

TO: Board of Education  
FROM: Sally Pryor  
DATE: May 4, 2009  
SUBJECT: Key Components of the District 64 Strategic Plan DRAFT

It is with great pleasure that I officially convey the key components of a new District 64 Strategic Plan Draft (Attachment 1) to the Board of Education. This draft is both a culmination and an invitation to start anew. It marks the end of a lengthy period of research, dialogue and preparation about the methodology and content of strategic planning that sprang forth from the Board's goal-setting session in October 2007. The draft plan itself offers an invitation for the community to help shape the future of education in District 64 well into the next decade.

The draft plan is the result of more than 35 hours of strenuous effort contributed by a group of 27 individuals drawn from all parts of the District 64 community. We are indebted to Maine Township High School District 207 for offering the Board meeting room at Maine South High School, so that the group could be sequestered for three full days (April 23-25). Under the skillful leadership of Dr. Howard Feddema of the Cambridge Group, the participants freely shared their thoughts and engaged in many rounds of vigorous small- and full-group discussion. The result is this draft plan; the key components of the plan were created and agreed upon collectively and unanimously. We believe this exciting plan captures the hopes and vision we share for the education of our students.

### **Community Outreach**

Following this Board meeting, the District will communicate the draft plan to staff and throughout the community. In addition to sharing the plan, we also will be soliciting volunteers to serve as members of the Action Planning Teams that will be convened for each strategy. We expect to form five teams around the strategies developed in the new draft plan, as described below.

The community engagement effort will include the following components:

- **District 64 Staff**
  - At the May 6 Building Meetings, the principals and Strategic Planning Team members from their schools will introduce the draft plan and answer questions. In keeping with our new plan's strategy to accelerate the use of technology, we have prepared an approximately 5-minute DVD presentation to introduce the draft plan. It is intended to briefly explain the work done to date and our plans going forward. A communications meeting also will be held for staff at the Educational Service Center.
  - In addition, the August 24 Institute Day to kick off the 2009-10 school year will more fully address the plan and the upcoming work of the Action Teams. Again, members of the Strategic Planning Team will be involved in this presentation.
- **Park Ridge Education Association** – I will meet with our teachers' union representatives at the May 14 meeting to discuss the draft plan and the upcoming formation of Action Teams.

- **News media** – We have prepared a news release about the draft plan for tonight’s meeting, and will follow up with our local reporters about the key components of the draft plan and the activities yet to come.
- **Parents**
  - At the May 14 PTO Presidents’ meeting, I will present the draft plan and address the next steps. I will also ask them to schedule presentations at their first PTO meetings of the 2009-10 school year to further solicit parent participation on the Action Planning Teams.
  - The May 7 Take Homes will include tonight’s news release about the draft plan.
  - Additional information will be included in the 2009-10 District Student-Parent Handbook and in the Take Homes this fall.
- **Community**
  - The District 64 Web site will continue to be used as a focal point for information about strategic planning. The draft plan will be added to the Web page. An on-line form will be activated for staff and community members to volunteer for participation on the Action Teams.
  - All members of the community will receive a copy of the draft plan and a volunteer form as a District 64 publication mailed to all local residents this summer.
  - Additional opportunities for speaking engagements to community groups will be sought, as well as publicity in the local publications and Web sites they sponsor.

### **Action Planning Teams**

Based on the five strategies established in the draft plan, we will seek volunteers to participate on these Action Teams:

1. Accelerating the Advanced Use of Technology
2. Building a Model for Personal Student Goals
3. Collaboration within Our Partnership
4. Expectations for Student Learning and Instructional Practices
5. Providing Support and Tools for Change

The work of the Strategic Planning Team was to create a vision of what District 64 will become; the work of the Action Teams is to describe how to make that vision a reality. The Action Planning Teams will be assembled early this fall, and will work for approximately four months. Typically, teams will meet for 2-3 hours each week, although each team will be responsible for setting its own work schedule. We anticipate utilizing technology in the form of a private blog for members to post work and share their ideas virtually as they move their work streams forward.

To be as inclusive as possible, each team is targeted to have between 15-20 members and ideally will have a balanced representation of staff and community members. Ideally, at least one member of the Strategic Planning Team will serve as a member of each Action Planning Team. Board members and District 64 administrators who did not serve on the Strategic Planning Team are also invited to participate as Action Team members. I will appoint the leadership of the teams; team leaders will receive additional training from Dr. Feddema prior to an orientation for all Action Team members to be scheduled in early fall.

### **Second Meeting of Strategic Planning Team**

The original Strategic Planning group will be reconvened in late January or early February 2010. The draft action plans developed by the five Action Planning Teams will be

presented and reviewed. The group also will make a recommendation to me regarding the implementation schedule for the components of these action plans.

### **Next Steps**

I will report to the Board over the summer on the progress of our communications outreach and the plans for formation of the Action Teams.

In closing, I do want to publicly acknowledge and thank the members of the Strategic Planning Team and recognize their outstanding service to District 64:

- **Community Participants**

- Kent Bergren, study group leader, Community Finance Committee

- Tom Cara, parent, Emerson Middle School

- Carole Gabel, parent, Roosevelt and Lincoln Middle schools

- Teresa George, parent, Washington School

- John Heyde, parent, Franklin and Emerson Middle schools and Board of Education member

- Bill Kann, community member

- Sharon Lawson, parent, Lincoln Middle School and prospective Board of Education member

- Carla Owen, parent, Field School

- Robert Smith, parent, Carpenter School

- Genie Taddeo, parent, Field School and Board of Education member

- Teresa Varco, parent, Lincoln Middle School

- **District 64 Participants**

- Agnes Adamik, special needs preschool teacher, Jefferson School Early Childhood Center

- Tim Benka, Assistant Principal, Emerson Middle School

- Diane Betts, Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning;

- Allison Blum, District technologist

- Erin Breen, grade 1 teacher, Roosevelt School

- Kathy Creely, Principal, Field School

- Michelle Fiore Cwiertniak, Channels of Challenge teacher, Field School

- Sonja Dziedzic, Curriculum Specialist for Fine Arts and teacher, Emerson Middle School

- Dr. Lynne Farmer, Director of Early Intervening Services/Response to Intervention

- Irene Kappos, Language Arts teacher, Lincoln Middle School

- Katie Kelly, grade 5 teacher, Roosevelt School

- Mike Kennedy, music teacher, Emerson Middle School

- Nancy Novak, Instructional Resource teacher assistant, Washington School

- Vanessa Taglia, grade 4 teacher, Carpenter School

- Jane Tufts, Speech/Language pathologist, Franklin School

- Internal Facilitator* – Bernadette Tramm, Public Information Coordinator

In addition, Ken Wallace, community member and Assistant Superintendent of Maine Township High School District 207, and Brian Wisniewski, community member, were unable to participate at the last moment. We do hope to involve them as members of Action Planning Teams this fall.

**Park Ridge-Niles School District 64  
Draft Strategic Plan  
April 25, 2009**

**DRAFT – Beliefs**

**We believe that...**

- All people have inherent worth.
- Quality education benefits everyone.
- Everyone within our community is responsible for the education and development of our children.
- The family environment has a major influence on the development of a child.
- All people can be successful learners and continue to learn throughout their lives.
- A safe, nurturing environment is essential to learning.
- People grow through a variety of experiences, opportunities and adversities.
- High expectations and a positive attitude result in higher performance.
- Both cooperation and healthy competition are necessary to achieve excellence.
- Effort, perseverance and self-discipline are necessary for people to achieve their personal best.
- People are responsible for their actions and honoring their commitments.
- Honesty and integrity are essential to build and sustain trusting relationships.
- Everyone benefits from contributing to the well-being of others.
- Understanding diversity is essential to thrive in an interdependent, global community.
- Change is inevitable and challenges us to grow.

## **DRAFT – Mission**

The mission of District 64, a vital partnership of staff, families and community, is to inspire all students to embrace learning, discover their strengths and achieve personal excellence in order to thrive in and contribute to a rapidly changing world by providing a rich, rigorous and innovative curriculum integrating civil behavior and fostering resilience.

## **DRAFT – Objectives**

All students will meet or exceed the District’s targeted benchmarks for critical thinking, creative expression and problem solving.

Each student will identify, set and achieve personally challenging goals related to academics, civil behavior, talents and interests.

## **DRAFT – Strategies**

1. We will accelerate the use of advanced technology as an integral component of the educational program and to effectively manage our system.
2. We will develop and implement a model for setting, measuring and achieving personal goals for each student related to academics, civil behavior, talents and interests.
3. We will develop and implement plans to ensure all members of our vital partnership (staff, families, community members and organizations) are working collaboratively to help us achieve our mission.
4. We will define and clarify expectations for student learning, ensure all staff effectively differentiate instruction, and use assessment data to support students in meeting or exceeding the District’s targeted benchmarks.
5. We will develop and implement plans to ensure staff and community members understand, are committed to, and have the tools to carry out changes within the system that are needed to achieve our mission and objectives.

## **DRAFT – Parameters**

1. We will always maintain safe, supportive learning environments.
2. We will not tolerate behavior that is demeaning or disrespectful to any individual or group.
3. School improvement plans will always be consistent with the strategic plan of the District.
4. No new program or service will be accepted unless it is consistent with the strategic plan, benefits clearly justify the costs, and provisions are made for professional development and program evaluation.
5. No program or service will be retained unless it provides an optimal contribution to the mission and benefits continue to justify the cost.
6. Student performance on the Illinois Standards Achievement Tests (ISATs) will always compare favorably with other high-achieving districts.
7. Absent dire unforeseen financial circumstances, the District will honor its commitment to not seek a referendum before 2017.
8. We will always maintain programming that addresses the academic, social-emotional and physical development of the whole child.