and decision-making are 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

From the 2017-2018 school year and forward, The Alliance School will be administratively led with Allan Laird as the lead administrator and Stephanie Nook assisting in administrative duties as assigned. For the 2017-2018 school year Stephanie Nook will be serving as the SST (School Support Teacher) and assisting in administrative duties including but not limited to: behavior referrals and management, programming, parent conferences, professional development, staff mentoring and observations, busing, etc. These administrative duties and her title will amplify as our expansion continues. As an administrative team, Mr. Laird and Ms. Nook ensure that the school community are abreast of district expectations and directives, provide the educational program as described and meet 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.

The Teacher Led Model of Leadership

The Alliance School is a teacher led school. All staff members teach, and all staff members participate in administrative planning and decision making for the school. One teacher is recommended by the Alliance staff to serve as the “Lead Teacher”, ensuring that the school community receives the information and resources necessary for democratic decision-making. The lead teacher ensures that administrative responsibilities are met, serves as the conduit between the district and the school community, submits staff evaluations, monitors the budget, submits budget materials, and is the administrative person of contact for the school. The lead teacher is also responsible for ensuring that the school community provides the educational

program, as described. For the 2015-2016 school year, Alliance will be supported by a district-assigned Assistant Principal.

Tuesday Staff Professional Development

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

12:15-1:00 - Classroom Prep

1:00 - 2:30 - Learning Team Meeting and Staff Professional Development (Entire Staff)

2:30 - 3:15 - Think Tanks/Content Meetings (Rotating)

3:15 - 4:00 - Administrative Committees

Each staff member will be on one Administrative Committee and one Think Tank. 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:

1. Testing and Assessment
 - a. Coordination of testing schedules: ACT Aspire, STAR, ACT, ACCESS
 - b. Academic interventions and progress monitoring
 - c. Data analysis of testing and incentive programs
2. Events Committee
 - a. Homecoming
 - b. Prom
 - c. Graduation Celebration
 - d. Family Events: Thanksgiving, Christmas Party, Family Unity Nights, etc.
 - e. Fundraising
3. PBIS and Discipline
 - a. PBIS initiatives and incentives
 - b. Restorative Practice, Repair Harm Circles, Peer Justice Councils
 - c. Detention Coordination
 - d. Attendance
 - e. Behavior interventions and supports

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

Administrative Committees

All staff members will participate in weekly Administrative and Tuesday Learning Committees. The following description is a model of the 2014-2015 committee assignments and responsibilities. Each year of the contract, the school will follow a similar model of distributed leadership and responsibility.

Sample:

~~Administrative Committees and Expectations:~~

~~Each committee must select a chair and report minutes to the lead teacher by the end of Tuesday. Staff updates should be provided on an as-needed basis. (If possible, send an email to all staff directly from meeting.)~~

Each staff member can only be on ONE committee.

- Discipline and Prevention
 - ⊖ PBIS
 - ⊖ Restorative Justice
 - ⊖ Attendance—truancy, incentives, action for students in hallway
 - ⊖ Behavior interventions and entering of Exceed data
- Student Events and Dances
 - ⊖ Homecoming
 - ⊖ Prom
 - ⊖ Christmas Party—presents, organizing event, food
 - ⊖ Cohort Competitions
 - ⊖ Student surveys and ideas
- Testing and Achievement
 - ⊖ ACT Aspire Testing—scheduling and organization
 - ⊖ ACT Testing for Juniors
 - ⊖ Incentives for testing
 - ⊖ Testing preparation materials
 - ⊖ Academic interventions and entering of Exceed data
- College and Post Secondary Planning
 - ⊖ Graduation
 - ⊖ College and college prep field trips—grade level schedule
 - ⊖ Grade level MPS requirements—career cruising, etc.
 - ⊖ Shadowing opportunities, vocational opportunities, career day, etc.

School Governance Council

The Alliance School Governance Council ~~will be~~ 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 ~~lead teacher~~ administrative team. The School 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 Governance Council reviews and approves the budget, makes recommendations for staffing positions to be added, and 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 a month with the ~~Lead Teacher~~ administrative team and share concerns about the community, proposed changes, additions to the school practice or policies, and participates in the Charter review process. ~~The Student Leadership Team also participates in the review of data and the writing of the Charter Renewal Application.~~

School-Wide Restorative Practice Circles

~~Students in the Restorative Practices classes listen for issues of student concern and then create circles for the entire school community to participate in around those issues. This practice allows for all student voices to become part of the discussion around issues of concern and strategies for solving issues as a community.~~

Community Meetings

~~When issues of importance come up, a whole school community meeting can be called. At the Community Meeting, information is shared with the entire school community and when a decision must be made, the school community participates in a vote. At times, students and staff may be asked to complete a survey to gather voices and opinions on policies and practices. These surveys and votes are instrumental in guiding school practices and principles.~~

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement in school activities, decision-making, and academic achievement is an ~~will be 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. The addition of a Parent Coordinator has increased the school's ability to engage families in the school community. Parental satisfaction 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 our parent coordinator has had a comment and suggestion box for parents and guardians to submit concerns, questions, and suggestions discreetly.

The school will use several modes of communication to engage families in the school

community, including the school website, the Infinite Campus Messenger program, direct mailings, emails, text messages, social media, and personal phone calls.

Alliance uses several modes of communication to engage families in the school community, including direct mailings, text messaging, apps such as Remind, personal phone calls, progress monitoring through Edgenuity, etc. Our Parent Coordinator 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, talent shows, staff and student basketball games, etc.

Another testament to our success and student and parent satisfaction is our stability measures. Our May to September stability rates have remained steadily high and regularly surpass other high schools in the district. In the 2015-2016 school year our May to September stability rate was 81.3% compared to the district's rate of 79.2%. Our September to September stability rates have increased over the last four years from 67.4% in the 2012-2013 school year to 72% in the 2015-2016 school year which indicates our growing presence in the community and the satisfaction of families.

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 potentials. Intervention time progress monitoring is built into the school day, so that all students receive academic and/ or behavioral enrichment interventions, as needed, and the school uses online learning, community partnerships, learning journeys, ~~intersession courses, after school programs,~~ and college partnerships and preparation opportunities to ensure that all students have the best educational experiences possible.

~~The educational program at Alliance is based on the following philosophies and practices that are embedded throughout the curriculum and courses, so that students are experiencing them as a regular way of learning:~~

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

- **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:

- 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.
- It has been conservatively estimated the 1,500 Gay and Lesbian youth commit suicide every year.

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. 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 10/31/16 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 LGBTQ (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 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:

- Full inclusion for students with special needs
- Gender neutral bathrooms

- The use of a year round schedule to meet the social-emotional and academic needs of students
- A full-time social worker
- The use of first names amongst students and teachers to create a collaborative learning environment
- Daily advisories for continual student check-ins
- Bullying report forms
- Honoring student voice and choice through the Student Leadership Team, student voting, student-led instruction, and other opportunities
- 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 foundation of a safe learning environment is created through strong relationships and personal connections; understanding and awareness of child development and Maslow's hierarchy of needs; individualized learning, differentiation, and support; respect, non-judgement, and acceptance of a student's background, ability, sexual orientation, gender identification, religion, and/or beliefs; and preventative and responsive practices to address bullying and/or harassment quickly and effectively.~~

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.

- **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.

The Alliance School has used and will continue to use a wide range of restorative practices to build community, solve problems, and to mediate conflict.

All staff members at the school are trained in restorative practices as part of the regular school-wide professional development. Teachers implement the restorative practices in their classrooms and as needed to solve problems, mediate conflict, or share ideas.

Students are also trained in restorative practices and facilitate the practices throughout the school year. The school currently offers two restorative practices classes each year—a class for beginning circle keepers and a class for experienced circle keepers. In the beginning class, students develop circle keeping skills; hold quarterly, school-wide, community building circles; facilitate repair harm circles; and do community outreach. In the 2014-2015 school year, beginning circle keepers presented at forums and organizations, such as the Milwaukee Youth Social Justice Forum, 2014, and Tamarack Waldorf School. In the advanced circle keepers class,

students mentor students in the beginners' restorative practices class; host new student circles so that students who are new to the school can learn about our community; provide circles of support for students who request them; lead repair harm circles and peer justice councils; and provide community outreach. In the 2014-2015 school year, the advanced restorative practices class presented at the Milwaukee Youth Social Justice Forum, 2014; led workshops for staff at Pathfinders and for youth and staff from Arts @ Large; and shared information on restorative practices with people from the local, national, and international communities.

Each quarter, students in the restorative practices classes facilitate school-wide circles based on topics that are of interest for the school community. These school-wide circles lead to stronger relationships between students and between staff and students.

The school also offers parent circles to engage families in the restorative practices and to engage them in the community. In the 2014-2015 school year, we hosted a mother-daughter circle and a circle for parents of LGBTQ youth.

Part of the Alliance mission is also to teach others about how to reduce bullying and provide safe and accepting learning environments for all students. Alliance staff and students collaborate with other organizations, such as Working Innovations and the Black Health Coalition of Wisconsin, and provide training opportunities for schools, community organizations, and universities. Staff at Alliance have presented restorative practices trainings at a host of sites, including: Alverno College, the Catholic Schools Consortium, Daemen University, and the Anti-Racist Anti-Bias Teaching Conference.

- **Inquiry-based learning**

Inquiry-based learning is a form of teaching and learning that involves students in learning by posing questions or problems that students engage in solving or answering rather than just presenting information to students. This is a model of teaching and learning that leads to greater student involvement in the learning experience. For example, in the Water Science class, students engaged in a variety of water-related questions such as "Which is better for you—tap water or bottled water?" or "Is it better to eat farm-raised fish or wild fish?"), investigated the questions, and then presented their investigations in a gallery exhibit of their work. The investigations were professionally designed and presented and the student learning was rigorous and relevant. This type of rigorous teaching and learning is the routine practice in Alliance classrooms.

Over 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.

- **Experiential learning**

Another model of teaching and learning used at Alliance is experiential learning. In this model, students learn through experience and reflection, rather than through passive listening and responding. One example of this was a collaborative project between the ceramics class and the restorative practices class. The two classes collaborated on a project where the students created ceramic talking pieces for use in the restorative practice circles and then presented their work in a workshop at the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA). Through this experience, students learned the techniques for creating ceramic arts, the principles of restorative practices, the use of both in everyday life, and the value of presenting what they’d learned to a greater audience.

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.

- **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, This year, 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.

Additionally, Alliance is planning to implement the program AP (Advanced Placement) and WE (an education partner that delivers service-based learning). This program married service learning with rigorous AP coursework. Our AP Environmental Science class will pilot the AP and WE program in upcoming school years. Students will focus on real world applications of their content knowledge, tackling issues such as access to clean water and loss of biodiversity. We look forward to including future AP and WE courses as we expand our AP program.

- **Blended learning**

~~The staff at Alliance has been at the forefront of teaching and learning through the use of technology and blended learning. The world is changing, and students have more access to information than ever before. When young people today are posed with a question, they instantly go to their phones to search for an answer. This means that the role of the teacher has changed greatly, as well. At Alliance, teachers have been able to use blended learning to provide greater access to learning and extended opportunities for learning. Teachers at The Alliance School have been using blended learning programs, such as Khan Academy (a program recommended by the College Board for SAT preparation), for years with great success. Blended learning provides teachers and students will the means to differentiate learning, make learning global, and to take the limits off for how far students can go with their learning. With blended learning, The Alliance School has been able to offer enrichment opportunities, such as additional AP courses; credit recovery opportunities for students who have failed courses; continuous learning opportunities for students who are out of school for medical or family travel reasons; and creative and engaging learning opportunities for this global and digital generation. Staff at Alliance use a variety of technologies to engage students in learning and to make learning a 24/7 possibility, such as: Google Drive, the Student Learning Community (SLC), Khan Academy, Duolingo (a dual language program), Edgenuity, homework reminder apps, Instagram, YouTube, and more.~~

~~—Much of the academic growth that we have seen in the past three years can be attributed to the use of blended learning strategies, especially in math, because these strategies have allowed teachers to target areas of need for students rather than covering the same information for everyone, and they have allowed students to accelerate their learning, as needed, as well. On our most recent report card, one of our areas of greatest strength was in the area of reducing the achievement gap. Blended learning has helped to make this possible because it increases our ability to differentiate, accelerate, and recover 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 the 09/29/16 High School Regional Walk-Through, 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 our 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.

Literacy Focus

As a school we believe the most essential skills our students will need for the 21st century are 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. In the upcoming years, we will 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.

Additional Practices and Future Implementations

Our mission at The Alliance School is to provide a safe, student-centered and academically challenging environment to meet the needs of all students. Through community involvement and service learning projects, students will learn responsibility and accountability, which will be reinforced in classroom instruction. Experiential, or hands-on learning, helps to elicit prior knowledge and provides the student with the relevance needed to process information and use it for future problem-solving. Students will be encouraged to teach lessons themselves in presenting their findings and to offer suggestions for future class offerings.

All of these and other research-based practices have proven effective at The Alliance School, and the teachers and staff members hold an unwavering commitment to continuous reflection and the development of additional new and innovative practices that lead to continuous academic and socio-emotional growth.

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

- ~~The deep and effective~~ **weekly professional development** based on staff needs, district initiatives, and timely research-based best practices
- **Full inclusion** of students with special education needs in the regular curriculum
- 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 creation of small **freshmen cohort classes**, which build community, allow for the strengthening of skills, and nurture young students in their first year of high school
- The practice of providing “extended” foundational freshmen courses (Algebra and English) and AP courses to students to ensure academic success and concrete content knowledge
- ~~The practice of providing a “double-dose” of math and English to all freshmen students so that they receive two years of math and English curriculum over the course of one year~~
- A commitment to the limiting of class sizes to under thirty students in most any core academic course
- ~~The use of the teacher-led model~~ and The use of **democratic governance practices**
- A commitment to **parent engagement, support, and partnership** through invitational practices, building trusting relationships, and regular communication
- A strong sense of **commitment, collaboration, and ownership amongst staff** members, which leads to rigorous teaching and learning, reflective practice, and effective innovation
- ~~The year-round schedule, which leads to the development of stronger relationships, provides support networks for students without interruption, and lends itself to opportunities for credit recovery and enrichment throughout the year~~
- The implementation of Think Tanks to address and collaborate about core pillars of our educational program - literacy, math, and restorative practices
- The creation of Lunch Advisories to address such pressing issues as attendance, GPA, behavior, and graduation in a small group that encourages students to be accountable and work on grade-level goals

- The expansion of our AP Program to include AP and WE in the 2017-2018 school year and beyond, to systematically roll out additional AP courses each year while providing pre-AP course work and skill building, and to work toward implementing AP Capstone option for continued rigorous course offerings
- Embedded interventions in classes with progress monitoring to ensure students' are attaining goals and objectives

Graduation Requirements:

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

Required:

- 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, 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. ~~is a year-round school that runs on a quarterly schedule. We have four quarters that will each include a three week break. The schedule for the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years will be, with some adjustments made to more closely align to the district's year round calendar, as follows, and future years will follow a similar year round schedule:~~

- First Quarter: August 3rd—October 9th (Intersession break Oct 10—25)
- Second Quarter: October 26th—December 18th (Intersession break Dec 19—Jan 10)
- Third Quarter: January 11th—March 17th (Intersession break March 18—April 6)
- Fourth Quarter: April 7th—June 13th

Weekly schedule:

The school will continue to use block scheduling 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.

~~Each year, with the growing focus on post-secondary education and employment, Alliance has been able to increase the number of Advanced Placement (AP) and advanced learning courses offered. For example, in the 2014-2015 school year, the school offered AP Environmental Science and AP Language and Literature, and several individual students were able to take and pass online AP courses using Edgenuity, as well. In the coming year, the school will add AP Art Studio and an AP math course to its available course list. AP courses are open to all Alliance students, with the goal that every Alliance graduate will be college ready.~~

Grade Level Coursework:

~~Ninth Grade Ninth grade students are scheduled into two grade level cohorts with small class sizes, co-teaching in all core academic courses, and an academic program designed to build up an Page 12 of 18 academic base of skills early in their high school program. Students complete all of algebra 1 and geometry, as well as all of English 9 and English 10, in their freshmen year. This gives students a strong academic base in math and English, setting them up for greater success in their other academic courses and providing them with the opportunity to take additional advanced courses in their high school years, including Advanced Placement courses, STEM courses, and Youth Options courses. During the freshman year, students take the following courses: Algebra 1 Geometry 1 English 9 English 10 U.S. History Biology Spanish 1 Health Physical Education Tenth Grade During the tenth grade year, students typically take the following courses: Algebra II and Trigonometry Composition and Advanced Composition Chemistry Restorative Practices Spanish II Art Foundations American Government Economics Physical Education Eleventh and Twelfth Grade In eleventh and twelfth grade, students are programmed into courses based on past credit attainment, graduation requirements, academic needs, and college and career goals. The school guidance counselor programs students into courses and assists students with college planning and post-secondary goals. Some typical eleventh and twelfth grade courses are: AP Language and Literature Statistics and/or Calculus Advanced Restorative Practices Hispanic American or African American Literature Page 13 of 18 AP Art History or AP Art Studio AP Environmental Sciences Anatomy and Physiology World Studies Philosophy Psychology Sociology Physical Education Clay Design Fiber and Fashions Poetry The focus in the early years on skill and credit attainment in the first years of high school allows students to focus on academic electives, college preparation, AP courses, and~~

other high-level coursework in their junior and senior years of high school.

Programming Scope and Sequence

Alliance's programming will follow a new rigorous scope and sequence that ensures students will experience grade-level expectations and academic development. The new scope and sequence in Alliance will include but are not limited to: extended math and English for 9th graders (which meet every day), recommended classes in Restorative Practices and Advanced Placement, expanding the number of Advanced Placement, and dual enrollment of students in MATC and UWM programs. The following is a basic outline of the scope and sequence for the new Alliance standard programming.

Ninth Grade:

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

Sophomore:

- English 10
- 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)
- Algebra II & Trigonometry
- Skills for Life (optional)
- Creative Movement
- Advanced Science (Physics, Human Anatomy & Physiology, AP Environmental)
- World History / AP U.S. History
- Electives (Art, Restorative School & 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

Sample Course Schedule:

~~Art courses and physical education courses will be integrated into the core curriculum and may include drawing, quilt-making, pattern design, ropes course completion, orienteering, running, yoga, tennis, mountain-biking, and more.~~

~~*There will be collaborative project integration among the disciplines based on overlapping themes.~~

~~**Classes and lessons will be designed around student interest and academic requirements. Student involvement in course design will be essential to the planning process.~~

~~***RTI will be incorporated into the class design to ensure that students who are in need of remediation or enrichment will be appropriately challenged and pushed for success.~~

Tuesday Staff Development

~~Staff members will focus on staff development and collaboration on Tuesdays. During the day, teachers will facilitate online classes, and will also participate in staff meetings, professional development activities, and IEP meetings. All staff members will be expected to be in attendance on Tuesdays and will be marked absent if they are not in attendance.~~

~~Sample of a typical Tuesday staff schedule at Alliance:~~

~~7:15–8:15 a.m. Early morning Tai Chi practice~~

~~8:30–9:30 a.m. Committee Meetings (on a weekly rotating schedule). *Administrative Committee Meetings (Committees: Academic Achievement & Post-Secondary Planning; Discipline & Prevention; School Events & Activities; Assessment Coordination & Data Review); Content Area Meetings (Subject area collaboration and curriculum alignment); Tuesday Learning Committee Meetings (Committees: Service Learning; Community Service; Online Learning)*~~

~~9:45–11:45 a.m. Full Staff Learning Team Meeting & Professional Development. *Sampling of professional development activities held this year: Restorative Practices; Trauma-Informed Care; Project-Based Learning; Standards-Based Grading; District Initiatives, such as PBIS, Infinite Campus, Educator Effectiveness...; Service Learning; AODA Intervention Strategies; Individual Student Reviews and Strategy Development; Invitational Learning; Ropes & Challenges.*~~

~~12:00–1:00 p.m. Break/Prep/Lunch~~

~~1:00–3:55 p.m. IEP meetings; Tours for prospective students; Student support for online~~

~~learning, community service, and service learning; Collaborative planning; Meetings with businesses and community partners; Individual student tutoring and make-up work; Additional training and professional development; Data review and planning for differentiated learning.~~

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. The school's mission is to be a safe, student-centered, and academically challenging environment to meet the needs of ALL students. The school plans to continue with this mission of serving all students through a challenging, culturally responsive, and differentiated learning program.

In January of 2017, we proposed an incremental expansion over the course of five years for high school students. This plan will bring us to an enrollment of up to 360 students by 2021-2022, which is nearly double our current enrollment. Given the recent progress our country has made securing equal rights for the LGBTQ community and our nation's continued dedication to anti-bullying efforts we feel a responsibility to expand our program at Alliance to better serve the students of Milwaukee. We have been a leader in MPS in this regard and we believe there is an ever growing need for the safe and rigorous learning environment that Alliance provides.

With our expansion of student enrollment comes the need for additional space. Our current building will reach a maximum capacity of 200 students in the 2017-18 school year. With this in mind, we would like to remain at 850 W. Walnut St. for the 2017-18 school year while we prepare for the transition to a larger student body and a new building to accommodate the larger student body for the 2018-19 school year. It is important for the new Alliance building to be centrally located in the city of Milwaukee because we draw students from the south, north, and east side. Additionally, we also attract students from outside of the district.

The culture and community of Alliance is what makes our school unique within MPS. It is of the utmost importance that we contain this culture. In order to do so, we would best serve our students in our own building or in a building where we have a specific and self-contained physical space. The administration at Alliance will collaborate with MPS administration in locating a new building.

Lastly, our transition to a larger student body and building would be transparent to the administration of Milwaukee Public Schools. We have proposed the following expansion ramp up:

- Alliance is currently budgeted for an enrollment of 190 students.
- 2017-18 school year: (+ 10) = 200 students
- 2018-19 school year: (+ 40) = 240 students (contingent upon a NEW BUILDING)
- 2019-20 school year: (+ 40) = 280 students
- 2020-21 school year: (+ 40) = 320 students
- 2021-22 school year: (+ 40) = 360 students

Special Education

The Alliance School is committed to a full inclusion model of special education. All students enrolled at The Alliance School ~~will~~ participate in regular education classes with their grade level peers and ~~will~~ receive supports and interventions from special education staff. The special education staff ~~will~~ 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 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 ~~will provide~~ a free appropriate public education to children with disabilities, including, but not limited to, identifying, evaluating, planning educational programs, and implementing placements Page 17 of 18 in accordance with those Acts. The Alliance School ~~will strive~~ 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

~~The School will provide yellow bus transportation service each year to students residing in the city of Milwaukee. Students who reside out of Milwaukee will be required to provide transportation to and from school, unless such transportation is provided by the student's district of residence.~~

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 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

Model Changes for Academic Achievement

The Alliance School has achieved extraordinary socio-emotional goals and has made significant academic gains over the course of the ten year contract 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: model changes that the school has adopted for the upcoming contract term with the goal of increased student academic achievement, including:

Freshmen Cohort: The freshmen courses at Alliance in the first 9 years had some of the largest class sizes. In the past year, the school decided to focus efforts on the freshmen experience by dividing the cohort in half. 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.

Guidance 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. Our guidance counselor has also signed out to be our career champion and has been working closely with Ms. Nook on programming to ensure

students are in courses they need for graduation and are following the Alliance scope and sequence. The counselor will work with the students and provide 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.

~~**Administrative Committees:** The addition of administrative committees focused on "testing and achievement" and "college and post-secondary goals" is a change designed with the goal of leading to increased academic achievement. These committees will focus on school-wide assessments, reviewing data, planning interventions, providing students with opportunities for post-secondary planning, and preparing students for college-level work.~~

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.

~~**Co-Teaching:** In the 2014-2015 school year, all staff members were trained in co-teaching models, and most classes at Alliance are now programmed so that there are two staff members in each class to support learning goals. This practice allows for collaboration between teachers, interventions in the classrooms, the use of pull-out groups, differentiated learning, and continuity of instruction when teachers are pulled from the classroom. This model of teaching and learning has been implemented with the goal of increasing academic achievement.~~

~~**Arts at Large Partnership:** The Alliance School has been chosen to be an Arts at Large Partnership School in the upcoming contract term. This partnership will bring in additional resources and training for staff and will lead to increased student engagement, attendance, credit attainment, and academic achievement.~~