



Helping Schools and Students Thrive

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February 12, 2026

Tarin Kendrick
Executive Director
Niles Township District for Special Education #807
8701 Menard Ave.,
Morton Grove, IL 60053

Dear Tarin,

The District Management Group (DMGroup) is pleased to present **Niles Township District for Special Education #807 (NTDSE)** and seven (7) of the K-8 districts in the Township in a Cross-District Special Education Opportunity Review proposal. These districts include District 67, District 69, District 70, District 71, District 72, District 73, District 74, and the NTDSE Cooperative.

Improving outcomes for students in special education is an imperative upon which virtually all superintendents, families, school boards, special education directors, and teachers strongly agree. Yet, despite the hard work of so many people and the rising share of funding directed to special education, the achievement of students in special education remain a source of frustration and disappointment for the majority of districts nationwide.

But achieving better results is possible. Based on a synthesis of pedagogical research, our in-depth study of districts most successful in this area, and our extensive analytics database, DMGroup has identified best practices for helping districts improve equity and outcomes for students (both with and without IEPs). With our Opportunity Review, DMGroup will take a close look at NTDSE and sender districts' current practices; given the importance of core instruction to all students, our analysis will encompass not only an examination of special education, but also some general education practices as well. DMGroup will then compare district practices to each other, best practices, and those of like-districts. The Opportunity Review will culminate in identifying high-impact opportunities to raise achievement of students with disabilities, improve staff quality of life, and manage costs for each district and for the districts to work collaboratively more effectively moving forward.

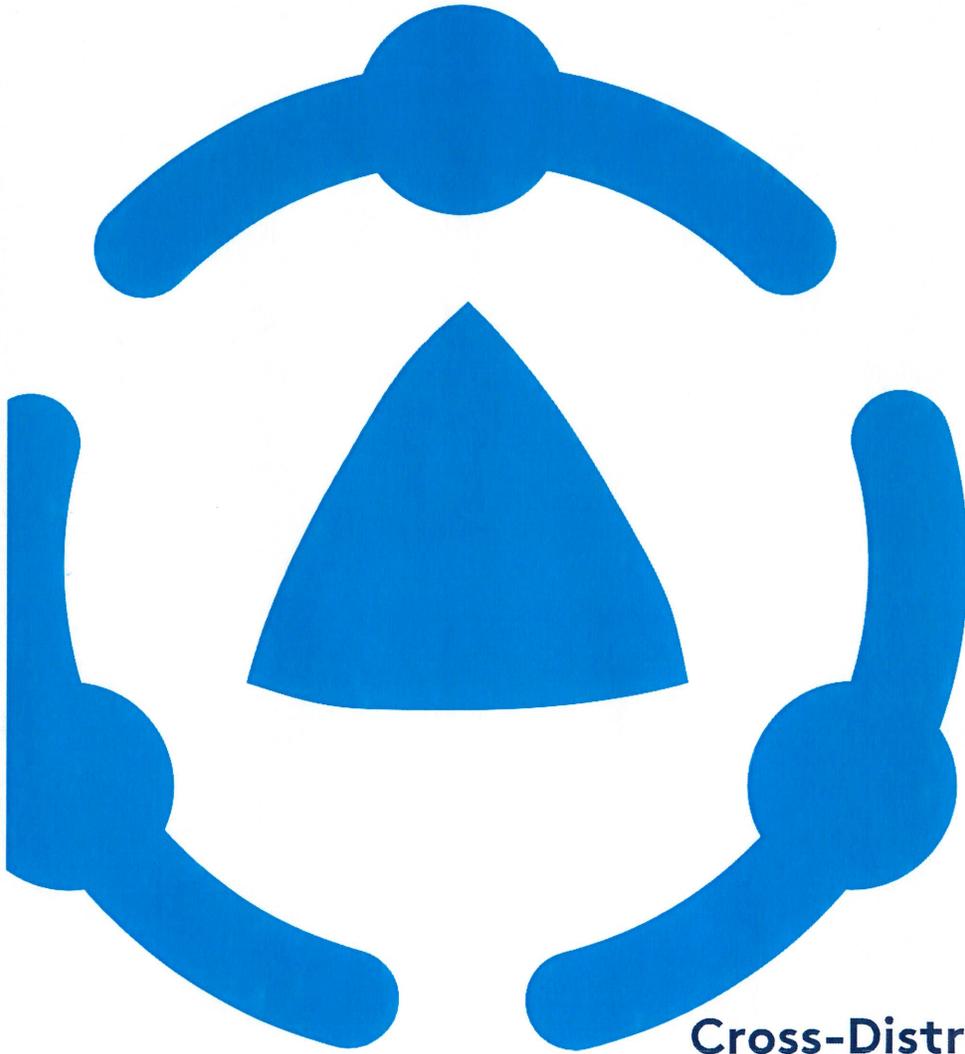
Once the analysis has been completed and opportunities identified, DMGroup will facilitate a Prioritization and Planning Workshop with NTDSE and district leaders to create a plan for moving forward and increasing collaboration across the Township to improve student achievement despite tight budgets. Our goal is not just to deliver a report, but to provide the district with actionable pathways to effect meaningful, real improvement for students.

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

John J-H Kim
Chief Executive Officer

Simone Carpenter
Director, DMConsulting



Cross-District Special Education Opportunity Review

Proposal for

Niles Township District for Special Education & K-8 Sender Districts

February 12, 2026



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Improving Outcomes for Students With Disabilities

The Challenge of Raising Achievement

Improving outcomes for students with disabilities and students without disabilities is an imperative upon which virtually all superintendents, parents, school boards, special education directors, and teachers strongly agree. However, addressing the significant achievement gap and equity gap between students with students with disabilities and their peers without is a challenge that persists despite the hard work of so many caring people and the rising share of funding directed to special education. Nationally, school districts are spending a growing percentage of their total budget on special education and other interventions. Over a third of the total increase in district spending over the past half-century has gone to spending on special education. And yet, general education, despite proportionally smaller increases in spending, has improved outcomes faster than special education outcomes.¹

School districts must tackle the challenge of addressing this achievement gap while also balancing their budgets. For many districts, there is uncertainty as to which of their special education practices and services are most effective. Even in districts that do know what works, leveraging these programs and services most effectively and efficiently proves difficult. Many staff are involved—special education staff, behaviorists, social workers, guidance counselors, school psychologists, paraprofessionals—and they are asked to do dozens of different things from writing IEPs to co-teaching to assessing; this complexity is exacerbated by the fact that these staff generally set their own schedules, making it nearly impossible to coordinate these staff efficiently, to provide staff necessary supports, and to ensure that they are serving students most effectively and efficiently.

Best Practices Show the Way

The good news is that clear best practices exist for improving services for students with disabilities and students without disabilities. DMGroup has conducted extensive research from a variety of sources including the What Works Clearinghouse, National Reading Panel, John Hattie’s “Visible Learning” meta-analyses, and our study of dozens of high-performing districts. In addition, we have created the country’s largest database of key staffing patterns, catalogued state and national databases of students served through special education, and assembled a library of cost-effective best practices.

As a result of all this research, we have identified best practices for improving services for students with disabilities and those without. And these helpful practices often cost no more than current practices in most districts. Over the past ten years, we have helped over a hundred districts identify high-impact opportunities and have worked collaboratively with districts to implement these recommendations to improve results for students. With our approach, districts had realized significant gains in achievement and inclusion and expanded services for students with disabilities.

¹ DMGroup analysis of R. Rothstein, “Where’s the Money Going? Changes in the Level and Composition of Education Spending” (Economic Policy Institute). Constant 2005 dollars.

Turning Research and Best Practices into Common Practice

DMGroup has developed a team experienced in working with districts to turn best practice research into common practice and achieve results. Our Opportunity Review identifies high-impact opportunities to better serve students in special education and students with disabilities. Because each school district has a different history, student population, and systems, the Opportunity Review begins with a systematic study of a district's current services, programs, procedures, staffing, and costs for special education; it also includes a review of these areas for general education core instruction and services for students with or without an IEP.

The district's practices are then benchmarked to other similar districts as well as compared to best practices as identified by DMGroup research. Our final report recognizes current commendable practices in the district, and identifies the highest-impact opportunities for improving the district's results for students with special education needs and for students with disabilities. The final report is followed by a full-day planning workshop in which DMGroup works with the district leadership team to prioritize opportunities and develop a plan for putting the high-impact recommendations into practice.

If desired, the district can choose to engage DMGroup to collaborate further on implementation. Our team has successfully helped districts implement a wide range of best practices that have proven effective in allowing school districts to raise student achievement, expand services, improve the equity in outcomes, increase access to services and contact with highly skilled staff, and improve parent satisfaction all within their financial constraints. When districts have implemented these best practices in a thoughtful, measured, and deliberate manner, it is not just students with disabilities that benefit, but all students.



DMGroup's Special Education Opportunity Review Process

DMGroup has developed a comprehensive approach for identifying high-impact opportunities to improve services and equity for students, both with and without IEPs.



Step 1: Create Momentum for Change

Create a Guiding Coalition to Foster an Inclusive Process, Build Shared Understanding, and Facilitate Effective Communication

DMGroup believes an inclusive process is essential to making decisions about how best to serve students. Because we know that leaders are busy, we have structured the Opportunity Review to minimize the impact on staff time and schedules while engaging them in the discovery process. It begins with establishing a cross-district “guiding coalition” that includes two (2) leaders from each participating district, ideally one from special education and one from general education. This important group will ensure that the values and priorities of the Township and the needs across districts are at the core of the Opportunity Review and determining the path forward. The

coalition will serve as a sounding board for initial recommendations and will consider ways to move forward with increased collaboration across the districts. This coalition will also play an invaluable role in two-way communication with each district's stakeholders, including leaders, staff, and parents.

DMGroup will begin our work with an in-person guiding coalition meeting for participating members to receive professional development in best practices, and will receive these materials to share with other leaders and staff in their respective districts as needed.

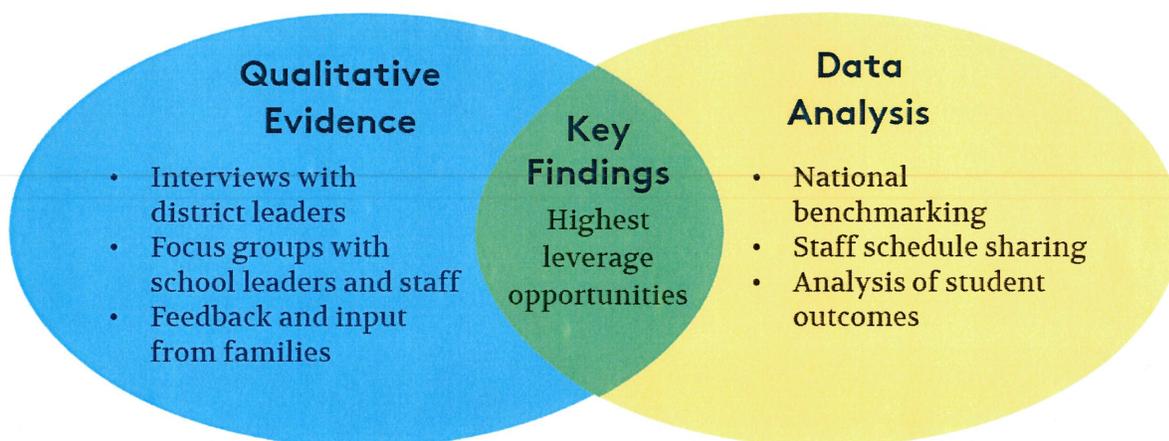
Step 2: Analysis of Current Practices

Comprehensive initial review of services currently provided to students with (and without) disabilities

DMGroup will conduct a deep, fine-grained analysis of current practices in all eight (8) districts (NTDSE and the seven K-8 districts). This begins with a systematic review of the services, programs, procedures, and staffing as relates to special education, some aspects of general education, and current social, emotional and behavior supports. This will be achieved through analysis and synthesis of existing documentation and data; in addition, using DMGroup's web-based software, there will be analysis of how special education and other staff spend their time and deliver services.

But all this hard data tells only half the story. DMGroup firmly believes that a deep understanding of current practices must include interviews and focus groups. We will conduct small group interviews and focus groups, up to seven (7) focus groups or interviews per district, each with about six (6) stakeholders in each role. Each district guiding coalition member will help determine the interviewees and aid in the creation of a full and rich picture of special education programming and general education support in their district.

DMGroup's Opportunity Review includes detailed data as well as input from staff and other stakeholders from each of the eight (8) districts:



Step 2a – Mapping of Current Practices

The first step is to gain a deep understanding of the current status of special education and other intervention supports in each district. Major focus areas include:

- Academic performance of students with disabilities
- Academic programming for students, both general education and special education offerings
- Attendance and discipline trends
- Staffing levels, by type of staff and service
- Staff perspectives on program effectiveness, organizational structure, professional development, and district support
- Role of paraprofessionals
- Numbers of students identified for special education services, by disability
- The prevalence and effectiveness of serving students with disabilities in the general education setting

An innovative component of this phase of our research includes gaining a deep understanding of how special education (and other intervention and remediation staff) allocate their time. Through the power of DMGroup’s web-based software, staff from each district will share a typical week’s schedule via an online calendar.

This data will help answer key questions, such as:

- What service delivery models are used, and are they consistent across the district? Are they similar or different across each of the districts?
- How do current service delivery models compare to best practices?
- How much time is spent directly with students each week? Is this similar or different across districts?
- How much time is spent on activities such as paperwork or meetings?
- Can time be utilized differently or more efficiently and effectively to allow staff to spend more of their time providing services to students?
- What percentage of service is push-in versus pull-out or co-teaching?
- How much service is one-on-one, small group, or whole class?
- What subjects or topics are being supported and to what extent?
- What role do paraprofessionals play in each district?
- Can social, emotional, and behavioral supports be expanded?



The first two phases of research are conducted through a variety of means. We balance data-driven analysis with extensive interviews. Electronic spreadsheets are provided to assist each district in collecting the needed data. Detailed student, staffing, and program information is collected and analyzed. But the hard data tells only half the story. Small group interviews with a range of stakeholders, both general education and special education, both school and district based, both certified and classified representing a wide range of roles and responsibilities will be conducted. As stated earlier, up to seven (7) small group focus groups and/or interviews will be conducted in each district.

During this research phase, leadership from each district is an active thought partner. Guiding coalition members from each district will help determine which roles should be studied, help create the lists of questions to be answered, and manage when staff share their schedules.

Step 2b – Analysis of Systems and Processes

The second step is to research and analyze the systems used within and across districts. Major focus areas include:

- IEP referral process and IEP determination methodology
- Integration of special education with RTI (Response to Intervention) / MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports)
- Communication strategy and effectiveness of district communications

Step 3: Benchmark to Best Practices

Comparing Practices to Nationwide Best Practices

Once a clear picture of current practices has been established, DMGroup will compare each district's current practices to best practices we have identified from our extensive research. DMGroup will also benchmark staffing, performance, and programming to other districts, both within and outside of the Township. DMGroup draws upon the databases that we have catalogued and created. District results will be benchmarked to the following:

- State and national database of prevalence of identifying students for IEPs, in total and by disability.
- Recommendations of the What Works Clearing House, a leading source for field-proven best practices and other published studies.
- Recommendations of the National Reading Panel, the preeminent source for reading instruction, especially for students with disabilities.
- The Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy white paper on effective practices in special education serves as our final point of comparison.

The major focus areas for comparison are:

- Staffing, including paraprofessionals, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech and language pathologists, psychologists, and IEP testers
- Rates of identification and referrals to special education

- Academic achievement
- Serving students with significant disabilities in your district
- Use of best practices in reading, math and English remediation and intervention
- Time staff spend devoted to serving children vs. meetings, paperwork and other duties
- Time devoted to developing IEPs

Step 4: Recommendations of Best Practices

DMGroup Opportunity Review Findings Report - More than just a report, but the start of meaningful, measurable change

Too often, districts dedicated to doing better for their students wind up with lengthy plans that prove too unwieldy to put into action. DMGroup firmly believes that great power lies in having a plan tightly focused on a very small set of the most important levers for improving performance – this is the aim of our Opportunity Review Findings Report. A short list is better than a long list.

Each district will receive a personalized Opportunity Review Findings Report that will include:

- Summaries of best practice research
- A short list of the highest impact opportunities that can help raise student achievement in their district
- Extensive analysis about the district’s current approach, services, and staffing
- Benchmarking of each district’s current approach to best practices and practices of like districts, both inside and outside of the Township

Each district will receive their individualized Opportunity Review Findings Report virtually with leaders from the guiding coalition in their district.

In addition to each district receiving a personalized Opportunity Review Findings Report, the guiding coalition will also receive a findings report outlining the opportunities to strengthen collaboration across Niles Township. This may include:

- Areas that many districts are struggling with that may be tackled together with shared resources or initiatives.
- Opportunities for shared professional development for staff, roles, or districts across the Township.
- Opportunities for shared programming or services, which may be enhanced by further collaboration or pooled resources across districts.

Some consulting firms believe that the success of an engagement is measured by the quality of what’s between the covers of the final report. We believe there is more to a successful working relationship with a school district, and this includes:



- Relevant, focused and unbiased insights. At the end of the review each district will have a list of commendations for all that is being done well; each district will also receive a short, focused list of opportunities to drive continuous improvement.
- Sharing best practices for raising student achievement from around the country. This can be done as formal professional development or informally as part of the planning process.
- We can, on request, provide ongoing implementation support, project management, and accountability for implementing the opportunities discovered.

Step 5: Planning Workshop to Craft Action Plans

Planning and Prioritization Workshop to help align on opportunities for increased collaboration across Niles Township

During an in-person meeting with the cross-district guiding coalition, DMGroup will support leaders across Niles Township to prioritize and plan for opportunities for increased collaboration across the Township.

Our goal is not to simply produce a report, but to help districts begin the process of producing real improvements for students despite tight budgets through potential opportunities to work together.

Our objective for the workshop is two-fold:

- The planning workshop allows the guiding coalition to prioritize the feasibility and impact of increased collaboration opportunities to support each district in improving services.
- In parallel, the guiding coalition will begin to plan and craft action steps that identify the path forward for increased collaboration. This ensures the plan is home grown, relevant, and realistic.

Additional District Review Integration (Add-On Option)

Beyond the eight (8) districts participating in this cross-district Special Education Opportunity Review, two (2) additional districts exist in the Niles Township area and send their students to NTDSE, District 73.5 and District 68. These two districts are participating in their own independent Special Education reviews. As an optional add-on to this work, these districts can opt to participate in the cross-district guiding coalition. In this optional add-on, DMGroup may review findings from their independent reviews and incorporate these findings into the opportunities for increased collaboration across the Niles Township.

Distinguishing Features of DMGroup's Opportunity Review

DMGroup brings the best of both worlds

When school districts seek the help of outside consultants they are often faced with a difficult choice. Some firms are led and staffed with retired educators who bring a wealth of experience. Their long history of working in school districts is a benefit, but also has some limitations. It is sometimes difficult for people who spent decades doing things a certain way to look for new ways to solve today's challenges. Because school districts are facing an unprecedented situation of permanently reduced resources and ever higher accountability for student achievement, they need new ideas. Out of the box thinking from consultants with experience from outside the world of K-12 education can help, as can extensive data and analysis; however, a knowledge of the complexities of school districts is essential to creating actionable recommendations.

At DMGroup we combine the best of both worlds, eliminating the need to choose one or the other. Each team typically includes people with experience with school districts and from without. This combination creates practical, yet innovative solutions to today's challenges. Our years of experience working with school districts ensure that our ideas are real world practical and can be implemented.

DMGroup has an inclusive approach

Bringing in outsiders to help can be frustrating for staff and the district leadership. Consultants sometimes seem to run the show and talk more than listen. We are different.

First, we partner with a district. We view our work as a joint effort and respect the expertise that resides in the district. For example:

- The list of who will be interviewed is jointly developed with the district. Everyone the district believes should have a voice will have input into our study.
- We share and welcome feedback on our initial thoughts.
- We share our initial findings and give leaders a chance to give feedback before our recommendations are finalized.
- Rather than telling the districts how to implement the recommendations, we facilitate discussions with the leaders to craft the prioritization and implementation plan. We of course can share best practices and our experience in other districts.

More than just a bound report, but the start of meaningful, measurable change

Yes, at the end of the study each district will receive a report, but you will also receive much more. Some consulting firms believe that the success of an engagement is measured by the quality of what's between the covers of the final report. We believe there is more to a successful working relationship with a school district, and this includes:

- Relevant, focused and unbiased insights. At the end of the review the district will have a list of commendations for all that is being done successfully; the district will also receive a short, focused list of opportunities to drive continuous improvement.



- We respect that each district has a unique history, culture, and needs. The review process takes this into account.
- Sharing best practices for raising student achievement from around the country brings awareness and insight to district leadership.
- Building momentum for change. The study will create positive energy, buy-in, and a desire to implement. Our research methodology is specifically designed to support your change management needs. This includes our inclusive process and a focus on just a few, high-impact opportunities.

The DMGroup Difference

The decision to engage outside support to help implement the findings of an Opportunity Review is not an easy one. We are often asked, “Can’t the district do the work on their own?” The simple answer is, yes, most districts can. The more complex answer is that most districts start the process, but a lack of resources, analytical skills, or just the distraction of day-to-day work slows or stops the reform efforts. Our help ensures that opportunities become realities.

- **DMGroup provides a national perspective and best practice expertise.** Districts have many talented administrators and teachers, but few have the time to research what has worked well across the country. DMGroup has assembled a large database of information, has developed proprietary benchmarking tools, and has identified best practices.
- **DMGroup provides focus, ensuring timelines are met.** Senior leaders are pulled in hundreds of directions. Often the urgent trumps the important. Our project management role ensures that review is completed on schedule, despite the many distractions that are certain to arise.
- **DMGroup provides analytical capacity.** Successful implementation requires a great deal of information, coordination, and great attention to detail. Because districts are such large, complex organizations, it can be a challenge to collect accurate information from multiple sources, cross validate, summarize in an actionable way, and then confirm that it reflects life in the classrooms. This is a core DMGroup strength.



A Brief Overview of DMGroup's Schedule Sharing Software

The Opportunity Review includes the use of DMGroup's Schedule Sharing technology, which provides unprecedented insight into how staff serve students and allocate their time. DMGroup will set up access to the online tool which then allows teachers, therapists, paraprofessionals, and others to share detailed information about their activities over a typical week.

Below is an example of the information that is captured for each period.

The screenshot displays the DMGroup Schedule Sharing Software interface. At the top, there are three numbered steps: 1. Enter your typical weekly schedule, 2. Tell us more, and 3. Save & Log out. The main form is divided into several sections:

- School:** A dropdown menu showing "Westwood Middle School".
- Day:** A dropdown menu showing "Monday".
- Start time:** A time selection field showing "8 : 00 am".
- End time:** A time selection field showing "9 : 00 am".
- Primary activity:** A dropdown menu with "Direct Instruction/Support" selected. A list of other activities is visible below it, including "Assessment/Collect Assessment Data", "Assigned School Duties (i.e Bus Duty, Lunch Duty)", "Attend IEP Meeting", "Attend Meeting", "Collaborating with Colleagues", "Paperwork/IEP Writing", "Parent Communication", "Personal Lunch", "Planning/Preparation", "Professional Development", "Student Observations", and "Travel".
- Setting:** A dropdown menu showing "General education classroom".
- Topic:** A dropdown menu showing "Math".

At the bottom of the form, there are tabs for the days of the week: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Below the tabs, the text "Westwood Intermediate School" is visible on the left, and "8:00 AM" and "9:00 AM" are visible on the right, indicating the time period for the entry.

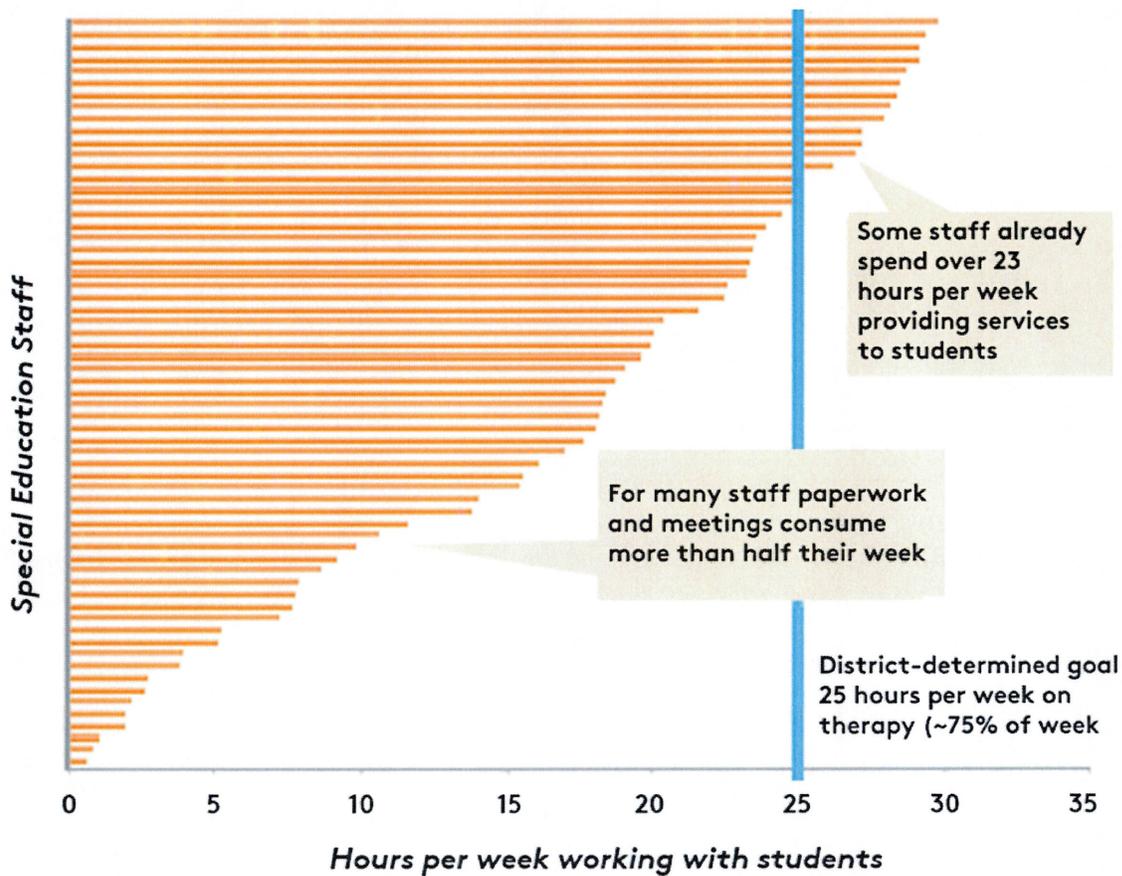
Data Provides Insight

With the data captured by DMGroup's scheduling software, our team can provide insightful analyses that will likely shape your practices going forward. Some examples of the insights provided are detailed below:

1. Time with Students

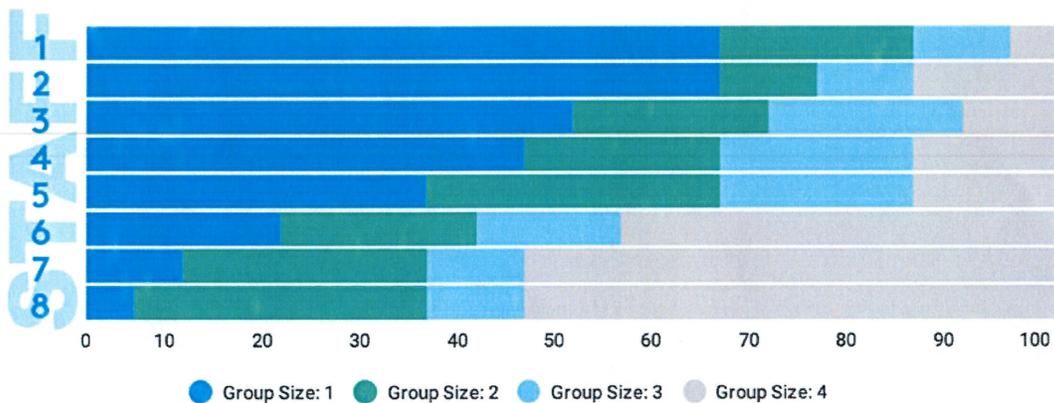
With the data captured by this tool, great insights can be had, such as the amount of time teachers and therapists spend with students as opposed to time spent in meetings, on paperwork, and on other required tasks.

For example, based on the data captured in one district, DMGroup provided the findings below, which indicated that many special education staff spent a significant amount of time in meetings or on paperwork and spent under 25 hours a week with students. As a result of these findings, the district set a goal that 75% of special education staff's time be spent working directly with students.



2. Group Size

The schedule sharing technology provides valuable insight into group size. The different colors indicate the percentage of time that a practitioner spends working in various group sizes, such as 1-on-1, groups of 2, 3, etc.



3. Activities During the Week

When the practitioners share their schedules, they also describe how their time is spent when not with students. The chart below is an example of the activities that a special

education teacher participated in during a typical week, as well as the average amount of time spent on each different task. DMGroup will work with your staff to customize this list for each role.

Activity	Average Hours per Week per FTE	Percentage of Time Spent on this Activity
Direct Service		
Direct instruction / support	19h 16m	53%
Total Direct Service	19h 16m	53%
Indirect Service		
Planning preparation	2h 19m	6%
Paperwork/IEP writing	2h 13m	6%
Lunch	1h 46m	5%
Assigned school duties	1h 18m	4%
Collaboration with colleagues	1h 4m	3%
Assessments/collect assessment data	9h 36m	2%
IEP meeting	0h 22m	1%
Meeting	0h 20m	1%
Eligibility meeting	2h 20m	1%
Administering tests	2h 18m	1%
Student observation	0h 17m	1%
Travel	0h 16m	1%
Parent communication	0h 13m	1%
Professional development	0h 7m	0.3%
Colleague observation	0h 4m	0.2%
No activities reported	5h 53m	16.0%
Total Indirect Service	17h 22m	47%



Project Timeline

Work will kick off in the spring 2026 with data collection and the coordination of the cross-district guiding coalition. DMG will work closely with NTDSE and district leaders to identify the appropriate timeline for the Opportunity Reviews, with a possibility of completing all reviews by January 2027 or extending through the end of the 2026-27 school year.



Complimentary DMCouncil Membership

Included in this offer is a complimentary, one-year membership to District Management Council (a \$4,500 value) for NTDSE and for each of the seven (7) participating districts (District 67, District 69, District 70, District 71, District 72, District 73, and District 74). You will join a community of forward-thinking education leaders from across the country committed to driving sustainable, measurable improvements to help schools and students thrive. As a member, you will have access to District Management Group's national conferences, our additional convenings such as our virtual roundtable discussions, professional development opportunities, our research, and our expert advice.

Your one-year membership will begin on the first of the month following the contract award. If you are not already familiar with the benefits of DMCouncil membership, we look forward to scheduling a membership onboarding call to introduce you to all the benefits of membership and to help us understand your most pressing needs so we can guide you to the District Management Group resources that can be most helpful to you.

BENEFITS

- Connect, share ideas, and collaborate with a **community of forward-thinking leaders** from across the country
- Deepen your knowledge and stay at the forefront of the **latest research** on management and education best practices
- Strengthen management capacity through an array of **professional development** opportunities:
 - ✓ **DMG Summit:** The DMG Summit is DMGroup's premier annual conference that brings together forward-thinking member superintendents and district leaders nationwide for an immersive professional development experience with leading experts on key strategic topics. Membership includes conference materials, hotels, and meals.
 - ✓ **Member Discounts to DMInstitutes:** DMCouncil members receive discounts to our structured professional development programs for district teams. DMInstitute's cohort-based coursework and coaching delivered over a period of multiple months builds skills that last. Past topics include Accelerating Learning, Academic Return on Investment, and Secondary Scheduling.
 - ✓ **Virtual roundtables:** Monthly member-only virtual roundtables provide opportunities for superintendents and district staff to stay abreast of management and educational best practices and to share ideas with their peers.
- Stay abreast of what works with **District Management Journal:** Receive ten subscriptions for your district leaders to our signature publication that includes research, toolkits, and case studies
- Access **expert advice:** consult with our experts to discuss your district's specific challenges

DMCouncil

- Established 2004 -

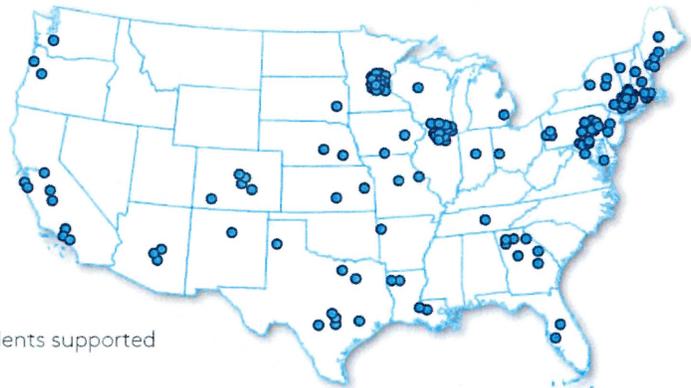
JOIN A NATIONAL NETWORK
OF OVER 1,400 DISTRICT LEADERS

Hundreds of districts

35 states

Thousands of district leaders

Millions of students supported



Pricing Proposal

Cross-District Special Education Opportunity Review

Pricing and Terms

The total cost of all services outlined, including a deep study of supports for both students with and without IEPs, access to DMGroup's proprietary benchmarking databases, and an Opportunity Review Findings Report for eight (8) districts, including the NTDSE Cooperative, District 67, District 69, District 70, District 71, District 72, District 73, and District 74, is \$350,000.00. This price includes all additional expenses such as travel time, hotel, printing, and materials.

The pricing in this proposal will remain valid for 60 days from the date of the proposal. If the proposal is not agreed and signed within 60 days, the offer made herein expires and pricing and availability of services cannot be guaranteed.

Additional District Review Integration Add-on Option

Integration of the two (2) additional independent special education reviews taking place in District 73.5 and District 68 in the cross-district collaboration opportunities is \$5,000.00 per district (\$10,000.00 for both districts). The districts, NTDSE, and DMGroup will mutually agree upon adding this optional service once each district does their reviews. A separate contract or addendum to this one will be executed at that time.

Accepted by:

District _____

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Accepted by:

District Management Group _____

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____





District Management Group

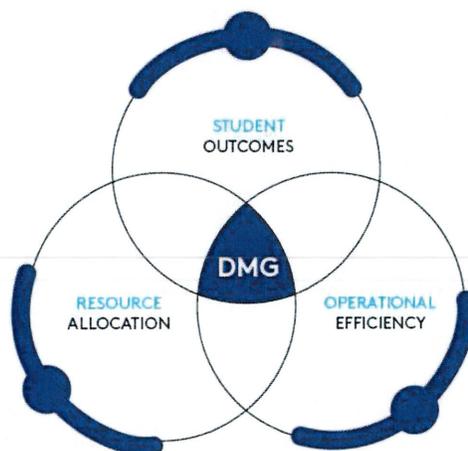
Helping Schools and Students Thrive

About District Management Group

Founded in 2004, District Management Group seeks to address the most important management challenges facing American public-school leaders.

The leaders of our school systems are charged with the enormous responsibility of providing students with the resources to succeed in school and beyond. To achieve this, district and school leaders must not only be great educators, they must also be great managers. District Management Group seeks to provide district leaders with the best management and educational practices, tools, and techniques to produce measurable, sustainable improvements that help schools and students thrive.

Our unwavering focus is on solutions that improve student outcomes, and simultaneously enhance operational efficiency and resource allocation. It is in achieving these three objectives simultaneously that improvements in student outcomes and the public education system as a whole can be made sustainable.



Our Services

DM Learning

Best-in-class knowledge and professional development, and a membership community of forward-thinking leaders learning, sharing, and making a difference for students.

- **DM Council**
 - Annual membership
 - Executive Partner Program
- **DM Institutes**
 - A-ROI Institute
 - Secondary Scheduling Institute
- **DM Journal**
 - DM Group's signature publication

DM Schedules

Cloud-based software and/or service to help districts optimize use of resources through scheduling.

- **DM Schedules for Elementary Schools**
- **DM Schedules for Special Education**
- **Secondary Scheduling**

DM Consulting

Customized management consulting support across a variety of practice areas.

- **Strategic Planning**
- **Special Education and Social, Emotional Learning**
- **Strategic Budgeting**
- **Initiative Inventory**
- **Program Evaluation**
- **Weighted Student Funding**
- **Implementation/Change Management**
- **Superintendent Entry Plan Development**
- **Custom Consulting**

Breakthrough Results

The Breakthrough Results approach achieves measurable results while building team members' skills and leadership capacity. This approach provides on-the-job experience, targeted professional development, and coaching to build meaningful and enduring skills.

- **Increase ELA achievement**
- **Increase math achievement**
- **Address equity issues**
- **Raise graduation rates**
- **Improve attendance rates**
- **Increase engagement**
- **Increase operational efficiencies**



Our Values



Partnership

We believe that each district's unique history, context, and culture matter. We get to know our partner districts, gaining a deep quantitative and qualitative understanding, so that we can work alongside your leadership team to help identify the right solutions and tailor implementation for long-term success.



Impact

We seek to help school districts achieve measurable and sustainable improvement, and, unlike many other firms, our work does not end with delivering a report. We aim to strengthen our partner districts' internal capacity and, if desired, provide implementation support. For us, the measure of success is client satisfaction and real results for students and schools.



Collaboration

We believe we know more together than we do alone. This is why we draw on best practices from the education sector as well as management techniques with proven results in the private sector and public sector, and we leverage the collective knowledge of our nationwide network of school districts.



Systems Thinking

We believe that true and enduring solutions require looking beyond the specific challenge at hand and taking a broad, holistic approach to achieve coherence and alignment. We deliver systems-level solutions that align with your strategic priorities and position you to bring about transformational improvement.



District Management Group is committed to partnering with districts to bring about transformational, measurable, and sustainable improvements in public education. We are committed to helping schools and students thrive.



District Management Group

Helping Schools and
Students Thrive

If you have any comments or questions about the contents of this document, please contact District Management Group:

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Niles Township District for Special Education & Niles Township Sender Districts - Special Education Opportunity Review

Objective: NTDSE's objective is threefold:

1. To enhance student services across Niles Township, reviewing structures, services, and supports across 9 K-8 school districts and the Cooperative district;
2. Identify opportunities for enhanced collaboration between districts in the Township, opportunities for better alignment to best practices for each district; and
3. Benchmark practices across and between districts within and outside of the Township.

Roadmap - Timeline and District Responsibilities:

1. Create momentum for change

- **Timeline:** 1 month (August 2026; January 2027, depending on which semester the district is participating)
- **District Leader Responsibilities:**
 - Identify 2 leaders to participate in cross-district Guiding Coalition; typically the Special Education leader and a second system-wide or general education leader
 - 2-hour in person Guiding Coalition kickoff meeting for those 2 leaders
 - [Optional] Share resources with other leaders and staff in their districts
- **DMG Responsibilities:**
 - Lead Guiding Coalition meeting, including all materials and facilitation
 - Provide support to district leaders in selecting Guiding Coalition members
 - Share all materials and resources from the kickoff with Guiding Coalition members if they want to share beyond the members

2. Analyze current practices

- **Timeline:** 3 months (September - November 2026; February - April 2027)
- **District Leader Responsibilities:**
 - Collect, collate, and share data related to special education services, models, IEPs, documentation, staffing, and outcomes. *Typically these are data points that are already collected for district leaders; DMG will provide templates and requests to support data collection.*
 - Participate in a 1-1 interview with a DMG staff member to share insights about special education and intervention in their district. *No preparation is required for this interview.*
 - Identify staff members to participate in focus groups with DMG and support the scheduling of focus groups for those staff members. *DMG will provide templates for leaders to fill in to identify staff members.*
 - Send communication to with staff about participation in focus groups, schedule sharing, and goals for this work. *DMG will provide*

communication templates that can be used to communicate about this work.

- During the week of schedule sharing, provide communication support and reminders to staff, *using DMG templates.*
 - As needed, validate information and questions from DMG to ensure data analysis is accurate.
 - **DMG Responsibilities:**
 - Provide templates for data collection, focus group participation, and communications to staff for district leaders to use.
 - Conduct focus groups and interviews with leaders and staff in districts.
 - Launch schedule sharing for districts and provide real-time tech support for staff completing schedule sharing.
 - Analyze all quantitative, qualitative, and schedule sharing data, including conducting benchmarking of districts to other districts and best practices.
- 3. Develop Findings and Recommendations**
- **Timeline:** 1 month (December 2026; May 2027)
 - **District Leader Responsibilities:**
 - Participate in findings presentations:
 1. Cross-District Guiding Coalition meeting - participate in meeting with cross-district guiding coalition to review opportunities for strengthened collaboration across Niles Township (*in person*)
 2. Individual district findings - participate in meeting reviewing findings for individual districts (*virtual*)
 - **DMG Responsibilities:**
 - Develop findings for strengthening collaboration and for each individual district.
 - Facilitate all findings presentations with individual districts and the cross-district opportunity review

