

# Dolton Riverdale School District 148

## Building Bridges to Success

### Introduction: The Strategic Planning Process

In fall of 2009, the Board of Education requested a future-focused Strategic Plan to support the District Improvement Plan (DIP) which addresses the immediate academic needs of students. The DIP, required by the Illinois State Board of Education, outlines annual achievement goals and objectives for improving student learning toward achieving Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

The strategic planning process focuses on the operational management of the school district and extends beyond the current school year to provide the Board of Education and Administration with a “roadmap” for future success. Consultants from inteGREAT Education began facilitating a multi-phase process to ensure the Strategic Plan was based on the long-range needs of District 148 and that it reflected research and best practices in education.

- } Phase One.....Review of Student Data
- } Phase Two.....Stakeholder Interviews
- } Phase Three.....District Leadership Team (DLT) Planning Session
- } Phase Four.....Review of the Strategic Plan by Small Committees
- } Phase Five.....Review of the Strategic Plan by the DLT
- } Phase Six.....Presentation to the Board of Education
- } Phase Seven.....Implementation

**Phase One** included a review of student data and observations of programs and structures. Findings indicated that many of the improvement initiatives implemented by District 148 have been successful. There remains, however, a need for district-wide uniform assessment tools and reporting of student progress that help maintain validity, reliability, and fairness of student learning results.

**Phase Two** included in-depth interviews with stakeholders (school board members, district-level administration, school-level administration, teachers, clerical staff and parents). The pyramid below, SIX CORRELATES for Continuous and Sustainable School Improvement, was used as the framework for determining interview questions:

*SIX CORRELATES for Continuous and Sustainable School Improvement*



**Accountability** utilizes a district-wide, quarterly review process that provides superintendents, principals, and teachers with a proactive method for discussing student achievement throughout the year.

**Craft Knowledge** ensures that all professional development initiatives provide staff with the skills and expertise they need to explicitly address the improvement focus

**Resources** align budgets, time, instructional materials and tools with the goals and objectives established in the action plan.

**Improvement Focus** links efforts to a clear, concise action plan that strategically addresses areas of concern

**Ownership & Involvement** provide the understanding of the urgent need for change and a deep, internal drive to improve student learning.

**Organizational Foundation** establishes principles of an organization that provide clear decision-making criteria and a consistent focus on improvement.

## Results of the Interviews

Interview responses noted a strong level of success and/or satisfaction with five of the six correlates outlined above. A summary of responses indicated a:

- } strong mission and vision (Organizational Foundation),
- } very dedicated and talented staff (Ownership & Involvement),
- } strong concentration on student achievement (Improvement Focus),
- } good use of funds, materials and technology (Resources),
- } solid professional development programs (Craft Knowledge).

## Area for Improvement

The weakest of the ***SIX CORRELATES for Continuous and Sustainable School Improvement*** was Accountability. As stated above, research and best practices call for continuous monitoring of student progress at all levels of the organization. Feedback from interviews with administration and teachers confirmed that there is no formal process for quarterly reporting and analyzing of student learning outcomes. The interviews indicated numerous assessment practices and programs (e.g. EdVision) were in place but only Success for All (SFA), implemented in some schools, assisted teachers every eight-weeks in analyzing and using student data to determine what students have mastered and what further instruction was needed.

## District Leadership Team

**Phase Three** brought the District Leadership Team (DLT) together for a planning session. InTeGREAT Education presented Phase One and Phase Two findings. Subsequently, DLT members were asked to identify organizational strategies necessary for continuous and sustainable improvement over the next three to five years. As each small group reported their projections, five patterns emerged:

- } all schools need to have the same assessment tools and resources so that the same data can be used to make decisions for improvement at all levels of the organization (e.g., individual students, classroom, grade-level, school-wide achievement data)
- } professional development initiatives need to provide the administration and staff with the knowledge and skills needed for analyzing and using student learning data
- } district-wide common-benchmark assessments need to be designed and implemented

- } a quarterly, district-wide system for reporting student progress needs to be established
- } the culture of the organization needs to remain at the highest level of professionalism

Using these five projections, one **Core Goal** and five **Action Goals** were created to guide District 148 over the next five years. To ensure successful implementation, detailed action plans have also been established.

<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>CORE GOAL</b>	<b>Measurable Outcome</b>
June, 2015	All District 148 administrators and staff will collect, analyze and interpret data and will demonstrate proficiency in using these data to make informed decisions for the continuous improvement of student learning	All five Action Goals successfully implemented



<b>Start/Completion Dates</b>	<b>Action Goals</b>	<b>Measurable Outcome(s)</b>
March, 2010/ December, 2010	<b>Action Goal 1:</b> All schools will have the same assessment tools and resources for making informed decisions about student learning	An inventory will confirm that all schools have the same assessment tools and resources
June, 2010/ October, 2012	<b>Action Goal 2A:</b> Professional development offerings, with follow-up coaching, will provide all District 148 administrators and staff with the knowledge and skills needed to analyze and use data	An audit of professional development programs and list of participants will verify training has taken place and that all appropriate staff has been trained.
September, 2011/ June, 2011	<b>Action Goal 2B:</b> A district-wide, quarterly accountability system will be established to involve all stakeholders (teacher to principal, principal to assistant superintendent, assistant superintendent to superintendent, and superintendent to the Board of Education) in reporting student achievement progress and setting data-driven quarterly improvement goals	A compilation of reporting forms will indicate quarterly meetings were held and improvement goals set
January, 2011/ June, 2014	<b>Action Goal 2C:</b> Common-benchmark assessments in Language Arts Science and Social Studies will be developed and utilized by classroom teachers	A compilation of common assessments for every grade level in language arts, science and social studies with assessment results documented.
On-going	<b>Action Goal 3:</b> A strong sense of collaboration and professionalism will remain the touchstone for guiding District 148 personnel in their dedication to students, parents and the school community at-large	Results on the annual organizational climate survey disseminated in May