

Data Retreat Findings Arlington Heights District 25 Refresh of Strategic Plan December 11, 2025



The strategic plan team met on December 11 to review district performance at its Data Retreat. Below are the summary findings. There were 8 table teams with 6-7 participants at each table. Following all 8 table team products, the facilitator summarized common findings.

Activity One : Understanding Our Perception Data- 5Essential Student and Teacher 2025 Results

The State of Illinois administers the 5Essential Survey to students (Grades 4-8) , all families and all staff each year. Schools strong in 3-5 of the Essentials appear 10 times more likely to improve student learning compared to schools weak in the Essentials. Arlington Heights scored strong in one Essential- Involved Families. They scored neutral in the other 4 Essentials: Supportive Environment, Collaborative teachers, Effective Leaders and Ambitious Instruction. Ambitious Instruction was the lowest area.

The 5Essentials Survey is a school climate and organizational effectiveness survey developed by researchers at the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research.

It's used primarily in K-12 education to measure key conditions that research has shown are critical for school improvement and student achievement.

The Five Essentials

The survey measures **five core factors** that support effective schools:

1. Effective Leaders

- School leaders who set clear goals, support teachers, and foster collaboration.

2. Collaborative Teachers

- Teachers who work together, share responsibility for student learning, and maintain high expectations.

3. Involved Families

- Families who feel welcomed, informed, and engaged in their children's education.

4. Supportive Environment

- A safe, orderly, and respectful climate where students feel supported socially and emotionally.

5. Ambitious Instruction

- Teaching that is challenging, aligned to standards, and actively engages students in learning.

There are 20 Essential measures:

Highest Scoring- All STRONG	Lowest Scoring. - ALL NEUTRAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teacher-Parent Trust ○ Parent Involvement in School ○ Safety ○ Student-Teacher Trust ○ Parent Influence on Decision-Making in Schools ○ Program Coherence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Math Instruction ○ English Instruction ○ Collaborative Practices ○ Academic Press ○ Academic Personalism ○ Teacher-Principal Trust

There are 15 Supplemental measures:

Highest Scoring- ALL STRONG	Lowest Scoring- ALL NEUTRAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Inquiry-based Science Instruction ○ Parent Supportiveness ○ Student Responsibility ○ Course Clarity ○ Human and Social Resources in the Community ○ Classroom Disruptions ○ Teacher Safety ○ Student-Peer Relationships ○ Rigorous Study Habits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Academic Engagement ○ Reflective Dialogue ○ Classroom Rigor ○ Innovation ○ Socialization of New Teachers

Additional notes:

No measures were VERY STRONG

No measures were WEAK

No measures were VERY WEAK

Parent participation to receive a parent report at the district level required all schools to have 20% or more parents respond to the survey. Not all schools received 20%

Survey Results show comparison to prior year
Survey Results align survey questions to each measure and Essential.

Activity One : Understanding Our Perception Data- InsighteX Diversity, Equity and Inclusion 2024 Results

The **INSIGHTeX survey** is a **custom organizational assessment tool** used by some school districts and other organizations to gather **data on culture, engagement, climate, equity, and related factors**. It isn't a single public-facing standardized survey you can simply look up, but rather a **proprietary survey instrument that district or organizational leadership commissions and uses internally** to measure how people feel about their environment and experiences.

What the INSIGHTeX Survey Is

- A **structured assessment** designed to collect feedback from staff, families, and sometimes students about their **experiences, perceptions, and engagement** within a school or workplace.
- It typically includes **multiple statements or questions** respondents' rate (often on scales like *Strongly Agree* to *Strongly Disagree*).
- The survey is used to **measure organizational culture**, including employee or staff engagement, satisfaction, inclusion, leadership effectiveness, relationships, and other climate indicators.

Common Uses

Organizations (especially **school districts**) use INSIGHTeX surveys to:

- **Understand culture and climate** among staff, students, or families.
- **Track engagement and satisfaction levels** over time.
- **Inform improvement planning** for equity, inclusion, and professional environment
- Help leadership **identify strengths and challenges** within the organization.

What It Typically Measures

While specific questions vary depending on how the survey is set up, common areas include:

- **Workplace or school culture and climate**
- **Staff engagement and satisfaction**
- **Relationships and communication**
- **Equity and inclusion perceptions**
- **Leadership and support structure**

Highest Scoring Dimensions	Lowest Scoring Dimensions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Pride○ Engage-Inspire○ Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Recognition○ Mission Conscious○ Training and Development

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Relationships ○ Continuous Improvement ○ Satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support Equipment ○ Performance Planning ○ Innovation
<p>Additional information:</p> <p>The survey is administered in the fall each year. Survey Results show comparison to prior year Survey Results align survey questions to each Dimension.</p>	
Students	Teachers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3% Student mobility ● 11% Student Chronic Absenteeism ● 54.2% Student READING on state IAR GROWTH ● 54.3% Student MATH on state IAR GROWTH ● 70% 8th grade students passing algebra ● 16% low-income students ● 12% English Learners ● 81 total discipline incidents ● 0.8% deemed Gifted and Talented ● 12% IEP students ● 95% Average daily student attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 93% Teacher Retention ● 71% Teacher Education- masters or higher ● 2% out of teacher field/certification ● 1% Teachers with Provisional certification ● \$78,595 average teacher salary ● 5% novice teachers ● 56% teachers with fewer than 10 days absent

Activity Three: Understanding and Metrics from the Three District Data Reports	
Student Academics and Learning Environment	
Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 54.2 Student READING on state IAR GROWTH ○ 54.3 Student MATH on state IAR GROWTH ○ 70% 8th grade students passing algebra ○ 95% Average daily student attendance ○ 93% Teacher Retention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 0.8% deemed Gifted and Talented ○ 12% IEP students ○ 16% low-income students ○ 12% English Learners ○ 11% Student Chronic Absenteeism

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 71% Teacher Education- masters or higher ○ Differentiated professional learning opportunity focused on foundational literacy instruction. ○ Addition of Advanced Learning Specialists, Instructional Coaches, and Student Services Specialists provide differentiated support that helps both students and teachers grow ○ Develop of a robust program review process that pairs curriculum-based professional learning with high quality instructional materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Moderate Gap Equity Continuum Student Learning & Learning Conditions ○ Expanding the consistent implementation of the literacy curriculum ○ Increase the cohesiveness of the continuum of services provides to all students, including subgroups ○ Continued focus on continuous school improvement ○ Readiness for Kindergarten ○ Readiness for Middle School ○ Readiness for High School ○ Continued work on building based instructional leadership
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High Quality Staff and Community Partnerships

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Retention • Teacher Education- master's degree or above • Teacher Evaluation Rating • Student-Staff Ratio • 5-Essentials: I enjoy what I do and want to do it here • 5-Essentials: Involved Families • 5-Essentials: Parent Involvement in Schools • 5-Essentials: Teacher-Parent Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Attendance • Teacher Demographics similar to Student Demographics • Teacher certified salary approaching state average when in past higher than state average • 5-Essentials: Student-Teacher Trust • 5-Essentials: Supportive Environment • 5-Essentials: Human and Social Community Resources

Stewardship of Resources

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest state financial rating: RECOGNITION • Strong record of financial stability over time – 32 years Certificate of Excellence • Triple A. BOND rating • Healthy Fund balance- savings • Short term borrowing • Expenditures to Revenue Ratio • District 25 spends \$2,304 less than the average of the other D214 feeder district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and Mandatory, Preserve Schools and Grounds, Extend Life of Schools and Grounds, Capital Improvements, Improve Efficiency, Enhancements - PRIORITY FACILITIES • Long range facility plan - prioritized by facility, projected costs and timelines

Activity Four : SWOT ANALYSIS - Strengths

Table 1	Table 2	Table 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Academic Achievements ○ Academic Interventions ○ Fiscal Responsibility ○ Social Emotional Support, Awareness and Resources ○ Teacher Quality ○ Teacher Retention ○ Staff to Student Ratio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teacher Retention ○ Student academic growth on state assessments ○ Financial health of the Community ○ Financial health of the district ○ Teacher to Student Ratio ○ Full day Kindergarten ○ Social Emotional Ruler and Support System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Financial Stability of the District ○ 1 to 1 tech device availability ○ Technology Infrastructure ○ Academic Achievement high ○ State Assessment Student Growth ○ High Quality Staff ○ Staff Retention ○ Strong School Culture/ Pride ○ Social Emotional Learning focused on Ruler program ○ Staff to Student Ratio ○ Student Support Services
Table 4	Table 5	Table 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Financial Stability, History, Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student Achievement ○ 5 Schools in top 10% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strong academic opportunities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social Emotional Ruler Support System ○ Teacher Retention ○ High Student Support Resources ○ Priority to Communicate with Community ○ High Student Achievement compared to Neighboring Districts ○ Collection of Data and Desire to have it Inform Decisions ○ Small Class size and Excellent Staff to student ratio ○ Resources for staff and Priority for Professional Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1 of 91 schools with AAA bond rating ○ 14:1 class size (Adult to student ratio) ○ 100% participation in Social Emotional Ruler program ○ Outperform the State of IL in ELA, Science and Math ○ Advanced placement for High School enrollment increasing every year ○ Seeking input from all stakeholders' - voices heard, input ○ Very high respect between students and teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Financial budget, history, balanced ○ Teacher Retention ○ Full Day Kindergarten ○ 1st grade readiness ○ Highly educated Teachers ○ Community support for education ○ Mental wellness of students being addressed ○ AAA bond rating ○ Highest state financial rating
Table 7	Table 8	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teacher Retention ○ Student Achievement ○ Fine Arts Program ○ Fiscal Responsibility ○ Extra-Curricular and Athletics ○ Safety measures ○ Social Emotion Support and Connections with Students ○ Class Size Commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thought exchange Surveys ○ Social and Emotional Needs-Ruler usage ○ Financial health ○ Not heavily reliant on state funding ○ Advances learning programs ○ Ability to have guests for assemblies ○ Administrative and Board visibility ○ Cultivating Community ○ Small class size priority 	
Facilitator Summary Top Strengths: Academic Excellence & Student Achievement (state assessments, growth, rigor) • High student achievement across schools, outperforming the State of Illinois in ELA, Math, and Science; strong state assessment growth; five schools ranked in the top 10%; increasing Advanced Placement participation; full-day kindergarten and strong first-grade readiness.		

Financial Stability & Fiscal Responsibility (AAA bond rating, budgeting, sustainability)

- AAA bond rating and highest state financial designation; balanced budget with strong financial history and long-term planning; minimal reliance on state funding; strong financial health of both the district and community.

High-Quality Staff & Retention (teacher quality, stability, professional learning)

- Highly educated, high-quality teachers and staff; strong teacher and staff retention; continued investment in professional learning and staff resources.

Class Size & Staffing Ratios (small classes, access, individualization)

- Small class sizes prioritized district-wide; strong teacher-to-student and staff-to-student ratios; 14:1 adult-to-student ratio; commitment to maintaining individualized attention.

Social-Emotional Learning & Student Support (RULER, wellness, interventions)

- 100% participation in the RULER social-emotional learning program; comprehensive social-emotional supports; focus on student mental wellness; strong academic interventions and student support services.

School Culture, Climate & Safety (relationships, pride, safe environments)

- Strong school culture and pride; high levels of respect between students and teachers; safe and secure learning environments; strong social-emotional connections with students.

Technology & Infrastructure (1:1 devices, instructional support)

- 1:1 student technology device availability; reliable technology infrastructure supporting instruction and access.

Community Engagement & Governance (communication, trust, stakeholder voice)

- Strong community support for education; priority on communication with families and stakeholders; Thought Exchange surveys and feedback opportunities; administrative and Board visibility; stakeholder voices heard and valued.

Data-Informed Decision Making (assessment, planning, continuous improvement)

- Ongoing collection and use of academic, financial, and social-emotional data to inform decisions; continuous improvement mindset across the district.

Enrichment & Student Opportunities (fine arts, athletics, extended learning)

- Strong fine arts programs; extracurricular activities and athletics; assemblies, guest speakers, and enrichment experiences supporting whole-child development.

Activity Four : SWOT ANALYSIS - Weaknesses

Table 1	Table 2	Table 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Competitive Salaries○ Diversity/Demographics of Staff○ Equity of Space and Resources across the District○ Timely, Relevant, and Rigorous Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Competitive Salaries○ Elementary Level Extra Curriculum Activities and Clubs○ Teacher Absenteeism○ Diversity/Demographics of Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Teacher Attendance○ Diversity/ Demographics of staff representative of community and students○ Transparency of Data to the Community

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consistency of High Expectations ○ Communication- Need to Know vs Nice to Know 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Important Communication Topics ○ Community Partnerships- opportunities, awareness, resources ○ Parent organization consistency ○ Coordination of Outside Support Groups ○ Interactive District Website 	
Table 4	Table 5	Table 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community communication/Knowledge of Performance ○ Collect more meaningful data in a more effective way ○ Diversity/ demographics of staff similar to students and community ○ Increase staff satisfaction/ climate ○ More engaged, innovative classroom instruction ○ Student population going to different high schools ○ Follow up on parent feedback to increase survey participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teacher attendance ○ Substitute shortages ○ Debt and construction ○ Number of student suspensions ○ Debt in teacher expenditures ○ Student demographics different than staff demographics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Revenue access outside out control ○ Teacher attendance ○ Repeat offenders in discipline actions ○ Diversity/ demographics of staff compared to students ○ Substitute shortages ○ Decline in admiration, respect, and support for education profession
Table 7	Table 8	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teacher voice in district decisions ○ Consistent Parent Communication and support ○ Student Engagement ○ Innovation and Relevance in Curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff demographics compared to student demographics ○ Personalization- knowing backgrounds, profiles, accomplishments of each child to determine direction 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consistent consequences in student behaviors ○ Balancing support staff equitably ○ Balancing needs/ class size, 504, behavior, unidentified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parent confusion about Advanced Placement, process, decisions ○ High School Readiness 	
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Facilitator Summary Top Weaknesses:

Staff Diversity & Representation (equity, demographics, inclusion)

- Staff demographics do not fully reflect student and community demographics; need to improve diversity, recruitment, and retention to better represent and serve the community.

Teacher Attendance & Substitute Shortages (staffing stability, continuity)

- Ongoing teacher absenteeism and substitute shortages disrupt instructional continuity; challenges in securing consistent, high-quality substitute coverage.

Curriculum Rigor, Relevance & Consistency (alignment, expectations)

- Need for more timely, relevant, and rigorous curriculum; inconsistency in high expectations across classrooms and schools; need for increased innovation and relevance in instruction.

Communication & Transparency (clarity, consistency, trust)

- Community and parent communication lacks clarity and consistency (“need to know” vs. “nice to know”); data transparency and communication of district performance need improvement; follow-up on parent feedback is inconsistent.

Student Engagement & Instructional Innovation (engagement, relevance)

- Need for more engaging, innovative classroom instruction; varying levels of student engagement; need to better personalize learning based on student backgrounds, profiles, and needs.

Equity of Resources & Support (space, staffing, services)

- Inequities in space, resources, and support staffing across the district; challenges balancing class size, 504 needs, behavioral supports, and unidentified student needs equitably.

Behavior, Discipline & Consistency (expectations, consequences)

- Inconsistent consequences for student behavior; repeat discipline offenders; concerns about suspension rates and alignment of behavioral expectations across schools.

Staff Voice, Satisfaction & Climate (engagement, morale)

- Need to increase staff satisfaction and climate; teacher voice not always sufficiently represented in district decision-making; broader decline in admiration and support for the education profession impacts morale.

Family Engagement & Understanding (partnerships, clarity)

- Inconsistent parent organization support across schools; align PTA expectations and partnerships; need for stronger, more consistent family engagement and education partnerships. Expand opportunities for family engagement being a partner in their students educational. Ensure parents understand the learning profile for their student (What they know, what they do not know, what they need to learn next)

Financial & Structural Constraints (debt, external factors)

- Debt related to construction and staffing expenditures; limited control over revenue sources; long-term financial pressures that may impact flexibility and planning.

Activity Three : SWOT ANALYSIS - Opportunities

Table 1	Table 2	Table 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Artificial Intelligence Teacher Resources, Support and Professional Development ○ Foundation/ Charitable contributions fund to Innovation and Identified Instructional Needs ○ Educating the general population to collectively support neurodivergent peers ○ Parent support to Comprehend IEP, 504, and ELL procedures and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Retention of Diverse Staff ○ Parent Engagement ○ Communication Clarity and Methods ○ Revenue Generating Opportunities ○ PTA Expectations ○ Language and Cultural Integration ○ Community Partner Expectations and Exchange of Resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continued Academic Growth ○ Community Understanding of our Performance Compared to Surrounding Districts ○ Expand Definition of Diversity to include more and Ethnicity ○ Artificial Intelligence Support and Professional Development ○ Community Engagement Forums ○ Competitive Salaries to Retain High Quality Staff ○ Ensure All Students are Included in Living the District Strategic Plan
Table 4	Table 5	Table 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Redefine sick and personal time- address staff absences ○ Evaluate where special education is housed ○ More athletic focus ○ Innovation ○ Future Planning for special Education Needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Higher teacher compensation ○ Higher teacher-principal trust ○ Taxpayer input on how dollars are spent ○ Robust curriculum that is timely, relevant, and addresses readiness ○ Chicago Bears coming to AH ○ Artificial Intelligence training and guidelines ○ Maternity/Paternity Leave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More Enrichment Opportunities ○ Mindset that ALL kids can grow and achieve ○ Affinity groups to support diverse students ○ Equity of culture across all schools ○ Impact of student learning coaches ○ Ensuring all kids have similar experiences regardless of which school they attend ○ Communication expectations for families consistent across all schools

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More balanced student contact hours before and after school in middle school ○ Restorative Practices consistent in implementation and practice
Table 7	Table 8	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Action plans for Inclusion and Diversity ○ Extended learning Resources for ALL students ○ Expand opportunities for advanced learners ○ More consistent SEL implementation ○ Activities availability for working families ○ Digital Literacy Curriculum ○ Trust vs Accountability for Students/ student responsibility ○ Consistency between goals and implementation ○ Digital citizenship ○ Student led Communication- voice, choice, interests, responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Personalized learning Opportunities ○ Student-Teacher Trust ○ More leadership opportunities for students- responsibility, voice, choice, interests ○ Students knowing where they are and where they need to be- communication from the school ○ Diversified Tier I instruction resources, strategies, professional learning for staff ○ AI policies and training ○ Advanced Learning Specialists based on school student population ○ Perceptions about academic rigor and engagement 	

Facilitator Summary Top Opportunities:

Personalized & Extended Learning Opportunities (voice, choice, growth)

- Expand personalized learning, extended learning resources, and advanced learner opportunities; increase student voice, leadership, responsibility, and clarity about learning progress.

Curriculum Innovation & Readiness (rigor, relevance, future-focused)

- Develop a robust, timely, and relevant curriculum that supports readiness, innovation, digital citizenship, and diversified Tier I instructional strategies across all schools.

Inclusion, Diversity & Equity Action (belonging, representation, access)

- Expand the definition of diversity; implement action plans for inclusion; support affinity groups; educate the community on neurodiversity; ensure all students experience the district strategic plan equitably.

Personalized & Extended Learning Opportunities (voice, choice, growth)

- Expand personalized learning, extended learning resources, and advanced learner opportunities; increase student voice, leadership, responsibility, and clarity about learning progress.

Staff Recruitment, Retention & Support (diversity, compensation, trust)

- Retain and recruit diverse, high-quality staff through competitive compensation, improved benefits (e.g., maternity/paternity leave), higher teacher–principal trust, and strategies to address staff absences.

Student Engagement, Enrichment & Athletics (access, balance, opportunity)

- Expand enrichment, extracurricular, and athletic opportunities; ensure access for working families; balance student contact hours before and after school, particularly at the middle school level.

Special Education and Advanced Learning Planning & Services (structure, future readiness)

- Evaluate where and how special education services are housed; plan proactively for future needs; assess the impact of learning coaches and deploy advanced learning specialists based on population needs. Strengthen parent understanding of IEP, 504, ELL, and advanced learning processes. Reduce confusion around Advanced Placement processes and decisions

Social-Emotional Learning & Restorative Practices (consistency, culture)

- Strengthen consistent SEL and restorative practices implementation across schools; build student–teacher trust; balance accountability with responsibility for students.

Student Pathways & Transitions (readiness, continuity)

- Students transition to multiple high schools; need for stronger high school readiness and clearer alignment of expectations and pathways.

Artificial Intelligence Integration (instruction, professional learning, policy)

- Provide AI-focused teacher resources, professional development, and clear guidelines; integrate AI into instruction, assessment, and digital literacy while establishing responsible use policies.

Community Partnerships & External Supports (coordination, awareness)

- Community partnerships and outside support groups are underutilized or inconsistently coordinated; need for greater awareness and alignment of available resources. Improve clarity and consistency of communication; expand community forums. Explore revenue-generating opportunities, charitable foundations, and community partnerships; increase transparency and taxpayer input on spending; leverage resources to fund innovation and instructional priorities.

Activity Three : SWOT ANALYSIS - Threats

Table 1	Table 2	Table 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Social media○ Disinformation of Misinformation○ Funding for Special Education○ Unfunded Mandates○ Mental Health Crisis○ Family Finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ State Funding○ Unfunded Mandates○ Federal Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ State Funding○ Unfunded Mandates○ Federal Funding○ Social Media○ Property Tax Delay○ External Political Influences

Table 4	Table 5	Table 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social Media ○ Student Safety ○ High School Boundaries ○ Changes in Technology ○ Federal and state Funding Changes ○ Cook County Tax Collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bullying ○ Taxpayer \$ going to school keeps increasing ○ Chronic Absenteeism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teacher age and retirement numbers ○ Federal and state funding ○ Clarify in readiness expectations ○ Pre Covid vs Post Covid Concerns ○ US Dept of Education Changes ○ Continued issues in behavioral and social emotional issues with students ○ Decrease in commercial and industrial tax revenue ○ Student Request Form-application and process
Table 7	Table 8	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ State and Federal Funding ○ Artificial Intelligence ○ Technology Balance ○ Student Engagement ○ Online Bullying and Group Chats ○ Political Divide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social Media ○ Energy Needs ○ Artificial Intelligence ○ Staff Shortages and Certifications ○ Overcrowding in some schools in the future ○ Fear of Innovation/Change ○ Fear of Litigation 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facilitator Summary Top Threats: <p>Funding Instability & Unfunded Mandates (state, federal, special education)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertainty in state and federal funding, unfunded mandates, and inadequate funding for special education place ongoing pressure on district finances and programming. <p>Misinformation, Disinformation & Social Media Influence (trust, perception)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media, misinformation, and disinformation campaigns can quickly erode trust, spread inaccuracies, and escalate community conflict or misunderstanding. 		

Student Mental Health & Behavioral Challenges (well-being, safety)

- Ongoing mental health concerns, increased social-emotional and behavioral needs, bullying (including online bullying), and post-COVID impacts threaten student well-being and school climate.

Staffing Shortages & Workforce Transitions (certification, retirement)

- Teacher shortages, certification challenges, substitute shortages, and increasing retirements pose risks to staffing stability and instructional continuity.

Political & External Influences (policy, polarization)

- External political pressures, polarization, and changes at the state or federal level (e.g., U.S. Department of Education shifts) may disrupt planning and decision-making.

Tax Revenue Volatility (property tax, economic shifts)

- Property tax delays, Cook County tax collection challenges, declining commercial and industrial tax revenue, and increasing taxpayer burden create financial uncertainty.

Student Safety & Engagement Risks (attendance, motivation)

- Chronic absenteeism, declining student engagement, safety concerns, and unclear readiness expectations may negatively impact academic outcomes and school culture.

Facilities Capacity & Enrollment Shifts (overcrowding, boundaries)

- Potential future overcrowding in some schools, high school boundary issues, and enrollment shifts may strain facilities and require difficult planning decisions.

Fear of Change & Legal Exposure (innovation, litigation)

- Resistance to innovation or change, combined with fear of litigation, may slow progress and limit the district's ability to adapt proactively.

Look on the next page for a draft of the SWOT that will be shared with stakeholders between now and our next strategic plan team meeting.

Feedback from stakeholders containing major themes will be shared with the team.

The team will consider feedback and make final changes to the SWOT Analysis.

Thanks to the team for a very productive day.

DRAFT SWOT ANALYSIS ARLINGTON HEIGHTS DISTRICT 25

Strengths: What are we most proud of? What do we consider to be the results of our best work? What advantages do we have? What do others say about us in positive ways?

- Academic Excellence & Student Achievement (state assessments, growth, rigor)
- Financial Stability & Fiscal Responsibility (AAA bond rating, budgeting, sustainability)
- High-Quality Staff & Retention (teacher quality, stability, professional learning)
- Class Size & Staffing Ratios (small classes, access, individualization)
- Social-Emotional Learning & Student Support (RULER, wellness, interventions)
- School Culture, Climate & Safety (relationships, pride, safe environments)
- Technology & Infrastructure (1:1 devices, instructional support)
- Community Engagement & Governance (communication, trust, stakeholder voice)
- Data-Informed Decision Making (assessment, planning, continuous improvement)
- Enrichment & Student Opportunities (fine arts, athletics, extended learning)

Weaknesses: What are we not doing well? What are we most criticized for or receive the most complaints about? What do we seem to have a hard time doing well? What needs our immediate attention?

- Staff Diversity & Representation (equity, demographics, inclusion)
- Teacher Attendance & Substitute Shortages (staffing stability, continuity)
- Curriculum Rigor, Relevance & Consistency (alignment, expectations)
- Communication & Transparency (clarity, consistency, trust)
- Student Engagement & Instructional Innovation (engagement, relevance)
- Equity of Resources & Support (space, staffing, services)
- Behavior, Discipline & Consistency (expectations, consequences)
- Staff Voice, Satisfaction & Climate (engagement, morale)
- Family Engagement & Understanding (partnerships, clarity)
- Financial & Structural Constraints (debt, external factors)

Opportunities: What opportunities for improvement do we know about, but have not addressed? With a little work, where could we change a weakness into a strength? What are we not doing currently that might be the opportunity for us to improve?

- Personalized & Extended Learning Opportunities (voice, choice, growth)
- Curriculum Innovation & Readiness (rigor, relevance, future-focused)
- Inclusion, Diversity & Equity Action (belonging, representation, access)
- Personalized & Extended Learning Opportunities (voice, choice, growth)
- Staff Recruitment, Retention & Support (diversity, compensation, trust)
- Student Engagement, Enrichment & Athletics (access, balance, opportunity)
- Special Education and Advanced Learning Planning & Services (structure, future readiness)

Threats: Who or what threatens us the most? What challenges are coming that we must respond to? What might block our progress? What do we have little control over that might impact our resources?

- Funding Instability & Unfunded Mandates (state, federal, special education)
- Misinformation, Disinformation & Social Media Influence (trust, perception)
- Student Mental Health & Behavioral Challenges (well-being, safety)
- Staffing Shortages & Workforce Transitions (certification, retirement)
- Political & External Influences (policy, polarization)
- Tax Revenue Volatility (property tax, economic shifts)
- Student Safety & Engagement Risks (attendance, motivation)
- Facilities Capacity & Enrollment Shifts (overcrowding, boundaries)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Social-Emotional Learning & Restorative Practices (consistency, culture.○ Student Pathways & Transitions (readiness, continuity)○ Artificial Intelligence Integration (instruction, professional learning, policy)○ Community Partnerships & External Supports (coordination, awareness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Fear of Change & Legal Exposure (innovation, litigation)
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