

To: Board of Education

From: Philip Bender, Superintendent  
Bernadette Tramm, Strategic Plan Internal Facilitator

Date: September 13, 2010

Subject: Update on Strategic Plan

District 64 is moving forward steadily on activities planned for implementation during 2010-11, the first year of the “Journey of Excellence.” Below is a summary of some of the key steps undertaken thus far to engage District 64 staff and administrators in the specific areas scheduled for the year ahead and to continue building awareness of the plan with parents and community members.

**District 64 Activities and Timeline**

Institute Day marked the official introduction of the new “Journey of Excellence” theme and logo with our staff. As you know, the morning featured an in-depth presentation on the five strategies in the plan, with particular emphasis on the three strategies needing extensive teacher involvement this year. The video featured teachers who participated in the Action Teams for the five strategies last year; Superintendent Bender was the overall narrator. Also that day, all staff members received a magnet and a laminated double-sided reference guide with the key plan components on the front and the “change protocol” (Strategy V) on the reverse. In addition, framed posters of the key plan components have been installed at all District 64 buildings. We hope these items will be a constant reminder of our shared mission and goals.

As a follow-up to this kick-off, a narrated PowerPoint presentation was also created and played at all staff building meetings on September 1. This talk introduced the leaders of the three strategies that require active teacher participation this year: Director of Technology Terri Bresnahan (Strategy I Technology), Lincoln School Assistant Principal Tim Gleason (Strategy II Personal Student Goals), and Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning Diane Betts (Strategy IV Student Learning). Dr. Bender and Ms. Tramm teamed up to provide a Q & A component.

As a follow-up, individual 20-minute before or after school informal sessions have been scheduled at all schools with Dr. Bender and the three strategy leaders. These optional meetings give staff an opportunity to ask any questions they may have about the 12 committee choices for teacher involvement this year.

The strategy leaders, Dr. Bender and Ms. Tramm have met as a group to plan other near-term activities, including these steps for organizing teacher involvement:

- September 3-15 – Informal building Q & A sessions as described above.
- September 15-22 – Teachers indicate first and second choices for committee involvement via an online form.
- September 28 – Members of the original Strategic Planning team and the three strategy leaders meet to review teacher preferences and balance committee membership to assure good representation of grade levels, teacher assignments and buildings on all 12 committees.
- October 1 – Strategy leaders announce committee lists.

In coming weeks, the three strategy leaders will continue to meet and prepare work plans for their committee efforts later this fall. In addition, all administrators are reviewing their Mutual Commitments & Expectations forms developed during the June 16-17 workshop with Strategic Plan facilitator Dr. Howard Feddema as part of their first goal-setting conferences either with Dr. Bender or their direct supervisor. The Administrative Council as a whole will devote additional time at an upcoming meeting related to their strategic planning leadership roles this year.

### **Parent and Community Activities**

As our new Superintendent, Dr. Bender has been invited to talk at meetings of all our school PTO/ A groups between September 7 and November 1. He has been using these occasions to focus on the new mission statement and Strategic Plan as he talks about his goals for District 64. In addition, he provided an extensive update for our Senior Tax Exchange Program participants at their annual orientation meeting on August 27.

The District 64 2010-11 Student-Parent Handbook also has a full page devoted to the key plan components for easy parent reference. Many teachers pointed out the plan in their recent parent night talks and school principals will continue to mention its importance in their school newsletters this year.

Community organizations in turn are welcoming Dr. Bender to speak about the Strategic Plan, including Kiwanis (August 11) and the Park Ridge Chamber of Commerce (November 10). Community awareness also will build with additional publicity from District 64 this fall.

Implementing the Strategic Plan requires the coordinated efforts of the entire District 64 community. These initial activities and communication outreach completed over the summer and during these first weeks of the new school year are laying the solid foundation needed for a successful first year of implementation activities for the District 64 Strategic Plan. We look forward to providing the Board and community with frequent updates.