



IRVINGTON
UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Our Vision for Tomorrow:
The Irvington Union Free School District
Strategic Vision

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Anita Marshall
Daniella Sarnoff
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Our Vision for Tomorrow

The Irvington Union Free School District Strategic Vision

Introduction

In the spring of 2016, the Irvington school community embarked on a journey to renew its vision for its schools and the education for its children. In this process the District engaged Dr. Giselle Martin-Kniep, President, Learner-Centered Initiatives, to lead an inclusive process to outline strategic objectives to inform the District's future.

The Irvington Union Free School District Strategic Plan describes a desired vision for how the schools can best serve the needs of its students and community. Board of Education members, school and District administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and many other community members provided tremendous levels of valuable contribution that informed the development of a plan that outlines the shared objectives for the Irvington Schools. The Irvington UFSD Strategic Plan will inform the work of the District by guiding future decision making in areas such as curriculum, development of student programs, professional learning, facility maintenance and budgeting.

Planning Process & Community Engagement

The comprehensive planning process included two community forums that were attended by over 100 community members and included parents, students, teachers, administrators, Board of Education Trustees, and community members. A representative Steering Committee, with 24 members, met over a series of four, full-day sessions. Working in a partnership, the Steering Committee collaborated in the review of data collected from the public forums and sought community feedback through target surveys.

In the development of *Our Vision for Tomorrow*, a key community presentation was facilitated at a Board of Education meeting February 1, 2017.

Mission Statement

In the process of defining long-range strategic objectives for the District, the Committee evaluated and confirmed the relevance of the District Mission Statement:

IUFSD Mission Statement

The mission of the Irvington Union Free School District is to create a challenging and supportive learning environment in which each student attains his or her highest potential for academic achievement, critical thinking and life-long learning. Our schools encourage the discovery and development of students' individual strengths, skills and talents, and foster social and civic responsibility.

The Committee support of the District's mission was grounded in its reflection of the unique culture that is present in the school community that is highlighted through:

- Our close knit, supportive community
 - Strong partnerships with the Village, Parents, PTSA, IEF and broader community
- Determined, talented students
 - Provide motivation for District to continue to improve
- Passionate, skilled educators
 - Dedicated to ensuring the very best experiences for every child, every day
- Supportive Board of Education
 - Advocates for the future of our students, schools, and community

District Theories of Action

Being proud of the rich-IUFSD reputation of impressive student success, the District was committed to honoring the strong foundation of beliefs that have been guiding its work since 2013-14 as reflected in the District Theories of Action.

Theory of Action I

If we provide students with rigorous, authentic learning experiences rooted in a comprehensive curriculum, then they will acquire the knowledge, skills and dispositions of successful 21st Century learners that will prepare them to thrive in a rapidly evolving global society.

Goal

In order to develop successful 21st Century learners that will be prepared to thrive in a rapidly evolving global society, the Irvington School District will:

- provide students with rigorous authentic, learning experiences
- develop a comprehensive curriculum that includes:
 - aligned and articulated content
 - defined learning outcomes
 - a balanced and systematic approach to assessment
 - 21st Century skills and dispositions - problem solver, flexible thinker, collaborative learner, effective communicator, empathetic citizen, and self-reliant, reflective, creative risk-taker.

Theory of Action II

If we value and foster the professional learning and growth of all members of our school community, then we will build our collective capacity to support student success.

Goal:

In order to build our collective capacity to support student success, the Irvington School District will:

- engage all members of our school community in the process of continuous improvement through the articulation of District goals
- involve all members of the school community in learning and developing the knowledge and skills to support student success
- provide educators with professional learning designed to support student growth
- provide all staff with professional learning to develop the skills necessary to meet District needs.

Theory of Action III

If we engage in a systematic approach of classroom observation, collecting data and offering feedback to one another, then evidence-based decisions will promote reflective practice, inform instructional design and guide professional learning in order to continuously improve/advance student achievement.

Goal

In order to continuously improve student achievement through professional learning, reflective practice, and instructional design, the District will:

- engage all K-12 instructional leaders in various approaches to classroom visitation to collect evidence of teaching and learning
- utilize the Instructional Rounds protocol as a tool to assess our progress toward our relevant theories of action and in addressing instructional goals
- use the Framework for Teaching as the benchmark for instructional best practices use the Annual Professional Performance Review as one indicator of student performance and teacher effectiveness.

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In consideration of the *Mission Statement, Community Culture, and the Theories of Action*, the Committee evaluated the community feedback and drafted a *Vision and Learning Principles* to inform their work in crafting overarching strategic objectives that are: consistent with local needs and values, apply to all students, and reflective of 21st Century experiences.

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The Committee's Framing Vision

A **community** (educators, students, parents, community members) that fosters curiosity, understanding, innovation, compassion, creativity, social emotional well-being, academic excellence and achievement.

A **culture** that acknowledges and respects individual differences, and provides for varied opportunities for teacher and student learning and innovation.

Schools that provide local-to-global learning experiences through an in-depth, broadly defined and interdisciplinary curriculum, supported with meaningful teaching practices and service opportunities.

Students who demonstrate their learning through varied and diverse learning and assessment opportunities which measure valued knowledge, skills and dispositions and attend to their needs, passions, strengths, interests, and learning styles.

Learning Principles

Adding to the foundation of its work, the Committee defined *Learning Principles* that are a series of beliefs that help to characterize the type of learning experiences that are valued for our students in order to provide the high quality education that will inspire them to achieve their personal best.

Learning is enhanced when it is:

- personally meaningful and motivating
- deep
- ongoing
- supported with opportunities to apply knowledge and skills
- accompanied by repeated opportunities to succeed, learn from mistakes and reflect on learning
- facilitated by teachers who are passionate about what they are teaching
- accompanied by specific, constructive, and timely feedback

Strategic Objectives

A primary goal in developing *Strategic Objectives* was to ensure that they were inspiration and established visionary standards for the school community. It was essential for the objectives to be flexible to accommodate the individual needs of students, faculty, staff and the community, a rapidly evolving global society, prepare students for success in collegiate studies and the workforce, and support social and emotional development. Of significant importance is the flexibility of the objectives to ensure the District is able to be responsive to environmental shifts that include changes in legislation and education regulations, emergent community needs, and the evolving financial environment. With this focus and through further refinement by the Administration and Board of Education, six strategic objectives were developed to inform the future work of the Irvington schools.

The Irvington Union Free School District Strategic Objectives

To achieve its mission and vision, and to provide for the future of its students, the Irvington Union Free School District will:

1. Provide students with a rigorous, comprehensive, enriched and diversified curricula that will prepare students to achieve their personal best, and will integrate technology in their learning.
2. Support educators through targeted professional learning and opportunities for collaboration.
3. Encourage innovation, creativity and risk taking to inspire a dynamic learning environment.
4. Foster the creation of a culture where students are active participants in society.
5. Strengthen local connections to and ownership of our schools.
6. Ensure the fiscal health of the district and provide for a high quality learning environment.

The Strategic Objectives will serve as a foundation of all aspects of District and Board of Education work. Critical decision making such as budgeting, program development, and facility enhancement shall be aligned with the District Mission and Strategic Objectives. Beginning in 2017-18, all school and District goals will be aligned with at least one specific Strategic Objective. Further, the District will develop appropriate, yet varied models of assessing attainment of Strategic Objectives. Then annually, the administration will present upon and publish ongoing progress. The progress reports will project new goals and strategies towards the Strategic Objectives and the related measures of success.

Strategic Objectives, Actions and Indicators of Success

Each of the six strategic objectives are further defined in a series of action plans that will expanded annually through building and District-level action plans and supported through the annual budget-development process. These specific plans will be presented and published each fall. Year-end reports will be publicly presented to the Board of Education and the community each June to document progress towards goal attainment.

Strategic Objective # 1:

Provide students with a rigorous, comprehensive, enriched and diversified curricula that will prepare students to achieve their personal best, and will integrate technology in their learning.

To accomplish strategic objective #1, we will provide students with a rigorous, comprehensive, enriched and diversified curriculum.

Key Actions	Indicators of Success
Develop a district-wide, common definition for instructional language (rigor)	An established understanding to support the delivery of a high quality of instruction
Develop a process to identify, select, and implement new courses and programs	New, well designed courses expanding student opportunities
Develop a process to evaluate new and existing programs	Enriching student experiences to prepare students for success
Develop a process for revision of curriculum and unit planners informed by student assessment	Challenging and relevant instruction in all courses
Develop and implement a range of assessments including formative, summative and performance-based	Newly-created assessments aligned with units of study
Identify opportunities to introduce new learning experiences	New or refined curricular/course experiences to expand and enrich learning

To further accomplish strategic objective #1, we will prepare students to achieve their personal best by supporting all our learners.

Key Actions	Indicators of Success
Development and implementation of a comprehensive Response to Intervention (RtI) system	K-12 articulated RtI plan that will ensure that students' needs are identified and supported
Professional development on RtI for faculty	All faculty and staff equipped to support and identify student needs
Implementation of tools and programs to assess and benchmark student performance	Data/analytics providing critical insight into student growth
Use of data collection to inform instruction and RtI process	Data-informed decision making to effectively identify student needs and provide support

Strategic Objective #2:

Support educators through targeted professional learning and opportunities for collaboration.

Key Actions	Indicators of Success
Provide targeted professional learning to support teacher growth and to promote a culture of constant improvement	A culture rich with teacher engagement will deepen instruction and provide for high quality learning experiences
Identify new opportunities for teachers to engage in professional learning that reduces time away from the classroom	Reduction in time out of class professional learning supporting student and program growth
Increase opportunities for teacher collaboration and professional communication	Implementation of rigorous, consistent standards across all classrooms
Celebrate the success and dedication of our administrators, faculty and staff.	Staff recognition experiences enhance morale

Strategic Objective #3:

Encourage innovation, creativity and risk taking to inspire a dynamic learning environment.

Key Actions	Indicators of Success
Continued growth of the Innovation Fund in partnership with the Irvington Education Foundation (IEF)	Enriched learning experiences through inspirational student-led grant opportunities
Creation of flexible learning spaces to provide for unique experiences	Varied styles of furniture and technology will have reduced restrictions on instruction and learning
Encourage staff to explore new ideas, pedagogy, and courses to inspire students	New, creative learning experiences

Strategic Objective #4

Foster the creation of a culture where students are active participants in society.

To accomplish strategic objective #4, we will foster the creation of a culture in which students become active participants in society by developing global citizenry, civic engagement, leadership capacity and personal responsibility.

Key Actions	Indicators of Success
Define global citizenry, civic engagement, personal responsibility and leadership	Published district definition of global citizenry which can include contexts such as: environment, world connection, collaboration, volunteering, social media, and social change
Support the development of character and dispositions through school culture, opportunities and behaviors	Student engagement and voice reflected in civic participation and citizenship
Provide for global learning experiences for all students	Authentic learning experiences that expose students to global topics and interaction with peoples across the globe
Promote digital citizenship among all students	Explicit instruction offered to all students and parents
Identify and align activities K-12	Articulated and coordinated experiences will provide for continuity and growth

Strategic Objective #5
Strengthen local connections to and ownership of our schools.

Key Actions	Indicators of Success
Continually assess district and school communication structures and systems using surveys and other means	A mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of District and school communication structures
Develop multiple mechanisms and structures for maximizing communication with staff and the community	Identification of priorities for improved communication
Expand community partnerships to provide authentic learning experiences	Identification of current community partnerships Survey data from local community on their interest and willingness to engage in or support partnerships
Expand advocacy partnerships to promote interests of IUFSO, our students, and the school community	Increased voice and influence to support District needs
Identify opportunities to engage community participation in school-based programs	New or expanded community programs Assessment of community-based opportunities to inform future planning

To further accomplish strategic objective #5, we will build school pride & outreach by enhancing school spirit and refining our communications.

Key Actions	Indicators of Success
Create District-wide booster club to support all student programs	An organized booster club in place to support athletics and the arts.
Enhancement of communication tools as a means to better build connections with the community	New website and aligned communication tools across the District
Foster growth of school image	New District identity; craft targeted school marketing materials; and spirit wear
Initiate a community-wide wellness campaign to support our students and families	A coordinated effort to proactively support and encourage wellness

Strategic Objective #6

Ensure the fiscal health of the district and provide for a high quality learning environment.

To accomplish strategic objective #6, we will manage our fiscal health by ensuring the District's financial security and providing for well-maintained facilities.

Key Actions	Indicators of Success
Perform analysis of district budget	Communication of cost drivers and financial trends to promote a deeper understanding of District finances.
Development and maintenance of a long-range financial plan	Publication of plan to inform financial planning
Development and maintenance of a long-range facilities plan	Publication of plan to inform financial planning and facility maintenance
Identification of opportunity for the reduction of expenses	Increased shared services & new efficiencies