Strategic Direction

Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 1. Effective Teacher in Every Classroom

What we will do

Our district employs about 12,700 teachers in almost 300 different schools, and we are putting into place a thoughtful, bold, systemic, and comprehensive plan of action that will dramatically transform the district's human capital systems and ensure that a highly effective teacher is in place in every one HISD's classrooms.

Why we will do it

We are committed to improving student achievement across our district, and research tells us that teachers are by far the most powerful school-based factor in a child's academic success or failure. Specifically, studies have shown that students who had very effective teachers for three years in a row were able to improve their performance on standardized tests by more than 50 percent in comparison to students who had three ineffective teachers in a row (Sanders and Rivers, 1996).

What we will report

The following *Strategic Direction Management Report* answers the question: Is HISD acting on the priorities identified in the strategic plan with fidelity? It measures HISD's accomplishments and risks for each Key Strategies in support of the overall Core Initiative.

The *Strategic Direction Management Report* is produced Quarterly. Color indicators are used to as an idication of whether administration is on track to accomplish a Key Strategy's quarterly goals. A "Green" indicator ● means the district has made acceptable progress with respect to budget, scope and timeliness. A "Yellow" indicator ○ means the district has identified risk with respect to one or more aspects. A "Red" inidcator ● means progress has stopped or has a significant deficiency. As the Strategic Direction builds a foundation towards achieveing the district's goals over a multi-year period, not all Key Strategies will have information to communicate in a given period.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 1. Effective Teacher

1.1 Strengthen recruiting and staffing policies and practices to attract top talent	
Main Element	**Progress**
1.1.1 Refine recruitment and staffing practices	🟢
1.1.2 Implement improved teacher recruitment and staffing practices	🟢
1.1.3 Build awareness and support among internal and external stakeholders	🟢
1.1.4 Implement a "Talent Acquisition System"	🟢

In this period, we began our focused recruitment efforts to recruit and select highly effective teachers. Our efforts included refining our college recruitment process to visit more rigorous programs including targeted events at Harvard, University of Michigan, Spellman, Columbia, University of Houston, University of Texas and many others. In addition to our more focused recruitment visits, we made several other changes in our selection process to ensure we find the best teachers. These changes included: Implementing differentiated selection process with tiers of candidate pools, creating a priority internal recruitment window, and aligning the selection process for ACP with the teacher selection process. launching recruitment efforts to enroll our Apollo math tutors in full-time teaching positions.

We have also selected our Talent Acquisition System vendor, Kenexa, and received Board approval to negotiate a contract with them.

Over the next period, we plan to begin working with core teams to implement the Talent Acquisition system and to launch a website with resources for Principals to access to assist in selection of teachers from our pool for their campuses. We will continue our targeted college efforts while focusing on our plan to hire experienced teachers and Montessori and Fine Arts candidates. We will be working hard to integrate any displaced teachers into the staffing process with the schools. We are also working on redesigning our vacancy tracking process to allow for more accurate reporting and focused staffing efforts.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 1. Effective Teacher

1.2 Establish a rigorous and fair teacher appraisal system to inform key decisions	
Main Element	**Progress**
1.2.1 Develop and implement a district wide staff review process for all teachers in every school	🟢
1.2.2 In depth review of the faculty in nine of HISD's lowest-performing schools	🟢
1.2.3 Design a model of teacher competency and behavior	🟡
1.2.4 Develop measures of student learning	🟢
1.2.5 Define the teacher performance appraisal process	🟢
1.2.6 Incorporate performance appraisal data into key decisions	🟢
1.2.7 Gather stakeholder input	🟡

Accomplishments

We have secured significant funding from private foundations (Arnold, Gates) and competitive public grants (TIF) to support the design and implementation of this work. In addition, we conducted the Fall 2010 Staff Review process where principals grouped nearly 12,000 teachers into one of four ratings, and discussed each teacher with their SIO, HR and PDS. Through the period we have actively engaged stakeholders through the SDMC and DAC to make recommendations and inform decisions around all aspects of the teacher appraisal redesign. Largely through this work, we have created three high-level performance criteria (Instructional Practice, Student Achievement and Professional Expectations) and more detailed criteria within each to serve as the framework for evaluation. As the next level of detail within the appraisal design work, we have launched five working groups who are charged with detailing the tools and instruments necessary to implement the new system.

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Planned for next period

Over the next several months we will accomplish several key goals towards designing a new teacher appraisal system. The SDMCs and DAC will provide key recommendations regarding the evaluation process, which we hope to translate into new policy proposals. The five working groups will continue to meet and outline details of the new system, with a public comment period in February that will serve as an additional opportunity for stakeholder input. We hope to have the SDMCs and DAC review a final proposal before t goes to the School Board in April.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 1. Effective Teacher

1.3 Provide individualized teacher support and development	
Main Element	**Progress**
1.3.1 Identify and track centralized TSD needs via Staff Review and appraisal ratings	🟢
1.3.2 Develop a long-term centralized TSD strategy	🟢
1.3.3 Implement a long-term centralized TSD strategy	🟢
1.3.4 Establish PD clearinghouse	🟢
1.3.5 Identify and track school-based TSD needs via Staff Review and appraisal ratings	🟡
1.3.6 Develop a strategy for school-based TSD	🟡
1.3.7 Establish metrics for measuring the effectiveness of school-based TSD	
1.3.8 Identify and execute training for principals to identify and respond to teacher development needs	🟡

In this period we accomplished, staffing reviews which were completed during the week of November 1, 2010. A Professional Development staff member was included in the reviews to support the process. Principals identified the category into which each teacher was placed and presented the Individualized Professional Development Plans that will be used to drive decisions for PD for 2010-2011.   Principals were provided with a handbook defining standards for school-based TSD. The handbook included step-by-step suggestions for the implementation of PD on the campus level. PDS staff members are providing coaching on school-based PD on a request basis.

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In the next period we plan to participate in the second staffing review sessions in order to continue to identify professional development that must be offered to meet the needs of individual teachers. A process will be designed through the PD clearinghouse to collect data relative to school-based TSD and the results in student performance. Training will be scheduled for principals and campus leadership to define strategies and resources that principals can use to provide PD for all teachers.

In the future we will be working to identify data sources that can be used to create the metrics by which all campus-based and centralized professional development will be evaluated.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 1. Effective Teacher

| 1.4 Offer meaningful career pathways and differentiated compensation to retain and leverage the most-effective teachers	
Main Element	**Progress**
1.4.1 Implement the ASPIRE Award program	🟢
1.4.2 Establish career pathways	🟡
1.4.3 Implement a new compensation model	🟡

Accomplishments

Preliminary ASPIRE Awards for the 2009-10 school year have been posted and share with staff. In addition, we have held initial and introductory conversations and focus groups regarding teacher leadership and career pathways.

Planned for next period

ASPIRE Award determinations will be finalized and paid out in January, and a more formal kickoff of the career pathways and compensation work will begin, including defining teacher leadership opportunities and associated compensation, and recruiting teachers for these roles.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 2. Effective Principal in Every School

What we will do

We are going to make sure that we have a highly effective principal at the head of every school, To do that, we will improve our recruiting system to be more aggressive in recruiting talented individuals into principals positions, starting with our own internal pipeline of best performing teachers and assistant principals and supplemented by strong external candidates. We will also provide all of our principals with the ongoing supports, careful evaluations, and individualized professional development they need while also placing all the necessary tools at their disposal to lead their schools into becoming the best in the nation.

Why we will do it

There is a broad consensus among educational experts that having an effectivee principal at the head of every school is of utmost importance to assuring student success. The more challenging and/or underprivileged the student population in the school, the more this is true. In HISD, we have ample evidence of this, as there is broad variation in the on-track-to college-readiness rates of our elementary, middle, and high school students, even among schools with very similar poverty levels.

What we will report

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Quarter: 2nd December 2010

Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 2. Effective Principal in Every School

2.1 Design and implement a rigorous, fair principal appraisal system	
Main Element	**Progress**
2.1.1 Develop a comprehensive principal appraisal system that includes multiple performance measures (e.g., student performance, school safety, teacher support), integrates feedback from teachers and principals' supervisors, and identifies principals' individual needs	🟢

Accomplishments

In this period we held an initial kickoff meeting with the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL). We collected feedback from various constituencies on the appraisal rubric. We initiated the identification of task force members and pilot implementation participants.

Planned for Next Period

In the next period we plan to finalize the principal appraisal rubric that will be used in the pilot implementation program. We will also hold the first task force meeting. In addition, we will solidify the work plan and timeline for full development and implementation of the new principal appraisal system.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 2. Effective Principal in Every School

2.2 Implement quality assurance standards and recommended practices to guide principals' decision-making, with high expectations and clear accountability.	
Main Element	**Progress**
2.2.1 Develop standards and recommended practices to guide principals' decision-making	🟢
2.2.2 Align practices and policies (e.g., principal's evaluation, job description, training, career path preparation) with the new model of standards for principal decision-making	🟢

Accomplishments

In this period we accomplished the task of initiating a draft document that describes quality assurance standards and recommended practices that will be used by principals to guide them in their day-to-day decision-making at the campus level.

Planned for Next Period

In the next period we plan to complete the draft of standards and recommended practices, vet the draft document through various constituencies and present a final draft of the standards and practices for review by the Superintendent's Cabinet.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 2. Effective Principal in Every School

2.3 Strengthen recruiting and staffing policies and practices to attract top talent	
Main Element	**Progress**
2.3.1 Create a high-quality leadership preparation program to prepare, recruit, and select best-in-class talent internally (e.g., teachers, assistant principals) in order to create an exceptional pool of candidates to fill school vacancies	🟢
2.3.2 Strengthen HISD's recruiting practices to attract top principal talent from sources external to HISD	🟢
2.3.3 Create systems to ensure ongoing effectiveness of HISD recruitment programs	🟢

Accomplishments

In this period we accomplished the task of initiating a partnership with the University of Texas Collaborative Urban Leadership Program (UTCULP) that will yield a pipeline of 24 individuals who will be ready to serve in district-wide leadership positions. We continued the partnership with the Rice Entrepreneurial Education Program (REEP) to cultivate the pipeline of individuals who complete that leadership program. We continued recruitment efforts by traveling to external events at the National Association of Bilingual Educators (NABE), Texas Association of Secondary School Principals (TASSP), Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA), University of Michigan, University of Texas, Lamar University and Prairie View A&M University. We developed new standards and a new selection process for principals and assistant principal/deans. We conducted a Leadership Summit on December 11, 2010, in an effort to continue to attract internal candidates for district leadership positions. We conducted a search and received Board approval to purchase a talent acquisition system that will add us in attracting, recruiting, hiring and retaining the best school leaders for HISD.

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Planned for Next Period

In the next period we will continue to work with the University of Texas and Rice University to support the leadership preparation programs at each institution. We will also attend additional external recruitment events sponsored by the Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA) and the National Association of Black School Educators (NABSE). In addition, we will begin working with core teams to implement a district-wide Talent Acquisition system.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 2. Effective Principal in Every School

2.4 Establish a comprehensive instructional leadership program to develop and retain top talent	
Main Element	**Progress**
2.4.1 Define leadership pathways/ladders for HISD staff and administrators to become principals, and for principals to advance into higher leadership roles	🟡
2.4.2 Assess the strengths and weaknesses of HISD's current supports to principals	🟡
2.4.3 Provide ongoing professional development to principals who are already working in HISD, tailored to individual need while also addressing key topics in principal development (e.g., coaching of teachers, mentoring, APs, and data-driven decision-making	🟢
2.4.4 Provide new principals with a high-quality, three-year mentorship program	🟢

Accomplishments

In this period we worked with external partners to provide additional opportunities for current employees to participate in new or current credentialing and certification programs that would lead to principal certification. Interested employees were notified. Recruitment or information sessions were held with HISD Alternative Certification Program's Principal Academy for Collaborative Engagement (PACE), Texas A & M University, Sam Houston State University, University of Texas, Rice University, Prairie View A & M University, University of Houston, and Lamar University. We are continuing to add to the number and variety of partners providing credentialing and certification services.

Additionally, we conducted research before proceeding with Main Element 2.4.2. We worked with the district's Procurement Office to determine the potential cost for hiring an external researcher to design and conduct the survey to assess the strengths and weaknesses of HISD's current supports to principals. Based on cost projections and funding concerns, we have begun conversations with HISD's Research and Accountability Department to develop and conduct the survey. Survey results will inform the conceptualization, design and delivery of future principal training. Additionally, Research and Accountability will complete the annual HISD Board-mandated principal survey of central office departments in the

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spring. These results, along with the results described in 2.4.2 will be used to develop ongoing professional development for current principals. Currently, plans are underway to provide a variety of training for current staff. These include Staff Documentation and Investigations training, district-wide master schedule training and cognitive coach training.

We have also begun the three-year mentorship program. First-time assistant principals and deans are enrolled in a "grow-your-own" leadership development model that includes coaching, learning seminars and job-embedded professional development. Chief School Officers, School Improvement Officers and key central office staff are coaching and guiding new administrators through structured professional development team meetings. First-time campus principals are also participating in learning seminars, coaching sessions with School Improvement Officers and have also been assigned a mentor.

Planned for Next Period

In the next period we will work in conjunction with the Research and Accountability Department to roll out the survey assessing strengths and weaknesses. The three-year mentorship program will continue. Staff Documentation and Investigations training will be concluded. We will have identified task force members and pilot participants who will help define the competency model, and provide feedback and input into the model for leadership pathways and ladders.

Main Element 2.4.2 will be on schedule now that we have a working agreement with Research and Accountability Department to complete the survey. This may be best strategy since this department is already tasked with completing the annual survey of principals. Findings from both surveys will inform future support and development strategies.

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Strategic Direction

Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 2. Effective Principal in Every School

2.5 Create a safe and secure environment conducive to learning in all schools	
Main Element	**Progress**
2. 5.1 Create a central data source to track and monitor safety violations/breaches	🟢

Accomplishments

In this period we conducted research to identify the characteristics of a central database that can best meet the needs of the district.

Planned for Next Period

In the next period we will share our findings with key constituencies. Schools will continue to use utilize the Safe Schools Department on issues that pertain to Safe Schools Choice Options (SSCO). The Safe Schools Department acts as an advocate, utilizing police reports from HISD Police and data from Federal and State Compliance to monitor schools to reduce miscoding of safety violations.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 2. Effective Principal in Every School

2.6 Create a healthy environment conducive to learning in all schools	
Main Element	**Progress**
2.6.1 Support positive behaviors in schools	🟢
2.6.2 Increase healthy options for HISD students	

Accomplishments

In this period we posted bullying information on the HISD Safe Schools website. Additionally, ongoing communication and training have occurred with schools, parents, community groups in collaboration with the Parent Involvement Department, Curriculum Instruction and Assessment Department, and Professional Development Services. HISD has also created systems to manage emergency illness of students and staff. We provide communicable disease surveillance, control and monitoring.

Planned for Next Period

In the next period, we will form a consortium of individuals representing HISD Police, Risk Management and Safe Schools to conduct safety audits at all HISD schools. We will also continue to cultivate partnerships with other health care providers in the greater Houston area.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 3. Rigorous Instructional Standards and Supports

What we will do

Redesign the course offerings, curriculum, assessment tests, and social/emotional supports provided in schools throughout HISD, with a particular emphasis on giving all students the same access to educational programs and opportunities, regardless of which school they attend, as well as improving instruction for students at all levels. We will also implement a set of targeted reforms in order to turn around HISD's lowest-performing schools.

Why we will do it

HISD has a number of outstanding academic programs and supports across the district, but on the whole does not prepare students for college and career readiness. Our scores show that, depending on the grade, only about 40 to 70% of our students are reading or doing math at grade level. In addition, student EVAAS growth data show a slowing of growth in mathematics progress from the fifth to sixth grades, resulting in only 18% of HISD eighth-grade students successfully completing Algebra I. The end result is that the majority of HISD students who enroll in community college require remedial courses in their first year.

What we will report

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 3. Rigorous Instructional Standards and Supports

3.1 Equity in access to educational programs	
Main Element	**Progress**
3.1.1 Ensure that all schools have high quality programs to meet the diverse needs of students	🟢
3.1.2 Broaden access to dual credit, Advanced Placement (A), and International Baccalaureate (IB) and improve exam success rates	🟡
3.1.3 Increase consistency of Magnet Schools	🟢
3.1.4 Provide specialized instructional opportunities throughout the district for students seeking alternative instructional programs	🟡
3.1.5 Launch a post-secondary access effort	🟢

Accomplishments

- Met with Texas IB Executive Director on October 14, 2010 to review process for schools to become an IB authorized site. Funds for summer training must be identified; however, schools will be ask to pay the annual application fees.
- Informational meetings were held for all interested Elementary and Secondary Principals on Wednesday, November 10 at 11:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- Working on securing funds for IB Level 1 and Level 2 summer training at Rice University, June 16-17.
- Completed RFP process. Magnet Schools of America was awarded the project and began the program review process on October 4, 2010. Phase I has been completed which included the review of the District's Vision and Governance of Magnet Programs; Public Vision of Magnet Programs; Current Magnet Procedures and Practice; Central Office Support; Magnet Fundings; and Magnet Evaluation.
- Currently, Phase II is underway reviewing Individual Program Quality. School visits to the 113 Magnet programs have been completed. The schools' Self Evaluation Reports are currently being reviewed.

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- Contemporary Learning Center (alternative school) received 3 million dollar grant through the federally funded Texas Title I Priority School Grant
- Dell Grant received with specific AP goals.
- Hosted all planned fall workshops for AP Coordinators, Pre-AP and AP Teachers and AP Mentor Program
- HISD AP Strategic Goals (aligned to Dell Grant) completed and presented to High School Principals November 2010 HS Principals meeting
- Hosted an IB Meeting for all prospective IB Elementary, Middle and High Schools on December 9, 2010

Planned for next period

- Final Magnet Review Report is expected on December 17, 2010
- AP Spring seminar workshop, AP Leadership Institute will be offered at Rice University February 5, 2011
- AP Celebration Saturday event for all HISD AP teachers will be offered at HSPVA February 19, 2011
- Continue the planning of Dell Grant spring/summer/fall activities

Issues/Concerns/Requests

- After the Magnet Program Review Report is reviewed by the Superintendent and Board Members, another round of Parent-Community Meeting in the Spring must be held to share the final Magnet Program Review report and provide an opportunity for parents and community members to give input and feedback.
- Create an implementation plan which includes a phase-in design to incorporate the recommendations.
- Contemporary Learning Center (CLC) is in the process of repurposing the school mission to attract a broader range of students interested in an alternative school setting
- HP Carter closing has provided an opportunity to expand the menu of alternative schools available – a plan for repurposing the school is in the works

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 3. Rigorous Instructional Standards and Supports

3.2 Develop and implement an aligned standards-based curriculum and assessment plan	
Main Element	Progress
3.2.1 Communicate high expectations for instructional delivery and establish district-managed curriculum guidelines	🟢
3.2.2 Arrange an independent external analysis of the district's curriculum in order to establish a well-crafted, focused, valid, and comprehensive curriculum	🟢
3.2.3 Promote academic rigor for all students by updating the current curriculum to meet standards for college and career readiness (CCR)	🟢
3.2.4 Train teachers on implementing the aligned/updated curriculum, and train principals on supporting teachers in achieving campus and district goals	🟢
3.2.5 Identify a robust assessment system that will provide customized predictive and diagnostic assessments that are aligned to the district curriculum's scope and sequence	🟢
3.2.6 Establish a clearinghouse that identifies high-quality, research-based instructional materials aligned to the district's curriculum	🟢
3.2.7 Pursue an online platform for curriculum management and access	🟢

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Accomplishments

- Developed reading and mathematics documents for parents that describe what students should know and be able to do by the end of each grade level, K – 8, and by selected high school courses.
- Developed new scope and sequence documents.
- Developed new formative assessments (known as interim assessments) that are administered by teachers approximately once every three weeks. The data from the assessments assist teachers in making instructional decisions.
- Instructional specialists are coaching teachers: modeling lessons, co-teaching, assisting in lesson plan development, etc.
- Curriculum managers and specialists are supporting schools with the implementation of intervention programs such as READ 180 and Cognitive Tutor.

Issues/Concerns/Requests

- The budget shortfall might hinder some of our plans for professional development, curriculum audits and an assessment system.

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Strategic Direction

Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 3. Rigorous Instructional Standards and Supports

3.3	Implement Response to Intervention model district-wide to provide early, effective assistance to children	
Main Element		Progress
3.3.1 Train teachers and principals on how to diagnose students' needs and differentiate support within the classroom		🟡
3.3.2 Implement a school-level approach to designing holistic intervention strategies for helping Tier II students and accurately referring Tier III students		🟡
3.3.3 Improve district-level solutions for Tier III students		🟡
3.3.4 Provide tactile materials and supports to assist all teachers in determining strategies to meet student academic/social emotional needs and challenges		🟢
3.3.5 Improve the instructional climate by offering technology-based applications to identify research-based strategies and solutions to meet the social/emotional needs of students		🟢
3.3.6 Articulate the Intervention Assistance Team/Response to Intervention process for parents		🔴

Accomplishments

- An academic and behavioral team has been meeting to develop the Online Pyramid of Intervention. These two teams will merge and the total product will be vetted before the online application is created.
- An Action Required Memorandum and an evaluation instrument was disseminated in November. The Safe Schools Manager has met/presented to schools and groups in the district—collecting concerns and recommendations from the field to implement new/improved strategies.

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- Safe Schools has been meeting with CEP and presented ideas to Dr. Pamela Randle to develop a strategy to promote behavior modification during placement, enhance communication with schools, and to monitor progress once the student has returned to the regular educational setting.
- All core Academic teachers have received an IAT/RTI flipchart.
- A draft of Pyramid of Intervention will be presented to the IAT steering committee in November
- The Safe Schools Department has secured personnel to assist with loading IAT/RTI information for parents onto the website; this activity will be complete December 2010.

Planned for next period

- District leaders are meeting to discuss next steps
- A grade/Chancery/PEIMS report will be pulled for all students in the Apollo 20 Schools; data will be utilized to make recommendations and work with campus-based IAT for interventions
- A moodle training for IAT will be developed by Professional Development utilizing information developed/supplied by Safe Schools. A blog for posting questions/concerns and to receive support will be utilized as part of the training process.

Issues/Concerns/Requests

- Until the moodle training is complete, there is only one staff member providing training/support for IAT/RtI.
- There are no funds available for the development of an online IAT/RtI model and other supportive materials
- There is a need for human and financial capital to ensure that this initiative be delivered in a timely manner; the online pyramid should be moved to year two or three of the strategic direction and a level II moodle training take place to train on the usage of this system.

Risks

- We must ensure that Apollo 20 schools receive support in implementing IAT/RTI

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 3. Rigorous Instructional Standards and Supports

3.4 Apollo 20 Plan	
Main Element	Progress
3.4.1 Build Apollo 20 Core Team	🟢
3.4.2 Research and identify proven approaches for low-performing schools	🟢
3.4.3 Implement a school-wide transformation intervention model that would begin with the 2010–2011 school year (e.g., increase learning time for staff and student support, allow operational flexibility for governance)	🟢

Accomplishments

- Schools improved attendance from 3-5% points compared to last year in the first few months.
- High Schools improved cohort drop out rate for 2010 on an average of 8% pending coding January 15th with TEA.
- Middle Schools tentatively met the 1.6% or less drop out rate pending coding January 15th withTEA
- Out of school suspensions have decreased by over 50% on average in our Apollo 20 schools.
- Math tutoring has seen 15% - 29% in growth from diagnostics in the beginning of the year for 6th & 9th grade tutoring.
- Overall schools systems and procedures have improved to establish a safer environment focused on learning.
- Schools have implemented stricter discipline policies and uniform policies.
- Schools have implemented PLCs that are looking at 3 week District Assessment data to monitor mastery and using individual student trackers to track mastery.
- Implementing Classroom Management and Professional Development plans based on principal priorities for 100% engagment, differentiation, assessing for learning, and moving towards more student centered learning. Schools still need growth in these areas, but coaching and development is being provided to schools.
- Schools are receiving monthly feedback around strengths and priority areas for growth once a month.

🟢 Green indicates acceptable progress   🟡 Yellow indicates a concern with timeline, budget and scope   🔴 Red indicates a deficiency in time, budget or scope

Issues/Concerns/Requests

- Continued communication with all stakeholders around the mission & vision of the program and success.
- Monitoring attendance rate.
- Instruction needs improvement at all 9 schools with continued development of many 1ˢᵗ and 2ⁿᵈ year teachers and coaching.
- Still need to raise some funding for program plan components.
- Moving unacceptable schools to acceptable.
- High number of special education students in our schools and some have a high number of second language learners.

Risks

Devoting a significant amount of money to ensuring a better education for our highest need children.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 3. Rigorous Instructional Standards and Supports

| 3.5 Implement a comprehensive literacy (reading) program in grades pre-k through 12	
Main Element	Progress
3.5.1 Develop a comprehensive PK-12 Literacy Plan to ensure all students have the necessary literacy skills to be college and career ready	🟢
3.5.2 Establish PK-12 reading standards across the district to be used in the identification of above-, on- and below-grade level readers	🟡
3.5.3 Develop and implement an aligned district-wide student literacy pathway to meet the needs of individual students at each grade level	🟡
3.5.4 Implement PK-12 standard district-wide screening and progress monitoring reading assessments to ensure students read on- or above-grade level	🟡
3.5.5 Provide differentiated and ongoing training to teachers, campus leadership teams and district administrators on how to implement, monitor and support literacy framework	🟢

Accomplishments

- Completed Phase 1 of Literacy Plan work.
- Received positive feedback on phase 1 literacy plan work from stakeholders (Elementary SIOs, Principal Ad Hoc committee, elementary and secondary literacy coaches, central office academic departments)
- Developed reading documents for parents that describe what students should know and be able to do by the end of the each grade level, K-12.

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- Launched ongoing training initiative to facilitate quality implementation of new reading adoption including coaching and mentoring, model lessons, and classroom support. (provided by instructional specialists and curriculum specialists).
- Launched district-wide textbook selection committee process for Pre-K, language arts, and ESL adoptions. Textbook implementation – Fall 2011.

Planned for next period

- Share literacy plan with the Superintendent and Board Members.
- Prioritize literacy plan components.
- Develop action steps for literacy plan framework through committee work.
- Develop implementation plan for literacy work.
- Review RFP proposals and select vendor.
- Develop training plan for Apollo schools.
- Finalize contract with TIMES/MetaMetrics and take to board for approval.

Issues/Concerns/Requests

- Determine funding source for TIMES/MetaMetics contract.
- Determine funding source for professional development.

Risks

- TIMES/MetaMetrics reading standards development work is behind schedule.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 3. Rigorous Instructional Standards and Supports

3.6 Implement a comprehensive Numeracy/mathematics program in grades pre-k through 12	
Main Element	Progress
3.6.1 Provide equitable instruction by establishing district-wide Numeracy targets to ensure that all students are college/career ready	🟢
3.6.2 Develop an aligned, district-wide Numeracy Coaching Model, targeted to meet the needs of teachers and students at each grade level	🟢
3.6.3 Provide differentiated and ongoing training to teachers, principals, School Improvement Officers, and other stakeholders on how to implement, monitor, and support Numeracy instruction	🟢
3.6.4 Develop and implement district-wide formative assessments and provide guidelines and standards of practice for targeted intervention, based on assessment data	🟢

Accomplishments

- Developed mathematics documents for parents that describe what students should know and be able to do by the end of each grade level, K – 8, and by selected high school courses.
- Developed new scope and sequence documents.
- Developed new formative assessments (known as interim assessments) that are administered by teachers approximately once every three weeks. The data from the assessments assist teachers in making instructional decisions.
- Instructional specialists are coaching teachers: modeling lessons, co-teaching, assisting in lesson plan development, etc.

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- Curriculum managers and specialists are supporting schools with the implementation of intervention programs such as Cognitive Tutor.
- Implemented Renzulli Learning Program at all elementary campuses.
- Began ongoing teacher leadership training for math lead teachers and department chairs; provided all grade 6 teachers with Math Solutions training.
- Developed phase 1 of PK-12 mathematics plan.

<u>Issues/Concerns/Requests</u>

- The budget shortfall might hinder some of our plans for professional development.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 4. Ensure data-driven accountability

What we will do

Build robust systems and processes that enable easy access to and use of key data to inform decisions and manage high levels of performance district-wide.

Why we will do it

Currently, relevant data on students, teachers, and achievement are difficult to access, often not up-to-date, and not always accurate. Furthermore, many people across the district lack the expertise to use data to make decisions.

This creates an opportunity to arm HISD leadership with accessible, timely and accurate data and provide them with the training necessary to understand how to translate data into action. By doing so, we will get better at making the key decisions that affect the performance of the district. Funding for this initiative is focused on Phase 1 which includes minimal training and will provide initial reports. Training beyond Phase 1 is a multi-year program of training and learning through use.

What we will report

The following *Strategic Direction Management Report* answers the question: Is HISD acting on the priorities identified in the strategic plan with fidelity? It measures HISD's accomplishments and risks for each Key Strategies in support of the overall Core Initiative.

The *Strategic Direction Management Report* is produced Quarterly. Color indicators are used to as an idication of whether administration is on track to accomplish a Key Strategy's quarterly goals. A "Green" indicator ● means the district has made acceptable progress with respect to budget, scope and timeliness. A "Yellow" indicator ○ means the district has identified risk with respect to one or more aspects. A "Red" inidcator ● means progress has stopped or has a significant deficiency. As the Strategic Direction builds a foundation towards achieveing the district's goals over a multi-year period, not all Key Strategies will have information to communicate in a given period.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 4. Ensure data-driven accountability

4.1 Build easily accessible and accurate data architecture, warehouse, and technology infrastructure	
Main Element	**Progress**
4.1.1 Create a data warehouse with business intelligence interface	🔴
4.1.2 Implement a data quality and data stewardship program	🔴
4.1.3 Re-skill and implement IT infrastructure that supports the District	
4.1.3.1 Instructional Applications Architecture	🔴
4.1.3.2 Collaborative work environment	🟡
4.1.3.3 Set new standard on End-User Computing Device	🟢
4.1.3.4 1:1 computing strategy	🔴
4.1.3.5 Implement a modern Network	🔴
4.1.3.6 Implement a modern Information Security Program	🔴

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Accomplishments

Currently, critical data on students and teachers achievement is housed in various locations, requiring extensive manual effort and time to pull together relevant and useful reports to inform decision making by leadership across the district. To remedy this, HISD will create a central repository (data warehouse) where all critical data will be stored. The initial bids for this effort were received and ready for presentation to the Board for approval in 3Q10. Initial analysis of employee and student subject data areas indicates that a 1-2 year effort to clean and structure data is required before a sustainable data repository can be built. For instance, historical student records are not in consistent formats throughout the district. Data such as course, teacher, transcript and state coding data elements are not consistently represented preventing effective data analysis. Each school can have different class period structures. Resources are being recruited to initiate the data quality effort.

In support of a 21st century learning environment, HISD needs to develop a special type of instructional application called a collaborative environment, which will allow students, teachers, and administrators to work online more productively across a common platform. A successful collaborative system pilot was conducted. This solution is ready for scaling to the whole High School as an expanded pilot test.

New contracts for PCs, servers and printers secured 10-30% price improvements in support of expanding technology usage throughout the District. In order to support the transition to new IT architectures, HISD must revamp its existing IT architecture in areas such as network connectivity and information security to ensure that the supporting infrastructure in place is safe, secure, and easy to access. A high-level network design and architecture for a new network was completed and RFPs (requests for proposal) to support were released. Work continues to secure federal funding in support this effort. Initial planning and firewall funding was secured as part of the Information Security Program.

Planned for Next Period

Secure funding for the Data Quality and Data Warehouse programs. Hire initial data quality, data warehouse and business intelligence resources. Review pilot results of student/teacher collaborative system with Chiefs and complete necessary work to reach next school level rollout. Implement new PC, server and printer pricing and contracts securing 10-30% price improvements. Continue to work on funding for network improvements. Continue work and fund raising on IT network security improvements.

Needed to move Red to Yellow

Majority of the efforts require funding to secure qualified resources and implement projects. District needs to initiate a data quality program in support of creating a central data repository that will be used to pull together relevant and useful reports to inform decision making by leadership across the district. District needs to determine priority of IT infrastructure projects and feasibility given current resources and funding.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 4. Ensure Data – Driven Accountability

4.2 Develop and implement performance management tools and practices for decision-making	
Main Element	**Progress**
4.2.1 Adapt Board Monitoring System to create a dashboard that provides a snapshot of the most important district performance measures	🟢
4.3.2 – 4.2.6 Create a dashboard that summarizes important performance metrics for key district leadership	🟡
4.3.7 End User Training	🟡

Accomplishments

Considerable work has been accomplished through the Apollo group and others to develop the Board Monitoring System metrics and present those to the Board, so that going forward efforts will be focused on implementing the new system. In addition, the existing performance management work in the central office has continued and serves as a strong foundation for developing performance metrics for key leadership in the next period. Accomplishments include extending the Dell grant expiration to continue central office performance management work with Battelle for Kids, and expanding the non-teacher employee appraisal pilot (ePerformance Phase II), which was launched December 3rd for managers.

Planned for next period

The Board Monitoring System and the performance metrics will be discussed at the January Board retreat, and following that session the metrics for key district leadership will be outlined. Much of the work also hinges on 4.1 so that effective data systems are in place.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 4. Ensure Data – Driven Accountability

4.3 Design Effective and Efficient Business Processes and Procedures for Optimization of Resources and Results	
Main Element	**Progress**
4.3.1 Design and implement effective and efficient processes for selecting, obtaining, and evaluating instructional services and materials	🟢
4.3.2 Design processes for schools to evaluate and share experiences about vendors	🟢
4.3.3 Define a business process for procurement of services and materials off of recommended vendor list	🟢

Accomplishments

In this period we developed a DRAFT vendor questionnaire to post on the District's portal. This questionnaire is intended to qualify prospective Suppliers and to gain a better understanding of the products and services they supply. Depending upon the prospective Suppliers responses will determine the District's testing of the products and services with the objectives and applications of the District's curriculum. We also developed a DRAFT application grid for District Staff to select approved products and services once they have been vetted and approved for use in the District.

Planned for Next Period

In the next period we plan to finalize the above DRAFTs and place them on the District's portal. Next, we plan to develop the District's testing protocol for products and services submitted for testing. Finally, we plan to develop the District's ScoreCard application for schools to comment on the success or disappointment in the products and services they have experience with and place that information on the portal for other campuses to view prior to their acquisitions of the same products and services.

Issues/Concerns/Risks

All the above elements will require a significant commitment of District staff time and effort to ensure the completion of this project on-time.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 5. Culture of Trust Through Action

What we will do

We will put in place structures, processes, and methods to ensure that we have effective two-way communication to engage both internal and external stakeholders, including staff, parents, and community members.

Why we will do it

A powerful sense of community and a shared direction among all stakeholders is crucial to the successful transformation of HISD. Yet, we know that current communication structures in place are insufficient to foster authentic engagement.

During the process of developing the Strategic Direction, we have attempted to begin the movement toward a communications approach that is more interactive and transparent. Throughout dozens of meetings, communication emerged as a clear area for improvement. Thousands of stakeholders shared concerns, ideas, and suggestions on how we can improve. Taking all this valuable feedback into account, we designed two strategies that will enable us to revamp our communication so we can engage internal and external audiences in meaningful ways and ensure we have authentic two-way communication. By doing so, we will prove our commitment to change, re-build trust and confidence, and start a new era in our communication and relationship with HISD's broad community.

What we will report

The following *Strategic Direction Management Report* answers the question: Is HISD acting on the priorities identified in the strategic plan with fidelity? It measures HISD's accomplishments and risks for each Key Strategies in support of the overall Core Initiative.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 5. Culture of Trust Through Action

5.1 Develop effective, timely, two-way communication for internal stakeholders	
Main Element	**Progress**
5.1.1 Establish structures and protocols for disseminating information to and from internal stakeholders	🟢
5.1.2 Use a variety of methods to communicate with internal stakeholders	🟢
5.1.3 Build capacity to ensure implementation of timely, effective, two-way communication	🟢
5.1.4 Define and implement methods to evaluate effectiveness of internal communications	🟢

<u>Accomplishments</u>

During this period we completed the redesign of the main pages of the district website, including the main employee page. A third party solution has been identified for schools to manage their websites more effectively and efficiently. The first cohort of schools that will be using this service has been identified and introduced to the product. We put in place standardized processes for publicizing Board of Education meetings and meeting outcomes. A dedicated webpage for principals has been created; the webpage will provide direct access to useful resources, including frequently used manuals and forms, department quick links, and information to help principals stay informed about major district issues and initiatives (key messages and talking points). Opportunities for internal stakeholders to engage in meaningful, two-way communication with the district have been expanded on the website and through printed materials (i.e., budget comment cards). We have assembled communications plans from other large school districts for benchmarking purposes in our work to create a district strategic communications plan.

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Planned for next period

Our plans for next period focus on expanding our efforts. We will continue work on developing a district strategic communications plan and exploring ways to expand use of social media. We will also continue efforts to strengthen the employee enewsletter, to plan and conduct webinars on writing for staff, and to convene a communications advisory group of internal stakeholders.

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Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 5. Culture of Trust Through Action

5.2 Develop effective, timely, two-way communication for external stakeholders	
Main Element	**Progress**
5.2.1 Establish structures and protocols for disseminating information to and from external stakeholders	🟢
5.2.2 Use a variety of methods to communicate with external stakeholders	🟢
5.2.3 Build capacity to ensure implementation of timely, effective, two-way communication	🟢
5.2.4 Define and implement methods to evaluate effectiveness of external communications	🟢

Accomplishments

During this period we completed the redesign of the main pages of the district website. A third party solution has been identified for schools to manage their websites more effectively and efficiently. The first cohort of schools that will be using this service has been identified and introduced to the product. We put in place standardized processes for publicizing Board of Education meetings and meeting outcomes. A dedicated webpage for principals has been created; the web page will help principals stay informed about major district issues and initiatives (key messages and talking points). Opportunities for external stakeholders to engage in meaningful, two-way communication with the district have been expanded on the website and through printed materials (i.e., feedback card in Welcome to HISD publication and budget comment cards). We have assembled communications plans from other large school districts for benchmarking purposes in our work to create a district strategic communications plan.

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We have progressed in restructuring and consolidating the community database. In a related effort, we completed the development of the process and template for communications updates to parents and community members. Our first update to the community at large was about the 2011-12 Budget. The first Community Conversations information session was held on November 9; the subject was the budget and legislative agenda. Additionally, we created the initial design for the parent newsletter and reviewed and revised questions for the biannual parent and community survey.

As part of the district's efforts to strengthen communications with various stakeholder groups, we developed guidelines for the African American Advisory Council and Latino Advisory Council and identified prospective members. We met with Professional Development to explore ways to adapt our community partnerships training model to webinar format for staff. A training module was developed for school-based bilingual Spanish-speaking clerks, secretaries, and VIPS to strengthen translation and interpretation skills.

Planned for next period

Our plans for next period focus on expanding our efforts. We will continue work on developing a district strategic communications plan and exploring ways to expand use of social media. We are planning to produce and distribute the first issue of parent newsletter, convene the first meeting of African American Advisory Council and Latino Advisory Council, and hold the initial training sessions for school-based Spanish-speaking clerks, secretaries, and VIPS.

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