

DR. FAVOR'S ANNUAL GOALS 2025-2026

Dr. Michael Favor
June 2026



Systemic Synergy - Aligning Objectives with District Demands



Goal #1

By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, the district will strategically enhance its alternative learning center and career and technical education (CTE) programming to serve student needs and community workforce demands. This will be achieved by increasing total enrollment in the DCALS program by 10%, ensuring all programs operate within their allocated budget, and developing new strategic business partnerships to provide students with expanded mentorship, internship, and career placement opportunities.



Goal #2

Provide high-quality, equitable, and specialized programming for all students in partnership with member districts. Focus on making continuous progress on waitlists, developing innovative academic programs aligned with core values, and expanding professional development for staff. Collaborate with the school board, superintendents, and key partners to identify areas of growth and implement improvements.



Goal #3

For the 2025-2026 school year, the ISD 917 leadership team will develop and execute a strategic plan to enhance our ISP and ESP staff. ISD 917 will focus on improving recruitment and retention to better support our mission and vision. The goal is to increase our ESP and ISP staff applicant pool by 10% by June 30, 2026.

By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, the district will strategically enhance its alternative learning center and career and technical education (CTE) programming to serve student needs and community workforce demands. This will be achieved by increasing total enrollment in the DCALS program by 10%, ensuring all programs operate within their allocated budget, and developing new strategic business partnerships to provide students with expanded mentorship, internship, and career placement opportunities.



PROGRESS TOWARD GOAL:

Goal: 10%

Current Trajectory: 27%

In September 2025, we had 171 DCALS students enrolled in the program. As of February 2026, we have 218 DCALS students enrolled.

CTE Students

Sept 2025 - 103

February 2026 - 115



INNOVATION

• Industry Certifications:

Through Intermediate District 917, in collaboration with surrounding districts, students have the opportunity to earn Industry Credentials and Certifications in areas such as Cybersecurity, OSHA, Communication Skills, and more. Stand out from others * Build your resume * Get a head start on your future. Most of these courses are virtual, free, and self-paced, with the added possibility of earning elective credit.

- **168 students have and or are currently taking 234 courses**
- **Districts Participating:** Hastings, DCALS (Main and North), West St. Paul, BlueSky Online, South St. Paul, Farmington, Lakeville South, Northfield, Inver Grove Heights, Burnsville

ACTIVITIES

- **Expanding to 10 CTE Programs in the 2026-2 School Year**
Programs Being Added
 - Cosmetology: Esthetics
 - Cosmetology: Nail Tech
 - PowerSports/Small Engines
 - Career Seminar 2 - Get credit for on-the-job experience!
 - Internships - Structured learning experiences to gain work experience in a field of study.
- Established Progress monitoring data/baseline data regarding student enrollment for DCALS-CTE programming with Frank Herman and Mark Johns.
- Students who apply for DCALS are processed and offered spots as intake paperwork is completed.

By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, the district will strategically enhance its alternative learning center and career and technical education (CTE) programming to serve student needs and community workforce demands. This will be achieved by increasing total enrollment in the DCALS program by 10%, ensuring all programs operate within their allocated budget, and developing new strategic business partnerships to provide students with expanded mentorship, internship, and career placement opportunities.



GOAL ACHIEVED

DCALS Enrollment

In September 2025, we had 171 DCALS students enrolled in the program.

In February 2026, we had 211 DCALS students enrolled.

In May 2026, we have 203 students.

Overall Growth: 19% increase from September 2025 to May 2026

*As of May 26, there have been 297 DCALS Enrollments throughout the 25/26 school year.

CTE Students

Sept 2025 - 103

February 2026 - 115

May 2026 - 110

** As of May 26, there have been 158 CTE Enrollments throughout the 25/26 school year

***Overall Growth: 6% increase from September 2025 to May 2026 (+7 students)

Online Courses

May 2026: 181 Enrollments for the 25/26 school year.

Established Progress monitoring data/baseline data regarding student enrollment for DCALS-CTE programming with Frank Herman and Mark Johns.

INNOVATION

Industry Certifications:

Through Intermediate District 917, in collaboration with surrounding districts, students can earn Industry Credentials and Certifications in areas such as Cybersecurity, OSHA, Communication Skills, and more. Stand out from others * Build your resume * Get a head start on your future. Most of these courses are virtual, free, and self-paced, with the option to earn elective credit.

- February 2026 - 168 students took 234 courses
- **May 2026 - 276 students enrolled took 347 courses taken**
- **10 students have earned high school credit through certification coursework.**
- **Districts Participating:** Hastings, DCALS (Main and North), West St. Paul, BlueSky Online, South St. Paul, Farmington, Lakeville South, Northfield, Inver Grove Heights, Burnsville.

Students who apply for DCALS are processed and offered spots as intake paperwork is completed.

ACTIVITIES

To increase access to high-demand career pathways, Intermediate School District 917 will expand from five to 11 Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses, programs, and learning opportunities.

Programs Being Added

- Cosmetology: Esthetics
- Cosmetology: Nail Tech
- PowerSports/Small Engines
- Career Seminar II - Get credit for on-the-job experience & employment
- Internships - Structured work-based learning experiences aligned to career interests and fields of study
- **Online CTE Courses** - Beginning in Fall 2026, through the 917 Career and Technical Center, we will offer 17 online CTE courses to students across our member districts, expanding access to career-focused learning regardless of location or scheduling constraints.
- **DCALS Main and North will offer in 26/27:**
 - Music Production
 - Work-Based Learning
 - Internships

By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, the district will strategically enhance its alternative learning center and career and technical education (CTE) programming to serve student needs and community workforce demands. This will be achieved by increasing total enrollment in the DCALS program by 10%, ensuring all programs operate within their allocated budget, and developing new strategic business partnerships to provide students with expanded mentorship, internship, and career placement opportunities.



2024-25 MN Graduation Rate

MN Alternative Education
Students Average
Graduate: 4-Year Timeline

Statewide 39%
DCALS Main 46.9%
DCALS North 47.6%

Provide high-quality, equitable, and specialized programming for all students in partnership with member districts. Focus on making continuous progress on waitlists, developing innovative academic programs aligned with core values, and expanding professional development for staff. Collaborate with the school board, superintendents, and key partners to identify areas of growth and improvements.



PROGRESS TOWARD GOAL ON TRACK ACTIVITIES



- Waitlists – significant movement is being made on regularly providing intakes and options to students/families:
 - 4.1 calendar days is the average to schedule intakes.
 - Setting IV continues to get referrals and itinerant services.
 - Melissa’s team has provided each district access to the Data Hub to learn about their district’s specific waiting list and needs.
- Strategic planning – We are moving forward with our strategic planning process and have begun listening circles. The information collected will be analyzed, themes identified, and revisions recommended for our current strategic plan.
- Expansion – Working to expand our SUN programming on the west side of the district.

ACTIVITIES

- Met with Treasure Island and Mystic Lake to find collaboration opportunities with 917
- Guided the leadership team to begin using the Core Values Reflection Tool to use in our decision-making process.
- Met with representatives Mary Clardy and Anquam Mahamoud to draft a bill to support international teachers and the cost of hiring.
- Planning the 2026-27 school year and professional development needs for staff with the team
- Visited with ISD194 (Lakeville) about setting III students accessing CTE.
- Refreshed the onboarding process for the school board

- Attended AESA Central Regional Symposium, October 2025
- Met with Intermediate Superintendents in October 2025 regarding our upcoming legislative priorities
- Shared the proposed Strategic Plan with the Board for 2026
- Met with DCTC VP Anne Johnson discuss IT Pathways partnerships with DCTC that were shared at the Retreat.
- The Intermediate Superintendents approved me as our representative to collaborate with MN Service Co-ops to combine our legislative platforms.
- Traveling to multiple sites to listen to staff about ICE activities and reviewing district plans
- Met with DCTC President about additional space for more programming with Special Ed

Provide high-quality, equitable, and specialized programming for all students in partnership with member districts. Focus on making continuous progress on waitlists, developing innovative academic programs aligned with core values, and expanding professional development for staff. Collaborate with the school board, superintendents, and key partners to identify areas of growth and implement improvements.



TARGET ACHIEVED



ACTIVITIES

- Waitlists – significant movement is being made on regularly providing intakes and options to students/families:
 - Student service updates are shared monthly at our board meetings.
 - 4.1 calendar days is the average to schedule intakes.
 - Setting IV continues to get referrals and Itinerant services.
 - Melissa’s team has provided each district access to the Data Hub to learn about their district’s specific waiting list and needs.
 - Strategic planning – Seeking approval for our 5-year plan beginning in the 2026/27 school year, with professional development aligned to our updated core values.
 - Expansion – Working to expand our SUN programming on the west side of the district. Currently in contract negotiations.
 - Updating our safe schools training to be thorough and inclusive of any programs we foresee for the 26/27 school year.
- Guided the leadership team to begin using the Core Values Reflection Tool to use in our decision-making process.
 - Met with representatives Mary Clardy and Anquam Mahamoud to draft a bill to support international teachers and the cost of hiring.
 - Planning the 2026-27 school year and professional development needs for staff with the team
 - Visited with ISD194 (Lakeville) about setting III students accessing CTE.
 - Refreshed the onboarding process for the school board
 - The goal is to be appropriately staffed for the 2026/27 school year. We’re currently reviewing applications for teachers for the CASE program and plan to enroll students swiftly.
 - Continuing to meet with Member districts as we find ways we can support them with their individual needs and provide programming uniquely to them.
 - Planning for professional development - including how Nurtured Heart and Conscious Discipline can be shared across the district.
- Attended AESA Central Regional Symposium, October 2025
 - Met with Intermediate Superintendents in October 2025 regarding our upcoming legislative priorities and again in the spring to adjust our course.
 - Met with DCTC VP Anne Johnson discuss IT Pathways partnerships with DCTC that were shared at the Retreat.
 - The Intermediate Superintendents approved me as our representative to collaborate with MN Service Co-ops to combine our legislative platforms.
 - Met with Cliff Carmody to discuss how we can partner legislatively and work better together. Will be attending a Co-op convention this summer.
 - Traveling to multiple sites to listen to staff about ICE activities and reviewing district plans
 - Met with DCTC President about additional space for more programming

At Mid Year, we had demonstrated that we had met our goal of increasing our ESP/ISP staffing by 10%.



The feedback to us was as shown below:



Here's what we're doing to continue to meet the goal and build on it for the upcoming 2026/27 school year.

For the 2025-2026 school year, the ISD 917 leadership team will develop and execute a strategic plan to enhance our ISP and ESP staff. ISD 917 will focus on improving recruitment and retention to better support our mission and vision. The goal is to increase our ESP and ISP staff applicant pool by 10% by June 30, 2026.



TARGET ACHIEVED

Goal: 10%

On September 2, 2025, our ESPs & ISPs group had 210 people. February 25, 2026, we had 231 ESPs & ISPs, and **we continue to have that same number direct-hired.** This is where we achieved our staffing goal. We are able to retain many, which is good news.

- We also have another 48 contracted ESPs through Amergis and/or Zen Educate.
- As part of our HR ESP retention plan, we are working to reduce the time it takes to transition contracted staff to direct hires. Previously, it was a 1-year requirement, making it hard to get them back after the summer break. Reducing the time is a direct request from the agency hires while also meeting our needs to better staff 917.
- We used feedback from contracted ESPs to refine hiring practices and improve overall onboarding process.
- Based on feedback from contracted employees and HR planning, we updated our hiring model with Indeed.
- Refining our process with contracted staff. We have included questions in the interview process to help them better understand the work in our SUN and CASE programs.

- Amergis (contract agency) now follows up with candidates on the 1st day and in the first full month to focus on retention.
- Planning ahead to anticipate PFML leave requests for the District. Aggressively staffing when appropriate. We have 31 applications processed through the state since January 2026. 20 are ESPs, and three applications received, if approved, would start in the 2026/27 school year.
- From the listening circles with contract ESPs, we met with our training team to ensure our contracted staff are trained in PCM/Ukeru as soon as possible
- Met with the State Special Ed Advisory Committee, focused on recruitment and retention of Special Ed teaching staff.
- Have maintained recruiting and onboarding ESPs throughout the year.
- Updated a recruiting video for ESPs that's inclusive of all member districts.
- New website to help reorganize our recruiting | retaining efforts. We'll be launching for the 2026/27 school year.

- We are hosting 2-3 targeted job fairs through Indeed in July and August to proactively recruit for the 2026-27 school year. Last year, we were able to recruit 40+ ESPs through our job fairs.
- Connecting with Lattice to look at a pilot program for ESP recruitment.
- Planning staffing for expansion - we have a 917 committee working to develop a plan to oversee it.
- Met with Mankato State/Dr. Preisler in October to ensure the continued partnership of Tier 1 future educators.
- Connecting with the Sanneh Foundation to create an online job fair to recruit ESPs
- Working with principals and Dr. Schaller on a staffing plan at LEC, CEC, Cedar and Alliance, to hire ESPs each month throughout the school year to meet our staffing targets. This directly impacts the student waitlist.
- **TurnSignal** connects you via video chat with a lawyer to protect your rights and is trained in de-escalation, so you can rely on them to guide the interaction and get you home safely.

Thank You & Questions

Thank you for your teamwork and energy. Let's build on momentum and insight to finish the year strong!

