

INTERCULTURAL LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE
2007-2008

TEACHER HANDBOOK

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History

The mission of the Intercultural Leadership Initiative (ILI) is to help reduce racial tensions at Lakeland Union High School (LUHS) by promoting cultural understanding through inter-cultural experiences at the grade school level. This is a pro-active program which encourages students from the four feeder elementary schools to explore issues of race and cultural diversity.

In the spring of 1999, a small pilot group of 7th grade students from Lac du Flambeau Grade School and North Lakeland Elementary School (NLES) were brought together for a number of face-to-face sessions, facilitated by adult facilitators from our community. During the 1999-2000 school year, the original pilot group plus a new 4th grade pilot group participated in the program. Based on the success of these pilot projects, the program expanded for the 2000-2001 school year to include all four feeder elementary schools. The project also continued to work at Lakeland Union High School (LUHS) with the original 10 students from the 1999 pilot. ILI's numbers have consistently grown over the years:

1999-2000: 32 students in 2 feeder elementary schools
2000-2001: 128 students in 4 feeder elementary schools and LUHS
2001-2002: 265 students in 4 feeder elementary schools and LUHS
2002-2003: 406 students in 4 feeder elementary schools and LUHS
2003-2004: 520 students in 4 feeder elementary schools and LUHS
2004-2005: 650 students in 4 feeder elementary schools and LUHS
2005-2006: 730 students in 4 feeder elementary schools and LUHS
2006-2007: 855 students in 4 feeder elementary schools and LUHS

The goal is to have the ILI program available for students from 4th -8th grade-so they have five years of connecting and working with each other before they enter high school. Our strategy has been to add a 4th grade group of students each year, while continuing to work with the students from previous years. This school year we will have students from 4th-8th grades from the four grade schools in the ILI elementary program.

There are three sessions per year for students in the elementary program. Students are split into teams and attend sessions where they learn about each others' cultures, traditions and the issues that have been barriers, and have caused conflict between them, over the years. They learn these concepts through experiential active learning techniques, games, initiatives and service learning projects that encourage a sense of community and healthy risk taking to solve problems. ILI sessions are led by professional facilitators from across the community, and are held mainly at LUHS or the LUHS school forest facilities, where students can explore these issues in a fun and safe atmosphere. ILI staff has developed curriculum specific to each grade level that specifically states each sessions' goals and objectives, connecting these to state, other publicly mandated standards of education as well as other "standards of the heart" ILI staff feel are essential for strong, healthy children.

The LUHS ILI program continues to work with 9th through 12th grade students to develop the pilot ILI program for the large numbers of ILI elementary students that began attending LUHS starting in the 2005-2006 school year. These students are mentors to the elementary students at each of their sessions as well as facilitators-in-training. In addition they hold regular bi-monthly meetings of their own at LUHS where they continue to work on issues of racism and the barriers between our cultures through more advanced experiential activities and service learning projects. In addition, ILI staff is helping these students discover their own gifts as facilitators and mentors for the younger students. ILI staff also offers 9th-12th grade students an After School Leadership Program every

Wednesday after school for 2 hours for students who are seeking a more involved experience-students learn the local history of our communities and are also trained in advanced facilitation skills as group leaders/mentors for the elementary ILI program. The final component of the LUHS ILI effort is an After School Learning Center that meets Tuesday-Thursday after school in the student services room. Students who participate in this program have access to LUHS and ILI staff tutors who help them with their academic work.

At the Annual Cultural Fair during the school year all ILI students, their families and teachers are invited to attend a celebration of their efforts for the whole year. It is a showcase for the public to view some of the students' team-building projects, participate in ILI staff/student facilitated activities and games, and a great opportunity for everyone in the community to enjoy a showcase of all cultures in our area schools.

The effectiveness of the program is being studied by assessing student evaluations that are given after each session, teacher evaluation forms from each session, annual attitudinal surveys that are filled out by students, parents and teachers. We are also involved in a longer term evaluation project that includes getting an understanding of a "baseline" of student understanding of cultural issues that we will compare in later years as the elementary ILI students begin to flow into the high school in greater numbers. True effectiveness is harder to measure, how children feel about themselves and each other, but we attempt to discover this through student journals and other methods.

The ILI project is housed at the Great Lakes Inter Tribal Council, Inc. (GLITC), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization located in Lac du Flambeau, Wisconsin. GLITC provides management resources and board leadership to the project, but no funding. All projects at GLITC are "stand alone", meaning they must provide their own sources of funding. From these sources of funding they pay rent for office space, and indirect costs for management and accounting services, which provide professional support for ILI and the more than 50 in-house programs.

GOALS, EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND MEASURES

Each of our ILI Project Goals corresponds to specific objectives and methods of evaluation, as detailed below:

Goals:

1. To reduce racial tension and conflict.
2. To implement a district-wide transition program from the elementary schools into LUHS.
3. To improve educational success rates for American Indian students in the district.

Goal #1 Objectives:

- A. To initiate, coordinate and maintain a supporting and advising coalition of teachers, administrators, and school boards which represent the four feeder elementary schools and the high school, community leaders, local foundations, tribal government, service clubs, community organizations, faith organizations, parents, businesses and individuals; and statewide organizations and foundations.
- B. To collaborate with LUHS on development, scope and sequence of their component program which will serve to increase positive social interactions between students and reduce the numbers of disciplinary actions at the high school related to racial tensions.

- C. To facilitate sessions where students learn specific concepts via active learning techniques which relate to cultural understanding and breaking down barriers to communication between students.
- D. To research and develop a curriculum related to interpersonal and intercultural relationships for grades 4-12.

Goal #2 Objectives:

- A. To revive and maintain a creative transition program for all students coming from the outlying feeder schools into LUHS through after-school and summer experiential activities.
- B. To gain consensus from all the schools to continue to use ILI as the district-wide program of choice for transition activities.
- C. To provide ILI programming for LUHS staff and personnel so they become familiar with transition issues--not only between 8th and 9th grades but also between 1st and 2nd semester of freshman year--while becoming culturally competent and sensitive through ILI training.
- D. To provide ILI programming for community leaders and parents so they become familiar with transition issues while becoming culturally competent and sensitive through ILI training.

Goal #3 Objectives:

- A. To increase the graduation rates and decrease the drop-out, suspension, expulsion, referrals and truancy rates for American Indian students, and increase the GPA's for these students at the high school level, so they are equal with their peers in all of these areas
- B. To increase the grade point average of American Indian students at the high school level, thus closing the "grade point gap" between them and their peers.

What To Expect

In this program, your students will be assigned to a team of around 30 students, 15 (approx.) from each school. This year, we will be breaking these groups in half again for their sessions so we are working with smaller groups.

- Each team will meet face-to-face three full days (around 9:00am-2:00pm) during the year for 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades. A schedule of your sessions for the year is attached.
- The locations for these sessions will mainly be at Camp Jorn (located in Manitowish Waters), the LUHS School Forest, or LUHS. Students must dress appropriately, we will try to be outside as much as possible, weather permitting. We will notify you before the sessions where they will be held.
- You will most likely accompany your students to the sessions, however each school does this differently.
- You and your students will be asked to fill out an evaluation at the end of each session. There will also be a survey that you and your students will be asked to fill out at the end of the year. These are our main assessment tools and are an integral part of our program.
- The schools will provide transportation to and from each session.
- The ILI program will provide a snack and lunch at each session.
- You will receive ILI email updates on a weekly basis.
- You will have school representatives that will be the direct line of communication with the ILI program.

- ❑ Feel free to call us anytime with your questions, suggestions or concerns. We are happy to come and meet with you for special concerns, questions or suggestions.
- ❑ We encourage you to participate in the activities with your students during the sessions-it's fun and your participation definitely has a positive impact on the students.
- ❑ Getting your students excited before a session will yield great results!
- ❑ There are no fees that you or your students need to worry about for this program- all funds are raised by ILI staff through grants and donations from your community neighbors.
- ❑ You and your students will be invited to attend the 7th Annual Cultural Fair at LUHS during the school year.
- ❑ Do you have any special activities or traditions from your culture that you would like to share at a session? Let us know on the attached form.

DISCIPLINE

- ❑ ILI staff are prepared to discipline students, if need be, as they teach, but we ask that you *consider yourself the ultimate authority* for your students and act accordingly. Some of the ILI activities encourage high energy and need some latitude but we ask that teachers step in and help ILI facilitators when they see behavior that is unacceptable.

Teacher Communication Form

Name _____
School _____
Grade _____
School Email _____
School phone and extension _____

Please return this form to:
Bob Kovar, Project Coordinator
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