



## Benefits of MSAN Membership

**FAQ: What is included in a district's membership in the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN)? What's included in the fee structure?**

Benefit of membership in MSAN is three fold:

- 1) access to on-line resources aimed at streamlining our networking and sharing of information across MSAN districts;
- 2) high-quality, research-based training & professional development for adults and student leaders; and
- 3) participation in research aimed at closing gaps.

### 1) ON-LINE RESOURCES

Membership in MSAN includes access to the following online resources:

#### a) MSAN Clearinghouse of Promising Practices

The MSAN *Clearinghouse of Promising Practices* is a searchable database developed to promote the extension and replication of practices and programs across MSAN districts that have shown to accelerate the learning of students of color AND for which there is evidence the practice is effective over time and/or with multiple groups of students. The Clearinghouse is meant to streamline and inform local district R&D and enhance networking among various district roles (e.g., literacy coaches, principals, special education teachers, etc.). Currently, the Clearinghouse has 84 initiatives/promising practices available to member districts.

#### b) MSAN Shared District Database

The *Shared District Database* is comprised of demographic overviews of student enrollment and achievement data including, but not limited to state achievement test data, ACT, SAT and other relevant nationally-normed tests given by the district, drop out and /or graduation rates, district and school enrollment rates, and student course selection data (e.g., 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade algebra, AP and or International Baccalaureate course enrollment).

#### c) Video Library of Speakers

Proceedings from past MSAN professional development events focused on different "problems of practice" experienced across MSAN districts are available to all members, including videos of keynote presentations that can be accessed by individual districts. Topics have included the under-representation of students of color in AP/IB courses, over-representation of students of color in special education, culturally responsive teaching practices, common supports for language learners, disproportionate

representation of students of color in discipline, and others. Speakers include Donna Ford, Pedro Noguera, Gloria Ladson-Billings, Russ Skiba, Marcelo Suarez-Orozco, Ron Ferguson, Yvette Jackson, Margot Gottlieb, and others.

## 2) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING

A central feature of the work of MSAN is to build local communities of learners through the holding of highly-focused professional development opportunities and working group/business meetings.

### a) Professional Development for Educators (1-2x/year)

MSAN sponsors 2 network-wide professional development opportunities annually based on shared challenges: the **MSAN Mini-Conference** which is held in the fall across different regions of the US, and the **MSAN Equity Institute** in the spring on the campus of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Membership includes registration for 6 educators (teachers or administrators) at the annual Institute and a reduced registration fee for the Mini-Conferences. Past topics for Mini-Conferences include the under-representation of students of color in AP/IB courses, over-representation of students of color in special education, culturally responsive teaching practices, and others.

### b) Business/Working Group Meetings (3x/year)

Convening of representatives from member districts, including Governing Board members (Superintendents) and members of the Research Practitioner Council (RPC), is designed to build a continuous stream of work focused on our shared mission. These business meetings are most appropriately thought of as team-based professional learning for member districts. One meeting each year is a site visit hosted by a member district willing to open up their practice to our collective learning. Across these meetings MSAN members are provided with access to researchers conducting inquiry across different fields of study on topics relating to our shared work. Previous research topics include: reducing stereotype threat, district-level interventions that increase family involvement of English language learners, development of racial bias in young children, human resource management for equity, effectiveness, and efficiency, supports for children and families experiencing homelessness, and others. Additionally, each meeting involves the in-depth presentation and discussion of one promising practice from an individual MSAN district. No registration fee is charged for attending MSAN business meetings. Districts cover the cost of travel and accommodations.

### c) MSAN Student Conference

Early in its development, MSAN members committed to creating opportunities for students of color to guide their work. Each year teams of students from member districts gather to engage in discussions about the barriers students of color face in their schools and districts, and develop action plans that outline steps their schools and districts can take to eliminate those barriers and improve the effectiveness of their schools. This youth leadership conference is an opportunity for students to learn from peers from across the country while constructing valuable messages for the academic leaders of

their schools. Dues include cost of attendance for 8 students and 2 chaperones at the annual MSAN Student Conference (approx. \$3,500). MSAN also covers the cost of hotel accommodations for a portion of the stay (approx. \$1,550)

### **3) RESEARCH**

MSAN districts have opportunities throughout the year to participate in research projects. One example of this type of benefit was in-house professional development with research staff for districts who participated on a project that focused on designing/testing a homework-based Algebra I intervention for 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders. Additionally, after the study was completed, all MSAN districts were provided access to the intervention before the general public.

#### **Non-Tangible Benefits**

MSAN is a true network. There are myriad opportunities for participation but all are dependent upon district level motivation and perceived need for participation. MSAN was started by districts with similar demographics in terms of racial and economic composition and similar academic outcomes for their students of color. What MSAN educators note time and time again how helpful it is to be a part of MSAN (district administrators and teachers, and even school board members); to be able to talk with other educators who are in similar settings, struggling with similar issues, and working on similar solutions.

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