

Hastings-on-Hudson UFSD Board of Education Goals 2018-2019

1. Strategic Planning

Create an open and inclusive process to hear from parents, the community, students, staff, teachers, and administrators regarding desired priorities for the District. From that process codify and communicate needs expressed and a path forward including timelines and metrics for progress.

Topical areas of focus will include, but aren't limited to:

- Curriculum, learning and instruction
- Professional development
- Diversity and inclusion
- Mental health
- Finance / budget
- Facilities and potential capital projects
- Co-curricular and athletics
- Communication
- Technology
- Organizational structure and processes

Progress this year

- Dr. Wilson surveyed district stakeholders compiling data, observations and recommendations for review.
- Dr. Wilson is giving his findings to incoming Superintendent Dr. Henning-Piedmont who, together with the Board of Education and other administrators, will determine next steps.

2. Curriculum, Learning and Instruction

Using current knowledge and the upcoming strategic planning process, develop a clear picture of the current state of learning and instruction in our District and begin articulating a vision of the future and path forward. While this process will unfold over the 2018-2019 school year, several areas of focus are already clear:

- Learning, and Instruction Leadership – Ensure curricular leadership needs are defined and appropriate hires are made to address
- Special Education – Clearly understand progress made against the 2017 audit and ensure a clear workplan and metrics are developed for the year ahead. More broadly, ensure we are working towards an inclusive special education / general education vision for the District
- Professional Development – Ensure we are defining, prioritizing, and offering professional development in keeping with District goals and our professional development plan. Where there are gaps in our professional development, ensure we are identifying and making plans to address

Progress this year

- Approved the search for an Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, and appointed Ms. Melissa Szymanski after a thorough interview process that included input from school and community stakeholders.

- Dr. Lauren Katzman provided a report to the Board in December 2018 that outlined progress made on the 2017 special education audit. The report found that much progress had been made, and that several critical areas need our continued focus: leadership structure at the central office to support change (recent hires are focused on this), developing high-quality inclusive instruction, and building high-quality relationships between the district and community.
- Special Education Director and Assistant Director reported back to the Board of Education and community in three public meetings regarding their specific goals and progress in special education, district-wide.
- Positioning central office administration to consider a thoughtful assessment of professional development investment and areas for growth going forward.

3. **Diversity and Inclusion**

Ensure the District develops and articulates a clear vision for diversity and inclusion, which comprises ethnic, racial, religious, gender, ability and/or health status, sexual-orientation, and socioeconomic diversity. Several important outcomes for the District this year include:

- Ensure hiring practices align with District vision
- Complete and make public *Incidents of Bias* protocol
- Continue to develop and implement plans to improve multicultural literacy across District
- Provide appropriate learning opportunities for staff, parents, and students

Progress this year

- 2018-19 marked the first year of our district's Director of Diversity, Ms. Jenice Mateo-Toldeo.
- Work undertaken this year includes professional development to improve multicultural literacy, *Incidents of Bias* protocol, a continued focus on diverse hiring, and the 3rd annual Multicultural Book Fair, which this year included a Multicultural Festival.
- Approved an increase to Ms. Mateo-Toledo's time for this position in 2019-20
- District partnership with the Bronx's KIPP NYC College Prep and Yonkers schools on the high school's production of *Hairspray*. Received regional recognition.
- The board has continued to support FMS's groundbreaking "Courageous Conversations" classes, where students explore how to talk about race and diversity.

4. **District and School Culture**

This is a broad category that can encompass many aspects of our District and schools. This year we'd like to focus on two aspects in particular:

- **Mental Health** – Prioritize the reduction of stress in our students by ensuring that our District has sufficient support and staffing to address mental health needs of all students, as well as examining the causes of stress and possible ways to address and reduce those causes
- **Leadership Development** – Ensure we are supporting the professional development and growth of our administrators

Progress this year

- 2018-19 marked the first year with a district-wide psychologist and introduced a guidance counselor at the elementary school.
- Recognizing the stress faced by high school students, and under the recommendation of Hastings High School Principal Mr. Lou Adipietro, supported our participation in Stanford University's Challenge Success. The broad-reaching, nationally-recognized program is positively impacting our faculty and students, and we continue to support its implementation.
- Introduced revising our District Code of Conduct to reflect current practices of restorative justice, and will begin drafting changes.
- The board supported the continued expansion of FMS's mindfulness work, which has gone from pilot to program.
- Social and emotional support continued to grow, with the continued implementation of the Second Step Social and Emotional Learning Program, at both Hillside and FMS, as well as the Yale University Center for Emotional Intelligence RULER Program at FMS.

5. **Fiscal and Facility Management**

Balance long-term financial health of the District with the needs and desires of the public. A few areas we will focus on this year:

- Budget
 - 5-year budget projection – Develop a set of provisional guiding assumptions allowing for a projected plan that can be updated yearly
 - Focus on cost management – Identify areas where efficiencies can be achieved while maintaining high standards across the District
- Facilities / Capital Projects
 - 5-year facilities plan - Make facilities plan available to the public highlighting essential areas: buildings maintenance, up-to-date learning spaces, security needs
 - Develop and publicly share a detailed rationale and timeline for a new Bond to undertake necessary facilities renovation work. Ensure robust and thoughtful community engagement throughout.

Progress this year

- \$18.3 million facilities bond approved by the community that will impact learning spaces used by all students, K-12. 18 months of community meetings leading to the bond proposal gave opportunity for stakeholders to voice opinions on facility needs in all 3 schools, consider a budget, and discuss priorities. Shared information in 2 public forums, and synthesized stakeholders' feedback into a bond proposal that includes a building addition, upgrades and significant maintenance to position our facilities for the future. Compromise and careful consideration led to a successful bond approval.
- Solicited local professional architects, designers, and engineers to participate in a volunteer advisory committee to interview and select architects and building managers for our facilities bond project.

- 2019-20 school budget approved that remains below the tax cap and is less than a 1% increase over the previous year.
- Encouraged public input on the recommendations for the budget in public meetings for 3 months leading up to the budget vote. Critical feedback from stakeholders allowed for cost minimization while maintaining various aspects of curriculum and instruction, and program and staffing that impact all learners.
- Examined budget for efficiencies, resulting in reductions, for example, of almost \$300,000 in budgeted busing costs.
- Began moving toward more frequent bid solicitation for work requiring expertise, to ensure that we receive competitive pricing and choice in quality of service.

6. Communication and Engagement

Continue to strengthen Board of Education communication and engagement with all stakeholders

- Create advanced schedule of upcoming topics to be discussed at board and other meetings
- Provide regular progress updates on goals
- Make content on the website easy to navigate and find
- Create opportunities to hear from stakeholders on key topics

Progress this year

- Clarified and publicized focused agenda items in advance of meetings. Informed community in advance of when and where to engage with the Board of Education on significant topics in public meetings, bond forum, budget work sessions, and committees.
- Listened to stakeholders' input on significant topics and shared efforts to transparently process decisions impacting the district.
- Promoted information about the 2 public forums related to the facilities bond, and 3 months of public meetings related to the school budget to specifically solicit input from stakeholders. Emphasized interest to hear from community in order to make informed decisions on behalf of the community.

7. Superintendent Search

Update 2017 profile of desired characteristics of a superintendent as needed. Start the process early- to mid-Fall to ensure the broadest and deepest candidate pool possible.

Progress this year

- Dr. Valerie Henning-Piedmonte hired as new Superintendent from a pool of over 40 qualified candidates. 17-member district-wide committee met each finalist and provided the Board with guidance and feedback.
- Dr. Henning-Piedmonte has been actively present in the district at Board meetings, assisting in the hiring of our new Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, PTSA meetings, community meet-and-greets, and working in collaboration with Interim Superintendent to ensure a smooth transition on July 1.