



Children are at the heart of all decisions

Long Range Plan
2016-2017



Long Range Plan

“Great Schools Matter to our families and to the communities we serve. District 41 is committed to being a great school district and preparing our students for success now and into the future.”

~ Superintendent Paul Gordon

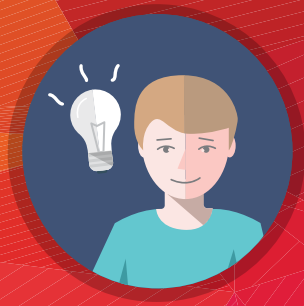
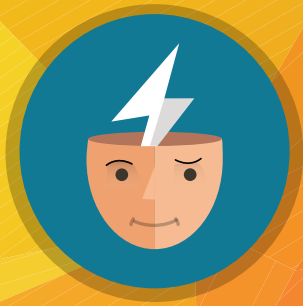
Children are at the heart of all decisions.

In the fall of the 2015-2016 school year, District 41 began a collaborative process to develop the district's new long-range plan. The district offered multiple opportunities for engagement, including staff workshops, engagement with district staff teams, focus groups with teachers and community members, and an online staff survey. The theme during the development of the Long-Range Plan was “Children are at the heart of all decisions.” The Long-Range Plan and this theme will guide the work of the district through 2021.

District Background

District 41 is known for high academic achievement, a strong sense of community and active family involvement. We value what we have in common, learn from our differences and honor diversity in language culture and ability. We serve about 3,600 children from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade in four elementary schools and one junior high school.

We serve parts of Carol Stream, Glendale Heights, Glen Ellyn, Lombard, and Wheaton. Our boundaries go roughly from Route 53 on the east, President Street on the west, Roosevelt Road (Route 38) on the south and North Avenue (Route 64) on the north. Our graduates attend Glenbard West High School in Glenbard District 87.



Our Vision

Ignite passion. Inspire excellence. Imagine possibilities.

Our Mission

We embrace the future with optimism, working in partnership with our community on behalf of our children. We develop intellect, engage creatively, foster responsibility, and build positive and collaborative relationships to enable all children to thrive in a changing and increasingly global society.

Our Values

Our values are the cornerstones of our learning community and direct the actions we take; we must model, teach and live them throughout the district.

We expect honesty, integrity and ethical behavior of all members of our learning community.

We empower every child to become a self-directed lifelong learner capable of creative and critical thinking.

We emphasize written and oral skills which are essential to success, timeless in their importance and are the basis of future learning.

We encourage flexibility and adaptability knowing they are necessary to succeed in a global and diverse society.

We leverage our resources and technology to create powerful and equitable educational environments and experiences for all learners.

Children are at the heart of all decisions

The District 41 Learner Characteristics guide everything we do within our learning community, and represent our goals for all learners, both children and adults. Our students do well on national, state and local measures of achievement, performing in the top 6% of the state, according to a 2013 independent study. Our comprehensive curriculum is similar to that of other high-performing districts, and includes Language Arts, Math, Science,

Social Science, Art, Music and Physical Education. Spanish starts in first grade, and there is a dual-language option that begins in kindergarten. In addition, Hadley Junior High students receive instruction in Technology, Health, Life Skills, Study Skills and Foreign Language. Hadley also offers a range of electives; examples of these are band, orchestra, drama, cooking, and lego-robotics.

Habits and Attitudes

a person with these habits and attitudes is someone who is...

- Curious
- Creative
- Resilient in the face of challenges
- Able to embrace change
- Adaptable
- Collaborative
- Open to diverse viewpoints and experiences
- Respectful of others
- Respectful of the environment
- Compassionate
- Optimistic
- Nurturing
- Challenge seeking
- Engaged and enthusiastic
- Future oriented with a global perspective
- Intrinsically motivated

Skills and Applications:

a person with these skills and applications is someone who can...

- Solve complex problems
- Make connections between present and future opportunities
- Think critically, reflectively
- Communicate effectively using a variety of media and technology
- Communicate effectively to a variety of audiences
- Utilize multiple literacy skills in learning
- Utilize organizational skills to enhance learning
- Mediate conflict peacefully
- Pursue a healthy lifestyle
- Appreciate beauty and the arts
- Advocate for oneself and others
- Apply current learning to new situations
- Synthesize multiple pieces of information to create new information
- Assume responsibility for learning





The District 41 Model

The 21st Century Teaching and Learning Model defines District 41's academic path. Our educators are committed and strategic. They have an unwavering belief in people as learners, thinkers, leaders, and problem-solvers, and express this belief through our Vision, Mission, Values and Commitments. We embrace and celebrate each student's history and future. We have an obligation to our communities and to our families to teach well and to nourish the human spirit with a love of learning and inquiry. We are determined to provide all of our students with a high quality education including opportunities to demonstrate their learning in varied and challenging ways. We know that learning is a complex process, and strive to be intentional and responsive to the needs of each of our learners.

Planning

The critical attributes of our District 41 planning structure are:

- Alignment to standards.
- A deep understanding of our students.
- Teachers as thinkers and learners.
- Our ability to differentiate instruction to allow students to be the problem solvers of tomorrow.

We start with the end in mind, and use backwards planning to innovate, take risks and engage students in inquiry through a problem-based learning approach. Through an in-depth analysis of the standards, authentic problems emerge that allow our students to study, examine and attempt to solve real problems.

Collaboration

Our planning sessions use a collaborative approach that allows educators to focus on creating deep understandings so that students can use what they've learned with confidence, connect their learning to the real world, and recognize concepts when they encounter them in a different context.

Professional Learning, and Professional Learning Communities

Our educators are intellectual and reflective practitioners who engage in professional learning experiences. Learning is at the core of our educators; we continually have a thirst for knowledge, a desire to improve our craft, and a drive to help our students grow as learners. Our Professional Learning Communities know



that the classroom is the heart of inquiry and reflection. We will deliver professional growth opportunities that are differentiated, authentic, rigorous, and engaging.

Leadership Plan Aligned to Goals

All professional learning promotes and supports the instructional model.

- Ensure all students meet the standards for scientific inquiry, engineering and technological design.
- Expand opportunities that already exist in school, district and state; learn from existing models and continually seek, research, and analyze new models and programs.
- Emphasize cognitive abilities and skills as learning outcomes (example: What is your evidence for your explanation? What alternative explanations have you heard from your team?).
- Include literacy and mathematics as part of all intentional learning outcomes.

Professional Learning Communities

The Professional Learning Community (PLC) structure is central to more than one component of the District 41 Model. It is where teams do much of their planning, it is where they learn from each other to hone

their craft, it is where they can develop PBLs and strategize differentiation, and it is where they can decide what they will look for as observable indicators of success

Differentiation

D41 educators differentiate instruction to meet the learning needs of all students by:

- Facilitating learning in and out of their classrooms using a variety of internal and external resources such as industry partnerships, authentic field experiences and technology to connect with the world outside of the classroom.
- Demonstrating innovation daily in their teaching and modeling the integration of theory and practice.
- Providing authentic feedback and constant opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to authentic situations.
- Seeking critical feedback about their pedagogy from peers, administrators and students.
- Supporting and encouraging students through the trial and error involved in the learning process (promoting resilience).



Workshop Model

Over the past decade, the workshop model has been shown to be one of the most effective differentiated instructional models. District 41 has used the workshop model in literacy since 2007. Using workshop in all content areas ensures that each student is highly engaged, the learning is differentiated, and students are working on “just right” materials as well as materials that will stretch their thinking. Workshop is a rigorous yet affirming educational model that can be outlined as follows:

- Mini-lessons are used to model skills or strategies.
- Students practice the skill or strategy together with the teacher.
- Students break into groups based on similar needs; the teacher works with each group in guided instruction.
- Students work independently or collaboratively to develop the skill or strategy, share their work with the class and engage in class-wide discussion.

Conferring

Learners crave feedback to grow, and conferring is a differentiated way to provide it. At the heart of the workshop, this conversation between two (or more) creates a

deeper understanding of a student’s thinking and processing and is an opportunity to coach and nurture students. The decisions about why and how to engage in a conference with a student are shaped by 1) the relationship with the student and 2) by the instructional intentions or purpose for the conference.

Assessment

Assessment for learning provides students and teachers with information they can use immediately to improve performance by differentiating instruction to meet the learner’s needs in the moment. Research shows that students do better when regular assessment shows them the way forward. Assessment for learning begins when teachers help students understand what “right” looks like, and provide frequent feedback taking care not to overwhelm them. The students’ role is to use feedback to see where they are in relation to where they want to be, and to determine how to do better.

Teachers and students are partners in the process: for example, students could create a student-friendly version of a scoring rubric, create practice versions of tests to help them study or accumulate evidence of their learning in growth portfolios. They can also partner with teachers by leading their parent/teacher conferences.



Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and Inquiry

Our 21st Century Teaching and Learning Model aligns to authentic, real-world work and exploration and is appropriate at all grades. The model is inquiry-based through the use of Problem-Based Learning with transdisciplinary approaches (meaning explicitly making connections across subjects) and is grounded in the state and national standards. Problem-based learning is not an event or a random special occurrence; it is rooted in our planned units and only thrives when it is connected to authentic learning and the standards. Inquiry involves the science, art and spirit of curiosity. Effective inquiry is more than just asking questions. “A complex process is involved when individuals attempt to convert information and data into useful knowledge. Useful application of inquiry learning involves several factors: a context for questions, a framework for questions, a focus for questions, and different levels of questions. Well-designed inquiry learning produces knowledge formation that can be widely applied.” (National Science Standards, 2000).

Panel

The most critical part of the PBL cycle is the panel...when students present their ideas, receive feedback and defend their solutions. Ideally, panel members have a vested interest and are genuinely looking for solutions. Students get feedback on the problem at hand, and learn about the experiences of the panelists. Developing and nurturing partnerships will be at the heart of District 41's PBL process. Partners from business, industry, and universities will co-teach with teachers, work with students, sit on panels, mentor, and share ideas for our curriculum. The PBL Coaches are the primary contact for industry partnerships and work with teachers to match the panel to the PBL.

“Problem-based learning is not an event or a random special occurrence; it is rooted in our planned units and only thrives when it is connected to authentic learning and the standards.”





Long Range Plan

The Long-Range Plan will guide our work as we align our resources to achieve the Strategic Priorities set by the Board of Education. The plan publically proclaims our commitment to these priorities and the measures by which we will hold ourselves accountable.

The Board of Education has established seven Strategic Priorities as the most critical objectives in meeting our Mission and achieving our Vision. Strategic Priorities, Indicators of Success, Key Performance Indicators, and the Action Steps will be used to establish our work and budget priorities each year and will serve as the framework to determine the success of the District. The Action Steps will continuously evolve into a more detailed School Improvement Plans and will be monitored annually.

Process and Timeline

The Long-Range Plan discussions began at the Board of Education level. The Board members held special public workshop meetings and drafted a new set of Strategic Priorities. From there it went to the Cabinet Team, through the district-wide Teams for Excellence, the school Building Leadership Teams, staff workshops, community town hall meeting, and finally back to the Board of Education for final review of all of the collaborative work that produced the final Long-Range Plan document.



Elements of the Plan

Strategic Priorities

The Board of Education identified seven Strategic Priorities to guide the work of the district.

Indicators of Success

The Indicators of Success were created by the Board of Education to further describe the main themes to be imbedded in our work toward realizing the seven Strategic Priorities.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

KPIs are measurable values that demonstrate how effectively District 41 is achieving the Strategic Priorities.

Action Steps

The Action Steps are the activities that will take place across the district that will propel us to achieving the Strategic Priorities.

Strategic Priorities and Indicators of Success

Strategic Priority 1

Academic Excellence – Student Learning and Academic Achievement: We will create a positive and nurturing environment which is foundational to student success. We will enhance and support a culture of academic excellence while working to close the achievement gap.

Indicators of Success

We will successfully prepare our students for high school and for an increasingly global society.

Establish and measure KPIs for academics, social/emotional learning and to close the achievement gap.

Champion active collaboration among staff.

Technology will support and enhance student learning.

Strategic Priority 2

Facilities that enhance student learning: We will ensure that our facilities accommodate and adequately support current educational needs and allow for flexibility to support long-term future needs. We will continually evaluate facilities and strategically plan for the maintenance of all buildings and grounds.

Indicators of Success

Evaluate space utilization.

Ensure and evaluate level of safety and security for all schools including fostering partnerships with civic agencies.

Implement plans for well maintain buildings and grounds on a scheduled basis.

Strategic Priority 3

Finances that support Student Learning: We will realize the district's mission while utilizing resources responsibly and efficiently. We will be respectful and mindful of taxpayers by evaluating and prioritizing spending.

Indicators of Success

Establish an annual budget with a five year forecast to prioritize, cost containment, and use resources responsibly.

Engage the community relative to financial priorities.

Evaluate spending for fidelity, impact, satisfaction and efficiency.

Strategic Priority 4

Dedicated and Talented Staff Committed to Student Learning: We will recruit, support and encourage retention of employees at all levels. We are committed to a thriving work environment that encourages staff learning, growth and to have a voice in the decision-making process. We will strive to make District 41 an employer of choice.

Indicators of Success

Staff is highly engaged in the work, they are proud of their work, feel valued, and are focused on the mission of the organization.

High quality professional development and mentoring opportunities are key to our success. Individuals are taught the skills and knowledge they need in order to be successful in their role.

Provide all teachers opportunities to engage the district beyond the classroom.

Strategic Priority 5

School Community Culture & Climate to further Enhance Student Learning: We will enhance a healthy, productive and collaborative relationship with school and district stakeholders.

Indicators of Success

Increase parent engagement and ensure they feel connected to the staff and to the overall school community.

Continuously improve a welcoming culture in each school community.

Continuously improve satisfaction among students parents and staff

Strategic Priority 6

Community Engagement & Communication: We will deepen trust with the community members who live in the over 10,000 households within the District 41 boundaries through comprehensive and transparent communications. We will seek input from all District 41 stakeholders.

Indicators of Success

The community is informed about District 41 practices, decisions and operations.

Enhance the District's understanding on the various community perspectives on school district topics.

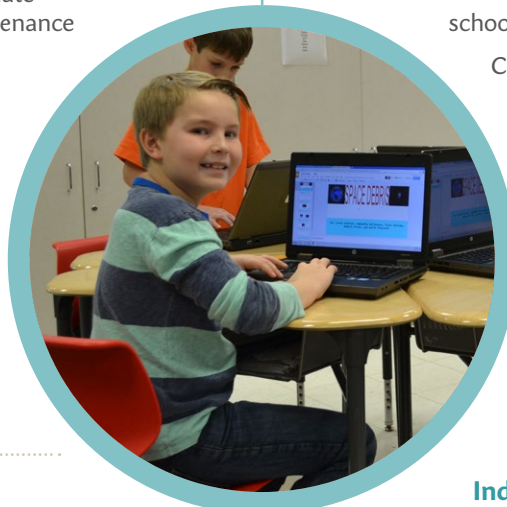
Improve stakeholder and community pride in District 41.

Strategic Priority 7

Long Range Plan Accountability; The Board will be accountable to annually review Strategic Priorities by monitoring and evaluating quantitative and qualitative data.

Indicators of Success

Board will set an annual date to review and evaluate data from Strategic Priorities 1-6



How do we know we are making progress?

Specific Action Steps are created to support the various activities the District will undertake in the next few years to achieve the Strategic Priorities. Each year we will develop a set of annual activities which support the Action Steps (called our School Improvement Plans). At the end of each year we review the completion of these activities, providing the results to our Board of Education. The District will also publish them on the Long-Range Plan section of the website. These are specific and unique measures for Glen Ellyn School District 41.

The second way of demonstrating progress involves comparisons with others. District 41 has developed a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to assess tangible progress on each of our Strategic Priorities.

Glen Ellyn School District 41 will continue to work every year toward achieving these Strategic Priorities, reflecting excellence and accountability.

Glen Ellyn
SCHOOL DISTRICT 41



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