



A Community of Learners

Informational Memo - Recalibration of District Initiatives Preview

TO: School Board

FROM: Superintendent Dr. Trisha Kocanda

May 19, 2020

Overview & Background

As our remote learning experiences evolve and develop a rhythm, time and attention is directed toward higher-level planning that impacts the mid- and long-term goals and priorities of The Winnetka Public Schools. The School Board will need to make decisions related to reprioritizing plans and strategy as it relates to important District-level work given the management of a pandemic for another 12-24 months. On May 5, 2020, Governor Pritzker released a [Restore Illinois](#) plan that shares information related to reopening of activities, inclusive of school operations. Based on current, available data, it is likely schools will need to continue building longer-term remote learning plans and modified in-school plans.

Looking Ahead

The School Board will continue with subcommittee meetings and host a work session to recalibrate the District's key initiatives - reviewing timeline and priorities. The management of a pandemic understandably shifts priorities, requiring a renewed look at what was planned under "normal" conditions. At the June 11, 2020, regular Board meeting, it is anticipated the Board will make timeline and priority decisions about the following high-level goal areas (the School Board President was consulted in developing these goal areas):

Facility Needs & Priorities

Goal: Revise the EMFP's most urgent needs and priorities given this spring's in-depth analysis by new architects, Perkins + Will, MSA Engineers, and Pepper Construction.

Next Steps: The Board's Facility Subcommittee is meeting on May 22, 2020, to analyze updated data and determine the most essential projects to maintain healthy facilities. The costs associated with the needs will also be presented for the Finance Subcommittee's consideration into long-term planning.

Financial Priorities & Planning

Goal: Evaluate updated financial models embedding new scenarios related to COVID-19, including potential property tax freezes and pandemic-related operational costs. The Board needs to review facility priorities and redefine a 3-5 year vision. This process will include discussion on re-evaluating an April 2021 facilities referendum. The Board will also need to review and refine financial parameters based on new models.

Next Steps: The Board will meet and discuss at a worksession in late May.

Strategic Planning

Goal: Agree to a new approach and timeline based on unexpected school closures and pandemic response. Administration, Maxie Clarke, and Megan Panje-Wilson, have been planning with the Battelle for Kids Team since the last Board meeting and created another approach ([Plan C](#)). Current thinking is to find a way to evolve the Portrait work over the course of a year during this "new normal" era and relaunch strategic planning in spring 2021. The District would develop a set of targeted annual goals for the 2020-2021 school year.

Next Steps: Once the School Board approves a revised approach and timeline, communication plans will be implemented to notify staff and community. Annual goals would be developed with Board input over the summer with approval in August 2020.

Pandemic Mid- and Long-Term Planning

Goal: Adhere to 3-phase plan for ensuring operational, health/safety standards and remote/hybrid educational programming can be jointly developed and implemented.

Next Steps: Administration will present a draft of the 3-phase planning, embedding purposefully sequenced decision-making for Board feedback at the May 19 meeting.