

**DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION
Wilmette Public Schools**

INFORMATION ITEM

Date: June 19, 2017

To: Members, Board of Education

From: Building Principals
Grade Level Administrators
Assistant Principals

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Tony DeMonte, Director of Technology & Media Services

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Subject: New and Continuing Initiatives

BACKGROUND

On September 26, 2016, the Board of Education approved the implementation of the 2016-2017 District 39 Strategic Plan. The district initiatives were divided into three sections: New Strategic Initiatives, Continuing Strategic Initiatives, and Annual Business.

This month's report will focus on new and continuing initiatives by noting the status of each goal/outcome, provide a summary update and any applicable next steps.

NEW INITIATIVES

School Climate: Creating a Culture of Empathy	
Outcome	District 39 will review current practices, study best practices and develop short- and long-term plans to improve school climate.
Status	<i>In Progress</i>
<p>As part of our ongoing practice, District 39 promotes kindness and connections among students through Second Step, a research based social emotional learning curriculum. The Bullying Prevention unit teaches students lessons such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Understanding class rules ○ Recognizing bullying ○ Listening with empathy and respect ○ Taking other’s perspectives and accepting differences ○ Disagreeing respectfully and responding with compassion ○ Empowering bystanders to take action <p>This year, staff were provided professional development on social conflict, bullying, and the district bullying investigation protocol.</p> <p>On December 6, District 39 hosted a parent forum on “Building a Climate of Empathy.” Executive director of Family Service Center, Dr. Renee Dominquez, attended and reached out to the Department of C&I to share information about their work with other district communities such as Glenview and Glencoe on the topics of empathy and school climate. The District is interested in learning more in order to develop a long-term plan.</p> <p>At the June Board meeting, a draft of D39’s Statement of Inclusion will be presented to the Board of Education. District 39 administrators, teachers, Board members, and Community Review Committee (CRC) members provided invaluable feedback that helped shape the language in the statement. The Statement of Inclusion supports the District’s mission to “nurture, guide, and challenge students to become creative thinkers, collaborators, and socially responsible, compassionate, and productive citizens of a global society.”</p> <p>Next year’s action step will be to continue the work of this initiative by having the Response to Intervention (RtI)/Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Committee review current SEL curriculum, universal screeners, strategies, and resources.</p>	
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Add as a continuing initiative in the 2017-2018 Strategic Plan. ● Review recommendations from the CRC report for 2017-2018 strategic planning. ● Review of the SEL curricula, universal screeners, strategies, and resources by the Response to Intervention (RtI)/Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Committee.

Student School Day	
Outcome	By spring of 2017, a review of District 39’s Early Childhood- grade 8 school day schedules will be completed with recommendations.
Status	Outcome Met
<p>As part of the three-year teacher contract ratified in November of 2016, the K-4 student day was extended by 20 minutes, and a weekly early dismissal for students was agreed upon. The schedule changes were the best solution for the issues identified by K-4 teachers and administrators; the added time provides great benefits to students and teachers as noted in the February 2017 Board of Education meeting report on K-4 scheduling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • core academic content and specials instruction, • dedicated intervention time, • collaborative planning time and training, • reduced use of substitutes. <p>Following parent feedback, K-4 Scheduling Committee recommended Fridays for early dismissal. During 2017-2018 school year, grades 1-4 students will be dismissed at 2:15 pm on Fridays. However, early childhood and kindergarten students will attend their respective regular school day.</p> <p>The extended school day for grades K-4 presented another opportunity: new school start and end times for students. District 39 presented a proposal during February Board of Education meeting, received feedback, and then presented a revised proposal at the March Board of Education meeting. March 20th’s start/end time proposal addressed many of the concerns voiced by parents and staff. The revised proposal that includes an independent bus tier for k-4 has an additional cost of \$265,000. While this cost is significant, it is far less than other busing plans <u>and</u> provides the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No D39 schools would start before 8:25. • The start time for AM kindergarten would be 8:35, rather than 55 minutes earlier as in the original proposal. • The start time for PM kindergarten would be 12:40, exactly as it is now. • The end of the day for PM kindergarten would be 3:15, exactly as it is now. • For parents, less money spent on early bird and no additional costs for after-school care. • There are five more buses available for PTA/O enrichment. This has the potential to save the PTA/O money as they get the best prices from North Shore Transit. <p>Finally, Highcrest Middle School’s administrative team revised the master schedule to allow for team/department collaborations for at least one class period per day for both grades 5 and 6 as well as expanded related arts offerings for students. For many years, the District has received parent feedback, supported by research, indicating adolescent students at Wilmette Junior High School should have a later start time. This has been accomplished with WJHS students beginning their school day at 8:25 starting in the fall.</p> <p>District 39’s website contains more specific information listed under “About Us” as “School Hours 17-18”.</p>	
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the 2017-2018 school master schedules and Friday early dismissals. • Gather ongoing feedback and reflect on the impact of new schedules and Friday early dismissals. • Monitor student attendance on Fridays.

School Attendance	
Goal	The District will increase positive attendance from 67% to 80% by June 2018.
Status	<i>In Progress</i>
<p>In April 2017, the Illinois State Board of Education approved the State’s plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to include chronic absenteeism as an indicator reflecting 10% of a school’s quality score. Although this is a new factor, District 39 already identified school attendance as a contributor to school success and developed a two-year strategic goal. During the 2016-2017 school year efforts were focused on increasing teacher and parent awareness and on implementing a multi-tiered system of attendance support through routine attendance monitoring and early intervention.</p> <p>Review of the 2016-2017 school year data showed a 3% increase in positive school attendance from 67% to 70%. Although improvement is noted, it is unlikely the District would reach 80% by June 2018. Therefore, the goal will be adjusted from 80% positive attendance to 75% by the conclusion of the 2017-2018 school year.</p>	
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue monthly attendance reports, routine attendance monitoring, tracking, and tiered interventions ● Include tardy data as part of each building’s monthly data monitoring and tracking process. ● Provide educational opportunities for parents and staff with a focus on the early indicators and students at risk for school avoidance. ● Develop consistent guidelines for nurses and parents about when to send or keep a student home. ● Add to the 2017-2018 Strategic Plan as a continuing initiative. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adjust goal to state: “The District will increase positive attendance from 67% to 75% by June 2018.”

Student Growth -- Response to Growth Intervention (RtGI)	
Outcome	<p>As part of the investigative and reflective process of developing a student growth model, student growth will be addressed through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developing a protocol for addressing the needs of students who do not meet expected growth. ● Establishing specific criteria for measuring and monitoring students identified with a need for a growth plan. ● Building teacher and parent capacity to encourage student growth mindsets.
Status	<i>Not Met - In Progress</i>
<p>This year, District 39 could not develop a protocol for addressing the needs of students who did not meet expected growth. Efforts to determine student expected growth using Performance Series data was unsuccessful. Therefore, District 39 will discontinue the use of Performance Series and implement NWEA MAP assessment starting in the fall of 2017. With all township schools using MAP, D39 student data will be included in the same data pool. In addition, approximately 10.2 million students nationwide take MAP greatly increasing the reliability of set expected growth targets.</p> <p>Establishing specific criteria for measuring and monitoring students identified with a need for a growth</p>	

plan requires *timely* access to multiple sources of data displayed to reflect students’ growth in learning. The current data warehouse system, INFORM, will no longer exist as Pearson is retiring the product. Therefore, District 39 reviewed other data warehouse systems and selected eduCLIMBER as its replacement. The Department of C&I and district database experts, Adam Altman and Bill Joyce, are working closely with eduCLIMBER programmers/data experts. All student assessment data is being transferred this summer.

In September, District 39 hosted two events to build teacher and parent capacity regarding growth mindsets.

- A parent night called “The Mindset Revolution: Teaching Mathematics for a Growth Mindset” was held on September 29, 2016. Stanford University’s Dr. Jo Boaler and Cathy Williams spoke to roughly 400 parents about what it means to teach math for a growth mindset and also heard ideas grounded in brain research on how all children can grow confidently as mathematical thinkers.
- The following day, all teachers heard a keynote by Jo Boaler and participated in other training sessions throughout the day. Although math examples were shared, the message was firmly grounded in encouraging growth mindsets in students. The District continues to support professional development opportunities that build teacher capacity around growth mindsets.

Next Steps

- Add to the 2017-2018 Strategic Plan as a continuing initiative.
 - Set-up data warehouse system, ensure accuracy of data stored, and create collections of data to support Response to Growth Intervention.
 - Identify a team of teacher leaders to learn, use, and eventually train others on eduCLIMBER.
 - Gather feedback from the user perspective and use it to make improvements.
 - Implement NWEA MAP math & reading assessments for grades 2-8.
 - Continue developing a protocol for addressing the needs of students who do not meet expected growth.
 - Establish specific criteria for measuring and monitoring students identified with a need for a growth plan.

CONTINUING STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Sustainability Planning & Practices	
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District 39 will improve environmental literacy among students as measured by the rubric developed. Baseline data will be establish 2016-2017. • District 39 will develop 5-year and 10-year facility plans to include cost effective sustainability projects identifying financial and energy savings.
Status	<i>In Progress</i>
<p><i>Measuring Environmental Literacy – Rubric and Baseline Data (Not Met)</i></p> <p>At the start of this year, District 39 set out to learn how to best measure environmental literacy. Research conducted by Julie Anderson, Curriculum Coordinator, revealed that other Green-Ribbon awarded schools like Prairie Crossing Charter School recommends that environmental literacy should <u>not</u> be assessed in isolation.</p> <p>Naomi Hershiser, head of Prairie Crossing’s environmental education, shared three reasons for <u>not</u> developing an environmental literacy rubric.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, fact-based knowledge is easy to quantify but does not reflect affective or behavioral attributes, which are more important with regard to environmental literacy. • Affective attributes such as attitudes toward the environment could be measured by a Likert scale. However, relevance of data is based on the assumption that all participants answer honestly. • Finally, behavioral attributes are challenging to observe in a standardized manner. <p>Ms. Hershiser shared that much of environmental literacy is developed when connected to 21st century learning approaches like problem-solving, collaboration, and inquiry. Although District 39’s curricula already embeds these learning approaches, the Department of Curriculum and Instruction plans to find more opportunities for D39 students.</p> <p><i>Improve Environmental Literacy – (Partially Met - Ongoing)</i></p> <p>District 39 has increased environmental awareness, developed environmental literacy and promoted sustainable practices district wide. Last year, Wold Architects’ comprehensive audit helped identify a few inconsistencies in sustainable practices. Therefore, creating consistency in practice across all the schools was the primary focus for this year. For example, each school has established building-based environmental teams such as student-led Green Teams. In addition, all school cafeterias compost food waste. Students play an <u>active role</u> in helping to reduce waste through our composting program. In fact, Highest Middle School students with the guidance of teachers, parents and Beth Drucker, created a video about the composting process capturing the attention of New Trier High School, Go Green Wilmette, Area School Environmental Group (ASEG), and Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County (SWANCC).</p> <p><i>Five-year and Ten-year Facility Plans – (Completed)</i></p> <p>During the April School Finance Committee (SFC) meeting, the initial capital projects/facility plans were shared. Along with identifying projects and its respective costs, forecasts of potential funding options available were presented. However, during the May SFC/Facility Development Committee (FDC) meeting, all projects qualifying as Health Life Safety projects were identified. As a result, some of the capital projects moved to the Health Life Safety list resulting in a shift in funding source.</p> <p>District 39 continues its practice of seeking energy and cost savings for facility improvement projects. For example, new, energy efficient boilers will replace the old system at WJHS. A reduction of energy costs is anticipated with these new efficient systems. District 39 will seek opportunities to apply for grants that, if</p>	

awarded, would further reduce financial impact on District 39. In addition, new, automation system controlled unit vents will replace Romona’s 60 year old units. Those units, along with the installation of large space HVACs in McKenzie and Romona School’s Learning Commons spaces will contribute to energy efficiency and produce some utility savings.

Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Add to the 2017-2018 Strategic Plan as a continuing initiative. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deeper audit of environmental literacy within existing curricula.
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Learning Commons

Goals	<p>By May 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 80% of Central students can demonstrate creativity, communication, critical thinking, and collaboration when engaged in learning experiences held in the Learning Commons. ● Harper will increase the use of Learning Commons by 25% compared to the traditional LMC/Tech classes. Baseline was established in 2015-2016. ● WJHS will increase the overall use of Learning Commons by 20% compared to the traditional Library and Technology Lab spaces. Baseline was established in 2015-2016. ● 80% of WJHS students can accurately explain how the Learning Commons spaces enhanced their application of creativity, communication, critical thinking, and collaboration.
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Status	Goals Met
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District 39 has been undergoing a cycle of revitalization and updating of the libraries in each of our six schools. This multi-year goal was a result of 2013-2014 Community Review Committee’s research and report about the skills needed by students today – known as the 4Cs (creativity, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking). This repurposing of existing spaces to support curricular improvements began with Central School in 2015. This year, Harper and Wilmette Junior High School (WJHS) students experienced their first year of their respective Learning Commons spaces.

All three schools have far exceeded the goals set forth in the 2016-2017 Strategic Plan.

- 100% of Central students demonstrated creativity, communication, critical thinking, and collaboration when engaged in learning experiences held in the Learning Commons. This concludes Central School’s two-year cycle of monitoring its use and the application of the 4Cs as a formal part of the strategic plan.
- Harper’s staff and students utilized the “Dolphin Den” for over 900 hours almost doubling the baseline of 560 hours of usage established in 2015-2016! As of May 2017, Harper students identified creativity as the most common skill used with the MakerSpace challenges and indicated that the remaining 4Cs were equally applied.
- WJHS results were equally impressive with 9,007 visits to the Learning Commons almost tripling the 3,456 visits established in 2015-2016 school year. 84% of WJHS students indicated that the space contributed more to the application of the 4Cs compared to their classrooms. This summer, Romona and McKenzie’s designs will take form transforming its libraries into flexible learning environments with completion anticipated for the fall.

Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Add to the 2017-2018 Strategic Plan as a continuing initiative. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Romona School - Year 1
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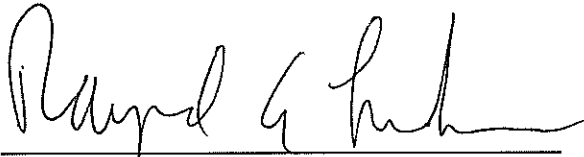
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ McKenzie School - Year 1○ Harper School - Year 2
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CONCLUSION

As this report reflects, outcomes and goals may require multiple years to come to fruition. These initiatives have a large impact on teaching and learning; the updates provide a gauge for maintaining the schedule of implementation for successful results.

The strategic plan is a “living document.” District 39 will begin the 2017-2018 planning process in late June by first embedding any initiative that will continue for another year. For any new initiatives, recommendations from the Community Review Committee, Board Strategy Committee, and District 39 administration contribute to the district strategic plan.

Recommended for presentation to the Board of Education,



Raymond E. Lechner, Ph.D., Superintendent