



Butler School District 53 Strategic Plan Report January 2018

A Strategic Plan is a document that articulates the organization’s mission and vision as well as the goals and objectives needed to achieve the vision. It provides the framework and guidance for an organization to fulfill its mission with optimal impact and efficiency. It is also an opportunity for an organization to obtain participatory involvement from internal and external stakeholders and from quantitative and qualitative information. Regularly engaging in a Strategic Plan and examining the mission and vision, assessing its current state, setting goals and action plans and measuring progress has become a characteristic of successful schools. A Strategic Plan provides a foundation from which progress can be measured, priorities established, resources allocated and communications improved among all stakeholders. In short, it creates a more relevant and responsive school system by articulating goals to improve performance.

DISTRICT OVERVIEW

Butler School District 53 is home to approximately 500 students at Brook Forest (grades K-5) and Butler Junior High (grades 6-8) and also operates a pre-school for students aged 3-5 with identified disabilities in partnership with the Oak Brook Park District Pre-School Program. Butler District 53 is a learning community committed to providing high quality instruction and rigor in the classroom while ensuring a balanced educational approach, nurturing the “whole child.” Rich in diversity, the District promotes a family atmosphere among the staff, students, parents and community. District 53 boasts unique parent involvement, a highly involved PTO, excellent teachers who really know the students and families, and children who thrive through that support. The District has received awards and honors that place it among the top schools in the state including the coveted National Blue Ribbon Award, given to both Brook Forest (2014) and Butler Junior High (2006 and 2015) by the federal Department of Education; the Bright Red Apple Award, School Search Bright A+ Award and Chicago Magazine’s “Number One” ranking of all schools in DuPage County. The school community prides itself on nurturing and challenging each child in his or her academic and personal development. The school community strives to provide enriching and engaging educational experiences that propel each and every student to new heights every day.

Mission

Butler School District 53 provides the best educational opportunities for each student to achieve academic excellence, to develop the curiosity for life-long learning, and to demonstrate personal and social integrity.

Vision

Education is a partnership in a journey of excellence preparing children to learn and succeed in an evolving world.

Purpose

We commit to do everything in our power to stand with and inspire our children to achieve a personal best for themselves and their community, every day.

Instructional Blueprint

We are committed to the ongoing development of learning environments, curriculum, instruction, and assessments that directly impact each student's growth toward becoming prepared graduates.

Core Values - We hold dear:

- *Providing for the highest academic achievement.*
- *Empowering every child to soar beyond established standards.*
- *Ensuring a child-centric approach to educational decision-making.*
- *Creating a holistic pursuit of academic, social and emotional growth.*
- *Facilitating and enriching student-driven learning.*
- *Fostering a collaborative, team-based learning environment.*
- *Exemplifying state-of-the-art educational best practices.*
- *Engaging teaching professionals in continuous learning.*
- *Investing in the success of every member of Butler 53.*
- *Developing partnerships with members of the Oak Brook community.*

SUMMARY OF THE PROCESS

HYA consultants met with the District 53 Administrative Team on October 24, 2017 to review the strategic planning process in addition to developing goals and expectations for the project.

Three goals for the Strategic Planning Project were developed from the October 24 discussion. They are listed below.

- Goal 1: To build consensus and support from stakeholders for the Strategic Plan by conducting community engagement sessions and an online survey.
- Goal 2: To collect information from stakeholders regarding District strengths and challenges.
- Goal 3: To present a new 3-5 year strategic plan to the Board of Education for adoption in February 2018.

Engagement Participation

The high level of survey responses, along with the participation in the interviews and the focus groups, are strong indicators of the support that the community, parents and staff demonstrate for the school district.

The numbers of participants, by stakeholder group, in the two methods of data gathering are listed below:

Group	Group Participants	Online Survey
Board of Education	7	NA
Administrator	7	3
Teacher	59	50
Community Member	9	73
Parent	27	204
Support Staff	19	13
Student	58	5
Total	186	348

It should be noted that the “community members” group as represented above was composed of business leaders, representatives of local government, and community leaders. School Board members were interviewed as individuals for the purpose of gathering their comments and did not convene as a group during this process.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The online survey, interviews, and focus group meetings were structured to gather input regarding the priorities and future direction of the school district. Additionally, the stakeholder interviews and focus groups collected information regarding the strengths of the District and anticipated challenges that it will be facing in the coming years.

Different thoughts and ideas emerged from the Community Engagement Process regarding the structure and purpose of the Strategic Plan. They emerged from discussions with Board members, administrators, community leaders, and teachers as essential components of the plan in order to move the district toward a collective understanding and vision. These are summarized

below and listed as bullets in a separate section before the summary of the common themes regarding strengths and future focus opportunities for the District as a guide in the development of the Strategic Plan.

There was a strong belief that the plan focus on the next generation of students and define how a Butler District 53 education prepares students for success, inspires and challenges them and produces students that are engaged lifelong learners prepared to be global citizens. The plan should be a vision for the future in the next 3-5 years and not a look backward. It should focus on key initiatives rather than outlining a plethora of initiatives. The plan should include strategies that examine, identify and align the core offerings. Finally, the plan should embrace the passion about educating our students and induce excitement and buy-in from the greater community. It should also provide the foundation for articulating the vision and the benefits of a District 53 education to the entire school community.

Suggestions Regarding Characteristics of the Strategic Plan:

- Articulate the vision to better communicate who we are as a school district and what the district provides
- Avoid initiative overload
- Brand the plan to build excitement, motivation, and buy-in
- Develop a 3-5 year “look forward” plan; not “look backward”
- Include a strategy that examines and identifies/aligns the core offerings
- Outline an inspiring plan for the future to provide an education that 1. Prepares students for success; 2. Inspires; 3. Challenges; and 4. Produces students that are engaged, global citizens and lifelong learners.
- Plan ahead for next generation of students attending Butler School District 53
- Revise the mission to reflect 21st century needs

COMMON THEMES

Board members, parents, community leaders, certified staff, students, support staff, and administrators were interviewed in groups or individually. Students in grades 4-8 as well as former Butler School District 53 students were interviewed in groups. Student responses from their direct experience with the learning environment were a rich source of qualitative information and provide an authentic perspective to this report. Goal priorities from the engagement notes regarding “Strengths of the District” and “District Opportunities for Future Focus” were sorted into broad categories and may be found in Appendix A. Engagement notes regarding the “Profile of a Graduate” and “Vision of the Future” are also provided in Appendix B to be used for future planning purposes by District 53. The online survey results are provided in a separate report titled, *Butler School District 53 Strategic Planning Survey Report* in Appendix C.

Themes were included that emerged from multiple sources of data including the extensive discussions about the District’s expectations for graduating students, strengths, challenges, and future areas of success. Common themes included: ensuring a well-rounded experience for all

students; preparing students to be ready for high school; providing a safe environment; and addressing students' social and emotional needs. Many participants emphasized these ideas as essential priorities in order to strategically lead the district forward and to continue to build on a strong foundation of excellence. These themes also emerged as priorities in Section III: Priorities and Item Analysis in the online survey results.

Butler School District 53 is a premier school district that has a history of excellence. It is consistently noted for high performance in every area, from test scores and student achievement to teaching strategies, curriculum, technology, professional development and preparing students for high school. Additionally, Butler 53 is known for its high standards in operations and finances and its low tax rate. Teachers personalize learning to meet the needs of students and there is academic support available for every student. The schools each have a sense of community, and the care and concern for every child is abundantly evident from the custodians, to the secretaries and classroom assistants, to the teachers and administrators. Moreover, parents and community leaders actively support the school. Participants also noted that communication with parents is generally strong and technology is accessible to all students. Despite all of these achievements, the schools and staff maintain high expectations and continue to find ways to improve the program and themselves.

Participants addressed some challenges for the District: Communicate more with stakeholders, especially those who have no children in the school as well as provide more information about the curriculum and academic expectations for parents. Other areas for growth are to continue efforts to meet the needs of the whole child and grow the social emotional program so that students continue to have a well-rounded experience. Also, participants suggested broadening current programs and implementing others so students have more a more expansive choice in courses. Related to that was continuing to grow partnerships with the high school and other organizations in order to provide more class choice for students. Participants also noted a challenge to expand the transition program for the high school. Keeping class size small, continuing professional development for technology and new instructional practices, and continuing to fine-tune and strengthen the language arts curriculum were also identified as challenges.

THEMES

Strengths of the District in Alphabetical Order

- Academic support is available to all students
- Actively engaged parents and community
- Communication with parents is generally good
- Dedicated and caring staff
- District employs effective, teachers, administrators and support staff in its schools
- District staff is responsive to the needs of all students and families
- Emphasis on student directed service projects in the community
- Excellent music program
- Facilities are well maintained
- Heritage of excellence and success

- High academic standards and expectations for all students
- High school preparation
- Nationally recognized Blue Ribbon school district
- Parents and community leaders actively support the school
- Professional development for teachers and paraprofessionals is encouraged
- Recognition for academic excellence
- Respectful student population
- Rich opportunities for extra-curricular participation
- Safe school environment for students
- Sense of caring for children and a sense of community in the school are evident
- Strong foundation of excellence
- Strong mathematics curriculum and instruction
- Students on track to be college and career ready
- Teachers personalize learning to address individual needs of students
- Technology is accessible to all students and integrated into the curriculum
- Welcoming, secure environment – “District 53 cares about kids.”

District Opportunities for Future Focus in Alphabetical Order

- Communicating with stakeholders
- Continue to grow the Fine Arts Program
- Developing common expectations regarding the rigor of the curriculum
- Developing the social emotional curriculum
- Ensuring a well-rounded experience for every student
- Expanding transition experiences to the high school
- Growing current programs and implementing new programs in order to provide more opportunities and choice for all students
- Improving the accessibility of information about the curriculum, and academic expectations to parents
- Maintaining small class size
- Partnering with the high school district and other community organizations to provide more student choice
- Providing professional development regarding technology and innovative instructional practices
- Strengthening the language arts curriculum

Draft Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 – Strengthen Exemplary Teaching & Learning: Ensure students are emotionally and academically prepared for success in high school, receive a well-rounded education, and engage in a culture of learning.

Areas of Focus for Goal 1:

➤ 1.1 Teaching

- Establish an instructional and curricular framework
 - Align standards, instruction, assessment and professional development
 - Examine the language arts curriculum for alignment across grades, emphasizing fundamental communication skills
- Define high expectations for academic performance and “readiness” for the next level of learning

➤ 1.2 Learning

- Develop a framework for social-emotional learning
- Implement instructional programs that personalize student learning, advance rigor, promote creativity, and provide differentiated learning
- Enrich extracurricular and exploratory opportunities for a well-rounded student experience
- Continue to integrate digital learning tools and support technology infrastructure

Goal 2 – Promote Community Engagement: Engage and communicate with families and the broader community to advance partnerships and bridge understanding among all stakeholders.

Areas of Focus for Goal 2:

➤ 2.1 Communication

- Establish a process for conflict resolution and communication of concerns
- Develop a transparent process for student placement
- Use relevant, on-going communication tools and methods to engage parents and community
- Utilize community outreach efforts for input and planning

➤ 2.2 Parents & Community Partnerships

- Build active community partnerships
- Engage non-parent community base
- Sustain family and community satisfaction over time

Goal 3 – Create Value: Leverage effective use of resources for the benefit of student learning to ensure community value.

Areas of Focus for Goal 3:

➤ 3.1 Finance

- Commit to fiscally sound practices
 - Achieve no significant findings in the annual audit
 - Benchmark cash reserves
 - Compare the operating expense per student with benchmark districts
 - Maintain a balanced budget
 - Utilize cost-saving consortiums
- Explore new revenue streams

➤ 3.2 Human Capital - Professional Staff and Support Staff

- Invest in professional learning to grow teacher excellence
- Balance staffing ratios with district standards and educational programs
- Compare compensation and benefits with benchmark districts
- Establish staff wellness opportunities
- Strengthen staff and leader satisfaction over time

➤ 3.3 Facilities

Action Plans

- Prioritize long term facility assessment and improvement plans
- Maintain safe, clean and learner-ready facilities

APPENDIX A

Butler School District 53
 Strategic Planning Report – APPENDIX A
 Engagement Notes Organized by Goal Categories
 December 2017

Goal 1 – Strengthen Exemplary Teaching & Learning: Ensure students are emotionally and academically prepared for success in high school, receive a well-rounded education, and engage in a culture of learning.

1.1 Teaching

- Allow students to be placed by grade based on academic performance, not outdated standards for academic progression
- ALP gifted program is a stressor for parents wanting acceleration
- Analysis of publisher spending is regularly evaluated and curricular purchases are made to drive down costs and view as strategic investments.
- Caution on too high of academic expectations
- Develop a system of readiness for next level
- Dual-enrollment college credit starting in 7th and 8th grade.
- Ensure staff has access to piloting and testing curricula prior to implementation
- Establish the meaning of high expectations for all student performance and
- Examine Chicago Lab school and/or private school offerings for comparison
- Few hard copy texts; science and social studies texts exist; nothing for language arts/communications; need a syllabus for parents ... learning target map....how do parents know what kids are doing in class?
- Fully embedded technology across curriculum
- Get testing rubric but not the actual test back; tests are returned to the teacher
- Hands-on learning – home arts curriculum, life skills
- Identification of best practices being used in the classroom with specific measurable objectives – not just everyone likes it.
- Increased rigor in science and social studies ... conceptual understanding as opposed to retention of basic facts
- Jobs – teach about jobs work, what you need to work in a job
- Keep: career day, major thematic projects, experiences from project learning
- LEAP...look into application in D53. Educational innovations....if we can incorporate it here, district staff should look into it as a minimum. Staff willing to look for improvement.
- Maintaining high academic achievement...look at best educational designs available. Create partnerships with best in field.
- Math – smaller classes for higher ability students; Central no longer taking middle school students into high school courses; more differentiation throughout
- Math and science over-emphasized at expense of arts, fine and performing arts
- More balanced approach to learning
- More explore days

- National-measures
- Newest technology for education
- Not seeing correct communication skills in student work
- Plan for and anticipate national and state standard changes to eliminate wasted revenue and time
- School has to balance too high expectations with co-curricular and other offerings
- Stress among kids for academic achievement and expectations
- Tracking of data on student performance in high school and college placement to have full view of long-term performance
- Transparency into the curriculum design process. Robust input from community, business, future employers, and teachers on educational needs. Surveys of stakeholders on satisfaction quarterly, bi annually and annually. Regular town halls to get community feedback.

1.2 Learning

- Address kid in the middle who is feeling stress, lost, drifted
- Alternative instruction for ELL, sped, and diverse learners
- Art, music, fine and performing arts
- Athletic program
- Bring art and music back into the schools for all kids – strengthen fine arts program
- Build emotionally healthy, self-confident kids
- Bully-free environment
- Butler needs to work on more than just academics...social skills, not all academic
- Career awareness, connecting learning activities opportunities to explore
- Classroom testing; kids unable to keep completed tests
- Co-curricular program could be stronger presence
- Coming from a small school to very large high school setting
- Competitive environment at Butler but not with stress (healthy amount), largely because we knew each other
- Concerns about curriculum; make sure curriculum is meeting needs of students
- Connected to other feeder schools, getting to know other kids before high school
- Cultural differences among population in the school setting
- Diverse population set against national issues
- Don't leave the "middle kid" out
- ELA – grammar, spelling, writing, correctness, complete sentences, etc.
- Embrace the whole child; more balance
- Enhance digital literacy through: proficiency in digital tools with quantifiable measures, making connections of technology use outside of the classroom, safety, creativity and innovation.
- Ensure a foundation of success skills that includes: respect, initiative, career planning/consideration, responsibility, personal finance, confidence, critical thinking, problem solving, resiliency, teaming and communication, innovation and digital literacy, etc.
- Even a high performing district can improve
- Feeling over-whelmed at Central
- Four levels of math but two levels of LA

- Kids in the middle
- Learning how to have locks on lockers at Butler
- Let kids be kids
- Let kids be kids ... stop feeding parent frenzy about acceleration, pushing kids forward
- Level of differentiation to meet needs of individual kids
- Literacy curriculum – parents not all satisfied
- Long term projects...common expectation at high school
- Philosophy...relate to SEL, global perspective...able to work with others
- Pressure – community recognizing amount of pressure on kids; starting conversation
- Production of personalized learning plans for all students
- Push to be in higher academic group when kids are crying; demands to excel; competition; pressure on kids overwhelming
- Reading comprehension
- Rely too much on technology
- Reporting to the Board and community of curricular spend (percent published purchased, percent teacher build)
- Scaffolds for learning that are posted on the website and student progress is regularly measured against and communicated to parents
- Schedule has changed over the last few years and not known until August; consistency needed in schedule; size of school; levels of math offerings at 8th grade; electives run the schedule – additional preps; whoever is available will teach the elective, not necessarily the most qualified
- School visits to other schools – STEM lab. Could do more school visits in future...depending on topic. Could be a fearful endeavor by some teachers, indicating “I’m doing something wrong.”
- Science analysis, logic
- Science could use re-examining
- Science curriculum
- Social Emotional Learning – competition, stress, able to work with others; students need tools to identify stressors and to deal with stress; meditation
- Some electives have been dropped (i.e. debate?)...more electives, required to take 2 electives here now...quality and choice has diminished.
- Strong music/band participation but drifts as kids matriculate to high school...few Butler kids now in band...keeping kids in band.
- Student-to-student transitioning activity (i.e. former Butler kid at Central escorting Butler kids through a school day)
- Teach about different holidays and celebrations...global
- Technology – continues to change. Infrastructure in good shape now...future? 1:1 initiative underway. Every kid has device. Google docs...Google Classroom. Seemed to be prepared for high school technology. Keyboarding. Readiness for high school. Word, SS, PP.
- Technology taking us too far maybe...may not need all the tech we have to learn
- Too focused on math at expense of other disciplines
- Too much technology...could be wasting money, cost of technology
- Transition programming to Central High School
- Turning work in on time, more student accountability at some time in the 8th grade year

- Tutoring
- Tutoring over the top....Does this infer that parents feel the curriculum is not adequate or keeping pace?
- Unique subjects to be taught
- Varied after school clubs
- What is the rush to get these kids so far advanced? ... Going in the wrong direction. Why kids take a 9th grade math class when in 6th grade? Push, push, push....
- Wonder how school district prioritizes offerings (i.e. keyboarding went away)

Goal 2 – Promote Community Engagement: Engage and communicate with families and the broader community to advance partnerships and build understanding among all stakeholders.

2.1 Communication

- Bring back the use of automated home calls and texting for reminders and updates
- Communication – what do stakeholders want to know and what is the best way to communicate that information?
- Communications to parents in accelerated curriculum issues...academic gaps
- Educating the public – communication
- Ensure all communication to the district is tied to a measurable outcome – i.e. we spent \$50k on professional development focusing on xyz that resulted in xyz. We learned to xyz and are adjusting by doing xyz next time
- Establish a process for complaints
- Feedback from community on best teacher awards.
- Fix app
- Fix website
- Fully use PowerSchool
- Mechanism for confidential concerns, complaints and feedback for staff, teachers and parents.
- Move from lengthy, wordy, long-winded written communication with no clear message to short on point communication.
- Move to data-driven and results oriented communication that is easy to get a perspective on school performance and transparent
- Post communication plan in public places and regularly update the plan
- Process of analyzing effectiveness of communication plan and programs that is regularly reported to the Board and community
- Recognition needs of diverse audience and utilize multiple communication strategies to ensure messaging is clear
- Regular and frequent survey administration to staff, faculty, parents and community to ensure communication expectations are met

2.2 Parents & Community Partnerships

- 80-90% of community have no kids in school here
- Better partnership with the Village – i.e. create plan to bring in new businesses that result in tax decrease
- Bring community in to school processes more
- Change the 53 BOE meeting dates to not conflict with District 86, forcing parents to choose which meeting to attend
- Community involvement ... eye to the future with building project. Public-private partnership needs to be a long term strategy
- Community outreach needs to increase awareness of what D53 is doing.
- Community participation – partnerships and outreach
- Competitive community...academic tutors on-going
- Future of Oak Brook – parts of community that do not come to D53; boundary issues
- Increase participation by placing community/parents on B&G, tech committees. Create communication, compensation, curriculum committees.
- Innovative and easily accessible social media use
- More community outreach
- Non-parent base in Oak Brook needs understanding of school district's long term needs ... communications; transparency; voter strategy
- Oak Brook Chamber of Commerce partnership – i.e. not just going to meetings, but having projects with measurable impact such as campaign that results in attracting new business, generating xyz in revenue and increasing real estate value by xyz%.
- Outreach to community members who do not have children in school to get their feedback and not just push out general information to them.
- Parent concerns create a quick reaction vs. long term solution, reactionary
- Parent involvement
- Parent University
- Parents feel teachers don't communicate well with each other across grade levels in terms of academic skills being taught (i.e. grade to grade skills; Daily Oral Language consistency)
- Parents included in curriculum placement (tested in spring, placed in June)
- Parents need to be advocating for kid's placement in curriculum – parents blindly trusting school decision-making. How are kids placed and communicated?
- Parents, grandparents....create sense of worth and pride in schools. Examples of community work day
- Partnership development - Chamber of Commerce, business, Park District, community partnership programming.
- Partnerships that facilitate entrepreneurship, innovation, digital literacy, life skills, etc.
- Rebuild relationships with IMSA and Bennett, etc.
- Two referenda failed. Ineffectiveness of school system to explain to the community why important to grow and improve. Need to educate community on district needs, efficiency, effectiveness

Goal 3 – Create Value: Leverage effective use of resources for the benefit of student learning to ensure community value.

3.1 Finance

- \$4M in projects on hold for a year
- Address infrastructure needs
- Begin financial modeling for collective bargaining discussions
- Benchmark reserve amounts and ensure alignment on a national scale
- CBA coming up for renewal
- Expand revenue through leases, corporate sponsorships, grants
- Finance - long hard look in Ed fund needed; \$1.8M special education budget; can keep things balanced if we don't do capital projects; staffing changes could help
- Finances...would like to save money each year for building maintenance. Aging community without kids who do not want to spend money on schools.
- First year with a deficit budget – \$350K; hope to balance by year end
- Fix the existing deficit; ensure a balanced budget
- Identify opportunities to outsource non-essential functions to reduce cost
- Implement 'green' strategies that will provide district cost savings
- Investment spent on infrastructure and has drifted away from staffing
- Join buying consortiums to improve procurement efficiency
- Long term financial plan that ensures fiscal solvency and timely monitoring that is easily accessible and understandable by the public.
- Payroll spending will be evaluated with measures to right size spending
- Planning for insurance and benefit costs – research for highest quality at most efficient cost
- Possible contract negotiations issue coming. Relationship was rough in the past. Superintendent had a goal of improving relationship with BOE and teacher union...able to guide both parties. Culture corrected itself. Last negotiations improved. Now with new BOE, teachers....
- Potential for future programs to be privately funded, i.e. transportation, lunch
- Prior failed one campus voted issue. Buildings need help.
- Reduction of technology and other school fees
- Renegotiate poor vendor contracts
- Right size the headcount and payroll for a district of our size
- Running small deficit now
- State Adequacy funding model; examine carefully for benchmarking staffing levels

3.2 Human Capital - Professional Staff and Support Staff

- Able to try new things; time to prepare it adequately is short; ok to explore creative
- Adequate staffing level for extra electives
- Administrative turn-over, affecting school improvement environment
- Analysis of student performance to identify professional development needs
- Articulate a succession plan
- Brook Forest Principal turn-over
- Changing leadership could be a major weakness....mission misdirected

- Continuous leadership is vital to community relations, intergovernmental connections. Contractual longevity of each leader important. Retention
- Create opportunities for national teacher recognition
- Create professional development opportunities that include professional skills in addition to pedagogical skills
- Create specific KPIs for administration with consequences if fail to meet
- Demonstrated continuous process of identifying and recruiting top talent.
- Doing well with PD....improved \$ flow to PD
- Fear of staff becoming self-protective, sides taken
- Fear on part of staff from lack of cooperation on board
- Gossip and rumors
- Grant writer....pursue more grants
- Identifying other benefits; expanding education relationships beyond National Louis
- Lack of appreciation for our role; recognition for service
- Lack of respect by parents of staff and administration....see at drop off time.
- Library not staffed at 1.0 FTE; resources could be improved for library
- Meaningful professional development with measurable outcomes tied to classroom events and performance that is communicated to the community.
- Morale is low because of strenuous discussion at BOE table. Fear, anxiety among some teachers and administrators
- More technology training for support staff
- Need more teachers to offset the number of preps, would permit more content specialists and teaching deeper in a subject area; some part-time staff limit content specialization
- Nurse staffed one day per week
- Opportunity to co-plan is challenging
- Peace and harmony with BOE and administration
- People wear numerous hats
- Plan to migrate our underperforming and mediocre performers out of the district
- Produce a fully built out organizational chart that is kept up to date, posted on the website, and accounts for every employee
- Quality of teaching staff in future
- Redesign orientation process to be inspirational and reflective of a high performing culture
- Remove more of the administrative work from teachers to the administration, and ensure the administration is frequently asking what they can do to help teachers be successful
- Severe substitute shortage. Teachers asked/told to fill in as a substitute, giving up prep period...stipend of \$25
- Some long term employees who have dedicated careers to Butler; need to recognize them; keep them motivated and attention to them; personal interactions; valued staff
- Speaking out for fear of retribution
- Staff stretched thin with numerous assignments
- Stress
- Stress on faculty from parent behavior, disrespect
- Support for teacher research and demonstration of innovation in the classroom on a national forum

- Teacher needs assessments to get feedback on teachers on what tools and resources they feel they need to be successful
- Teacher representation as presenters at national conferences
- Teacher stress
- Teachers not being asked on what they would like to teach
- Teachers teach a lot of preps; teacher workload heavy on preps (4 average; few with more)
- Tension
- Tension seemingly between teachers and parents; some with new BOE; teachers feeling nervous with new BOE
- Turn-over among non-certified staff
- Wellness programs
- Younger teachers being stretched on duty assignments...burn-out coming

3.3 Facilities:

- Aging facilities
- Bigger school
- Brook Forest open classroom original design, partitions, sound-proofing; enrollments have increased; if McDonalds site transitions to homes could cause over-crowding
- Brook Forest students eat lunch in gym/same as for gym and everything else in school offerings; some classroom eating. Age of facility, roof replacement. Classrooms feel small.
- Climate control; loud HVAC system in classrooms
- Concern among public about facility status prior to rehab work being completed
- Custodial staff training on cleanliness and environmental standards
- Develop inspection and facilities review survey instrument that is posted to the public
- Drop-off/pickup traffic flow not using correct signage or directions
- Examine playground safety
- Facilities need improvement – parking lots dangerous (structure of traffic flow), traffic flow/signage issues, poor bus system (long rides), technology infrastructure, kitchens, home arts facility for curriculum
- Facility study needed (BF especially)
- Handicap access to 2nd floor needed
- Infrastructure for technology platform
- Invitation to the community to participate in facilities discussions and solutions
- Life safety needs
- New server room...MDF facility
- Partitioned classrooms not sound-proofed
- Plan for facilities needs that is posted on the website
- Review school safety and security procedures, protocols (Police Department audit)
- Safety & security on-going enhancements, dream of new learning spaces, spend smart for future, space and storage, some teachers on carts – Can facilities be better?
- Safety and security concern in front of building with glass (BF)
- Small classrooms built for small class sizes, now creating for some crowded conditions
- Small size creates some of these challenges
- Small size of school district and allocated budget related to expense of various projects

- Space needed for STEM lab
- Special education kid space needed for some independent student work
- Storm water management
- Study playground updates, safety
- Traffic flow at schools
- Transparent input for parents, teachers and staff to communicate facilities concerns that are communicated publically with proactive solutions
- Updated school

APPENDIX B

Butler School District 53
Strategic Planning Report – APPENDIX B
Additional Focus Group/Community Engagement Meeting Notes
December 2017

Board Members

Portrait of a Graduate

- Able to balance academic rigor, learning, and social emotional well-being
- Able to understand competition and readiness for life
- Academically ready for high school
- Advocates for oneself
- Be the best academically prepared and well-rounded students
- Caring individual
- Demonstrates judgement – develop steps towards gaining judgement; discrimination in thought; learning how to learn
- Demonstrates readiness for the demands of high school
- Effectively uses of English/Language Arts skills
- Handles competition; co-curricular programming helps
- Has the emotional strength to deal with stress of school. Adult life expectations. Strong within themselves. Able to face failure and look at it as an opportunity. Able to learn and fail on own
- IQ as well as EQ readiness for life
- Leave district as whole kids.
- Leverage technology as a tool for learning
- Looks at situations globally and decides what is best...world today very different
- Socially adept, caring, kind
- Understands data and data-sharing
- Well-rounded individual...social emotional learning. Ready to succeed in 9th grade and beyond. How you prepare for school, athletic events?

Vision of the Future

- Building well self-confident kids
- Care for the staff – “WE” – Board of Education has given them all we can.
- Career awareness, connecting learning activities opportunities to explore career options
- Caution on too high of academic expectations
- Co-curricular program has a strong presence
- Communication – children able to communicate with other people...writing, speaking, listening, etc.

- Community involvement ... eye to the future with building project. Public/private partnership needs to be a long term strategy
- Continuous leadership is vital to community relations, intergovernmental connections. Contractual longevity of each leader important. Retention of administrators
- Curriculum – teachers get tools needed
- Develop a system of readiness for next level
- Doing well with staff professional development....improved money flow to professional development
- Explore Board of Education meeting sites at Village Hall.
- Grant writer....pursuing more grants
- Leadership is solid....succession planning for younger administrators
- LEAP...looking into application in D53. Educational innovations....if we can incorporate it here. District staff should look into it as a minimum. Staff willing to look for improvement.
- Look for 4 year strategic plan
- Maintaining high academic achievement...look at best educational designs available. Create partnerships with best in field.
- More community outreach.
- Need a name for the plan....excitement, motivated, branding
- Parents, grandparents....create sense of worth and pride in schools. Examples of community work day
- Partnership development - Chamber of Commerce, business, Park District, community partnership programming, etc.
- Personalized learning for every student
- Philosophy...relates to social-emotional learning, global perspective....able to work with others.
- Quality of teaching staff in future
- School visits to other schools – STEM lab. Could do more school visits in future...depending on topic. Could be a fearful endeavor by some teachers, indicating “I’m doing something wrong.” Examine future benchmark districts....look outside the state as well
- Science analysis, logic
- Self-learning capability amidst enormous change in a discipline (i.e. role of technology today).
- Staff and students having everything they need
- Start planting seeds for a future school, combined buildings, updating facilities.
- Technology – continues to change. Infrastructure in good shape now...future? 1:1 initiative underway. Every kid has device. Google docs...Google Classroom. Seemed to be prepared for high school technology. Keyboarding. Readiness for high school. Word, SS, PP.
- Two referenda failed. Ineffectiveness of school system to explain why important to grow and improve. Need to educate community on district needs, efficiency, effectiveness

Administrators

Portrait of a Graduate

- Possesses 21st Century skills

- Confident
- Demonstrates a continuous learning for life
- Good humanitarians
- Great critical thinkers
- Depth and knowledge in cultural literacy
- Successful academically
- Flexible; able to adapt to change over time
- Possess an understanding of oneself academically, socially, and emotionally
- Literate at every level with strong communication skills
- An understanding that each individual is part of a larger global community
- Socially and emotionally secure, confident
- Values service learning; takes care of fellow man; Butler gives back
- Understands learning is continuous, connects to a larger global community
- Well versed in 4 Cs

Vision of the Future

- Life safety have been addressed in the buildings
- Peace and harmony between the Board of Education and administration
- Planning ahead for next generation of kids coming through D53
- Recognition of employees - Some long term employees have dedicated their careers to Butler; need to recognize them; keep them motivated; personal interactions; actively demonstrate that staff are valued
- Strong, efficient technology infrastructure

Community Leaders

Portrait of a Graduate

- Ability to define success in different ways - Success not always defined by how much math taken
- Able to speak and advocate for themselves
- Academically prepared for next step of education
- Communication and human relation skills
- Community service, purpose, and contributor
- Consumer skills
- Develop maturity and independence
- Diversity awareness and appreciation
- Ready for the workforce
- Respect
- Social and emotional balance
- Strong work ethic
- Successful community participant
- Understands team work as well as working independently

Parents

Portrait of a Graduate

- Able to write well with grammatical correctness
- Career awareness
- Communication skills: writing, reading, handwriting, speaking, listening, spelling, correctness, penmanship
- Executive functioning i.e. organizational skills
- Flexible
- Focused
- High school ready
- Independent skills – self-organization skills – parents now manage time commitments
- Language arts: reading, writing, listening, speaking, spelling, grammar
- Manages stress – decompress time, social emotional learning, kids not being kids because of heavy school work, over-loaded curricular offerings
- Organizational skills
- Physical well-being – longer lunch period, gym not optional with PE/Band; more art, learn how to come down and relax
- Possess time management skills
- Ready for high school
- Social emotional learning – social development, take care of over-all well being
- Speaks a foreign language
- Strong academic preparation
- Understands that academics is one characteristic of a well-rounded individual
- Well rounded and not completely academic focused
- Whole child; well-rounded
- Works well in groups

Vision of the future

- Bring community in to school processes more
- Career Day, major thematic projects, experiences from project learning
- Community participation – partnerships and outreach
- District needs clear boundaries/guidelines on parent concerns, issues.
- Examine playground safety
- Examine school start/end times...school dismissed late at 3:25pm...was addressed in past
- Facilities improvements – parking lots dangerous (structure of traffic flow), traffic flow/signage issues, poor bus system (long rides), technology infrastructure, kitchens, home arts facility for curriculum
- Facility study (Brook Forest especially)
- Let kids be kids ... stop feeding parent frenzy about acceleration, pushing kids forward
- More balanced approach to learning
- Needs of the children in the middle are being met
- Parent University
- Parents included in curriculum placement (tested in spring, placed in June)

- Review school safety and security procedures, protocols (Audit by the Police Department)
- Space needed for STEM lab
- Start and stop time of day re-examined
- Storm water management
- Strengthen fine arts program for all students
- Strong communication with all stakeholders
- Study playground updates, safety

Students

Portrait of a Graduate

- Able to express oneself to peers
- Able apply knowledge from skills at Butler
- Able to listen and focus
- Able to participate in class discussions
- Able to plan for oneself - Have in your mind what you want to do.
- Able to self-advocate for yourself
- Able to set limits on what you can/cannot do in high school
- Able to work well in a group
- Background idea of what you are learning
- Be a friend, not a bully
- Be ready
- Catch onto topics quickly
- Collaboration skills
- Confident
- Digital citizenship, cyber-bullying
- Flexible
- Focus on being a good student
- Follow the 8 Keys
- Good personality
- Handles the right amount of challenge
- Helps others
- Known as a good student; good person
- Knows how to speak publically...going from small school to large setting; student to student interactions as well as is groups/classes
- Knows how to study
- Knows how to study for tests, review materials, projects
- Leadership abilities
- Manages time well
- Model for others
- Motivated to learn and teach others
- Nice, kind, intelligent
- Organizational skills – time management

- Organized, problem solving
- Responsible
- Schedules and plans ahead....self-management of time
- Smart
- Social, well liked
- Straight A student
- Strong academic study skills, note-taking
- Thinks ahead
- Time management skills
- Understand different points of view in understanding others
- Understands one's emotions
- Well prepared for math and science
- Well taught

Vision for the Future

- Better weather plans inside
- Bigger school
- Bully free
- Connected to other feeder schools, getting to know other kids before high school
- Jobs – teach about jobs work, what you need to know to work in a job
- Learning how to have locks on lockers at Butler
- Long term projects...common expectation at high school
- Newest technology for education
- Nice school
- Productive ways to do things: pick up line more advanced, safer
- Some electives have been dropped (i.e. debate?)...more electives, required to take 2 electives here now...quality and choice has diminished.
- Strong music/band participation but drifts as kids matriculate to high school...few Butler kids now in band...keeping kids in band.
- Students get to a good college or nice job
- Student-to-student transitioning activity (i.e. former Butler kid at Central escorting Butler kids through a school day)
- Teach about different holidays and celebrations...global
- Time management
- Transition programming to Central high school
- Turning work in on time, more accountability at some time in the 8th grade year
- Unique subjects to be taught
- Updated school
- Work on more than just academics at Butler...social skills, not all academic

Support Staff

Portrait of a Graduate

- Academically skilled

- Advocate for themselves; seek out resources they need
- Communicate and interact with social media, technology
- Demonstrates digital citizenship
- Demonstrates social emotional learning
- Good understanding of technology; basic skills and understanding
- Independent
- Life skills – social, problem solving, self-starters, fine motor skills (i.e. holding pencil correctly, using scissors)
- Life skills: communicate with others, figure out things on own, independence
- Possesses good manners, cleanliness; clean school is a model
- Problem solver
- Social skills
- Strong social skills
- Uses keyboarding skills
- Well prepared to attend a large high school
- Well rounded student, not just book-smart; whole citizens

Vision of the Future

- Embrace the whole child; more balance
- More technology training for support staff
- New server room...MDF facility
- Strong infrastructure for technology platform

Teachers

Portrait of a Graduate

- Ability to see success in anything; do your best with what you have
- Able to independently advocate for themselves
- Be committed
- Collaborate and work as a team
- Develop 21st Century thinking and learning skills; perform effectively with technology to further learning; collaborate, communicate
- Integrity
- Internal motivation to develop a passion of learning; developmentally appropriate
- Life-long learner
- Meet or exceed state standards
- Passionate
- Perseveres; able to handle failure
- Prepared for high school both public and private
- Problem solving skills
- Shows compassion; to give back; service to others
- Social emotional learning, stability, strength
- Thinks critically

- Well rounded – arts, PE, SEL
- Well rounded, global citizen

Vision of the Future

- Climate control; loud HVAC system in classrooms
- Handicap access to 2nd floor needed
- Investment spent on infrastructure and has drifted away from staffing
- Lack of vision
- Library not staffed at 1.0 FTE; resources could be improved for library
- Nurse staffed only one day per week
- Small classrooms built for small class sizes, now creating for some crowded conditions

APPENDIX C



Butler School District 53
Strategic Planning Survey Report

HYA
Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates

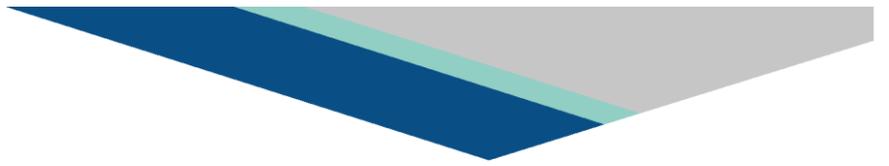


TABLE OF CONTENTS

METHODOLOGY.....2

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....3

SECTION I: STATE OF THE DISTRICT ITEM ANALYSIS.....4

SECTION II: QUALITY OF PROGRAMMING ITEM ANALYSIS.....5

SECTION III: PRIORITIES ITEM ANALYSIS6

METHODOLOGY

The Strategic Planning Survey process engaged stakeholders from the classroom to the community, providing an opportunity to learn what works well in the District and identifying areas for improvement.

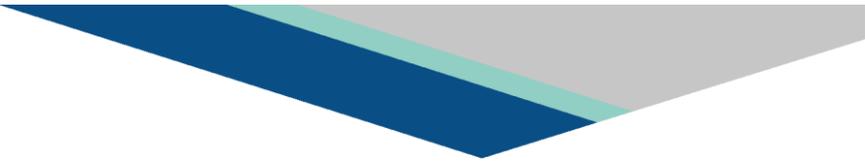
Interviews

All Board of Education members participated in individual, structured interviews. Each participant was asked to share his or her opinions on a variety of topics, including: expectations of the strategic planning process, district strengths, significant issues, quality of education, curriculum and standards, financial state, facilities, communication, and vision for the future.

Surveys

Strategic planning survey data were collected during December 2017. The survey was offered in English and Spanish. Administrators, support staff, community members, teachers, parents, and students were surveyed online. The District communicated with stakeholders, inviting them to share input regarding their experiences with the District. A range of questions were asked on the survey regarding the quality of education, programs and curriculum, teaching and learning environment, communication, community relations, operations, and priorities for the future. A total of 348 stakeholders completed the survey.

Participants were asked to rate the District in a number of areas on a scale of 1 to 5: Unsatisfactory (1), Poor (2), Average (3), Good (4), and Excellent (5). For the purpose of this report, a respondent was considered to rate the District favorably if the respondent selected either Good (4) or Excellent (5). Results were reported based on the percentage of respondents in each stakeholder group who selected Good/Excellent on each survey question.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Butler School District 53 Strategic Planning Survey was completed by 348 stakeholders. The largest stakeholder groups that participated in the survey were parents and community members. Parents and community members represented almost 80 percent of all respondents. Administrators, teachers, and support staff, cumulatively, totaled just under 20 percent of all respondents.

STAKEHOLDER DEMOGRAPHICS

	Frequency	Percent
Administrator	3	0.9
Teacher	50	14.4
Support Staff	13	3.7
Community Member	73	21.0
Parent	204	58.6
Student	5	1.4
Total	348	100.0

SECTION I: STATE OF THE DISTRICT

ITEM ANALYSIS

Percentages of all stakeholder groups selecting 5 (Strongly Agree) or 4 (Agree) for each item are presented below.

	ALL (341)	Administrator (3)	Teacher (49)	Support Staff (18)	Community Member (69)	Parent (203)	Student (5)
VISION AND VALUES							
The district provides a clear, compelling vision for the future.	42%	100%	55%	67%	23%	42%	20%
The district is heading in the right direction.	44%	100%	69%	50%	20%	44%	0%
The district has high standards for student performance.	73%	100%	96%	72%	52%	73%	20%
The district makes decisions based on information from data and research.	45%	100%	76%	61%	23%	42%	20%
The district is working to close the achievement gap.	41%	100%	67%	56%	22%	39%	20%
TEACHING AND LEARNING							
The district provides a well-rounded educational experience for all students.	55%	100%	65%	50%	36%	59%	0%
Teachers personalize instructional strategies to address individual learning needs, special education and gifted.	59%	67%	92%	56%	35%	59%	0%
District schools are safe.	72%	100%	88%	78%	55%	72%	20%
The social and emotional needs of students are being addressed.	53%	100%	82%	67%	28%	53%	0%
Students are on track to be college and career ready.	65%	100%	92%	67%	46%	64%	0%
Technology is integrated into the classroom.	72%	100%	88%	83%	43%	77%	80%
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT							
The district engages the community as a partner to improve the school system.	49%	100%	71%	50%	22%	51%	20%
There is transparent communication from the District.	40%	100%	63%	56%	19%	40%	20%
The district engages with diverse racial, cultural and socio-economic groups.	52%	100%	71%	56%	25%	55%	20%
MANAGEMENT							
Facilities are well maintained.	64%	100%	78%	83%	49%	64%	60%
The district is fiscally responsible.	50%	100%	78%	67%	30%	48%	0%
The district employs effective teachers, administrators and support staff in its schools.	61%	100%	90%	67%	33%	62%	0%
Employees are held accountable to high standards.	59%	67%	92%	67%	33%	59%	20%
District technology infrastructure is sufficient to support use of technology in the classroom.	59%	67%	78%	72%	30%	63%	60%

SECTION II: QUALITY OF PROGRAMMING

ITEM ANALYSIS

Percentages of all stakeholder groups selecting 5 (Excellent) or 4 (Good) for each item are presented below.

	ALL (306)	Administrator (3)	Teacher (44)	Support Staff (12)	Community Member (53)	Parent (195)	Student (4)
OVERALL							
Please rate the overall quality of education in the District.	74%	100%	89%	92%	70%	69%	25%
PROGRAMS							
Advanced Placement, talented and/or gifted	65%	100%	80%	75%	49%	65%	25%
Career education	30%	67%	25%	42%	25%	32%	0%
English/language arts/reading	60%	100%	89%	67%	51%	54%	25%
English Language Learners (ELL)	35%	67%	34%	50%	34%	33%	25%
Extra-curricular	53%	100%	77%	58%	40%	49%	25%
Fine arts (visual arts, music, theatre)	59%	100%	84%	58%	42%	57%	25%
Intramurals and/or athletics	46%	100%	77%	58%	36%	39%	50%
Math	72%	100%	93%	58%	51%	72%	25%
Physical education (PE) and health	64%	67%	89%	58%	40%	65%	25%
Science	71%	67%	84%	75%	45%	73%	50%
Social studies/history	66%	67%	70%	50%	45%	70%	50%
Special education	46%	67%	84%	50%	32%	39%	75%
World languages (foreign language)	45%	100%	55%	33%	42%	42%	75%
Student services (counseling, social work, nursing)	52%	67%	80%	67%	28%	51%	0%
Library and other resource centers	58%	67%	73%	33%	38%	61%	75%
	ALL (328)	Administrator (3)	Teacher (44)	Support Staff (12)	Community Member (69)	Parent (196)	Student (4)
ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS							
The academic expectations in this district are:							
Percent responding Too Low:	18%	0%	7%	0%	17%	21%	25%
Percent responding Just Right:	52%	67%	59%	67%	38%	56%	25%
Percent responding Too High:	16%	33%	32%	25%	13%	12%	0%
Percent responding Don't Know:	14%	0%	2%	8%	32%	11%	50%

SECTION III: PRIORITIES

ITEM ANALYSIS

Respondents were asked to select 4 statements that best represent what they believe should be the priorities and focus of the Board of Education and Superintendent in the next 3-5 years. Results by constituent group are presented below. Each constituent group's Top 4 most frequently selected statements are depicted by colored cells (reading the chart vertically); consensus is illustrated as multiple constituent groups selected the same statements (reading the chart horizontally).

	ALL (323)	Administrator* (3)	Teacher (46)	Support Staff (13)	Community Member (68)	Parent (189)	Student* (4)
Addressing the achievement gap	6%	0%	4%	0%	1%	8%	0%
Addressing students' social and emotional needs	34%	33%	63%	54%	19%	30%	50%
Ensuring a well-rounded experience for all students	56%	67%	87%	62%	41%	53%	75%
Ensuring facilities can support a modern learning environment	25%	67%	17%	38%	21%	28%	0%
Ensuring fiscal health	24%	0%	7%	8%	47%	21%	0%
Ensuring high student achievement on standardized tests	18%	0%	4%	0%	15%	24%	50%
Hiring and retaining quality teachers and administrators	57%	33%	78%	46%	50%	56%	50%
Integrating current technology into teaching and learning	23%	100%	20%	15%	24%	23%	0%
Maintaining a positive relationship with the community	21%	33%	20%	25%	34%	17%	0%
Preparing students to be ready for the next grade and ultimately college and career ready	51%	33%	28%	46%	51%	56%	100%
Providing a safe environment for students and employees	33%	0%	37%	62%	21%	35%	50%
Providing individualized instruction for students	29%	33%	28%	31%	18%	33%	25%

* Number of respondents was too small to highlight 4 priorities