

GLENBROOK HIGH SCHOOLS
Office of the Superintendent
Glenview - Northbrook, Illinois

To: Board of Education

From: Mike Riggle

Re: District Initiatives 2013-2014

Date: August 12, 2013

An initiative by concept, is an act or strategy that is targeted to resolve a problem or address an existing or anticipated concern. I believe our district initiatives (goals) over the past five years have done just that. They were originally based in identified concerns that were developed from a community meeting held in the fall of 2005. As we move forward with our discussion of the district initiatives, I feel it is important that our initiatives continue to be grounded firmly in current district challenges, which I believe are the following:

- **Growing Student Population** – Enrollment projections reveal a significant increase in student enrollment at GBS as opposed to a stable, if not declining enrollment at GBN.
- **Fiscal Challenges** – The projected growth in student enrollment along with legislated changes in areas such as pensions and health care will present fiscal challenges in the near future.
- **Building Capacities** – As the student populations of GBS and GBN become more disproportionate, it is important to determine the existing capacities of the schools and determine potential courses of action to ensure the highest quality education possible that serves our communities well in a reasonable and fiscally efficient manner.
- **Technology Integration** – The Chromebook initiative is a significant step forward in support of student engagement. The further integration of technology has the potential to change teaching and learning in our schools.
- **Maintaining Quality Staff** – A significant number of teachers and administrators will retire in the next five years.
- **Common Core Curriculum** – Significant efforts will continue in all curriculum areas to make proper adjustments to align and revise existing curriculum to meet the advertised standards.

Analysis of Initiatives List

At the board retreat on May 11, a draft of possible initiatives for next year was presented and discussed. I have attached a copy of the list presented for your review.

In further analyzing the list of possible initiatives, I am providing my perspective as to the priority ranking of each item, along with my thoughts.

Business

1. Skyward Implementation – Phase 2 (Not mandated, but purchased and scheduled for implementation with Skyward)

This work has been underway for the last year. The bulk of the implementation work to be completed in the next year is in the area of human resources. I propose that the initiative be moved into HR.

2. Develop a Long Range Cost Containment Plan For Health Insurance (Not mandated, but strongly indicated as a need by the board during the negotiations process)

This is an important follow-up item to our discussions and negotiations regarding health and dental insurance. It properly outlines the business calendar for completing work in this area and gives adequate timing for board consideration and action.

3. Building Capacity and Enrollment Study and Planning (Not a mandate, but necessary due to significant enrollment increases at GBS that begin in 2014)

With the student enrollment at GBS predicted to grow quickly, updated projections are needed to determine whether the capacity of the current facility will be sufficient for the predicted population and what construction projects will be necessary. Consideration of redistricting students to balance enrollments will be necessary.

4. Renovation of 3801 W. Lake Avenue Building (Not mandated)

Completing the renovation of the District Office building is not as important as making sure that the GBS building capacity is adequate for the determined enrollment. I propose that this item be taken off the list until the timing and scope of this project has been determined by the Facilities Committee.

5. Facility Safety Upgrades (Not mandated)

I propose that this item be removed from the list until the scope and timing of this project has been finalized by the Facilities Committee.

The business department will be challenged with a great deal of work that must be accomplished that is directly related to recent negotiations settlements and further refinement of the Skyward business software. Hillarie will be continuing her work to craft and negotiate a second teacher salary schedule with the GEA that must be completed by December. In addition, there are changes to the health insurance plans to be incorporated and adjustments and expansions will be made to the wellness program. Finally, Hillarie will be representing the district as the president of the Illinois Association of School Business Officials (IASBO), which is a one year term that introduces significant time commitments.

Curriculum and Instruction

This area tends to be the most time consuming because the initiatives are often dependent on instructional supervisors and teachers who are willing to donate their time. The amount of discussion and planning necessary to make these initiatives successful is difficult to coordinate logistically.

1. Student Engagement (Mandated for district under NCLB)

A great deal has been accomplished so far and this work serves as a solid platform for school improvement. We now have data from student surveys and classroom walk throughs and wish to add a teacher survey that will help us complete a more accurate picture of student engagement.

2. Common Core Standards Implementation (Mandated by the State)

The CCS have now been adopted by nearly every state and is to be the base for standardized assessments in 2015. A great deal of work has been completed as part of articulation efforts and is schedule to continue down to the course level.

3. Homework Study (Not mandated)

This work began last year with the collection of data from our student surveys and on best practices and we are now positioned to discuss homework practices in the district, their impact on students and what changes should be made. However, with Chromebooks being introduced to Grades 9, 10 and 11, it is probable that the homework practices that currently exist may change to some extent. Those practices may also change as GBS makes its transition to the block schedule in 2014-2015. I suggest that we defer this initiative until Chromebooks have been implemented and GBS has transitioned to the block schedule. Until then, the data collected as well as the best practices identified can be shared with administrators and teachers for consideration.

4. Academic Program Review (Not mandated)

This possible initiative will have to be further discussed to bring clarity to the purpose and intended result. It is good to review our programs, but it requires significant work from the staff and we want to be very clear as to the purpose and what the review will consist of. This is the area that was intended to target the desire to possibly expand the Academy and would also serve to incorporate a closer look at programs designed to serve students who are below average, but do not qualify for special services.

* Digital Learning Pilot (Not mandated, but extremely important to student engagement)

I did not give this a priority rating because I recommend that this item be incorporated in the student engagement initiative. We intend to continue our measurement of the impact of the Chromebooks on student engagement and their deployment is extremely important because of the potential positive impact on teaching methodologies.

Human Resources

1. New Teacher Evaluation Instrument Implementation (Mandated by State Code)

Discussions will be concluded soon with the GEA and criteria for ratings will be finalized. Final implementation must begin this fall for the district to remain in compliance with state statutes.

2. Continue Senate Bill 7 and PERA Implementation (Mandated by State Code)

This is related to the teacher evaluation, but it is targeted more clearly to the establishment of job descriptions and prescribed rankings that will be used should reduction in force be necessary.

3. Applitrack Software Expansion and Implementation (Not mandated)

This project will allow more thorough filtering of candidates to be completed to determine candidates who meet the desired standards of the district and can be considered for interviews. This is an important effort in identifying quality candidates for employment.

4. Skyward Implementation (Not mandated, but purchased and scheduled with Skyward)

This work is underway and is important to solidify employee data and make more resources available to staff.

5. Staff Engagement (Not mandated)

Since the district has just completed negotiations and concerns brought forward by unions are being addressed, I consider this item to be low in priority.

PR & Communications

1. Develop a Communications Plan for 2014-2017 (Not mandated, but necessary)

This is a multi-step process that involves data collection and analysis. I consider it to be essential in continuing to move forward toward improved communication.

2. Support Major District Initiatives by Implementing Proper Communications Channels (Not mandated)

It is the responsibility of the people involved with each major initiative to include and utilize the PR & Communications office with their work. I do not see the need to document these efforts and feel this initiatives should be dropped. The tasks involved would be difficult to establish and measure.

Student Wellness

1. Develop a plan to address student needs identified in 2012-2013. This is an important area and should be continued. (Not mandated, but necessary)

Technology

1. Upgrade of Wireless Network Infrastructure (Not mandated. Completed in August)

By the time our list is finalized, this work will be done with only technical adjustments and monitoring remaining. I would remove it from the list.

2. Assistive Technology for Special Education Students (Mandated by student IEPs)

This has been a gap in our technical services and communications that needs to be resolved.

3. Develop a Plan for Record Retention and Data Storage (Not mandated)

This is currently an area of weakness for the district that needs to be addressed. The significant growth in FOIA and records requests will continue and the district needs to be positioned to meet these statutory duties.

Other Work

In addition to these initiatives, it is important to recognize that there is work of significance that will be necessary during the coming year.

- A new teacher salary schedule will be negotiated. (Mandated by negotiations)
- A significant number of board policies will be revised and some will be created. (Must be completed to comply with State Code, negotiations, TRS, etc.)
- PowerSchool implementation will be completed, but is an ongoing process for a full year. (Not mandatory, but essential to complete)
- Board training must be completed and properly advertised. (Mandated by State Code)
- Data Warehousing – Efforts will be made to identify data needs and tools that can be used to provide the information needed for decision making in a variety of areas including school improvement, RtI and others. (Not mandated)

District 225 Initiatives 2013-2014

Business

- Skyward Implementation - Phase 2
- Facility Safety Upgrades
- Building capacity and enrollment study & planning
- Renovation of 3801 West Lake Ave building
- Develop a long-range cost containment plan for health insurance

Curriculum and Instruction

- Student Engagement
- Common Core Standards implementation
- Digital Learning Pilot
- Homework Study
- Academic Program Review

Human Resources

- Staff Engagement
- New teacher evaluation instrument implementation
- Continue Senate Bill 7 and PERA implementation
- Applitrack software expansion and implementation

PR & Communications

- Develop a communications plan for 2014-2017
- Support major district initiatives by implementing proper communications channels

Student Wellness

- Develop a plan to address student needs identified in 2012-2013

Technology

- Upgrade of wireless network infrastructure
- Develop a plan for record retention and data storage
- Assistive Technology for special education students