



## **Guidelines for MSAN Student Conference Team Selection**

Early in its development MSAN members committed to creating opportunities for students of color to guide their work. Students offer important insights into improving the effectiveness of their schools and districts. To this end, MSAN holds an annual conference to strengthen the leadership skills of its students.

During the annual conference teams of students from member districts:

- engage in discussions about barriers students of color face in their schools and districts,
- network with students from across the country to craft solutions and strategies to eliminate these barriers,
- share their ideas about how to motivate students to succeed and how their school could be made a more meaningful and interesting place, and
- develop plans of action to implement these strategies for change and report these valuable messages to the academic leaders of their schools and districts.

### **Conference Team Selection**

Each district team should consist of 6-8 students and 2-3 chaperones. Registration costs for up to 10 attendees from a district are included in your MSAN dues. If a district would like to send more students and chaperones a registration fee per person will be charged. The following information provides a common framework for thinking about student selection.

#### **Student Selection:**

- Your team should include students of color who represent the diverse racial and ethnic demographics of your district.
- Your team should consist of both high-achieving students and “promising scholars” - students who show academic promise and leadership potential, but that potential is not yet reflected in their grade point or test scores.
- Students should demonstrate leadership potential in school and/or their community and want to help improve the academic achievement of other students of color.
- Student participants should be sophomores, juniors or seniors, with the majority of your team being sophomores and juniors.
- Student participants should be able to act responsibly and with maturity at an off-campus, out-of-state event such as the MSAN Student Conference. Student expectations and responsibilities are outlined in the Conference Handbook and should be reviewed with all students prior to leaving for the conference.

### **Chaperone Selection:**

- Chaperones will need to meet with their team prior to the conference to review the conference schedule, complete the pre-conference assignment, and to review the rules/expectations regarding behavior and dress.
- During the conference, chaperones will need to be full participants in all of the events and social activities. Chaperones will also need to be aware of their students' whereabouts at all times.

### **Conference Preparation**

- Your district will be provided with an electronic copy of the Student Conference Handbook which should be reviewed by chaperones and students prior to conference arrival. Parental consent forms are included in this information.

### **District Follow-Up**

The following information provides a few suggestions for ways in which Governing Board members and members of the Research Practitioner Council can support local student teams.

- Arrange times for the conference team to share their experiences and their action plans with your office and with curriculum support staff.
- Consider ways to integrate their work with other ongoing efforts in achievement and curriculum.
- Help the teams see the links between their work and your district's equity activities.
- Engage the teams in ongoing discussions and planning for district work to eliminate achievement gaps.
- Convene the teams who have attended each conference across grade levels and schools to compare action plans and support one another's efforts. Some attendees at the previous annual MSAN Student Conferences had no awareness of activities to address achievement gaps at other schools or other levels in their district.
- Give a formal means for students to present their action plans and experiences to you and your top-level staff and to the teams that have attended other MSAN conferences.
- Find ways to publicly recognize the teams for their work, particularly among their peers.