

Strategic Plan Update September 2024

Introduction

District 103's Strategic Plan was created by a diverse group of 58 members of our community including students, parents and staff who identified six competencies (characteristics and skills) our students will need to be successful in our society. Those competencies evolved into the Portrait of a Graduate that guides the work of the district. Those competencies are:

- Empathy
- Collaboration
- Global Citizenship
- Critical Thinking
- Adaptability
- Perseverance

Additionally, the committee created a Strategic Plan, which involves four main goals that outline the work of the District through the 2025-2026 school year.

- Goal 1: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Goal 2: Individualized Learning
- Goal 3: Social Emotional Learning (SEL)
- Goal 4: Infrastructure

Each year, the District identifies key tasks to complete from the Strategic Plan to move the district forward with accomplishing the work of each goal. Described below is an update of where the district is in the Strategic Plan process.

The work for Goal 1 and Goal 2 have been combined through a process called Inquiry Based Learning, an active learning approach that encourages students to ask questions, explore new ideas, conduct research, and to have greater agency in their learning.

A listing of the Goals and Tasks for each goal can be found below and also on the [District 103 website](#).

Goal 1: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Objective

Provide authentic learning experiences that engage students in asking questions for understanding and addressing complex real-world issues.

Summary of Tasks

- Research best practices in providing authentic learning experiences across all content areas.

Strategic Plan Update September 2024

- Audit current curriculum for authentic learning experiences.
- Modify, create, and adopt curriculum changes or an instructional model aligned to the goal.
- Review curriculum changes or adopted instructional model.
- Evaluate curriculum changes or adopted instructional model.

and

Goal 2: Individualized Learning

Objective

Provide opportunities for all students to advance their individual academic knowledge, skills, and abilities through personalized learning experiences.

Summary of Tasks

- Research theory and best practices on individualized learning/interest based learning.
- Create/adopt district level individualized learning model for all students.
- Provide professional development for staff regarding individualized learning.
- Assess effectiveness of model and student learning using student achievement/growth data.
- Evaluate curriculum changes or adopted instructional model.

Current Status

Starting in 2022, staff participated in Inquiry-Based Learning training with multiple consultants, including author Trevor Mackenzie. Since then, staff have continued to explore and implement the Inquiry-Based Learning model through book studies, collaborative idea-sharing, and feedback gathered from their lessons. Teachers use instructional strategies that “ignite young minds and foster a deep desire to explore and understand the world around them”, called “provocations.” Additionally, they have begun using specific questioning techniques to encourage students to create their own questions. As part of this effort, staff work to align the skills they are teaching with the competencies outlined in the Portrait of a Graduate. Teachers are developing alignment charts to ensure consistency between building skills and the language used in report cards.

Plans for 2024-2025

For the 2024-2025 school year, the focus will turn to more subject-based inquiry on the work of Peter Liljedahl in his book, “Building Thinking Classrooms”. Additionally, the staff will focus on assessing the implementation of Inquiry Learning in the schools using the [Harvard Graduate School of Education Project Zero](#) rubric titled, [Inquiry Driven Teaching and Learning](#).

Goal 3: Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Objective

Strategic Plan Update September 2024

- Develop well-balanced citizens by implementing robust State SEL standards, fostering safe, healthy, and just communities.

Summary of Tasks

- Review SEL Tiers to ensure alignment with State SEL standards and MTSS framework.
- Assess students' SEL needs as identified in the Portrait of a Graduate in all grade levels using a research-based tool.
- Align and articulate curriculum, both vertically and horizontally, with SEL standards and student needs.
- Institute standard SEL training for all staff members.
- Align feedback on student progress with State SEL Standards.
- Create standard Parent Education Guides/Program to augment school curriculum.

Current Status

During institute days, staff members participate in Kagan SEL training. Panorama surveys are conducted each year to provide data on the social emotional growth of our students in grades K-8. The data is being utilized to support student needs. In the spring of 2023, belonging surveys were distributed to students in grades 5-8, with another round administered to students in grades 6-8 in the spring of 2024 to gauge the students' sense of belonging at Daniel Wright. The insights from the surveys will guide the development of targeted action items. SEL surveys for students took place in May of 2024. Over the summer, our building teams worked together to align SEL language within the report cards, so families will see these represented within the Learner Characteristics for each school's report card.

Plans for 2024-2025

A new curriculum at Daniel Wright, Better Together Cubed, (BT3), a program that focuses on building empathy, resilience, courage, and connection within school communities, is being implemented. Early Childhood is also implementing a new comprehensive curriculum, Frog Street, which includes a program called Conscious Classroom Curriculum for SEL. Administrators will receive enhanced training on analyzing Panorama data, which focuses on aligning the survey results to the students' needs. Alignment of behavior intervention practices will take place in grades K-8. The District has a new MTSS Coach position this year who will be working with staff across all the buildings to align our interventions with Reading, Math, and SEL and supporting staff with resources and problem-solving strategies.

Goal 4: Infrastructure

Objective

- Create adaptable learning environments that respond to enrollment trends, human resources needs, and curricular programming.

Summary of Tasks

- Conduct review of infrastructure needs to update 5-year plans for facilities and technology including staff, family, student and community voices.

Strategic Plan Update September 2024

- Create community-focused recruiting effort to provide a staffing pool that represents the demographic of our community.
- Update and analyze fiscal projections to determine funds needed for the 5-year plan.
- Identify areas in each facility that can be repurposed to maximize learning spaces.

Current Status

The current enrollment trends are steady. Financial projections show that the district has a balanced budget and 32% of expenditures in reserves. To attract new talent to the district, district employees participate in job fairs, the most recent one being an online job fair in March 2024. Additionally, staff members recruit their acquaintances and friends when openings arise. Of the staff, 75 employees live within the District boundaries, not including those working at the 103 Club. In April 2024, the [facility matrix](#) was updated and presented to the Board of Education. Major areas of improvement include updating the univents in classrooms. To address future facility space needs, the district works with a real estate advisory group to review properties within the district boundaries as potential sites for future expansion.

Plans for 2024-2025

The district will monitor enrollment trends and maintain financial health by upholding a balanced budget and ensuring a positive reserve account. Efforts to attract new talent will continue through national advertising and job fairs. Additionally, the district will regularly update the facility matrix to ensure buildings and grounds are well-maintained and operational while keeping an eye on potential property within district boundaries for future expansion.

Summary

The district is committed to advancing critical thinking, individualized learning, and social-emotional development of our students and to instilling the competencies outlined in the Portrait of a Graduate. We thank our community for partnering with us to raise our Leaders in Learning.