

Des Plaines District 62

Strategic Plan Orientation Homework

Read your assigned article. Record below 5 key points to share with others who will not have read the article. Record ideas of things to keep in mind as we begin the strategic planning process to set future direction for the district.

Article 1: Strategic Planning With Students, For Students. -

Education Elements

Key Point 1	Plan With Students For Students: Most adults overestimate their ability to understand and emphasize with their students' experiences at school. Nearly every school district strives to write a student-centered strategic plan, but how student-centered can your plan be without actively including student voice throughout the planning process?
Key Point 2	Amplifying Student Voice in the Process: Understanding what student data tells us leads to strategic plan than better addresses student needs. It is critical to have student voice on the strategic planning team. It is also critical to engage students not on the team to provide feedback to team thoughts and ideas. Student satisfaction data tells important stories.
Key Point 3	Generating Student-Centered Solutions: Students indicated their favorite part of the process was brainstorming possible actions and strategies in response to "How Might We" questions. During table team discussion it was critical to have small group discussions to listen and understand different perspectives. Often parents felt differently that community members. Students felt differently than teachers or other staff. Different perspectives led to generating better solutions. Together each accomplishes more.
Key Point 4	The Impact of the Process on Student Involved: The more the team began to know everyone better I started to realize that it was safe to ask questions and make mistakes. You know, we are all just there to make our school better. The students were referring to an integral element of successful teaming: psychological safety. Psychological safety is the shared belief that all ideas, questions, and feedback are welcome and that it is safe to take risks and admit mistakes. The impact of creating a psychologically safe environment goes beyond just idea generation. Students reported experiencing personal growth as a result of serving on the steering team and collaborating with others in this safe space.
Key Point 5	Selecting Students for the Team: The reality is that there are no set criteria when it comes to selecting the right students to serve on your strategic planning steering team. Select students able to fully see and understand the perspectives of others, which is vital to the strategic planning process. Select students who are involved in a wide array of activities within the school district. Select students who together can weigh in on various aspects of student needs.
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Article 2: Addressing Teacher Burnout, Post-Pandemic Learning Environments, and Public Mistrust through Strategic Planning **-Collin Thompson, Education Elements**

Key Point 1	Sometimes we need to pause and create new strategies when the ones we have in place are not working. This applies to school districts today who are facing very challenging circumstances with a record number of educators leaving the profession, math and reading levels at a twenty-year low, and public trust in education eroding. This plan should provide teachers with adequate support, address learners' post-pandemic needs, and rebuild community confidence. A strategic plan that is rooted in community engagement leads to stronger community buy-in and two-way trust.
Key Point 2	Addressing Teacher Burnout: Having a strategic plan that is created with teachers, and not for them, can help districts identify systemic barriers that contribute to teacher confusion and burnout and address them appropriately. More than half of teachers who responded to a recent nationwide survey indicated they were considering quitting the profession. There are alarmingly fewer students considering education as a profession. The profession is under great scrutiny when one looks at student achievement results. Educator pay and benefits are in question. A strategic plan should include responsive priorities to directly support teachers, including enhancing wellness development opportunities by implementing a professional development scope and sequence, adapting curriculum in response to Professional Learning Community data, and creating moments of connection with teachers and staff by celebrating achievements.
Key Point 3	Post Pandemic Learning Environments: Isolation during the pandemic led to an alarming increase in students' feelings of anxiety, depression, fatigue, and distress. This data becomes even more startling when you consider that kids and teens had already been facing record levels of mental health challenges prior to the onset of COVID-19. A number of districts that are working to address the emotional and social needs of their students through their strategic plan have identified some key steps to support students. These include the hiring and retention of more mental health providers, establishing a training program to equip teachers and staff with the tools they need to support students, and creating opportunities for positive student-to-student and teacher-to-student connections which cultivate respect and celebrate diversity.
Key Point 4	Public Mistrust: Yet another challenge school districts face is the erosion of public trust. In many parts of the country, tensions between parents and school officials have risen in very public ways, often documented and widely discussed online. Concerns from parents include fears that their children will fall behind academically as a result of COVID-19, safety concerns at school, and their children's acute social and emotional needs. According to one survey, 9 in 10 parents worry that their children will not be able to recover academically from the pandemic. Transparency and two-way communication are imperative for districts to assure parents that they can trust the district with their children's education and well-being. The creation of a strategic plan that responds to the concerns of parents allows districts to implement structures and systems that help foster communication, collaboration, and trust.
Key Point 5	The creation of a community-centered, responsive strategic plan: Provides districts with the roadmap they need to meet constituent needs. While strategic plans are not a panacea for teacher burnout, post-pandemic learning challenges, and public mistrust, they are a proven way to make the changes needed to achieve the results desired.
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Article 3: The Core Four of Personalized Learning. - Education Elements

Key Point 1	<u>Student Ownership:</u> The components that make up the Core Four of Personalizing Learning categorize the key practices that build student ownership of learning. These are the practices we have most often seen that build agency, self-actualization, and lifelong learners. Building student ownership of learning requires positive relationships with students. Teachers who know and care about their students as individuals as best able to personalize learning that builds ownership.
Key Point 2	<u>Student Reflection and Goal Setting:</u> Practices that can build a bridge for students between the content they are learning and why they are learning it. While these are two separate practices, they can, and should be interconnected in the classroom. Reflecting on what we know and how we learn builds self-awareness that can make goal-setting a truly meaningful experience. Setting goals empower students to dictate their own indicators of success that are important for their personal growth.
Key Point 3	<u>Targeted Instruction:</u> Students can articulate what instruction they are receiving and why, and students have some choice over the instruction they receive. By analyzing data and using it to tailor the learning experiences, we shift from a one-size-fits-none approach to a classroom environment grounded in students' strengths, needs, and interests. Teachers who target instruction modify instruction to better meet students where they are and provide opportunities for students to have voice and choice in their instructional experience.
Key Point 4	<u>Collaboration and Creativity:</u> Personalizing learning encourages students to work with one another, share ideas, create new solutions and projects, provide one another with feedback, and, in the process, learn more about themselves. A research study of top U.S. companies shared the skills students need in a post-pandemic world, and every single one named self-awareness and collaboration, comfort with ambiguity, or strategic and agile thinking to solve complex problem.
Key Point 5	<u>Flexible Path and Pace:</u> Students learn in different ways and to truly personalize the learning experience, there must be opportunities for students to progress towards mastery of their learning through flexible learning pathways and at different paces. Learning pathways are the teacher-curated set of learning activities and checkpoints that lead all students to a common outcome or objective (standards or competencies). Creating differentiated pathways for students allows us to honor the unique needs, talents, and strengths of each student as they progress through their learning journey.

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Article 4: Future-Ready Schools. – All4Ed

Key Point 1	Readiness is a new important measurement of school success. Nationwide, nearly 86% of students graduate from high school within four years, but this seemingly stellar rate tells an incomplete story. Even though more students are graduating, many lack the skills to succeed in college, work, and life. Nearly 70% of beginning students at public two-year colleges must take remedial courses to master material they should have learned in high school. Meanwhile, 82% of employers report that recent high school graduates have at least some gaps in preparation for typical jobs in their companies. We are interested in Kindergarten Readiness, Grade Level Readiness, Middle School Readiness, High School Readiness, Post-secondary Readiness, College and Career Readiness, and Life Readiness.
Key Point 2	Student Learning is Changing: Future Ready Schools® (FRS) helps district leaders, principals, and teachers work together to transform their schools using collaborative, creative, and bold practices that improve learning outcomes for all students. Every student, no matter their zip code, deserves access to a robust and fulfilling technology- enabled public education that prepares them for success in work and life.
Key Point 3	What Matters Most: Focus on Instruction and the Love of Learning: Buying devices and ensuring internet access is not sufficient. Successful transition to a “future ready” school system happens when districts find a compelling blend of technology planning, collaborative leadership, and a sincere love for teaching and learning – for the betterment of each and every student. As districts across the United States make enormous investments in technology – and plan for successful deployment, it is critical to emphasize the prioritization of improvements to instructional practices. Concentrating on what matters most will ensure that schools deliver technology’s promises for improved student outcomes.
Key Point 4	Advance Exemplars of Excellence, Equity, and Innovation: The FRS network acts as a convener, collaborator, publisher, promoter, counselor, emulator, and evangelist of “best practices” in technology-enabled education.
Key Point 5	Future Ready School Resources: Future Ready School Resources: FRS’s research-based framework is the foundation of our programming, emphasizing collaborative leadership, system redesign, and continuous improvement to accomplish technology-enabled, learner-centered educational experiences for all students. The seven critical areas of the framework are: Curriculum, instruction & assessment; Personalized professional learning; Robust infrastructure; Budget & other resources; Community partnerships; Data & Privacy; and Use of Space & time.
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