

CLIMATE OF EXPLORATION

In partnership with the New Trier community we will develop an educational climate and structure that enable students to explore aspirations, talents, and interests across their high school years in order to set meaningful goals and confidently pursue their dreams.

ACTION PLAN 1: Enhance our efforts to ensure a physically and emotionally safe environment so each student can learn and grow.

ACTION PLAN 2: Develop and implement the process for a Personal Exploration Plan [PEP] which encourages and supports the academic growth and the development of unique talents, interests, and capabilities of the individual student.

ACTION PLAN 3: Create smaller communities that support focused, integrated, and experiential learning.

ACTION PLAN 4: Develop several voluntary extended studies opportunities.

ACTION PLAN 5: Enhance family and community understanding of and involvement in the opportunities for student engagement and exploration within New Trier.

ACTION PLAN 6: Enhance student understanding of and involvement in the opportunities for their engagement and exploration within New Trier.

ACTION PLAN 7: Nurture a culture within New Trier that welcomes help and support from external sources.

ACTION PLAN 8: Examine co-curricular, extra-curricular, and leadership programs on campus and provide sufficient opportunities for participation.

CONNECTIONS AMONG EXPERIENCES

In partnership with the New Trier community we will design and implement structures that will allow students to make meaningful connections among academic, personal, social, and other life experiences.

ACTION PLAN 1: Include students in all-school committees that make decisions about curriculum and instruction.

ACTION PLAN 2: Increase the existing network of resources to provide students and staff with more experiential learning.

ACTION PLAN 3: Increase resources for the existing New Trier courses that provide integrated learning experiences (e.g. English-World History Team, American Interdisciplinary Studies, and Integrated History and Science) and develop new courses and programs that support interdisciplinary learning.

ACTION PLAN 4: Create an interdisciplinary school-within-a-school that provides students with a sense of community, hands-on experiential learning, and an opportunity to present all aspects of themselves as learners.

ACTION PLAN 5: Offer an intersession experience for all students that allows them to make personal connections among academic, personal, social, and other life experiences.

ETHICAL CONDUCT AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

In partnership with the New Trier community we will identify, communicate, model, and reinforce standards of ethical conduct and responsible global citizenship.

ACTION PLAN 1: Create a student driven program to identify and articulate New Trier's core standards of ethical conduct and responsible global citizenship.

ACTION PLAN 2: Devise a plan for communicating, reinforcing, and modeling the standards of ethical conduct and responsible global citizenship identified through the process described in Action Plan #1 for New Trier staff, students, and community.

ACTION PLAN 3: Identify the staff development, extracurricular, and co-curricular programs that currently reinforce and teach the standards identified in Action Plan #1. Provide structures that allow for communication and coordination of these programs.

ACTION PLAN 4: Evaluate and coordinate existing programs where students reach beyond the New Trier community to promote responsible global citizenship.

ACTION PLAN 5: Promote responsible global citizenship by creating additional opportunities for our students to have direct contact with peoples of diverse backgrounds.

ACTION PLAN 6: Increase the recruitment and retention of diverse staff members.

ACTION PLAN 7: Identify and create a plan for each course in each department so that ethical decision making can be illustrated and reinforced.

ACTION PLAN 8: Identify and create a plan for each course in each department so that global citizenship can be illustrated and reinforced.

ACTION PLAN 9: Identify existing and create new staff development programs to support the implementation of the specific results identified by the Ethical Conduct and Global Citizenship Action Team.

ACTION PLAN 10: Identify and create a plan for each athletic program and extracurricular activity to reinforce ethical decision making and responsible global citizenship.

HEALTHY, BALANCED LIFE

In partnership with the New Trier community we will identify those factors that place excessive demands on time and energy in the pursuit of excellence and develop plans to encourage a healthy, balanced life.

ACTION PLAN 1: Limit the number of daily scheduled periods so that every student has a period every day for lunch. Require students taking Early Bird courses to have a free period scheduled in addition to a lunch period.

ACTION PLAN 2: Develop institutional guidelines for homework and a departmental schedule for testing and deadlines.

ACTION PLAN 3: Require students to obtain departmental approval to register for an AP course.

ACTION PLAN 4: Provide students, staff, and parents with the skills, strategies, and resources needed to manage stress and time more effectively.

ACTION PLAN 5: Promote healthy eating habits among students and staff members.

ACTION PLAN 6: Expand educational efforts that address substance abuse and prevention programs for students. Design ways to include parents and staff in these efforts.

ACTION PLAN 7: Strengthen the partnership with families and teachers of students in sender schools to dispel misperceptions about the high school experience at New Trier that contribute to excessive stress and anxiety.

ACTION PLAN 8: Utilize the adviser system to dispel misperceptions about the high school experience at New Trier.

ACTION PLAN 9: Reduce anxiety about the college admissions process by dispelling misperceptions.

INTRINSIC VALUE OF LEARNING

In partnership with the New Trier community we will design academic leveling and grade weighting systems which foster the intrinsic value of learning and achieve our mission and objectives.

ACTION PLAN 1: Educate the community, staff, students, and sender schools about the need to relieve students of extrinsic pressures as they develop a love of learning.

ACTION PLAN 2: Affirm our level system (levels 2, 2E, 3, 4, and 9 [and 1 and 5 through the class of 2009]) that flexibly addresses students' strengths and allows for movement and choice. In addition, continue to examine methods of using course level designations to foster student growth and encourage experimentation in class selection.

ACTION PLAN 3: Continue to develop broader information for colleges and universities that more appropriately portrays our students' performance. One of the effects of this initiative would be the elimination of all ranking of students at New Trier in the college applications process (i.e., we would discontinue the use of the present decile system beginning with the Class of 2010).

ACTION PLAN 4: Implement a timeline that eliminates our grade weighting system, a method that detracts from the intrinsic value of learning and emphasizes competitiveness and extrinsic forces that detract from learning.

ACTION PLAN 5: Continue to advocate for our students with colleges and universities, with special emphasis given to the positive impact of strategic changes on New Trier's strengths in academics, leadership, athletics, and performing arts. A similar program would be used to keep families and township residents informed.

OPTIMAL USE OF TIME

In partnership with the New Trier community we will design a calendar and schedule for optimal use of time to help us achieve our mission and objectives.

ACTION PLAN 1: Adopt a comprehensive school-wide calendar process with web-based communication.

ACTION PLAN 2: Develop new class schedule models that redistribute weekly class time minutes, preserve adviser room, and allow for longer class periods. Consider mandating a lunch period.

ACTION PLAN 3: Provide time on a regular basis in the annual calendar for communication and interaction between and among staff and students.

ACTION PLAN 4: Coordinate scheduling of the departments to achieve a balanced workload among their experiences at the end of each semester.