







STRATEGIC PLAN

»»» 2018-2023

2022-2023 Priority Initiatives

PRESENTED: MAY 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. **WORK TO CONTINUE.**
- » 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 received the 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant from the Iowa Department of Education to continue LEAP programming at Jefferson and Washington.
 - » The district is in the process of hiring coaches for competitive dance teams at each high school.



- 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.
 - » In partnership with Dubuque Community Y Care and Dubuque Initiatives, the district is moving forward with plans to establish a preschool center with wrap-around care to open in fall 2024 at the former Medline site.



- 03** Provide professional development for staff that increases the sense of belonging in the classroom, providing students with an optimal learning environment. **WORK TO CONTINUE.**
- » 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.
 - » Elementary schools are initiating the job-embedded professional learning of instructional rounds to enhance implementation of differentiation and optimal learning environment.
 - » High school and middle school Guiding Coalitions have been formed comprised of instructional coaches and educational support team members.
 - » The Guiding Coalitions are focused on providing equitable learning opportunities for each student through our MTSS process which is at the heart of the optimal learning environment. Guiding Coalitions will meet every three to four weeks next year to further the work.
 - » Presenter proposals are being collected and the schedule is taking shape for the 2nd Annual Secondary Symposium on August 16, which is focused on professional learning around the optimal learning environment.
 - » Through an Iowa Workforce grant, professional development on Restorative Practices has been conducted by the International Institute of Restorative Practices. This training aligns with the optimal learning environment and has deepened understanding of restorative components of Second Step (Restorative Questions) and 7 Mindsets (Circles).
 - » Planning is underway to introduce the 7 Mindsets Circles at both Washington and Roosevelt and continue this practice at Jefferson, which will align all three middle schools in the use of this strategy to build community and solve problems when they arise.



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04 Expand the VERTEX Initiative with additional career and college readiness experiences for students. **WORK TO CONTINUE.**

- » 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.
- » School-based teams are being created that will partner with district staff to build-out more opportunities for students, including a goal to have 100% of 9-12 students “favorite” and rank career clusters and occupations in K-Nav.



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.

- » Several elementary teams have plans for more learning around the Professional Learning Community (PLC) process to refine and engage in further tools for MTSS.
- » Social-Emotional Learning Content Leaders (teacher leaders) have been re-aligned to provide additional support at the high-school level, with their leadership, enhanced communication and cooperation to help standardize the district universal tier.
- » Training designed to help paraprofessionals re-enforce Second Step concepts throughout the school day was designed and delivered at the elementary level.
- » A Brain Health Retreat Room was added to the Alta Vista Campus, providing another resource to support student brain-health issues.
- » Elementary and middle school counselors are realigning curriculum and supports to better support the social-emotional behavior health MTSS tiers. Suicide prevention lessons will be added at the elementary and middle school levels.
- » Planning is underway for systematic and team collaboration professional development for the 2023-2024 school year based on student achievement data and staff survey assessment inventory to enhance and refine the instructional practice to address academics and social-emotional learning with implementation checklists.
- » District staff are partnering with the secondary Assistant Principals, Student Needs Facilitators, and select teaching staff around MTSS for Behavior using the RTI at Work framework. This team will help schools identify essential standards for behavior, help teachers teach those standards and provide for Tier 1, 2, and 3 interventions when appropriate. This work will begin in June and run through the school year next year.



06 Review and possibly modify graduation requirements to allow for additional student choice connected to career pathways or college. **WORK TO CONTINUE.**

- » The Graduation Requirements Committee met throughout the year and presenting its findings to the Educational Programs committee of the School Board in May.
- » Work will continue into next year under new priority initiatives as the graduation committee works to develop a new 9th-grade seminar course and further build-out VERTEX Initiative programming.

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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- ✓ 07 Finalize a preK-12 computer science guiding philosophy and add new computer-science opportunities at all levels.

 - » Coding has been added to the learning experience for all third-grade students in fall 2022.
 - » 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.
 - » Lego Discover was implemented in PreK through 1st grade classrooms and Lego Explore was implemented in 2nd grade classrooms through John Deere funding to grow computer science.
- ✓ 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.
 - » Through a Stronger Connections Grant from the Iowa Department of Education, Second Step Bullying Curriculum will be purchased for each elementary counselor.



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.
 - » Learning sessions at meetings so far have included legislative advocacy and financial best practices for PTOs.
 - » The meeting schedule for next year has been established and plans are underway to explore a symposium-type learning opportunity to bring all school parent/family groups together to learn and collaborate.
- ⓑ 10 Re-invigorate school/business partnerships and mentoring programs in the post-COVID landscape. **WORK TO CONTINUE.**

 - » 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, and create new partnerships will company’s like Cottingham and Butler.
 - » 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.
 - » The district is utilizing its social media outreach to increase awareness of school/business partnerships.
 - » Work with school/business partnerships will be included as a stand-alone priority initiative for next year’s priority initiatives.

OUR MISSION IS TO DEVELOP
world-class learners
 AND **citizens of character**
 IN A **safe and inclusive**
 LEARNING COMMUNITY

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-  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.
 - » Kindergarten welcome events were held 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.
 - » Before and after-school programming has been established for 2023-2024 to ensure each elementary building has options available for families.
-  12 Launch the ACHIEVE Parent Portal to engage families in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process in new ways. **WORK TO CONTINUE.**


 - » All teachers, administrators and nurses are currently using the ACHIEVE system on the staff side and professional learning has been provided on progress monitoring so staff are ready for the launch.
 - » 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. This will likely happen during the 2023-24 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.



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.
 - » The Board approved bond petition language, which anticipation of a bond election in November 2023.
-  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 explored 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 also considered logistical concerns involving storage, charging, and other items needed to house and maintain equipment in the classrooms.
 - » After a review of financial, academic and logistical implications, it was determined that the district was not prepared to implement these options for the next school year and will revisit them for the 2024-2025 school year.
-  15 Ensure alignment with financial targets to ensure expenditures are maximized to support strategic goals.

 - » The district continuously reviews and monitors financial needs as compared to funding levels.
 - » The budget proposal for the 2023-2024 school year is complete and spending priorities are aligned with financial targets and the strategic plan.

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- 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 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.



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.
 - » Summer work hours are being established for staff on contract in summer months to give expanding flexibility.
 - » 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.
 - » Staff wellness initiatives will be included as a new priority initiative for next year.



- 18 Enhance staff recruitment efforts with a focus on generating a more diverse applicant pool for open positions. **WORK TO CONTINUE.**
- » 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.
 - » The district has created a new Human Resources and Equity Specialist position, which will be responsible for staff recruitment.
 - » Through partnership with Frontline, which provides the district's human resources software infrastructure, systems are now in place to provide more accurate data regarding applicants.



- 19 Develop systems to grow career paths and leadership opportunities within the district, with a focus on grow-your-own programming. **WORK TO CONTINUE.**
- » 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.