Advanced Learning Advisory Committee Recommendations
Recommendations to MMSD finalized in January 2019 as part of the Office of Civil Rights resolution process

Root Cause: Funding
We recommend a baseline of 1.0 FTE Advanced Learning Specialist at each elementary and middle school with additional allocation available to schools based on Advanced Learning and Talent Development needs as defined in the 2017-20 AL Plan.

Root Cause: Funding
We recommend that the district articulate a strategy for
sustaining advanced learning identification and supports through the middle-to-high school transition and throughout high school, including supporting connections to post-secondary opportunities. We recommend that this strategy is directly linked as a continuation of the work and internal capacity building with Equal Opportunity Schools. The strategy may include a High School coordinator position for AL within the department and/or school-based counseling staffing - these positions would be centered in work with historically underserved populations.

Root Cause: Bias and Opportunity
We recommend that the district, through cross-departmental collaboration efforts, provide continuous, concrete instruction using high-quality advanced curriculum within the regular school day across the five domains of advanced learning. The purpose of this recommendation is to recognize, value, and nurture diverse talents and advanced potential for all identified students (this would be dependent on additional funding for AL staffing, and specific attention to when/how this might take place within instructional design, especially K-2).

Root Cause: Opportunity
We recommend that the district develop specific AL "talent development" programming for students from underserved populations. Widespread accessibility to this programming can be accomplished by leveraging and investing in summer school, community partnerships, community schools, and out of school time structures and services. Building this capacity will include hiring and training staff as needed, and recruiting and transporting students. This programming is to be implemented in conjunction with, not in lieu of, comprehensive programming and support within the regular school day and school year.

Root cause: Systems and Structures
Recommendation We recommend that the district support schools in implementing flexible grouping across and within grade levels (to allow flexible clustering and smaller breadth within a class for better teacher support). Strategies for grouping should also be embedded in recommended instructional practices from C&I and supported by scheduling in collaboration with the district scheduler. This would be paired with

assessments and ongoing professional development for ALS and teaching staff to build school capacity for continuous and accelerated student growth within these cluster groupings and flexible groupings.

Root Cause: Systems and Structures
We recommend that the district develop and/or identify equity-minded universal pre-assessment practices (for literacy and math as a starting point for elementary school; across all academic areas in middle school) and require regular use of these pre-assessments to inform instruction for students with AL needs. This is in service of elimination of identification biases and stereotype threat.

Root Cause: Systems and Structures
We recommend that the district monitors and ensures that the AL Plan is being implemented and integrated with fidelity through the use of the AL School Level Implementation Plan (SLIP). We further recommend that the SLIPs be made publicly available and that the Board of Education is updated annually on AL plan implementation progress.
Two priorities for this ongoing work include integration and consolidation of instructional design and best practices of plan implementation (such as BEP, ELL Plan, and Special Education Plan) to eliminate systemic inequities, as well as professional development around these comprehensive instructional practices.

Root Cause: Accountability
We recommend that the district provides transparent, reliable, and valid data that is appropriately disaggregated and cross-tabulated (including looking at intersecting identities and qualitative measures), as determined with the AL Advisory Committee. The purpose of this recommendation is to establish an accurate baseline and equity-based goal, monitor and evaluate progress towards that goal, and inform next steps in implementation.

Root cause: Bias
We recommend that the district intentionally provide asset-based and strengths-based training around identification and support of students with advanced learning needs, as part of ongoing funding and training (for both school-based and central office staff) for continuous identity development, anti-racism, and bias trainings. While this is a broader recommendation, we believe it is central to promoting equitable referral and access to advanced academic opportunities for students who have been historically marginalized within MMSD. This will be measured as part of School Improvement Plans.

Root cause: Community Building
We recommend that the district provides specific programming for students who have been historically underserved by education, with a goal of building a peer community to support an advanced academic mindset. One successful strategy is AVID programming and strategies. This would include examining how to expand AVID and/or AVID-like strategies into elementary schools.