Every Child is a Work of Art

Create a Masterpiece.

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From the Board of Education President and Superintendent

MALIK EVANS

JEAN-CLAUDE BRIZARD

December 2009

Dear Rochester Community Members,

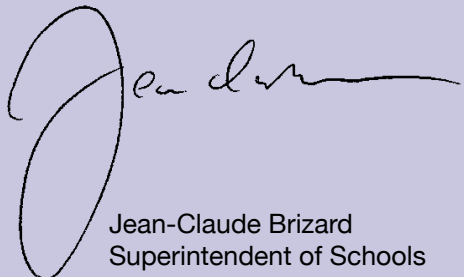***Our strategic plan begins with our belief that every child, <u>every</u> child, can succeed.***

Emboldened by this belief, we are driven to face our challenges, embrace the changes we must make to our culture and practices, and hold ourselves accountable for the success of every student. Together, we can achieve our vision to create a masterpiece of every child, each a work of art, who we have the profound privilege and profound responsibility to educate and to prepare for success in college, work, and life.

This plan is the product of the work we began nearly two years ago to improve student success. It is the result of our efforts as a district and as a community. The plan was developed under the leadership of the Superintendent and his senior administrative team, with support from the Board of Education, and shaped through conversations with principals, teachers, parents, students, and others. The community played a critical and integral role in its development. Through your feedback on our online strategic plan survey along with your participation in meetings, focus groups, and public forums, you directly shaped this 5-year strategic plan. We look forward to continuing and strengthening our partnership with you in support of our students.

The strategic plan provides a roadmap for our work beginning with our accomplishments in the 2008-2009 school year and continuing through 2012-2013. It details the changes we must make at the district, school, and classroom level to ensure student success. Because our core work of teaching and learning takes place in the school and classroom, this is where we will focus our efforts, resources, and impact over the next five years. Our entire community, however, plays a role in helping us reach our goals.

The activities and timelines in this plan may change as we move forward and face new challenges. What will not change is our goal to ensure the success of every student.

Sincerely,

Malik Evans
Board of Education President

Jean-Claude Brizard
Superintendent of Schools

Introduction

Our Vision

Every child is a work of art. Create a masterpiece.

At the core of our strategic plan is the belief that our work is about every child. Every child brings a wealth of talent and potential to us. We must embrace that talent and potential and equip every student with an education that draws forth the masterpiece that lies within each of them.

Our Mission

The mission of the Rochester City School District is to provide a quality education that ensures our students graduate with the skills to be successful in the global economy.

Our Core Values: Achievement, Equity, and Accountability

Our core values are based on our belief that every child can succeed. Every child can become a masterpiece.

Achievement - Improving student achievement through a laser-like focus on teaching and learning with an emphasis on results

Equity - Distributing resources equitably based on the needs of schools and students

Accountability - Using data to ensure that we hold adults accountable for the success of all students

What This Plan Means to You

This strategic plan is about ensuring that every child succeeds. Our entire community has a role to play in making it happen.

If you are a student, you can…

- Have high expectations for yourself, learn what you need to do to grow academically and socially at school, and commit to doing that.
- Seek support from your principals, teachers, guidance counselors, and school staff on the academic and social issues you face.
- Expect a high level of respect from your teachers and schools.
- Expect and request high-quality customer service from the Rochester City School District when you need information or help.
- Communicate to the Rochester City School District, through your school, student leadership, and directly, when you need us to do something differently or better.

If you are a parent, you can…

- Talk with school staff about your child's education and how you can support his or her learning.
- Emphasize at home the high standards the Rochester City School District sets for every one of its students.
- Expect to be treated with respect and a high level of customer service when interacting with any part of the district.
- Expect and request a range of high-quality school and program choices that reflect the diverse needs and interests of your child.
- Expect and request access to information about your child's school and your child's performance at school.

If you are a community member, you can…

- Emphasize in the community the high standards Rochester sets for every one of its students.
- Consider ways in which you can partner with the Rochester City School District to further student success.
- Support the dissemination of accurate information about our schools and students in the community.
- Hold us accountable for supporting student success by reviewing our strategic plan progress reports and questioning us about our performance.
- Hold us accountable for how we use taxpayer dollars.

If you are a Rochester City School District school administrator, teacher, or staff member, you can…

- Hold every student to high standards in your school or classroom.
- Empower students and families with knowledge of what students must know and be able to do.
- Hold yourselves accountable for adding to what every student knows and can do, every day.
- Collaborate with your fellow administrators, teachers, and staff to determine how to improve teaching and learning in your school.
- Be flexible and willing to adjust teaching to better accommodate diverse student learning needs.
- Expect and request a high level of professionalism, courtesy and high-quality professional development support from central administration.

If you are a Rochester City School District staff member who does not work in a school, you can…

- Emphasize in your daily work the district's high standards for every student.
- Discuss with your supervisor and colleagues on how you can best contribute to student success.
- Maximize the time and effort you spend on supporting student and school success.
- Be flexible and willing to adjust to new and improved ways of doing work centered on students and schools.
- Expect and request a high level of collegiality, respect, and recognition for your contribution to the district.

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STUDENT SUCCESS

FOCUS

CENTRAL OFFICE

★ *AGILE*
★ *FLEXIBLE*
★ *RESPONSIVE*
★ *EMPOWERING*

Achieving Our Vision

In January of 2008, guided by our core values of achievement, equity, and accountability, then-new Superintendent Brizard and members of his leadership team set out on an extensive listening and learning tour that involved meeting with hundreds of community members—students, parents, principals, teachers, district staff, and community partners. Your observations and insights combined with a detailed analysis of district performance helped to establish a clear picture of our current state and challenges to improving student success over the next five years.

What ultimately emerged was an ambitious agenda for change. At the heart of this agenda are two core strategies that will continue to focus and direct our efforts through 2013:

CORE STRATEGIES

Strategy 1: Proactively manage and support performance to empower schools

Our core work as a district is teaching and learning. Since teaching and learning take place in schools, schools must be the primary focus of our efforts and resources. Central administration will manage and support school performance to ensure student success. Schools, in turn, will be held accountable for their performance.

Based on their performance and capacity, schools will receive different levels of support and flexibility.

Strong performers with high capacity will be empowered with the flexibility to make certain decisions, requesting support from central administration on an as-needed basis. These schools will be called **Autonomous Schools.** Schools that do not perform well will receive less flexibility and receive proactive, targeted support to improve their performance. These schools will be called **Dream Schools**, a concept we launched in 2008-09. Dream Schools and other schools that fail to improve over time will be phased out or closed. School leaders and teachers will both play a critical role in this new structure.

Strategy 2: Create an organization and culture that is agile, flexible, and responsive to schools and students

We will be a lean and efficient organization that makes it easy for schools and students to get the support they need. We will work toward continuous improvement and change our culture toward one in which support for schools and students is everyone's focus. If we all acknowledge that every student can succeed, they will. If we are motivated by the belief that every student is a work of art and can become a masterpiece, we can motivate them to believe this too.

SNAPSHOT OF OUR DISTRICT TODAY

We are far from where we need to be to truly prepare each of our students for success in college, work, and life.

- Nearly half of our students do not graduate high school in 4 years.
- Nearly half of our students do not graduate high school in 5 years.
- We have significant achievement gaps that impact particular groups of students. For example, gaps in graduation rates are as follows:

- African American and White students: 4 percentage points
- Latino and White students: 9 percentage points
- English Language Learners (ELL) and non-ELLs: 19 percentage points
- Students with Disabilities and General Education students: 33 percentage points

WHAT THIS MEANS TODAY AND TOMORROW

If we don't change for the better, we are effectively saying to ourselves, our country, and the world that it is okay to have lower expectations for minorities and lower-income students.

If we don't equip every student for college, work, and life, we are saying that it is okay for our children to be worse off than we are. We are contributing to a future in which our children will grow up to:

- Suffer from health issues as much or more than we do
- Struggle to find employment and be very likely to end up in poverty
- Earn hundreds of thousands of dollars less in their lifetime than their better educated counterparts
- Be more likely to engage in criminal behavior that will make our city and county a less safe and desirable place to live
- Lack the ability to take full advantage of their rights and freedoms as democratic citizens
- Be ill-equipped to understand and change the world around them for the better

WHERE WE ARE AS A CITY

Rochester faces mounting challenges, from poverty to a declining population to health issues.

- Rochester ranked 11th in the nation for child poverty. 36.9% of children under the age of 18 are in poverty and that number increases to 37.2% for children under the age of 5.
- We have the highest rate of poverty among NYS Big 5 districts; 50% of our schools are at 90% poverty or higher.
- Between 2000 and 2006, the population of Rochester declined by 5.3%. Enrollment in our school district has continued to shrink over the past ten years.
- In the 2000s, 14-15% of incoming RCSD Pre-K and K students were hospitalized in a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at birth. That figure increased to 19.7% in 2007-08. This represents a change from every 1 in 7 to every 1 in 5 children.
- In 2007-08, over 15% of incoming Pre-K students had a parent who was incarcerated.
- In that same year, over 27% of incoming Pre-K students had experienced the death of a close family member.
- The estimated 2007 median household income in Rochester was $29,329, over 45% lower than the NYS median of $53,448.

HOW WILL BETTER EDUCATING OUR STUDENTS HELP OUR CITY TODAY AND TOMORROW?

If we drastically improve the education we provide to our students, we will:

- Give the families who will leave us for jobs and a better education in the suburbs a reason to stay
- Attract new families, increase our city's population, and increase our tax base
- Improve the quality of our workforce and ability to attract businesses that will create jobs
- Reduce the rate of poverty
- Reduce the scope and severity of health issues we face
- Improve the safety of our city, making it a more pleasant place to live, work, and go to school
- Spend our taxes on public health and education instead of incarceration
- Improve the health, well-being, and academic readiness of our next generation of incoming students
- Fulfill a moral, civic, and economic duty to improve ourselves, our children, and our society
- Prove that an urban education that provides every child with the opportunity to excel, regardless of race/ethnicity, disability, language proficiency or income level, can work.

Change Is Possible: Year One

While our challenges may seem daunting, the progress and growth of our district demonstrate that positive change is very possible.

We hit the ground running in 2008-09, year one of the 5-year strategic plan, and made the following key changes:

- We completed the first phase of a district-wide reorganization, devolving people and other resources from the central office to schools. That set us on the path to begin concentrating our resources at schools and make our organization more agile and responsive to school needs.

- Through the Dream Schools Initiative and our new Office of School Innovation, we began to proactively support and manage school performance to provide our students with high-quality, competitive secondary school options.

- We eliminated the practice of sending suspended students home with the goal of maximizing time for student learning, re-focusing our organizational approach to school safety around student needs and academic rigor.

- We began the development and rollout of the Rochester Curriculum, empowering schools, students, and families with a common understanding of our high expectations of what students should know and be able to do in each grade.

- Through the first phase of an overhaul that increased transparency in our district budgeting process, we improved our understanding of how we can better focus our fiscal resources in service to our students.

As the 2008-09 school year drew to a close, we reflected on the results of our changes, the progress we made, and the work that remains:

- Four-year graduation rates for students who started 9th Grade in 2002, 2003, and 2004 continued to increase. The 2004 Total Cohort Graduation Rate (2008 graduates) is 52% (1,153 of 2,220).

- Achievement in Grades 3-8 on New York State Math Assessment continued to improve overall. The percent meeting NYS standards went from 55% in 2007-08 to 63% in 2008-09, an 8 percentage point increase.

- Achievement in Grades 3-8 on New York State English Language Arts (ELA) Assessment continued to improve overall. The percent meeting NYS standards went from 47% in 2007-08 to 56% in 2008-09, a 9 percentage point increase.

- The graduation rate for our former English Language Learners (ELL) (76% graduation rate) surpasses both Non-ELL (52%) and ELL (33%) students by 23 and 43 percentage points respectively.

- The significantly low graduation rate for our Students with Disabilities at 24% supports our plan to overhaul Special Education.

- LEAN/6-Sigma training was conducted for the Superintendent's cabinet, eight Administration leaders and 20 additional personnel.

- $1.4M in safety and security value (cameras, GPS and bus attendants) was added to our student transportation service through our new contract.

- Regulations for Intervention and Discipline were developed; suspensions dropped 32% and disruptive incidents dropped 40%.

- A reader-friendly budget book to improve the transparency of our fiscal operations was developed.

- Our School Food Services operation's financial performance improved by $586,000 (4%).

Public Input

As we pushed our agenda for change forward, we also continued to solicit community input.

Over 1,300 members of the Rochester community—student, parents, district staff, and community partners—shaped our plan through participation in focus groups and by responding to our online Strategic Plan survey.

We cannot underscore enough the importance of community engagement with the district. It is simply critical to student success. Given the profound impact that the school district has on the community and vice versa, we cannot operate in isolation from each other; we must collaborate as partners. The community's critical insights and recommendations are integrated throughout this plan. We will continue to engage the community to support us and hold us accountable for meeting our goals for student success through 2013.

Strategic Goals Overview

To clearly define our path and frame our agenda, we have established five goals:

GOAL 1   We will ensure that each of our students is academically prepared to succeed in college, life, and the global economy.

GOAL 2   We will create safe, engaging, and nurturing school environments that enable student success.

GOAL 3   We will recruit, develop, and retain highly effective, diverse people dedicated to student success.

GOAL 4   We will use world-class operational standards and practices to continuously improve how we support student success

GOAL 5   We will create a culture in which we hold ourselves accountable for student success

Our actions to accomplish these goals will be focused by our two core strategies:

STRATEGY 1   Proactively supporting and managing performance to empower schools, and

STRATEGY 2   Creating an organization that is agile, flexible, and responsive to school needs.

Key Themes across the Strategies and Goals

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT refers to making small improvements in processes that result in increased quality of products and services. "Recognition, Intervention, and Adjustment" is an educational practice based on the idea of continuous improvement. The idea behind this practice is fairly simple:

Recognition: Take stock of the results of your actions by looking at data to assess the impact of your practices or actions. Keep in mind the goals you're working towards.

Intervention: Based on your findings about what is and isn't working and keeping in mind what your goals are, select or develop an intervention based on prior evidence, research, or best practice.

Adjustment: Try the intervention. Check to see if it is changing results in a way that will help you achieve your goals. If so, determine how to sustain or accelerate your progress. If not, go back to "Recognition" and repeat the cycle.

THE USE OF DATA is essential to this cycle of continuous improvement. You can't simply rely on observations or your gut. You need to see what the data says. That's the "Recognize" step. You then need to use the data to help you determine what you'll do differently and how. That's the "Intervene" step. Finally, once you make the change by putting the intervention into practice, you'll have to monitor your data again to see if the change is working. That happens after you take the step to "Adjust."

These themes pervade the plan and our work. They will be fundamental to helping us change our culture to better support and drive student success.
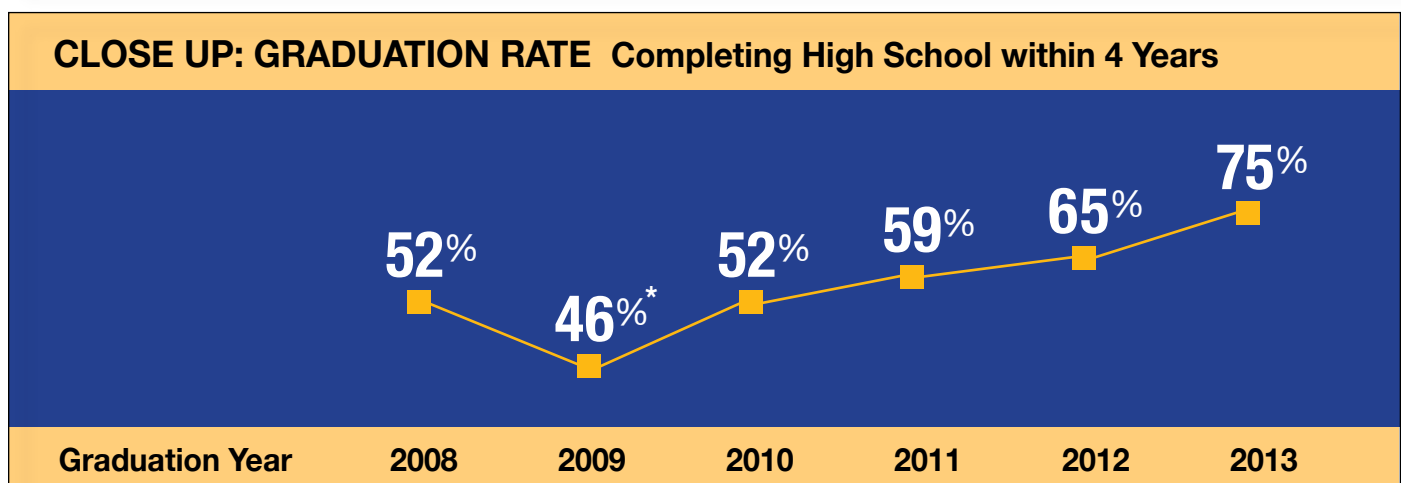
Performance Measures

We have set performance targets for each of our goals. As we did in year one, we will continue to monitor our performance data to assess our progress toward achieving our goals. We will become more aggressive about our use of data and about reporting on our progress. (See the "Monitoring Implementation" section of the plan.) When the data demonstrate we are off track, we will intervene and adjust our practices. When it demonstrates we're on track, we will determine how to sustain or accelerate our progress.

Note: Some of our performance measures indicate "TBD" rather than actual target metrics. In some cases, this is because we have not yet developed the metrics; in others, it is because a sub-strategy/initiative has not yet begun and thus does not yet have baseline data. As we move forward, we will publish the additional measures and metrics as part of our strategic plan progress reports. (NA=Not available.)

GOAL 1 *We will ensure that each of our students is academically prepared to succeed in college, life, and the global economy.*

OBJECTIVE I: Ensure Academic Rigor for Every Student
OBJECTIVE II: Differentiate Student Supports to Meet the Needs of Every Student
OBJECTIVE III: Focus on College and Career Readiness
OBJECTIVE IV: Create an Innovative Portfolio of High Quality Choices for Families

Graduation/College & Career Readiness	Baseline		Annual Targets			
For Cohort Students Graduating in:	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**
Percent of Cohort Students:	Cohort 2004	Cohort 2005	Cohort 2006	Cohort 2007	Cohort 2008	Cohort 2009
Completing High School within 4 years	52%	46%*	52%	59%	65%	75%
Number of Regents Required to Pass	none	two	three	four	five	five
Graduation with Regents Diploma	21%	20%	30%	49%	55%	60%
Graduation with Advanced Regents Diploma	7%	8%	9%	10%	11%	15%
Graduation with Local Diploma	24%	20%	14%	7%	0%	0%
Average PSAT Scores (Out of 240)	115	103	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Average SAT Scores (Out of 2400)	1228	1216	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

CLOSE UP: GRADUATION RATE Completing High School within 4 Years

Graduation Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
	52%	46%*	52%	59%	65%	75%

*Projected decline due to phasing out of NYS local diploma. Phase-out will be completed in 2012.

Graduation Achievement Gap	Baseline		Annual Targets			
For Cohort Students Graduating in:	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**
Percentage Point Gap between:	Cohort 2004	Cohort 2005	Cohort 2006	Cohort 2007	Cohort 2008	Cohort 2009
African American and White Students	5	4	3	2	1	0
Latino and White Students	10	9	8	7	4	2
Students w/Disabilities & General Ed Students	34	33	32	25	22	20
English Language Learners (ELLs) and non-ELL students	20	19	18	14	12	10

Elementary/Middle Achievement	Baseline		Annual Targets			
Percent of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced (Level 3/4) on NYS Assessment in:	**2007-08**	**2008-09**	**2009-10**	**2010-11**	**2011-12**	**2012-13**
ELA Grades 3-6	53	60	65	71	73	75
ELA Grades 7-8	35	48	55	60	65	70
Math Grades 3-6	62	69	70	73	75	78
Math Grades 7-8	41	50	52	58	60	64
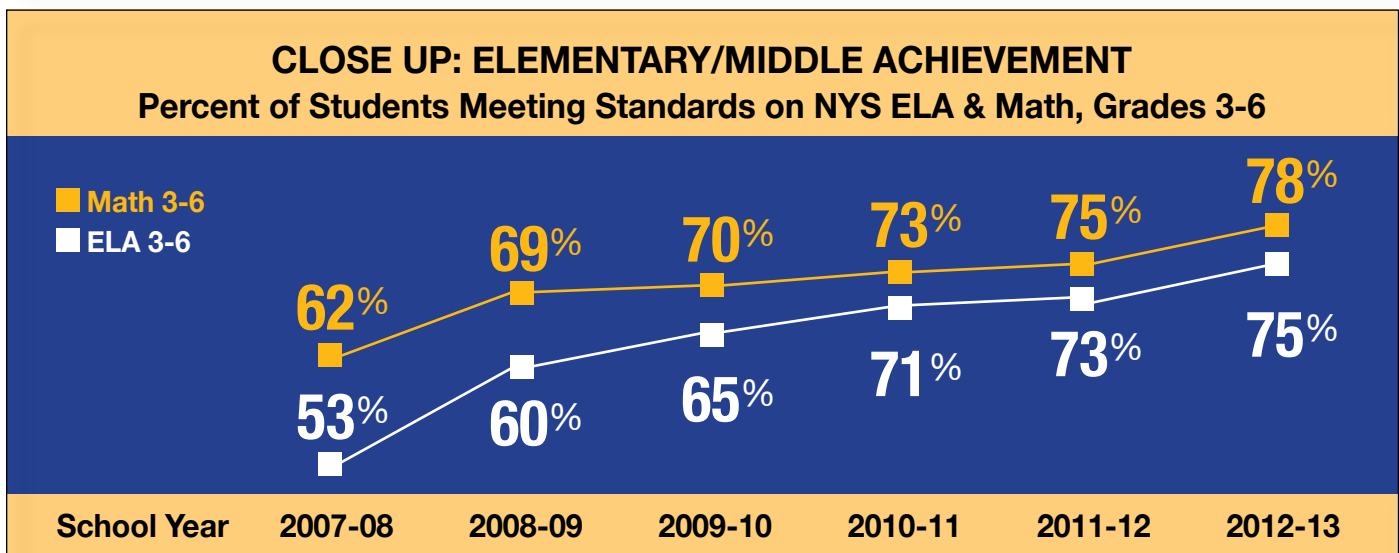
CLOSE UP: ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE ACHIEVEMENT
Percent of Students Meeting Standards on NYS ELA & Math, Grades 3-6

■ Math 3-6
■ ELA 3-6

School Year	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Math 3-6	62%	69%	70%	73%	75%	78%
ELA 3-6	53%	60%	65%	71%	73%	75%

Elementary/Middle Achievement Gap	Baseline		Annual Targets			
Percent Point Gap between General Education Students and Students with Disabilities Scoring Proficient or Advanced (Level 3/4) on NYS Assessment in:	**2007-08**	**2008-09**	**2009-10**	**2010-11**	**2011-12**	**2012-13**
ELA Grades 3-8	39	42	42	38	35	30
Math Grades 3-8	33	34	34	30	25	20
Percent Point Gap between English Language Learners (ELLs) and non-ELL Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced (Level 3/4) on NYS Assessment in:						
ELA Grades 3-8	28	33	33	30	25	20
Math Grades 3-8	17	18	18	14	10	5

GOAL 1 *(continued)*

Early Childhood	Baseline		Annual Targets			
	2007-08	**2008-09**	**2009-10**	**2010-11**	**2011-12**	**2012-13**
Enrollment in Prekindergarten	1,826	1,850	1,872	1,900	1,950	2,000

Note: The current NYS cap for enrollment in the Rochester Universal Pre-K program is 1,872. We are lobbying to increase the cap; at the same time, Rochester is experiencing a decline in the Pre-K age population, so projections attempt to account for both the increase in the cap as well as the decrease in population projections.

School Choice/Enrollment	Baseline		Annual Targets			
Percent Participation in Choice Process	**2007-08**	**2008-09**	**2009-10**	**2010-11**	**2011-12**	**2012-13**
Kindergarten Choice	60%	60%	70%	75%	80%	85%
Grade 7 Choice	79%	88%	95%	98%	100%	100%
Satisfaction with Choice Process						
Parents	NA	NA	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Students	NA	NA	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Elementary to Secondary Transition*						
Metric to be determined.	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

*Targets will represent the percentage of students making Rochester city schools their first choice.

GOAL 2 *We will create safe, engaging, and nurturing school environments that enable student success.*

OBJECTIVE I: Effective Safety Systems and Practices

OBJECTIVE II: Support the Whole Child through a Systems Approach to School Culture and Climate

Attendance/Suspensions	Baseline		Annual Targets			
	2007-08	**2008-09**	**2009-10**	**2010-11**	**2011-12**	**2012-13**
Elementary School Attendance	92.3%	92.7%	94.5%	96%	96%	96%
Secondary School Attendance	87.5%	87.2%	90.4%	92%	94%	95%
Long-Term Suspensions	668	540	513	487	463	400
Short-Term/In-School Suspensions*	8,568	5,251	4,988	4,739	4,000	3,500
Hours Saved by Keeping Students in School	NA	31,506	29,928	28,434	24,000	21,000

*The District eliminated out-of-school suspensions in 2008.

GOAL 3   *We will recruit, develop, and retain highly effective, diverse people dedicated to student success.*

OBJECTIVE I: Develop and Support Highly Effective School Leaders
OBJECTIVE II: Develop and Support Highly Effective Teachers

Leaders/Teachers	Baseline		Annual Targets			
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Enrollment in Rochester Leadership Academy	NA	NA	65%	65%	81%	90%
Percentage of School Leaders Deemed Highly Effective*	NA	NA	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Percentage of Teachers Retained after 3 Years (Tenured)	83%	88%	88%	88%	88%	88%
Percentage of Teachers Deemed Highly Effective*	NA	NA	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Diversity Indicator TBD	NA	NA	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

We have not yet defined the term "highly effective" but are working to do so.

GOAL 4   *We will use world-class operational standards and practices to continuously improve how we support student success.*

OBJECTIVE I: Learning Environment Supports Student Success
OBJECTIVE II: World-Class Standards of Efficiency and Customer Service

Operations/Administration	Baseline		Annual Targets			
Efficiency/Customer Service	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
School Building Administrator Satisfaction with Customer Service	NA	NA	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Transportation						
Average Bus Ride Time Per Student in Minutes	NA	NA	45	42	TBD	TBD
Cost Per Student	NA	NA	$1,750	$1,650	$1,500	$1,400
On-Time Tier 1 and 2 Routes	NA	NA	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

GOAL 5   *We will create a culture in which we hold ourselves accountable for student success.*

OBJECTIVE I: Stakeholder Engagement and Satisfaction
OBJECTIVE II: Use Data to Inform Decisions and Actions
OBJECTIVE III: Transparency and Equity in Resource Distribution
OBJECTIVE IV: Performance Management

Stakeholder Satisfaction	Baseline		Annual Targets			
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
District Satisfaction Survey Results						
Students	NA	NA	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Parents	NA	NA	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Community	NA	NA	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
School Leaders	NA	NA	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Teachers	NA	NA	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

STRATEGIC GOALS

Each of our 5 goals has several objectives that further define the goal. Each objective then has a set of sub-strategies that will focus our work through 2013. In the section that follows, sub-strategies are listed in bold.

Goal 1: We will ensure that each of our students is academically prepared to succeed in college, life, and the global economy.

Remember the value of the arts in building culture and motivating students.

-Public input from the strategic plan survey

OBJECTIVE I: Ensure Academic Rigor for Every Student

Every student is a work of art. We must prepare each of our students for success. This work begins with academic rigor grounded in the belief that every student can meet or exceed high expectations.

The Rochester Curriculum Framework sets high expectations for every student. The RCF is a comprehensive, aligned, culturally responsive curriculum that defines clear, uniform, and rigorous standards for what students in each grade are expected to know and do in ELA and Math. All schools much teach the Rochester Curriculum, supported by central office. While what they teach is non-negotiable and must be the same for every student, teachers have flexibility and latitude over how they teach it. Formative data from benchmark assessments will be used to regularly track student progress. School leaders and teachers will use this data to inform the interventions and adjustments needed to keep each student on track to meet or exceed expectations. This is the first time that our district has ever developed such a framework, and significantly, it was developed not by textbook publishers but by the classroom teachers who know our students and who teach these subjects in our district.

Students with Disabilities who receive Special Education instruction and services will be held to the same high expectations as all other students in the district. All schools must use the Rochester Curriculum Framework for teaching Students with Disabilities. We have developed a comprehensive plan to overhaul Special Education based on the findings from an audit conducted in Year One by the Council of Great City Schools and in Year Two by the University of Rochester. We have already begun to implement key changes to Special Education including hiring an Executive Director of Special Education who reports to the Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning and sits on the Superintendent's Cabinet, the district's senior leadership team. Further changes in Special Education will build greater capacity and ownership among school leaders, Special Education and General Education teachers, and staff to effectively deliver instruction and support services to Students with Disabilities. Special Education Zone Chiefs will manage and support schools, while also holding them accountable for the performance of students with disabilities.

English Language Learners will be held to the same high expectations as all other students in the district. All schools must use the Rochester Curriculum Framework for instructing English Language Learners. A focus on ELLs will be integrated across Math and ELA in the RCF. Additionally, our growing ELL population currently has limited choices in high-quality programs across the district. We will provide more high-quality, differentiated options across our schools to meet the diverse needs of every ELL. Professional development aimed at increasing the rigor of ELL instruction will be provided to teachers of ELLs.

Early Childhood Education, from Pre-K through grade 2, provides students with strong foundations that are critical to student success. We will continue to deliver high-quality Pre-K instruction through our nationally recognized program and continue to use data to inform program improvements. We also seek to expand access to Early Childhood and are seeking policy and funding solutions at the state level. We will ensure there is strong alignment in curriculum and assessments from Pre-K through grade 2 to ensure that the benefits of Pre-K education carry through to elementary school and beyond.

Physical Education is intimately linked to academic achievement among students. Research continues to indicate that physically fit students outperform their less healthy counterparts.[7] Further, we know that many of our students suffer from a range of health issues common to children from urban areas. We will focus and align our physical education, school food, nutrition, and student health and wellness efforts and partnerships to better prepare our students to learn and to equip them to make healthier choices.

Arts Education is critical to ensuring we develop the whole child. Through a greater central focus on an aligned yet differentiated Arts curriculum, we will provide students with higher quality arts instruction that is better reflective of their interests and learning needs.

OBJECTIVE II: Differentiate Student Supports to Meet the Needs of Every Student

While every student is a work of art, and should be held to the same high expectations for success, what every student needs to become a masterpiece may vary. With a shared culture of high expectations, schools will recognize and embrace the differences in how our students learn. They will use data to tailor the time, resources and supports every student requires for academic mastery toward college readiness.

Use of Data: Research shows that the use of data is common to the highest performing districts in the country. Central office will support schools in the frequent use of data to inform instruction by providing them with a comprehensive set of tools and training to use the tools. Schools in turn will use the data to examine the performance of every student, not simply averages across students, to manage and deliver effective instruction.

Response to Intervention (RtI) is used to help every student who is struggling to learn and succeed in the classroom by adjusting instruction to accommodate his or her specific learning needs. This approach addresses student skill or performance deficits early and quickly. Each student is provided with the time and supports they need to improve. RtI acknowledges that although every child may be different, high expectations and quick, aligned responses can keep a student on track to meet or exceed expectations. With the use of RtI, we expect to see a decline in Special Education classifications and earlier improvements in language acquisition and proficiency among English Language Learners.

Targeted Supports will prevent student academic regression and accelerate student learning during key transition periods such as summers, after school, and from grades 7 to 8 and 8 to 9. We know that some students struggle during transition and that more time for instruction can help keep them on track. Students who are already on track can significantly accelerate their learning if offered additional time and support. We will provide summer school, after school, and other extended learning opportunities to as many students as possible.

[8] American Diploma Project, "Making College and Career Readiness the Central Drivers of an Assessment System." http://www.ccsso.org/content/PDFs/NCSA09_191_MGandal.pdf

OBJECTIVE III: Focus on College and Career Readiness

College-readiness isn't about anticipating that all students will attend college; it's about preparing them to access a full range of options after graduation. It's not about restricting their choices; it's about broadening them. This is reinforced by national and state recognition of the fact that the knowledge and skills required for career readiness are increasingly the same as those required for college readiness, especially in the areas of Math and English.[8] Regardless of the path they choose after graduation, every student must leave us college-ready.

Empowering students with both knowledge and experiences that will prepare them for college is critical. We will clarify the indicators and performance measures we monitor to know that our students are ready for college. We will create a clear college counseling curriculum, to be implemented by our guidance counselors, that families and students have access to online. And we will ensure that we develop and sustain strong higher education partnerships to expose and educate our students about college from an early age.

Empowering students with both knowledge and experiences that will prepare them for careers is critical. We will strengthen the rigor of our career and technical education offerings. We will partner with businesses to broaden students' awareness of the range of career opportunities available to them. We will provide students with meaningful career development and mentorship opportunities early in their education, giving them extra time to think about their future careers.

OBJECTIVE IV: Create an Innovative Portfolio of High-Quality Choices for Families

We must view our schools as a system or "portfolio," not as isolated places with no relationship to one another. This is especially true given the high mobility rate of students in our district. Taken as a whole, our schools must offer enough high-quality program choices that reflect the diverse talents, needs, and interests of every one of our students. Without high-quality choices, families will continue to leave us for other districts.

To continuously improve the quality and rigor of our portfolio of schools, we must open new schools fueled by innovative ideas that area also grounded in evidence and research. We must redesign existing schools by either expanding or shrinking them so they can better serve students. We must support schools, through the Dream Schools model, to improve their performance. Finally, if schools continue to fail, we must phase them out or close them. This requires will, commitment, and motivation. It is not easy to do, but it is necessary; we cannot be true to our vision without replacing failing schools with schools that work.

Re-tooling our choice and enrollment process is directly related to improving our portfolio of school choices. As we change the number, quality, and focus of our schools to better address the needs of every student, we must make sure that families have equitable access to these new and higher quality choices.

OBJECTIVE I: Effective Safety Systems and Practices

Overhauling our student discipline policies and practices to reduce disruptions to teaching and learning was a primary focus for us in Year One. We abolished the practice of sending suspended students home, drastically reducing the number of instructional hours lost for these students. We established In-School Suspensions and will continue to improve the supports we provide to schools. We also have clarified and developed standards for school discipline and will manage and support schools to use them. Finally, we will continue to partner with the RPD and use data to inform additional improvements to our safety and discipline practices.

A school security plan focused on clear and effective intervention is the next step. We need to delve further into evidence- and researched-based practices to develop a system-wide security plan that allows us to practice Recognition, Intervention, and Adjustment to prevent and address school safety and student discipline issues early. Once we develop the plan, we will roll it out with training and supports for schools and hold them accountable.

OBJECTIVE II: Support the Whole Child through a Systems Approach to School Culture and Climate

A Youth Development Framework that provides a comprehensive, systematic approach to addressing student health, attendance, behavior, adult connections, and teaching and learning is being finalized and piloted in a small group of schools. The framework is ambitious and intended to change school culture and practice. It focuses on prevention, early intervention, and intensive intervention.

The framework will reinforce the use of Response to Intervention (RtI) and the district's Regulations of Intervention & Discipline, and will also pilot the use of Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports in a broader group of schools. The result of the pilot will be used to inform improvements to the framework before schools adopt it districtwide and develop their own Youth Development plans based on the framework. Other key related initiatives involve clarifying and distinguishing the role of social workers from guidance counselors. Guidance counselors will primarily focus on student academics and college readiness. Social workers will play an integral role in youth development.

> "Research and utilize the practices of other successful districts and use the honest feedback provided to you by students, parents, staff, etc."
>
> *-Public input from the strategic plan survey*

> "Highly qualified adults, given adequate resources and safe school environments, can produce superb results with children."
>
> *-Public input from the strategic plan survey*

OBJECTIVE I: Develop and Support Highly Effective School Leaders

We are establishing a comprehensive system to recruit and equip school leaders to assume increased autonomy and accountability for school and student performance. We will continue to recruit highly effective school leaders locally and nationally to ensure we have a strong pipeline of talent. Existing and aspiring school leaders will be developed through the Rochester Leadership Academy (RLA), an innovative professional development institute created in partnership with St. John Fisher College and the Wallace Foundation through the New York State Education Department's Cohesive Leadership initiative. RLA's purpose is to strengthen our existing leaders and build their capacity to assume greater autonomy and accountability.

Hold school leaders accountable and organize central office supports around their needs. This is a critical step we're taking to manage and support school performance and prepare school leaders to transition to the Autonomous and Dream Schools structure. Over the course of our multi-year transition to the new structure, our Chiefs of Schools will continue to supervise principals and serve as liaisons between principals and central office to coordinate the supports they need to succeed.

Examine, strengthen, and align principal evaluation, tenure, and compensation structures. In high-performing organizations, people know what they are expected to do, are evaluated on how well they do it, and are given rewards or consequences based on their performance. The Chiefs of Schools will conduct rigorous evaluations of principals, grounded in data and their expert observation of principals over the school year. Principals will be held accountable for performance. Schools that have weaker performance and school leader capacity will receive fewer freedoms, while those with stronger performance and more effective school leaders will get more. The school district will also continue to explore innovations in school leader compensation and performance management.

OBJECTIVE II: Develop and Support Highly Effective Teachers

The district will continue to recruit and support talented and effective new teachers. We use the term "highly effective," not "highly qualified." Efficacy goes beyond having the right certification or qualification to teach a student. It extends to commitment, capacity, and a belief in every student. We will continue to recruit diverse, effective teachers capable of providing high-quality instruction to every child. Our teachers will be committed to acknowledging the link between their practice and student outcomes and be willing to adjust their practices based on what will move their students forward. Based on the high retention rates of teachers supported through our nationally recognized Career in Teaching (CIT) Mentor program, we will continue to support first-year teachers through the program.

Equip teachers to deliver effective instruction to support student and school performance. The district will manage and support instruction by providing job-embedded professional development in using the Rochester Curriculum Framework. We will help also schools to embrace their role in our learning organization by supporting the establishment of professional learning communities (PLCs) that center around the Rochester Curriculum

Framework. The PLCs will provide teachers with structures and supports so they can focus on learning and the use of data to support learning, results, and working collaboratively to support effective instruction.

Examine, strengthen, and align teacher evaluation, tenure, and compensation structures. As with school leaders, teachers must be held accountable for student performance. In the entire school system, they have the most direct relationship to and impact on students. School leaders will support and hold teachers accountable for providing rigorous instruction for every student and for their overall performance. School leaders will conduct rigorous and timely evaluations of teachers grounded in data and their expert observation of teachers over the school year. The school district will also continue to explore innovations in teacher-distributed leadership, teacher compensation and performance management.

GOAL 4: We will use world-class operational standards and practices to continuously improve how we support student success

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OBJECTIVE I: Create Learning Environments that Support Student Success

Improve transportation safety and efficiency to reduce disruptions to instruction. In making changes to our transportation system to achieve cost savings, we have remained focused on ensuring that students arrive at school safely and on time so they are ready to start the academic day.

Provide students with high-quality, age-appropriate food to promote health and wellness. Student health and wellness are intimately tied to academic achievement. The level of satisfaction with our food service was low and costs were high; it was clear that we needed to change. Working in partnership with Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency, we will provide high-quality food in an efficient and effective manner that promotes student health and wellness.

Modernize, maintain, and right-size our facilities portfolio to support student learning. Research shows that clean, safe, and well-maintained facilities promote student learning. They also promote a sense of pride in our community and acknowledge the value we place on education in our community. Our work over the next five years involves continuing our work and partnership with the Joint School Construction Board to modernize, maintain, and right-size our portfolio of schools.

OBJECTIVE II: World-Class Standards of Efficiency and Customer Service

Organize central office (CO) around school and student needs. As we analyzed our district in 2008, it was clear that our central office to student ratio was larger than any of the other NYS Big 5 districts. That fact combined with the strategies we developed to focus our agenda for change motivated us to significantly reorganize the central office in the fall of Year One. We will continue to focus and align our central structures and functions to school and student needs. This will likely continue to involve further reorganizations that reduce the size of central office.

Continuously improve district processes, procedures and systems to better serve schools and students. As a learning organization, we must examine our systems and processes and identify areas for improvement. This applies to everything from our Human Capital systems like PeopleSoft to food services to transportation. The goal is not to reinvent the wheel, but to rely on proven methodologies to improve our service to schools and students.

"Student achievement is of the highest priority; schools need the tools to assist students in reaching their full potential."

-Public input from the strategic plan survey

OBJECTIVE I: Stakeholder Engagement and Satisfaction

Engage parents as partners in the journey to student success. It's not enough to say that parent engagement is a challenge; we must be creative. Through surveys, we will solicit creative ideas from parents directly. Further, we will continue to offer Parent University courses to help parents further their own education and improve their ability to navigate the system, so they may help children to do the same.

Hold ourselves accountable to parents and provide them with efficient customer service. We are responsible for clarifying what their children are expected to learn and whether or not they are meeting these expectations. We are responsible for communicating timely and clearly to allow parents to make the best choices on behalf of their children. We are also responsible for helping parents and students understand their choices around school placement and running a smooth and equitable process that is efficient and centered around their needs.

Establish a professional learning community with strategic partners. We will model the behavior we expect to see in schools and classrooms at the central level by working closely with the myriad strategic partners who have furthered our development and progress. A snapshot of the much longer list of public and private partners we've been fortunate to work with includes PENCIL, United Way, Ibero, County of Monroe, Center for Governmental Research, City of Rochester, the Wallace Foundation, numerous faith-based organizations, the Hillside Work Scholarship Connection, Center for Youth, Rochester Business Alliance, Wegmans, and institutions of higher education including the University of Rochester, St. John Fisher College, and Monroe Community College.

Hold ourselves fiscally accountable to taxpayers. Taxpayers have a right to know how and how effectively their resources are spent on education. We are responsible for being transparent to the public with this information. To that end, in Year One, we published a "reader-friendly" budget book, our first attempt at increased transparency. We have further to go and will do so in the coming years.

Communicate effectively both internally and to the Rochester community. Again, in the spirit of transparency and accountability, we will continue to provide timely and clear communications within the district and to the community. We recently changed our website to improve the user experience and are now publishing a district newspaper, *The Rochester Educator*, three times per year. We will continue soliciting input from the community about public perception of the district; we encourage you to participate to help us improve.

OBJECTIVE II: Use Data to Inform Decisions and Actions

Build formative and summative data tools and train district staff, schools and families to use them. The use of data is integral to nearly every aspect of our change agenda, including our own culture transformation. As we have noted, the use of data to inform decisions will be essential to many of our practices, from effective use of the Rochester Curricu-

lum Framework, to Response to Intervention, to evaluating school leaders and teachers. We will build a comprehensive set of tools and structures to enable everyone in the district, from central staff to parents to schools to the community, to monitor student performance and hold us accountable for it.

OBJECTIVE III: Transparency and Equity in Resource Distribution

Implement a weighted student funding system aligned to the transition to the Autonomous and Dream schools structure. In weighted student funding, resource distribution is driven by "student need," not by staff placement. Schools receive funding that is "weighted" on the basis of the characteristics of the students they serve. Those characteristics may include special education, poverty, limited English proficiency, and gifted education among others. More "weight" may be given to students with these characteristics, thereby increasing the dollars that a school that serves them will receive. We are developing the appropriate weights we will assign in our district.

Weighted student funding gives school leaders greater autonomy in how they use their funds. They can decide how to best use the funds to drive student success. School leaders are also held more accountable given that they have more control. We will roll out the weighted student funding process parallel to our transition to the Autonomous and Dream school structure. By the time we have fully transitioned, Autonomous school principals will have much greater control over their budgets because of weighted student funding. We have not yet determined the specific level of control that either Autonomous or Dream schools will have over their budgets. That is part of our work over the next two years.

OBJECTIVE IV: Performance Management

Move to a differentiated school supervision, autonomy, and support structure based on performance. Ultimately, at the end of five years, all of the work we have done to build capacity across the system will have prepared us for the district-wide transition to the Autonomous and Dream School Structure. The Autonomous and Dream School models are based on successful models in other districts throughout the country, including San Francisco. The fundamental idea is to differentiate how we manage, support, and empower schools. Treating high-performing schools and low-performing schools the same is not effective. Similarly, a singular approach to school support and management doesn't address what individual high- and low-performing schools really need to make significant gains.

In this new structure, schools will be given additional freedoms and flexibility if they demonstrate strong performance and the capacity to use those freedoms and flexibility to improve student achievement. Schools that demonstrate weak performance and lack capacity will receive additional supports, be managed more closely by central administration, and have less freedom and flexibility. Concentrating more resources and power at the school level makes sense; of all parts of the organization, schools are best positioned to make decisions that impact teaching and learning in the classroom.

Build district-wide performance management systems to ensure greater accountability for results. Our vision is for everyone in the district, working together to improve school and student performance, to have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Empowered with knowledge of what they are working toward and what they are expected to do, they strive to perform to meet or exceed these expectations. They will work closely with their supervisors to assess and reflect on their performance and be held accountable for it through a clear process that involves a timely and effective evaluation for everyone in the district. Clear rewards and consequences, such as greater autonomy in the case of schools and school leaders, will follow from these performance evaluations and will motivate them to improve their work to ensure student success.

Timeline

This section provides a detailed timeline of the actions and initiatives that have and will be taken each year through 2013 to achieve our goals.

GOAL 1: We will ensure that each of our students is academically prepared to succeed in college, life, and work in the global economy.

OBJECTIVE I: Ensure Academic Rigor for Every Student

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Create and manage school adoption of a district-wide framework that aligns standards, curriculum, and benchmark assessments					
Create and roll out the Rochester Curriculum Framework, a rigorous, standards-based, aligned, culturally responsive curriculum for Math/English Language Arts					
• Integrate research-based strategies for English Language Learners across curriculum					
• Incorporate research-based strategies for Students with Disabilities across curriculum					
Grades 5 to 9 Math/ELA	♦	♦			
Grades K to 4 Math/ELA		♦	♦		
Grades 10 to 11 Math/ELA			♦	♦	
Grades 11 to 12 Math/ELA				♦	♦
Create and roll out rigorous benchmark assessments aligned to Rochester Curriculum and NYS assessments	♦				
Establish protocol and metrics to exempt high performing schools from benchmark assessment requirement		♦			
Manage, support, and hold schools accountable for fidelity of school implementation of curriculum and benchmark assessments for every student	→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→				
Continuously improve Rochester Curriculum Framework based on school input, district level analysis, and changes in Council of Chief State School Officers/NYS guidance on standards	→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→				
Overhaul and decentralize Special Education with focus on high expectations and rigorous instruction for students with disabilities					
Complete comprehensive audit of Special Education	♦				
Create Cabinet level position, hire Executive Director of Special Education, and reorganize Special Education at Central Office	♦				
Provide professional development to build school leader capacity to serve students with disabilities and support effective staff delivery of Special Education (See also Principal Professional Development)		♦	♦		
Provide professional development to build school/staff capacity of general and special education administrators and teachers to deliver effective instruction and support services to students with disabilities (See also Teacher Professional Development)			♦		
Increase equity of distribution of high-quality Special Education Programs across schools/zones			♦	♦	
Roll out plan to decentralize Special Education and increase school ownership and accountability for the performance of students with disabilities			♦	♦	
Improve English Language Learners' access to rigorous instruction					
Select and roll out dual language, transitional bilingual, and maintenance bilingual programs to increase distribution of high-quality ELL/bilingual programs across schools		♦	♦		
Increase collaboration and training for central Curriculum Directors to better manage and support teaching and learning for ELLs across content areas	♦	♦			
Manage and support schools in teaching and learning for ELLs		♦	♦	♦	♦
Expand access to Pre-K and ensure strong transitions from Pre-K through Grade 2					
Develop plan for expansion of nationally recognized Pre-K program from half to full-day and request additional state funding for program and transportation		♦			
Study impact of participation in Pre-K on K,1,2 achievement and performance		♦			
Study teacher attrition issue in K and develop plan to resolve			♦		

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Use study results to strengthen structure of the K,1,2 programs; focus on alignment of curriculum and assessment and effective transitions, including better alignment of partners, from K through 2			◆	◆	
Ensure Pre-K program quality through continued use of program evaluation data to inform program improvement	→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→				
Value and acknowledge the link between student health, wellness and academic success					
Develop Physical Education Plan and align to revised Health and Wellness Policy		◆			
Evaluate and strengthen quality of Physical Education offerings in elementary schools		◆			
Align focus on student nutrition by strengthening partnership between Physical Education, Student Health Services, Food Services, and community health and agency partners	◆	◆	◆		
Strengthen arts curriculum and practices district-wide					
Develop Pre-K through 12 arts curriculum for art, music, theater, and dance		◆	◆		
Survey principals on current arts practices to inform improvements to the curriculum and practices		◆			
Provide professional development to keep art teachers current on practices and techniques		◆	◆	◆	◆
Identify partners to collaborate with RCSD to provide robust art program		◆	◆		

OBJECTIVE II: Differentiate Student Supports to Meet the Needs of Every Student

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Use data to inform improvements to teaching and learning for every student (See also Goal 5 "Use Data to Inform Decisions and Actions")					
Train schools leaders and teachers to use formative data to proactively monitor student learning and adjust instruction		◆	◆		
Support schools effective use of data to inform teaching and learning			◆	◆	◆
Adopt a district-wide model to recognize, intervene, and adjust instruction early and effectively for students struggling to learn					
Create cross-functional team and develop multi-year plan to train and support K-12 school use of Response to Intervention (RtI) model	◆				
Identify pilot cohorts and implement RtI across cohorts I & II		◆			
Develop protocols and metrics to track and improve the model		◆			
Based on pilot, implement plan to roll out RtI district-wide			◆	◆	◆
Provide content area-specific professional development to Curriculum Directors supporting schools		◆			
Target supports to accelerate student learning and to prevent academic regression and disengagement					
Identify key PreK-12 transition points at which students are at risk for disengagement or regression (i.e. 7 go 8, 8 go 9, etc.)	◆				
Re-align extended learning offerings to target students most at risk for disengagement/regression including after-school, Saturday, and remediation courses for 7th/8th grade students		◆			
Expand portfolio of summer school courses for acceleration and/or remediation	◆	◆			
Create multiple pathways to for students to earn a high school credential					
Create multiple pathways focused on preventive and recuperative strategies for students grades 9-12 to earn a high school credential					◆
Integrate Alternative Education into Multiple Pathways model					◆

OBJECTIVE III: Focus on College and Career Readiness

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Empower students with knowledge and experiences that prepare them for college					
Systematize focus on college readiness by establishing a college readiness framework that includes defined college readiness indicators (e.g. Regents exam, PSAT, SAT and AP participation and performance) and college enrollment indicators (acceptance to 2 and 4 year colleges)		◆	◆		
Where possible, track student progress 2 years and 4 years beyond high school into college	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Build a college-going culture campaign to raise student/family awareness/knowledge of college		◆			
Expand access to pre-college and college instruction across secondary schools (including expansion of AP courses, AVID, Springboard, and Early College High Schools)	◆	◆			
Require and support every student to take the PSAT		◆	◆	◆	◆
Establish and strengthen partnerships that provide students/families with training on access to college and obtaining financial aid/scholarships		◆			
Establish and strengthen partnerships with higher education that provide students/families with exposure to and awareness of college through informational events and meaningful college visits		◆	◆	◆	◆
Develop, roll out, and publish online a guidance counseling curriculum that defines expectations for college counseling by month by grade for each school year		◆			
Empower students with knowledge and experiences that prepare them for careers					
Through college-going campaign and other communications, clarify the link between college and career readiness for students and families		◆			
Realign current CTE programs to NYS PAP/New Perkins IV standard framework to increase rigor			◆	◆	
Expand quantity and choice of CTE programs; Engage guidance counselors and business partners to identify new CTE programs aligned to labor market needs				◆	◆
Provide career mentorship for students in their chosen career field through partnerships with Virtual Enterprise/PENCIL		◆			
Identify and implement programs to provide student work-based experiences from 7-12			◆	◆	
Align college and career readiness standards to NYS P-16 plan					
Once available, align to NYS P-16 college and career readiness standards and data systems					◆
Begin to systematically monitor student progress 2 years and 4 years beyond high school					◆

OBJECTIVE IV: Create an Innovative Portfolio of High-Quality Choices for Families

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Seek and seed innovations to continuously improve the quality and rigor of our portfolio of schools					
Create Office of School Innovation and hire Executive Director	◆				
Release New School Proposal Guidelines		◆			
Create innovative secondary schools		◆	◆	◆	◆
Release School Redesign Proposal Guidelines		◆			
Redesign/reconfigure existing schools		◆	◆	◆	◆
Establish criteria and stakeholder engagement process to close schools		◆			
Close underperforming schools that do not succeed in DREAM structure		◆	◆	◆	◆
Inform/collaborate with the Joint School Construction Board to modernize facilities and right-size the district	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Create, seek and seed innovative, cutting-edge initiatives and programs (focus on Secondary Schools)	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Re-tool and streamline enrollment/placement choice process to improve access and equity for every student					
Audit existing Enrollment/Placement process and provide recommendations	◆				
Revisit Board of Education policy to inform redesign of elementary school choice process			◆		
Overhaul Secondary School choice process including creating a new 8 go 9 transfer process				◆	◆

GOAL 2: We will create safe, engaging, and nurturing school environments that enable student success.

OBJECTIVE I: Effective Safety Systems and Practices

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Overhaul student discipline policies and practices to reduce disruptions to teaching and learning					
Abolish practice of sending students home for suspensions	◆				
Plan and implement In-School Suspensions (ISS) program	◆				
Revise and publish online new discipline code to reflect new suspension strategy, policy, and to clarify boundary between intervention and discipline	◆				
Support and hold schools accountable for fidelity of discipline code implementation		◆	◆	◆	◆
Make improvements to ISS to support individual school needs		◆			
Continue to identify schools where the Alternatives to Suspension program, focused on prevention and therapeutic intervention, should be opened		◆	◆		
Develop and implement school security plan focused on clear and effective intervention					
Develop plan to address system-wide security issues through collaboration between School Safety and Youth Development		◆			
Establish a partnership with the Rochester Police Department and collaborate on security issue resolution	◆	◆			
Train staff to ensure fidelity of security practices across schools		◆			
Train school safety officers on relationships to students as part of Youth Development Framework		◆			
Monitor incident report data to inform plan rollout and school supports needed		◆	◆	◆	◆
Manage system-wide security plan rollout			◆		
Monitor incident data and provide supports to improve implementation				◆	◆

OBJECTIVE II: Support the Whole Child through a Systems Approach to School Culture and Climate

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Establish and adopt a comprehensive youth development framework district-wide					
Build a youth development framework focused on three tiers- prevention, early intervention, and intensive intervention across student development domains (social and emotional learning, adult connections, bio-psycho-social, positive behavioral supports, effective instruction)		◆			
Pilot YD framework as part of school improvement planning at a cohort of schools		◆			
Based on findings, adjust framework and roll out to larger cohort of schools			◆		
Support schools in the development of their individual Youth Development Plans aligned to framework				◆	◆
Systematize and target student health services based on actual student needs					
Pilot Alliance for a Healthy Generation, Healthy Schools Initiative with first cohort of schools		◆			
Establish Wellness teams to support students (and adults) school-wide		◆			
Develop comprehensive student health report card for every student		◆			
In partnership with city health agency, explore possibility of expanding student health clinics		◆	◆		

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Continue to analyze results from annual Student Risk Survey to inform focus and nature of health service offerings, integration per above on health/wellness	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Establish and refine systems to ensure effective engagement and social/emotional learning for every student					
Conduct audit of district and school attendance policies and practices	◆				
Use audit findings to roll out revised comprehensive attendance procedures and protocols	◆				
Conduct staff training on procedures and protocols with focus on clean attendance data	◆	◆			
Develop/enhance attendance reporting and begin using to inform decisions	◆				
Pilot Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports and collect data on existing programs at a cohort of schools to inform expansion of district-wide rollout		◆			
Distinguish and define the role of Social Workers to clearly focus on student social/emotional development rather than counseling activities		◆			
Work with school leaders to ensure Social Worker and Guidance Counselor roles are clarified and distinguished in schools		◆	◆		
Develop plan to increase student leadership opportunities including service learning, and student congress/government in schools		◆	◆		

GOAL 3: We will recruit, develop, and retain highly effective, diverse people dedicated to student success.

OBJECTIVE I: Develop and Support Highly Effective School Leaders

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Establish a comprehensive system to recruit and equip school leaders to assume increased autonomy and accountability for school and student performance					
Build a pipeline of leaders through local and national recruitment efforts	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Develop Rochester Leadership Academy to build capacity in practicing school leaders	◆				
Commence Rochester Leadership Academy for first cohort of existing school leaders		◆			
Provide ongoing, principal-driven professional development, mentoring, and coaching through RLA		◆	◆	◆	◆
Build pipeline of aspiring school leaders from within through the Leadership Empowerment Aspiring School leaders Program (LEAPP)		◆	◆	◆	◆
Commence LEAPP for first cohort of aspiring school leaders		◆			
Incorporate LEAPP into RLA structure			◆		
Continue to support new school leaders through mentor program	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Hold school leaders accountable and organize central office supports around their needs (See also Performance Management)					
Support school leaders in School Improvement planning and goal-setting	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Coordinate central office efforts to respond timely and effectively to principal support requests	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Align Zone Chief support with DREAM Schools initiative		◆			
Train/support and hold school leaders accountable for completing timely staff evaluations	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Support and hold school leaders accountable for implementing Rochester Curriculum Framework	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Examine, strengthen, and align principal evaluation, tenure, and compensation structures					
Continue to conduct timely evaluations for each principal	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Consider innovative opportunities to align and strengthen evaluations, tenure and compensation	◆	◆			
Implement innovations in accordance with transition to district-wide roll out of Autonomous and DREAM school structure			◆	◆	

OBJECTIVE II: Develop and Support Highly Effective Teachers

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Recruit and support talented and effective new teachers					
Pilot/continue key partnerships and initiatives to build a pipeline of aspiring, diverse teachers	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Continue RCSD's nationally recognized mentorship program to support first year teachers	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Equip teachers to deliver effective instruction to support student and school performance					
Create Professional Learning Communities of teachers focused on learning, results, and working collaboratively to support effective instruction	◆	◆			

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Implement systemic, job-embedded, individualized professional development for teachers and increase school level-ownership over teacher PD		♦	♦		
Focus professional development on differentiated, data-informed, academically rigorous and relevant instruction		♦	♦		
Collaborate with higher education to provide standardized professional development curriculum that includes research based practices, instructional procedures, and current regulations for Special Education teachers		♦	♦		
Provide specific research-based professional development for Special Education teachers on how to teach the Rochester Curriculum to students with disabilities		♦	♦		
Provide specific research-based professional development for teachers on how to teach the Rochester Curriculum to English Language Learners		♦	♦		
Research effective models and practices of Teacher Distributed Leadership to inform professional development for teachers		♦			
Examine, strengthen, and align teacher evaluation, tenure, and compensation structures					
Train and hold school leaders accountable for conducting timely teacher evaluations	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Improve alignment between teacher evaluation and tenure recommendations	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Consider innovative opportunities to strengthen teacher compensation and incentives	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦

GOAL 4: We will use world-class operational standards and practices to continuously improve how we support student success

OBJECTIVE I: Learning Environment Supports Student Success

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Increase transportation safety and efficiency to reduce disruptions to instruction and reduce cost					
Issue RFP, select vendor, and realign transportation services from Single to 2 Tier system	♦	♦			
Use GPS/automated tracking systems to enhance transportation efficiency		♦			
Staff buses with security matrons and implement security cameras		♦			
Develop safety plan for students who walk to school		♦			
Provide students with high-quality, age-appropriate food to promote health and wellness					
Audit District food services and use findings to develop plan to overhaul district food services	♦				
Hire food services manager	♦				
Develop RFP for new food services contract with student health and nutrition experts from City agencies, and student health and wellness teams and identify new vendor	♦	♦			
Commence new food service operations		♦			
Continuously improve food services based on customer feedback			♦	♦	♦
Modernize, maintain, and right-size facilities portfolio to support student learning					
Revise capacity and facilities master plan based on school facility needs and changes to the school portfolio driven by school innovation work	♦				
Ensure ongoing collaboration between facilities and school innovation offices for effective portfolio improvement planning and implementation	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Execute facilities modernization program, as part of capital improvement plan, in conjunction with the Joint School Construction Board/Rochester City Government to improve building conditions and right-size the district	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦

OBJECTIVE II: World-Class Standards of Efficiency and Customer Service

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Organize central office (CO) around school and student needs					
Complete Phase I to reorganize central offices to be lean, agile, and responsive to school needs; devolve CO staff to schools.	♦				
Continue right-sizing and reorganization of district around school and student needs.		♦	♦		
Build customer service and job-specific capacity in non-school central office and field staff through professional development.		♦			
Continuously improve district processes, procedures and systems to better serve schools and students					
Create operating processes and procedures to define, align, and streamline district operations.	♦	♦			
Determine how to maximize use of PeopleSoft to streamline procurement efforts.		♦			

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Develop plan to increase MWBE procurements.		◆			
Assess current state of HCI systems, processes, and customer service.	◆				
Use diagnostic findings and apply Six Sigma/LEAN to inform improvements to codify and streamline HCI processes for employees, maximize use of HCI systems including People-Soft, and improve customer service.		◆			
Roll out training on continuous improvement (Six Sigma/LEAN) to HCI/Staffing, Placement, Transportation, and Food Services.		◆			
Identify other areas in the district where formal continuous improvement orientation/training can be leveraged to improve efficiency and effectiveness.		◆	◆		
Reorganize IT office with greater focus on customer service approach to all end users from schools to central office.	◆				

GOAL 5: We will create a culture in which we hold ourselves accountable for student success.

OBJECTIVE I: Stakeholder Engagement and Satisfaction

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Engage parents as partners in the journey to student success.					
Survey parents to align engagement activities, including Parent University offerings, to their needs.		◆			
Make Parent University course modules available online; Improve alignment between Parent University and Adult Education offerings.			◆		
Align parent engagement efforts to School Improvement Plan.		◆			
Work with schools to improve school level parent engagement.		◆	◆	◆	◆
Hold ourselves accountable to parents and provide them with efficient customer service.					
Improve use of communication tools; establish email listserv and publish RCF curriculum online, to increase access to and transparency of information for parents and students.		◆	◆		
Consolidate enrollment & placement center into a single location that serves as a "one-stop shop" for families and includes bilingual services and homeless liaison staff.		◆			
Assess feasibility of building newcomer welcome center to support new immigrant students/families.		◆			
Build family orientation center within new center to streamline services, improve quality and quantity of new student data collection, and set expectations with parents about their child's education.		◆			
Survey parents and assess relationship between parent engagement and enrollment/placement offices to inform reorganization.			◆		
Establish a professional learning community with strategic partners.					
Engage and sustain partnerships with business, non-profit, and government communities to advance progress toward strategic goals.	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Create structures and formalize mechanisms to engage and sustain partners to ensure accountability for results, mutual learning, and collaboration on strategic efforts to further success.		◆			
Hold ourselves fiscally accountable to taxpayers.					
Conduct thorough analysis of district fiscal position.	◆				
Begin to make resource allocation decisions transparent through Budget Book.		◆			
Be good stewards of taxpayer dollars through strategic alignment of resources to strategic plan.		◆	◆	◆	◆
Communicate effectively internally and to Rochester community.					
Revamp district website.		◆			
Implement new district-wide newspaper for distribution three times annually.		◆			
Build capacity in individual District departments and at school level to maximize use of communications tools to support stakeholder connections.		◆	◆		
Consider feasibility of plan to maximize use of district television stations for school and student communications and recognition.			◆		
As set forth in the plan for monitoring the implementation of the strategic plan, provide regular communications updates about progress on the strategic plan.		◆	◆	◆	◆
Continue to issue timely and effective internal and external communications.	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆

OBJECTIVE II: Use Data to Inform Decisions and Actions

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Build formative and summative data tools and train district, schools and families to use them					
Issue RFP and select vendor to build District dashboard to capture formative data, including benchmark assessment results, to monitor student learning in real time	◆				
Build Dashboard		◆			
Build School level scorecard that includes school climate and outcome indicators		◆			
Assess and continuously improve training and other supports to help schools use data to improve teaching and learning		◆	◆		
Begin to collect data and analyze data on high cost programs through a pilot to inform the development of a more robust program evaluation system		◆			
Based on results from pilot, determine how to best evaluate programs for the strategic allocation of resources			◆	◆	
Continuously improve central office capacity to use data to inform decisions and actions	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆

OBJECTIVE III: Transparency and Equity in Resource Distribution

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Implement a weighted student funding system aligned to the transition to the Autonomous and DREAM school structure					
Increase the transparency of the budget process	◆				
Build analytical and support level capacity around budgeting for weighted student funding		◆			
Develop weighted student funding model		◆			
Pilot weighted student funding model with 4-6 Pioneer schools			◆		
Continue to build capacity around use of weighted student funding through training and communications for central office staff and School Leaders through RLA			◆		
Rollout weighted student funding to all schools, Autonomous and DREAM				◆	

OBJECTIVE IV: Performance Management

SUB-STRATEGIES	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Move to a differentiated school supervision, autonomy, and support structure based on performance					
Analyze school level control over resources and begin to devolve resource to school and build capacity across school leaders	◆				
Define final vision for differentiated autonomies, support, and supervision		◆			
Build vision, initial capacity and, systems for DREAM schools model to identify, intervene, support and transform underperforming schools	◆				
Select, identify, begin transformation of first cohort of DREAM schools	◆				
Provide ongoing support to first cohort of DREAM Schools		◆	◆		
Select, identify, and begin transformation of second cohort of DREAM schools		◆			
Pilot new autonomies with "Pioneer Schools," a first cohort of "Autonomous Schools"			◆		
Use key findings from Pioneer Schools to improve Autonomous schools model for district-wide implementation			◆		
Build Autonomous/DREAM School support capacity to ensure readiness for move to new structure		◆	◆		
Move to district-wide structure of 2 performance levels: Autonomous Schools and DREAM Schools				◆	
Build District-wide performance management systems to ensure greater district accountability for results					
Align central office staff performance management process to strategic plan		◆			
Clarify performance and progress measures for evaluation across district		◆			
Build capacity across district, from central to schools, to use staff evaluation tools effectively		◆			
Manage performance proactively utilizing formative and summative tools		◆	◆	◆	◆
Engage Center for Governmental Research to monitor strategic plan implementation		◆	◆	◆	◆

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Implementing This Plan

Aligning Resources

To achieve our goals, we must align our resources -- people, money, and time -- to ensure that they are used where they are needed most: in the classroom. A critical partner in this work has been Education Resource Strategies, a non-profit organization that works with urban public school systems to rethink the use of resources, supporting strategies for improved instruction and performance. This partnership along with our efforts at improving transparency in our use of funds has positioned us well for a more strategic alignment of our resources. The actions and initiatives noted in Year One of the timeline were funded in the 2008-09 school year and have been completed. The majority of the funding we need for activities and initiatives planned for Year Two, 2009-2010, is in place. For Years Three and beyond, resource allocation will be tightly aligned to the strategic plan.

Managing Performance

Performance management begins with the Superintendent, who is held accountable by contract to the Board of Education. To manage performance throughout the rest of the organization, the Superintendent implemented a performance management process with his Cabinet in Year One. Cabinet members set department-level goals that were aligned to the district goals and against which they were evaluated.

Cabinet members, in turn, implemented a performance management process within their departments. Department staff set goals and were evaluated against them. Moving forward, department-level goals will be aligned to the 5-year strategic goals.

Chiefs of Schools will continue to work with school leaders to support the development of school-level goals and performance targets, aligned to the 5-year strategic goals, through the School Improvement Planning process. Principals will continue to be evaluated against these goals and provided with formative feedback to help them progress. Principals will be supported and held accountable to conduct timely and rigorous teacher evaluations and provide formative feedback to teachers through observations and other feedback mechanisms throughout the school year.

"The focus of all decisions should be what is best, overall, for the child."

-Public input from the strategic plan survey

Every child is a work of art…

Monitoring Implementation

The purposes of monitoring extend beyond transparency and accountability. Monitoring is a tool to support our efforts to change our culture and keep us on track to success.

Ongoing monitoring provides regular opportunities to learn, reflect, and take quick and informed actions to make progress. It will help us make a habit of using data to recognize, intervene and adjust in support of student achievement. It will help us to model the culture of learning we expect to see in schools and classrooms throughout the organization. It will also provide us with access to formative data, so that we don't wait until the end of a year or five years to discover that we haven't met our goals. Instead, we can assess our performance in real time, so that we can work smarter, making changes earlier and quicker to improve and accelerate our progress toward preparing every student for success.

Our commitment to transparency and accountability has led us to engage the Center for Governmental Research (CGR), an independent, external evaluator with a long history in Rochester, to monitor our implementation of the strategic plan. CGR will serve as the community's representative to hold the district and Superintendent accountable for effective execution of the reforms we initiate. It will support the ongoing documentation and communication of the results of our reform efforts. CGR will supplement and enhance, not supplant, our own monitoring effort. It is first and foremost our own responsibility to ensure the success of our plan in preparing every student for success.

For updates on the Strategic Plan: www.rcsdk12.org

Create a Masterpiece.

Every child is a work of art.
Create a masterpiece.

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December 2009