

Livingston Public Schools

District Goals 2022-2023 Mid Year Progress Update

February 7, 2023



What is a District Goal?

- Areas we want to highlight and prioritize.
- Not the only focus of the Board or the Administration, we have many areas of focus.
- Developed jointly between administration and Board of Education.
- Consistency of goals provides for deeper impacts and clear direction.

New for 2022-2023

- Aligned with 2022-2027 Strategic Plan
- Five Goals instead of four to connect with themes of plan
- Strategic Plan adopted in October
- Goals adopted in November
- Implementation teams established to monitor goals

DISTRICT GOAL - Safety and Wellness

Ensure the emotional well-being and mental health of all our students through a strong feeling of connectedness, a sense of belonging to their school community, an awareness of the resources and support available to students and families in an effort to thwart the negative impacts of stress and mental illness.

ACTION STEPS

- Establish a Mental Health Advisory Panel of mental health professionals from the greater community who treat children and adolescents professionally.
 - Meet with panel a minimum of two times during the 2022-2023 school year.
 - Using data and input from the advisory panel, establish goals and action plans related to mental health.
- Establish home-school connection with *Community Conversations* to provide information on District curriculum, programs, and activities that support student mental health and to hear community member concerns about them.
- Using Livingston's Portrait of a Graduate, align the counseling curriculum with identified student needs and provide students with the tools to build skills for a well-balanced life.
- Ensure that there are opportunities at all schools to promote interpersonal connections between students and trusting adults.
 - Identify adults who can be resources for students.
 - Implement Mental Health First Aid Training for all staff and Teen Mental Health First Aid Training for all tenth-grade students.
- Create Threat Assessment Team(s) that aligns with New Jersey standards, is composed of teachers, administrators, and law enforcement liaison, and provides a structured system to discuss students who show signs of mental health struggles. Identify students who may be at risk of engaging in violent and harmful acts, create new intervention strategies, and establish new protocols to intervene with those students.

MID-YEAR UPDATE - SAFETY AND WELLNESS

IN PROCESS:

- Youth Mental Health First Aid Training for Administrators and staff started in July of 2022 and will continue through the end of the 2023-2024 school year.
- Several staff received certification as trainers for Youth and/or Teen Mental Health First Aid in the fall of 2022.
- Teen Mental Health First Aid has been completed with all 10th grade students at LHS.
- Dedicated hours in curriculum writing exclusively for SEL skills and inclusive content and texts. Portrait of a graduate being used as a guide in curriculum writing per Board action steps connected to goals.
- Summer safety committee assembled, community forum held, and spring safety committee in the planning stages.
- After school hours mental health support made available to students at HMS and LHS.
- Care Solace being used as a tool to connect students and families with mental health professionals.
- Advisory at MPM and HMS and Community at LHS Continues to connect students with adults in small groups talking together on SEL-related topics. First time instituting morning meeting at all elementary schools where students are able to engage in SEL-based discussions.

IN PLANNING:

- Ready to begin planning threat assessment teams. Waiting for guidelines from the Department of Education.
- The Mental Health Advisory panel is in progress of being assembled for the Spring 2023. Potential members have been identified and recommended.

DISTRICT GOAL - Teaching and Learning

Investigate, identify, and envision the elements of a new district-wide instructional framework with emphasis on common language of instruction, authentic assessment, and a real-world context to foster student growth.

ACTION STEPS

- Conduct focus groups and analyze results to inform decisions about adopting a new instructional framework district-wide. Based on survey results, either work to identify an existing framework or begin creating a new one resulting in a presentation and proposal at the end of the 2022-2023 school year to the Board of Education for full development in the 2023-2024 school year and full implementation in the 2024-2025 school year.
- Research best practices for instruction to determine the Livingston Public Schools “gold standard” and investigate instructional models and best practices, which incorporate elements of the district vision and align with LPS values. Gather information from students on strengths and weaknesses of current instruction in order to remediate the weaknesses.
- Engage stakeholders in conversations about instructional philosophy and values using the 2022-2027 Livingston Public School’s Strategic Plan and Livingston’s Portrait of a Graduate as foundations for those discussions.
- Work with departments to explore “language silos” to be streamlined within the instructional model. Determining common language in instruction will ultimately create greater consistency throughout the district and lead to more effective instruction.
- Begin reflection on current grading and reporting practices at the secondary levels to determine alignment with goals and priorities. Creating consistency in grading processes and practices will ultimately add to common understanding of methodologies helping students better understand expectations and improve grade-related stress.
- Conduct a formal assessment of our current post-secondary transition guidance practices to analyze whether all students are being well-served in that process. To evaluate progress, conduct focus groups of students about their experiences with their post-secondary advice from our Counseling Department. Utilize professionals who work directly in higher education admissions to provide feedback to us on our post-secondary counseling practices.

MID-YEAR UPDATE - TEACHING AND LEARNING

IN PROCESS:

- District rollout of Portrait of a Graduate to provides a context for articulation and focus of the LPS instructional model.
 - The “how”
 - Conversations surrounding what this looks like in the classroom.
- Administrative team expanding use of District calendars for assessment and data collection to build greater consistency in our data analysis and experience for our students.
 - Collaborating on implementing and piloting Tier 1 interventions across schools.
- Data Teams working in schools and across the District to look at common assessment data points to inform instruction.
- Beginning implementation of web-based curriculum writing software with goal to drive common language of instruction and transparency with the community.
- Transitioning the District exclusively to Schoology to build more consistency and better communication for students and parents.
- Relaunch Livingston U, designed to share best practices by experts in the District.

IN PLANNING:

- Research instructional models and the development of instructional models to inform the work of strategic planning implementation team.
- This spring /summer we will begin “Putting it Together: Taking Inventory” of instructional priorities and best practices.

DISTRICT GOAL - Leadership and Governance

Foster a supportive and desirable work environment for all district staff by providing opportunities to grow as leaders, contribute to district initiatives, access mentoring, and participate in training and professional development in order to maximize recruitment efforts, retain excellent teachers, and promote longevity.

ACTION STEPS

- Conduct a survey and focus groups with the staff to determine needs across the district. Analyze results of staff surveys to determine areas for improvement and action.
- Design and implement programs to connect staff members with peers in order to foster a district-based mentoring program for new teachers.
- Provide personal wellness programming and services for district employees.
- Support the Board of Education in engaging in collaborative and productive negotiations with all three bargaining units with the intention of improving the District's recruitment and retention efforts.
- Analyze data gathered from the district's formal exit protocols to inform future practices aimed at improving the district's employment protocols and practices.
- Create opportunities for leadership development to promote staff members' professional growth and mobility within Livingston Public Schools.
- Create staff leadership feedback groups in order to hear directly from staff members about their experiences in Livingston Public Schools. Meet with leadership feedback groups at least one time during the 2022-2023 school year.
- Reflect upon current practices and try new ways of recruiting new staff members, with particular a focus on enhancing diversity in our hiring.

MID-YEAR UPDATE - LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

IN PROCESS

- Partnering with TCNJ to offer Teacher Leader and Administrator Certification programs. Starts in Fall of 2023 - This is a major step forward in bringing teacher leadership opportunities to the district. Livingston leaders will teach the courses creating multi-layered chances for leadership.
- Participation in TA to Teacher Program through Ramapo College
- Future educators mentoring program mentors students to want to become excellent teachers
- Teachers participating in Strategic Planning Implementation Teams.
- Twelve teachers formally assisting with district equity work. Creation of leadership positions.
- LEA issued a survey in advance of negotiations. Teacher feedback being used to shape negotiations.
- Held several negotiations meetings with LEA, commenced process with LSA & LAA.
- Listen & Learns - Conversation conducted by Superintendent at each school to gather feedback
- Monthly meetings with new teachers at schools. Veteran teacher leading the meetings.
- Teachers leading building SciP - School Improvement Panels and Faculty Council at LHS
- CJPRIDE - Member district of CJ PRIDE and benefit from the recruiting of diverse faculty and staff. Teachers and administrators participate in recruitment efforts at job fairs.
- Departing employees provided with an opportunity and encouraged to participate in an exit interview.
- Data form interviews utilized to inform administration of positives and negatives perceived by staff.
- Personal wellness content has already been added to District PD Program, and will be expanded.

IN PLANNING

- Working with LEA to organize wellness event for staff.
- Continuing negotiations engaging regularly with all three bargaining units.
- Creating a teacher to teacher buddy program through Livingston Induction of Valued Educators (LIVE)

DISTRICT GOAL - Community and Culture

Engaging all stakeholders, including students and their families, in educational programs is essential to creating a community of equity in our school district. Ensure just outcomes for each student, raise marginalized voices, and challenge imbalances of power and privilege.

ACTION STEPS

- Complete an equity audit for the district including an equity data drive to create informational sets of data to analyze our equity position and inform future equity work. Examine disparities not just connected to race and culture, but to ensure we are providing an inclusive environment for all students. Use a third-party source, someone who is not currently invested or involved in current work in our district.
- Create a more welcoming community by developing and implementing new opportunities to engage new Livingston families with district programs and parent organizations. This will include ensuring that all families receive timely information about Livingston Public Schools, and can identify how to connect with essential school personnel. Create a parent resource group to connect families of long-time residents with new ones. Explore the facilitation of a “buddy student” program to provide an immediate connection for students arriving from other schools.
- Review English Language Learning (ELL) program to ensure it is properly implemented and resourced and communicate with families of ELL students on a regular basis. Conduct at least one parent night specifically for ELL Parents to orient them to Livingston Public Schools, so their questions and concerns can be addressed.
- Provide effective educational opportunities to increase positive student to student and teacher to student interactions around culture and equity. Ensure community advisory time that would foster relationships between adults and students and strengthen relationships and foster connection.
- Pilot curriculum, assessment, and instructional audit in Social Studies K-12 to determine where there are gaps or missing perspectives and ensure that content reflects multiple voices and examines human history from multiple perspectives. Utilize social studies curriculum audit to begin developing a process for a systematic audit and revision of curriculum where needed, with the plan to replicate the process in future in all of the content areas and levels.
- Utilize talents of faculty and staff members to help facilitate, reflect upon and expand, and improve equity initiatives in every school in the district. Formally and systematically reflect on the effectiveness of these positions to make recommendations for future role definition and needs in the areas of equity and inclusion. Gather feedback from students, equity team members, and other stakeholders to ascertain the impact of the new positions.

MID-YEAR UPDATE - COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

IN PROCESS

- Dedicated hours in curriculum writing exclusively for SEL skills and inclusive content and texts.
- ELL Family Nights and after-school support programs.
- ELL Program numbers being reviewed. Conversations held with ELL Teachers and Supervisor. Possible resource needs to be discussed by Board.
- Audit of Social Studies curriculum to identify gaps and concentrations to ensure all voices and experiences are included in our program.
- Growth of Community and advisory programming in our schools.
- Character Education programs and cultural celebrations at the elementary level.
- Significant purchase of diverse texts to enrich classroom libraries K-12.
- Building Equity Coaches in all schools and Student Equity Advisors in secondary schools to lead the building equity teams and student-led initiatives in equity.
- Multiple schools partnered with parents to conduct cultural celebrations aligned with holidays such as Diwali and Lunar New Year.
- Caring Communities groups focus on mindfulness, helping build students' capacity to be self-aware and to self-manage their emotions and stress.

IN PLANNING

- Create new partnership to help us engage in equity audit. Potential consultants being interviewed. Close to finalist being identified.
- Welcome to Livingston Program - Hoping to coordinate with Township to plan event. Meetings should begin soon.

DISTRICT GOAL - Finance and Facilities

Take inventory of the district's facilities to determine current strengths, deficiencies, and needs. Use the Demographic Study and conversations with town officials and management to gain understanding of future needs. Determine the gaps between what currently exists and what the district will need in the future. From that investigation, devise a multi-year plan to create flexible, innovative educational spaces that meet the needs of a growing and changing student population who have a range of learning needs and interests.

ACTION STEPS

- Produce a facilities usage report that indicates space needs in schools throughout the district based on registration trends, current enrollment, and predicted future needs.
- Compile a list of possible solutions for any facilities deficiencies and compare benefits and drawbacks of each solution considering budget, timeline, and alignment with district vision, mission, and programming goals.
- Identify, produce, and promote a consensus plan for moving forward with facilities improvement, if needed, and the funding of a potential facility improvement process.
- Create opportunities through forums and meetings for public input and discussion regarding future facilities development.
- Create opportunities through public and smaller-group meetings and discussions for district and township personnel and district and township representatives to meet and strategize for future facilities development.

MID-YEAR UPDATE

IN PROCESS:

- The district architect completed a capacity analysis which was presented to the Board of Education and the community in October 2022.
- Shared enrollment status within our schools with the Board of Education and the Community.
- Created new space with existing space to address mid-year enrollments (Pre-K).
- Engaged Architect to prepare facility modification options that could be completed in the short term.
- Continue to operate in a fiscally responsible way in order to continue to add funds to the district's capital reserve.
- Continue to work with town officials to identify spaces within the community that can be utilized by the Board of Education in the short term.
- Establishment of a working group consisting of town officials, council members, district administration, and board members to continue to meet and work towards finding additional space within the community that can be utilized for the district for a long-term solution.

IN PLANNING:

- Share short-term and long-term facility expansion plans with Board of Education and Community.
- Create long-term facilities planning team to begin looking at long-term options.

Questions?

