

## 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 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 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 LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual and Ally) 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 [and life](#).

### **Governance Structure at Alliance**

The Alliance School uses a democratic model of leadership, where ~~the administrative responsibilities and decision-making are-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 2019-2020 school year ~~and forward~~, The Alliance School ~~has been~~will be administratively led ~~by~~with Phyllis D. Smith ~~as the lead administrator~~. 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 will 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.

- Tuesday-Wednesday 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 on Tuesdays-Wednesdays for staff professional development is a necessity. ~~Below is a~~ Below is a sample calendar of our staff professional development for Tuesdays-Wednesdays:

11:30-12:00 Staff Lunch

12:00-1:30 – Staff Meeting (School Business and Coordination, Quarterly Staff Circles, [Quarterly Data Dives](#), Conversations about students and scheduling, etc.)

1:30-2:30 – Professional Development and Staff Collaboration

## 2:30-3:30 – Committees

Each staff member will be ~~on one Administrative~~ on two 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~~ one of their committees and collaborate.  
The committees are:

### 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~~

## 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.~~

## **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 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 submi 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, 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 ~~etentials~~potential. ~~Intervention time progress Intervention time and progress mmonitoring -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-~~The 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:

- 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.

According to the MPS 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, students that identify as LGBTQIA+ are:

- Twice as likely to self-harm
- Over twice as likely to consider suicide
- Three times as likely to attempt suicide
- More likely than non-LGBTQIA to use and abuse drugs

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](http://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 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 bathrooms

- The use of ~~a year-round~~ an early-start schedule to meet the social-emotional and academic needs of students

- A full-time social worker

- A full-time psychologist

- 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 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 Practice (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 RP 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 RP, so we create opportunities for them to develop as RP practitioners. Restorative Practices classes deepens the students' understanding of themselves, the system in which we live, and their power to shift systems by becoming practitioners in the school. The 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. -during the spring of the 2022 school year.

Our students are supported by a community of adults who learn and practice RP with each other, within the school, and within the classroom. Learning RP is an essential part of our onboarding process. The RP teacher and students facilitate the teaching sessions. Once staff members learn, they have the opportunity to implement RP in the spaces in which they work as well as co-create and co-facilitate a quarterly staff circle. Parents and community members also have the opportunity to engage in RP work when they enter the school and as they participate in gatherings.

RP is woven into the school's discipline practices as well. 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. Students who are struggling and continue to cause harm are invited to a peer council where they are given a deeper level of support and an opportunity to take responsibility then make amends. 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.

The school community continues to evolve, and it is essential that there is a person who facilitates RP throughout this process. The RP teacher will continue to support this work within the school community and nurture supportive relationships within the city and the country.

### 3. *Inquiry-based learning*

~~Since the 2017 school year~~~~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**

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.

#### 20.4. *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.

#### 21.5. *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.

#### 22.6. *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.

### **Additional Practices and Future Implementations**

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 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 build~~s~~ community, allow~~s~~ for the strengthening of skills, and nurtur~~ing~~e 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 course;
- 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

### **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~~ Since the 2017-2018 school year, The Alliance School ~~will closely~~ has closely aligned 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.~~ 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.

### Weekly Schedule

The school will continue to use block period scheduling with seven periods in each day. ~~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 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: math and English for freshmen, recommended classes in Restorative Practices and 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 Alliance standard programming.

*Freshmen:*



- [English 9 English](#)
- [World Language Composition](#)
- 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)
- Algebra II & Trigonometry
- Science ● ~~Skills for Life (optional)~~
- World History / ● ~~Creative Movement~~
- 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.~~

- ~~● [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](#)~~

~~● 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.~~

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 work~~ s with the students and provide s 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.~~