
Recovery Plan Update

Harrisburg School District

Dauphin County, Pennsylvania

February 2018



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of

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Harrisburg School District Act 141 Recovery Plan Update

February 2018

An Amended Act 141 Recovery Plan for the Harrisburg School District (“the District”) was enacted on May 31, 2016 by the Board of School Directors. The School Board, the Chief Recovery Officer (“the CRO”) and the District administration have operated under the provisions of this Plan and its predecessors since the 2013 adoption of the initial Act 141 Recovery Plan.

Report

The purpose of this document is to provide an update on the District’s progress in implementing the Amended Recovery Plan with a particular focus on the initiatives. Such updates have been prepared periodically since the initial Plan was approved.

The report provides an assessment of the District’s status on each initiative with commentary from the CRO and her technical support team from Public Financial Management (PFM). In addition, the report grades each initiative on a three-level scale: Completed, Not Completed, and In Progress. In order to grade the status of each initiative, the timelines for the initiative as well as the academic, monetary, operational or other impact were taken into account. It is important to note that the grades are dynamic, and can change up or down over time as new items arise under each initiative or conditions change.

The information in this report has been provided by District leadership during regular monthly status meetings with the CRO and PFM. Using the information from the District along with other data gathered from sources such as annual financial reports, school district audits, interviews with District staff and personal observations, the CRO and the PFM team prepared this review of the status of the Recovery Plan. The review was provided to the District administration for review and feedback.

Harrisburg School District – Recovery Plan Initiative Status as of 12/27/17

	Initiative	Completed	In Progress	Not Completed
Administration and Finance	AF01			
	AF02			
	AF03			
	AF04			
	AF05	No longer applicable		
	AF06			
	AF07			
	AF08			
	AF09			
	AF10			
	AF11			
	AF12			
	AF13			
	AF14			
	AF15			
	AF16			
	AF17			
	AF18			
	AF19			
	AF20	No longer applicable		
	AF21			
Facilities	FA01			
	FA02			
	FA03			
	FA04			
	FA05			
	FA06			
	FA07			
	FA08			
	FA09			
	FA10			
	FA11			
	FA12			
	FA13			
	FA14			
Food Service	FS01			
	FS02			
	FS03			
	FS04			

	Initiative	Completed	In Progress	Not Completed
Revenue	RV01			
	RV02			
	RV03			
	RV04			
	RV05			
	RV06			
	RV07			
	RV08			
	RV09			
Debt Service	DS01			
	DS02			
	DS03			
	DS04			
	DS05			
Workforce	WF01			
	WF02			
	WF03			
	WF04			
	WF05			
	WF06			
	WF07			
	WF08			
	WF09			
	WF10			
	WF11			
Education	ED01			
	ED02			
	ED03			
	ED04			
	ED05			
	ED06			
	ED07			
	ED08			
	ED09			
	ED10			
	ED11			
	ED12			
	ED13			
	ED14			
	ED15			
	ED16			
	ED17			
	ED18			
	ED19			
	ED20			
	ED21			

Status of Initiatives

Of the 85 Recovery Plan initiatives approved by the Board, 55 initiatives are considered complete, 9 initiatives remain in progress, and the remaining 21 are considered ongoing until the end of the plan. All initiatives are scheduled to be completed by June 2018.

Education

ED01 - Establish Principals in All Buildings and the Superintendent as Instructional Leader

- Reports on classroom walkthroughs (observations) are provided to the CRO on a regular monthly basis.

ED02 - Reorganize the School Buildings

- See FA13 below.

ED04 - Increase Academic Accountability

- The Board approved curriculum revisions (ongoing) and the ROAR Career Pathways Program was launched successfully in fall 2017.

ED07 - Develop a District-Wide Parent Involvement Initiative

- The Superintendent is holding quarterly meetings with SAC and there are no plans to change that schedule. The District is trying to get more family involvement specialists engaged.

ED09 - Secure Outside Funding for Educational Enrichment and Other Programs

- See RV07 below.

ED15 - Organizational Structure: Complete Administrative Regulations and Handbook, District Data Management Plan, and Educational Technology Plan

- The revised deadline for the Administrative Regulations Handbook and Education Technology Plans are January 2018. The original Amended Plan deadlines were August 2016, May 2017, and September 2017, respectively.
- The District will commit ongoing procedures to writing and provide the CRO Team with a print copy of the Data Management Plan by February 2018.

ED16 - AEDY Enrollment/Discharge Report

- The District is now producing and reviewing this report monthly.

ED17 - Promptly Implement a Career Pathways Program

- The District has successfully implemented the program but there will be ongoing work to expand it including, but not limited to: exploring additional grant opportunities and establishing more partnerships with local employers.

ED18 - Create a Full-Time English Language Learner (ELL) Coordinator Position

- As a result of an increase the ELL population, the District plans to transfer an administrator to serve as a full-time ELL Coordinator in January 2018.

Administration & Finance

AF03/AF04 - Assess Absences among District Staff and Develop an Action Plan/Program to Reduce Staff Absenteeism

- Absence Taskforce Committee meetings and review of absence reports are ongoing.

AF09 - Create and Distribute an Administrative Handbook and a Staff Handbook (*see ED15*)

- Staff Handbooks were completed; Administrative Handbook from Administrative Regulations has a revised deadline of January 2018.

AF10 - All Position Descriptions Should Be Reviewed and Updated and be ADA Compliant

- Revised deadline of December 2017 to complete position review; compensation review and updates to be completed March 2018. The original Amended Plan deadline was August 2016.

AF14 - Complete an Enrollment Study

- The District did complete an enrollment study but needs to determine a process for updating that study in-house each year. Increased immigrant from Puerto Rico and changes in district policy related to enrollment of beginners has impacted the accuracy of the report.

AF17 - PD Plan for Assistant Human Resources Director

- The District now has an experienced HR Director and Coordinator in place.

AF18 - Retention of Senior Management Team Members

- Exit interviews for senior leadership are now in place.

Facilities

FA02 - Sell Unused Buildings

- The District approved a real estate agent to market the properties and is developing a Facilities Plan which includes the recommended sale of William Penn and Steele Schools. The sale of the former Woodward School site must also be finalized.

FA08 - Complete customer satisfaction surveys of facilities

- The District now completes and reviews customer satisfaction surveys each January.

FA12 - Acquire an Automated System to Manage Building Maintenance Issues

- The District now completes and reviews principal satisfaction surveys each January.

FA13 - Develop a Five-Year Facilities Plan

- The District is in the process of developing a multiyear Facilities Plan, which includes the sale of William Penn and Steele Schools. In addition, the District has developed plans for taking classroom space back from Head Start as needs arise at the elementary level.
- The District will continue to monitor enrollment at Marshall Math/Science and SciTech to ensure the buildings have sufficient enrollment to continue programs there.
- The revised deadline for completing the Facilities plan is June 2018, with a draft by January 2018. The original Amended Plan deadlines was April 2017.

FA14 - Pursue Composting Alternatives

- The District is waiting on the Harrisburg City and Susquehanna Township for approval.

Revenue

RV03 - Encourage Additional KOZ Development with Associated PILOT Agreements

- KOZ is approved and the bylaws are awaiting further direction from the City.

RV04 - Develop Partnerships with Tax-Exempt Entities to Generate Voluntary Payments

- Currently, the District is not actively seeking additional opportunities for voluntary payments.

RV05 - Develop a Strategy for Marketing the District's Vacant and Unneeded Properties

- See FA02 above.

RV06 - Optimize Utilization of the Federal Medical Assistance (ACCESS) Program

- The District will continue present efforts to maximize ACCESS reimbursement.

RV07 - Engage Professional Contracted Grant Writing Services to Seek Additional Funding from Competitive Grants and Non-Traditional Sources

- Currently, the District is continuing to use existing staff to apply for grant opportunities rather than contracting for additional help. The District expressed concern regarding managing new grants given current staffing constraints. In Spring 2018, the District plans to explore expanding its partnership with the Foundation.

RV09 - The Severity of the District's Financial Condition is such that Annual Tax Increases May Be Necessary Each Year to Close the Gap between Expenditures and Revenues

- The District has not proposed a tax increase in 2018 to exceed the PA Index.

Workforce

WF01 - Set Wage Growth at Affordable Levels While Attracting and Retaining a Qualified Workforce

- The District hopes to accomplish this goal during upcoming collective bargaining negotiations. The District hired new labor counsel and negotiations will begin in 2018.

WF02 - Flexible Health Insurance Cost Containment

- See WF01 above.

WF04 - Right-Size District Staffing to Match Student Population

- The deadline for completing this initiative is January 2018. The Amended Plan required that the study be completed and results incorporated into staffing and building plans by October 2016. The District did use the study to recommend the sale of Steele School.

WF08 - Create Incentives for Teachers to Build Careers at HSD

- See WF01
- The revised deadline for a plan to reduce high teacher turnover is June 2018. The original Amended Plan deadline for implementing elements of a program was September 2016. Plans were tabled until the next round of collective bargaining negotiations.

WF09 - Address Low Teacher Wage Pattern in Years 0-9; Address Incentives for Veteran Teachers

- See WF01
- The revised deadline is June 2018. The original Amended Plan deadline was July 2016. Plans were tabled for the next round of collective bargaining negotiations.

WF10 - Maintain and Regularly Update Position Control File

- The District has successfully developed a position control file and now needs to institute a process for continually updating it. The District plans to use this file in the upcoming budget adjustments.

WF11 - Review Act 93 Job Descriptions (*see AF10*)

- See AF10 above.
- The original Amended Plan deadline to contract with an organization to review the job positions was December 2016. The contracting and completion of the review has taken significantly longer than planned. The revised deadline is January 2018.

Academic Accountability

PVAAS results document district growth in English and language arts (ELA) and mathematics at all grade levels, when comparing 2017 results with average growth over the past three years. Although some improvement in PSSA proficiency achievement can be documented for the past two years, the majority of the schools and grade levels did not achieve the proficiency targets established in the 2016 Amended Recovery Plan.

- Only Grade 4 at Melrose exceeded the 2016 Amended Recovery Plan target of 31.2% of students in reading and language arts (ELA) scoring at or above the proficiency level.
- Math Science Middle School exceeded the 2016 Amended Recovery Plan proficiency targets in all subject areas.
- SciTech High School Campus exceeded the 2016 Amended Recovery Plan achievement targets and the 2017 State average scores on Keystone test in all subject areas.

To achieve the academic accountability goals, the academic focus of the district must continue to be the consistent, effective implementation of **systems** that can ensure:

- Consistent implementation of the written curriculum across all grade levels.
- Effective instructional strategies in every classroom.
- Monitoring of student academic growth as measured by benchmark assessments aligned to the PSSA test.
- Implementation of an effective MTSS process and academic interventions.
- Ensuring the district's PBIS program is implemented with fidelity in all schools.

Financial Accountability

Although the financial status of the District has improved since 2013 and the District continues to maintain a fund balance, annual expenditures are slated to consistently outpace revenues in the coming years. Several costly projects could consume a substantial portion of the current fund balance. As a result, the District must carefully prioritize the drawdown of the fund balance.

Conclusion

The overall conclusion of the CRO and the PFM team is that the District has continued to make steady progress on most initiatives over the past years. However, the District has also continued to face academic challenges, and much needs to be accomplished in order for the Act 141 Recovery Plan to be considered successful.