



Developing a Shared Vision for the Lower Merion School District

School Board Presentation
Strategic Plan Summary

May 11, 2009



LOWER MERION SCHOOL DISTRICT

STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

- Mission, Vision, Values



- Strengths & Needs



- Goals



- Strategies



- Activities

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Parents / Community Members
- Teachers
- Students
- School Administrators
- School Board Members



**AFFIRMING THE
MISSION, VISION, AND
SHARED VALUES**

THE MISSION OF THE LOWER MERION SCHOOL DISTRICT

Committed to excellence and continuous improvement, the Lower Merion School District strives to ensure that all students achieve their highest level of critical thinking and creativity, that they value themselves and the diversity of others, and that they are knowledgeable, contributing citizens capable of excelling in a rapidly changing world.

This is accomplished by individuals engaging in innovative, active experiences tailored to myriad ways of learning and in partnership with our community.

VISION OF THE LOWER MERION SCHOOL DISTRICT

Students are our reason for being. We create an environment designed to fulfill the individual learning needs and aspirations of each student. LMSD develops active partnerships at all levels of our learning community and values the individual contribution of each member.

We view learning as a dynamic, innovative collaboration. Individuals learn best when their hearts, minds, and spirits are intimately engaged in the learning process.

Enter to learn. Go forth to serve.

CORE VALUES OF THE LOWER MERION SCHOOL DISTRICT

We believe that:

- All people have equal intrinsic worth.
- People learn in different ways and at different rates.
- Each person bears responsibility for the well-being of society and the quality of the environment.
- Learning occurs everywhere and is a life long pursuit of knowledge, truth and wisdom.
- High quality public education directly benefits the entire community and is essential for a democratic society.
- The responsibility for learning rests primarily with the individual; however, education is the shared responsibility of the student, home, and family, school and the entire community.
- Individuals learn best when actively engaged in the learning process.
- Excellence demands sustained effort.
- All individuals can be successful learners.
- High expectations yield high results.
- Society benefits when individual rights are balanced with social responsibility.
- Ethical conduct is essential to the quality of life.

LMSD Identified Strengths

- Infrastructure
 - Community
 - Adaptability
 - Human Component
 - Resources
 - Programs
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LMSD Identified Needs

- Communications/Connections
 - Attention to Diversity
 - Develop Engaged Learners
 - Collaboration Time
 - Healing Community
 - Global Approach
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STATE REQUIRED GOALS

- **Four Year Graduation Rate** (for districts that graduate seniors)
 - Graduation rate will meet an 80% threshold and/or show growth
- **Mathematics**
 - At least 56% of all students will be proficient in mathematics, as measured by the annual state-wide PSSA assessments
- **Reading**
 - At least 63% of all students will be proficient in Reading, as measured by the annual state-wide PSSA assessments
- **Student Attendance** (any school that does not graduate seniors)
Student attendance will meet a 90% threshold and/or show growth
- **Student Participation in State Assessments**
 - At least 95% of eligible students will participate in required state-wide assessments



BROAD GOAL AREAS

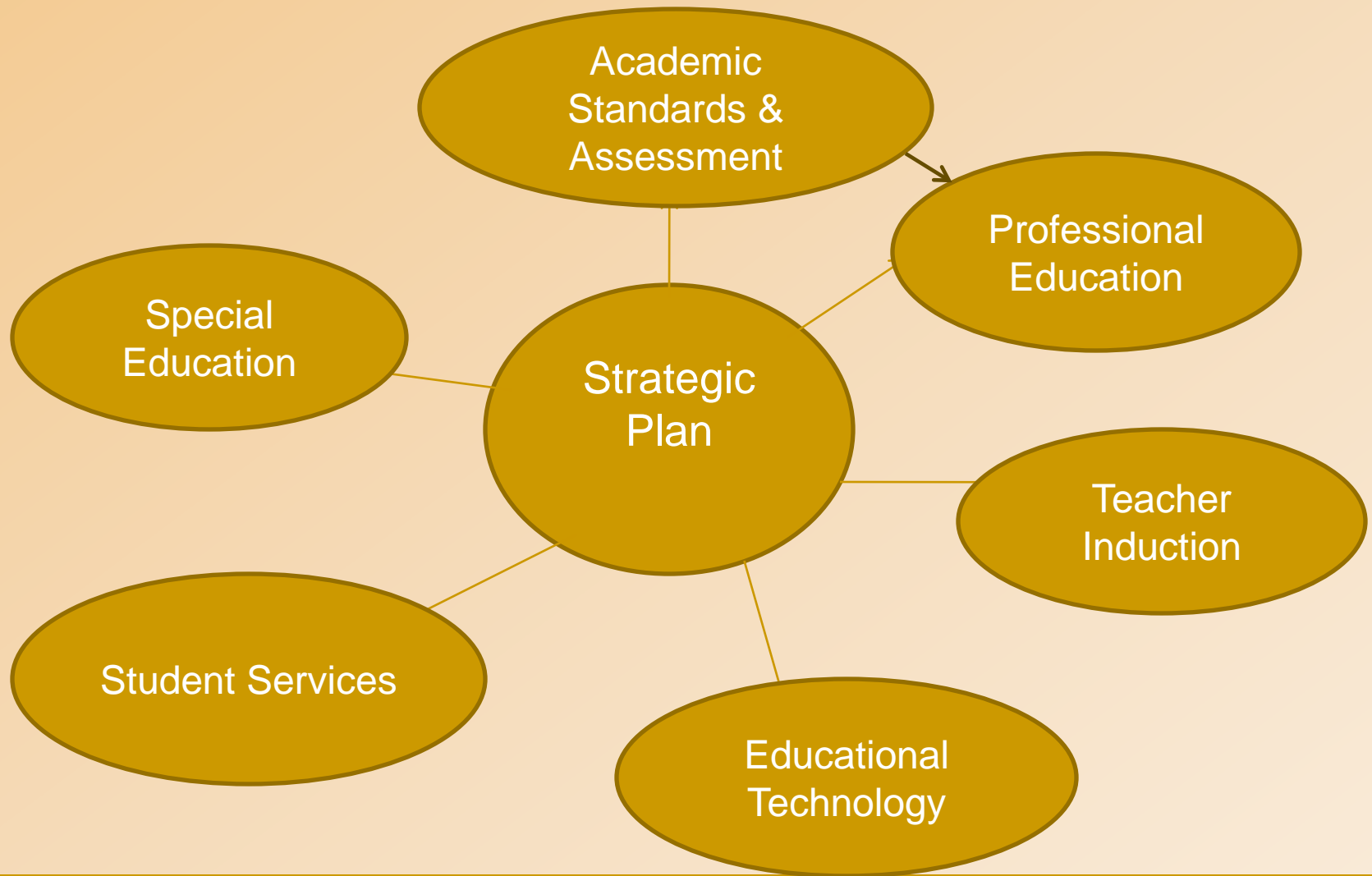
- Curriculum
- Student Achievement
- Achievement Gap
- Mathematics & Reading
- Holistic Needs of Students
- Participation in State Assessments
- Student Attendance
- Graduation
- Communications
- Facilities
- Educational Technology

SUB-COMMITTEES

Providing Recommendations

- Academic Council
- Committee to Address Race in Education (CARE)
- Communications
- Instruction & Curriculum Council/Staff Development Council (ICC/SDC)
- Safety and Health/Green Council
- Technology Office
- Holistic Needs / Graduation
- Others...

STRATEGIC PLAN REPORTS



Linking commences!

Academic Standards
and
Assessments

Professional
Education

Teacher
Induction

Strategic
Plan

Goal

Goal

Goal

- Strategy
- Activities

- Strategy
- Activities

- Strategy
- Activities





Goal : CURRICULUM

Develop and implement an integrated, coherent, culturally proficient and rigorous curriculum with relevant instruction and assessment framework

- Align curriculum (K-12) throughout the district
 - Establish a mechanism to communicate the curriculum and monitor its implementation in order to ensure that it is easily understood and effective
 - Develop a rubric to assess curriculum continuity across grade levels (Elementary, Middle, HS), to be measured at the time of transition from one level to the next
 - The development and revision process will emphasize critical thinking, problem solving, and prediction skills in the curriculum that would be futuristic in scope, differentiated for individual needs, authentic and engaging for all students
 - Increase teacher collaboration time for meeting curriculum development for such things as common planning, data analysis, joint learning opportunities, common scoring, transitional meetings, and inclusion of students with diverse learning needs resulting in more informed instruction in the classroom
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Curriculum Action Plans

- Academic Council, Staff Development Council (SDC), & Instruction & Curriculum Council (ICC)

Recommended Actions Include

- Refine secondary curriculum revision cycle and restructure the elementary curriculum revision cycle
- Provide training for efficient and effective data analysis
- Construct instructional units & effective lessons emphasizing critical thinking, problem solving and prediction in all content areas
- Demonstrate Differentiated Instruction, Cooperative Learning and brain research strategies across all content areas
- Improve teachers' knowledge and application of sound pedagogical strategies in all content areas
- Introduce & reinforce the LMSD Standards for teaching framework
- Align curriculum through concept mapping process in all content areas
- Uniformly create, implement, and monitor effective pedagogy in all content areas
- Articulate a curriculum using a web-based application to facilitate collaboration among teachers across subjects, grade levels and schools
- Explore additional opportunities for teacher collaboration



Goal : STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

To sustain and increase the number of students achieving at the proficient and advanced levels in the PSSA across all grade levels and content areas

- Identify other measures of academic success that surpass the expectations of the Pennsylvania Assessments (e.g., ERBs, CBAs, IB, AP, PSAT, and SAT scores)
- Identify percentage of disengaged learners based on survey of HS/MS/ES professional staff, students, and parent(s)/guardian(s). The District will research appropriate tools to identify levels of student engagement/disengagement. The District will identify steps based on the data and research to reduce the population of disengaged students. The target number for decreasing disengaged learners will be determined after gathering baseline data on student engagement/disengagement each year.



Student Achievement Action Plans

- Academic Council
- Staff Development Council (SDC)
- Instruction & Curriculum Council (ICC)

Recommended Actions Include

- Explore additional opportunities for teacher collaboration
- Develop and implement district common assessments
- Introduce & reinforce LMSD standards for teaching framework
- Conduct workshops/trainings on diversity and culturally proficient teaching strategies
- Demonstrate Differentiated Instruction, Cooperative Learning and brain research strategies across all content areas
- Increase focus on school culture; grouping practices, relationships between students, teachers, administrators and parents; and culturally relevant curriculum and assessment strategies
- Expand learning opportunities outside of the classroom



Goal : ACHIEVEMENT GAP

To significantly decrease and/or eliminate the achievement gap for all African-American students, and for other groups of students where data show the gaps exist

- Addressing and identifying the needs of African-American students to decrease and/or eliminate the achievement gap.
- Addressing and identifying the needs of students in identified groups to decrease and/or eliminate the achievement gap.
- Provide necessary training for data collection of information on current performance of African-American students. Identify students' current levels of performance and identify those students performing at or below the level of their peers. Create building level action teams to address particular student needs and ways to enhance their understandings of content to increase achievement in those areas.
- Provide necessary training for data collection of information on current performance of students in identified groups. Identify students' current levels of performance and identify those students performing at or below the level of their peers. Create building level action teams to address particular student needs and ways to enhance their understandings of content to increase achievement in those areas.
- Improve grades for African-American students.
- Improve grades for students in identified groups.
- Increase enrollment of African-American students in higher level courses.
- Increase enrollment of identified groups in higher level courses.



Goal : ACHIEVEMENT GAP

To significantly decrease and/or eliminate the achievement gap for all African-American students, and for other groups of students where data show the gaps exist

- Increase high school attendance rates for African-American students.
- Increase high school attendance rates for students in identified groups.
- Increase high school graduation rates for African-American students.
- Increase high school graduation rates for students in identified groups.
- Increase the number of African-American students participating in the gifted support program.
- Increase number of students in identified groups participating in gifted support program.
- Increase SAT and ACT scores for African-American students.
- Increase SAT and ACT scores for students in identified groups.
- Increase the number of African-American students attending and graduating from higher education institutions.
- Increase the number of students of identified groups attending and graduating from higher education institutions.



Goal : ACHIEVEMENT GAP

To significantly decrease and/or eliminate the achievement gap for all African-American students, and for other groups of students where data show the gaps exist

- Provide mentoring for viable career paths as an integrated part of the educational experience of the African-American student.
- Provide mentoring for viable career paths as an integrated part of the educational experience of the students in identified groups.
- Meeting or exceeding the mandated Pennsylvania PSSA proficiency levels for African-American students.
- Meeting or exceeding the mandated Pennsylvania PSSA proficiency levels for students in identified groups.
- Provide support to parent(s) /guardian(s) of African-American students to assist in addressing academic achievement needs.
- Provide support to parent(s) /guardian(s) of identified groups of students to assist in addressing academic achievement needs.



Achievement Gap Action Plans

- Committee to Address Race in Education (CARE)
- Academic Council
- Staff Development Council (SDC)
- Instruction & Curriculum Council (ICC)

Recommended Actions Include:

- Increase counselor intervention through monitoring student course selection triggered by close examination of grades and standardized test scores
- Model clustering process used for World Language enrollment for African-American students to other areas of the curriculum, and do so for all groups of students where achievement gaps are identified
- Conduct specialized educational programs and enhance student advisories to address student holistic needs
- Use personalized education plan and individual (electronic based) portfolio to engage students and parents(s), guardian(s) in process of making all students successful and graduating within five years of starting high school
- Develop intervention strategies
- Utilize data-driven instruction
- Provide parent(s)/guardian(s) workshops



Achievement Gap Action Plans

(continued)

Recommended Actions Include

- Regular review and audit of school policies and practices
- School based student services team review student portfolios
- Employ alternative cognitive assessments
- Increase participation in enrichment activities
- Conduct workshops and training on diversity and culturally proficient teaching strategies
- Demonstrate Differentiated Instruction, Cooperative Learning and brain research strategies across all content areas
- Provide training for efficient and effective data analysis
- Uniformly create, implement, and monitor effective pedagogy in all areas
- Expand learning opportunities outside the classroom
- Provide opportunities for student visitation to colleges
- Provide career awareness mentorship opportunities – career awareness programs, career & college fairs, career symposium
- Survey parent(s)guardian(s) of African-American students and parents of students in other identified groups



Goal: MATHEMATICS & READING

By 2014 all students attending LMSD will demonstrate proficiency in reading/mathematical skills as measured by the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)

- The development & revision process will emphasize critical thinking, problem solving, and prediction skills in the curriculum that would be futuristic in scope, differentiated for individual needs, authentic and engaging for all students
- Align curriculum (K-12) throughout the district
- Identify other measures of academic success that surpass the expectations of the state assessments (e.g., ERBs, CBAs, IB, AP, PSAT, and SAT scores)
- Increase teacher collaboration time for meeting curriculum development for such things as common planning, data analysis, joint learning opportunities, common scoring, transitional meetings, and inclusion of students with diverse learning needs resulting in more informed instruction in the classroom



Mathematics & Reading Action Plans

- Align Curriculum through Concept Mapping Process in all content areas
- Refine the secondary curriculum revision cycle and restructure the elementary curriculum revision cycle
- Construct instructional units and lessons emphasizing critical thinking, problem solving and prediction in all subject areas
- Demonstrate Differentiated Instruction, Cooperative Learning and brain research across all content areas
- Improve teacher's knowledge and application of sound pedagogical strategies in all content areas
- Introduce & reinforce LMSD standards for teaching framework
- Uniformly create, implement and monitor effective pedagogy in all content areas
- Develop and implement district common assessments
- Articulate a curriculum using a web-based application to facilitate collaboration among teachers across subjects, grade levels and schools



Goal: Address Holistic Needs of Students

To further the goal of creatively developing a school and community environment that recognizes and addresses the holistic needs of our students, i.e., mental health, character, citizenship, self worth, etc.

- Student stress and mental health should be assessed at a broad level in order to consider interventions in a proactive manner.
- The need for student character and citizenship development , (as well as the importance of ‘digital citizenship’) should be considered by a collaborative team of district stakeholders and integrated in the curriculum and policies of the district as found needed and appropriate.
- Every student’s sense of self-worth and belonging needs to be taken into account when developing and implementing district programs, policies, and practices.

Holistic Needs of Students Action Plans

- Committee to Address Race in Education (CARE); Academic Council; Staff Development Council (SDC); Instruction & Curriculum Council (ICC)

Recommended Actions Include

- Identify data collection methods necessary to determine student stressors and mental health needs
- Establish a systemic process to review and share data collection
- Conduct specialized educational programs and enhance student advisories to address student holistic needs
- Develop crisis management and student support procedures
- Consider needs of parent(s)/guardian(s) and include parent(s)/guardian(s) in cross-curriculum development process
- Identify and utilize cross-curriculum opportunities to integrate character and citizenship lessons and programs
- Connect every child to some staff/school community member
- Include self-worth and belonging needs in all curricular scope and sequence descriptions



Holistic Needs of Students Action Plans

Introduction to Student Services

(continued)

- Use available data to identify student stress and mental health needs
 - Develop curriculum for high school American Government class
 - Establish relationships with PennCORD & National Constitution Center
 - Provide materials focused on Citizenship and Learning
 - Provide professional development to increase use of PennCORD and other citizenship materials in the classroom
 - Provide guidance for all students to develop appropriate and effective digital citizenship
 - Ensure inclusive stakeholder representation as policy is adopted
 - Conduct workshops/trainings on diversity and culturally proficient teaching strategies
 - Integrate classroom lessons addressing holistic needs of students
 - Adopt and implement a research based character/citizenship program(s) and implement at every grade level
-



Goal: STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN STATE ASSESSMENTS

At least 95% of eligible students will participate in required state-wide assessments

- Meet or exceed the rate of student participation in state assessments with comprehensive use of communications and incentives for students.
- Meet or exceed the rate of student participation in state assessments with comprehensive use of communications with parents(s) and guardian(s)
- Promote higher participation rate at approved private schools and other approved educational settings with comprehensive communication plan to school administration and students



Student Participation in Statewide Assessments Action Plans

■ Student & Curriculum Services

Recommended Actions Include

- Communication and incentives for students to ensure very high participation in PSSA testing
 - Communication with approved educational settings with "attributed" district students to assure very high participation in PSSA testing
 - Communication to parents concerning state assessments
-



Goal: **STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

Student attendance will meet a 90% threshold and/or show growth

- The District will establish, review and uphold policies that maintain a safe and secure learning environment. Students will feel safe, secure and be cognitively, behaviorally and emotionally engaged. A program will be developed and monitored through professional development on anti-bullying and harassment programs as well as diversity awareness.
- Administrators and staff will continue to develop intervention strategies based on the regular review of student data including attendance, educational engagement, academic performance and achievement, disciplinary data to identify students in need of intervention.



Student Attendance Action Plans

■ Student & Curriculum Services

Recommended Actions Include

- Conduct regular review and audit of school policies and practices
- Develop intervention strategies to identify students in need of intervention



Goal: GRADUATION RATE

100% of LMSD students will graduate from high school within 5 years of starting high school

- Articulate a comprehensive plan for 100% of LMSD students to graduate from high school within five years of starting high school by developing a personalized educational plan for all students starting in seventh grade and being supported every year for six years throughout secondary school
- Dual Enrollment Program opportunities will provide students with post-secondary training with opportunities to earn college credit



Graduation Rate Action Plans

■ Student & Curriculum Services

Recommended Actions Include

- Use personalized education plan and individual (electronic-based) portfolio to engage students and parent(s)/guardian(s) in process of making all students successful and graduating within five years of starting high school
- Explore opportunities for enrolling and participating in Dual Enrollment Program



Goal : COMMUNICATIONS

To create open communication channels for all district stakeholders including parents, students, community members, staff, and board members

- Ensure that all District stakeholders (Parent(s)/Guardian(s), teachers, students, community members, etc.) have adequate access to a wide variety of technological resources
- Create an atmosphere where everyone's voice is heard
- Ensure all stakeholders have access to District information



Communication Action Plans

- Communications Sub-Committee
- Academic Council

Recommended Actions Include

- Access to computer and internet
 - Establish partnerships with business & community resources to provide access on as need basis
 - Utilize existing resources
 - Website tutorial
 - Listening & responding to stakeholders
 - Town Hall forums
 - Assess stakeholders' understanding of district programs/resources
 - Communication policy
 - Communications training
 - Network of key communicators
-

Goal: FACILITIES

Provide facilities to insure high quality educational programs while reducing the impact on the environment

- The district will adopt a green cleaning program whose goal will be to clean facilities in a manner that reduces negative health affects to occupants
- Complete the capital program to build two new high performing green high schools and renovate the District Administration Building.
- Improve Facility Planning and Preventative Maintenance Operations
- The district will reduce overall energy usage in its buildings. The district will reduce energy usage by a percentage to be determined after further study. It will also seek to have at least five schools achieve the EPA Energy Star certification not later than the end of 2013.
- Adopt a purchasing policy that seeks to purchase products that have a reduced impact on the environment.
- Recycle and/or compost materials to reduce the amount of waste being hauled to landfills.
- Review and refine the practice of employing alternative fuel vehicles in department operations.



Facilities Action Plans

- Operations
- Joint Health and Safety
- Green Council

Recommended Actions Include

- The district will implement other measures to improve Indoor Environmental Quality as outlined in the LEED for Existing Building rating system
- The district will strive to meet the green cleaning criteria established in LEED for Existing Buildings in all buildings not later than 2013
- Complete LEED Applications
- Monitor Energy Consumption
- Conduct periodic facility assessments and incorporate shortcomings into a 5 year plan
- Increase preventative maintenance efforts
- Adopt a School Board Energy Policy
- Benchmark Energy Performance Using EPA Energy Star Tools

Facilities Action Plans (continued)

- Implement an Energy and Environmental Awareness Program throughout the District
- The district will avoid purchasing products that may release harmful levels of chemicals such as VOC's or harmful refrigerants
- The district will purchase energy saving appliances, electronics and other products labeled with the EPA Energy Star where available
- The district will purchase products with reduced packaging and transportation requirements
- The district will seek to purchase products made of renewable and/or recycled materials whenever possible
- Expand efforts to compost waste generated at schools
- Increase the current amount of material being recycled
- Implement the use of bio-fuels
- Transition to the second generation of CNG buses and support vehicles

STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS



Progress reported to the Board and Public during the following meetings:

- February 17th – Business Meeting
- March 4th – Curriculum Meeting
- March 9th – Education Meeting
- March 16th – Business Meeting
- April 13th – Education Meeting
- April 22nd – Curriculum Meeting
- April 27th – Business Meeting
- May 11th – Education Meeting

Important Dates

- January 25th and February 3rd - Strategic Plan Committee Meetings
- May 6th - Committee Reconvened
- May 11th - Plan Presented to Board and Public
- May 13th --- June 12th - Plan Available for Public Inspection
- June 22nd - Plan Approval

Thank

You!!!



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