

Duluth Denfeld High School

Findings from School Year 2018-19 and School Year 2019-20

Every youth should have the opportunity to reach their full academic potential, which requires that school environments be safe and nurturing for all. Disruptive or unsafe student behavior can be addressed in inclusionary, effective ways. Current practices of school-based arrests are inherently exclusionary, and their use – and overuse, among some student demographics, such as students of color and students with disabilities – has typically led to negative educational and social-emotional outcomes for youth.

Minnesota’s School-Based Diversion Model for Students (MN SBDM) seeks to address disruptive and unsafe student behavior in a way that is effective, and keeps youth in school – and out of the juvenile justice system.

DHS provided \$19,500 of funding per school year

In SY2018-19 the MN School Based Diversion Model was serving students at Denfeld High School. The Denfeld High School’s MN School-Based Diversion Model Team included:

Mike Meyer, MTSS SELC Coordinator, School Social Worker and Site Coordinator and Tonya Sconiers, Principal in SY2018-19. Tom Tusken, Vice Principal; Marcia Nelson, Vice Principal; Gabrielle Benton, School Psychologist; Sarah Laulunen, School Social Worker; Jennifer Wellnitz, School Counselor and BARR Coordinator; Shane Erickson, School Social Worker; Donna Saylor, School Social Worker; Jason McClure, School Resource Officer; Angel Peluso, Community Schools Program Coordinator; Erica Backstrom, CRC Duluth Program Director; all worked on the SBDM team in both SY2018-19 and SY2019-20. Additionally, several teachers and the diversity and inclusion specialists join meetings as much as they could to contribute to the conversation. At the start of 2019-20 school year, staffing changes at Denfeld have included the following: Laurie Knapp, Principal and Heather Jarvis, MTSS SEL, PBIS and Focus Room Coordinator. Others who joined the team in SY2019-20 included: Diane Fitzgerald, Guidance Counselor; Geri Saari, Guidance Counselor; Kevin Michalicek, Gen Ed Teacher; Robert Gagne, School Counselor; Jessica DeMars, SPED Teacher; Carla Harrold, Gen Ed Teacher; Gina Hollinday, Gen Ed Teacher; Ashley Tuve and Biz Sorenson, Therapists from Nystrom Mental Health and Angie Laschinger, Manager of the Nystrom program at Denfeld.

Duluth Denfeld High School MN SBDM metrics

School year	Enrolled	Referred	Declined	Served
2018-19	947	68	0	68
2019-20	921	44	0	44

MN SBDM responses to behavioral incidents



- Applied restorative practices (e.g., conducted a chat or circle)
- Informed parent/s or caregiver/s
- Had a school case conference



- Referred to a behavior support team
- Referred to principal or school administration
- Referred to SRO or law enforcement^a



- Screened/assessed for co-occurring disorder
- Screened/assessed for trauma

Types of behavioral incidents that led to student referrals to MN SBDM:

- Being truant or skipping class^b
- Bullying
- Disruptive behaviors toward another student, staff, volunteer, or visitor, including verbal fighting WITHOUT physical contact or insubordination/refusal to comply with reasonable requests or rules
- Drug or alcohol usage/possession (not distribution)
- Electronics Violation^b
- Fighting with physical contact/physical assault
- Insubordination/refusal to comply with reasonable requests or rules^b
- Tobacco use or paraphernalia, including vapes^b
- Other: Social Media; Family Issue; Fights or Tension^a

^a Indicates that the response was applied to students' behavioral incidents in only SY2018-19

^b Indicates that the response was applied to students' behavioral incidents in only SY2019-20

End of year status for student served:

