

Pine-Richland School District



STRATEGIC INITIATIVE UPDATE

APRIL 20, 2015

This presentation was developed as a high level overview of the 2014-2015 strategic initiatives of the Pine-Richland School District and actions-to-date.

Strategic Initiatives



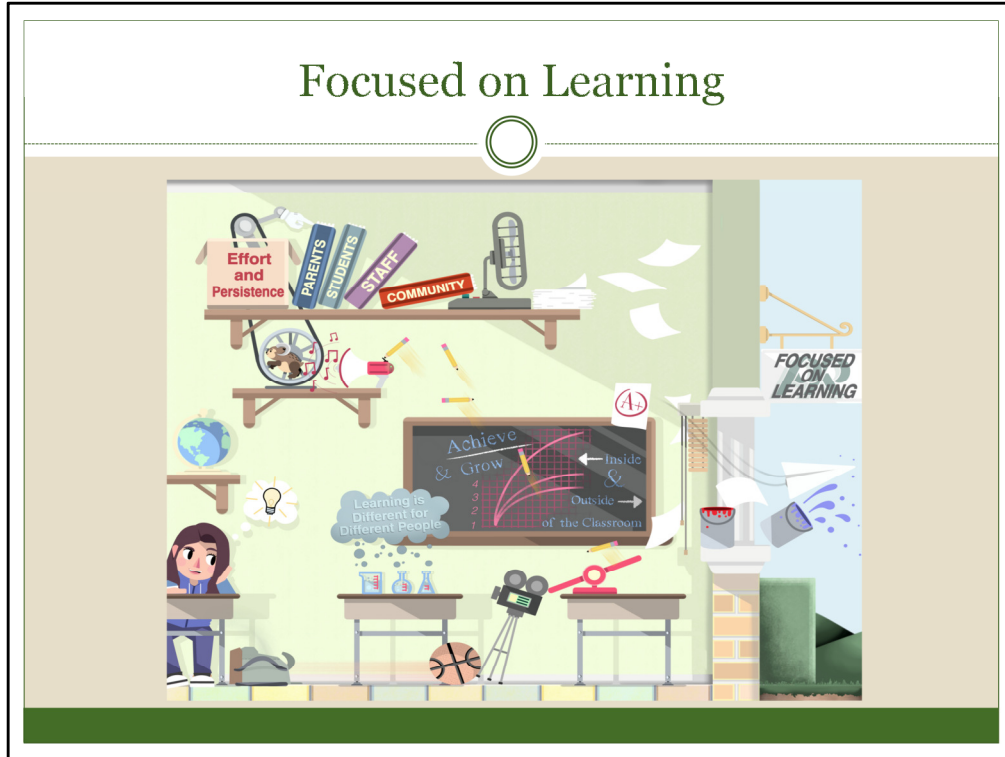
- The following strategic initiatives have been used to guide work in the organization during the 2014-2015 school year.
- Initiatives were aligned with the current strategic plan.
- Progress updates have been provided during board meetings, board committee meetings, staff in-service meetings, faculty meetings, the district website, and various other forms of electronic and face-to-face messages to our staff and community.

Rank	Strategic Initiative	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Marcl.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Deliverable/Result
1	Negotiations (PREA, ESPA, Act 93, and Admin Support)															Ratified Contracts or Agreements
2	Curriculum Review Process							B						B		Pacing Guide; Units; Learning Goals
3	Technology Solution (People, Foundation, Device)						B									Solution Implemented
4	RTII (Math)							B						B		Decision Tree
5	Data-Driven Decision-Making				B											Academic Achievement Report
6	Website Roll-out															Updated Site
7	Emergency Operations Plan			B												EOP Board Action; Completed Drill Monitoring Grid
8	Educator Effectiveness (Principal and Teacher)							B								Software Solution Identified and Evaluations Implemented for all Staff; Differentiated Supervision Model
9	Transportation RFP/Contract				B					B						Contract Awarded
10	Special Education Cyclical Monitoring Response													B		Balanced Scorecard Update; Corrective Action Completed
11	Gifted Education Cyclical Monitoring Response													B		Balanced Scorecard Update; Corrective Action Completed
12	Resiliency															Student Assistance Program Expansion to EHUE
13	Demographic and Feasibility Study													B		Final Report from Contractor with Presentation to Board
14	End-to-End Hiring					B										Replace Portal and Verified Recruitment Approach
15	Food Service RFP/Contract				B								B			Contact Awarded
16	Board Policies and Administrative Regulations															"Batch" Policies Approved; Individual Policies Approved; ARs Updated
17	Knowledge Management															Strategic and Tactical/Operational Action Plans Completed

This “at-a-glance” spreadsheet demonstrates a rank ordering of strategic initiatives. It was created during the summer of 2014 and reviewed by the board and administration. It was then publicly discussed and communicated. This road map for strategy implementation was designed to emphasize “peak work periods” for each area (dark purple) and also identify the likely deliverable or output of the work. The actual work flow has varied from this original design.

This presentation will provide a summary of each initiative.

Focused on Learning



Given the scope of operational initiatives, it is critical to balance systems-level work with a clear focus on the core purpose of education. A podcast was developed that illustrates our theme of ***Focused on Learning***. We encouraged families to view the video podcast and also tied this message into the website redesign. At one point, viewers were also asked to watch a separate video clip that shows an example of a “Rube Goldberg” design. This concept helps set the context for a student-created image connected to our district theme. Special thanks to high school art teacher Mr. Vincent Thearle and student Julian Brooks for creating the image.

Click this link for the District [Focused on Learning Podcast](#)

Click this link for a Rube Goldberg [Video Clip Example](#)

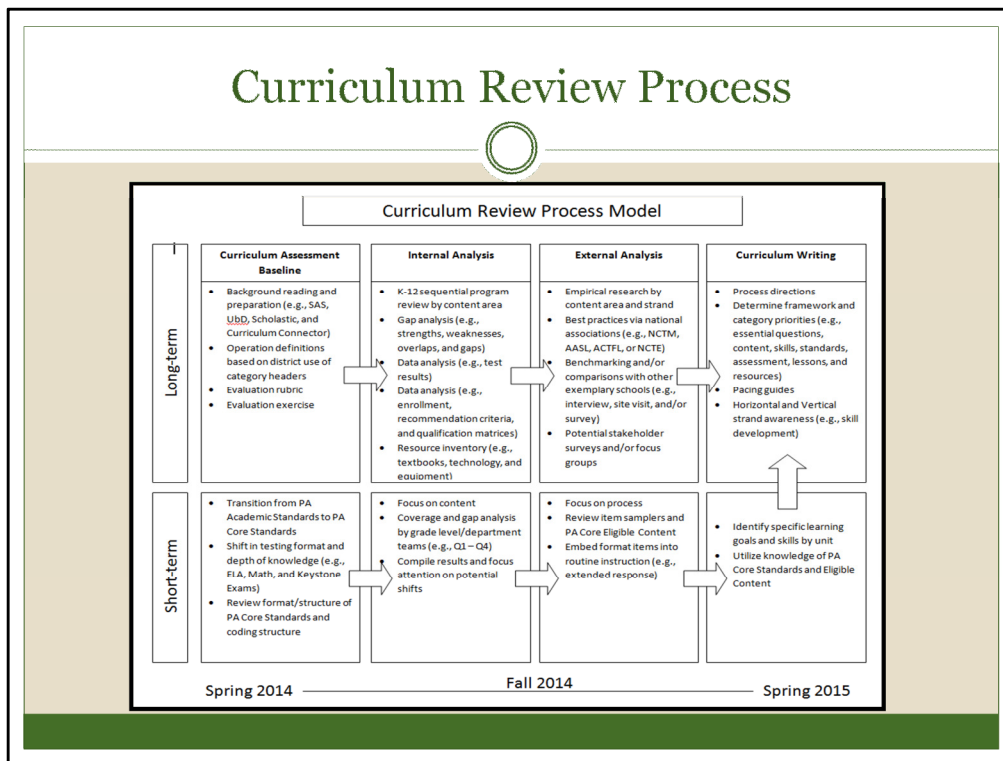
Negotiations



- **Pine-Richland Education Association (PREA)**
 - Comprised of the professional staff (i.e., teachers, counselors, etc.) with the contract ratified on September 8, 2014 for the term July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2018.
- **Pine-Richland Education Support Professionals Association (PRESPA)**
 - Comprised of building secretaries, custodians, maintenance, personal care assistants, para-educators, instructional assistants, and library assistants. Negotiations are in progress for a contract that ends on June 30, 2015.
- **Act 93 Administrative Compensation Plan**
 - Comprised of directors, principals, psychologists, HR and Employee Benefits administrator, and buildings/grounds coordinator with a meet-and-discuss agreement approved on April 6, 2015 for the term July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2019.
- **Administrative Support Personnel**
 - Comprised of administrative assistants, media staff, collegiate affairs, and several business office and HR office staff. A new agreement will be established in the upcoming weeks for a likely term of July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2019.

The Pine-Richland School District internal workforce is comprised of these major groups. Collective bargaining agreements are negotiated with PREA and PRESPA. Act 93 administrators participate in a meet-and-discuss process with representatives of the school board and district administration. The administrative support personnel do not fall directly within either approach. The last group of internal employees included the contract administrators (i.e., superintendent, assistant superintendent, director of human resources and legal affairs, and director of financial and operational services). It should be noted that Pine-Richland outsources staffing for several important operations that fall outside of these internal groups (i.e., transportation, food service, and the majority of technology positions).

Curriculum Review Process



In conjunction with instruction and assessment, curriculum serves as a foundational element of an effective school system. The district has completed a process to assess the written curriculum across all courses and grade levels. The existing framework organizes that information according to the following categories: Essential Questions; Content; Skills; Lessons; Assessments; Standards; and Resources. Department and grade level chairpersons completed this assessment using an evaluation rubric developed by the district. The rubric builds on best practices and research at a state and national level. The committee focused on a comprehensive and systematic curriculum review process and cycle that provided the opportunity to assess the internal program (e.g., sequence, gaps, overlaps, data, etc.) and benchmark against external sources (e.g., research, trends in the field, and exemplar schools). The curriculum assessment baseline initiative was an input to this goal.

The PRSD Curriculum Review Process Model is being implemented throughout the 2014-2015 school year. A series of activities have been utilized to enhance the scope and sequence of the written curriculum via an internal and external analysis. Within this analysis, staff members were organized into vertical teams (e.g., K – 12 English Language Arts) to reflect upon current practices, identify strengths and needs, evaluate available standards (e.g., PA Core Standards), and identify the most appropriate resources. Internal and external research was conducted in an effort to identify best practices. The existing PRSD Curriculum Framework was also reviewed and revised as a component of the curriculum writing process (e.g., pacing guides, units, and learning goals). Teachers continue to work in vertical and horizontal teams to support students' academic growth across grade spans. Course offerings and sequencing is being refined to assist in guiding students through courses aligned with their interests and abilities.

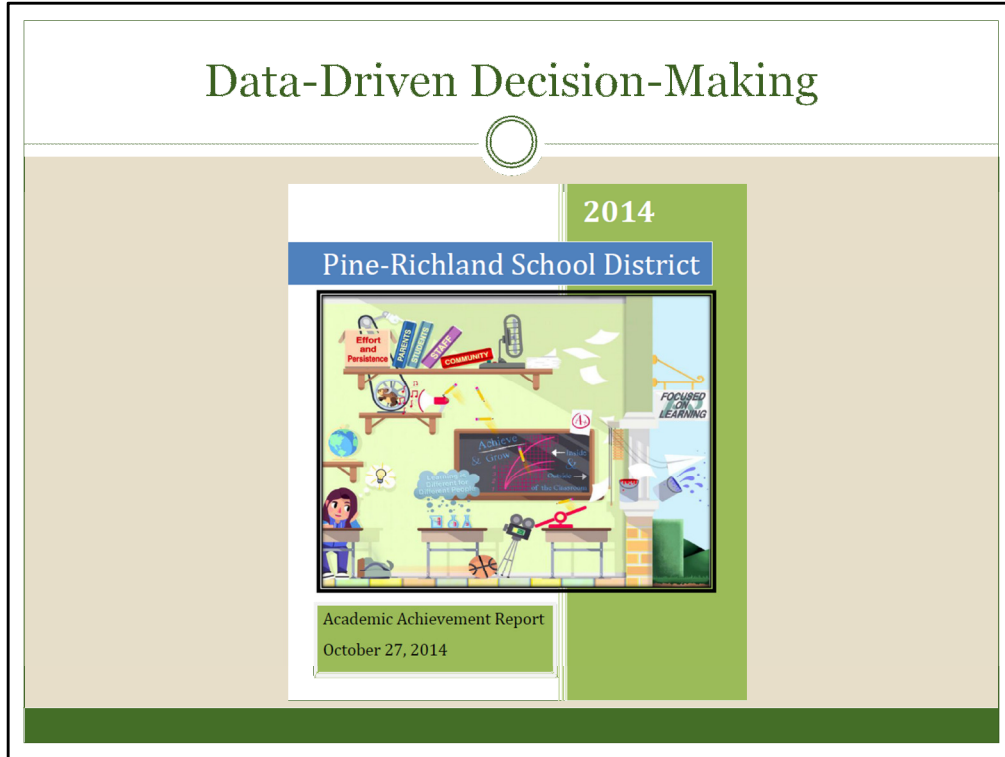
This initiative has involved teachers and administrators from all six schools. Professional development days in the school calendar provided some of the time necessary to pursue this initiative.

Technology Solution

- Technology Leadership Council and Building Level Technology Coaches
- Director of Technology
- 2014 IT Audit Report (synergIT)
- Cabling Request for Bids / Primary School Project
- EHUE PC Platform and Staff Computer Replacement
- HS/MS Computers-on-Wheels (COWs)
- Professional Development Opportunities

After managing IT as an internal function through 2010, the final year of a fully outsourced technology contract with VARtek Inc. expires on June 30, 2015 (i.e., staff, hardware, etc.). A third party, SynergIT, was contracted in the spring of 2014 to conduct a comprehensive IT audit as a foundation for future technology decisions. The audit was completed in July of 2014 and presented to the board in early August of 2014. The district is now working through a process to determine the future vision - operations and learning - of technology at PRSD and to evaluate potential delivery models. A series of Operational Services Committee meetings have been held in this area. In addition, the district formed a Technology Leadership Council to provide a representative work group for planning purposes. In March, Mr. Shawn Stuebener began work as the new, internal Director of Technology for Pine-Richland. More information about technology needs and decisions will be described in future communications.

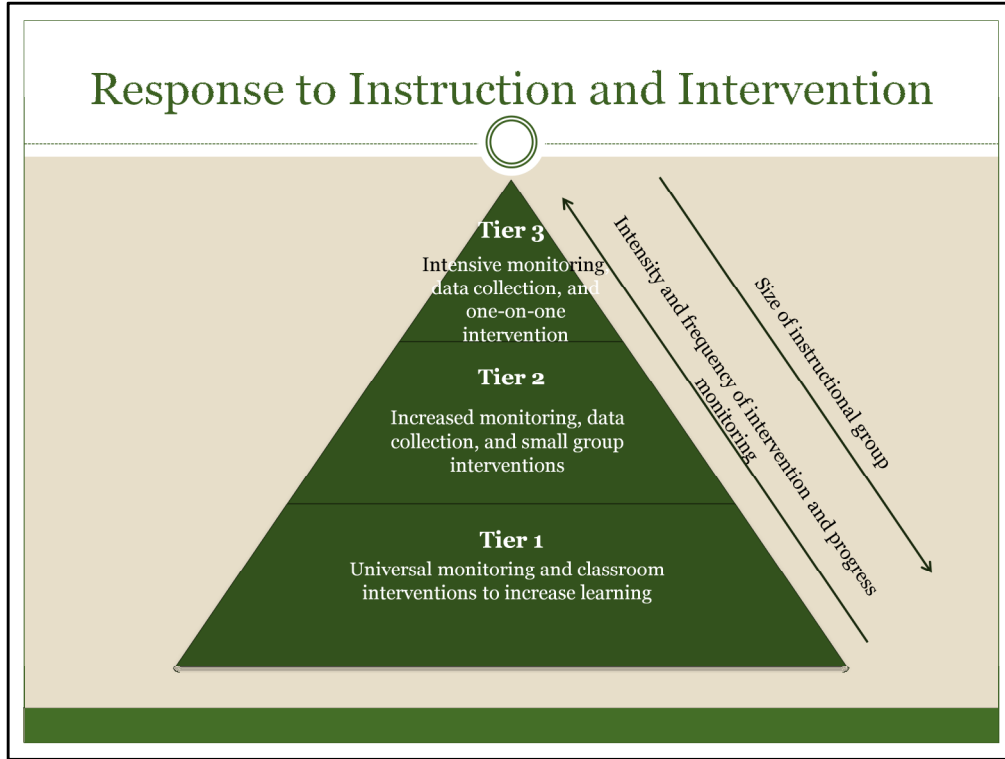
Data-Driven Decision-Making



The Academic Achievement Report offers an annual summary of student learning throughout the district and is presented every fall to the board and school community. Summative information about student achievement and the statistical analyses of student achievement over time are provided in a visual manner to illustrate levels, trends, and comparisons of performance. The performance of Pine-Richland students is compared to state and national student performance. Assessment results reported include scores from PSSA tests, Keystone Exams, AIMSWeb assessments, Advanced Placement exams, and ACT and SAT tests. Student performance is disaggregated by school, gender, and special education. **An improvement in this report for 2014-2015 was the use of Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System (PVAAS) data that helps measure the amount of year-to-year growth demonstrated by groups of students.** Some of the reported data is included by the Pennsylvania Department of Education in its calculation of School Performance Profiles.

Pine-Richland School District uses data as one important element in a series of systematic processes to increase student learning. Data contained in the Academic Achievement Report was used in the curriculum review process to gauge the effectiveness of our educational programs. At grade levels, analyzing levels and trends of student achievement and growth data permits teachers to understand the strengths of their curriculum and areas for improvement. At the classroom level, student achievement and growth data analysis allows teachers to make decisions about how to differentiate curriculum and instruction to meet the specific learning needs of their students. A systematic process for analyzing data from the PSSA tests and Keystone Exams will be created and replicated for future analysis of other district assessment data.

Response to Instruction and Intervention



While the general curriculum serves as the foundation of the educational program, it is also important and necessary for schools to have a continuum of services to meet the unique learning needs of students. The district conducted a comprehensive study – internally and externally – of an intervention framework for the purpose of meeting each child’s learning needs that ensures a systematic, reliable, and valid approach for both remediation and enrichment. This approach is known as a Response to Instruction and Intervention model (RTII). Given the complexity of this initiative, the committee narrowed its focus to literacy interventions in 2013-2014 . The focus in 2014-2015 shifted to mathematics. Math pathways, programs, and services were directly tied to the curriculum review process.

Website Redesign



The screenshot displays the Pine-Richland School District website. The header features the district name and logo, along with navigation links. The main content area includes a 'Spotlight on Learning' section with a photo of a student, 'Upcoming Events' for the week, and various news items. The design is clean and modern, with a focus on educational content.

Website Redesign & Survey

- A new design highlighting the district's theme "Focused on Learning" and a new section titled "Spotlight on Learning" on each building page, which serves as a window into the classrooms
- Improved navigation across all platforms (regular computers/laptops, smart phones & other mobile devices)
- A standard approach across each building website to provide for more consistency (e.g., Easy to navigate teacher directories)
- Survey provided to parents this winter for feedback (expect continual updates to reflect the district's mission & strategic initiatives)

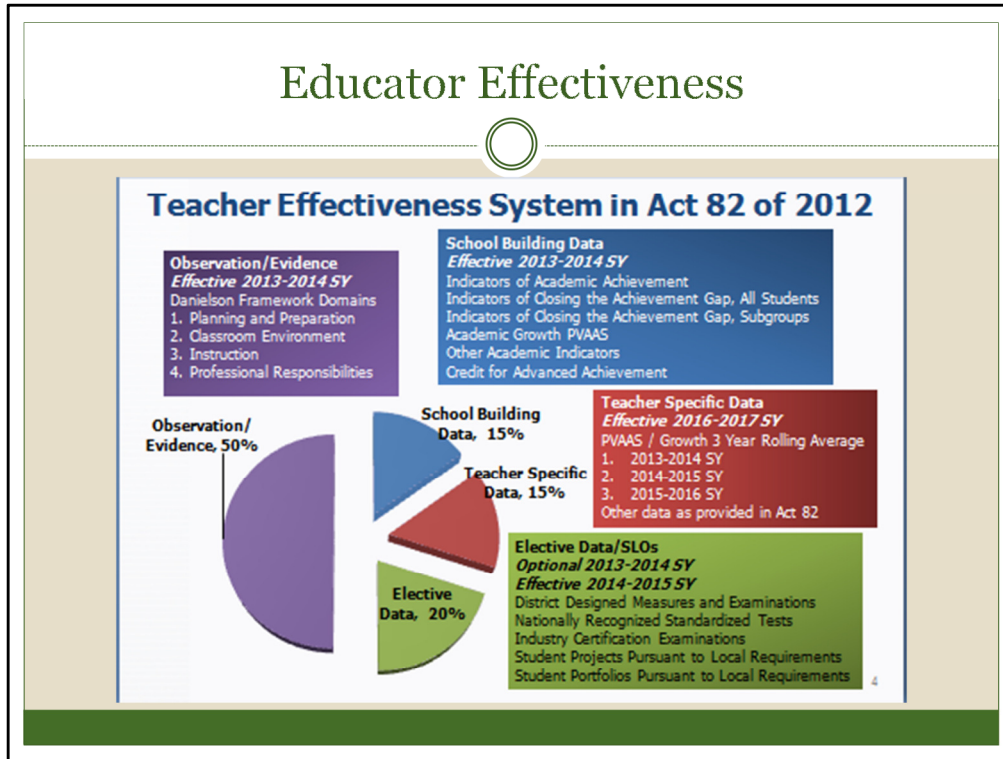
Effective communication with internal and external stakeholders remains a top priority of the district. In almost all cases, Pine-Richland has moved to electronic media as the method for communication. The district is finishing work on upgrading the district website by providing a more consistent approach to communication at all levels of the organization by meeting the varied needs of diverse stakeholder groups (e.g., students, staff, parents, community, and prospective families) in a professional manner.

Elements that have been addressed include streamlining channel categories, developing teacher-landing pages, eliminating multiple click through steps and incorporating mobile responsiveness. The new design highlights the "Focused on Learning" theme and provides a glimpse into classrooms highlighting student work. Users will find improved navigation across all platforms, a standard approach across all building sites.

Families can rely on the website to have the most up-to-date information about their child's building. The electronic notifications pull parents and guardians to the website through interactive links.

This winter, the district provided a survey to parents this winter. This feedback will be used for continual improvement. The website is an ever-changing tool and will be continually updated to reflect the district mission and strategic initiatives.

Educator Effectiveness



Act 82 was a significant piece of legislation passed in Pennsylvania related to the Educator Effectiveness Project. While there are multiple components of the new legislation, the most significant and immediate impact was a change to the teacher evaluation system in Pennsylvania. The new evaluations system is based on the Framework for Teaching by educational researcher Charlotte Danielson. A new report card for schools called the School Performance Profile was established. Those tools plus classroom observations of teachers by principals are intended to measure and report student achievement and growth on PSSA and Keystone Exams. There is also a connection between student achievement and growth within the new evaluation model.

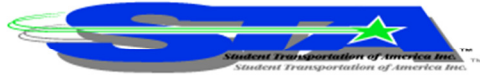
The development and implementation of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) was a focus within this strategic initiative in 2014-2015. Future work will focus on the concept of differentiated supervision and an updated electronic observation/evaluation management system to improve efficiency and increase collaboration between administrators, teachers, ESPA and administrative support staff. In addition, the new principal evaluation system will be implemented in the 2014-2015 school year.

Emergency Operations Plan

- The revised EOP was approved by the school board on October 27, 2014.
- Two-year MOU between PRSD and NRPD is scheduled for approval on May 18, 2015 for a term beginning July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017.
- A series of drills are being conducted at all school buildings.

The district is required to develop a comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) that complies with guidelines established by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Association (PEMA). The EOP is comprised of a public plan and a functional plan. The public plan was brought forward in the fall of 2014 for approval by the Board of School Directors. Throughout this process, representatives of the district have maintained an active partnership with the Northern Regional Police Department. In addition, the district has updated a quick reference guide for all staff members to guide emergency response. An annual training calendar was implemented to monitor training sessions and school-based drills.

Transportation Provider



STA of Pennsylvania, Inc.
119 Bus Lane, Punxsutawney, PA 15767

**PRESENTATION
TO THE
SCHOOL BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION
OF THE
PINE-RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The school district has been under contract with the current transportation vendor since 2003 following a competitive proposal process. The current agreement expires in June 2015. To determine if transportation costs were competitive to the market and to ensure a comprehensive approach was taken to evaluate this operation, a request for proposals (RFP) was implemented. The result of that process was a recently approved contract with Student Transportation of America, Inc. from July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2022. The district has developed a transition plan to ensure student transportation service will be operational for the start of the 2015-2016 school year.

Food Service Provider



The school district is required by the PA Department of Education Division of Food and Nutrition to periodically issue a request for proposals for food service management. The process is defined in detail by the PA Division of Food and Nutrition, and the school district is required to follow the prescribed timeline and use the prescribed documents drafted at the state level. The request for proposals must be reviewed and approved by the school board and PA Division of Food and Nutrition prior to being advertised and sent to competing food service management companies. The process included a walk through of the school facilities for any interested company, and all companies interested were given detailed information regarding the current process to formulate their best proposals to the school district. This process led to a recommendation to continue using Sodexo as the food service provider.

Special Education Cyclical Monitoring



Strategies for continuous improvement include:

- IEP Coversheet with Key Focus Areas
- Internal File Review Process at all Schools
- Focus on Specially Designed Instruction (SDIs) and use of IEP Writer

The district has developed and implemented multiple systems that ensure continued and improved compliance with Chapter 14 and IDEA regulations. In 2013-2014, the district participated in the Pennsylvania Department of Education special education cyclical monitoring. The strategies described in this slide were implemented in the 2014-2015 school year for continued growth as well as to proactively develop systems that will monitor the district's progress. Tools were developed to examine special education paperwork in all buildings on an ongoing basis, which will include internal audits quarterly.

Gifted Education Cyclical Monitoring



Strategies for continuous improvement include:

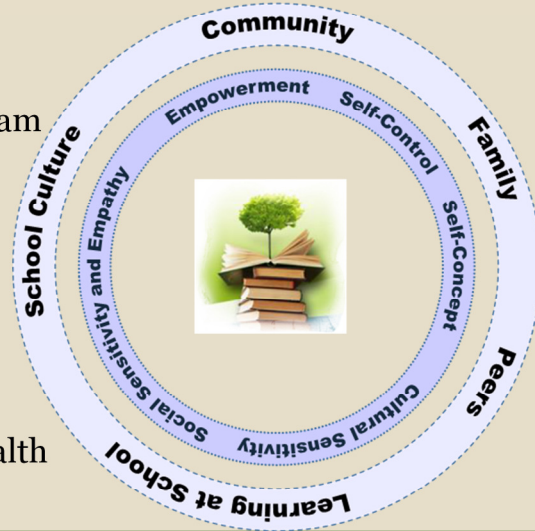
- Increase staff awareness of the needs of gifted learners
- Gifted plan development as part of the district's comprehensive plan for PDE
- Review and revision of the identification process and tools for students that are thought to be gifted
- GIEP document completion with emphasis on strength-based objectives

The district is addressing specific aspects of its gifted programs and services identified during a spring 2014 cyclical monitoring site visit from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) to ensure compliance with state regulations for gifted education. These aspects include the connection of gifted education to the district's strategic plan, the inclusion of recommendations for gifted goals in gifted written referrals, the creation of gifted goals that are aligned to standards, and the provision of training to all staff on the needs of gifted learners. In spring 2015, a monitor from PDE will revisit the district to review how the district addressed those aspects. In an effort parallel to the curriculum review process, the gifted education department is conducting an internal and external analysis to determine best practices in gifted education.

Resiliency

Areas of focus included:

- Student Assistance Program
- RTII Meetings at K-6
- Pupil Services Team Meetings
- School-Based Mental Health



Resiliency is *“one’s ability to adapt well in the face of hard times while also building on one’s strengths.”* Pine-Richland School District is committed to providing resources that support students in their development of resiliency. Last year the district developed a framework that identified both internal and external strengths that act as protective factors when students experience difficulty. This year the district continued to strengthen its resources for resiliency by expanding existing programs, such as student assistance, RTII, and pupil services. The district is also exploring a partnership with a third party provider related to school-based mental health. This program would operate in consultation with Allegheny County Office of Behavioral Health.

End-to-End Hiring



- The current PRSD job portal has proved challenging for applicants (front-end) and difficult for the district to manage (back-end).
- A recommendation has been made to utilize a human resources module with the current finance vendor to manage this process (i.e., Sungard).
- Given the necessary testing before deployment, the new portal will be operational in the early winter 2015.

As an educational organization, the quality of staff has a direct impact on student learning in our schools. The district has been focused on ensuring that a systematic and thorough approach is used in the staffing, recruiting, hiring, on-boarding, induction, and retention process to hire the best individuals who possess a fit to the culture and strategic expectations of the district. Through the process, specific opportunities for improved systems and processes have been identified. Specifically, the transition from the PRSD job portal to a different electronic recruitment tool is a top priority. Future focus will be given to the induction processes for new hires.

Board Policies

- PSBA review
- Section 600 Finance
- Section 700 Property
- Eventual review of all sections with an established review cycle for policies and administrative regulations.

The operation of public school districts is governed - in part - by the board policies that are developed and approved at the local level. Given changes in legislation and trends in education, the board and administration are implementing a systematic process for policy review and revision. The Pennsylvania School Board Association (PSBA) also serves as an important agency in this process. As the policy review unfolds, a cyclical review process of administrative regulations is necessary to ensure that policies are effectively implemented in the school district.

Demographic and Feasibility Study

- Temporarily postponed due to monitoring of enrollment trends (i.e., relatively stable enrollment in the past few years)
- Capacity analysis at HE, RE, and WE
- Demographic tools within the new Transfinder bus routing software will be helpful in this area

The Pine-Richland School District has experienced significant and steady student growth over the past 20 years (i.e., 2,367 students in 1993-1994 to 4,5__ students in 2014-2015). Multiple new construction and renovation projects were completed in that time period to respond to enrollment growth. The last comprehensive demographic analysis with population projections was completed in June 2008 by Shelby Stewman, Professor of Demography and Sociology at Carnegie-Mellon University. As compared to the prior 16 years, the past four years have shown stable overall enrollment. A redistricting for the primary schools was implemented prior to the 2012-2013 school year to equalize enrollment. This topic will be revisited in the next year.

Knowledge Management

- As a method for capturing knowledge and building institutional memory, an action plan format is being utilized for both strategic initiatives and routine items.

The identification and capture of organizational knowledge is important for high level performance.