# 2016 - 2017 District 39 Strategic Plan

### A. New Strategic Initiatives

School Climate: Creating a Culture of Empathy	
Situation	There is a need to better develop empathy, instill respect, and promote acceptance of responsibility within our school communities. Currently, debates regarding the difference between social conflicts and bullying are occurring among a variety of people in and out of the educational setting. Potentially, some situations defined as "bullying" could actually be incidences of typical social conflict for the age group. Education of all stakeholders is in this an area for District 39 and continued efforts should be made in developing a common understanding.  The district takes cases of bullying seriously and investigates all reports of bullying. In particular, there have been increased reports of before/after school incidences, racial and/or religious tension, and social conflicts/bullying within social media settings. These incidences are known to have an impact on student attendance as it contributes to social avoidance. Therefore, proactive measures need to be made in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusiveness.
Question(s)	<ul> <li>How do we promote empathy, respect, and responsibility in students?</li> <li>What is the difference between social conflict and bullying?</li> <li>What tracking system can be implemented consistently so that students transitioning from schools remain on the "radar"? <ul> <li>What situations should be tracked?</li> </ul> </li> <li>What venues should be used to educate students, teachers, and parents about bullying and social conflicts?</li> <li>How do we empower teachers to respond to incidents of bullying and social conflict?</li> <li>What research embedded in Social Emotional Learning and the Second Step program helps District 39 refine our efforts in improving school climate?</li> </ul>
Hypothesis	<ul> <li>A coordinated effort to develop empathy, instill respect, and promote acceptance of responsibility will reduce behavioral incidents.</li> <li>A single standard format for tracking behaviors will help identify patterns of social conflict and bullying.</li> <li>Education will help parents and students understand the difference between social conflict (which is a normal part of social learning) and bullying (which is harmful)</li> <li>Professional development for staff will help improve responses to behavioral incidents.</li> </ul>
Outcome(s)	District 39 will review current practices, study best practices and develop short- and long-term plans to improve school climate.
Action Steps	<ol> <li>Develop a public equity and diversity statement.</li> <li>Identify and communicate explicit definitions for social conflict vs. bullying.</li> <li>Facilitate a community forum to discuss issues related to diversity, respect &amp; responsibility.</li> <li>Revising practices to have meaningful consequences to behavior/restorative practices.</li> <li>Develop a consistent practice of Early Childhood - grade 8 behavior tracking among schools.</li> <li>Establishing behavior baseline data will help monitor efforts moving forward.</li> <li>Develop an education plan for parents, staff, and students.</li> <li>Review Social Emotional Learning research.</li> <li>Review Second Step Bullying supplemental materials.</li> <li>Participate in Community Review Committee (CRC).</li> <li>Review the May 2017 Community Review Committee report/update.</li> <li>Develop a Comprehensive Plan for 2017-2018.</li> </ol>

Student School Day	
Situation	Early childhood through eighth grade schedules are varied in start and end times, as well as time allocated for content area instruction. Our current schedules do not reflect best practices for student learning and teacher collaboration.
	Due to shared staff, schedules for EC through grade 4 cause interruptions in the blocks of time set aside for consistent instruction in core content areas. This fragmentation creates conflicts with the new ELA curriculum adoption and workshop approach in delivering instruction. The workshop approach requires an extended period of time for mini-lessons, conferencing, writing, and reading. In addition, curricular goals in mathematics require students to dive deeply into concepts, discuss strategies and reasoning as they problem solve. Interruptions in instructional blocks of time do not allow for students have to smoothly shift their focus from math to the next content area. Schedules that allow grade levels to teach content at the same time of day allows for flexible student groupings. In addition, current schedules also do not allow for a dedicated time for intervention for students needing support in a given content area.
	The lack of dedicated common planning time during the school day, prevents teachers in EC - 5th grades from having opportunities for sustained collaboration, both as a grade level, and across grade levels. This factor inhibits the ability to coordinate content-area instruction so students have similar experiences across a grade level, provides limited time to discuss student data and plan for interventions, and impedes transition between grade levels both in academic areas as well as for social-emotional transition. With dedicated plan time during the school day, it would improve opportunities for collaboration and would reduce the need for substitute coverage.
	Current schedules also impact transportation logistics and cost. Varying lengths of school days hampers transportation logistics. Due to transportation constraints, students at Highcrest experience a significant wait-time between arrival and the start of the school day. Additionally, alterations to bus schedules may result in district costs.
Question(s)	<ul> <li>How can we align transportation and scheduling needs?</li> <li>How can we increase opportunities for collaboration while reducing the drain on subs?</li> <li>How do we consistently address individual student learning growth within the school day?</li> <li>How can we reduce shared staffing to benefit core content instructional time?</li> <li>What impact would schedule changes have on families?</li> </ul>
Hypothesis	District 39 believes that restructuring the school day will provide additional time for vertical alignment and collaboration, resulting in improved continuity of instruction, increased student engagement, and dedicated planning/collaboration time for teachers. This restructured school day will allow for a dedicated time for intervention, resulting in increased student growth in core content areas. Aligning transportation needs will result in a decreased wait time at the start of the day for Highcrest students.
Outcome(s)	By spring of 2017, a review of District 39's Early Childhood- grade 8 school day schedules will be completed with recommendations.
Action Steps	<ol> <li>Conduct parent and staff surveys.</li> <li>Explore Early Childhood - grade 5 scheduling options for organized collaboration opportunities.</li> <li>Identify master scheduling options (Early Childhood - grade 4) to isolate blocks of instructional time for core content areas and consistent time for intervention.</li> <li>Explore before and after school programming schedules.</li> <li>Explore transportation costs and schedules.</li> </ol>

		School Attendance	
Situation	students may have medical situations that result in absences. Unfortun students can miss more than nine days of school. Currently, 71% of ou The last five years of positive school attendance data shows a consister shows that approximately 6% of the remaining 29% of students not show	to compounding episodes in later grades that could lead to school refusal. Illness accumulate to the total days missed and the students have positive attendance.  Interest of 70% to 73% with 2015-2016 year being 71%. Although attendance rappening positive attendance patterns were considered chronically absent (missed lents, 67% of grades 5-8 students were believed to have been impacted by schools.)	nese sporadic absences build up to a point where  ates have not significantly fluctuated, 2015-2016 data  18 or more days of school). Of the students who were
Question(s)	<ul> <li>What factors/triggers influence student attendance?</li> <li>What reasons contribute to the pattern/trend in regards to stud</li> <li>Is there a particular cohort (K-4, 5-6, 7-8) where attendance is</li> </ul>		
Hypothesis	The potential causes that influence student attendance may be:		
	Home-school connection  Response to student behaviors  Unfamiliarity with school supports  Separation Anxiety (begins in Kindergarten)  Motivation to attend school  Medical situation	Academic or specific program avoidance	Social avoidance
Goal(s)	The District will increase positive attendance from 71% to 80% by Jun	e 2018.	
Action Steps	Identify and develop tiered interventions to promote positive school att	tendance (95% of time or more).	
	Home-school Connection  1. Inform parents on district attendance practices.  2. Provide parents resources available to support positive attendance.  3. Create comprehensive attendance practices.  a. Targeted intervention at K and Grade 1 b. Routine attendance tracking c. Train school nurses in addressing absences.	<ol> <li>Academic or specific program avoidance</li> <li>Prioritize and reduce academic stressors (e.g. Alternatives to student presentations to demonstrate student competencies).</li> <li>Provide teachers with training about school refusal/anxiety.</li> <li>Increase communication about homework expectations and ways parents can help their children.</li> <li>Create a central location where parents can access information about homework practices on district website.</li> </ol>	<ol> <li>Social avoidance</li> <li>Review positive school-wide culture of diversity, inclusion and acceptance through programmatic and systematic effort.</li> <li>Establish social groups with Social Worker.</li> <li>Teach students coping strategies for managing stress and anxiety.</li> <li>Track all bullying investigations systematically.</li> </ol>

Student Growth Response to Growth Intervention (RtGI)	
Situation	Historically, student attainment (achievement) data has been the focus for reporting student success. In the spring of 2016, an investigative process for developing a student growth model began. The first step focused on the development of growth target ranges for District 39. The district decided to establish growth target ranges using local data only. Multiple data points are necessary to provide a more complete assessment of student growth. Therefore, other student data such as curriculum-based assessments, non-cognitive factors, and classroom performance should be considered in developing a student growth model.  This year, the district will spend time applying, analyzing, and reflecting on the best model for D39 students. Once established, we believe this growth intervention model (RtGI) will provide the best combination of student data that will contribute to rich, collaborative discussions and instructional planning throughout the year. Ultimately, the outcome will be a protocol/approach to provide interventions for students who are not demonstrating growth gains.
Question(s)	<ul> <li>How is student growth measured?</li> <li>What factors contribute to student growth?</li> <li>How do we ensure that all students are growing academically?</li> <li>Are there performance differences between distinct groups? (e.g. gender, percentile/decile ranking, schoolsetc.)</li> </ul>
Hypothesis	There are several potential factors that impact student growth data:  • Limitations of assessment tools  • Non-cognitive factors such as academic mindsets, behaviors, and learning strategies (e.g. Characteristics of Successful Learners)  • Baseline achievement  • Instructional practices
Outcome(s)	As part of the investigative and reflective process of developing a student growth model, student growth will be addressed through:  • Developing a protocol for addressing the needs of students who do not meet expected growth.  • Establishing specific criteria for measuring and monitoring students identified with a need for a growth plan.  • Building teacher and parent capacity to encourage student growth mindsets.
Action Steps	<ol> <li>Review current assessment systems for demonstrating student growth.</li> <li>Establish local expected growth gains using Performance Series historical data.         <ul> <li>a. Renorm/Re-establish local expected growth gains in spring 2019. (three-year cycle)</li> <li>b. Monitor and compare local expected growth gains for improvement.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Establish baseline data using 2016-2017 PARCC results (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers).</li> <li>Analyze Performance Series data comparing scaled score (achievement level) with established local expected growth gains.</li> <li>Develop protocol for addressing needs of students in <i>all levels of attainment/achievement</i> (high, average, low) who <i>also</i> fall within the bottom quartile of <i>growth</i> target gains.</li> <li>Develop a system to monitor the possible factors contributing to student growth (e.g. gender, demographics, mobility).         <ul> <li>a. Conduct a data analysis of performance differences within distinct groups.</li> <li>b. Identify non-cognitive factors that may be impacting student growth.</li> <li>c. Provide guidance on how to define student growth, and reflect on the impact of instructional practices on student growth.</li> <li>d. Use student growth data to inform instruction.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Build teacher and parent capacity to encourage growth mindsets.         <ul> <li>a. Encourage continued teacher participation in Academy 39 coursework through Stanford University's online course, "How to Teach Maths".</li> <li>b. Host a parent education event on the "Mindset Revolution" with speakers Jo Boaler and Cathy Williams, Stanford professors and experts in the field.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

## **B.** Continuing Strategic Initiatives

Sustainability Planning & Practices	
Situation	A sustainability audit performed by Wold Architects and Engineers identified potential energy savings projects and recommended improvements for coordination and communication of sustainability efforts district-wide. According to the Wold audit, the district has embedded cross-curricular instruction related to environmental awareness, but needs to coordinate building activities regarding student/staff sustainability practices, promote the use of school gardens for educational experiences, and unify communication practices to staff and community.  District 39 continually seeks to identify cost effective and environmentally conscientious ways to operate. By improving upon current sustainability planning and practices, ways to conserve natural
	resources in a cost effective manner will be identified.
Question(s)	<ul> <li>How can sustainability and environmental literacy education promote use of school gardens?</li> <li>What is the best way to communicate environmental education embedded in curriculum to teachers?</li> <li>What sustainable facility projects will provide a return on investment within 5 years (by 2021) or within 10 years (by 2026)?</li> <li>How can District 39 improve current landfill waste reduction targets? (e.g. &gt; 25%)</li> </ul>
Hypothesis	The following improved planning and practices will increase District 39's commitment to sustainability practices and promotion of environmental literacy:  Sustainable facility projects will yield long term financial savings.  Coordinated instructional efforts will ensure district-wide alignment related to environmental practices.  Improved communication practices within the schools and community will showcase D39 leadership in environmental/sustainability efforts.  Improve its reduce, reuse, and recycle practices by establishing consistent school based plans.
Outcome(s)	District 39 will improve environmental literacy among students as measured by the rubric developed. Baseline data will be establish 2016-2017. District 39 will develop 5-year and 10-year facility plans to include cost effective sustainability projects identifying financial and energy savings.
Action Steps	1. Ingersoll-Rand conducts a Feasibility Study with recommended potential facility projects by September 2016. 2. Sustainability Liaison and C&I Coordinator will establish strategic sustainability and environmental literacy, with regard to the following:  a. Communicate a plan to District 39 stakeholders.  b. Identify curricular connections in which environmental literacy and sustainability are addressed and/or needed.  c. Establish environmental literacy indicators for K-4, 5-6, and 7-8.  d. Develop grade-band rubrics for measuring environmental literacy.  e. Establish baseline data for measuring environmental literacy using grade-band rubrics. (spring 2017)  f. Establish building-based environmental teams such as student-led Green Team  g. Collaborate with PTO/PTA regarding enrichment opportunities related to sustainability, school garden activities/usage, and environmental awareness.  h. Promote use of school gardens for educational experiences.  i. Establish a district communication structure that highlights facility improvements, school gardens, & environmental literacy within D39 and the broader Wilmette community in collaboration with Communications Director.  j. Review and improve all reduce, reuse and recycle practices, establish district wide standards for all schools.  k. Decrease landfill waste reduction by an additional 5% from FY 16.  l. Train custodians to promote proper cafeteria composting procedures and standardize measurement of compost waste.

Learning Commons	
Situation	Learning Commons space will be completed in three schools (Central, WJHS, and Harper) as of August 2016, and Romona & McKenzie, 2017 and HMS in 2018. While technology and library curriculum is being redesigned to reflect 21st Century ideas and learning, library and technology spaces had not been transformed to support this type of teaching and learning. Learning Commons spaces are structured to foster an environment that promotes communication, creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration (4Cs). Learning experiencesas well as exemplar lessons from curriculum maps-highlighting best use of space needs to be documented and accessible to all staff.
Question(s)	<ul> <li>How can a unified space better utilize resources, space and staff?</li> <li>How does a Learning Commons space and culture affect student learning, creativity, and interest/motivation?</li> <li>How can we facilitate a variety of experiences due to the varied modalities of learning that can be utilized in a student-centered, flexible space?</li> <li>How do we promote higher order thinking by having a flexible space for learning experiences that are designed to teach, apply and demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills?</li> <li>What new and emerging technologies, that are not accessible in a traditional classroom, can give students the opportunity to increase their usage and understanding in their future careers?</li> </ul>
Hypothesis	Learning Commons spaces will increase and enrich learning opportunities that are not available in general education classrooms.
Goal(s)	By May 2017:  • 80% of Central students can demonstrate creativity, communication, critical thinking, and collaboration when engaged in learning experiences held in the Learning Commons.  • Harper will increase the use of Learning Commons by 25% compared to the traditional LMC/Tech classes. Baseline was established in 2015-2016.  • WJHS will increase the overall use of Learning Commons by 20% compared to the traditional Library and Technology Lab spaces. Baseline was established in 2015-2016.  • 80% of WJHS students can accurately explain how the Learning Commons spaces enhanced their application of creativity, communication, critical thinking, and collaboration.
Action Steps	Facility Development 1. Continue school-based planning and implementation of Learning Commons spaces. 2. Collaborate and reflect on the construction of Learning Commons spaces at Central, Harper and Wilmette Junior High School.
	Educational Development  1. Complete Library Media and Technology curriculum review with committee members by January 2017.  2. Revise or embed technology and library curricular goals within District 39's curriculum maps and indicate examples that best use Learning Commons.  3. Identify the application of the 4Cs and engagement levels on a given activity through student self-assessments.  4. Identify and post lessons and learning experiences that support curricular goals best met in the Learning Commons environment.

#### C. Annual Business

#### **Curriculum Review Committees** By the end of 2016-2017 school year: Outcome(s) English Language Arts Curriculum, reading component, will be completed along with plans for professional development for implementation beginning fall 2017. World Language Curriculum review will be completed for implementation beginning fall 2017. Progress Reporting/Report Card Review Committee will review student achievement and progress communication formats. Library Media/Technology Curriculum will be completed January 2017 for implementation beginning fall 2017. **During summer 2017:** Grades K-4 Science Curriculum will be aligned with Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). **Action Steps** English Language Arts 1. Finalize reading component of curriculum maps for grades K-8. 2. Develop and/or review reading common assessments for improvements. 3. Find areas for integration with other content areas such as science and social studies. World Language 1. Finalize curriculum writing process. Review and select supporting materials and resources. 3. Provide ongoing professional development for World Language teachers. 4. Articulate with New Trier High School regarding placement of D39 students in World Languages. a. Review Spanish placement protocols. b. Pilot the use of Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) for World Language placement at NTHS using Spanish in 2016-2017. Progress Reporting/Report Card 1. Survey parents about the impact of homework practices. Review current practices and investigate best practices in reporting academic progress and characteristics of successful learners (CSLs). Reflect and revise reporting formats (progress reports and report cards) to align to meet the needs of all stakeholders: students, parents, and teachers. Review and revise homework policy/practices to establish consistent grade level and department homework expectations. Communicate the homework policy/practice with parents (District Parent Handbook) and teachers (District Staff Handbook). 6. Develop strategic communication to guide parent support on homework. Library Media/Technology 1. Complete Library Media and Technology curriculum review with committee members by January 2017. Reflect on current instruction about Digital Citizenship and review the proposed Digital Citizenship curriculum developed by New Trier Township sender districts. Examine roles of library media specialists and technology teachers in relation to curriculum and Learning Commons implementation. Establish student grade level outcomes for skills within library media and technology. Science

- 1. Review completed NGSS alignment for grades 5-8 for impact on grades K-4 Science curriculum.
- 2. Conduct NGSS alignment for grades K-4 Science curriculum during summer 2017.

Technology Infrastructure	
Outcome(s)	Conduct a security audit to ensure security of student/financial data and effective infrastructure supports for learning/working environments.
Action Steps	<ol> <li>Conduct and review security audit using an outside vendor.</li> <li>Adjust practices according to vendor's audit results.         <ul> <li>a. Prioritize security projects.</li> <li>b. Implement no/low cost fixes.</li> <li>c. Plan and budget for large scale fixes.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
	Grade 5 1:1 Learning Program Roll-Out
Outcome(s)	Finalize professional development plan to staff.
Action Steps	<ol> <li>Continue professional development to staff on software and tools that help facilitate instruction.</li> <li>Survey staff at the beginning and end of year regarding impact of 1:1 learning program on instruction.</li> <li>Provide support to all staff on how to use the iPad for productivity and simple troubleshooting.</li> <li>Update School Finance Committee (SFC) on insurance fees and other financials involving the program to make adjustments as needed.</li> <li>Present a final report regarding 1:1 Learning Program.</li> </ol>
	Grade 5 Teaching Endorsement
Goal s)	By the end of the <b>2017-2018</b> , 100% of 5th grade teachers will have middle school endorsements. By the end of the <b>2017-2018</b> , 50% of all grade 5 teachers will have a math endorsement.
Action Steps	<ol> <li>Monitor progress of grade 5 teachers toward obtaining middle school endorsements.</li> <li>Monitor progress of grade 5 teachers toward obtaining math endorsements.</li> </ol>
	Teacher Evaluation
Outcome(s)	The continuation of PERA (Performance Evaluation Reform Act) Joint Committee will focus on decisions for implementing student growth in 2017-2018.
Action Steps	<ol> <li>Identify and address staff training needed in 2016-2017 in order to implement the Teacher Evaluation Plan.</li> <li>Review year 1 implementation of the student growth component of teacher evaluation.</li> <li>Plan for year 2 implementation of the Teacher Evaluation Plan as established by the PERA Joint Committee.</li> <li>Provide an update on the implementation of the teacher evaluation plan.</li> </ol>
Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) Implementation	

Outcome(s)	District 39 will prepare for the state-mandated KIDS assessment marked for implementation 2017-2018 school year.
Action Steps	<ol> <li>Host a two-day training with an Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) trainer and invite other districts to participate for teaching staff.</li> <li>Provide ongoing support to kindergarten teaching staff on the assessment tool.</li> <li>Provide a half-day training for administrators on the implementation of KIDS.</li> </ol>