



# *Overview of Pittsburgh Public Schools' Strategic Plan, Supporting Technical Plans, and School Plans*

Education Committee Meeting

November 5, 2008





# Timeline for Strategic Plan Development 2008

## **July to September:**

- PDE Training on required format for District/School Plans (June – July)
- Collaborate with Executive Leadership to develop initial draft of District Plan for Steering Committee meetings
- Steering Committee meetings (July 30, August 13) to review draft of District Plan, provide input and recommend revisions prior to public commentary

## **September to October:**

- Public commentary on District's Plan from September 30 – October 31
- School Plans drafted and given to Executive Directors by October 14 for review and feedback



# Timeline for Strategic Plan Development 2008 (continued)

## **November:**

- Revise final draft of District's Plan to incorporate public commentary
- Review final draft of District's Plan and overview of School Plans at November 5 Education Committee meeting and obtain Board feedback
- Board receives updated revised final draft of District's Plan at November 19 Agenda Review
- Board votes on District Plan, School Plans and other supporting plans at November 25 Legislative Session
- Plans submitted to State by November 26 deadline



# Nature of this Plan

- Strategic Plan is a *rolling* guide designed as a tool to help the District progress.
- Continuous Improvement
  - Review
  - Reflect
  - Revise

# Alignment of PPS' Strategic Direction with PDE Planning Requirements

**Board Goals, Core Beliefs and Commitments**

*Excellence for All*

**PDE District Framework for Planning  
One Plan for All – Aligns All District Level Plans**

**School Improvement Plans -Getting Results!**

**Central Office Plans**

# Aligns Eight Plans

- Commonwealth Empowerment Plan (3 year plan filed 12/14/06)
- Chapter 4 Plan (6 year plan due 11/26/08)
- Teacher Induction Plan (6 year plan due 11/26/08)
- Professional Education Plan (6 year plan due 11/26/08)
- Educational Technology Plan (3 year plan due 11/26/08)
- School Services (i.e., Student Services) (3 year plan due 11/26/08)
- Special Education Plan (3 year plan filed 5/31/08)
- **District Improvement Plan (PDE requires a 2 year plan due 11/26/08)**



# The Context

- Conciliation Agreement- Advocates for African American Students
- NCLB Planning and Accountability Requirements
- Community Input
- Financial Means
- Enrollment Decline

# The Process- Involvement

- **Parents (38)**
- **Students (40)**
- **Central (46) and School (2) Staff**
- **Board Representation (1)**
- **Community Partners and Representatives (17)**
- **Business and Industry Partners (4)**
- **Post secondary Training Partners (5)**
- **Teacher Representatives (2)**
- **Principal Representatives (7)**
- **Citizens at Large (3)**

# Process to Gather Ideas

- **Steering Committee Meetings (2)**  
July 30, 2008 & August 13, 2008
- **Parent Focus Groups (2)**  
September 16, 2008 & October 29, 2008
- **Student Listening Groups (6) for 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders**  
Week of October 27  
Pittsburgh Allderdice, Brashear, Allegheny Traditional, Weil
- **Public Comment Period: September 30 – October 31**  
Public Hearing: October 13, 2008  
Web Survey  
Plan Available in Central Offices for Review

# What Stakeholders Said at Steering Committee Meetings

Four Questions- Where in the draft plan do you see potential to . . .

1. . . . attract and keep more families within Pittsburgh and PPS?
2. . . . improve educational outcomes and help ensure that students have planned and are prepared to pursue education beyond high school?
3. . . . build a common culture of expectations and accountability within PPS and shared by all stakeholders?
4. . . . build awareness and support among stakeholders for the vision, mission, and Excellence for All initiatives?

In response to Question #1 . . . attract and keep more families within Pittsburgh and PPS?

- **33%** Build pride in schools and the school system: Let parents, students, and teachers be the chief marketers of PPS. Capitalize on uniqueness of Pittsburgh's neighborhoods.
- **18%** help parents help students.
- **12%** improve customer service.

Question #2...Improve educational outcomes and help ensure that students have planned and are prepared to pursue education beyond high school?

- **24%** Provide high quality instruction and academic rigor/clear expectations by grade level; monitor student academic progress and catch them before they fall behind.
- **12%** Develop and implement a rigorous CTE program aligned with employer and post-secondary institution expectations and requirements.
- **10%** Provide safety nets that remove non-academic barriers for kids.

Question #3: . . . build a common culture of expectations and accountability within PPS and shared by all stakeholders?

- **52%** Provide clear, high expectations that everyone can understand—parents, students, teachers, principals, community members.
- **24%** Train staff to work effectively with parents and involve them in the school.
- **19%** Provide high quality instructional leadership and accountability for same.

Question #4: . . . build awareness and support among stakeholders for the vision, mission, and Excellence for All initiatives?

- **39%** Widely circulate information on the District to places where people congregate and strongly market PPS with good news about our schools, staff, and students
- **33%** Expand marketing of The Promise--show what it means to students/families
- **13%** Recruitment goals for increasing enrollment in the District

# How the Plan Changed as a Result of Steering Committee Comments

- The Narrative Section was edited to explain:
  - Pathways to the Promise**
  - PPS Graduation Requirements**
- Strategies under Goal 2 were edited to explain:
  - Pathways to the Promise and Student Services/Safety Nets**

## Other Changes...

**New strategies under Goal 5 were written specifically to respond to stakeholder requests for:**

- **Better communication and getting the good news out about PPS**
- **Stronger parent engagement**
- **Training school staff to be more welcoming to parents**
- **Establishing a culture of excellent customer service**

# Input from Public Hearing

- *“In my 15 years of working on strategic and 19 empowerment plans, I found this recent process to be the fairest of all. There were many stakeholders from all parts of the community, teams were formed, and brainstorming was abundant. . . If anything, I make these suggestions: Make the implementation process work. Monitor it, follow through.”*

**– Dr. Johnson Martin**

- *“And I really believe that we need a two-way sustained conversation in this District, and in this city, as to how we are going to address topics. And that's something that we really long for.”*

**–Mark Rauterkus**

# Input from Public Hearing

*“The plan that was presented was a draft, very comprehensive, and the folks that I saw around this room, that were representing the community, were very diverse. And, you do know that the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers has a huge stake in this, as we were the first to contribute money (to The Promise), it came from our scholarship money.*

*We know that what we do with our kids is what's important for the future of this city, and this whole community for which we all live.*

*And I just wanted to be sure that you were all aware that I think that we have a very good process, and we have something good to work from, from now on, and you know somebody like me will certainly say something if it's wrong.”*

**– Sylvia Wilson**

# Input from Public Hearing

*“I also participated in the development of the strategic plan, and I have participated in strategic planning with this District a number of occasions, under a number of different administrations.*

*All stakeholders were included, such as parents, community, and all levels of Pittsburgh Public School staff.*

*And I felt that, as a group, we were in agreement that we saw our comments, suggestions and recommendations included in subsequent drafts of the plan.”*

**–Bonita Allen**

# Input from Web Survey

- Survey was promoted via a number of methods:
  - Press release
  - Local newspaper articles (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, *Pittsburgh Tribune Review*, etc.)
  - Steering Committee Member emails to their colleagues and peers
  - Parent EFA communications and outreach

# Input from Web Survey

- Various Groups Responded
  - **35% PPS Parents/Caregivers**
  - **8% Former Parents/Caregivers**
  - **42% PPS Employees**
  - **4% Community Members**
  - **3% Citizens at Large**
- Results were highly positive:
  - **100% of respondents indicated they understand the basis of the plan, the requirements that shape it, and key features of the plan—The Pittsburgh Promise, etc.**
  - **All strategies were rated as either “Very important,” “Important,” or “Neutral.”**
  - **No strategies were rated as being “Unimportant or Very unimportant.”**

# Input from the Web Survey

- Improve Customer Service:

***“Create uniformity throughout the District. Do the same thing at each school. A parent can have 3 students in 3 separate buildings and receive 3 different letters about the same issue.”***

- Improve Staffing of School Buildings:

***“Hire teachers that have the motivation to bring in parents, and the community to enhance the students’ learning.”***

# Input from Web Survey

## **Include Community Resources:**

- *Access community to help foster child development*
- *Invite community participation*
- *Create after school walking clubs to increase community presence on streets*
- *Explore history of state grants that match community dollars for efforts to create safe streets*
- *Community involvement efforts should be more defined*

## **Acknowledgement of District's innovations:**

- *Many innovations in plan*
- *Sci-Tech school strong*
- *Focus on whole child is very appealing*
- *Like the direction the District is taking*

# How the Strategic Plan is Organized

# Major Sections of the Plan

- **Letter from the Superintendent**
- **Executive summary**
- **How the plan is structured**
- **History and demographics of the district**
- **Mission, shared goals, core beliefs**
- **Comprehensive strategies in five goal areas**

# Five Goal Areas in the Plan

1. Maximum academic achievement of all students
2. Safe and orderly environment for all students and employees
3. Efficient and effective support operations for all students, families, teachers, and administrators
4. Efficient and equitable distribution of resources to address the needs of all students
5. Improved public confidence and strong parent/community engagement

# Goal 1: Maximum Academic Achievement – 15 Strategies

- Strategy: 1.1** Define and deepen implementation of a system of managed instruction
- Strategy: 1.2** Reduce racial disparities in academic achievement and graduation rates
- Strategy: 1.3** Provide more efficient and effective gifted and special education programs
- Strategy: 1.4** Improve in areas of academic concern—5<sup>th</sup> and 11th grade
- Strategy: 1.5** Continue to provide and improve early childhood education

# Goal 1: Maximum Academic Achievement – 15 Strategies

- Strategy: 1.6** Provide students with guidance that is focused on Promise Readiness
- Strategy: 1.7** Leadership improvement among principals and executive directors, including rigorous professional development and performance accountability frameworks and metrics.
- Strategy: 1.8** Use of diagnostic data to improve instruction and learning
- Strategy: 1.9** Implementation of a strong career and technical education plan
- Strategy: 1.10** Continued implementation of accelerated learning academies



# Goal 1: Maximum Academic Achievement – 15 Strategies

- Strategy: 1.11** Implementation of High School Reform and rigorous, new, high-quality school options
  
- Strategy: 1.12** Seamless planning for staffing school buildings in order to ensure maximum learning and achievement with minimal disruptions to the school
  
- Strategy: 1.13** Develop a corresponding six-year professional education plan to support student achievement strategies in the District
  
- Strategy: 1.14** Develop a six-year teacher induction plan in collaboration with the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers (PFT)
  
- Strategy: 1.15** Pathways to the Promise—Ensuring students are “Promise Ready”



## Goal 2: Safe and Orderly Environment for All Students and Employees- 5 Strategies

- Strategy: 2.1** Continue to support and establish safe and welcoming school environments including necessary interventions and safety nets that support each student's success
- Develop a six-year student services plan*
- Strategy: 2.2** Continue to implement violence prevention initiatives
- Strategy: 2.3** Continue to implement behavioral support interventions
- Strategy: 2.4** Continue to implement alternative school setting
- Strategy: 2.5** Improve technology supports for safe school environments

## Goal 3: Efficient and Effective Support Operations for All- 11 Strategies

- Strategy: 3.1** Fiscal restraint through disciplined budgeting in all areas, including additional budget reductions while protecting our academic initiatives
- Strategy: 3.2** Improve internal controls over financial reporting
- Strategy: 3.3** Leverage human capacity, process reengineering and technology to create efficiencies
- Strategy: 3.4** Improve bid process with the goal of lower costs and more efficient EBE (Eligible Business Enterprise) compliance
- Strategy: 3.5** Significantly improve work order processes to maximize efficiencies and deliver high quality work products on schedule within budget
- Strategy: 3.6** Reconfigure facilities & plant operations to maximize efficiencies



## Goal 3: Efficient and Effective Support Operations for All- 11 Strategies

- Strategy: 3.7** Create District progress reporting system (See also 1.8 Use of Diagnostic Data)
  
- Strategy: 3.8** Improve functionality of technology supporting information flow across the district
  
- Strategy: 3.9** Develop an e-technology plan to support student achievement initiatives and other district needs
  
- Strategy: 3.10** Continuously improve employee evaluation system for administrators to support development of a high performance culture
  
- Strategy: 3.11** Development: aggressively pursue private and public sector funding opportunities that align with *Excellence for All*

## Goal 4: Efficient and Equitable Distribution of Resources – 4 Strategies

**Strategy: 4.1** Tie all plans to direct enrollment declines and fiscal realities of the District without negatively affecting student achievement improvement initiatives

*Include communications planning on what these declines will mean potentially to parents, students, and neighborhoods*

**Strategy: 4.2** Develop innovative means for providing rigorous educational opportunities within the hard realities of declines

*Including strategies for high school reform, magnet audit, and The Pittsburgh Promise itself*

**Strategy: 4.3** Develop a ten-year facilities plan

**Strategy: 4.4** Standardize Distance Learning across the District



## Goal 5: Improved Public Confidence and Strong Parent/Community Engagement – 7 Strategies

- Strategy: 5.1** Excellent Customer Service:  
*Build an excellent customer service organization*
- Strategy: 5.2** Marketing and Communications:  
*Present the advantages, choices, and success stories of PPS in a consistent and compelling manner to assert a view of the District that is different than what most people may know*
- Strategy: 5.3** Parent Engagement:  
*Ensure effective and consistent outreach to every PPS household throughout the school year*
- Strategy: 5.4** Public Relations:  
*Promote District priorities, programs, and progress proactively through broadcast, print, and online media*

# Goal 5: Improved Public Confidence and Strong Parent/Community Engagement – 7 Strategies

## **Strategy: 5.5**

### **Web:**

***Position the PPS website as the primary source for timely accurate and comprehensive information and feedback***

## **Strategy: 5.6**

### **Community Relations and Partnerships:**

***Build and sustain partnership and promotional opportunities that align with Excellence for All and enhance the improvement of student achievement at every level***

## **Strategy: 5.7**

### **Government Relations:**

***Build and maintain positive relationships with State and local governments***

# Technical Plan 1: Professional Education Plan Strategy 1.13 (6yr)

- Training qualifying for Act 48 credit
- Professional development aligned to State standards for student achievement
- Inclusion of assessment anchors in training
- Schedule of trainings

## Technical Plan 2: Teacher Induction Plan Strategy 1.14

- **Orientation to the District**
- **Mentorship program for each new teacher**
- **Professional development in re:**
  - Classroom procedures**
  - Curriculum**
  - District processes**
  - Instructional methods**

# Technical Plan 3: Develop E Tech Plan- Strategy 3.9 (3yr)

- **Addresses Technology Needs of District as Revealed by Needs Assessment of Schools and Staff**

PA Technology Inventory Survey

District In-house Poll of Central Office Needs

- **Includes strategies to support creating and sustaining an appropriate technology infrastructure, professional development, and integrating technology into curriculum, instruction, and assessment**
- **Basis and requirement for \*E-Rate Filing.**

**\*E-rate is a Federal program that provides millions of dollars worth of savings to school district costs for eligible technologies and services**

## Technical Plan 4: Student Services Plan Strategy 2.1 (6 yr)

- Student Code of Conduct
- Uniform Policy, Compulsory Attendance, Health and Wellness, etc.
- Coordination and oversight of community agencies in public schools
- Developmental services addressing student needs, including guidance counseling, psychological services, health services, home and school visitor services, social services
- Diagnostic intervention and referral for students

## Technical Plan 5: District Improvement Plan Strategy 1.4 (2yr)

- Improve in areas of academic concern—5<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade (2 year plan)
- Responds to NCLB improvement requirements from the PDE
- Based on the PDE's required template *Getting Results!*
- Provides strategies for Central to use in supporting and guiding schools and staff to improve in areas of concern
- Connects to School Improvement Plans, which are based on the PDE's required template *Getting Results!*

# Process for Creating District Improvement and School Improvement Plans

- Central Office and School Leadership Teams met to analyze student achievement result data and determine root cause for concern
- Student achievement results form the basis of all plans
- All plans include strategies to monitor progress by reviewing formative data periodically



# School Improvement Plans Reflect the District's Overarching Strategic Plan

## **Align to the overall Strategic Plan**

### **Address the following:**

- Specific areas of academic concern in each school regarding NCLB Performance targets and District targets
- Incorporate District improvement strategies, such as Read 180 and Teaching and Learning Teams, etc.
- Safe and welcoming environments
- Incorporate District improvement strategies, such as PBIS in K-8s, etc.
- Parent and community engagement
- Other local goals the school has set for itself

# School Plans- "Getting Results"

- **All PPS Schools completed plans**
- **State submission- AYP Status of the School (26)**
- **Completed by a team**
- **Three Phases:**
  - Organize**
  - Analyze**
  - Plan Solutions**

## *Example: Pittsburgh Arsenal 6-8*

- **Achievement Data**
- **Attendance**
- **Misconduct**
- **Root Cause Analysis**
- **Action Sequence**

## Pittsburgh Arsenal 6-8 (Continued)

- IEP Students missing AYP in Reading
- Root Cause-Students' functional ability below test readability
- Root Cause-Special Ed teachers have limited content knowledge
- Increase inclusion, co-planning and co-teaching with regular education teachers

# School Plans

- 26 must be approved and submitted to PDE  
“School Improvement” or “Corrective Action”
- Plans were read by team of readers and sent back to schools with suggested revisions
- Executive Directors read the plans for their schools
- Plan implementation a part of Teaching and Learning Team process

## Next Steps

- Board Education Committee presentation includes results of Public commentary – November 5, 2008
- Board comment is incorporated into Revised Final Draft Plan and circulated to the Board for Review – November 14, 2008
- Board Agenda Review – November 19, 2008
- Board Legislative Vote – November 25, 2008
- Strategic Plan, Supporting Technical Plans, and School Improvement Plans Due to PDE – November 26, 2008



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