

East Side Neighborhood Services

A.S.P.I.R.E. - Overview

Supporting youth and families to increase school attendance and achieve educational success.

East Side Neighborhood Services is one of the many agencies partnered with the Hennepin County Be@school program. The Be@school program aims to increase student attendance. When a student is assigned a case manager (Youth and Family Liaison), our goal is to help increase the student's attendance by supporting the families and eliminating barriers.

Objectives:

The A.S.P.I.R.E. Program, which stands for Assisting Students and Parents In Resources and Engagement, partners directly with schools throughout Hennepin County to provide support to youth and families who have been referred for 12 or more unexcused absences. Our program serves families who live in North/NE Minneapolis and nearby suburbs. The primary purpose of the program is to provide wraparound services that bridge the gap between families and schools. We also connect families to community resources that can assist with their unique needs, such as mental and chemical health, after school enrichment, mentoring, summer programming, tutoring, and stable housing. ASPIRE receives referrals for students in grades K-12.

Providing Connection and Advocacy:

A.S.P.I.R.E. staff are connectors who help fill the gaps for families that need assistance with resources not only for educational success, but also basic needs. Homelessness, food insecurity, job loss, limited childcare options, and lack of healthcare have all contributed to barriers that were exasperated during the COVID-19 pandemic, further deepening educational disparities among the families and communities we serve.

With the experience and knowledge of our team, we not only assist families with immediate needs, but also with larger scale needs that create a foundation for future stability. Each student and family in the ASPIRE Program creates an individualized Family Action Plan, setting goals that act as the blueprint for support and resources.

Taking a holistic approach with the families we serve has allowed us to address attendance and truancy issues more effectively than the punitive methods used in the court system. By building trusting partnerships with parents and students, we hope to provide additional pathways for self-advocacy and empower confidence to navigate educational systems in the future. We also believe it is critical to foster supportive long-term relationships between families and schools. The ASPIRE team is one of few avenues for families to get this type of holistic wraparound support.



Support to:

- Connect with school staff
- Navigate conflict at school
- Enroll or transfer schools
- Advocate for special education accommodations (IEP/504)

Resources for:

- Transportation
- Housing stability
- Technology
- Food, clothing and household goods
- School supplies
- Family activities (Free tickets for kids)

Referrals to:

- Tutoring and credit recovery
- Adult education and employment
- Mental and chemical healthcare
- Creative Arts Therapy
- Childcare and Out-of-School Time programs
- Financial counseling

Contact Information:

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EAST SIDE
Neighborhood

