



EVANSTON/SKOKIE
SCHOOL DISTRICT 65

Every Child, Every Day, Whatever it Takes

TO: Board Of Education

CC: Dr. Angel Turner & Dr. LaTarsha Green

FROM: Dr. Katie Speth

DATE: Feb 10, 2025

RE: 3,6,9 memo regarding IL Department Strategic Goals

Objective: X **Information** **Discussion** **Follow-up**
Decision

SMARTIE Goal - Evaluation

100% of certified educators in D65 will receive a complete evaluation process by May 1st 2025.

100% of school leaders will receive a complete evaluation process by June 16, 2025

Staff Evaluations

- Evaluation Process Progress
 - 264 non-tenured educators
 - 35 non-tenured educators have overdue formal observation #1
 - Formal observation #1 was the first deadline (formal completed before winter break)
 - Therefore, 86.7% of non-tenured educator evaluations are on track.
 - The schools management team continues to work with school leaders to ensure that all elements of the evaluation process are closed out
 - Upcoming deadlines:
 - Educators score their Student Learning Objectives (SLO) by 2/13
 - Formal #2 for non-tenured educators by 2/13
 - We will pull the data at these deadlines to monitor progress.
- Developing Leader Capacity
 - 1/16 Collaborative:
 - Reviewed contract language updates
 - conducted walkthrough of "Process Dashboard" in Perform to build leader capacity to monitor their own completion of evaluation tasks.
 - Ongoing:
 - Pulling data reports and following up with individual leaders when deadlines are not met
 - Checking the process dashboard with leaders during coaching conversations

School Leader Evaluations

- 100% of principals received at least one formal observation; all principals will receive a second formal observation by February 10th.
- Working to acquire access to assistant principals in SuperEval to monitor completion of AP evals.

SMARTIE Goal - Standards Based Grading

By June 2025, District 65 will implement a comprehensive, equitable, and inclusive standards-based learning and grading (SBL/G) system across all K-8 schools, with 100% of educators demonstrating proficiency in consistent assessment practices.

- Content directors have collaborated to find cross-disciplinary practices, thus reducing the emphasis on discipline-specific instructional practices and building a strong base of cross-disciplinary practices - while still honoring important discipline-specific elements. This work includes participation in Learning Walks at schools with a focus on elements of the Instructional Framework

SMARTIE Goal - Instructional Framework

In 80% of the observed classrooms two identified instructional elements from the D65 Instructional Framework are readily apparent

- The Teaching and Learning team continues to focus on developing and supporting high impact instructional practices throughout the district. They collaborate on aligning cross-content practices that align to the D65 Instructional framework.



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TO: District 65 School Board

CC: Dr. Angel Turner, Superintendent

FROM: Dr. Corina Herrera, Assistant Superintendent of Student Specialized Services

DATE: Feb 3, 2024

RE: 3-6-9 Update

Objective: X Information Discussion Follow-up
Decision

This memo provides a trimester update on the Student Specialized Services and Supports (S4) department goals and work related to the School Deficit Reduction Framework.

Student Specialized Services and Supports Goals Progress to Date

The Student Specialized Services and Supports Department (S4) has been working toward the following three goals that align to the district and superintendent priorities:

Focus Area 1: 6th grade Dual Language Roll-up

Strategic Goal 1: Equity, Access, and Opportunity

Goal: By May 2025, the ML Team will ensure a successful Middle School Roll-up by completing observations (each trimester) of 6th grade DL classrooms to assess adherence to the research-based language allocation model, will engage the school community through the SAP process regarding the location of the next DL Middle School, and collect parent feedback through survey feedback to identify areas of strength and improvements regarding TWI/DL programs.

Progress:

- Language Allocation:
 - The ML team has completed the first-trimester observation and is planning for a second-trimester observation the week of **February 3, 2025**. Key highlights from the first observation include: Educators were observed to consistently adhered to the language allocation guidelines across content areas:
 - **Math, Language Arts, Science:** Spanish

- **Electives, PE, English Language Arts:** English
- Parent Feedback on TWI/DL Programs:
 - Parent feedback regarding the TWI/DL programs has been solicited through a survey, which was sent to all families. The survey asked parents to share their "glows and grows" regarding the programs and to indicate their interest in continuing with TWI/DL in the upcoming school year.
 - **K-5 TWI Parent Feedback Survey:**
 - 128 respondents completed the survey.
 - 68% expressed interest in sending their child to a Dual Language (DL) middle school.
 - 26.6% were "maybe interested" in the opportunity.
 - 5.5% indicated they were "not interested."
 - **Dual Language Parent Survey:**
 - The team will conduct **telephone outreach** to gather additional feedback. The survey closes on **February 7, 2025**.
- SAP III:
 - Applications for the **SAP III** committee were sent, and **21 committee members** were selected, with representation from every TWI building and middle school.
 - The first of three SAP III meetings is scheduled for **Feb 6th, 2025**. The essential question is: Where will the next DL middle school program be located in the fall of SY2026.... Chute or Nichols.

Focus Area 2: Budget

Strategic Goal 5: Strategic Resource allocation practices that ensure long-term financial stability and the allocation of resources aligned to equity priorities

Goal: By the end of the 2024-2025 school year (SY25), each team within the Student Specialized and Support Services (S4) Department will manage their allotted budget without exceeding the total annual budget provided by the Business Office. This will be achieved through monthly, quarterly, and annual budget monitoring checklist completion, facilitated by team leads, and supported by regular financial check-ins with the S4 leadership and the Financial Services team. Success will be measured by ensuring that each team stays within its allocated budget for the fiscal year, as confirmed by a final report from the Business Office.

Progress:

Each S4 team monitors its budget on a monthly basis.

Monthly meetings with Financial Services ensure ongoing budget compliance and quarterly checklists support accurate reporting.

- Based on the latest report for all S4 budget accounts, we are on track to reduce expenditures in contract services, particularly related to staffing agencies, and are expected to remain within budget across all other areas. The team has found some success in reducing an over-reliance on staffing agencies by implementing an accountability system to maintain job postings for vacant positions and actively monitor them for applicants. We are also exploring other more cost-effective opportunities such as agencies with lower rates.
- The teams have ensured that expenditures are submitted for payment under the correct budget accounts and when necessary journal entries are submitted to the correct budget account lines
- The Financial Services team continues to provide guidance and monthly meetings to ensure grant and local accounts are accurate
- I review accounts monthly for the Multi-lingual team, Student intervention services, Health Services, Wellness Services, and Individual Education Services to ensure we are staying within budget
- Budget amendments/reallocations were made for the IDEA grant to ensure spending down and reduce carry-over
- The following is used to track all S4 budgets in the areas of purchase services, supplies and materials, and transportation for Individualized Education Services, Multi-lingual, and Wellness Services
 - **Total Annual Budget Allocated**
 - **Year to Date Expenditures**
 - **Percent of Budget Used**
 - **Percent of Budget Remaining**

S4 Program	% of Budget Used	% of Budget Remaining
FY25 Budget - Community School (286 - E S L - T.P.I)	85.63%	14.37%
FY25 Budget - Community School (289 - Title III- Grant)	31.42%	68.58%
FY25 Budget - Community School (410 - SPED Out of District Costs)	45.16%	54.84%
FY25 Budget - Community School (415 - Special Services-Local)	63.03%	36.97%
FY25 Budget - Community School (440 - I.D.E.A. Budget-Grant)	65.78%	34.22%
FY25 Budget - Community School (577 - EL Elevating Educators Grant)	49.62%	50.38%
FY25 Budget - Community School (613 - Health Services)	91.10%	8.9%
FY25 Budget - Community School (628 - MTSS)	91.03%	8.97%
FY25 Budget - Community School (695 McKinney-Vento)	92.46%	7.54%

Focus Area 3: Retention

Strategic Goal 4- Recruit, select, develop, and retain highly effective staff and partners invested in the best educational opportunities and support for all students and staff

Goal: By the end of the 2024-2025 school year, the S4 department will implement teacher retention strategies by developing and administering (1) a teacher satisfaction survey in collaboration with HR, discipline-specific PD on five (5) school improvement days, and establishing two (2) university partnerships.

Progress:

- **Teacher Satisfaction Survey:** The S4 Department completed a draft of the teacher satisfaction survey
- **University Affiliation Agreements:** Between the IES and ML teams a total of 7 affiliation agreements
 - Northeastern
 - DePaul
 - National Louis
 - Roosevelt
 - Loyola
 - North Park
 - UIC
- **Targeted PD/Training:** The S4 department has engaged Multi-lingual teachers, IES teachers, Interventionist, Nurses, Health Clerks, and Related Service Providers in four (4) discipline-specific PD/training
 - Cycle 1:
 - September 18
 - November 13
 - December 4
 - Cycle 2:
 - February 5
- **Other:**
 - Researching and Collaborating with Financial Services and Human Relations Teams regarding a high-needs incentive for hard-to-fill vacancies
 - IES coordinators, ML Team, and Student Intervention Services will be attending upcoming IASPA Virtual Job Fairs in collaboration with HR
 - School Psychologists will be attending the ISPA intern fair to recruit interns for the 25/26SY

Focus Area 4: SDRP Champion Work - Special Education (IES) Audit

As a champion for the Special education audit component of the SDRP, I am collaborating with IES coordinators, IES educators, cabinet members, departments, and

building administrators to learn the current reality of our special education continuum, staffing, scheduling efficiencies, allocations, and out of district placements.

Progress:

This trimester we completed the SPED Audit Survey. I visited all but two schools to collect feedback from IES educators, including related service providers, and administrators regarding our continuum of services. The focus of the survey was to gather first hand information about what is working and what is not with our current models for programming, services, scheduling, and staffing allocation. Additionally, the SPED audit leadership team is finalizing a review of paraprofessional staff assignments to gather more information on allocations and workload across the district. The data team is gathering internal data related to SPED services and programming, reimbursement, staffing, student outcomes, and transportation. The goal is to use various data to assist us in understanding what is working and what need improvement to optimize special education in the district. Finally, the leadership team has completed its review of the WestEd proposal, which is aimed at supporting the internal SPED audit work. Our partnership with WestEd will help synthesize the data review and analysis, providing recommendations for optimization with a focus on efficiency, best practices, and improved student outcomes. The goal of the audit is to create efficiencies that lead to the following improvements:

- Optimizing Reimbursement,
- Optimizing Programming and Services,
- Optimizing Scheduling, Staffing Allocations, and
- Transportation.



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TO: District 65 School Board

CC: Cabinet Members

**FROM: Terrance Little, Assistant Superintendent of Safety,
Climate, and Athletics**

DATE: 03/10/25

RE: 3-6-9 Board Update for SCA Department

Objective: xxx Information Discussion Follow-up Decision

Goal 1: Budget Management

Strategic Objective 5.4: Develop a process to review current programming for return on investments and expand or add new programs aligned with the district's equity practices.

SMARTIE Goal:

By June 2025, implement a comprehensive, equity-focused budget monitoring system for the Safety, Climate, and Athletics Department that ensures 100% alignment with district priorities, improves resource utilization efficiency by 3% (3% budget reduction from the previous year), and increases transparency in financial reporting, while actively involving stakeholders in the budgeting process.

Budget Utilization Efficiency

- **Measure:** Percentage of allocated funds effectively used within the fiscal year
- **24-25SY Progress:** Continuing to track on target for a 3% efficiency increase by closely monitoring spending patterns and maintaining a \$1,000 per school day reduction in transportation costs despite a 12% contract increase for this school year. We are currently on track to save over one million dollars.

Stakeholder Engagement

- **Measure:** Number of Transportation budget planning sessions involving stakeholders (other departments)
- **24-25SY Progress:** Hosted five Transportation Finance sessions (09/26, 10/24, 11/21, 12/19, and 01/16) with cross-departmental representation.

Goal 2: Disproportionality and RTO Management

Strategic Objective 1.5: Ensure access to and monitoring of participation in wrap-around services that include pedagogical, social, emotional, and psychological support to achieve high standards of excellence.

SMARTIE Goal:

By the end of the school year, District 65 will implement a comprehensive “Positive Climate Initiative” through the FACE Liaisons to reduce disciplinary incidents of levels 3, 4, and 5 by 5% and increase student and staff-reported feelings of safety and belonging by 3%, ensuring equitable outcomes across all demographic groups through data-driven, culturally responsive practices and community engagement, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Disciplinary Referrals Rate

- **Measure: Percentage reduction in disciplinary referrals (Branching Minds) of levels 3, 4, and 5**
- **24-25SY Progress:**
 - A total decrease from 1201 incidents in SY22-23 to 623 in SY24-25 as of Jan. 13th
 - Level 3, 4, and 5 incidents now account for 23.5% of total incidents
 - Percent of students with Level 3, 4, or 5 incidents decreased from 5% to 3.8%

Incident Demographics

- **Black/African American Students:**
 - 80% of incidents are Level 1 and 2 (classroom) incidents
 - 50.2% decrease in total incidents (from 2530 to 1260)
- **Hispanic/Latino Students:**
 - Decrease in incident percentage from 18% in SY22-23 to 13% in SY24-25
- **Students with IEPs:**
 - Total incidents decreased from 1604 to 1009
 - Level 3, 4, and 5 incidents reduced from 360 to 301 (16.4% decrease)
- **Free/Reduced Lunch Status:**
 - 63% of all incidents were committed by students receiving free or reduced lunch, which is a slight decrease from the previous 66%.

School Climate Survey Results

- **Engagement:**
 - 3rd and 4th grade: Declined from 58% to 48% positive responses
 - 5th-8th grade: Slight increase from 34% to 35%
- **Sense of Belonging:**
 - 3rd and 4th grade: Slight decrease from 64% to 63%
 - 5th-8th grade: Significant increase from 51% to 58% (highest ever)
- **Well-Being and SEL:**
 - 5th-8th grade at 73% positive response (highest ever)
- **Community Engagement**
 - **Measure:** Establish and grow at least two community partnerships related to a positive school climate
 - **24-25SY Progress:** We have met and scheduled meetings with the Moran Center, FAAM, and Northwestern University to continue our partnerships for wraparound services for our students.

Goal 3: Concierge Safety Management

Strategic Objective 1.1: Ensure all schools have positive school climates built upon transparent and equitable policies and practices where all members of the school community feel emotionally and physically safe, included, and accepted.

SMARTIE Goal:

By June 2025, the Concierge Team will implement a proactive, equity-focused safety approach across all schools in District 65. They will respond to and address all level 5/critical criterion indicators, increase student-reported feelings of safety by 3%, and ensure equitable treatment across all demographic groups, particularly focusing on traditionally overpoliced student populations.

- **Training Compliance:**
 - **Measure:** Percentage of Concierge team members up-to-date on required training (e.g., emergency procedures, first aid)
 - **Progress:** Currently at 100% compliance, with all team members having completed recent emergency and cultural sensitivity training.
- **Building Security Audits:**
 - **Measure:** Conduct one comprehensive security audit for three school buildings
 - **Progress:** 100% of our school buildings have been audited by our Concierge Safety Management Team. Additionally, three schools have been audited by an outside vendor.

Summary of Progress and Key Achievements:

- **Budget Efficiency:**
 - Despite contract increases, transportation costs were reduced by \$1,000 per school day compared to last year, achieving significant budget utilization improvements. We are on track to see over one million dollars in savings.
- **Positive Climate Initiative:**
 - A total decrease from 1201 incidents in SY22-23 to 623 in SY24-25 as of Jan. 13th for levels 3's, 4's, and 5's
 - Our Concierge Safety Management Team has audited 100% of our school buildings, and additionally, three school buildings have been audited by an outside vendor

Attendance Metrics

- District K-8 Average Daily Attendance (ADA): 93.8% (up from 93% last year)
- High Performing Schools (95% or higher):
 - Lincolnwood
 - Lincoln
 - Walker
 - Orrington
- Improved Attendance Rates:
 - Rhodes
 - Haven
 - King Arts
 - Nichols



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TO: District 65 School Board

CC: Dr. Angel Turner, Superintendent

FROM: Dr. Stacy Beardsley, Asst. Superintendent, PMA

DATE: February 7, 2025

RE: 3-6-9 Update for Perf. Management and Accountability

Objective: X Information Discussion Follow-up Decision

This memo provides a quarterly update on the Performance Management and Sustainability priority goals and work related to the School Deficit Reduction Framework.

PMA Goals Progress to Date

Goal 1: Program Evaluation (Strategic Plan Goals: 2.1, 2.5, 5.1, 5.3)

By June 2025, a comprehensive program evaluation process will be developed to assess programs for impact, equity and cost effectiveness. The program will be used to complete one program evaluation and initiate at least one per District department. Feedback will be gathered to improve the program evaluation process for future work.

Measure:

- **Development(Completed)** KPI 1: - 100% of the toolkit(Toolkit, Workbook, Overview Presentations, and Schoology Course) is completed by October 1st with initial feedback from at least 8 department leads/external partners with 80% or more satisfaction rating.
- **Professional Learning/Training (Completed Development - Delivering in an On-Going Basis with each Phase)** KPI 2.1: Define and Provide professional learning (training, workshops, consultation, etc.) to program evaluation capacity at the department or team leads to ensure program evaluation plans are defined prior to program launches as a part of program design - emphasis on design phase, peer feedback, etc.
 - **(Not Complete)** KPI 2.2: 95% of Cabinet will attend the "Program Evaluation Overview Session" and complete the "Program Prioritization" sheet with at least 1 program/initiative
- **Feedback: (Ongoing)** KPI 3: Feedback is gathered within 2 weeks at the end of each cycle and 85% of actionable feedback items are implemented in the revised version within 1 month after the pilot feedback is gathered.

Progress:

During quarter 2, RAAD identified the program focus for the program evaluation pilot (Direct Student Supports - FACE and School Counselors introduced with ESSR funding). The team has held meetings with the leadership of both programs and completed phase one of the program evaluation process. One group is currently engaging in phase 2 and the other group is exiting phase 2 and moving to phase 3.

Three shifts to the original work plan have been initiated. Specifically, the delivery of professional learning through the Schoology developed course is being chunked in introductory meetings at each phase. Second, feedback is being gathered on the process after each phase rather than at the end of the complete program evaluation. The final shift is that KPI 3 was listed for completion by February 1. We have adjusted the deadline to May 1, 2025. With the need for a focus on SDRP, the pilot launched later than expected.

Goal 2: Sustainability (Strategic Plan Goals 2.5, 5.1, 5.4, 5.5)

By May 30 2025, a thoroughly vetted district-wide sustainability program plan will be presented to the D65 School Board including:

- *Vision of sustainability in D65,*
- *Categories of focus,*
- *Goals / targets,*
- *Strategies to achieve / implementation*

And aligned to the City of Evanston and Village of Skokie sustainability program plans and District 65 strategic priorities will be included in D65 school board policy as a commitment to advancing D65 sustainable practices.

Measure:

- **Readiness for Sustainability Plan Development (Completed):** KPI 1: 100% of the readiness steps for building a sustainability plan are complete by 10/15/24
- **Sustainability Plan Development (In-Process - On time)** KPI 2: Complete at least 75% of the defined elements of a sustainability plan and it is ready for comprehensive external (people beyond the core team) review.

The Sustainability Coordinator, Karen Bireta, has organized a [working group](#) to help to develop the first ever District 65 sustainability plan. The team consists of a variety of stakeholders including DEC leadership, D65 and D202 staff and students, City of Evanston employees, City of Skokie employees, Evanston Public Library employees and members of multiple climate oriented community based organizations in Evanston.

This team has been meeting approximately every three weeks since October to develop a District plan that will be brought to the Board for feedback and to review a possible revision to Board policy (Policy 4:70). The team came to consensus on four focus areas for the plan: Teaching and Learning, Sustainable Operations, Transportation and Mobility and Healthy Indoor and Outdoor Environments. The team is working in small groups currently drafting goals and strategies for these focus areas.

The next steps include finishing the draft, gathering stakeholder feedback and then sharing with the sustainability plan and possible policy language with the School Board in April.

Goal 3: Financial Management (Strategic Plan Goals: 5.1, 5.3)

By June 30, 2025, 100% of the PMA team will have strengthened budget and financial monitoring skills as measured by:

- *100% of the teams finish the fiscal year having spent no more than 100% of their budgeted funds.*
- *The department as a whole spends less than 100% of our budgeted funds.*
- *Quarterly budget check process is followed with 100% fidelity by team and department leaders.*
- *FY26 budgets are informed by FY25 actuals and District priorities.*

Measures:

- **(Complete) KPI 1:** 100% of program budgets have been reviewed and finalized by department and team. At least 75% of teams have spending plans drafted for 100% of their programs.
- **(In Process) KPI 2:** 100% of team leads complete quarterly checks as a department in October, January, April and June.

The Performance Management and Accountability team has been collaborating with the Financial Services team to define a process for monitoring the departments spending as well as strengthening the departments understanding of the contract process, p-card procedures and Infinite Visions tools. In October, the team engaged in professional learning focused on 1.) the use of IV for monitoring budgets and 2.) the District 65 contract process.

The team has utilized a PMA developed protocol for analyzing budget programs to assess spending to date and take necessary action steps as needed to ensure that accounts are accurate and spending will not be over budget at the end of the fiscal year. The protocol (budget review) was executed in November and January and team leads defined specific next steps that in some cases involved engaging financial services or human resources. The team will

conduct the third quarter review prior to budget finalization per a PMA team lead request to allow this process to better inform budget building.

SDRP Champion Work - School Closing/Consolidation

I am championing the school closing/consolidation portion of the School Deficit Reduction Plan work. I am working closely with individuals from the Financial Services department and the Strategic Communications and Project Management Department to plan and begin to execute this process.

To date, the team has taken the following steps:

- Reviewed relevant literature on school closings and consolidations.
- Developed initial estimates of potential cost savings if a building was closed.
- Defined a draft work plan and aligned this with SDRP phase 2 work.
- Drafted initial thinking on the formation of a working group to provide input and feedback at three critical points in our process: 1.) identifying the categories/criteria and weighting to inform scenario development, 2.) provide initial feedback on scenarios for closure or consolidation include attendance boundary adjustments and program placement and 3.) Provide a second round of feedback on scenarios.

Over the next quarter, the goal is to form and engage with the working group to define categories and criteria for scenario development.

SDRP Support Work: Data and Program Evaluation

The Research Assessment Accountability and Data (RAAD) team is closely connected to the SDRP work in a couple of important ways:

1. Ad Hoc Data Requests to Support SDRP: The RAAD team has developed a draft process for managing internal data requests for the SDRP work. The goal of this process is to ensure that requests are reviewed and responded to in a timely manner. During quarter 2, RAAD conducted additional analysis work to support summer learning and provided data analysis work for the special education audit and the transportation audit.
2. Program Evaluation: The program evaluation pilot and the ability to learn from the experience and begin to internalize this way of doing work in D65 is essential for long term District fiscal planning and responsibility. As we learn more about the pilot, RAAD will determine how to streamline the process and begin the process of introducing program evaluation to each department. This will also allow the District to better assess the impact of programs in the future.



TO: Dr. Angel Turner, Superintendent
CC: District 65 Cabinet Team
School Board
FROM: Melissa Messinger, Exec. Chief of
Strategic Comms. & Project Management
DATE: February 10, 2025
RE: 3,6, 9 Milestone Memo for SCPM goals

Objective: ☒ **Information** ☐ **Discussion** ☐ **Follow-up** ☐ **Decision**

This memo provides a quarterly update on the Strategic Communications and Project Management (SCPM) priority goals.

SCPM Goals - Progress to Date

Goal 1: Communication Plan for Standards Based Grading

(Strategic Goal 3 - High Quality Teaching & Learning to Support Student Success)

By the end of the 2024-2025 school year, the strategic communications team will implement a communications plan in support of the Instructional Leadership Department to build parent/caregiver awareness in understanding the shift to standards based grading in middle school, as measured by marked improvement in a community-based SBG periodic pulse survey and other engagement measures.

KPI: Reach at least 50% of middle school parents/caregivers with an introductory messages about Standards Based Grading

- Average 60% open rate on Fast Five community-based newsletters containing information on Standards Based Grading
- SBG in middle school intro video: 352 views
- "Teacher Insights" series (4 videos): combined total of 356 views
- Website traffic: Nov 15-Feb 2: 945 visitors

During Quarter 2, our Strategic Communications team continued its partnership with the Instructional Leadership team on developing a communications plan focused on building understanding of the shift to standards based grading in middle school.

The "Teacher Insights on Standards Based Grading" video series was shared with middle school leaders for family education through their school newsletters and other communication methods. This collection included four videos featuring teachers discussing the benefits of standards based grading and how it enhances student learning. Additionally, we provided two other videos that helped parents understand how to navigate PowerSchool and understand the new report card and their child's progress.

Additionally, our website was updated to contain the most up-to-date SBG/L information; which is used as a resource hub. All of the information is being shared through multiple sources to increase outreach and access to this information including school newsletters, the Fast Five, social media, text message, Superintendent's scoop, and in-person meetings.

Goal 2: Foster School Transition & Construction Progress

(Strategic Goal 1 - Access, Equity, and Opportunity)

By the end of the 2024-2025 school year, establish and implement a SAP III process that engages various stakeholders in developing a Foster School transition plan focused on community building and that takes into account the impact of the significant shifts in student enrollment across District 65 schools.

KPI: Launch at least two community-building initiatives (e.g., community forums, welcome events, partnership programs) aligned with the plan's goals

Foster School Transition Committee

The Foster School transition Committee formed in November with 28 community members from a diverse and representative perspective that includes three school principals from Orrington, Willard, and Lincolnwood, three parents and one staff member from Bessie Rhodes, and over 50% residents of the 5th Ward. The committee's focus is:

- **Engagement** -- What is the best way to engage students, families, and community members in the intentionality of opening the Foster School?
- **Transition:** How do we create a smooth, successful transition for each family?
- **Community:** How do we create a community before the school opens?

To-date, the committee has met five times and is next planning to host a community meeting for future Foster Families on February 19 in addition to forming four distinct sub-committees beginning in February.

Two community building initiatives underway are as follows:

- Foster school pride and spirit with the development of branding and logo concepts for the school rooted in community voice.
 - Committee topic focused on school branding
 - Last summer, future students and community members selected the Phoenix to be the school's mascot.
 - Several logo concepts and color schemes were presented to the committee with broader outreach and feedback at an open community meeting on 2/19
- Hiring process for Foster School Principal
 - Input on leadership profile and process gathered by Committee
 - Open process to solicit input from staff and future families on the qualities, skills, and characteristics of the first school leader
 - Convening of a community based interview panel to make recommendation to the Superintendent.

- New principal will work closely with transition committee and community on outreach strategies and preparation for a smooth and joyous opening in summer 2026
- Applications are currently being accepted, with the aim of having a principal hired in April to start July 1, 2025.

Foster School Construction

Goal: By the anticipated opening of the school in fall 2026, the Project Management team is tasked with helping to ensure school construction remains on budget and on-time and that key milestones and deliverables are met within the district's locus of control, a key area of focus will remain on being good neighbors and collaboration within the Fifth Ward community throughout the construction process.

Six Month KPI - Work to ensure that 100% of construction contracts are finalized and awarded within the scope of the overall budget. The project should remain on track with the key milestone of completing the installation of the building's precast structural walls by March/April 2025.

The construction of Foster School in Evanston's Fifth Ward is progressing well and remains within its \$48.5 million budget. Approximately 90% of the project's contracts have been finalized, and the building's foundation is nearing completion, in preparation for the precast structural walls to be raised and installed in March and April.

In December 2024, the District 65 school board approved \$23.4 million in construction contracts, covering essential components such as structural steel, electrical systems, HVAC, plumbing, and roofing. Notably, the structural steel bid was rebid, resulting in a significant cost reduction from nearly \$2.5 million to about \$1.8 million. This favorable bidding outcome increased the project's contingency fund to \$4.9 million, providing a financial buffer for unforeseen expenses.

Despite a change order of \$117,704 for additional stone to stabilize the ground, the project remains under budget. The first bid group for site clearing and ground improvements is complete and came in under budget, while the second bid group for the building foundation and precast concrete exceeded the budget by about \$300,000. However, the third bid group, encompassing much of the building's core mechanical infrastructure, was \$3.5 million under budget. The final two bid groups to be bid out in March and October of this year, will address flooring, kitchen installations, playground equipment, and pavement.

Goal 3: Structural Deficit Reduction Plan Communication and Engagement

(Strategic Goal 5 - Long Term Financial Stability)

By the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2025), the Strategic Communications team will have developed and implemented a multipronged communication plan aligned to the structural deficit reduction plan framework that leverages various outreach strategies and engagement methods to build understanding and root decision-making in community voice with an intentional focus on historically marginalized communities.

Six Month KPI: Implement at least 3 communication methods (e.g., community meetings, newsletters, social media, surveys, etc.) that reach 60% of the identified stakeholders.

- SDRP email communications average a 62% open rate
- December stakeholder sessions - Approximately 270 people participated in the in-person/virtual sessions, and 209 responded to the online survey.
- January stakeholder sessions - Approximately 183 people participated in the in-person/virtual sessions, and 79 responded to the online survey.
- Key Takeaway from January Engagement in an independent analysis: *Communication and transparency in D65's decision-making process has been well received by staff and the community. Maintaining this level of collaboration and communication should remain central to the work moving forward.*
- Website Traffic: The SDRP resource hub had 2,704 visits from Nov 15, 2024-Feb 2, 2025 which puts it in the top 10 most visited web pages during that time period.

The Strategic Communications and Project Management team is supporting the Structural Deficit Reduction Planning (SDRP) work on a macro scale to help ensure a robust process that is driven by community voice. On the back end, this includes change management and communication to help mitigate the impact on various stakeholder groups as the SDRP is operationalized and reductions are ultimately realized.

The past three months were heavily focused on the development of structural deficit reduction plan scenarios rooted in community voice. The District took a two-pronged approach of gathering input on the front end of the planning process to learn stakeholder values and priorities that could be used to shape the scenarios being developed. On the backend, stakeholder feedback was gathered to help ensure alignment.

A total of 17 meetings were held during both phases which included a combination of targeted outreach events and open sessions that anyone could attend. Various communication strategies were enacted to ensure access to the information. Electronic survey options were made available as an alternate method for providing feedback. Additionally, the District ensured Spanish interpretation across all virtual and in-person engagement sessions. Efforts were also made to ensure meetings were held at various times of the day/evening to accommodate work schedules and childcare needs at different locations within the community to ensure accessibility.

Additionally, a resource hub was created on the D65 website to aggregate all related SDRP communications, resources, and engagement opportunities.



**EVANSTON/SKOKIE
SCHOOL DISTRICT 65**

Every Child, Every Day, Whatever it Takes

TO: District 65 School Board

CC: Dr. Angel Turner, Superintendent

FROM: Tamara L. Mitchell, SFO, Chief Financial Officer/CSBO

DATE: February 10, 2025

RE: 3-6-9 Update for Financial Services

Objective: X Information ___ Discussion ___ Follow-up ___ Decision

This memo provides a 2nd quarter update on the Financial Services Department's goals aligned with the strategic plan, as well as progress on initiatives related to the Structural Deficit Reduction Plan.

Financial Services Department Goals Progress - First Quarter of FY2025

Goal 1: Department Budget Monitoring

By March 31, 2025, improve knowledge of and access to department and school budgets systemwide with a focus on cost containment. Focus on Departmental Budgets will be ongoing. Increase use of and monitoring of departmental budgets by 80%.

During the first quarter, members of the Financial Services (FS) Department focused on strengthening financial oversight and accountability through key collaborations and training initiatives. This included implementing site-based accounting in partnership with the Human Relations Department and Schools Management Team to monitor lunchroom supervision salaries and agency expenditures.

Additionally, the department worked with Student Specialized Services and Supports (SSSS) to establish and monitor site-based budgets for agency-related services personnel, enhancing financial transparency. To support department leaders and staff in budget monitoring, one-on-one and group training sessions were conducted on financial processes, including cooperative purchasing and P-Card usage.

During the second quarter, members of the Financial Services Department conducted a Training Tour, meeting district leaders and support staff at their worksites to provide hands-on training in their daily environment. The initiative was well received, with initial feedback being positive. Participants expressed appreciation for the team's efforts in making training more accessible

and relevant to their roles. Subsequent checkpoints with staff will include exit tickets to facilitate concrete tracking and measure training effectiveness.

Goal 2: Financial Services Team Management

By March 31, 2025, develop and implement a professional learning and development plan for Financial Services team members, focused on professional growth, best practices, and operational efficiency. At least 75% of team members will actively participate in professional learning opportunities as a result of this plan.

During the first quarter, the Financial Services Department focused on developing and implementing a professional learning and development plan aligned with professional growth, best practices, and operational efficiency. As part of this effort:

- Team members participated in training sessions led by Tyler Technologies to enhance their knowledge of financial software functionality.
- The Payroll Team attended a specialized payroll seminar, further strengthening expertise in payroll processes.

In the second quarter, professional learning progress slowed due to the holiday season, year-end financial closeout, and efforts to finalize the FY2024 financial audit. The department remains committed to its long-term learning goals.

Plans are in place to reignite momentum in Q3, with targeted training sessions and engagement strategies to ensure at least 75% of team members actively participate in professional learning by the end of Q4.

Goal 3: School Consolidation Pathway Modeling

By March 31, 2025, develop and finalize at least 25% of the School Consolidation Pathway model in collaboration with Performance Management and Accountability (PMA). This model will optimize district building utilization, enhance walkability, and minimize the impact on marginalized and disadvantaged students, ensuring alignment with the SAP III process.

During the first quarter, Dr. Beardsley, Kirby Callam, and I established a standing weekly meeting to advance this work. Key accomplishments include:

- Developing a draft planning template that outlines tentative authentic questions to guide the process.
- Identifying potential stakeholder group members to ensure diverse perspectives are represented.

- Identifying potential content experts who can provide specialized insights to inform decision-making.

As work on the Structural Deficit Reduction Plan (SDRP) has progressed, we have refined our timeline and continue to fine-tune our thoughts on pathway development. Moving into Phase III, my focus will be on scenario modeling and identifying resources to address major capital needs while ensuring alignment with broader consolidation efforts.

Additionally, Dr. Beardsley and the PMA team have developed and shared initial estimates of potential operational cost reductions related to building closures. These cost projections are critical, as they provide a clearer picture of potential savings that could be repurposed for capital improvement plans. Other next steps for Phase III of the SDRP include:

- Identify key considerations across departments and teams regarding SDRP work.
- Develop financial planning, forecasting, and modeling to support consolidation efforts.
- Assess potential funding sources to mitigate capital investment needs.



EVANSTON/SKOKIE
SCHOOL DISTRICT 65

Every Child, Every Day, Whatever it Takes

TO: District 65 School Board

CC: Dr. Angel Turner, Superintendent

FROM: Tiffany Taylor, Executive Chief of Human Relations

DATE: February 3, 2025

RE: 3-6-9 Update for Human Relations

Objective: X Information Discussion Follow-up Decision

This memo provides a quarterly update on the Human Relations goals and work related to the School Deficit Reduction Framework.

Human Relations Goals Progress to Date

Focus Area 1: Evaluations

Goal: By June 30, 2025, implement a digital employee evaluation tool to build the capacity of our workforce and streamline the performance reviews process.

Strategic Alignment - Strategic Goal #2 and #4

SuperEval for non-union classified staff launched on 11/1 and is currently in use. During the 2nd quarter, key evaluation process resources, such as the [Performance Evaluation User Guide](#), [1:1 Check-In Agenda](#), [Department Check-In Agenda](#), [Quarterly Reflection Meeting \(aka 2x2\)](#), and the [Stay Interview - Template](#) were created to support managers with the evaluation process.

As we enter the final quarter of the year, HR's next steps include:

- Collaborating with SuperEval to finalize the completion report and track progress across the key evaluation activities.
- Developing an update report to share with Cabinet Leads.
- Monitoring the ongoing use of SuperEval to ensure all employees complete the necessary steps.
- Reviewing feedback from training sessions to refine future training and onboarding efforts.
- Ensuring continued access to evaluation resources for all non-union, classified staff.

Focus Area 2: Onboarding/Offboarding

Goal: *By April 30, 2025, develop and launch a streamlined digital onboarding and offboarding system that ensures a standardized, efficient, and secure employee lifecycle process for all employees.*

Strategic Alignment - Strategic Goal #2

Front Line Central Implementation

In the last quarter, the team has made strong progress on the onboarding/offboarding project. The Operations team has been evaluating forms for each employee group (e.g., educators, paras, non-union) to assess whether they are necessary, need updates, or can be eliminated. They also explored opportunities to simplify the process by consolidating certain forms into a single form to improve the candidate experience. Additionally, the team has been focused on ensuring the accuracy and completeness of the onboarding packet for each group. With 12 employee groups in total, this has been a major task. To test the changes before a full-scale rollout, the team has launched a pilot of Frontline Central with guest educators. This will help identify issues early and gather feedback to refine the process.

Resource Development

The team has also been developing resources tailored for both candidates and hiring managers. The following resources have been drafted and are currently under review for revisions.

Onboarding Documents

- Hiring Manager Onboarding Checklist
- New Hire Onboarding Checklist
- Employee File Folder Checklist
- Create 45th Day New hire onboarding survey
- Candidate Hire Roadmap - Draft
- Hiring Manager Roadmap - Draft

Offboarding Documents

- Hiring Manager Separation Checklist
- Employee Separation Checklist
- Work Transition Plan Template
- Separation Confirmation Email
- DRAFT Separation FAQs
- D65 Exit Survey
- Offboarding Roadmap - Hiring Managers
- Offboarding Roadmap - HR

Resources still in development:

- Manager's Onboarding Guide
- New Hire FAQs
- Employee Handbook (electronic version)

Focus Area 3: SDRP Champion Work - Staffing Plan

In the last quarter, I focused on two key areas:

- **Section Closures:** Identifying RIFs, recalibrating class sizes, and exploring consolidation opportunities, resulting in an FTE reduction of 18.
- **Reworking School Staffing Models:** Re-evaluating out-of-classroom positions and reconstructing models based on staffing profiles tailored to each school's enrollment projection.

Now that the SDRP target scenario has been identified, HR has moved forward with developing a file of impacted staff and reviewing it with Franzcek to ensure that all CBA and legal implications are properly captured. Additionally, HR will meet with the Cabinet to review the timeline and outline the next steps. Individual meetings are scheduled with individual Cabinet Leads to go over the specifics related to their impacted staff.
