

Minority Student Achievement Network
MSAN Monthly, October, 2017

This edition of the MSAN Monthly provides us with a powerful counter to the bias and hate being perpetrated on a national level against many of our most marginalized students and families. We highlight the ways that day-to-day equity initiatives have a significant impact on the lives of the children we serve. Read on to:

- Learn more about the agenda that will shape the training for the 200+ high school equity leaders attending the **2017 MSAN Student Conference** later this month;
- Save the date to attend the Fall MSAN Webinar where our colleagues from Buckeye Elementary School District (AZ) will share the powerful work being done by their **middle school equity clubs** as they create more welcoming schools across the district; and
- Revisit how important it is for our students of color to see themselves in schools. **Ethnic studies programs** and **demographically diverse teachers** can, and do, make a difference.

UPCOMING WEBINAR

Developing MSAN Programming at the Middle School Level: Learning from Equity Clubs in Arizona

Thursday 11/9/2017, 2:00 PM PST, MST/3:00 PM CST/4:00 PM EST

Participate using your computer, smartphone, or telephone—log in using this link

<http://go.wisc.edu/27470h>

Participants will hear the story of how Buckeye Elementary School District in Arizona has created an award-winning middle school program that focuses on increasing educational equity for their middle school students, framed by their district participation in the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN). This webinar is open to non-MSAN districts.

EQUITY-FOCUSED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

MSAN's Annual Professional Learning Focus Area and Professional Learning Calendar

In order to link learning across MSAN events and programs in a more systematic way, MSAN is launching a newly-designed approach to its professional learning agenda, an **annual focus area**. Based on survey data from our MSAN Superintendents and members of the Research-Practitioner Council, this year's focus area will be ***Increasing numbers of students from underrepresented groups in advanced courses and programs***. See the **2017-2018 MSAN Professional Learning Calendar** at go.wisc.edu/MSANProfessionalLearning for details.

EQUITY IN ACTION

Federal Judge Overturns Arizona Ban on Ethnic Studies Courses

Past issues of the MSAN Monthly have highlighted Ethnic Studies programs, research showing the effectiveness of these programs, and efforts to discredit these programs and even make them illegal. [Recently, a federal judge overturned an Arizona ban on ethnic studies courses aimed at Hispanic students](#), saying it was motivated by racial discrimination and violated pupils' constitutional rights.

LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Student Leadership in MSAN

Remember! MSAN 2017 Student Conference October 18-21, Cleveland, OH

Early in its development, MSAN members committed to creating opportunities for students of color to guide their district's equity work. Each fall at the [MSAN Student Conference](#), teams of students and staff from MSAN member districts develop Action Plans with specific strategies and implementation plans for advancing educational equity in their schools. See below for a sample plan, and for videos of students discussing their Action Plans with decision makers in their districts. Watch for information in your district about how you can support the implementation of your students' 2017 MSAN Action Plan.

- [Action Plan](#), The Public Schools of Brookline (MA) October 2016
- [Action Plan Presentation to School Board](#), Birmingham Public Schools (MI) April 2017
- [Action Plan Presentation to School Board](#), Arlington Public Schools (VA) November 2016

RESEARCH YOU CAN USE

Demographically Similar Teachers: A Policy Lever that Extends Educational Investments

You may have read a recent NPR article titled "[If Your Teacher Looks Like You, You May Do Better In School](#)." While increasing the number of teachers of color is not a new "gap closing" initiative supported across MSAN districts, [new research](#) published in the *Journal of Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, provides educators with "insight into the way students actually think and feel about the teachers who look like them and those who don't." While the findings are compelling, all research carries a cautionary note. This one comes from long-time friend of MSAN, **Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings**, Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, who reminds us: "a more diverse population of teachers alone won't help students of color to change attitudes and behaviors about school... **We need teachers who view their students of color as whole people.**"

For more information on the resources MSAN districts are using to hire and retain educators who are culturally responsive, equity focused, and representative of their student body in terms of race, ethnicity, language, and other identity markers, visit [MSAN's Personnel & Staff Development Equity Resources Website](#).