

## STRATEGIC PLAN »»» 2018-2023

### 2020-2021 Priority Initiatives

PRESENTED: MAY 2021

#### STATUS UPDATE KEY:

- OPERATIONAL
- ✔ COMPLETED
- SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS
- STEADY PROGRESS
- SOME PROGRESS
- ✘ CANCELLED



### Student Achievement and Development



01

Create virtual learning plans through district, school and family collaboration, for all learners including those with disabilities, those eligible for English Language Learner (ELL) services, those at-risk, and those in Gifted and Talented programming.

- » All students entitled for special education supports and services have a virtual learning plan as part of their Individualized Education Plans. These plans were developed by IEP teams, beginning last spring.
- » English Language Learner (ELL) Teachers have worked with ELL families to develop virtual learning plans to provide needed supports.
- » Gifted and talented programming is being delivered virtually and in-person with creative scheduling.



02

Continue enhancement of educational delivery models to ensure that high-quality blended learning can be delivered despite any potential future disruptions.

- » Teachers of online students continue to meet weekly to discuss teaching strategies and challenges, giving them the ability to modify or enhance teaching as needed.
- » The February 5 professional learning day was redirected to provide staff the opportunity to prepare for the return to fully in-person learning.
- » School staff participated in professional learning and collaboration time on Friday mornings to prepare for a transition to virtual instruction on inclement weather days.
- » Further exploration of best practices for blended learning continues at both elementary and secondary levels. Targeted technology integration combined with best-practice pedagogy are being used to ensure standards are addressed.



03

Study at-risk factors and develop programming for students in grades 7-8.  
**REFOCUSSED DUE TO PANDEMIC RESPONSE**

- » The pandemic has shifted focus from a stand alone at-risk program for a small number of students to continued improvements in multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) structure and process to support all students.
- » Efforts were focused on teacher professional learning, tier one interventions and instructional coaching along with tier two and three intervention supports.
- » Planning for specific at-risk programming for grades 7-8 will move forward throughout pandemic recovery efforts.



04

Enhance Gifted and Talented programming utilizing recommendations from the Gifted and Talented program study.

- » All elementary schools have participated in professional learning sessions about the new identification process and the equity components in that process.
- » The gifted and talented team is working to define specific tools and procedures to ensure a valid and reliable identification process as well as equitable opportunities for students.
- » Implementation of the updated process includes team decision-making through the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) process for advanced learners, as well as measures for identifying students from currently underrepresented populations.
- » Every building has participated in staff development about changes in Gifted and Talented (GT) identification and MTSS process for gifted students, as well as advanced learners. Further work will be with instructional coaches and GT facilitators around instructional design and new roles.



CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE



05

Leverage school-level areas of excellence in equity initiatives to create best-practice exchanges that foster information sharing, additional learning and mutual support.

**WORK TO CONTINUE**

- » The district is engaged with the Midwest and Plains Equity Assistance (MAP) Center and a team from across the district is currently participating in a cohort with MAP Center experts regarding equity-based strategic planning.
- » The Educational Support Team continues to participate in additional professional development sessions regarding equity in teaching and curriculum, and in turn provides professional learning to school-based curriculum staff.
- » The district executive team and members of the Educational Support Team completed the “Communities of Change” training presented by the Fountain of Youth.
- » This work will continue as a new Director of Equity transitions into the role this summer.



06

Increase the number of students taking the ACT, with a focus on under-represented groups, and gather baseline data on students taking the ACCUPLACER exam.

- » The PAVE THE WAY Testing Day will be held on March 3.
- » Students were given the opportunity to register to take the ACT exam, ALEKS/ACCUPLACER assessment or ASVAB career aptitude test.



07

Provide professional learning to enhance lesson planning to move from a focus on assessing the standards to a focus on teaching and learning standards.

**WORK TO CONTINUE**

- » Educational Support Team, Instructional Coaches, Content Leaders and Building Leadership Teams are coaching collaborative learning communities as they analyze classroom assessment data to make instructional decisions that improve student learning of standards.
- » This work continues to be deeply aligned with the work occurring in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and future professional development and school plans.
- » At the secondary level, year-long work in Canvas focusing on blueprint courses will include common assessments and essential standards, as well as creation of common navigation to address equity and accessibility for all.
- » Special education is partnering with Keystone AEA to conduct a pilot in the area of Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) for students with significant disabilities. Eleven special education teachers have received the first part of this professional learning, including representatives from Senior, Hempstead, Washington, Eisenhower and Table Mound. This work will continue next year and a plan to scale up will be developed to meet the needs of the district.
- » The Educational Support Team provided staff development using the process of backwards design at schools who self-identified a need for purposeful planning. This staff development will continue with buildings next year.

# TOGETHER.

WE inspire.

WE teach.

WE engage.

WE learn.

WE challenge.

WE empower.

WE live.

WE rise.

WE succeed.

Together, we shape a future of success.

FOR **ALL.**

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE



## Community Engagement



08 Develop and communicate Return-to-Learn practices and expectations with families and staff, based on best-practice recommendations from federal, state and local officials.

- » Vaccination efforts for staff are underway and all interested individuals have received their first dose, with the second dose scheduled in March.
- » The district transitioned to in-person learning on February 15.
- » Return-to-Learn planning with ongoing communication has been a key to beginning this school year safely.
- » A district COVID-19 website houses all relevant information and a dashboard provides ongoing information about active COVID-19 cases in schools.
- » Ongoing collaboration continues with local public health officials as best practices and guidance evolves.



09 Train district interpreters and translators to serve as cultural brokers who help strengthen relationships with various district stakeholder groups.

- » A common system is now in place district-wide for staff to request translation and interpretation services.
- » Interpreters and translators have been trained to understand the expectations and the process of how to provide the interpretation and translation, with the emphasis on the legal and ethical consideration in doing so.
- » District interpreters and translators continue to assist families in navigating district procedures.



10 Launch ParentSquare, a new parent/school engagement tool, district-wide.

- » ParentSquare is operationalized and continues to provide the backbone of school-family communication.
- » Since June, the system has been used to send 2,678 posts and 259 smart alerts.
- » Since June, 6,810 parents have actively engaged with the system by commenting on or appreciating a post, completing a form, signing up for conferences, or responding to a poll.



11 Analyze data related to students open enrolling to another district and develop an action plan based on the analysis. **WORK TO CONTINUE**

- » Review of data this year included looking closely at where students attended during the pandemic to inform the impact on future enrollment patterns.
- » The district will continue to monitor this data and explore future action steps.



## Effective Resource Management



12 Procure and deploy new tablet/laptop devices at the elementary school level to both enhance access to technology and prepare for required continuous learning should it be necessary.

- » All elementary students have received devices and those devices are being actively used for learning.
- » All middle school and high school students continue to have a device through the Anytime, Anywhere Learning Initiative.

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

- ✓ 13 Procure additional technology support and work with partners to determine and eliminate barriers to equitable internet connectivity for students and staff.

  - » Over 700+ mobile cellular hotspots were secured beginning in March, sourced from three different carriers to help provide coverage in the greater Dubuque area.
  - » For those who do not have internet access and cannot afford it, the district attempts to provide one hotspot per household assigned to the oldest student for all the siblings to use.
  - » Over 630 hotspots are currently checked out to date.
  - » Additionally, the district purchased and installed outdoor wireless access points at all 19 school buildings in the district. These access points provide community members with free internet access from Wi-Fi zones located in school parking lots between 6:30 a.m.-9 p.m. daily.
- ✓ 14 Utilize Secure an Advanced Vision for Education (SAVE) funds to begin phase two of the Dubuque Senior High School renovation project.

  - » Bids for the renovation have been received and opened, and a recommendation is expected at the March Board meeting.
  - » The project remains on track, with completion expected in fall 2024.
- ✓ 15 Plan strategic cost-saving measures due to budget pressure brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

  - » Since the last strategic plan update, the district received notice of approximately \$6.5 million of federal ESSER II funds to support COVID-19 relief.
  - » The district has established a working plan for how to allocate these funds moving forward, including budget relief of COVID-19 expenses, support of student remediation and enrichment to support lost learning, and budget support of the district's food service fund.
  - » This plan will be officially submitted to the State in August.
- ✓ 16 Explore strategies to enhance operational efficiency across district facilities.

  - » The Board held a work session in January to discuss this topic and begin conversation around future district efficiencies.
  - » Initial exploration of possible strategies was conducted and work to further research these options and gather feedback is included in the 2021-2022 Priority Initiatives.



### Employee Excellence

- ✓ 17 Provide professional development focused on approaches to teaching infused with technology, influenced by both the pandemic and the social, political, cultural and psychological development of learners.

  - » The district has provided differentiated professional learning to all online teachers in delivering instruction embedded in technology, as well as navigating and setting up the technology required to deliver instruction online. A support system has also been established at each level for online teachers that meets weekly.
  - » Professional learning to secondary and elementary staff has been delivered around many new integration tools to enhance instruction with technology.
  - » Social Emotional Learning (SEL) lessons have been included in June, August and October professional learning, with additional sessions ongoing.

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

- » A variety of equity-related sessions were provided for administrators and staff at various levels, including topics on providing a culturally proficient, social emotional learning process for all families and students, talking about race, culturally competent mediation and culturally responsive strategies for attendance support.
- » Secondary New Teacher training is focusing this year on culturally responsive teaching which includes the social, political, cultural, and psychological development of learners. Coaches and mentors are being trained to recognize opportunities to impact teacher practice in the equitable development of learners.
- » Overall, this priority initiative supported the district’s work in successfully adapting to the many external forces impacting the learning environment with minimal interruption. This work will be incorporated into various priority initiatives for next year.



18

Enhance efforts to diversify staffing that mirror the Dubuque community through review of future job descriptions, interview questions and recruitment efforts.  
**MOVED FORWARD TO 2021-2022**

- » The district has participated in Urban Education Network (UEN) job-alike work sessions focused on strategies to hire a diverse staff.
- » Job descriptions across the district have been reviewed and updated to support and reflect the equitable hiring practices of the district.
- » Local outreach continues to be conducted with community partners serving diverse populations to encourage and support employment applications to the district.
- » The district has gathered best practices from national, regional, state and local resources to adopt and customize processes for recruitment and hiring practices.
- » The district has been reviewing the attraction, recruitment, hiring and retention process to support diverse talent pools.
- » The human resources office participated in a number of job fairs and employment outreach programs that assist in reaching more diverse candidate pools.
- » The district engaged the use of an equity-focused search firm to support the hiring of the district’s next Director of Equity, with that search nearing completion. This work will continue next year as a collaboration with human resources and equity.



19

Research best practices and develop a plan to maximize the impact of the paraprofessional employee group on student learning.

- » Professional development sessions have been delivered to paraprofessionals last spring, in August prior to the beginning of the school year, and on the October 2 professional learning day.
- » Sessions were built to meet the individual needs of the various paraprofessional groups and were differentiated. Some sessions were aligned to specific subgroups of paraprofessionals, and other sessions were offered as choice sessions so paraprofessionals could attend the sessions they felt matched their professional learning goals.
- » The district will continue to provide high quality professional learning to support our paraprofessionals in meeting the diverse needs of our students.