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DPI names three district partners in initiative to improve engagement for students kept at margins of schools

DPI one of four state agencies across the nation to partner with SWIFT Education Center

MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction announced it recently named three school districts as partners in an initiative to build capacity and provide academic, behavioral, social, and emotional support to students in an effort to improve educational outcomes.

The Monona Grove School District, the Shorewood School District, and the School District of Altoona were named as partners in the effort, funded through the U.S. Department of Education and the National Center on Inclusion Toward Rightful Presence at [SWIFT Education Center](#), a unit of the Life Span Institute at the University of Kansas. The DPI is one of four state agencies across the nation partnering with the SWIFT Education Center over a four-year period.

“This partnership is a key to ensuring we meet the needs of all students in our schools,” State Superintendent Dr. Underly said. “I am honored Wisconsin has the opportunity to collaborate with the national center, and to have the Monona Grove, Shorewood and Altoona districts on board as demonstration sites. This intentional work ensures all Wisconsin students are fully included in all aspects of their educational experience.”

By making positive changes in systems, policies and practices, the partnership aims to create meaningful engagement in general education for students traditionally kept at the margins of school, including students whose cognitive skills require intensive support.

“We are proud to partner with the DPI and the SWIFT Education Center for rightful presence for all in Monona Grove,” Monona Grove School District Superintendent Tanya L. Fredrich, Ph.D., said. “This collaboration aligns with our district’s mission to create a safe, equitable, and inclusive learning community for everyone. By working toward systems that support meaningful engagement for all students, especially those requiring intensive cognitive support, we continue to prioritize equity and ensure every learner has access to high-quality academic instruction among their peers.”

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SWIFT Education Center's technical assistance providers will facilitate partners' systemic and sustainable changes, as well as monitor progress toward implementation through regular assessments. The results will demonstrate how to effect change toward equity and justice in school systems.

"The Shorewood School District is honored to be selected as a model demonstration site for inclusive schools," Shorewood School District Director of Special Education and Student Services Kate Harder said. "We are thrilled to expand upon our equity work and build our own capacity through this partnership with the National Center on Inclusion Toward Rightful Presence and the DPI to ensure all of our learners and in particular, our students identified with disabilities, experience true belonging within our schools and communities."

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