



Strategic GrowthPlan Addendum: Embracing Reality, Maximizing Opportunity

July 27, 2020

PLEASE NOTE: This addendum is crafted to articulate strategic intent and commitment. It is not a set of tactical details. While there is much to be worked out, we are working swiftly and responsively.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, MIA stands at a crossroads: either forge ahead against all odds trying to force its way through closed doors, or create an alternative delivery system that invites utilization of its social and emotional learning (SEL) knowledge and expertise. MIA chooses the second option - the option that opens doors for others.

Not that in-person facilitation will ever be eliminated, far from it. But the current environment and reality is that as an outside systems entity, in both public education and juvenile justice, combined with drastic state budget cuts, MIA's normal way of doing business is not possible at this time.

In contrast, we are hearing "Yes!" to our creating and making available "free"¹ videos and other resources that encapsulate the essence of what MIA has proven to be effective.

By embracing technological options and using various delivery portals, including YouTube and MailChimp, MIA will focus on creating a series of modules (via online digital content) for teachers as well as students, and will continue to do this as needed on a perpetual basis. This becomes a new growth strategy for MIA, and is still very much in alignment with our strategic plan to disrupt the school to prison pipeline.

A single teacher in an elementary school setting directly impacts approximately 30-35 students per day. A middle school and high school teacher may directly impact a range of 150-200 students per day. Using available methodologies, the number of students impacted will likely leap to far greater numbers in this first year than we had projected doing through in-person efforts.

The truth is MIA may lose something in *depth* of impact, but could gain greatly in *breadth* of impact.

Considering the number of teachers who know MIA and believe in MIA, combined with other contacts we possess, we have a ready-made clientele who would rapidly embrace anything we could create to help them deal with unprecedented needs for SEL assistance.

¹ "Free" is what we must do at this time, but this does not need to remain true forever.



As we all know, one fervent user will bring no less than a handful of other persons from their peer network into using a successful solution. Being that MIA will now have online digital content available, suddenly, our geographic “reach” can happen without limits. A teacher in Denver knows a teacher in California who knows a teacher in Virginia who knows a teacher in India...and so it grows! Truth be told, this innovative, strategic initiative actually expedites the fulfillment of MIA’s strategic objectives as it will positively impact thousands of students—now even more inclusively, by engaging and equipping teachers—through this action.

MIA has the capacity, the intellectual and experiential knowledge, the talent, the content, the initial funds, and the will and fortitude to make this happen. And even more exciting, MIA has the graduates who provide extensive diversity and the benefit of experiencing the value of what we do. MIA’s Executive Director (Andrea) and Program and Partnerships Director (Maya) are now working on the tactical realities of how to make this happen.

It is most likely that grades 2, 3, 4, and 5, will be the initial beneficiaries of the content that can be developed between now and the start of school. We will deliver “Brain Breaks” content multiple times during the fall semester beginning the week school is back in session. We will add on more comprehensive SEL activities and teacher guide resources beginning Oct 12. We believe it wise to wait until October 12 to roll these activities out as teachers and administrators—and everyone else imaginable—will need the month of September to determine what the reality of school will actually be. We need not be another “burden” for them to balance. If and when a program partner is ready for us to facilitate in-person programming again with their students, we will meet that need happily and in a way that keeps everyone safe.

In regards to our Restorative Theatre program within the juvenile justice system, we will continue to work with youth and staff through synchronistic (in-person) online programming until the day comes we can physically return in-person to those spaces.

While we await the next response to COVID-19, as well as reconciliation and repair to race relations, from Colorado, the US and the world, MIA is deeply committed to being a leader for teachers and young people learning to cope with their new realities. Recently, Denver Public School district took a tremendous step toward reparation. They ended their contract with Denver Police funding School Resource Officers, and are planning to redirect those funds toward positive youth development (i.e. increased \$\$s toward SEL curriculum, mental health supports, restorative justice initiatives, etc). And MIA is the exact thing to add to the system's resource pool in helping students thrive. We already have the tools, data, and knowledge needed to help the system to where they are already saying they want to go.

We will DISRUPT the school-to-prison pipeline by embracing this opportunity to do everything we can to serve all who need it!