

DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION
Wilmette Public Schools

INFORMATION ITEM

Date: January 27, 2020

To: Members, Board of Education

From: Building Principals
Grade Level Administrators
Assistant Principals

Ellen Crispino
Business Manager/CSBO

Kristin Swanson, Ph.D.
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Assistant Superintendent and Administrator for Human Resources

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Subject: 2019-2020 Strategic Plan Updates: Annual Business Section

BACKGROUND

On September 23, 2019, the Board of Education approved the implementation of the 2019-2020 District 39 Strategic Plan. The yearly planning cycle includes Strategic Plan updates. This executive summary report will focus on mid-year updates of the action steps identified under Annual Business. The updates on the Continuing and New Strategic Initiatives will be presented in February and March respectively.

School Safety

The State of Illinois requires school districts to review school safety plans annually. In addition, District 39 regularly collaborates with the Wilmette Police Department and Wilmette Fire Department. During 2017-2018 school year, a security review process was established categorizing priorities in phases for implementation. This information along with a detailed board update was presented on August 27, 2018 by Tony DeMonte, Director of Technology and Media Services.

This year, administration identified, planned, and completed the following security projects for this year:

- Additional security cameras have been installed at Wilmette Junior High School. All other district schools will have additional cameras installed by the end of the school year.
- Public Announcement (PA) speakers in all gyms have clarity issues due to the horn style speaker and the acoustics of a gym. This is a universal issue with all gymnasium speakers in and out of District 39. In order to improve clarity, District 39 experimented with swapping the horn speakers with stereo speakers. As a result, clarity greatly improved. Therefore, the remaining speakers in District 39 gymnasiums will be outfitted with stereo speakers.
- Stop the Bleed is a national awareness/call-to-action campaign intended to encourage bystanders to become trained, equipped, and empowered to help in a bleeding emergency before professional help arrives. The Wilmette Police Department has provided Stop the Bleed training to all paraprofessionals, maintenance staff, and Mikaelian Education Center staff. As opportunities arise, more staff will receive training from either the Wilmette Police Department or District 39 nurses who are also certified trainers. Stop the Bleed kits, donated by the Wilmette Optimist Club and North Cook Intermediate Service Center, have been placed in all schools as well as the Mikaelian Education Center. More kits will be purchased and mounted in hallways for easy access.
- Last year, District 39's Crisis Plan language was reviewed and updated by a committee of staff, Wilmette Police Department, and Wilmette Fire Department. This year, the Crisis Plan was shared with staff. The revised abridged format allows for any future updates to be made current immediately. For example, District 39 worked in conjunction with the Wilmette Police Department to identify a reunification site which has been added to the Crisis Plan.

Ensuring the safety and security of students and staff in District 39 is a primary and ongoing goal.

Standards-based Learning and Reporting

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) provides districts with content area learning standards which are grade level specific. Curriculum reviews began in District 39 to update and align curriculum maps in all content areas with the newly adopted learning standards. Learning standards have always served as a guide for teachers in designing lessons, delivering instruction, monitoring student progress, and sharing student progress information with parents. The purpose of the District 39 reporting system is to provide a communication framework among students, parents, teachers, and administrators that fosters each student's academic growth and the development of learner characteristics.

HIGHCREST MIDDLE SCHOOL

Highcrest Middle School implemented the revised grades 5-6 report cards this fall that included process marks, achievement letter grades, and marks for progress toward grade level priority standards. Progress reports went to families in November and included details of progress toward standards and information about each student's learner behaviors in the areas of preparation, self-direction, and engagement.

Following the first quarter progress reports and conferences, staff feedback indicated that the majority felt well-prepared for conferences and progress reports, with no staff members indicating feeling unprepared. Staff shared their reflections about what went well and what was challenging. These reflections have identified items to be addressed through staff meetings and teacher collaboration meetings in preparation for semester report cards in February.

A family survey was shared following conferences in order to gather feedback from parents. Only 12 responses were submitted which does not provide significant representation of the Highcrest families. Although limited, half of the respondents indicated they learned more about their child's progress from the revised format, and the majority of the respondents felt the communication and preparation for parents for the new format was sufficient. A new round of communication efforts will occur prior to end of the semester to inform parents about report cards.

Websites for communication and guidance were set up for both staff and parents. A screencast of information was shared with families, and staff has had continued professional development on the revised format and systems in place. Communication will continue throughout the remaining quarters, and feedback will continue to be gathered in order to ensure any needed changes are implemented in the coming year.

WILMETTE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

In fall 2019, a committee of Wilmette Junior High (WJHS) staff representatives was formed to review the elements of the current reporting system and determine if revisions were needed. During the first five meetings, the committee has reviewed articles from authorities in the area of grading and assessment, gathered feedback from staff and parents, and have spent time learning from Highcrest staff members about their journey. Through these discussions, it has been determined that revisions are necessary for WJHS, and that the three components of learner behaviors, progress toward priority standards, and summative achievement should be evaluated. The committee will continue the work toward final revision recommendations, if needed, along with a timeline for implementation.

Grades K-8 Science Curriculum Review

Based on the curriculum review cycle, fall 2019 signaled the start of the seventh year since the last science curriculum review. Therefore, Department of Curriculum & Instruction assembled representative teams of enthusiastic and knowledgeable teacher leaders from all grade levels, special education, and differentiation support to formally review District 39's curriculum in a two-year review.

Last year (2018-2019), the Science Curriculum Review Committee began the work of aligning District 39 science curriculum and materials to the Illinois Learning Standards. The standards are based on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) which incorporate three dimensions of science learning:

- Science and Engineering Practices
 - What scientists do to investigate the natural world and what engineers do to design and build systems
- Disciplinary Core Ideas
 - Key ideas in science that build on each other throughout the grades
- Crosscutting Concepts
 - Exploration of connections across the four domains of science: Physical Science, Life Science, Earth and Space Science and Engineering

Upon completion of a thorough curriculum materials selection process, Elevate Science for grades K-4 and Amplify Science for grades 5-8 were selected with special consideration of the needs, interests, and abilities of our students as well as its particular attention to the three dimensions of science learning. This school year, the committee members are using Elevate Science and Amplify Science resources and materials with their students. These science curriculum materials have proven to support transitioning students from “learning about” science to “figuring out” science which is the primary focus of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Therefore, as the committee revises the District 39 Science Curriculum maps, close attention is given to ensure that students engage in phenomenon investigations, incorporates multiple learning modalities, inquiry, and argumentation.

Sustainability Planning, Practices, and Education

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

District 39 continually seeks to ensure positive environmental practices during construction projects through the use of sustainable materials, grant funding applications, and cost analysis. The current addition/renovation projects being undertaken by District 39 are designed to meet and exceed rigorous energy codes and standards. The design process for Kindergarten Enrichment has been an entire effort in sustainability beginning with the early district-wide program analysis. The analysis shifted the location of programs which minimized the amount of additions and construction required to double the capacity of the kindergarten program.

Within Central School, STR Partners continually followed the sustainability mantra of “reduce, reuse, and recycle”. Efforts have been made to keep as much of the existing room configuration and materials as possible while still achieving the functional needs and desire to have enjoyable space for students and teachers. STR Partners enhanced the interior environment by providing better indoor air quality. This has been done by replacing difficult to control, noisy, unit ventilation units with a roof top unit (RTU) that provides greater thermal comfort, filtered air, and quieter delivery. Specific technical sustainability features that are vast improvements over old “always on or off” mechanical systems include:

1. RTU with heat wheel for energy conservation
2. High efficiency motors with variable frequency drives (VFD’s)
3. Modulating compressors to follow load of the space
4. Reuse of fin tube radiation in the space

5. Condensing units with modulating compressors to follow load for spaces
In addition, electricity consumption is being greatly reduced by changing light fixtures from fluorescent to light emitting diode (LED) type.

STR Partners have reviewed the current status of grants available at this time for construction and energy conservation. Currently, no grants are available but STR Partners will continue to monitor State and Utility programs should any applicable grants become available.

SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION

District 39 continues to partner with the districtwide PTO Environmental Awareness group to communicate and educate students, families, and staff about District 39's sustainability/green practices such as recycling, composting, and reusable products. This year's first meeting was held on October 14, 2019 and focused on documenting all efforts into the form of an annual reference chart. This chart contains action items, persons responsible, and date of completion. Examples of action item include:

- limiting idling by bus drivers/families
- PTO representatives sharing information with families during back to school events and/or curriculum night
- educating staff through trainings
- seasonal newsletter, *Sustainable Stats*, highlighting D39's green practices/helpful tips
- updated website page to include information about D39 Green Teams, District Operations, Noteworthy News, Sustainable lessons

This document also serves as an open mode of communication among all members of the multi-stakeholder team:

- Katie Lee, Administrator for Curriculum & Instruction
- Lisa Winter, Sustainability Liaison and Food Coordinator
- Liz Gibbs, Curriculum Coordinator
- Aimee Stolz, D39 PTO Environmental Awareness Chair
- Beth Drucker, Amanda Nugent, and Lynsy Jacobs, Committee Members

CONCLUSION

District 39 administrators and staff have worked diligently toward achieving the goals and/or outcomes of the 2019-2020 Strategic Plan. The Board will be presented updates on the Continuing and New Strategic Initiatives in February and March respectively. The Board of Education may expect a full Strategic Plan review in June.

Recommended for presentation to the Board of Education,



Kari Cremascoli, Ph.D., Superintendent