Dual Language Task Force

October 23, 2025

WHO'S IN THE ROOM?

Icebreaker: Stand-Up, Hand-Up, Pair-Up

1. Participants find a partner not at their table and someone new to you
2. Introduce yourselves with your name and role
3. **One short phrase** about why you're excited or interested in this Dual Language Task Force.

Icebreaker: Stand-Up, Hand-Up, Pair-Up

Two More Rounds

1. Thank your current partner after 1 minute
2. Find a new person to meet for the next round
3. Aim to meet at least three different people

Share Discoveries

1. Everyone should return to their seats
2. Volunteers:
   - Share common reasons
   - Share interesting ideas heard

Our Why

Our Future Together!

Our Mission

North Shore School District 112 is a transformative learning organization where curiosity inspires minds, innovation shapes the future, and students, staff, and families engage to create a kind and connected community that is committed to excellence.

Our Vision

Our vision is to be a thriving, inclusive, learning community where each student is empowered to reach their full potential and achieve their greatest aspirations. By utilizing evidence-based practices, innovations in teaching and learning, and personalized support, we create an environment where each student learns, grows, and achieves academic excellence. We nurture resilience and foster meaningful relationships, while developing transformative leaders, engaged learners, and responsible citizens who are inspired and equipped to make a positive impact.

Our Values

In North Shore School District 112, we have identified six values that students will experience and staff will model in our learning organization.

Compassion

Connection

Equity

Growth

Integrity

Safety

COMPASSION We value cultivating a compassionate community where students actively demonstrate empathy, kindness, and understanding toward others to uphold personal growth and social responsibility.

EQUITY We value equity in our district by creating opportunities for each student by addressing individual needs, dismantling barriers, and amplifying student voices. We provide each student with the personalized resources and support to succeed, designing culturally responsive environments to meet each student where they are.

INTEGRITY We value integrity in our learning organization by upholding honesty, respect, and accountability in how we act and how we treat others, and by nurturing students who make meaningful contributions to the community and the world.

CONNECTION We value connection as the foundation of our thriving learning organization. By encouraging meaningful relationships and two-way communication among students, families, staff, and the broader community, we build a supportive environment where everyone feels valued and engaged.

GROWTH We value continuous growth by setting rigorous academic standards and high expectations for each student.

SAFETY We value safety and well-being, both physical and emotional, by creating a secure and supportive learning environment for students, staff, and the community.

Goal Area 1

Focus on student success and well-being

Goal Area 2

Develop relationships and partnerships

Goal Area 3

Focus on attracting, developing, and retaining quality staff by using resources strategically, responsibly, and flexibly

Dr. Sonia Soltero's Recommendations and Administration's Recommendations

1. *Prioritize English Learner Needs: Formally elevate the educational needs of Spanish language English Learners through explicit prioritization in district and school planning, policies, resource allocation, teacher recruitment/retention, professional development, family engagement, curriculum, and assessment.*
    - ***Accept***
    - ***Launch a task force to focus on student success, family engagement, and facilities and operations. The task force will advise the superintendent and deputy superintendent who will make recommendations to the board in May 2026.***

2. *Program Redesign to 80-20 Model: Consider shifting the dual language program from a 50-50 model to an 80-20 model, citing research that suggests academic, biliterate, and socio-cultural advantages for both English Learners and English-dominant speakers due to increased exposure to Spanish in early grades. Recommend a comprehensive review and needs assessment to create a five-year improvement strategic plan.*
    - ***Partially accept***
    - ***Conduct an "RFP" and Launch a third party to conduct a thorough K-5 program assessment and evaluation inclusive of staff's input on 80/20 to be conducted in the 25-26 school year.***

Dr. Sonia Soltero's Recommendations and Administration's Recommendations

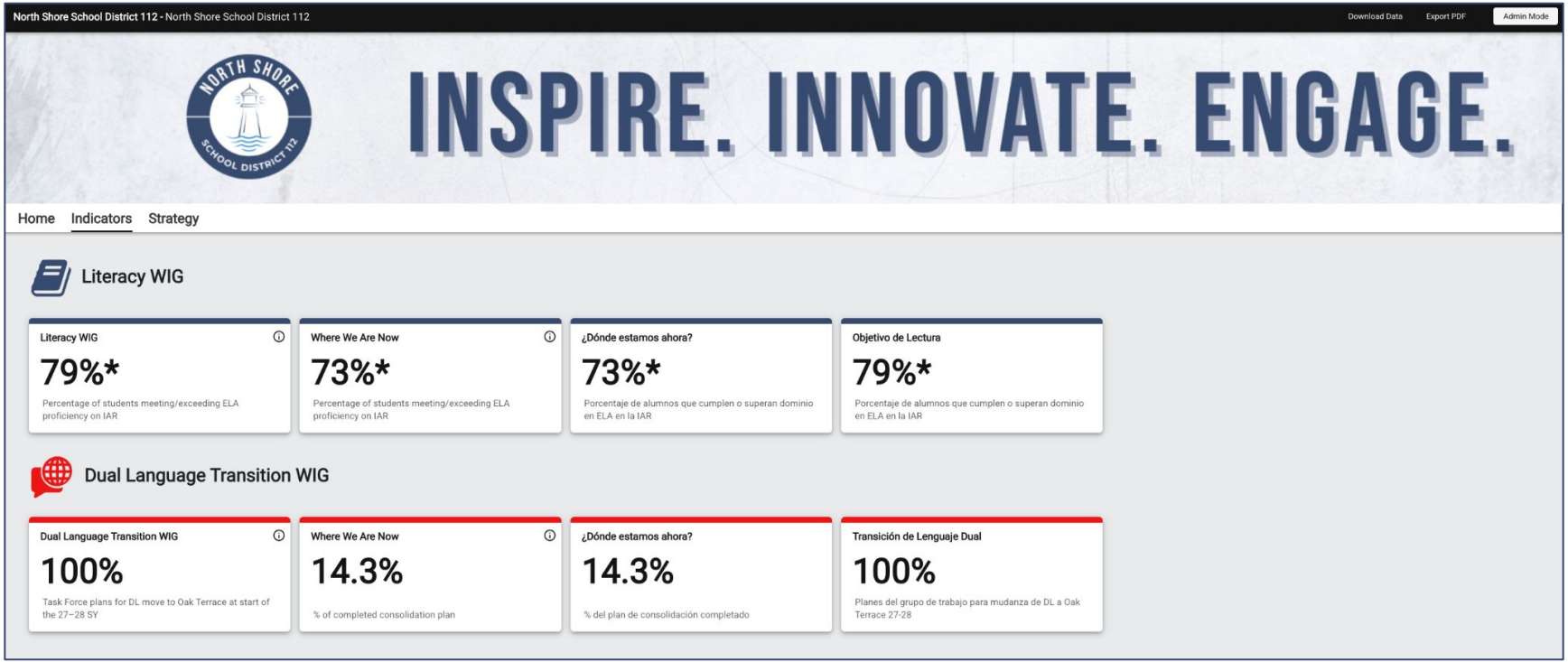
3. School Climate and Culture Reset at Oak Terrace: Undertake a systemic effort to bolster Oak Terrace's standing and shift from a deficit-based narrative to an asset-based mindset, both within the school and the broader community. This involves strategies to improve climate-culture, foster stronger relationships, increase integration of diverse families and students, and celebrate the school's strengths.

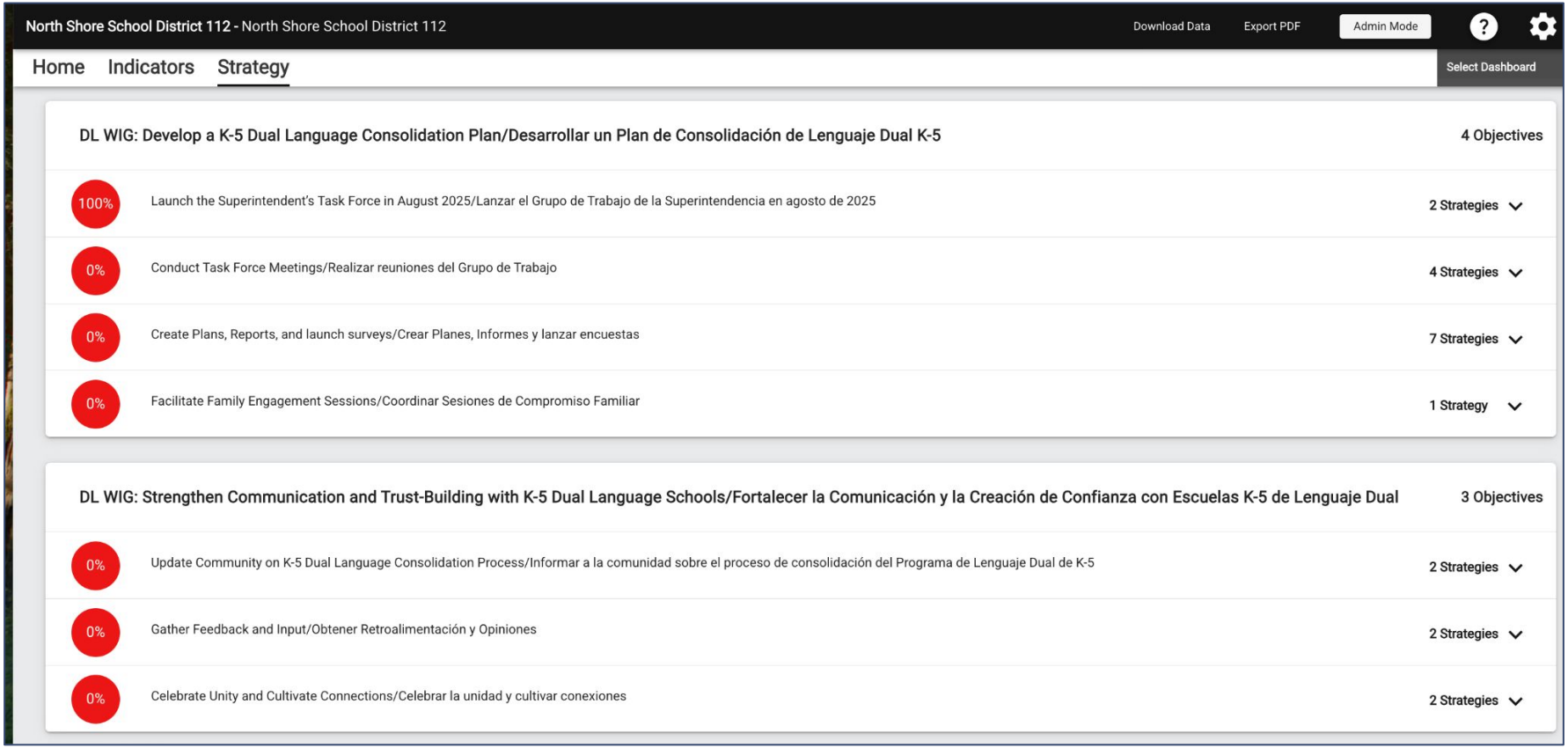
- ***Accept***
- ***Address culture reset through the launch of the task force to foster stronger relationships.***
- ***Post consolidation, a co-principal and associate principal leadership model will occur at Oak Terrace to support integration.***

4. *Phased Consolidation Plan to Oak Terrace: Consider a phased consolidation of the dual language program from two schools into Oak Terrace, citing declining enrollments, particularly among native Spanish speakers. The proposed transition would begin in 2026-2027 by suspending kindergarten enrollment at Red Oak and allowing existing students to remain for two years, with full consolidation at Oak Terrace by 2029-2030. This plan involves increasing kindergarten and first-grade classrooms at Oak Terrace.*

- ***Partially accept***
- ***Enroll all dual language kindergarten at Oak Terrace SY 26-27.***
- ***Move preschool to Green Bay SY 27-28 in order to maintain sections together and allow for inclusive opportunities for students who need to access the structured classrooms.***
- ***Recommended to the board of education on June 26, 2025, to fully consolidate schools at the start of the SY 27-28.***

Our “Wildly Important Goals”




North Shore School District 112 - North Shore School District 112
Download Data
Export PDF
Admin Mode
Home
Indicators
Strategy
Select Dashboard
DL WIG: Develop a K-5 Dual Language Consolidation Plan/Desarrollar un Plan de Consolidación de Lenguaje Dual K-5
4 Objectives
100%
Launch the Superintendent's Task Force in August 2025/Lanzar el Grupo de Trabajo de la Superintendencia en agosto de 2025
2 Strategies
0%
Conduct Task Force Meetings/Realizar reuniones del Grupo de Trabajo
4 Strategies
0%
Create Plans, Reports, and launch surveys/Crear Planes, Informes y lanzar encuestas
7 Strategies
0%
Facilitate Family Engagement Sessions/Coordinar Sesiones de Compromiso Familiar
1 Strategy
DL WIG: Strengthen Communication and Trust-Building with K-5 Dual Language Schools/Fortalecer la Comunicación y la Creación de Confianza con Escuelas K-5 de Lenguaje Dual
3 Objectives
0%
Update Community on K-5 Dual Language Consolidation Process/Informar a la comunidad sobre el proceso de consolidación del Programa de Lenguaje Dual de K-5
2 Strategies
0%
Gather Feedback and Input/Obtener Retroalimentación y Opiniones
2 Strategies
0%
Celebrate Unity and Cultivate Connections/Celebrar la unidad y cultivar conexiones
2 Strategies

PILLARS OF DUAL LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Oak Terrace Elementary School

A Century of Belonging and Innovation - Opening Remarks for Superintendent's Task Force on Dual Language Consolidation

by Dr. Michael Lubelfeld Superintendent

North Shore School District 112

Overview

01. Historical Foundation

From 1916 opening to serving immigrant families seeking educational opportunities.

02. Community Hub Development

How Oak Terrace became Highwood's gathering place and neighborhood identity center.

03. Innovation Excellence

National recognition, dual language leadership, and modern campus transformation achievements.

04. Future Vision

2025 consolidation plan and strategic goals for dual language academy excellence.

From Immigrant Dreams to Community Foundation

1916 Opening Foundation

Oak Terrace Elementary opened in 1916 with six classrooms, six dedicated teachers, and 187 students. Built specifically to serve children of Italian and Eastern European immigrants seeking the American dream through quality education.

Community Identity Hub

Oak Terrace became Highwood's central gathering place where immigrant families celebrated milestones, built lasting friendships, and established strong neighborhood identity.

Educational Opportunity Gateway

The school provided immigrant children with essential pathways to academic success, cultural integration, and future opportunities in American society.

Educational Evolution Through the Decades

1880s–1957: Oak Terrace K–8

Served as comprehensive elementary and middle school providing complete foundational education.

1957: Wayne Thomas Elementary

Transitioned to elementary-only focus with specialized programs and dedicated elementary education approach.

1978: Bilingual Education Introduced

Pioneered multilingual learning programs to serve diverse student populations and cultural backgrounds.

1993: North Shore District Created

Became part of newly formed District 112, strengthening resources and educational excellence.

Building Excellence Through Innovation and Investment

1988	1996	46M	85K
National Recognition Year	Dual Language Launch	Campus Value 2018	Square Feet Facility

National Recognition Achievement

> 1988 program elevation established Oak Terrace as statewide model of educational equity and excellence.

- Illinois state recognition for innovative programs.
- Model school status for equity initiatives.
- Statewide reputation for educational excellence.

Dual Language Innovation

> 1996 Spanish-English program launch became national model for bilingual, bicultural, biliterate education excellence.

- District 112's flagship dual language program.
- National model for bilingual education.
- 30 years of continuous program excellence.

Campus Transformation Success

> 2000 Prairie-style building investment created modern collaborative learning environment designed for 21st century education.

- $15 million initial investment in facilities.
- 85,000 square feet of collaborative spaces.
- Current facility value of $46 million.

Consolidating Excellence: Oak Terrace Dual Language Academy

2025 Board Decision

Complete K-5 dual language program consolidation at Oak Terrace recognizes both historical legacy and educational leadership excellence.

2027 Transition Complete

Oak Terrace becomes District 112 Dual Language Academy, continuing 30 years of bilingual innovation begun in 1996.

Strategic Excellence Vision

Centralizing dual language expertise strengthens program quality and reinforces Oak Terrace's identity as bilingual education center.

Strategic Vision for Tomorrow's Multilingual Leaders

Legacy Meets Innovation

Oak Terrace's transformation into District 112's Dual Language Academy honors our century-long commitment to educational excellence while embracing cutting-edge multilingual pedagogy for tomorrow's global citizens.

Centralized Expertise Excellence

Consolidating dual language specialists, resources, and proven methodologies strengthens program quality and consistency across all grade levels.

Bilingual Bicultural Identity

Reinforces Oak Terrace's established identity as center for bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate educational excellence and innovation.

Continuous Program Enhancement

Builds upon three decades of dual language success to create even stronger outcomes for future student generations.

STUDENT SUCCESS

Student Success Subcommittee

Leanne Berzanski
Caitlin Castro
Enrique Castro
Sarah Gord
Sarah Jablonski
Rudy Lagunas
Chelsey Maxwell
Emma Milner-Gorvine
Kristin O'Rourke Salamanca
Kaye Piña
Lauren Polakoff
Sarah Ramp
Michael Rodrigo
Jenny Schwind
Doug Smithenry

Connection to the Strategic Change Agenda

Goal Area 1: Student Success & Well-Being

Goal Area 3: Attract, Develop, Retain Quality Staff & Strategic Use of Resources

Our Goal

The Student Success Subcommittee will focus on supporting the **academic** and **social-emotional success** of Spanish-dominant learners. The team will guide the selection of a third party to audit the program and provide **recommendations** on staffing, class size, professional development, and resources. To prepare for FY27, the subcommittee will review current PD, survey staff to identify future needs, and assess staff capacity and interest in potentially implementing an 80/20 K-2 model.

Our Tasks

- Selecting a third party to conduct a needs assessment and audit of the program to be completed by April 2026
- Assess current resources to support the potential curricular shift from 50/50 to 80/20
    - ELA and SLA
    - Math and SS
    - Science and SEL
- Assess current staff to understand the language stamina and needs to potentially staff K-2 for 80/20 instruction model
- Review current professional development opportunities and survey staff to identify needs for FY27

Professional Learning

September 30 - Co-Teaching Writing Year 2 - Danette Meyer

October 13 - Early Release (Foundations of DL and CLG Follow Up) Sonia

December 4 - Co-Teaching Writing Year 2 - Danette Meyer

January 6, 7, 8 - (CLG Follow Up) Sonia

January-April - Early Releases (TBD) Sonia

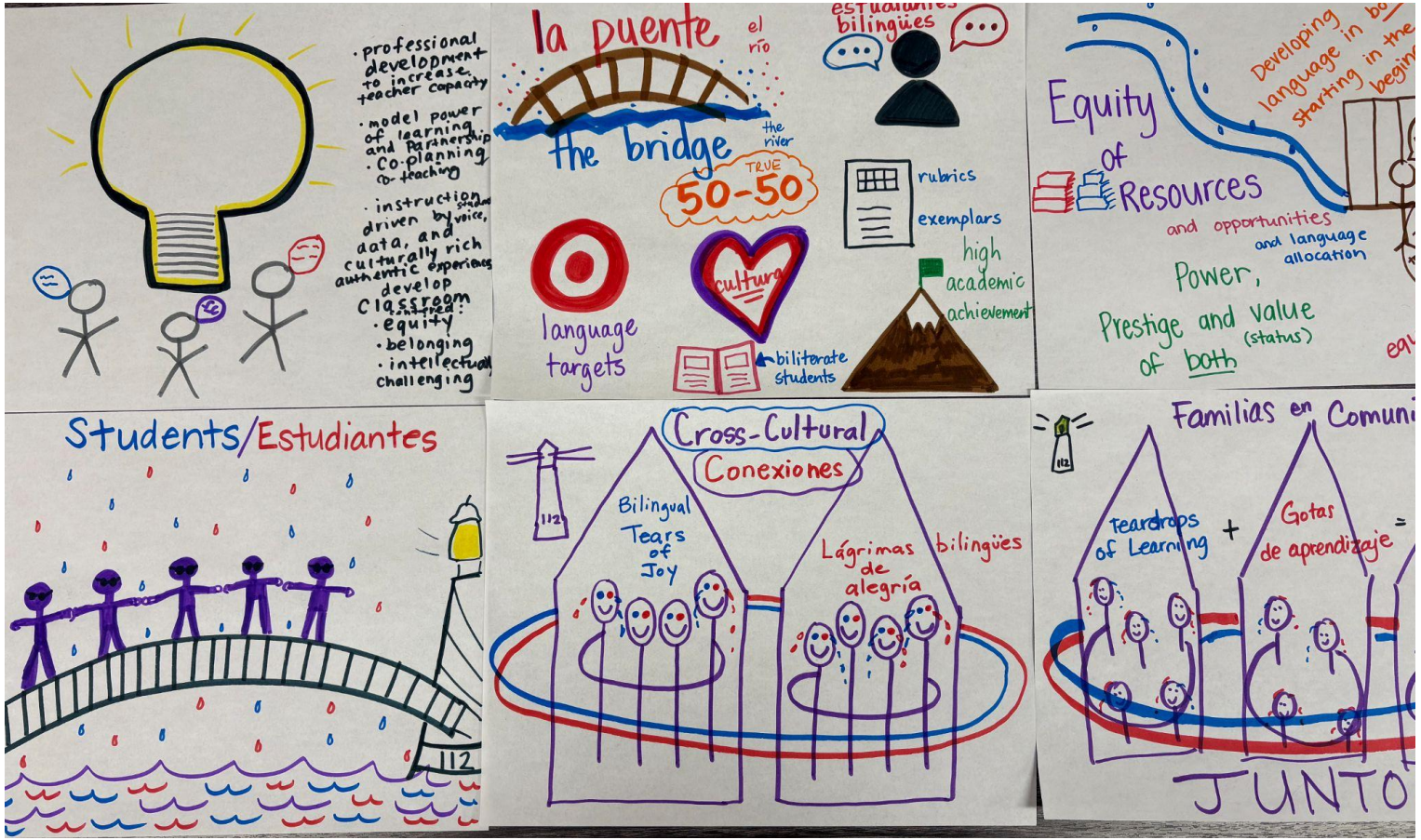
February 17, 18, 19 - (CLG Follow Up) Sonia

April 28, May 7, May 19 - (CLG Follow Up) Sonia

Scope of Our Work

Session	Date	Tasks
Session 1	October 23, 2025	Subcommittee Focus Reviewed, Vision For The Future
Session 2	November 4, 2025	RFP Draft, Professional Development Needs, Curricular Needs
Session 3	January 29, 2026	Staff Professional Development Survey, Instructional Model Review
Session 4	March 3, 2026	Review of Curricular Materials

Session One Recap



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Family Engagement Subcommittee

Veronica Avila
Maria Barraza
Holly Colin
Anna Etlinger
Ben Finfer
Lori Fink
Suzana Flores
Iara Fuenmayor
Dulce Gonzalez
Diana Gran
Mary Jordan
Erica Kenner
Lacey Kornick
Diana Meraz
Tori Montalbano
Anna Sandoval
Hal Schmeisser
Ashley Servin
Megan Sink

Connection to the Strategic Change Agenda

Goal Area 2: Develop Relationships and Partnerships

Our Goal

The Family Engagement Subcommittee will provide insights, feedback, and suggestions for activities for transitioning students and families into Oak Terrace in a thoughtful manner. The subcommittee will create of survey/focus group questionnaire to understand intentions of current K-5 dual language families (1) whether they plan to enroll their future children in the dual language program at Oak Terrace (2) whether the remaining ones at Red Oak, plan to remain in the dual language program post-consolidation at Oak Terrace. The committee will plan family engagement sessions that include tours of the school for students and families to visit the Oak Terrace learning and play spaces. The committee will also thoughtfully create an onboarding mechanism to communicate and support new families (kindergarten and beyond) into the program throughout the phased consolidation.

Our Tasks

- Review current family engagement opportunities at each school; investigate traditions that are important
- Considerations for combining RO/OT events at OT; survey students
- Review extracurricular activities at each school; identify gaps and investigate new opportunities
- Considerations for combining OT/RO activities at OT (e.g. Chess Club) survey students
- Consider ways to onboard kindergarten and new families into the program
- Create surveys/questionnaires to gather input from families on intentions of participation in the DL Program throughout phases of consolidation and post
- Plan family engagement sessions that include tours of the school for students and families to visit the Oak Terrace learning and play spaces

Scope of Our Work

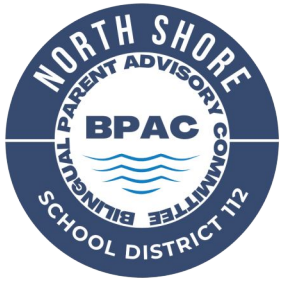
Session	Date	Tasks
Session 1	November 6, 2025	Honoring traditions while envisioning what lies ahead
Session 2	December 11, 2025	Review survey questions, plan family engagement sessions/tours
Session 3	January 15, 2025	Finalize family engagement sessions/tours, plan for onboarding new kinder families

After our final subcommittee meeting, we will host three family engagement events at Oak Terrace (details to be determined by the subcommittee)

Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee (BPAC)

For English Learner Families

BPAC brings together parents, guardians, staff, and community members to support English Learner students by sharing resources, giving input on programs, and building connections across our schools. Parents of dual language students at Northwood, Red Oak, Oak Terrace, and children receiving English Language services at any NSSD 112 school are automatically members.



Remaining Meetings

- Tuesday, November 4, 2025
- Tuesday, February 24, 2026
- Tuesday, April 14, 2026

All meetings held at Oak Terrace

FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS

Facilities/Operations Subcommittee

James Bock
Jake Butman
Cathy Curran
Jeremy Davis
Jaret Fishman
Miriam Garcia
Luis Gonzalez
Adam Hoopai
Marybeth Ingle
Melissa Itkin
Don LaBonte
Ines Llopart
Melissa Madara
Jakub Maximilian
Piper Mead
Tania Morgan
Jessica Rivero
AJ Rodino
Nikki Rodrigo
Amalia Schwartz
Jeremy Wickham

Consultants

Leanne Meyer-Smith
Principal Architect
Wight & Company

Patty King
Associate Principal and Licensed Landscape Architect
Wight & Company

Margaret Chaidez
Project Manager, ADA Coordinator
Play Illinois

Connection to the Strategic Change Agenda

Goal Area 2: Develop Relationships and Partnerships

Goal Area 3: Attract, Develop, Retain Quality Staff & Strategic Use of Resources

Our Goal

The subcommittee will provide insights, feedback, and suggestions for the consideration of the redesign of the outdoor playspace at Oak Terrace, redesign of the old front office area, the lounge/workroom, and other areas.

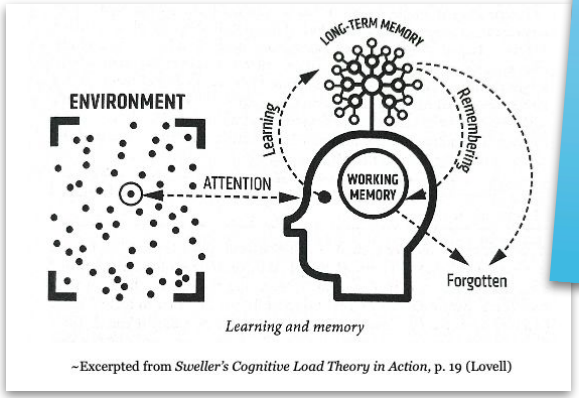
Our Tasks

- Identify needs for the redesign of the outdoor playspace for renovation
- Survey students, staff, and families
- Input for redesign of the front area of the school (old office) and potentially the lounge/workroom
- Review the furniture needs at Oak Terrace in line with the renovated K-5 schools
- Conduct a gap analysis between the renovated K-5 buildings and Oak Terrace.

Scope of Our Work

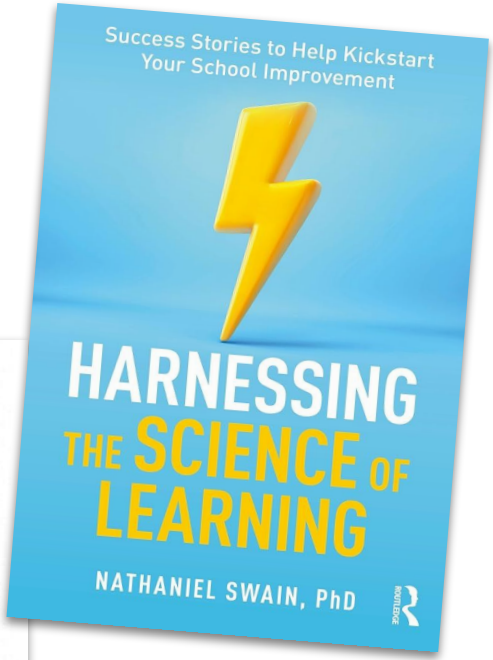
Session	Date	Tasks
Session 1	November 6, 2025	Tour of Oak Terrace (inside and outside)
Session 2	December 11, 2025	Tour of outdoor play spaces
Session 3	January 15, 2026	Tour of Indian Trail
Session 4	February 12, 2026	Playground and exterior synthesis
Session 5	March 12, 2026	Wight synthesis

Cognitive Load Theory



Learning and memory

~Excerpted from *Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory in Action*, p. 19 (Lovell)



Norms

For Focused Individual Work (Reading, Writing, Thinking)

- **Embrace the Silence:** During designated times for silent reading, writing, or reflection, we maintain complete silence. This allows everyone the mental space to process the content without interruption.
- **When You're Done, Wait Silently:** If you finish a reading or task early, remain silent and patient. Use the extra time for reflection, re-reading, or simply being present until the group is ready to move on.

Future Agendas

Agendas for all subcommittee meetings

www.nssd112.org/TaskForceAgendas

3-2-1 Activity

On (6) post-it notes, individually reflect on the following:

- **3** affirmations -topics/ideas you found important in the future agendas
- **2** connections - topics/ideas where you see yourself directly contributing to support the work
- **1** question or new idea- topic/idea that isn't clear or an idea you have about what's being considered or not considered

3-2-1 Activity

Norms

1. **Embrace the Silence**
2. **When You're Done, Wait Silently**

Subcommittee: Reflection and Prioritization

- As a group categorize the post-its into the 3-2-1 groups
  - Review the post-it notes
  - Place into common groups
- Use 3 sticky dots to show what needs to be prioritized
  - Each person will receive 3 sticky dots
  - Place the dots where you think the ideas/comments generated needs the most attention
- Debrief collective ideas

Whole-Group Share-Outs

Visioning Activity

As we move together as a team, it's an opportunity to chart the course for a stronger K-5 DL program. What will success look like by the end of the 2027-28 school year? Please work with your table to discuss the questions below and capture your thoughts in the notes section.

- Renaming: "*What do we want this task force to be called?"*
- Legacy: "*What does success for your subcommittee look like?"*
- Questions: "*What must your section of the subcommittee report in May to the board of education address?"*
- Reflections: "*What else should we consider?"*

Feedback Form