







## STRATEGIC PLAN »»» 2018-2023

### 2022-2023 Priority Initiatives

PRESENTED: FEBRUARY 2023

**STATUS UPDATE KEY:**

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



### Student Achievement and Development



- 01** Increase student connections through the addition of new, varied extracurricular activities, with emphasis on the addition of culturally relevant activities, clubs and organizations.
- » Black Excellence Associations have been formed at each district high school and have held their first meetings.
  - » Middle school activities directors are drilling down to identify specific students who are not engaged in a school extracurricular activity/program and working to identify an activity/program of interest for those without other commitments.
  - » The district has engaged in conversation with parents from each high school interested in helping start competitive dance programs at the high school level.



- 02** Explore district/community partnerships that provide strong early childhood programming while also addressing community childcare needs as part of the BELIEF grant.
- » A childcare work group has been formed and is meeting monthly to discuss legislation and opportunities for lobbying for childcare support programs.
  - » This group continues to collaborate to explore innovative ways to provide childcare and early childhood education to meet community needs.
  - » The work group is comprised of broad community stakeholder representation including: City of Dubuque, Dubuque Early Childhood, Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque, St. Mark's Youth Enrichment, Child Care Resource of Northeast Iowa, Dubuque Area Chamber of Commerce, Northeast Iowa Community College, Greater Dubuque Development Corp. and Dubuque Initiatives.



- 03** Provide professional development for staff that increases the sense of belonging in the classroom, providing students with an optimal learning environment.
- » All elementary teachers received professional learning around optimal learning environment in January.
  - » Differentiation Professional Learning connected to the assessment tool of iReady and the new elementary language arts curriculum materials has continued.
  - » Most teachers have completed Part I and Part II of intercultural communication professional learning.
  - » Schools have deeply embedded this overall initiative into their school-plan work, including professional learning in the areas of intercultural communication, behavior, equity, grading practices, strategic conference attendance, positive behavior intervention and support (PBIS) onboarding, and more.



- 04** Expand the VERTEX Initiative with additional career and college readiness experiences for students.
- » Additional development of college and career pathway plans has been underway.
  - » Pathway plans are finalized in: Auto/Diesel Technician, Business, Computer Science, Construction, Early Childhood, K-12 Teacher Education, Information Technology, Nursing, Welding Registered Apprenticeship.



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- 05 Support furthering each school’s Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) work as outlined in its school plan across all tiers and including academics, attendance, and social-emotional behavior health.
- » Winter data discussions have occurred with each elementary school’s instructional leadership team for school improvement planning modifications and to determining future MTSS structures to meet learners’ needs.
  - » Several elementary teams have plans for more learning around the Professional Learning Community (PLC) process to refine and engage in further tools for MTSS.
  - » Plans are in the works for the 2nd Annual Secondary Symposium on August 16, 2023, focusing on opportunities that will give teachers choices for sessions to learn more about how to create the Optimal Learning Environment in classrooms.
  - » Strengthening of the Social-Emotional Behavior Health (SEBH) universal tier continues as we implement and monitor fidelity of Second Step, 7 Mindsets, and common 9-12 lessons during advisory.
  - » Training designed to help paraprofessionals re-enforce Second Step concepts throughout the school day was designed and delivered at the elementary level.



- 06 Review and possibly modify graduation requirements to allow for additional student choice connected to career pathways or college.
- » The Graduation Requirements Committee has met four times and has a weather make-up meeting scheduled in March.
  - » The committee has reviewed District, Mississippi Valley Conference (MVC) and Urban Education Network (UEN) graduation data over time.
  - » The group has also reviewed the number of student opportunities to earn a credit and the graduation requirements of each school, has identified our problems of practice, and are working collectively to determine course of action to recommend to the Educational Programs Committee in an upcoming meeting.



- 07 Finalize a preK-12 computer science guiding philosophy and add new computer-science opportunities at all levels.
- » The state-required vision statement has been completed and submitted to the Iowa Department of Education.
  - » Coding has been added to the learning experience for all third-grade students in fall 2022.
  - » Coding activities have been added in preschool with all preschool teachers receiving professional learning around “BeeBots” and integrating them into the curriculum.
  - » A variety of BeeBot mats were ordered for preschool, kindergarten and first-grade classrooms through a grant to continue coding activities with the district’s youngest learners.
  - » First Tech Challenge (FTC) Teams were established at all three middle schools and successfully competed in four competitions this year.



- 08 Enhance, promote and streamline reporting, staff training and student education/supports related to issues of bullying and harassment.
- » Every building has administrators who are trained to conduct bullying and harassment investigations with updated training modules provided by the Department of Education.
  - » The district’s ‘Say Something’ webpage provides resources for students, staff and families. It is linked from the homepage of each school website and is advertised in schools by welcome signs, new smaller QR-code posters and through school-based communications.
  - » A bullying lesson along with corresponding video was conducted with all secondary students in October.
  - » A Second Step bullying prevention unit taught by the school counselor is being piloted at two elementary schools.

# 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.**

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## Community Engagement

- 09 Develop and implement a Parent Organization Network to enhance parent/family organizations in schools.

  - » The Parent Organization Network continues to meet and collaborate in order to strengthen building parent/families organizations.
  - » Development of a vendor guide is underway to create a directory of service/product providers used by parent/family organizations.
  - » Learning sessions at meetings so far have included legislative advocacy and financial best practices for PTOs.
- 10 Re-invigorate school/business partnerships and mentoring programs in the post-COVID landscape.

  - » The mentoring program has built on existing business partnerships to recruit new mentors from McGraw Hill, Kunkel & Associates, John Deere, Emmaus Bible College, University of Dubuque and Loras College.
  - » A new partnership has been created with Cottingham and Butler, and the district has trained 30 new mentors from the organization.
  - » There are 86 mentors returning to mentor the same student, and the district has trained 90 new mentors for this school year.
  - » An inventory of current school/business partnerships has occurred and is in the process of being reviewed to determine next steps.
  - » The district is working with the Dubuque Area Chamber of Commerce to share information broadly with area businesses to generate additional interest in school/business partnerships.
- 11 Reconnect and reengage families to their school communities, recognizing this engagement positively impacts school attendance and achievement.

  - » Ongoing work is underway with the Jule public transit system to meet transportation needs for students and families.
  - » Each elementary school has hosted orientation meetings and open houses to re-engage with families.
  - » Before school care has been established at 9 of the 12 elementary schools for grades K-5 through partnerships with school principals, paraprofessionals, Dubuque Leisure Services, Y-Care, and the Foundation for Dubuque Public Schools, with financial support from grant funding.
  - » Planning is underway for kindergarten welcome events across the district in April to establish strong family connections.
  - » Secondary schools have created and enhanced attendance teams to support engagement of students.
  - » High schools have promoted VERTEX employer nights as well as college readiness activities such as FAFSA prep for students and families.
- 12 Launch the ACHIEVE Parent Portal to engage families in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process in new ways.

  - » All teachers, administrators and nurses are currently using the ACHIEVE system on the staff side.
  - » The Iowa Department of Education continues to work on the Parent Portal of ACHIEVE, which is not yet completed.
  - » No statewide launch date has been announced and the system is not expected to be launched during this school year.
  - » On the IEP documentation side, ACHIEVE has been launched and students will be moved into the system as their annual IEP review occurs, with all students being in the system by the end of the school year.

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## Effective Resource Management

- ✓ 13 Engage a study committee in the planning process to develop a two middle school model.

  - » The study, led by INVISION Architecture, was concluded with a recommendation to build a new middle school on the current Washington Middle School site.
  - » Work is underway to develop a plan moving forward, including financing options, which will come to the Board at an upcoming meeting.
- Ⓟ 14 Explore feasibility of a learning management system and augmented 1:1 computing environment at the elementary level.

  - » Canvas has been identified as the LMS of choice because of district familiarity and the state will reimburse the cost.
  - » The district is exploring capacity to support, maintain, implement, and sustain devices at the elementary level, and may need to begin with a single elementary grade level (potentially 5th-grade students) for introduction and implementation of an augmented 1:1 computing environment.
  - » The district is also considering logistical concerns involving storage, charging, and other items needed to house and maintain equipment in the classrooms.
- 👉 15 Ensure alignment with financial targets to ensure expenditures are maximized to support strategic goals.

  - » The district continues to review and monitor the current financial needs as compared to funding levels.
  - » With state supplement aid established by the legislature for the upcoming school year, work continues on projections and spending priorities aligned with financial targets and the strategic plan.
- Ⓒ 16 Enhance district cybersecurity efforts and staff training to best protect district data.

  - » The district purchased and implemented an agentless, defense containment solution that responds to malicious intent of illegitimate encryption and file corruption of data as another layered solution in the district's cybersecurity posture.
  - » The district conducted a tabletop exercise with district leadership in the month of February to help plan for the continuation of instruction and operations in the event of a cybersecurity instance.
  - » The district is having discussions with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC) about resources and services their agencies can provide as support.
  - » The district conducts rolling, daily phishing tests to simulate some of the highly used tactics in order to provide awareness and help district staff identify and exercise caution when handling suspicious email messages.
  - » The district provides monthly cybersecurity awareness training to all staff consisting of brief training videos and assessments from our cybersecurity awareness provider.

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## Employee Excellence

- 17 Develop a staff retention plan that explores incentives, systems of care and enhanced staff recognition programs.

  - » The district explored conducting a complete analysis of current positions, titles and compensations, but found it to be cost-prohibitive.
  - » Exploration continues of additional non-pay incentives such as exploring work-from-home flexibility on inclement weather days, alternate summer schedules, etc.
  - » Visibility has been enhanced of the district's A+ Staff Recognition program, which allows individuals to recognize staff for outstanding work.
  - » Additional access to free staff wellness and brain health resources has been promoted among district staff.
- 18 Enhance staff recruitment efforts with a focus on generating a more diverse applicant pool for open positions.

  - » The district is enhancing its efforts with HBCU Careers, which is focused on reaching students attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities as they undergo their job search.
  - » Staff will attend HBCU career recruitment fairs in Chicago and St. Louis this spring.
  - » The district has created a new Human Resources and Equity Specialist position, which will be responsible for staff recruitment.
- 19 Develop systems to grow career paths and leadership opportunities within the district, with a focus on grow-your-own programming.

  - » The district continues to collaborate with staff members and local colleges/universities to support programming that leads to a teaching degree.
  - » The district has developed a system for assisting paraprofessional staff in gaining observation hours as part of their education degree curriculum.
  - » The district is supporting a staff member who is hired as a registered behavior technician as she finishes her degree to become a special education teacher with an in-demand "Strat II ID" license.
  - » Staff are taking part in local high school career fairs and working with VERTEX coaches to promote the district's education career pathway among high school students.