

MEMORANDUM

TO: TCAPS School Board
FROM: Jim Feil
DATE: February 6, 2009
SUBJECT: **State of the District Goals Update 2008-2011**

Traverse City Area Public Schools' District Goals are advancing with the active efforts and commitment of all staff working throughout our school system. At this mid-year point of 2008-2009, I am pleased to report overall momentum and progress for each of TCAPS' goal areas.

Collectively we are making headway on key strategies. TCAPS' employees are coming together to align their work within schools, departments, and across functions to catalyze "teaching and learning" success, and to provide effective communications and efficient resources to improve student achievement and enhance TCAPS' overall performance.

TCAPS' Administrative Team members were asked to share examples of key departmental outcomes they have accomplished year-to-date. Their responses provide a snapshot of our strategies in action. The following mid-year results were gleaned from an extensive list of examples that were cited:

Student Achievement Outcomes

- 41 Professional Learning Community (PLC) Teams are focused on student achievement.
- Individual Reading Plans are enhancing reading progress for all students.
- Math curriculum support and implementation (in-services, coaching, family math nights, and more) is enhancing student learning.
- All Day Everyday Kindergarten student-learning gains.
- Middle school 6th grade intramurals are engaging many students.
- Teaming of teachers (6th Grade, Freshman Academy) is enhancing instruction, building relationships, and supporting student learning.
- Extended learning offerings, academic support, and mentoring are supporting student learning.
- Trimesters, Freshman Academy, and transitions for 8th to 9th grade and 9th to 10th grade are supporting student success.
- More online and blended course opportunities are serving more students.

- Student growth in reading and writing is evident (READ 180, Calkins Writing Workshop implementation, Read Naturally, Literacy Coaches are contributors, All Day Everyday Kindergarten).
- Early Childhood focus is strengthening (Preschool Creative Curriculum, and ECP participation in ISD monthly meetings).
- TASC (Teachers Addressing Student Needs) and refined Special Education evaluation processes are helping to monitor individual student learning progress.

Communications Outcomes

- Greater parent participation and awareness of school activities is evident.
- Increased PTO communications, parent organization involvement, and outreach are occurring (Principal-hosted PTO Coffees, District-hosted PTO Connection Network, Parent Surveys, Newsletters, and ESL parent meetings).
- Marketing communications are focused on increased enrollment of current and prospective students into transition year program offerings (preschool to kindergarten, elementary to middle school, and middle school to high school transition options).
- AlertNow rapid communications system is being well received and fully utilized as an effective and efficient way to keep parents and staff connected (cited over a dozen times by Administrative Team members with many varied examples of how schools are using the system such as monthly parent updates, parent conference announcements, grade level emails, etc).
- Updated Web sites, teacher and content area Moodle sites, Pinnacle Analytics tools enhance communication and increase collaboration among students, teachers, and parents in support of student learning.
- Increased access to electronic communications among transportation team members.
- Weekly emails to all staff are helping to keep employees informed.

Resource Management Outcomes

- Completed move of teacher and student materials associated with District transitions.
- Reorganization of Maintenance Department structure to provide optimal efficiencies, effectiveness, and cost savings.
- Successful building additions and renovations completed and underway to support trimesters, changing graduation requirements, and athletic season changes.
- Online bidding software service (BidSync) and new routing software will improve effectiveness and efficiencies in procurement and transportation areas respectively.
- All copy/print jobs are evaluated for ways to run more economically.
- Implementation of LEED programs and certification (green facilities, environmentally friendly conservation practices, recycling, etc.).
- Continued achievement of CAFR (Comprehensive Annual Financial Report) reinforces high standards and business practices.
- Camera systems have been installed on some buses to improve safety.

- School efforts have focused on energy savings, FTE reduction, improved fee collection, emergency preparedness, etc)

The examples cited by Administrative Team annotate and affirm mid-year results reported in the attached brief "District Goals 2008-2011 Status Report ~ February 2009." The brief summarizes key efforts underway for goal areas and performance indicators. Key efforts and mid-year milestones are noted along with monitoring processes that are continuing. An additional pamphlet is included to provide a concise overview *2008-2011 TCAPS District Goals and Strategies*. (Note: You are the first group to field test the enclosed at-a-glance communications brochure developed for sharing TCAPS' District Goals and Strategies with parents and the community).

TCAPS' challenges are clearly recognized. Over the next few months: TCAPS' high schools will administer the Michigan Merit Exam and ACT, all schools will convene enrollment information meetings (kindergarten through high school), complete registration for 2009-2010, and continue to monitor individual student progress to ensure a year of growth for every TCAPS student.

Challenges that we expect include:

- Inequity in school funding
- Resource constraints (time, revenues, and implications of pending budget reductions).
- Crucial two-way communications to: 1) deepen understanding of the value of TCAPS' educational offerings to our youth and our community, and 2) engage staff, parents, and community partnerships in positive ways that continue to improve student achievement and organizational performance.

There is no doubt that TCAPS' organization is operating at the leanest levels possible while working to ensure value is added and a high quality, comprehensive Pre K-12 curriculum is maintained. I look forward to the Board's continued support and advocacy for TCAPS' District Goals that will continue to allow our school system to provide its significant and vital contribution to our region's economy and to achieving our institutional Mission and Vision.

To prepare for our February 9th Board discussion, State of the District – Goals Update, I have included a worksheet with several questions that will guide our discussion on Monday. You may want to review the materials and make notes related to the questions in preparation for our conversation. If you have a question or concern you would like to discuss prior to the meeting, please do not hesitate to call or email.

Attachments (3)

JGF:kt



**State of the District
Goals Update 2008-2011
Board of Education ~ February 9, 2009**

Goal 1: Student Achievement

All students will make a minimum of a year's growth annually and demonstrate grade level proficiency in language arts, math, science, and social studies.

Performance Indicators:

MEAP – Data is yet to be released from the State.

Michigan Merit Exam (MME) – MME will be administered in March 2009.

ACT – Test will be administered as part of the MME in March 2009.

High School Graduation Rate – Will be available in August for 2007-2008.

Advanced Placement (AP) Course Participation and Test Performance – AP Tests will be administered in May 2009.

Senior student approvals for post-secondary education – Will be available in June 2009.

Data Monitoring Process:

1. Teachers monitor student progress and adjust instruction on a daily basis.
2. Principals monitor data on a weekly basis for student achievement and attendance in addition to regular formal and informal observations in teacher classrooms. All are working diligently to provide prevention, intervention, and extensions as needed.
3. Principals are meeting with central office staff on a regular basis to monitor student achievement, attendance, and enrollment.
4. Data regarding evaluation plans for transition, early childhood, online and summer school programs are being compiled and reviewed on a regular basis.
5. Students and parents are using Parent Viewer to monitor achievement, assignments, and attendance of the student.
6. Student enrollment, staff retirements, and budget reductions were reviewed in January 2009 to determine what staffing is needed for 2009-2010.
7. Applicant interview questions were compiled from a variety of sources in January 2009 to assist the committee that will revise the applicant interview questions.
8. A minimum of two formal classroom observations of teachers is being conducted by principals.

Key Efforts:

1. Transition plans are being implemented and evaluated.
 - Grade configuration transitions
 - Trimesters
 - Sixth grade electives and intramurals
 - Communications
 - 8th grade high school courses
 - Online courses
2. Elementary staffs are participating in Professional Learning Communities. Secondary staffs are participating in Leadership Teams, Critical Friends Groups, and receiving training in using protocols to look at student work.
3. K-12 principals are meeting in professional development forums to improve teaching and learning.
4. Expansion of new and innovative programming continues. Early Childhood programs are expanding into additional sites. The District will reopen the Young Five's program in a central location in the Fall of 2009. Silver Lake Elementary will be adding All Day Everyday Kindergarten. A committee has been formed to look at foreign language in the early years. An intervention committee has been meeting to explore programs and needs in grades K-12 in the areas of language arts, mathematics, social/emotional, and progress monitoring. The Freshman Academy, 6th grade in the middle school, and 9th grade in the high schools are being implemented this year and expanded district programming for next year. Secondary staffs are exploring new and innovative middle and high school redesign through the Smaller Learning Communities Grant. Mentoring programs and academic assistance for improving learning is provided at all secondary sites. Changes to the 6th grade pilot elective program are in process for next year offering more choices for students and parents.
5. Teachers, principals, and central office staff are monitoring individual student reading progress.
6. Sixty-six (66) separate teacher Moodle technology sites have been established and are in use daily. In addition, the work to coordinate curriculum is steadily flowing into Moodle and has been organized in a special section. Nearly all secondary courses and programs have sites that are in progress. Work is beginning with elementary grade level staff to consolidate online curriculum materials into Moodle sites. Parents and students are using Internet Viewer to keep track of student progress and attendance.
7. TCAPS received a 2-year online waiver extension from State Superintendent Mike Flanagan. Training in the use of Moodle is ongoing and TCAPS will benefit from a grant from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to organize blended learning opportunities in Algebra II. Another grant from MDE has already provided a credit recovery option in Algebra I. Both West Senior High and Central High Schools have students taking online classes and/or blended courses. We plan to increase the availability of these options for our third consecutive year.
8. Middle school intramurals are being implemented and evaluated this year. Safe Routes to School continues at West Middle School, and the District has applied for Federal funding through the President's economic stimulus package to address, among other things, infrastructure changes that will allow for implementation of site plans to enhance the Safe Routes to School initiative. The Farm to School program has been recognized statewide, as well as nationally.

9. The Creative Curriculum was adopted for all preschool programs in TCAPS and many in our region. The ISD, ECI, and TCAPS have provided ongoing professional development for our Early Childhood teachers and preschool managers.
10. Exploration continues with staff and administration in developing performance-based assessments indicating a student's year of growth.
11. Executive Team meets weekly to make sure there is interdepartmental consideration and work towards improving student achievement.
12. A Teacher Applicant Interview Questions Committee has been formed to review and revise teacher applicant interview questions.
13. Teacher evaluations are on schedule per the Master Agreement.
14. A rubric is being developed to assist with decision-making in non-certified hiring.
15. All targets have been established for this goal.

Goal 2: Communications Goal

All communications will increase support and engagement among students, staff, parents, and community for improved relationships and student achievement.

Performance Indicators:

Survey Research: Student, Parent, Staff, Community Degrees of Satisfaction and Engagement

- Exit Interviews with Parents of Students Leaving TCAPS
Implemented: August 2008 and Ongoing
- Parent Survey – Elementary School Survey
Implemented: November-December 2008
Central Grade School to implement survey – February 2009
Initial findings to be reported February 2009
- Parent Survey – Middle School and High School (Online)
Middle School Survey – Released week of January 26th
High School Parent Survey – Under development
- Employee Communications Survey
Implemented February 2-6
Findings to be reported March 2009
- KEYS to Excellence 2.0 Staff Survey (part of Smaller Learning Community Grant) to be administered to middle school and high school staff.
Scheduled for Spring 2009
- Coalition of Essential Schools Student Survey to be administered to middle and high school students.
Scheduled for Spring 2009

Percentage of District Students Enrolled in TCAPS Annually

<u>2007-08 Baseline</u> 78%	<u>2008-09 Projected</u> 77%	<u>Mid-Year Status (February 9, 2009)</u> 77.4%
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<u>School Year</u>	Other K-12 <u>Enrollment Options</u>	<u>TCAPS Enrollment</u>	<u>Total Enrollment</u>	<u>TCAPS Percentage of Total Enrollment</u>
9-08	2946	10072	13018	77.4 %
9-07	2844	10310	13157	78%
9-06	2780	10479	13259	79%

Note: February 11, 2009 is Supplemental Count Day for 2008-2009.

Data Monitoring Process:

1. Communications Committee (Transition Plan) met in October and January to review status of communication strategies and action plans. Committee supports action plans and provides input for sharing and monitoring of the following:
 - Results from exit interviews with parents of students who have left TCAPS in 2007-2008 and thus far in 2008-2009.
 - Plans for implementation / reporting of:
 - Employee Communications Committee
 - Parent Survey for Elementary Schools
 - Enrollment & Marketing Strategies – Preschool, Kindergarten
2. Principals meet with central office staff (including Communications Office) on a regular basis to monitor student enrollment.
 - Monthly student enrollment data has been sent to secondary building principals since September 2008.
 - Compiled student enrollment data for the region as of September 2008 has been sent to the Executive Team.
 - Communications Office to participate in elementary building action plan updates in March 2009 to align marketing/communications with building action plans.
3. 2007-2008 Employee Exit Interview Survey results were reviewed in September 2008.
 - Employee exit surveys continue to be sent as employees exit TCAPS. Results will be available in July.
4. Guest Teacher Survey was conducted by Human Resources Department in Fall 2008.
 - Results have been reported to Executive Team and schools.
5. Communications Office provides support to schools and departments for implementation of district web site, school web sites, and AlertNow Rapid Communications System (and monitors access and use).
 - Training completed in November 2008.
6. Communications updates were provided to DAC regarding Exit Interview Results in October 2008. Continued updates are also planned for Parent Surveys, follow-up to October “School of Choice” presentation.
7. Summary of Elementary Parent Surveys reported at DAC on February 2nd.

Key Efforts:

1. Communications Transition Committee continues to review and refine status of Communications Goal, strategies, and action plans:
 - Summary report of Exit Interviews – October 2008
 - Initial results Elementary Parent Survey – January 2009
 - Employee Communications Survey findings – March 2009
2. PTO Connections Meetings have been implemented to: 1) encourage and support parent engagement initiatives at the elementary schools, and 2) foster outreach efforts among school parent networks to build enrollment.
 - October 2008, January 2009, and scheduled for April 2009
3. Communications Office is working closely with principals to share survey research data (parents, students) and hosted special programs on “Trends in School Choice” to inform and assist school improvement efforts.
4. Executive Director and Director of Human Resources discussed communications monthly with Roundtable since September 2008.
 - Improved efforts in communicating with staff regarding insurance and 403-B changes have begun.
 - The Human Resources Department surveyed staff regarding employee professional development and wellness interests.
5. Communications Office continues to provide support and make tools available to help schools and the district to promote TCAPS’ “Positive Stories of Learning” at schools, to enhance school-home relationships, and to increase enrollment (working closely with Administrative Team, Principals, Smaller Learning Communities grant leadership team, and staff throughout TCAPS).

Tools implemented / projects completed to date (2008-2009):

- Welcome Video Web links for TCAPS’ elementary schools
- New TCAPS enrollment packet (Enrollment Invitation)
- Informational videos to support curriculum (student achievement goal): Assessment Wall, Preschool Creative Curriculum, Kindergarten, Middle School Intramurals, Greg Mortenson presentation for students
- Promotion of positive TCAPS’ programs via Education Matters segments on TV 7 & 4. Twelve segments produced so far for 2008-2009
- District brochure overview of TCAPS’ offerings (distributed at information outlets throughout TCAPS’ market area)
- Launched TCAPS Listserve – Fall 2008 (275 subscribers to date)
- Implemented AlertNow Rapid Communications Phone/Email System (December 2008: All schools trained and using the system)
- Published “E-News” District Newsletter
 - October 2008: Preschool, Peer Mentoring, Annual Report, USDOE Visit, *Three Cups of Tea* program at West Senior High School
 - December 2008: District Goals and Strategies
 - February 2009: TCAPS - Your Learning Journey Starts Here
 - April 2009: TCAPS - Going Green
- School Web sites
 - 12 out of 13 elementary schools are now transitioned to new content management system.

- 4 out of 5 secondary schools are now live and transitioned to new content management system.
 - Working with classroom teacher web pages to link with school sites.
 - District Web site – Curriculum information and content is being organized and uploaded (working in cooperation with District Support Specialists).
6. Marketing and media efforts to date have included the following promotions, campaigns and outreach:
- Daily press releases and media advisories to support and promote TCAPS’ programs, activities, curricular and co-curricular events:
 - YTD January: 165 press releases issued
 - YTD January: 444 TCAPS feature stories in local news media
 - Friday Night Live in July-August 2008
 - Beach Bums (season advertising and “TCAPS Night” – August 2008)
 - Chamber of Commerce Expo – November 2008
 - Weekly *Record-Eagle* banner ad: Promote enrollment and new program offerings (preschool, online learning, etc.)
 - *Northern Express* ad (through December 2008): Promote secondary program opportunities
 - Outreach – TCAPS hosted Greg Mortenson, humanitarian and author of *Three Cups of Tea* (September 2008 at WSH and January 2009 with Dennon Museum)
 - Preschool Fair (at Montessori Children’s House) – January 24th
 - Kindergarten enrollment blitz: February – April (radio, print, tv, and web in conjunction with parent information meetings)
 - Secondary enrollment blitz: February – April (radio, print, tv, and web in conjunction with Parent Information meetings)
7. Providing support for TCAPS’ Business Office, Operations, and Administration to ensure openness, access, and availability of information inclusive of: publishing annual reports, televised School Board and Board Committee meetings, monitoring, and follow-up of web-inquiries to: info@tcaps.net.

Goal 3: Resource Goal

The District will responsibly manage and align human, financial, and physical resources in support of improved student achievement.

Performance Indicators:

Balanced Budget and a minimum of 10% Fund Balance

Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting

FINANCE

Data Monitoring and Key Efforts:

1. Monitoring of the State's financial condition and the impact on our operational budget occurs on a regular basis. Information used comes from a variety of sources, included by not limited to:
 - State of Michigan Senate Fiscal Agency and the House Fiscal Agency
 - State's revenue consensus data
 - MSBO provided data
 - Daily review of Gongwer

This information is reviewed literally on a daily basis. As a result of this information, we have taken on a major budget initiative that calls for \$2.1 million in budget reductions and further use of fund equity to balance the 2010 budget.

We will closely monitor the upcoming events/information:

- The Governor's "State of the State" address
 - The Governor's budget
 - Michigan's House budget
 - Michigan's Senate budget
 - President Obama's economic stimulus package and its potential impact on Michigan schools
2. Based on preliminary state budget information, it appears that the situation could be worse than originally projected last fall. On the positive side, President Obama's bailout program may provide funding that serves to relieve some of the current budget pressures, but the question remains as to the long-term potentially negative impact of such stimulus.

OPERATIONS

Data Monitoring and Key Efforts:

1. Weekly construction meetings
2. Monthly (at a minimum) review of budget vs. actual expenditure in relation to projects under way.

All projects currently underway are expected to come in on time and under budget. The winter weather has impacted some of our scheduling, but at this point not enough to suggest that delays will occur. We will continue to monitor progress on this point very closely.

We continue to review our overall project planning on a quarterly basis via our Quarterly Bond Review meetings. These meetings take into account all issues that impact our bond/capital programs including, but not limited to:

- Cash flow
- Bond repayment information
- Expected arbitrage
- Timing of future bond sales
- Timing and status of future projects including:
 - Infrastructure
 - Bus replacement
 - Technology
 - Physical education/athletic upgrades
 - Fine and performing arts needs
 - Operational equipment replacement

These meetings serve to make sure all parties are working on the same page and that the District has collective understanding as to the status of capital planning. Summary information from these meetings is shared with board operations and finance sub-committees. Progress continues to be positive and moving along according to well laid out district capital planning schedules.

Other operational initiatives continue to move forward in a positive manner. The GIS inventory project will be completed on time and the District continues to comply with and pass all operational related inspections.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Data Monitoring Process:

1. Obtained and reviewed comparable employee salary and benefit data from other school districts and TBAISD in July 2008.
2. Obtained and reviewed cost information on employee insurance options.
3. Secondary physical education teacher certifications were reviewed and a reminder was sent to the six remaining teachers who do not have their health endorsement to obtain a status report of their efforts in meeting the July 1, 2009 deadline.
4. Secondary special education teacher certifications were reviewed and a reminder was sent to the eight remaining teachers who are not highly qualified in K-12 special education to obtain a status report of their efforts in meeting the July 1, 2009 deadline.
5. Teacher certifications were reviewed and the Registry of Educational Personnel was submitted to the State in December 2008 verifying certification and highly qualified status of all certified staff.

Key Efforts:

1. Implemented dependent eligibility verification process in November 2008, which resulted in over \$40,000 in health insurance premium savings.
2. Began negotiations with two of the three employee groups with expired contracts.
3. Sent reminder letters to all physical education teachers on parameters for meeting health endorsement requirement.
4. Sent reminder letters to all secondary special education teachers and principals on parameters for meeting highly qualified requirements.