

Imagine
2014

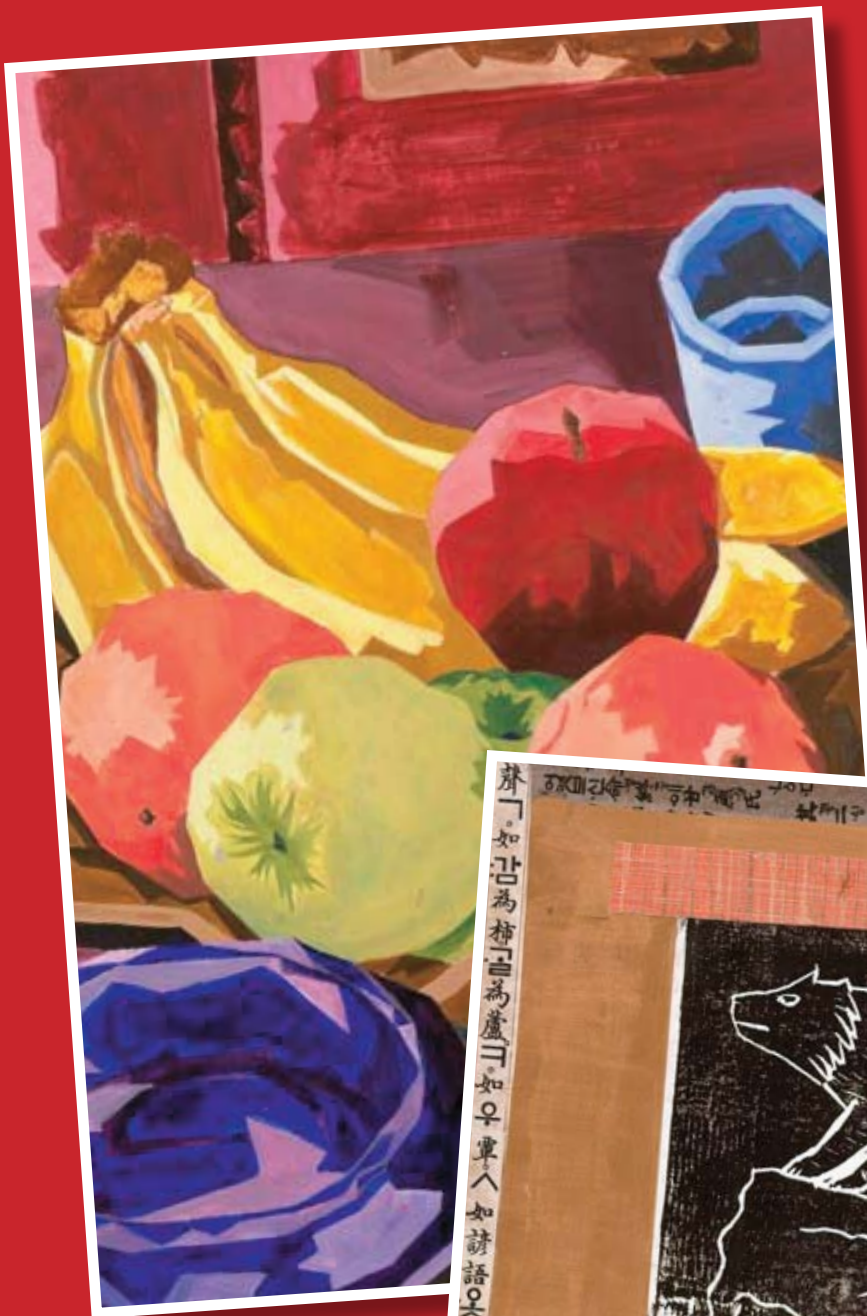


Building a System of Great Schools

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*Thank you to the wonderful artists of the Philadelphia schools
whose work is featured throughout this report.*



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Imagine a great city system of schools in which teachers, principals, parents, staff, policymakers, and the entire community collectively focus all energy, efforts, planning and development, resources, and initiatives on building a 21st-century culture of achievement ... where children come first, excellence is the norm, talent is nurtured, opportunities are made equal, and success is measured by the steady improvement of teaching and learning in classrooms system-wide ... resulting in accelerated student progress ... a school system in which all students succeed, families have many quality choices, the staff is great, adults are accountable, and world-class operations support the entire enterprise.

Getting Back to Basics

Countless individuals, community groups, and organizations from inside and outside the School District of Philadelphia generously participated in shaping a strategic direction for our schools for the next five years. This plan is really about getting *back to the basics*. Almost 30 years ago, Dr. Ron Edmonds said, “We already know everything we need to know about how to educate all children well. The question is ... do we have the will to do so?” The question is just as timely today: Do we, the adults in this community, have the political will to provide our children with a decent education? If we truly believe that every child in every Philadelphia classroom deserves an education equal in quality to the opportunities found in neighboring districts, we have our answer. The children deserve no less than our very best. Our vision is based on five goals:

- 1. STUDENT SUCCESS:** So that students will grow each year and graduate with the academic skills necessary for success in college, work, and life, we will provide specialized services, comprehensive supports, transition services, and high-quality instruction through ...

Instructional Best Practices

- Clear and uniform teaching standards and expectations for teachers
- Professional development on differentiated instruction, academic rigor, and using data to inform instruction
- Teams of teachers working collaboratively
- Model classrooms for observing highly effective teachers in action
- Coaches or master teachers for all schools





Early Childhood Education

- Regional Centers with early developmental screening, pre-school and parent classes, and take-home learning packets
- Early Childhood Centers in selected high schools
- Common standards for entry into kindergarten



Elementary Schools

- Supports for all students reading below the 40th percentile
- Gifted and talented programs
- Art and music instruction in all grades
- Regional Talent Centers where students can explore artistic, cognitive, and athletic interests
- Smaller class sizes (kindergarten: 20 students to 1 teacher; grades 1–3: 22 to 1)



Middle Schools

- Personalized learning environments through team teaching and “looping” for English and math teachers in which teachers stay with students more than one year
- Additional guidance counselors (150 to 1) who remain with students for three years
- Longer eight-period schedule to provide additional opportunities for exploration and enrichment



High Schools

- Three additional Career and Technical High Schools and one small high school to prepare future Philadelphia teachers
- More guidance counselors (200 to 1) who remain with students for four years
- Restructured school day to include seven periods plus an eighth period for remediation and enrichment
- Personalized learning environments through individual graduation plans for every 9th grader and looping for English and math teachers



- Student Success Centers in every high school
- Intramural athletic programs in all high schools
- Additional re-engagement programs, work-based experiences, SAT and ACT prep classes, dual-enrollment opportunities, and Advanced Placement (AP) and honors courses



All Schools

- Early warning indicator system to support struggling students
- Regional Newcomer Welcome Centers to support new immigrant students
- Greater support for special education learners through inclusion whenever possible and implementing the Individualized Education Plan process with fidelity
- Safe learning environments with clear expectations, supports, and interventions
- Stronger parent and family engagement through ongoing communications, Parent Resource Centers, Parent University, and respect for different cultures and languages
- Stronger strategic partnerships with foundations; government agencies; businesses; colleges; and alumni, non-profit, community-based, and faith-based organizations

2. QUALITY CHOICES: To give our students every chance to be successful, we will build a system of schools in which success is rewarded and failure is not tolerated by ...

- Implementing a performance management system with uniform high standards and expectations to evaluate *all* schools – District, charter, and contract schools – and holding them accountable for student achievement
- Rewarding high-performing schools with greater autonomy and replicating their success (Vanguard Schools)
- Continuing to provide additional supports to struggling schools (Empowerment Schools)
- Embracing bold new educational approaches (both internal and external) with proven success when restructuring and transforming consistently low-performing schools (Renaissance Schools)
- Providing quality choices to students and parents and ensuring their participation in key decisions

3. GREAT STAFF: To have a talented staff that reflects the diversity of our student body, we will ...

- Recruit the best candidates in a timely way so that all schools are fully staffed with great teachers, principals, and staff
- Open an Office of Teacher Affairs as a hub to support, inform, and advocate for teachers – from hiring to retirement
- Create Professional Development Centers where teachers, administrators, and all other staff can go to receive professional development and training tailored to their individual needs
- Create leadership institutes for all teachers, principals, and support staff aspiring to leadership positions in the District
- Implement a new standards-based evaluation process for teachers, principals, District support staff, and managers

4. ACCOUNTABLE ADULTS: To ensure that all employees understand the depth and breadth of their accountability for the success of our children and schools, we will ...

- Implement performance measurements for all schools and departments and tie evaluations to meeting system-wide goals
- Publish annual progress reports for all schools and the District
- Design strategic compensation packages to reward high performance
- Identify and require common standards of professionalism

5. WORLD-CLASS OPERATIONS: To provide the best business and operational practices that equitably support our educational mission, maximize efficiencies, and minimize costs, we will ...

- Create a forward-looking Facilities Master Plan to address “right-sizing” and the fair allocation of resources
- Build a District-wide information and telecommunications network that is effective and efficient
- Balance and align the annual budget with District goals
- Develop a weighted student funding formula to ensure equity

Realizing Imagine 2014 will require a commitment from all of us – all who are capable of encouraging, challenging, teaching, supporting, inspiring, and celebrating the children of Philadelphia. We welcome your contributions to our thinking and to our work.

“We already know everything we need to know about how to educate all children well. The question is ... do we have the will to do so?”

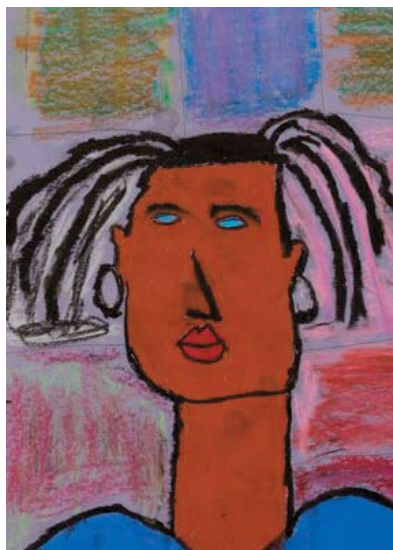
— Dr. Ron Edmonds

This plan builds on the successes of the School District of Philadelphia’s past while articulating a new chapter in its future, representing a strategic direction for our schools for the next five years. It is based on the School Reform Commission’s Declaration of Education Goals (see page 63) and extensive input from community forums, stakeholder meetings, several working groups, recommendations from the superintendent’s transition team, the expertise of school District staff, and best practices from around the country and the world.

While the School District of Philadelphia has made progress over the past seven years in improving student achievement, we recognize that we must accelerate that progress for our students if we want them to become successful in their future endeavors and productive citizens of a global society. We also recognize and cannot continue to tolerate the insidious opportunity and achievement gap that remains for too many of our students, and we must work to eradicate that gap. As we work to increase achievement and close this opportunity and achievement gap, we must celebrate and embrace the multicultural diversity of our students and families. We must put in the supports and systems that will lead to accelerated student achievement. We must work to allocate resources equitably across the District in schools and for students. We also must hold the adults accountable for the success of our students because we know the critical role that adults play in bringing about that success.

We chose a single word to create a picture of what all these significant but separate actions will achieve. It is a word that most every child can respond to easily: *Imagine*.

Imagine our schools in 2014. When we succeed in implementing this plan, we will see ...



... a great city system of schools in which teachers, principals, parents, staff, policymakers, and the entire community collectively focus all energy, efforts, planning and development, resources, and initiatives on building a 21st-century culture of achievement ... where children come first, excellence is the norm, talent is nurtured, opportunities are made equal, and success is measured by the steady improvement of teaching and learning in classrooms system-wide ... resulting in accelerated student progress ... a school system in which all students succeed, families have many choices, the staff is great, adults are accountable, and world-class operations support the entire enterprise.

In the following sections of this strategic plan, you will find more detailed descriptions of the schools we imagine. We have organized our thinking into five overarching priorities:

Student Success. We will ensure students graduate with the academic skills necessary for success in college, work, and life.

Quality Choices. We will build a system of great schools in which success is supported, replicated, and rewarded and failure is not tolerated.

Great Staff. We will recruit, develop, and retain talented people who reflect the diversity of our student body.

Accountable Adults. We will hold all adults accountable for delivering on our promises to children.

World-Class Operations. We will use world-class business, operational, and communication practices that support teaching and learning as we maintain what works, implement change, and introduce new approaches that help our students succeed.

If we are to realize in 2014 what we can now imagine, it will take a commitment from all of us – all of us who are capable of encouraging, challenging, teaching, supporting, inspiring, and celebrating children. The children of Philadelphia deserve no less than our best.



Superintendent's Core Beliefs

- Children come first.
- Parents are our partners.
- Victory is in the classroom and facilitated by a strong instructional leader.
- Leadership and accountability are the keys to success.
- It takes the engagement of the entire community to ensure the success of its public schools.

Guiding Principles

- Increasing achievement and closing the opportunity and achievement gap for all students
- Ensuring the equitable allocation of all District resources
- Holding all adults accountable for student outcomes
- Satisfying parents, students, and the community

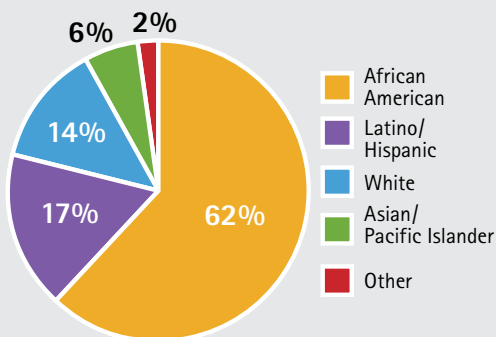


Although some Philadelphia schools have made important and inspiring progress in the past several years, too many students are still not benefiting from the world-class education that they deserve. The demographic and metric data below and on the next page offer a snapshot of our community, where we stand, and how far we still must go to achieve the challenging goals advanced by the *Imagine 2014* five-year strategic plan.

Snapshot of Students, Teachers, and Schools

Students

195,411 Total (including charter students)



76% Low income

7% English language learners

15% Special education

17% Increase in students needing English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services since 2001 (includes charter schools)

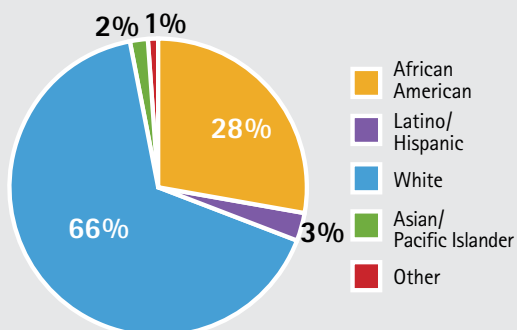
7% Increase in students needing special education services since 2005 (includes charter schools)

Teachers

10,709 Total

44 Average age

13 Average years of experience in the District



Schools

347 Total

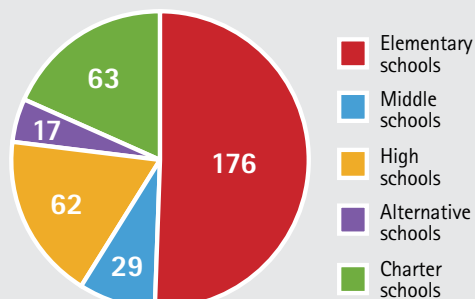
66 Average age of buildings

25 Buildings that are more than 100 years old

11 New schools built in the past 10 years

5 New schools currently in construction

43,500 More seats than students



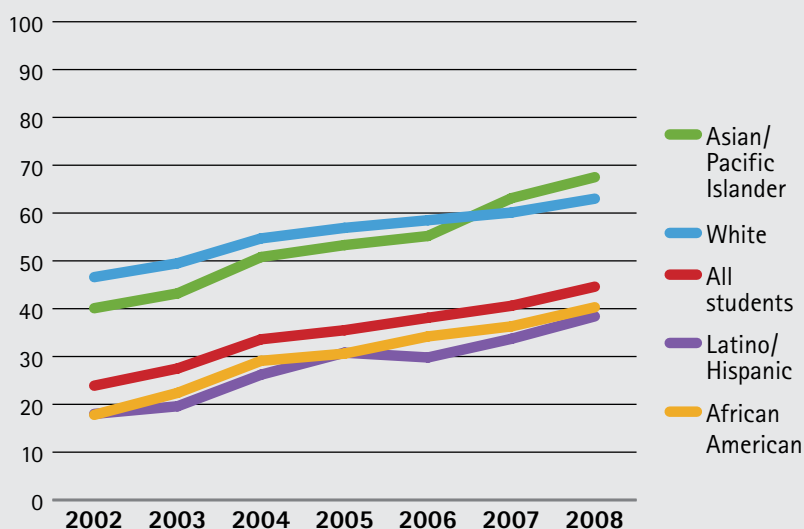
Our Metrics

- 43%** Schools making Adequate Yearly Progress
- 74%** Children entering kindergarten who have attended pre-school
- 52%** 3rd grade students who are proficient in reading (based on PSSA)
- 33%** 11th grade students who are proficient in reading (based on PSSA)
- 52%** 11th grade students who are below basic in math (based on PSSA)
- 28** Percentage point gap between white and Asian students and African American and Latino students in PSSA math proficiency
- 390** Average SAT I Verbal score for seniors in 2006–07 (state average: 488)
- 398** Average SAT I Math score for seniors in 2006–07 (state average: 498)
- 3,720** Approximate number of this year's 9th graders repeating 9th grade for the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd time
- 7,500** Average number of students with unexcused absences on any given school day
- 20** District schools on the state's Persistently Dangerous Schools list
- 146** Teacher vacancies on the first day of school
- 52%** Retention of new teachers after three years
- 39** Number of National Board Certified teachers

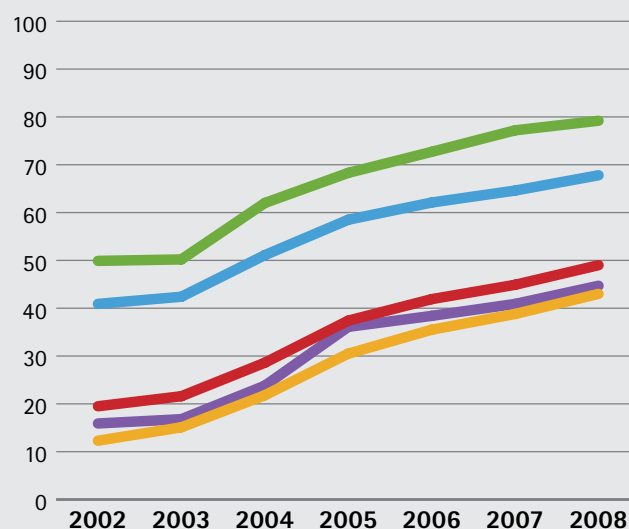
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT VARIES WIDELY BY RACE/ETHNICITY

Percentage of Students Advanced or Proficient on PSSA

Reading



Math





We intend to accelerate the progress that we have seen over the past seven years and to fully develop a system of great schools that serve all children.

We know we will be successful when every parent has the opportunity to send their child to a neighborhood, career and technical, charter, arts, or any other school and knows that the school will be a great school.

Flowing from the vision and commitments in the School Reform Commission's Declaration of Education, we define our theory of action as a "System of Great Schools that Serve All Children." Our theory of action is an aligned set of strategies that support our guiding principles:

- Increasing achievement and closing the opportunity and achievement gap for all students;
- Ensuring the equitable allocation of all District resources;
- Holding all adults accountable for student outcomes; and
- Satisfying parents, students, and the community.

A System of Great Schools is founded on the idea that, as a district, we will effectively manage the core of our work – teaching and learning. We will provide all schools with clear expectations and standards that clearly delineate the "what" (i.e., core curriculum, performance outcomes) while giving schools that meet annual performance targets the autonomy to decide the "how" to improve student outcomes. Schools that are successful in accelerating student achievement will be given additional freedom to better serve the needs of their students. We also will seek to partner with the innovative and passionate individuals who have great schools to replicate their programs across the District.

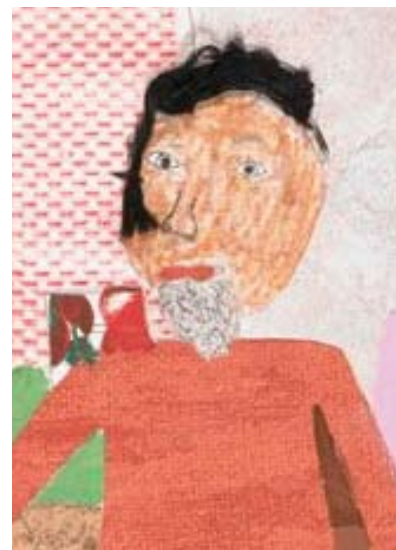
For schools that are failing, the District will intervene with strategies that we know will accelerate student achievement. At the same time, we believe that any individual or organization that knows how to operate successful schools in which children succeed is welcome to compete for the opportunity to turn around failing schools.

Whether a school is District-run or externally managed, all schools within our system of great schools will be held to a consistent set of performance standards that are centered on accelerated student achievement and demand the best education for our children.

The strategies and action steps described in the following pages will not all be implemented in year 1 or even in year 2 or 3, but they will be phased in between now and 2014. Budget realities will play a significant role in determining how quickly we can move ahead in key areas. We are committed to transparency so that the community both understands where we plan to go and can monitor our progress every step of the way.

As the adage states, “what gets measured gets done.” That makes it all the more important that (1) we are measuring the right things and (2) that the community – including all school employees – is crystal clear about what success looks like and the progress it should expect from year to year. To that end, we have developed a series of outcome goals that will be measured and reported on every year showing the progress toward the 2014 targets (see next page). In addition, we will set process goals every year that will clearly indicate the parts of the plan we will be implementing that year. For example, process goals for the first year of implementation might be to open one Regional Talent Center and to reduce class size in kindergarten to a certain number. These process goals will be clearly delineated at the beginning of every school year. We will use the following schedule to announce these goals and report on our progress in reaching them yearly:

- **October:** Set and report on outcome and process goals for the school year.
- **March:** Publish mid-year progress report.
- **September:** Publish year-end report card as well as individual school report cards for the previous school year.



Our Annual Report Card

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

ANNUAL REPORT CARD

BASELINE 2008

440 N. Broad St. - Suite 301, Philadelphia PA 19130
 Arlene C. Ackerman, Superintendent, aackerman@philasd.org, 215-400-4100

347 Schools Enrollment: 195,411

English Language Learners: 7%
 Special Education: 15%
 Mentally Gifted Program: 3%
 Low Income: 76%

African American: 62%
 Asian: 6%
 Latino: 17%
 White: 14%
 Other: 2%

INDICATOR GUIDE

- ⊕ Target Hit
- ⊕ Target missed, positive growth
- ⊗ Target missed

↔ out of 24 targets met

Student Achievement

We believe that, in everything that we do, children come first. Furthermore, we believe that all children can learn at high levels and it is our responsibility to ensure that the achievement gap is eliminated. These performance targets specifically measure the outcomes of the core of our work — teaching and learning.

↔ out of 8 targets met

PSSA Proficiency - Math
 PSSA Proficiency - Reading
 Achievement gap - Math
 Achievement gap - Reading
 Grade 3 PSSA Reading proficiency rates
 Graduation rates
 Percentage of students dropping out
 Percentage of students enrolling in post-secondary education

2008 BASELINE	2014 TARGET	2014 ACTUAL	TARGET MET
49.0%	73%		
44.8%	71%		
28.1	14.9		
24.8	13.2		
51.6%	74%		
53%	75%		
47%	23.5%		
TBD	65%		

School Operations

We believe that, in order to accelerate student achievement, the District must become a high-performing organization. This includes but is certainly not limited to being responsible stewards of our financial resources, ensuring that every classroom and school has effective teachers and principals, and continually striving to become a customer-driven organization.

↔ out of 11 targets met

Percentage of teachers of color in SDP
 Percentage retention of new teachers after 3 years
 Percentage of teachers reporting job satisfaction
 Percentage of principals that rate SDP departments as supportive
 Percentage of schools scoring A or B on Safe Schools Index
 Percentage of schools meeting 80% of performance targets
 Number of schools meeting 80% of performance targets
 Number of teacher vacancies on first day of school
 Number of principal vacancies as of August 1
 Achieve a balanced budget
 Percentage of schools receiving weighted student funding
 Percentage of school buildings in state of good repair

2008 BASELINE	2014 TARGET	2014 ACTUAL	TARGET MET
33.8%	51%		
52%	70%		
N/A	80%		
66.2%	82%		
TBD	90%		
N/A	80%		
146	15		
10	0		
No	Yes		
0%	100%		
TBD	95%		

Community Satisfaction

We believe that parents and families are our partners and play a critical role in the education of our children. In order to accelerate student achievement, our District must provide excellent services to parents and families and actively inform these stakeholders of the options available for their students.

↔ out of 5 targets met

Percentage of families that grade their school as A or B on annual survey
 Percentage of parents that are satisfied with their child's teacher
 Percentage of parents that are satisfied with their child's principal
 Percentage of parents that agree that their child's school engages parents effectively and values their input
 Percentage of families that feel they have access to quality school options

2008 BASELINE	2014 TARGET	2014 ACTUAL	TARGET MET
N/A	90%		
N/A	90%		
N/A	90%		
N/A	90%		
N/A	90%		



All enrollment data are from September 2008. Some percentages may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

TBD: Baseline to be determined

N/A: Not applicable in baseline year

Over a six-week period between late February and early April, Philadelphians turned out morning, noon, afternoon, and evening to learn about *Imagine 2014*.

Some attended large-scale community meetings where they heard presentations about the broad goals of the plan and then chose to discuss one goal area in more detail. Some heard the conversation with the assistance of translators, who made the plan understood in six languages. Others participated through meetings of their organizations, such as City Year and Project U-Turn Collaborative, or at roundtables for parents, student government, faith-based organizations, and university faculty. By April 4, thousands of parents, students, staff, and community members had weighed in on the first draft.

Their comments and questions were captured by facilitators and scribes at each session and then reviewed by District staff to determine the overall response to the plan as well as recommendations for change. Overall, there is overwhelming support for the plan and the content of the five goals.

Parents and teachers alike are pleased to see class size reductions in kindergarten through 3rd grade and the integration of 21st-century skills into the core curriculum. There is acknowledgment of the need to create an early warning system and provide a second chance for students who have dropped out of school, to communicate better with parents so they know how to support their children, and to accelerate efforts on recruiting highly effective teachers and providing incentives to keep them teaching. High school students applauded reduced class sizes at the elementary level – and would like to see the same at the high school level – and demonstrated their own analytical ability by asking the question: What is the research that says these are the things we should be doing?

Participants providing feedback generally had fewer concerns about *whether* a strategy should be implemented than *how* it might be achieved. There are many questions, for example, about how the District will ensure all students have quality choices and how this plan will result in closing the achievement gap.

Some comments and questions that were voiced are included verbatim in this document to illustrate concerns and issues of interest.

The plan has been modified to incorporate changes in word and deed: wording changes to reinforce a point or to clarify a strategy, as well as changes resulting in additional actions or emphasis, such as more counselors at the elementary level, expanded opportunity for middle school students to take world languages, and changes in schedules at

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high schools that result in smaller class sizes. In the public meetings, participants expressed the most interest in discussing strategies for Student Success but also for Quality Choices and Great Staff, so more changes are visible in these sections of the plan.

Student Success

As noted earlier, this plan is about getting back to the basics – and good teaching is a fundamental basic for student success. A new emphasis in the plan is instructional best practices, with the creation of uniform teaching standards and expectations for teachers that will guide teaching and learning in the classroom.

Basic, as well, are textbooks in core subject areas and quality libraries where students can access reading materials and resources. A nourishing breakfast and lunch are essential, so breakfast and lunch programs will be expanded.

Remembering that the end goal of graduation is college and work, there is an added focus on transitions after high school, not just transitions between levels such as elementary to middle school. Curriculum changes will reflect this focus as well, with rigorous curriculum linked to real-world and field experiences that prepare students for life after high school. Those real-world experiences will become even more valuable with improvements at current career and technical education schools.

There is an added emphasis on incorporating purposeful writing across content areas.

Special education students will have access and opportunities to participate in school activities, and students attending summer school will have enrichment opportunities as well as academic classes.

Attendance is a basic expectation for students – daily attendance and truancy reduction will be a shared priority in the City, with attendance teams monitoring truancy and implementing re-entry plans at each school.

The voice of parents will be heard as more opportunities are provided for decision-making at schools.

Quality Choices

The notable change here is clarifying what quality choice means so that the public understands the different school models and the input parents, students, and the community will have in the process.



Great Staff

Teacher effectiveness is a key factor in student success, and much of the input in this area is incorporated in the new Instructional Best Practices section in Student Success. This includes greater specificity on what professional development for educators will include, professional development for substitute teachers, and emphasis on all teachers teaching core curriculum so that expectations for what students should learn are consistent across schools.

BROAD OUTREACH



Civic/Government

- Governor
- Philadelphia Legislative Delegation
- Mayor, along with his Cabinet and Commissioners
- City Council



Community

Public Meetings

- March 3: East
- March 12: West
- March 19: South
- March 23: Northeast
- March 26: Southwest
- March 31: North/Northwest
- April 4: Central/Central East

Group Meetings

- Accountability Review Council
- City Year
- Council for College and Career Success

- Delaware Valley Grantmakers
- Education Compact
- EPIC Stakeholders
- Faith-Based Organizations Roundtable
- Latino Community Meeting
- Philadelphia Education Fund
- Philadelphia Student Union
- Project U-Turn Collaborative
- University Partners Roundtable
- Working Groups
- Business Partners Roundtable

Students/Staff

- Student Government Roundtable
- High School Student Meetings with Youth Commission (2)
- Philadelphia Federation of Teachers Union Representatives
- Teacher Meetings by Regions
- City-Wide Principals Meeting
- Central Office Staff Roundtable
- Union Representatives



Imagine...

- All children enter kindergarten with a quality early childhood experience, ready to learn and succeed in school
- All children enter every grade on level
- A district where all students are excited to attend school every day
- A district where the opportunity and achievement gap is closed for all students
- All students have access to comprehensive enrichment, including arts, music, and athletic programs during the day, after school, during the summer, and on Saturdays
- All students have a work-based experience by 12th grade
- All students who want to go to college are ready to do so
- Students who are at risk of falling behind or dropping out of school are identified early and provided the supports they need to succeed
- Students have multiple and convenient options to return to school and graduate

Quality Instruction at All Levels

Common sense and current research tell us that quality instruction is key to student learning. A recent study from New York City, for example, credits well-qualified teachers with reducing the achievement gap between schools serving the poorest students and those serving more affluent students. In today's schools, instruction has advanced far beyond what we encountered in the past. Teachers must be sufficiently knowledgeable about the subjects they teach to make learning both relevant and challenging for every child. Relevant learning demands up-to-date curriculum focused on what we all know to be "the basics" – but it extends to what will be basic in the 21st century, including technological and global literacy. To master these skills, students must become active participants in their own learning and have opportunities to learn in multiple ways that reflect the diversity of the student population.



Instructional Best Practices

We will provide teachers with the skills and supports they need to be highly effective in accelerating student achievement.

- Establish clear and uniform teaching standards and expectations for teachers that will serve to guide teaching and learning in classrooms.
- Use evaluations based on the teaching standards to provide targeted, individualized professional development and supports for teachers as well as incentives for high performance.

*"Improve training/orientation for new teachers and include instructional strategies and strategies to deal with behaviors, conflict resolution, classroom management, and safety techniques."**

**The quotations and questions in this report come from community meetings held in March and April.*

- Continue our professional development focus on differentiated instruction, academic rigor, and the use of data to inform instruction to provide teachers the support they need to teach the core curriculum.
- Provide substitute teachers with targeted professional development to provide them with the information and skills to be successful in the classroom.
- Establish a Peer Assistance Program for new and struggling teachers.
- Enhance new teacher induction to provide new teachers with the orientation and information they need to succeed in the classroom.
 - Begin induction in the summer prior to teaching as well as throughout the school year.
- Create teams of teachers at every school to work collaboratively on aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment to improve student achievement.
- Create model classrooms in which potential teachers still in college, student teachers, and other teachers can observe highly effective teachers in action.
- Focus the efforts of teacher leaders on supporting classroom teachers in implementing the three professional development strands: differentiated instruction, academic rigor, and using data to inform instruction.
- Identify coaches or master teachers for all schools that support the school's academic goals.

Early Childhood Education



“What are the criteria for early childhood centers? Will they be income or guideline driven?”

We will provide a solid foundation in pre-school learning to give all children the social and academic experiences that will enable them to start school prepared for success.

- Create Regional Early Childhood Centers.
 - Use developmental screening to determine levels of need in cognitive development, social and emotional development, speech and language development, fine motor skill development, and gross motor skill development for students during their first three years.

- Identify children with developmental delays and provide support to them and their families, including giving them first priority in the Regional Early Childhood Centers.
- Provide monthly learning packets for families of children with developmental delays.
- Provide home visits to families of pre-school students to provide specific training on successful interventions that can be used in the home.
- Provide language assistance for English language learner (ELL) pre-school children and their families.
- Establish Early Childhood Centers in selected high schools to provide quality early care for children of high school students and District staff.
- Develop and distribute to pre-school, day care, and home care providers common standards for kindergarten entry.



Elementary Schools

We will provide every elementary school student with the academic, co-curricular, cultural, and behavioral supports for academic motivation and commitment to high achievement.

- Provide support to help all elementary students be proficient in reading by 3rd grade.
 - Use multiple assessment tools to identify students who need targeted reading interventions.
 - Provide students reading below the 40th percentile with the opportunity to receive half-hour daily lessons for 12–20 weeks from specially trained teachers.
 - Improve reading fluency and comprehension of ELL and elementary students with language deficits by using guided oral reading instruction and building sight word knowledge in order to recognize words quickly when reading.
- Make art and music classes available in all elementary schools.
- Provide parent ombudsmen, student advisors, and social service liaisons in each elementary school to identify students and families in crisis for early wrap-around services.

“What is meant by ‘support’ for below 40th percentile?”



- Make gifted and talented classes available in all elementary schools.
- Decrease student to counselor ratio to 500 to 1.
- Reduce class sizes.
 - Kindergarten – 20 to 1
 - First through 3rd grades – 22 to 1



Middle Schools

“Our schools must teach more challenging subject areas while the students are eager to learn.”

We will focus on strengthening teachers’ skills in meeting the needs of early adolescents and supporting principals of middle grade students.

- Create structured personalized environments, using a variety of team teaching structures, such as three- or four-member teacher teams, to meet the wide developmental needs of all students.
 - Group staff and students into smaller communities (i.e., teams, houses, academies) for enhanced teaching and learning.
 - Provide common planning time for team teachers.
 - “Loop” English and math teachers, so teachers can stay with students for more than one year to ensure continuity and personalization.
 - Ensure a ratio of one guidance counselor for every 150 students.
 - Provide every student with a mentor, advisor, advocate, or other adult who stays connected to that student throughout the middle grades experience.
 - Schedule eight periods a day to support academic, elective, and career exploration for students. The extra time will allow for exploration and enrichment beyond the six core subject areas of reading, math, science, social studies, physical education, and arts or music.
- Create structured environments that also teach life skills, such as money management and work and study skills.
 - Incorporate well-developed procedures and routines for effective classroom management in every classroom.
 - Facilitate learning by teaching study and organizational skills to all students.



High Schools

We will create high schools that will share a common emphasis on engaging instruction, personalization, teamwork, and rigorous preparation for college and careers.

“There should be continuation of reading through high school.”

- Open three additional Career and Technical High Schools in collaboration with the community trade unions, health institutions, and bio-tech industries and also improve current career and technical programs.
- Open one small high school dedicated to preparing future Philadelphia teachers.
- Provide one grade-level counselor for every 200 students, who would stay with each group of students for all four years.
- Personalize learning by giving students a sense of ownership over the direction of their learning.
 - Create individual graduation plans for every 9th grader, including career assessment.
 - Assign an adult advocate for each student to help him or her navigate the educational experience.
 - Create advisories in all high schools.
 - Loop 9th and 10th grade English and math teachers to allow them to stay with their students for more than one year to ensure continuity and personalization.
- Develop flexible scheduling and student grouping patterns.
 - Create master schedules that allow for intervention courses, credit recovery, or enrichment.
 - Schedule seven periods a day (eighth period for remediation), which will provide greater opportunities and flexibility for students as well as decrease class sizes.
 - Schedule students so that they work as a group with a team of teachers.
 - Institute standards-based credit acceleration and assessments so that students can move through high school at their own pace.
 - Use online resources that create more flexible learning opportunities.

“All high schools should offer college preparatory courses.”

“Add night school to the trade school program.”





“Change core curriculum to interest the students and increase engagement. Make lessons more active and modify for student needs.”

- Establish Student Success in every high school, which would provide opportunities for students to prepare for, choose, and apply to college.
- Increase the number of opportunities for students to participate and succeed in dual-enrollment courses and early college experiences.
- Use academic supports to help students prepare for ACT and SAT testing.
 - Use SAT/ACT test prep kits.
 - Offer SAT/ACT test prep throughout the school year.



Core Curriculum

We will narrow the gap between the “adopted curriculum” and the “taught curriculum” by equipping all faculty with the content and instructional skills that challenge students, build on their interests and strengths, and stimulate curiosity and critical thought.

- Redesign the Pre-K–12 core curriculum to improve instructional practices in all content areas (Pre-K, K–8, high school) and ensure high-quality instruction.
 - Incorporate instructional practices, such as the use of cooperative learning, inquiry-based instruction, thinking maps, project-based learning, simulations, hands-on learning, and integrated technology, into the core curriculum.
 - Update English language arts, math, science, and social studies curriculum to be more integrated, rigorous, and relevant in preparing students for college and career opportunities.
 - Link the core curriculum to real-world and field experiences to provide students with instruction that is relevant to their everyday lives and reflects the diversity of the student population.
 - Incorporate purposeful writing across different content areas.
 - Expand the opportunity for students to take world languages as early as middle school and increase the diversity of languages offered.
- Integrate 21st-century skills into all aspects of the core curriculum:
 - Accountability and adaptability, which encourage students to accept responsibility and develop the ability to adjust to changed circumstances.
 - Communication skills, which promote the art of effective speaking and writing.

- Creativity, intellectual curiosity, and problem solving.
- Critical thinking and systems thinking, which help students analyze and evaluate situations.
- Information and media literacy skills, which encourage reading and writing in a variety of forms.
- Interpersonal and collaborative skills, which encourage teamwork.
- Social responsibility, which encourages a concern for the good of a larger group (family, neighborhood, city, etc.) as opposed to the individual alone.

Specialized Services and Programs

Who will teach the child who only understands “imagine” when it looks like this: **Представьте** ? Who will teach the child who sees the letters backward? What will we do to challenge the student who can read the word “imagine” in 1st grade? Our students are incredibly diverse. We must consistently apply research on meeting the needs of ELL students, special education learners, and gifted and talented learners – so that all of our teachers are prepared to help each and every student be successful.



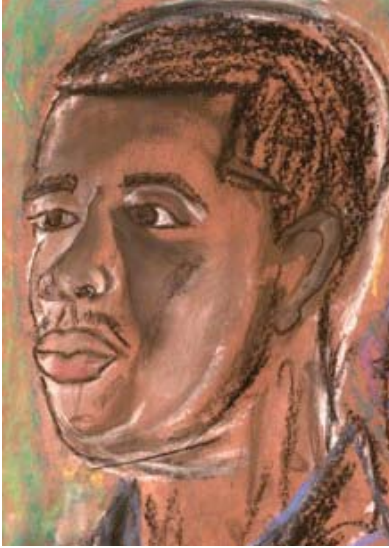
English Language Learners

We will narrow the achievement gap between native English speakers and our English language learner (ELL) students and help their families to support their academic success and cultural integration.

“We need more and stronger bilingual programs. There’s a concern that they have disappeared.”

- Create an articulated curriculum (Pre-K through 12th grade) complete with standards and benchmark assessment and exit timelines.
- Select and implement a research-based structure for transitional bilingual, maintenance bilingual, and dual-language programs.
 - Provide students with a transitional bilingual program in which the home language is taught until the student’s proficiency in English has been sufficiently developed to allow him or her to participate successfully in all-English classrooms.
 - Provide maintenance bilingual programs for students who are native speakers of another language.





“I suggest bilingual classes in grades 1-4 and then transition after that.”

“English language learners need to have tutoring and mentoring daily.”

- Offer in every region dual-language programs that provide varied kinds of instruction, such as language arts instruction in both program languages, instruction on literacy skills (such as phonics and fluency) along with opportunities to read literature in both languages, and ample time for student interaction (such as through the use of cooperative learning), allowing students to practice their new language skills with their peers.
- Open three Regional Newcomer Welcome Centers where immigrant students can receive intensive transition supports in instruction and community engagement for up to one year. New students and their families would be connected to resources, information, programs, and services that promote self-sufficiency and multicultural understanding.
- Identify and designate geographical pathway schools that can serve as feeder schools for ELL families, if they choose.
- Provide professional development for all teachers so that they can become proficient in teaching ELL students, and provide opportunities for regular education teachers to become certified to teach ELL students.
- Use a variety of instructional methods so that teachers connect whatever students are learning with words, numbers, pictures, music, or interpersonal experiences.
 - Provide varied methods of instruction that allow students to have classroom discussions while reading and writing.
 - Provide meaningful instruction in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies by transitioning Limited English Proficient (LEP) students toward higher academic achievement while they reach English fluency.
 - Use a number of techniques with ELL students, such as adapting texts, emphasizing key vocabulary, connecting new learning to prior knowledge, and providing opportunities for interaction across the content areas.

- Include ongoing, intense, and effective professional development initiatives in the training of teachers, administrators, support staff, and regional personnel in research-based ESOL and bilingual programs.
- Provide teachers, administrators, support staff, and regional personnel with the skills necessary to support students in a supportive and culturally sensitive environment.
- Provide teachers, administrators, support staff, and regional personnel with a strong foundation in language acquisition as well as content knowledge.
- Provide teachers, administrators, support staff, and regional personnel with training in designing lessons that clearly define language and content and use hands-on activities, vocabulary strategies, and visual clues.

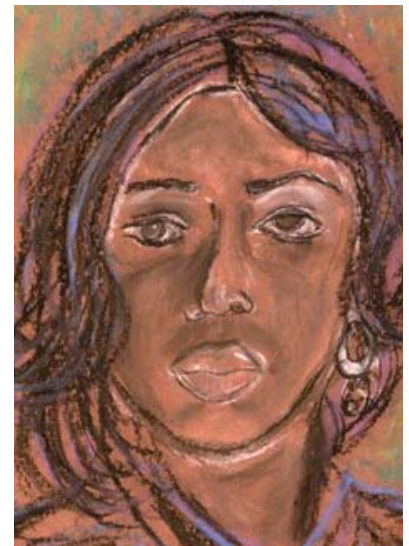


Special Education Learners

We will provide challenging instruction to students with learning challenges to ensure that they leave school well prepared for continued learning and successful employment.

- Implement the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process with fidelity, and annually provide incentives to schools that implement the IEP process with fidelity.
- Provide IEPs that include state standards in the general education curriculum, along with high expectations, focused instruction, and increased exposure to curricular content.
 - Include curricular modifications and accommodations, indicate materials and/or resources that are aligned to the state standards to be used, and create priorities for students as part of all IEPs.
- Use instructional practices that support the learning of special education learners.
 - Make curriculum more accessible to special education students by using strategies such as graphic organizers, think-pair-share, and cooperative learning.
 - Instruct and assess students using a variety of methods, materials, and mediums (visual, auditory, tactile, etc).

“Children with disabilities should be entitled to the same level of academic and emotional support as regular education students.”





“There should be full-time special education classes for students who need them.”

- Use specific criteria to document children’s learning styles and determine the best mediums for instruction (i.e., visual, auditory, tactile, etc).
- Integrate activities and accommodate more than one learning style whenever possible.
- Implement a phase-in model of inclusion whenever possible for special education students.
 - Provide special education learners with special education and general education teachers who plan and deliver instruction together (i.e., co-teaching model).
 - Provide a collaborative learning experience for special education learners through the co-teaching model.
 - Provide special education learners with access and opportunities to participate in school activities.
- Provide ongoing professional development for all teachers to support the inclusion of all students with special needs.
 - Provide school staff with training on how to analyze learning experiences to determine the best use of different instructional methods.
 - Provide school staff with training on a variety of teaching methods.
 - Provide school staff with training on the co-teaching model and the benefits of collaborative planning and teaching to enhance student learning.
- Re-introduce regional Transition Coordinators who will coordinate existing resources to provide information, training, and technical assistance to families and students as they transition from grade to grade and into the work world or post-secondary education.
- Re-introduce the Behavior Shaping Resource Unit, which will provide techniques to deal with challenging behaviors in “real-world” situations, especially home, school, and social program environments, for all educators, parents, coaches, social workers, or anyone responsible for supervising and educating students.



Gifted and Talented Learners

We will ensure that our highest academic performers from all backgrounds have access to stimulating instruction so that they can excel at the highest levels.

- Expand gifted and talented programs at elementary schools.
- Increase opportunities for students to participate and be successful in honors and AP courses by offering those courses in all high schools.

Comprehensive Supports and Programs for All Students

If school is truly a time for personal exploration and development, students need timely guidance from counselors to plan their futures. And they deserve a full menu of programs to allow them to explore their interests: athletics and intramurals, leadership workshops, music, dance, drama, debate, and work experiences for a start. For many students, it is making music or making a touchdown that keeps them in school and making progress on the academic front. If school fails to hold the student's interest, there must be interventions from the school, families, and City agencies to engage the student again, and programs and schools that offer a better fit.



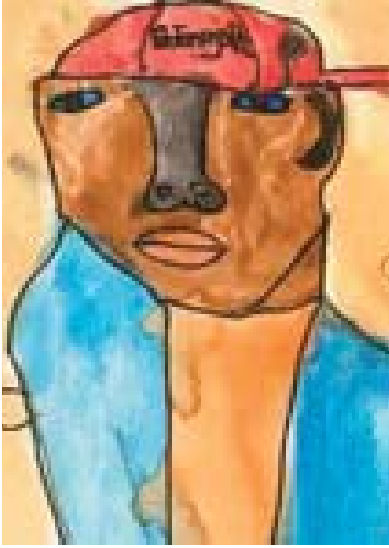
Guidance and Counseling

We will ensure that every student receives the behavioral and academic supports and career and college exploration opportunities they need *outside* the classroom to be successful *inside* the classroom.

- Provide students with accessible and high-quality academic counseling, mental health services, and support programs that include partnerships with community agencies, business and industry, and colleges and universities.
- Provide academic counseling that helps students and their parents learn about curricular choices and plan a program of study to reach post-secondary opportunities.
- Provide career counseling about work, jobs, and apprenticeships.
- Provide personal and social counseling to help students resolve conflicts, define individual goals, and understand themselves and the needs of others.

“Provide more guidance counselors for students who want to go to college and more guidance for career planning.”





“We need to better engage and motivate students to stay in schools.”

Athletics

We will recapture the motivational value of sports in children’s lives, expanding participation at all skill levels and emphasizing the values that develop character.

- Offer intramural programs at all middle schools and high schools.
- Create athletic programs that focus on preparation, maintaining a positive attitude, and establishing high standards of conduct and attitude.
- Teach students about teamwork and sportsmanship.

Student Leadership

We will expand opportunities for students to serve their schools and communities and acquire the habits of citizenship that will make them student leaders now and adult leaders in their communities and workplaces in the future.

- Develop leadership opportunities for students at all middle schools and high schools.
- Ensure participation at all schools in student government organizations.
- Implement student retreats, service learning projects, and school-based opportunities throughout the school year.

Remediation and Enrichment

We will expand the school day and school year to provide students with cultural and academic experiences that make them well-rounded creators and learners.

- Provide “easy-to-access” opportunities for enrichment during the summer, after school, and on Saturdays.
 - Create Regional Talent Centers in partnership with fine arts organizations in the community.
 - Partner with community organizations, business and industry, and colleges and universities to provide families with enrichment activities outside of the school day.



- Solicit support from organizations and philanthropic foundations to provide musical instruments and equipment for students in need.
- Expand summer school so that students have enrichment opportunities in the afternoon in addition to academic classes in the morning.
- Provide students with experiences in music, visual arts, dance, and drama as an integral part of their education.

“We need more enrichment activities that appeal to both boys and girls, e.g., rap music, dance class.”
- Adhere to high academic standards, and provide students with exemplars of quality art locally and nationally.
- Showcase exemplary student work.
- Provide before-school and after-school academic support through community and other organizations that address the specific academic needs of struggling students, and use benchmark assessments to hold them accountable.
- Regularly monitor students and customize interventions to meet their individual needs.
- Create focused tutoring sessions that are based on the needs specified in benchmark assessments.



Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Opportunities

We will provide students with programs and activities that supplement their academic learning.

- Create a menu of extra-curricular and co-curricular programs and activities that are aligned to the mission of each school.
- Provide students with opportunities to participate in programs that support core content areas and student interests or encourage entrepreneurship (i.e., math club, Spanish Club, etc.).
- Provide students with opportunities to enhance their performance skills (i.e., band, choir, etc.).



Access to Reading Materials and Resources

We will increase opportunities for students to access reading materials and resources in their schools.

- Increase student access to reading materials and resources by providing library books for classrooms or expanding school libraries.



- Ensure all high schools have quality, functioning libraries.
- Ensure enough textbooks in all core subject areas for all students.



Work-Based Experiences

We will introduce every student to the world of work and the requirements of successful employment and career mobility.

- Ensure work-based opportunities for all high school students.
- Provide career exposure beginning in elementary school and continuing throughout the middle and high school years, with a focus on internships, apprenticeships, and career exploration activities.
- Implement Career Academies in all comprehensive high schools.



Re-Engagement Programs

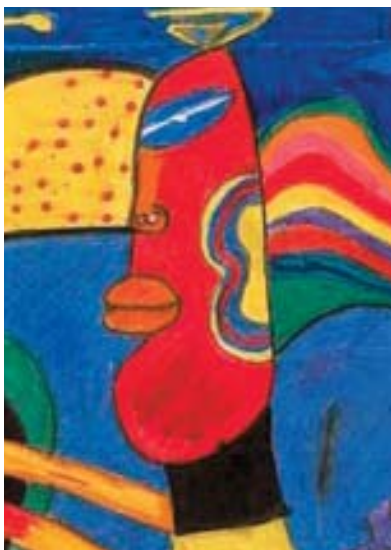
We will seek out dropouts, provide them with multiple options for returning to school, and connect them to the support services they need to enable them to focus on school success.

- Offer a wide range of research-based school options for out-of-school youth, including increasing the number of students enrolled in Accelerated Schools; developing options for students with varied learning styles, scheduling needs, and skill levels; and opening additional Re-Engagement Centers in communities with high dropout rates.
- Create a Talent Development Institute for schools serving out-of-school youth to help train administrators and teachers in designing quality programs to meet these students' needs.
- Implement a school report card system to track and report on the progress of re-connected youth.
- Hire and train Street Outreach Teams in local communities and launch a Youth Outreach Corps through which students can earn internship stipends and elective credits to reach out and re-engage dropouts.
- Educate parents of disengaged youth about re-engagement and school completion options, establish partnerships with family and community groups to support youth re-engagement, and partner

"Begin career exposure in 8th grade. Starting in 11th and 12th grades is too late."

"Instead of out-of-school suspensions, alternative programs could be more effective in changing behavior."

"Students who drop out should have an opportunity to re-enter. A second chance for students means everything."



with the City and community-based organizations to actively perform street outreach and school connection.

- Increase collaborations with City agencies to provide facilities and programs.
 - Partner with the City's Department of Human Services (DHS) to identify resources to assist with youth re-engagement.
 - Provide a service map of all City-funded resources in schools and school communities to redirect services toward youth re-engagement.
 - Hire and deploy DHS staff to serve as case managers in new, satellite Re-Engagement Centers.
- Monitor and evaluate external partners who provide accelerated programs to ensure our students are receiving the academic supports and services they need to succeed.



Health Education

We will provide physically challenging activities and help students acquire lifelong habits of healthy living through exercise, nutrition, and preventive health care.

- Institute a healthy eating program for elementary school students.
 - Use a healthy eating assessment tool to create a plan of action for the school.
 - Create a healthy eating promotion program for elementary schools that is based on peer teaching from older to younger school children ("Healthy Buddies").
- Implement a well-balanced and comprehensive physical and health education program that contributes to the physical, mental, social, and emotional development of students.
 - Create and implement an organized set of policies, procedures, and activities designed to protect and promote the health and well-being of students and staff, including health education, a healthful school environment, and health services.
 - Develop a recommended healthful living plan for students and staff.
- Expand breakfast and lunch programs so that all students have access to a healthy breakfast and lunch at their schools.

"Implement healthy school lunches in public and charter schools."



"The future is now, so we must have more warning systems."

Early Warning Indicator System

We will respond quickly to situations that predict subsequent dropping out so that students can get back on track with minimal loss of academic momentum and school motivation.

- Develop an early warning indicator system for all students in elementary, middle, and high schools. The system will incorporate the following indicators: attendance, academic achievement in math and reading/English, and student behavior.
- Train regional superintendents, principals, assistant principals, and school-based case management team members in using this system, and provide monthly reports to regional superintendents to measure progress toward removing barriers for students.
- Use the early warning indicator system for school-wide, targeted group, and individual student planning.
- Use the early warning indicator system to monitor and evaluate school success by reviewing school progress toward reducing the number of students exhibiting at-risk behaviors at the school and regional levels.
- Evaluate principals and regional superintendents based on reduced numbers of students exhibiting at-risk behaviors.
- Inform parents and students about the early warning indicators, what they may mean for academic progress, and how to create and support an intervention plan. Tools include a City-wide marketing campaign, parent outreach forums, and clearly marked notices to parents with the report cards.



Attendance and Truancy

We will incorporate best practices in improving attendance to short-circuit the association between and among absenteeism, poor grades, and dropping out.

"Explain to students the danger of dropping out and the importance of studying in class."

- Establish attendance teams and develop and implement truancy plans and re-entry plans at each school.
- Ensure that daily school attendance and truancy reduction are shared priorities in the City by aligning resources and providing cross-system training.

- Implement a District and City-wide media campaign focused on the importance of attending and staying in school. Focus on educating parents, students, and communities about the link between school attendance and student success.

Transition Services

Helping students make the transition from where they are to the next level of schooling means eliminating those big fears of the unknown. Summer programs and orientations that give students a chance to learn what to expect help them take the next step with confidence, whether they are moving from elementary to middle school, middle to high school, or high school to college or work.



Pre-K to K, Elementary to Middle School, Middle to High School, High School to College or Work

We will provide students with strong programs and supports during key transition periods to prepare them for continued success.

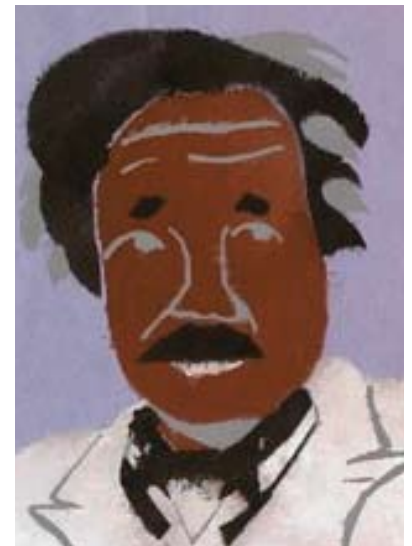
- Strengthen Summer Bridge programs.
 - Pre-K to K: provide all kindergarten students with the opportunity for one-week transition experience the summer before entering kindergarten.
 - 5th to 6th grade: three-day orientation.
 - 8th to 9th grade: three-day orientation.
 - Develop and distribute to students and parents grade-level expectations for academic and behavioral success.
- Use Student Success at high schools, as well as collaborations with strategic partners, to provide smooth transitions for high school graduates to college or work.



Alternative Education

We will provide students returning to district schools from Alternative Education with the supports and services they need to succeed.

- Provide six-month re-entry plans for all students exiting Alternative Schools.
- Designate a guidance counselor for returning students.
- Continue wrap-around services for all returning students for up to six months.



Safe Learning Environment

“How will Single School Culture be implemented?”

Schools must be safe, not just for the peace of mind of parents and families but because developing the mind requires freedom from fear. Life’s important lessons about living in a community are reinforced in schools that have clear expectations on what behavior is okay, what is not, and what will happen when rules are broken and learning is disrupted. Creating a positive, welcoming place to learn is an assignment for everyone – not just the school safety officer, but students, families, educators, and neighbors as well.



Positive School Climates

“Leadership of the school makes a difference in climate.”

We will create positive school climates that provide students with safe environments in which they can focus on learning.

- Implement “Single School Culture” – an effort to engage all adults in a school to take ownership of the learning environment.
 - Phase in implementation of Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) to determine, communicate, and implement climate and safety standards.
 - Recruit, hire, and train a School Climate and Safety Team Leader at each school who will serve as a resident expert in using academic, behavioral, and climate practices to prevent incidents.
 - Implement the Comprehensive Student Assistance Process, an initiative that provides the adults in schools with a forum to discuss student progress and craft supports to help students succeed.
- Monitor and evaluate school environments by developing indicators of high-quality climate and safety; training central District staff to conduct safety walkthroughs and audits and provide feedback, including incident reporting as an indicator on school report cards; and ensuring building security.
- Have the Student Support Team and School Climate and Safety Team frequently review data to identify safety and climate trends.
- Implement Peer Mediation in all middle and high schools.



Supports, Rewards, and Consequences

We will clearly delineate the supports, rewards, and consequences that schools can use to ensure a safe learning environment.

- Provide school staff, students, and parents with clear supports, rewards, and consequences.



- Use the Positive Behavior Supports model to direct resources and attention to the most disruptive and violent students.
- Re-institute in-house suspension for all students in grades 6–12 suspended five days or less. Suspension longer than five days would require written approval by a regional superintendent.
- Monitor and evaluate external partners who are providing alternative programs for students in the disciplinary process to ensure our students are receiving the academic supports and services they need.

Parent and Family Engagement

When families are involved at school, not just at home, children do better in their classes and they are more likely to graduate. But first, families must understand the importance of their involvement and influence, feel welcome to participate, and learn how they can support their children in multiple ways. If they have access to conversations and written materials in languages they can understand, someone to advocate for them at each school, and opportunities to build their own skills, more families will become connected to the school community and engaged in their child's learning.

“How will the District engage parents?”



Clear, Ongoing, Relevant Communication

We will communicate with parents in a way that addresses their diverse needs and backgrounds.

“Have active parent welcome desks in all schools.”

- Provide all parents and families, especially those who have been historically underserved (such as those with language and cultural differences), clear and relevant information on the academic and social progress of their children by continuously surveying parents and families to determine needs and interests.
- Increase the use of the Family Call Center, Family Walk-in Center, FamilyNet, Parent and Community Resource Center, Translations and Interpretation Center, and Auto Dial to improve communication between the District and families.

“We need respectful relationships between teachers and parents, especially when students get into trouble or are always suspended.”



Empowerment through Education

We will provide parents the tools and skills they need to be strong advocates for their children's education.

- Expand the Parent University to empower parents and families by providing them with the skills necessary to advocate on behalf of their children.
- Facilitate parent and family access to key school personnel, such as teachers and principals, by using student support personnel in a coordinated manner to serve as key points of contact for parents and families, providing customer service professional development for all staff who interact with parents and families, and including parent and family engagement measures in all staff performance evaluations.
- Provide differentiated supports for all parents and families, including multilingual families, through the Parent University and Parent and Community Resource Center located in each region. Centers will partner with community organizations to implement targeted initiatives for multilingual families and families of color, develop differentiated communications and workshops, and increase multi-lingual staff to provide targeted outreach and supports to these parents and families.
- Jointly develop a Parent-School-District compact that outlines parent, school, and District expectations of each other.
- Provide more opportunities for parents to participate in making decisions at schools.

Strategic Partnerships

The best partnerships serve both partners well ... and school partnerships are no exception. One of the significant benefits is the exchange of information. Students learn what's expected in the workplace while business people are exposed to different perspectives and the realities of 21st-century schooling. College professors prepare their students to teach in an urban district while student interns bring back their own real-world observations to inform discussions. What makes it strategic is having the right match: the right community partner for the student, educator, school, or District program.



Philanthropic Institutions and Foundations

- Create an Office of Institutional Advancement for Fund Development to seek business and foundation resources that promote and support students, schools, and families.

City, State, and Federal Agencies

- Partner with the City's DHS to provide wrap-around services for students and families at school sites.

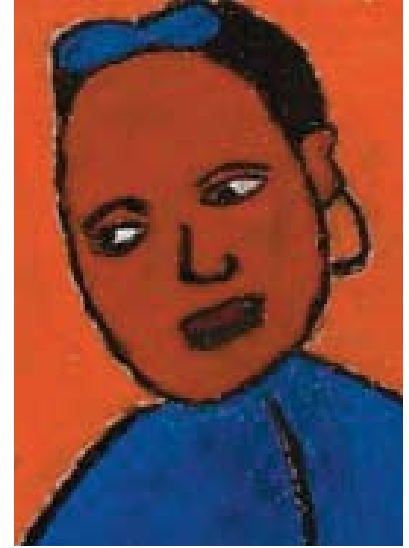




- Establish and sustain local and state government relationships that support the District's education agenda and strategic plan.

Businesses

- Provide a menu of partnership options for businesses.
- Use business partnerships to expose students to careers and provide students internships and career exploration opportunities.
- Establish an executive exchange/on-loan program through which businesses lend key executives to the District with expertise in finance, operations, and other related fields to build capacity.
- Initiate programs such as "Principal for a Day" to draw partners into schools.



Colleges and Universities

- Increase and strengthen schools that work in partnership with institutions of higher education so that they are inclusive of all students.
- Work with colleges of education to build innovative partnerships that prepare and train teachers who are ready to work in an urban public school system.

"Strengthen university partnerships to better prepare student teachers for urban education."



Alumni, Non-Profit, Community-Based, and Faith-Based Organizations

- Build a District-wide alumni association to promote public awareness of the District and engage alumni in networking, fundraising, and contributing expertise to benefit students, schools, and initiatives.
- Establish a City-wide "child advocacy" coalition of parents and community groups to improve children's lives and opportunities while advocating for children and strengthening school-based partnerships.
- Build partnerships with organizations that are targeted toward the needs of particular students, schools, and the District.
- Develop the appropriate systems to track information on established partnerships, grant development, idea and concept development, and other results.



Imagine...

- A system of schools that effectively manage the core of our work — teaching and learning
- A system of schools in which great schools are rewarded and replicated and failing schools are closed or transformed
- A system of schools in which every school is run by passionate and innovative individuals who always put children first
- A system of schools in which any individual, organization, or company that knows how to operate great schools where children succeed is welcome to compete for the opportunity to replicate their programs by turning around failing schools and opening high-achieving schools that meet the needs of Philadelphia's children

Uniform High Standards for All Schools

For the first time, we will establish consistent high standards for all schools (District, charter, and contract schools) and monitor their progress to ensure high academic results for all students. We will reward high-performing schools with greater autonomy as well as opportunities to replicate through transforming failing schools. All schools will be held to the same standards of performance. We will develop standards that recognize the importance of absolute student achievement and also the achievement growth of students in schools.

- Use school report cards, student performance data, and school quality reviews to categorize all District, charter, and contract schools based on their ability to improve student achievement.
- Decide to renew or cancel agreements and contracts with schools based on performance data. Internal and external turnaround providers must meet District targets annually for three consecutive years to ensure a second contract.
- Implement a school rating system to help parents compare the progress of all types of schools to other similar schools.
- Annually monitor the performance of all schools in increasing student achievement for all students, and publicize the results to the community before the beginning of each school year.
- Inform students, parents, schools, and the community why the District is establishing higher standards for schools and how this step will improve student achievement for Philadelphia's children.



“Every school must be a high-quality school.”

A New Model of School Choice

“Will students have a voice?”

Students and families deserve choices. Learning from Philadelphia’s rich history in providing school choice to students and families, we also know that innovation and choice can lead to high-quality school options in the District. We have neighborhood schools, magnet schools, and career/vocational/technical schools. Our community also has many great charter schools born from our past efforts to encourage and support school choice. We also have a vibrant history of working with external partners to provide additional options for students. Where school choice expands high-quality school options for children and stimulates innovation, we will support those efforts.

“What are the different types of school structures?”

We also know that we can get more out of our efforts to provide choice by focusing our work on effectively measuring the performance of all schools and using these assessments to provide families and students with a growing list of excellent school options. The challenge for us is to focus on quality school options and to learn how to better support schools and identify new partners (inside the District or external) who can run great schools. We also recognize that this means making hard choices and that when a school does not work, we must transform it and try different approaches to increasing student learning.

It is time that we stop tolerating mediocrity, failure, or excuses about why we cannot provide great schools and great choices for all families. Our students deserve nothing less. Just as important, students and parents must be able to participate in making decisions about what happens in their communities and at their schools. We will not force decisions on communities, and we will not displace students from their local schools, if that is the option they choose.

“Create policies and procedures that are equitable, particularly around student placement.”

Building on learnings from past reform efforts in Philadelphia and what we know works in other school districts across the nation, we envision four basic school models in our drive to create a system of great schools.



Vanguard Schools

We will reward high-performing schools that help our children succeed. When schools outperform similar schools and continually meet annual performance targets, they will be granted greater autonomy, and we will consider replicating their success.

- Using objective performance data, identify District, charter, and contract schools outperforming like schools in absolute performance and student growth. Such an analysis will help parents compare progress to similar District schools and identify excellent performers.
- Enter into “autonomy agreements” with high-performing schools that define annual performance targets that must be met by schools to operate autonomously and to receive more flexibility in staffing, budgeting, scheduling, and the like.
- Train, provide resources, and support the highest-performing schools to operate more autonomously from the District and/or to replicate their work as successful school choice models with other District schools that have historically failed to increase student achievement.



Traditional District Schools

We will continue to operate traditional District schools and work to ensure that they are provided the basic tools necessary to educate Philadelphia’s children. The multiple strategies of our Student Success goal (pages 19–39) are primarily focused on serving these schools and our Empowerment Schools (next page).

“Are charter schools treated the same?”





“Will students receive similar resources and support in all schools?”

Empowerment Schools

Building on our current Empowerment Schools initiative, we will continue to provide additional supports to struggling schools to help them improve and meet their performance targets. Our goal is to get these schools back on track so that they can better serve children.

- Provide extensive District intervention to struggling schools in multiple areas, including instruction, student support services, operations, teacher effectiveness, and school leadership.
- Implement the remaining goals of our strategic plan so that we better support these schools to continually improve and provide high-quality learning environments for children.



“When will the rubric be presented for failing schools?”

Renaissance Schools

We will transform historically failing schools and embrace bold new educational approaches with proven track records of success that can transform schools. We will work with both internal and external partners as long as they have a proven track record of delivering dramatic improvements in student achievement. We will not experiment on our students, and we will not force solutions on school communities. We are committed to providing every child in Philadelphia a high-quality school. In communities where we have not done that for too long, we will implement our Renaissance Schools model.

“What is the process for developing the [request for proposal]?”

- Identify and recruit qualified *internal* partners, such as a successful principal, a group of excellent teachers, or the teacher’s union, who want to use their expertise and knowledge to transform a Renaissance School (In-District charter school).
- Identify and recruit qualified *external* partners, such as a successful public charter school or education management organization, to transform a Renaissance School.
- Develop performance contracts that hold these providers accountable for meeting specific targets for student achievement gains and absolute performance. Any provider chosen must understand that students who choose to will remain in their school. We support dramatic change in failing schools but not at the expense of displacing students from their local schools.



- Provide a transition year-in-training, resources, and support to prepare providers to effectively operate failing schools and ensure a smooth transition. *“Can the community be a part of governance in schools?”*
- Ensure that school communities are integrally involved in the entire process.
 - Review proposals from internal and external providers to operate schools.
 - Recommend models that will best serve their community.
 - Participate in on-site visits to evaluate potential providers.
 - Participate in the transition process.
- Match school reform models with specific schools and communities to prepare the schools to transition to a new form of operation as Renaissance Schools.





Imagine...

- A district that starts every school year with a full complement of highly effective staff that reflects the diversity of our student population
- A district that recruits and retains the best and brightest teachers, principals, support staff, and managers
- A district that provides ongoing opportunities for staff to enhance skills, talent, and expertise to better serve students

Recruiting the Best

The teaching profession is changing. Beginning teachers are more likely to see themselves as short-timers, moving on to another career within 10 years. They may be replaced in the classroom by a career-changer: a lawyer or engineer who has decided to move to teaching. Recruiting great teachers to the urban workforce will require strengthening pipelines from District schools to colleges and back to the District, while designing programs to attract mid-career professionals.

We will start every school year with a full complement of highly effective employees who reflect the diversity of our students.

- Change the hiring timeline from August to June to fill vacancies in a timely manner before the beginning of the school year.
- Move the timeline for in-District teacher transfers to May to ensure each principal's vacancies are filled in a timely manner.
- Enforce the timeline for teachers and administrators to notify the District if and when they are retiring in a given year. Provide incentives for those staff who adhere to the notification date and consequences for those who do not.
- Develop a pipeline of applicants from the schools of education at local colleges and universities that begin when students are sophomores. Offer contracts to education students in January and February for the following year.
- Identify master teachers and principals who will serve as recruiters to provide onsite interviews and offer contracts at national, state, and local education conferences.
- Install an applicant tracking system that allows us to track candidates from the time they apply for a position until either they are hired or their application is disposed of because they were not qualified for hire.



"We need staff members who are caring, passionate, and excited about teaching in our schools."

"What is the school district doing for teachers who aren't certified?"

“Open a high school to prepare future teachers.”

- Design and regularly conduct onsite central office recruitment, and pre-hire teacher programs that include interviewing, candidate commitment letters, and overviews of District teacher induction and development programs.
- Design a unique “Teach in Philadelphia” program that attracts mid-career professionals and college graduates (engineering, arts, and science), provides pathways to certification (e.g., Praxis Prep, Intern Cert) and District employment, and uses university partnerships.
- Design an incentive program to recruit District high school students who want to teach.
- Tie future New Teacher Project and Teach for America contracts to longevity and performance metrics.
- Design and implement an orientation program that will prepare new hires to understand the District’s culture.
- Design a program for District staff to obtain certification to increase the number of teachers of color.

Retaining Highly Effective Staff

Helping children become capable, conscientious, and contributing members of their communities requires that all of our staff members model those characteristics. Whether we are hiring beginning teachers or school principals, groundskeepers or accountants, we are looking for people who are highly skilled at what they do and committed to learning. Once they have become part of the School District of Philadelphia, it is our responsibility to keep them here: with competitive compensation packages, a supportive work environment, and professional development that helps them continuously improve.

We will implement a comprehensive Talent Development Program that meets the different needs of all staff.

- Create an Office of Teacher Affairs, which will serve as a business hub to support, inform, and advocate for teachers and provide them with resources from hiring to retirement.
- Conduct monthly superintendent–teacher roundtables to create an ongoing dialogue to ensure that concerns and ideas are heard and acted on.



- **Provide quality professional development for all school staff.**

“How is the new professional development in schools going to be different from now?”

- Conduct an annual system-wide survey to identify the developmental needs of all employees, including support staff, and use the results to shape future offerings.
- Create Professional Development Centers where teachers, administrators, and all other staff can go to receive professional development and training tailored to their individual needs. The centers, located in different regions to allow easy access for staff, would provide ongoing training after school, Saturdays, and all summer.
 - Offer training and coursework with topics ranging from classroom management to differentiated instruction to customer service to family engagement so that staff can choose offerings that best fit their needs.
- Design and implement leadership institutes for all teachers, administrators, managerial staff, and those aspiring to leadership positions in the District.
 - Use leadership institutes as an internal pipeline to build and cultivate strong leaders within the District.
- Provide periodic technical training programs (budget, human resources policies, employee relations, database management) to all employees.
- Implement an online tracking system to log professional development activities for all District staff.

“We must improve staff development and continuous support for teaching methods.”

“Build in collaborative time for teachers in their schools.”

Incentives for High Performance

“What is the school district doing to improve ‘CASH’ incentive programs, i.e., value-added incentives?”

Successful recruitment and retention strategies must be based on the realities of urban schools. It is harder to recruit a math, science, or special education teacher than an English teacher. It is harder to enlist teachers to transfer to a school where many students struggle than to move to a school where success seems to come easily. Incentives such as loan forgiveness programs, tuition reimbursement, sabbaticals, and differentiated compensation can help address these realities, while ensuring that we keep our most effective teachers where we need them most: in the classroom.

“The loan forgiveness program is a great idea.”

We will retain highly effective teachers, principals, and support staff with programs and processes that reward and encourage talent, high performance, and leadership succession.

- Introduce a tuition reimbursement incentive program.
- Establish a teacher loan forgiveness program.
- Design and implement a system of financial and non-financial incentives and rewards for tenured teachers (five-plus years in the system) identified as high performing and highly effective through public honors and awards and funded opportunities for personal and professional growth (such as the Harvard Principals Institute, clearly defined and purpose-driven sabbaticals, conferences, and networking forums).
- Design and implement “grow and give back” programs for teachers, principals, and others to share what they have learned with colleagues.
- Design and implement a differentiated compensation scale for highly effective teachers, principals, and staff to provide incentives for meeting critical needs in struggling schools and in hard-to-fill subject areas (e.g., English as a Second Language, math, the sciences, world languages, etc).

Responsive Central Office

Teachers are unlikely to do their best work in the classroom if they are constantly struggling with the human resources (HR) department over everyday issues of pay and benefits. Just as school staff are expected to support the needs of their students, they should be able to count on reciprocal support from central office that is timely and responsive to their needs. As such, central office becomes more of a customer service center than an order-giver.

“The Employees Help Desk should be more helpful.”

We will ensure that the HR department offers “extraordinary” customer service.

“Customer service toward one another during the hiring process should be better.”

- Implement a process improvement plan for each HR department.
- Provide customer service training and re-training for all employees.
- Design a customer experience survey to evaluate the effectiveness of the department and provide directions for change.
- Review and enhance the quality of the District hotline tree to ensure that inquiries are directed to the right people and are responded to in a timely way.





Imagine...

- A district where every employee believes that his or her work is directly linked to the district's core mission and goals
- A district where every employee understands what is expected of them
- A district where excellence is rewarded and mediocrity is not tolerated

Performance Measurements for All Schools and Departments

The best-laid plans are often put aside when there is no clear path forward and no way to measure progress. Philadelphia has a head start on measurement with the use of School Report Cards that include metrics such as student achievement, graduation rates, and customer satisfaction. Next steps will include translating District goals to measurements for each level of the organization: regions, divisions, schools, departments, and individual employees.

We will measure and assess the performance of all departments and individuals toward achieving the District's strategic objectives.

- Translate strategic objectives into tangible performance measurements at the District level. In creating these new metrics, we will build on the existing School Report Cards and include both absolute (performance vs. objective standard) and relative (performance vs. peer group) goals.
- Establish goals and targets for each performance measure that are challenging yet achievable.
- Develop a mix of leading and lagging indicators that reflect a balance between past performance and current measures of progress toward performance goals.
- Cascade the District-wide performance goals down through the organization, from region/division to school/department to individual employees.
- Define links and interdependencies among departments that are necessary to successfully meet performance goals.
- Invest in data and technology infrastructure to facilitate the administration of the performance management system.



"Hold all staff accountable."

"Who will measure performance and how?"

“What are the measures of success beyond test scores?”

“Where is the performance target for music, arts, library science, etc.?”

System-Wide Evaluations Tied to Performance Goals

Performance goals take the guesswork out of employee evaluation and help employees see how their work contributes to the success of their department or school. A balanced evaluation program includes both supports and rewards: supports such as professional development and coaching and rewards such as financial incentives and public recognition.

We will develop and implement an evaluation system with rewards and consequences that holds staff accountable for meeting performance goals.

- Create a program to publicly recognize and celebrate high-performing departments and individuals.
- Provide financial incentives for high performance among individuals through differentiated salary increases, cash bonuses, and career paths.
- Build a system of additional supports for struggling staff, which includes targeted professional development, mentoring and coaching, and supplemental resources.
- Simplify mechanisms to remove low-performing staff who do not improve after receiving additional supports.

Regular Progress Reports

Communicating results is an essential component of the strategic planning cycle. Higher levels of trust result when school districts create a consistent schedule for reporting – honestly and clearly conveying the good news as well as the challenges – and make these reports readily available.

We will regularly report to the public the District’s progress in meeting its goals.

- Report on the progress of individual schools through school report cards.
- Formalize a regular schedule of public reviews on overall District performance, including an annual assessment of prior year performance in August, announcement of current year performance goals and targets in September, and a mid-year progress report in February.
- Facilitate public access to District, region, school, and departmental performance reports through the District’s Web site.



Common Standards of Professionalism

Gracious communication and timely responses to requests are hallmarks of good customer service. School system employees are both consumers and deliverers of customer service. When they are treated with respect and attention to their needs, they are more likely to reciprocate with an equal measure of service to each other, parents, and the public.

“Improve District customer service when dealing with schools.”

We will establish common standards for professionalism and responsiveness to ensure that quality customer service is consistently delivered throughout the District.

- Define minimum acceptable standards for all employees in terms of professionalism and response time.
- Invest in regular customer service training for all employees.
- Embed customer service standards in individual, school/department, region/division, and District-level performance goals.
- Set customer service expectations of District constituents through communication and marketing mechanisms.
- Create an online District management system to track all customer requests, response time, and the quality of each experience for every department and school.



Imagine...

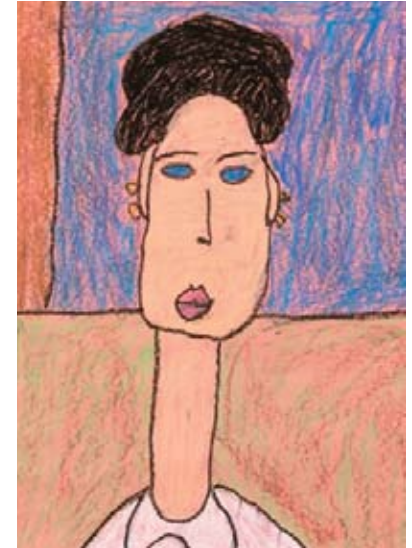
- A school district where resources are distributed in a fair and equitable way to all schools
- A school district where all buildings and grounds are clean, attractive, and properly maintained in a manner conducive to effective teaching and learning
- A school district that is always a good steward of the public's finances
- A school district with the right number of facilities, in the right locations, and with the appropriate instructional layouts that ensure efficiency, effectiveness, and a positive learning environment

Facilities Master Plan

School buildings are the public face of a school district, and their condition is often the yardstick the public uses to measure a school's commitment to excellence. Keeping the community's real estate investment well maintained is a continuing challenge – cleaning, painting, retrofitting, restoring, and remodeling, with limitations on when it can all be done. Keeping up with technology only adds to the complexity, as 20th-century buildings must be upgraded to bring the world into the 21st-century classroom.

We will create a comprehensive, continually updated, five-year facilities plan for the District that is aligned with the *Imagine 2014* Strategic Plan.

- Ensure that all school facilities are maintained and configured to maximize quality teaching and learning.
- Identify, secure funding for, and implement required facilities and technology modernization projects.
- Identify opportunities for more efficient space use through co-location of programs, charter school use of surplus District property, and similar space-sharing strategies.



“Consult teachers and students during the design phase of new schools.”

“Where is the place for parents/ community to visit inside the school?”

We will maintain and modernize District facilities on an equitable and accountable basis.

- Redesign the facilities maintenance work-order system to methodically and equitably rank and prioritize work orders; adopt industry standards for efficiency and best practice in facilities repair and renovation; implement strategies and work processes that meet or exceed those standards; and use real-time data reports on performance to manage resources, improve accountability, and drive more strategic decision-making.

“A clean and neat school means the world to the students.”

- Establish a cooperative planning process for creating, closing, reconfiguring, replacing, and renovating District facilities that ensures that all educational programs have adequate and appropriate space in which to operate in locations convenient to students and their families.

“When technology is available, there are huge differences in student engagement and learning.”

We will provide students and staff with a state-of-the-art information technology environment that enhances learning and improves efficiency.

- Build and efficiently operate a District-wide information and telecommunications network that is continuously upgraded to support communications, instruction, and work processes in the most convenient and effective manner possible.
- Provide schools with the necessary infrastructure to support 21st-century classrooms.
- Acquire, or when appropriate, create instructional media and applications that enable educators to be more effective in teaching, and train teachers to use these media and applications to maximum effectiveness.

Streamlined and Effective Operations

When school districts “sweat the small stuff” (procurement, payroll, facilities, transportation, and similar back-office priorities), it makes it more likely that principals, teachers, and counselors will succeed with the “big stuff” – teaching students to read, write, do math and science, and master other essential skills they will need in the 21st century. A top priority is to maximize the amount of dollars going to schools and classrooms while minimizing the amount spent on bureaucracy and administration.

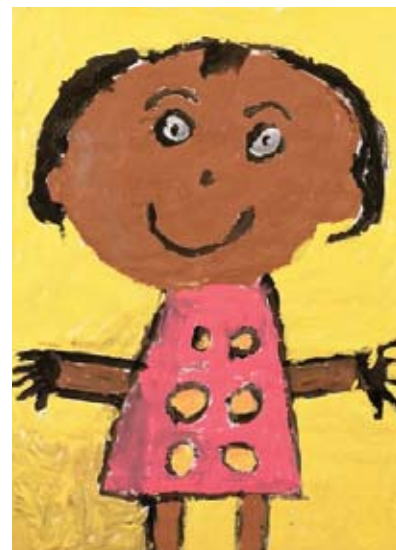
“Who is making the operations action plan? Is it the cabinet, superintendent, consultants, or workgroups (parents, teachers, principals)?”

We will streamline business and service operations to minimize cost, maximize efficiency, provide outstanding customer service, and promote equity in the distribution of resources.

“We need to streamline the bureaucracy so that processes are more efficient.”

- Establish clear performance goals for all finance and operations work units that promote efficiency and transparency, monitor actual performance, compare performance to goals, and develop and implement strategies to improve performance.
- Revise existing policies and procedures to eliminate wasteful or duplicative work and speed transaction processing time.
- Modernize current financial systems to increase ease of use, enable integration with other District work systems, provide timely information, and reduce time spent on administrative tasks.
- Enable school operators to purchase business services from diverse providers when this will improve quality and lower costs.
- Negotiate and manage outside vendor contracts to get the highest quality and lowest cost, and continuously monitor and evaluate vendor effectiveness in meeting the District’s educational and operational goals.
- Ensure that all qualified vendors have an equal opportunity to do business with the District, and encourage the growth of minority and women-owned business enterprises.

“Employ students through internship programs to help with school upgrades and facilities needs (landscape, electrical, technology, etc).”



We will foster open, ongoing, responsive communication between educational staff and operations staff to create a culture of shared responsibility for supporting effective learning environments.

- Increase collaboration, communication, and cooperation between the District's academic, administrative, and financial leaders and staff to ensure that resources are allocated and used in a manner that advances the District's critical objectives, performance is measured and improved, and good customer service is provided.
- Make customer satisfaction a key element in appraising and rewarding performance for financial and operations managers and staff.

Balanced Budgets Aligned with District Goals

One important constraint on “blue-sky thinking” is the prospect of “red ink” in the school district budget. To keep the budget balanced and maintain momentum for innovation, the District must make accurate projections of available resources, set year-by-year priorities that can be accomplished without draining those resources, and relentlessly monitor spending to ensure every dollar is supporting District priorities.

We will develop and implement annual balanced budgets that are aligned with and support the District's strategies and goals.

- Continuously monitor actual year-to-date and projected full-year spending and compare to the budget.
- Identify and correct projected budget-to-actual variances in a manner that does not impair the District's educational progress.
- Report to the District's funding governments and the public how the District's resources are being used in ways that are clear, transparent, and informative.

“What is the decision-making process for the budget?”

“How much is the strategic plan going to cost?”



Weighted Student Funding Formula

School budgets around the country are often based largely on who's teaching (the salaries they earn, which vary by years of experience and teaching credentials) and how many students are in the school. An increasing number of school districts are taking a different approach: factoring in the individual needs of the specific students in the school, not just how many there are. While all schools are provided a base level of support, they receive additional funds for students who require more extensive services. In addition to changing funding formulas, school districts are changing their decision-making practices, with greater involvement of school staff and parents in formulating budgets that work for their buildings.

"What does equitable allocation of resources for students look like?"

We will allocate District resources to schools during the annual budget process in an equitable and transparent process, with additional resources allocated to help students with significant needs to achieve at the same level as other students.

"I like the idea of allocating resources based on need."

- Review and improve the District's school budget methodology to ensure equity in the distribution of financial resources.
- Give principals and school leadership teams, including teachers and parents, meaningful opportunities to help shape school budgets that will improve the efficient and effective operation of schools and raise student achievement.



We are currently working to prioritize and determine which initiatives of *Imagine 2014* we will be focusing on in the upcoming school year. In doing this, one key factor is aligning our budget with these priorities. As discussed in the Measuring Our Progress section, we will be unveiling the priorities for the upcoming school year with progress goals, a detailed implementation plan, and costs as we begin the next school year.

For more details, please visit our Web site:
www.philasd.org/strategicplan.

School Reform Commission's Declaration of Education

- We believe that children come first.
- We believe all children can learn at high levels.
- We believe all children can reach their learning potential and that the achievement gap can be eliminated.
- We believe schools have an enormous impact on children's lives.
- We believe parents are our partners and play a critical role in the education of a child.
- We believe the School District of Philadelphia can become a high-performing organization.
- We believe that all children must be educated in a safe and orderly environment.

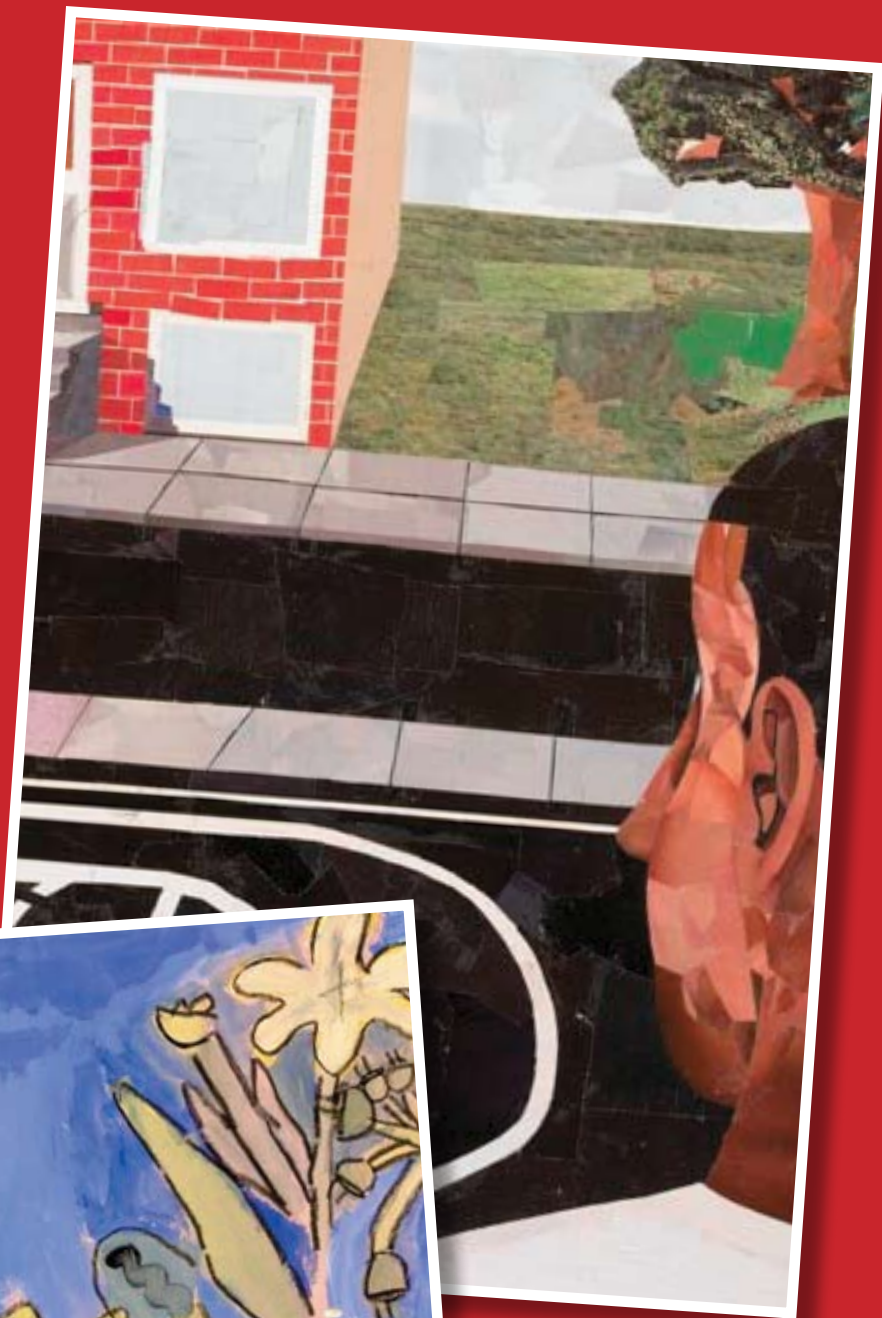
Success is the *only* option.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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This plan would not have been possible without the dedicated efforts and input of those who provided feedback on the drafts of the plan, including parents and community members; District staff members; principals; teachers; and representatives of the following colleges and universities, business organizations, and community organizations:

- African American Chamber of Commerce
- Arcadia University
- ASAP/After School Activities Partnerships
- Bank of America
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Black Alliance for Educational Options
- Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania
- Bryn Mawr College
- Cabrini College
- Campus Philly
- Central Montco Technical High School
- Chester County Intermediate Unit
- Chestnut Hill College
- Cheyney University of Philadelphia
- City Year
- Communities In Schools of Philadelphia, Inc.
- Community College of Philadelphia
- Congreso
- Council for College and Career Success
- Delaware Valley Grantmakers
- Drexel University
- Economy League of Greater Philadelphia
- Education Compact
- Education Voters Pennsylvania
- EducationWorks
- The Enterprise Center
- EPIC Stakeholders
- The Franklin Institute
- Free Library of Philadelphia
- Fresh Artists
- Girl Scouts
- Good Schools Pennsylvania
- Greater Northeast Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition
- Gwynedd-Mercy College
- Haverford College
- Holy Family University
- Hope College
- Institute for Civic Values
- Juntos
- Kent State University
- Kimmel Center, Inc.
- Kutztown University
- Leadership Philadelphia
- MicroSociety
- Microsoft
- Middle States Commission on Elementary Schools
- NAACP
- National Constitution Center
- Need in Deed
- The New Teacher Project
- Norris Square Neighborhood Project
- The Pennsylvania State University
- Philadelphia Academies Inc.
- Philadelphia Biblical University
- Philadelphia Education Fund
- Philadelphia Federation of Teachers
- The Philadelphia Foundation
- Philadelphia Gas Works
- Philadelphia Student Union
- Philadelphia Youth Network
- Project GRAD Philadelphia
- Project U-Turn Collaborative
- Public Citizens for Children and Youth
- The Reinvestment Fund
- Research for Action
- Right to Education Task Force
- Rosemont College
- Saint Joseph's University
- Synterra Ltd. & Synterra Partners
- Teach for America
- Temple University
- UBS Financial Services
- United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania
- University of Pennsylvania
- University of the Sciences
- Urban League
- Villanova University
- The Wachovia Foundation
- West Chester University of Pennsylvania
- West Philadelphia Coalition of Neighborhood & Businesses
- White-Williams Scholars
- Widener University
- Women's Way
- Youth United for Change





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