

Skokie-Morton Grove District 69 Board of Education

June 20, 2017

Strategic Plan Measures

Background

The District completed a Strategic Plan process during the 2014-15 school year, and launched the 2015-16 school year with a multi-year implementation plan. In June 2016, the Board received a year-end status update on progress to date. Later that fall, the 2016-17 goals were shared with the Board. This report provides serves as a year-end status update on our progress to date. Over the summer, the administrative team will review the implementation plan and this document to begin the process of establishing goals for the 2017-18 school year. The 2017-18 goals will be shared with the Board later this fall.

Student Achievement

Improving individual growth and mastery through a challenging and rigorous curriculum to support academic success

Overall Goal: Ensure high standards and college/career readiness for every student by developing K-12 aligned curricula, assessments, and programming.

Goal 1: Review, revise and expand the STEM curriculum.

2016-17 Action Steps	Planning	Launched	Continuing	Completed
Implement K-8 common math assessments.				X
Continue implementation of Eureka math (Year 2). Modify materials, revise pacing, and differentiate for all learners.			X	
Implement K-8 NGSS science aligned curriculum.		X		
Develop K-8 common science assessments.	X			
Revise report card to reflect change in science standards.				X
Integrate creative learning common space at Edison into curriculum and use across grade levels.			X	
Pilot a learning management system with STEM and Humanities leaders.				X

Highlights

Common math assessments have been implemented across grades K-8. Teachers are using the Mastery Manager assessment system to deliver the assessments and analyze the data. Using this data system tool, teachers are able to analyze student performance by item number, standard assessed, or type of question. The STEM Leadership Team representatives and STEM Instructional Coaches have facilitated grade level meetings focused on differentiation strategies and pacing of lessons.

Science curriculum maps are under development, and an initial review of instructional materials has been conducted. The STEM Leadership team decided to hold on implementing new instructional science materials because of the limited choices available. Many publishers are still developing NGSS aligned science programs, and we anticipate better materials being available in the near future. Additionally, we have implemented STEM modules during WIN, which have already enhanced our science instruction allowing us time to wait for improved programs.

The STEM Leadership team has developed model lessons to be incorporated in the creative learning space, Makerspace, at Edison. This work will continue into next year. Over the summer, our STEM Instructional Coaches are conducting professional development with teachers who want to learn more about using this space before we return in the fall. The new CFC Director of Science starts on August 1st, and will take some time to develop short-term priority areas for science instruction.

STEM Leaders piloted and reviewed Learning Management Systems (LMS) during the school year. It was decided to move forward with Schoology. Schoology consistently received strong reviews and is used fairly widely in neighboring elementary districts. Initial training will take place this June and throughout the summer with a full role out at the start of the 17-18 school year.

Goal 2: Review, revise and expand the humanities (ELA & social studies) curriculum

2016-17 Action Steps	Planning	Launched	Continuing	Completed
Establish Humanities/ELA Leadership Team				X
Provide initial PD on ELA standards and best instructional practices to the Humanities/ELA Leadership team as well as content specialists in Grades 6-8.				X
Conduct audit of existing ELA curriculum and materials.				X

Highlights

District 219 hired a K-8 Literacy Director as part of CFC to work with Districts 67 and 69. The Humanities Leadership Team was formed this year, and guided by the Literacy Director. The team attended professional development focused on ELA Common Core Standards, and best practices in Guided Reading and reading strategies. The District was able to reallocate staffing to support one Humanities Instructional Coach for the 2016-17 school year. A second coach will be employed for the 2017-18 school year.

The team prioritized writing instruction as a need, and reviewed instructional materials that would support the developing ELA curriculum. The writing program, Schoolwide, will be adopted as an instructional resource for K-8 students. Schoolwide utilizes a writer's workshop approach and is a robust program that includes many resources to support students. Over the summer, professional development activities will focus on guiding reading and planning for an extended (approximately 80 minute) block of ELA time.

Goal 3: Provide appropriate instruction to address the needs of advanced learners, ELL, and special education students.

2016-17 Action Steps	Planning	Launched	Continuing	Completed
Convene ALP Implementation Team to develop infrastructure and programs. Provide professional development to all staff on ALP programming and strategies.				X
Implement any ELL programming changes required to maintain compliance.				X
Establish an ELL Learning Team – late Fall/early Winter 2016				X
Establish a District requirement that all K-2 classroom teachers become ELL licensed by the 2019-20 school year.				X
Add representatives to STEM and Humanities leadership teams. Pilot supplemental STEM and Humanities lessons.				X

Highlights

The ALP Implementation Committee developed a multi-year plan to support advanced learners and build our ALP program. Identification practices were revised and curriculum maps developed for advanced coursework at Lincoln. At Grades 1-5, the committee supported the implementation of Total School Cluster Grouping (TSCG) for the 2017-18 school year.

The EL Learning Team was formed with stakeholder representatives - parents, staff, administrators, and Board members. The team developed a vision/belief statement and made recommendations for EL programming in District 69. These recommendations focused on: professional development, programming needs, and community.

Based on the number of students qualifying for EL services and the State determined change in exit criteria, there is a need for classroom teachers to obtain ESL licensure. This will allow us to better serve all students, balance class sizes, and create a continuum of EL services that is responsive to EL needs. It is likely that the requirement for K-2 classroom teachers to become ESL licensed will extend to Grades 3-5 classroom teachers.

The District provides up to \$2000 per year in tuition reimbursement per teacher and permanent salary enhancements for obtaining these additional hours. The administration continues to alert staff to affordable and accessible programs that allow them to obtain this licensure.

Both our STEM and Humanities Leadership Teams now include teacher representatives from our ALP, EL, and special education programs.

Learning Environment: Engaging students and employees in a learning focused environment

Overall Goal: Create a culture of trust, respect, and support among the school community.

Goal 1: Provide age-appropriate co-curricular and extracurricular opportunities.

2016-17 Action Steps	Planning	Launched	Continuing	Completed
Establish an After School Activities building process at Lincoln and Edison – Fall 2016			X	
Explore feasibility of an after school activity bus run for Edison students.				X
Develop additional parent-child outside of school day experiences at Madison.		X		
Develop week-long summer Kindergarten kick-off (“Kids Can Kindergarten”) just prior to the start of school.			X	
Explore feasibility of additional targeted summer programming opportunities for students and families.			X	

Highlights

Edison has created a procedure and process for after school activities. This structure was recently negotiated into the SEA contract so that both Edison and Lincoln will use the same process beginning in the fall. The structure ensures that after school activities are aligned with curricular objectives and support our core program of student. Additionally, we have used the after school format to provide extra support and interventions. At Edison, it was noted mid-year that students were performing below the expected target in math. An after school support club was held during the winter and spring sessions targeted at students who needed extra support. The District offered after school transportation at Edison for the first time this year, and it increased the overall enrollment as well as the diversity of students attending. The administration recommends that this continue next year.

At Madison, activities have focused on a parent-child format. Last August, we offered Kids Can Kindergarten just prior to the start of school. The program started with a parent/child activity followed by a parent session on kindergarten curriculum standards and games/activities that families can do at home to support learning. This program will be revised and repeated this August. In June, we offered a Kids Can Kindergarten focused on Literacy. Students engaged in different literacy activities with educators modeling for parents how they can support the development of literacy skills at home. Families were also introduced to the Little Free Libraries for summer reading.

The Summer School Feasibility Committee was formed with K-8 representatives. Their goal was to research best practices for summer programming that impacts student achievement. The goal is to begin building a K-2 program for summer 2018 with subsequent grades being added in future summers. The committee created a mission statement and guiding principles about what makes quality summer programming. The next step is to connect with existing summer community programs to determine if, through collaboration, we can maximize our students summer learning experiences.

Goal 2: Align district and building practices, policies, and procedures with students’ social-emotional needs.

2016-17 Action Steps	Planning	Launched	Continuing	Completed
Establish a Behavior Management Learning Team (BMLT) – Spring 2017	X			

Highlights

Originally, we intended to launch the Behavior Management Learning Team (BMLT) in spring; however, with two new principals it is important that they experience the full school year to really understand our community and our students. The administration also decided that it was a higher priority to establish the building-based student behavior teams and begin foundational training. These building-based teams have formed and participated in their first session this spring. The District is also pleased that through reallocation of resources, we are able to add a Behavior Specialist to all three schools, allowing for one Specialist per grade level. The District has also reallocated administrator resources to create a Dean of Students position at Lincoln, designed to oversee all aspects of student life. Thus, the BMLT is currently in the planning stages, and the administration is evaluating possible facilitators. The goal is to launch this Team in the fall.

Goal 3: Maintain a safe learning environment

2015-16 Action Steps	Planning	Launched	Continuing	Completed
Conduct an administrative review of existing safety practices (internal and external), and makes adjustments as needed.	X			
Construct new bus driveway and utilize for parent drop-off/pick-up until new parent driveway completed as part of Phases 1 & 2 construction at Edison.				X
Establish an Arrival/Dismissal building review process at each school – Fall 2016		X		
Identify a (current or new) food service provider who can implement healthier breakfast/lunches that expose students to more fresh and visually appealing options.				X

Highlights

The administration reviewed the current Crisis Plan, and determined that while it required a few minor adjustments, it provides a solid foundation and structure for responding to crisis situations. This summer all of our buildings are being re-keyed. This will allow all classroom doors to be locked from the inside, avoiding a situation where a teacher has to go into the hallway to lock the door. Additionally, all teachers will have the ability to lock all classroom doors. The administration plans a more comprehensive review of the Crisis Plan during the 2017-18 school year as our construction at Edison and Madison completes.

The new bus driveway at Edison was completed in November and has made a significant positive impact on the traffic flow during arrival and dismissal. In collaboration with the Village of Skokie, Madison piloted a new parent drop-off and pick-up system for the last six weeks of school. The system appears to be working more smoothly, and has resulted in a safer situation at arrival and dismissal time. Ultimately, the District may need to do some reconfiguration of driveways to support a new pattern.

Following a competitive bidding process, the District has identified a new food service provider for the 2017-18 school year. OrganicLife has been approved by the Illinois State Board of Education as the most responsible bidder, and the contract will be approved by the Board at the June meeting. A transition plan will be implemented during the summer to ensure food service will be ready for the next school year.

Goal 4: Provide appropriate instructional time and resources to support curriculum.

2016-17 Action Steps	Planning	Launched	Continuing	Completed
Establish building-based teams to review effective use of student instructional time and develop a master school schedule that reflects instructional priorities.				X
Develop a K-8 program of study and District guidelines for allocation of minutes to each subject area.				X
Create school master schedules that are age and developmentally appropriate, and supportive of the district priorities and program of study.				X

Highlights

Building-based scheduling committees were formed and spent the year, under the guidance of a scheduling expert, developing new master schedules. The committee created the program of study, district minimum instructional time guidelines, and established priority considerations for schedule development. The schedules at Madison and Edison are similar, with minor changes based on space utilization. The highlights include: providing 60 minutes of daily planning time for teachers, increasing minutes in Physical Education, and establishing extended academic blocks for math and ELA. Lincoln returns to a daily schedule from the alternating block. Highlights include: daily math and ELA instruction in an extended (“double period”) block, formation of smaller academic teams who share common students, and improvements to the delivery of EL and special education services.

Resource Management: Efficiently and effectively allocating district resources

Overall Goal: Align resources with strategic plan priorities while maintaining the District’s long-term financial stability.

Goal 1: Attract, develop and retain high quality staff.

2016-17 Action Steps	Planning	Launched	Continuing	Completed
Establish hiring protocols and rubrics for teaching staff.				X
Establish an exit process that may include an interview or survey.	X			
Implement revised Teacher Evaluation Plan. Establish an annual process to review the Teacher Evaluation Plan.				X
Provide professional development on developing quality Type 3 assessments and use of targeted student learning outcomes (SLO) in instructional planning. (Year 1)				X
Negotiate a fair and fiscally prudent PSRP contract.			X	
Negotiate a fair and fiscally prudent SEA contract*. <i>*Carry-over from 2015-16</i>				X

Highlights

To date, administrators have conducted approximately 500 interviews of candidates for our open positions. We have established a team approach to identifying and recruiting top candidates. This includes shared interview questions and criteria, as well as an established process and structure. All of our administrators participate in the interview process for open positions, regardless of whether an opening is at their school or not. With our focus on filling open positions, we have not yet had an opportunity to establish an exit interview/survey process. This will carry over to next year.

The Joint Committee met to assist with planning for implementation and to evaluate the effectiveness of the Teacher Evaluation Plan (TEP) plan. The committee shared successes and challenges within the plan and reached consensus on revisions. The Joint Committee shared these revisions to the TEP at a May staff meeting.

In an effort to provide professional development for teachers on their Type III assessments, the curriculum coordinator and consultant met with individual and teams of teachers to review assessment criteria. These meetings gave teachers an opportunity to analyze their assessments with colleagues to determine whether or not they were valid and reliable. This summer, teachers will be able to schedule a work day to meet with administrators to get their Type III assessments approved prior to the beginning of the school year.

The SEA contract was ratified earlier this spring and will be in effect from 2016-2019. The PSRP contract is expected to be ratified at the June 20, 2017 BOE meeting and will be in effect from 2017-2021.

Goal 2: Develop a long-range facility plan to support the educational programming.

2016-17 Action Steps	Planning	Launched	Continuing	Completed
Launch pre-Phase I Construction projects				X
Develop annual process for identifying building capital project and/or upkeep needs.	X			

Highlights

Phase 1 construction is underway at both Madison and Edison, with Madison scheduled to be completed in December 2017 and Edison scheduled to be completed in August 2018.

In addition to the larger construction projects, the Board has designated \$500,000 in the annual Operations and Maintenance budget for smaller projects/maintenance items. A process for identifying and prioritizing ongoing capital projects will be implemented to coincide with the annual administrative planning sessions each winter.

Goal 3: Develop a structure to evaluate strategic plan programs based on their impact on student learning.

2016-17 Action Steps	Planning	Launched	Continuing	Completed
Establish an ongoing review cycle for the District Student Assessment Plan to ensure alignment with instruction.				X
Develop a structure to review the financial impact of strategic plan recommendations on overall financial health of district and ability to sustain programming.	X			
Consider options to reallocate resources to support strategic plan goals.				X

Highlights

Annually the District Assessment Plan is reviewed and adjusted. We reintroduced fall benchmark assessment based on feedback from teachers that the fall to spring assessment was needed for student goal setting. Feedback after this year indicates this to be a positive addition to our assessment plan and we will continue this for the next school year.

As changes to programming and staffing have been made during the implementation of the Strategic Plan, administrators have reviewed the changing needs of the district with a critical eye on staffing needs. In most cases, as we have added staffing we have been able to reallocate FTE and financial resources from other areas to avoid or minimize the financial impact. This review and reallocation is part of our desire to ensure that changes are sustainable over time.

The long-term financial impacts of strategic plan initiatives are reviewed as part of the annual five-year financial forecast. As the initiatives grow in size and scope and require new district resources, a more detailed structure to review these new expenses will be developed and implanted to ensure sustainability.

Communication & Community Engagement: Cultivating stakeholder collaboration and building community

Overall Goal: Improve two-way communication among the school community.

Goal 1: Provide opportunities for stakeholder input and feedback

2016-17 Action Steps	Planning	Launched	Continuing	Completed
Establish a formal teacher leadership structure that encourages two-way communication and shared decision-making.				X
Survey stakeholders, as appropriate, on various district procedures and/or events.				X
Utilize community email list to communicate with broader community and provide opportunities for input.				X
Provide professional development to support staff on effective strategies to welcome and engage families in a customer service and responsive manner.				X

Highlights

The District is currently seeking individuals to fill newly established curriculum leadership positions for the 2017/2018 school year. The goal for this leadership structure is to collaborate with the curriculum department and building administration to lead grade level and department meetings that focus on interdisciplinary connections, students' social-emotional needs, coordination of grade level activities, best instructional practices, and professional development.

It has been a priority to survey stakeholders after activities to enhance these programs for the future. This includes surveying parents following attendance at programs as well as surveying staff members on various activities. Committee members meet after their events to review the data from surveys. This data is then used to inform future decision-making.

Support Staff participated in an Institute Day training on Family Friendly Schools. The goal of this professional development was to develop strategies that welcome and engage families, and to create a more positive/welcoming school environment.

Goal 2: Develop and maintain opportunities to engage families in student learning.

2016-17 Action Steps	Planning	Launched	Continuing	Completed
Establish a building-based process to create age-appropriate, consistent staff communication to families			X	
Identify specific staff representatives to support PTO, FUND69, PLUS, ELL Parent Mentors, Family Liaisons, and Y.O.U. in their efforts to engage families.				X

Highlights

This year, the building administrators provided an electronic update to families regarding current events at the building. These updates give families a glimpse into the academics and programs at each school as well as informing families of exciting upcoming events. The next step is to develop age-appropriate consistent teacher communication to families.

This year, we had staff/admin representatives aligned to each of our parent groups (PTO, FUND 69, and PLUS). In addition, we continue to build resources available to our families through ELL Parent Mentors and YOU. Our Family Liaisons have become integrated into many events and initiatives in the District. We continue to focus our liaison work as outreach to families to build a strong home school connection with all of our families.

Goal 3: Develop and maintain collaborative relationships with businesses and community organizations.

2016-17 Action Steps	Planning	Launched	Continuing	Completed
Establish a Community Schools Action Team (CSAT) Learning Team to develop a logic model (framework to evaluate programming) that can be used to ensure that programming is effective and responsive to dynamic community needs.				X
Continue utilizing grant funding to sustain ELL Parent Mentor Program.				X

Highlights

The Community School Action Team (CSAT) Learning Team met to develop a belief statement, guiding principles, and recommendations for our community school work. The CSAT has identified priority areas of Extended Learning Opportunities, Health/Wellness, and Family Engagement. The CSAT will use the identified structure to build teams and workgroups that will be able to sustain this work into the future.

Grant funding was utilized to sustain the ELL parent Mentor Program for the 16-17 school year.

Goal 4: Celebrate the successes of District 69

2016-17 Action Steps	Planning	Launched	Continuing	Completed
Re-organize the District Web Site to facilitate its use as the main communication tool for all stakeholders.				X
Establish an internal staff newsletter to recognize personal life events and celebrate staff.				X
Continue Annual Staff Recognition event with specific attention to identified milestones (5-year; 15-year; 25-year; and retirees).				X
Continue Annual Staff Back to School BBQ and support of Wednesdays on the Green.				X
Continue “Building a Caring Community” as the theme for the 4-year Strategic Plan, with an emphasis on addressing racial inequity.			X	

Highlights

The District established a staff newsletter to highlight personal life events and to celebrate staff for accomplishments both in and out of the classroom. The Annual Staff Recognition event has been established to recognize staff and celebrate their accomplishments. This year it included video footage from staff to recognize retiring members. The Annual Back-to-School BBQ has also been established as a tradition that kicks off the school year on a positive note. While each of these are marked as “complete”, they will continue indefinitely as part of our District culture.

In our second year of our four-year “Building a Caring Community” (BCC) theme, our discussions focused on racial equity. Approximately once per month, during faculty meetings, staff engaged in discussion and conversation regarding our culturally and linguistically diverse students with an emphasis on discussions about race.

Conclusion

This annual look back at the year is always so rewarding. The Strategic Plan continues to successfully serve as a road map to focus our efforts and align our work. Through the dedication of our administrators, teachers, staff, parents and Board we have been able to accomplish so much in a very short period of time.