

BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

STRATEGIC PLAN

**Interim Report on Implementation of Action Items
2007-08**

January 11, 2008

Prepared for Superintendent John Ramos by:

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In October 2007, Bridgeport Superintendent of Schools John Ramos engaged the services of the UCLA School Management Program (SMP) to gather data and evidence related to the implementation of the district's Strategic Plan (as adopted by the Bridgeport Board of Education on April 9, 2007). The period of agreement for this work began on November 1, 2007 and runs through June 30, 2008.

Superintendent Ramos directed SMP staff to focus on the implementation schedule outlined by the District Strategic Action Liaison Committee. This committee prioritized the numerous action steps contained in the Strategic Plan, choosing 21 steps that should be implemented during the 2007-08 school year. Prioritized steps are included as evidence in this section (memo of October 17, 2007).

For each identified step, SMP was tasked with developing a unique plan to gather accurate and timely feedback on the state of implementation. This will include information on the processes as well as the outcomes. Information will be summarized and reported back to Superintendent Ramos in a timely manner, highlighting accomplishments along with an early indication of barriers to progress, if and where they are identified.

SMP agreed to deliver an initial, interim report to the Superintendent no later than December 23, 2007 (Phase 1, this report), with a final report due on June 30, 2008 (Phase 2).

Data gathering began in earnest early in November of 2007. The SMP team set out to gather an overview of the state of implementation, casting a wide net and interviewing as many accountable participants as possible. The summaries of these interviews are presented in this report. Phase 2 (beginning in January 2008) will continue the data gathering process by interviewing a wide variety of participants who are (or may be) impacted by the Plan's implementation. Interviews will be supplemented by gathering evidence of impact 'on the ground' – in the schools or community as appropriate.

Phase 1 Interviews and focus of discussion




















11/20/07	Cynthia Fernandes	Action Plans 1.1 and 1.2
11/28/07	Kate Gredinger	Action Plan 8.1
11/28/07	Lisa Pavlik	Action Plan 6.1
11/28/07	Henry Kelly	Action Plans 3.3 and 4.1
12/4/07	Robert Henry	Action Plans 10.1, 10.2 and 10.3
12/4/07	Douglas Hiscox	Action Plan 5.4
12/5/07	Meredith Robson	Action Plans 6.1, 7.1, 7.2, 8.1, 8.3, 8.9



12/5/07	Tammy Papa	Action Plan 8.3
12/5/07	August Serra	Action Plans 7.1 and 7.2
12/11/07	Theresa Carroll	Action Plans 3.1 and 3.2
12/11/07	Alma Maya	Action Plans 7.1 and 7.2
12/12/07	Marilyn Ondrasik	Action Plans 4.1 and 4.2
12/12/07	James Ritchie	Action Plan 2.2
12/12/07	John DiDonato	Action Plans 6.1 and 8.9
12/17/07	Robert Rader	Action Plan 4.2
1/10/08	Robert Francis	Action Plan 6.1




Summaries of salient points raised during the interviews were organized according to action steps. Copies of the relevant sections were returned to interview subjects for comments regarding accuracy.

A review of the findings to date, along with discussion and planning for the second phase of evidence collection, was held with Superintendent Ramos on January 10, 2008.

QUICK REFERENCE ON THE STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

	1.1	Establish Gold Core instructional strategies	
	1.2	Provide ongoing professional development on instructional strategies	
	2.2	Ensure all students create and annually review a personalized life-plan	<i>Implementation started, but on two parallel tracks</i>
	3.1	Revise the School Education Plan template to align with the District's Strategic Plan	
	3.2	Develop a process for monitoring, adjusting and updated the SEPs	
	3.3	Design and provide professional development experiences to engage school and district personnel in a continuous cycle of planning and improvement	
	4.1	Develop an Integrated Accountability Plan for the district that aligns with the Strategic Plan	
	4.2	Develop an Integrated Accountability Plan for the Board of Education	
	5.4	Develop the capacity of the Superintendent's cabinet to think strategically	<i>Implementation underway</i>
	6.1	Provide a genuine parent friendly climate at all schools facilitated by the school administrator	
	7.1	Establish a formal relationship between the BPS and the NNPS	
	7.2	Establish a BPS Strategic Action Liaison Committee to support the BOE and administrators during implementation	<i>Initial work completed, but the structure is either not in place or not widely understood</i>
	8.1	Provide interventions to decrease the number of unwanted teen pregnancies and STDs	
	8.3	Establish a youth-governed teen learning/rec center	
	8.9	Provide professional development for SATs on the use of a social emotional matrix	
	9.5	Establish an internal marketing and PR office	<i>Underway</i>
	9.6	Develop and deliver a public relations campaign focused on adults	<i>Underway</i>
	9.7	Develop and deliver an organized campaign for the State General Assembly	<i>Underway</i>
	10.1	Budget and its' management will be separated from the City of Bridgeport's budget and it's	

		management	
	10.2	Prepare and disseminate monthly budget documents to create transparency	
	10.3	Analyze the development of school system resources and operational systems	<i>Seeking funding to complete this step</i>

-  **Implementation stalled or not started**
-  **Implementation proceeding, but a caution**
-  **Implementation completed or ongoing**

Strategy #1 Action Plans

Strategy #1

We will design and implement assessment and differentiated instructional strategies that enable all students to achieve mastery in literacy, math, science, social studies and higher order thinking competency.

Result Statement #1.1 ◆ Implementation completed or ongoing

Establish “Gold Core” instructional strategies” (based on effective identified tenets).

Action Steps

1.1.1 Establish an Instructional Strategy Steering Committee of stakeholders to identify and delineate “Gold Core” instructional strategies to be used in the District for a 5 year period.

1.1.2 Identify effective tenets of initiatives already in use within the district including but not limited to Institute for Learning (IFL), National Urban Alliance (NUA), Marzano, Gardner, and Bloom.

1.1.3 Communicate identified “Gold Core” Instructional Strategies to District Improvement Team via the following: focus groups, curriculum committee meetings, department meetings.

What’s been done?

Superintendent Ramos feels they have made good progress on this step. Cynthia Fernandes has the primary responsibility for this statement. We interviewed Ms. Fernandes on 11/20/2007.

The term ‘gold core instructional strategies’ is used by Ms. Fernandes to mean best instructional practices, and she uses this concept to guide professional development across the district. Fernandes is trying to ‘unbrand’ the particular programs (IFL, NUA, etc.) and make them all comprehensively Bridgeport practices.

A steering committee was established, chaired by Fernandes and including a math specialist from the CT State DOE, a community representative, a representative from central office, and two teachers. The committee brings new information and ideas to the table, where it is examined to see if it fits into the big picture. The committee meets formally four times per year, and uses email to stay in touch between meetings. Teachers have been invited to attend several committee meetings to help identify best practices.

Instructional practices have been identified and promoted, including the creation of a visual titled “Accountability – Instructional Leadership; Bridgeport Public Schools’ 2007-08 Focus Points”. The seven focus points are:

Behavioral Strategies – Living Above the Line

Behavioral Strategies – PBIS
Literacy/Numeracy – IFL
Literacy/Numeracy – NUA
Focused Writing Instruction – Empowering Writers
Integration of Technology
Least Restrictive Environment

All feed back to accountability – The Leadership and Learning Center.

Communication and professional development to promote the use of gold core instructional strategies has begun, and is supported through the direction of the professional development committee and District Improvement Team. One example was a district-wide meeting of 6th grade teachers, building on 6th grade level team meetings at schools. Fernandes believes we should see gold core instructional strategies incorporated into the school improvement plans. They are integrated into the district improvement plan.

Where can we see it?

We should look for evidence of gold core instructional strategies echoed in the school improvement plans, as well as evidence of their use in schools and classrooms.

Some examples were provided by Fernandes. At Batalla they have taken the lead on implementing IFL strategies, and we should find evidence of ‘accountable talk’ throughout the school. She believes the students would be able to share their own definitions of accountable talk. In her own words, not all teachers are expert yet but they are getting there.

Blackham was suggested as a place to look for good evidence of NUA strategies – we should see ‘maps’ on the walls and evidence of students and teachers using them.

Phase 2. Conduct a short on-line survey of all schools, including the principal, that asks about awareness and use of gold core instructional strategies. Ask specifically about professional development provided and if it is adequate, identify possible areas for additional needs. Follow up with on-site visits to Batalla, Blackham, and other schools to conduct interviews with principal and small group of teachers. Using an observation rubric provided by Fernandes conduct classroom observations in the above schools looking for evidence of classroom implementation.

Success, barriers, unexpected consequences?

Strategy #1 Action Plans

Strategy #1

We will design and implement assessment and differentiated instructional strategies that enable all students to achieve mastery in literacy, math, science, social studies and higher order thinking competency.

Result Statement #1.2 ◆ Implementation completed or ongoing

Provide ongoing professional development on instructional strategies to include but not be limited to: differentiated instruction, “Gold Core” instructional strategies, and use of varied technologies.

Action Steps

- 1.2.1 Design Professional development opportunities.
- 1.2.1 Schedule ongoing professional development on "Gold Core" instructional strategies.
- 1.2.2 Identify needed resources (personnel and materials) to support the implementation of “Gold Core” instructional strategies.

What’s been done?

Superintendent Ramos expressed some concern that current professional development (particularly for NUA) is piecemeal, largely because of funding restrictions. He is seeking foundation support for a more comprehensive approach. Cynthia Fernandes has the primary responsibility for this statement. We interviewed Ms. Fernandes on 11/20/2007.

Fernandes is the gatekeeper for all PD in the district, and ensures everything offered is aligned with and supports the use of gold core instructional strategies. The only exceptions to this are grant-funded opportunities that people may bring in. As she puts it, “If you bring in money I am hard pressed to tell you not to use it.” Reading First is a good example of an exception, though she believes in theory that Reading First does support the district program.

Professional development time is split evenly between the schools and the district, and the ‘buy in’ has been good. While schools control their half of the offered PD, mostly they are aligned with the district focus. At the most recent district-wide PD, 80% of the schools participated.

A central office social studies director has been hired, leaving only PE and athletics unfilled at the district level. Two technology specialists have also been hired.

Where can we see it?

Master calendar of district professional development (included)

Phase 2. Conduct a short on-line survey of all schools, including the principal, that asks about awareness and use of gold core instructional strategies. Ask specifically about professional development provided and if it is adequate, identify possible areas for additional needs. Follow up with on-site visits to Batalla, Blackham, and other schools to conduct interviews with principal and small group of teachers. Using an observation rubric provided by Fernandes conduct classroom observations in the above schools looking for evidence of classroom implementation.

Success, barriers, unexpected consequences?

Resources for PD remain tight – it is largely funded out of Title II money. Title II also supports a number of co-teachers, so there isn't quite as much funding available as Fernandes would like and could use. There are time issues that the union has taken a hard line on, and they are held strictly to a 50 minute period twice per month at the schools. Fernandes feels they could do more if they had more time or more funding available to pay stipends.

Strategy # 2

We will create, enhance and maintain a variety of supports to prepare all students to succeed in further education and training.

Result Statement #2.2 **tracks**



Implementation proceeding slowly, but on two parallel

Ensure all students create and annually review a personalized life-plan, i.e. dreams, hopes, and plans for a quality life.

Action Steps

2.2.1 Convene a task force to research, discuss and propose an implementation model that includes definitions, timeframes, and expected outcomes, for student *life-plans* that begin in the early grades and become increasingly more focused each succeeding year.

2.2.2 Develop a two year pilot program for implementation in grades 2, 7 and 11.

2.2.3 Design an evaluation of the pilot that includes measures of expected outcomes together with student, faculty and parent feedback.

2.2.4 Implement the pilot program; gathering information for use in the evaluation.

2.2.5 Review and modify the design of the program based upon the result obtained during the first year of the pilot.

2.2.6 Move to full implementation in year four.

2.2.7 Establish and promote a system that recognizes, rewards, and celebrates student's progress on bringing their life-plans to fruition.

2.2.8 Develop a school/community culture that fosters shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation.

2.2.9 Ensure that faculty and staff are aware of, and infuse into school culture the most current theories and best practices to support of life plans.

What's been done?

We met with James Ritchie of the University of Bridgeport on 12/12/07. Dr. Ritchie shared his belief that this is a particularly important piece of the strategic plan, being the only action statement that focuses directly on students. The work of the Bridgeport Higher Education Alliance (BHEA) has been aligned to dovetail with this section of the strategic plan.

Ritchie stated the goal for this year is to pull together supporting arguments and best practice from research and seek grant funding for implementation. Fairfield University, Sacred Heart University and the University of Bridgeport are collaborating in this effort.

Nadia Ward (Yale) and Theresa Dworkin (Bridgeport Public Schools) have agreed to evaluate this program.

In a meeting with John DiDonato (also on 12/12/07) he indicated that he has taken the lead on implementing this step, and sees a need to utilize the resources already in place – re-examining the roles of the counselors, social workers, and classroom teachers. He'd like to employ a packaged curriculum and designate a team to take on a continued leadership role.

Where can we see it?

Phase 2. Follow up with Ritchie (BHEA) and DiDonato on the status of the pilot program and its' scheduled implementation. Look for continuity following Ritchie's retirement, and ways for DiDonato and BHEA to work together on this. Dr. Ramos has agreed to broker a discussion between the two parties if we can arrange it. Visit Madison School and Park City Magnet for evidence of early implementation.

Success, barriers, unexpected outcomes?

Ritchie states the group is working well with their contacts on the school level, though has experienced more difficulty in getting the central office staff to focus on this step. He sees this as simply a reflection of too much going on.

James Ritchie is retiring on June 30. Who will take the lead on this, and be accountable for its implementation?

Strategy #3

We will build and sustain the capacity of each school to implement focused school education plans.

Result Statement # 3.1



Implementation completed or ongoing

Revise the School Education Plan (SEP) template to align with the District's Strategic Plan, which reflects the needs, climate and culture of the learning community.

Action Steps

3.1.1 Establish a committee to revise the SEP template

This committee will include:

- Co-chairpersons
- A member of applicable strategic action planning committees
- Representative district and school personnel

3.1.2 Seek the expertise and assistance in the design of the SEP template from:

- Center for Performance Assessment (CPA)
- Connecticut State Department Education/ Connecticut Accountability
- Learning Initiative (CALI)

3.1.3 The committee will:

- Create an agenda that denotes expectations with timelines for completion of SEP template
- Research and review exemplars of SEP
- use CPA rubric to analyze exemplars and develop district template
- Plan professional development that will result in understanding the components and content of the SEP template

What's been done?

Both Superintendent Ramos and Theresa Carroll expressed confidence that this piece is ongoing. Carroll expressed this as a continuum that will move to deeper levels of understanding. Professional development for the SEP has been completed for principals and other administrators, and will be offered on a yearly basis as implementation progresses. Common formative assessment training was completed last week.

Where can we see it?

Carroll sees evidence in the SEP revisions that were coming in. Schools just went through two separate compliance reviews – NCLB/Title I and CPA/PIM. Each school will be required to provide quarterly feedback, based on evidence, to the district improvement committee and their

assistant superintendent. Evidence binders should be kept at each school and available for viewing.

Phase 2. Schedule visits to schools (possibly the same schools as in Action Step 1) and review the evidence binder with the principal or an administrator. Seek specific evidence of changes or refinements to the SEP based on data, as well as feedback from the district office.

Success, barriers, unexpected consequences?

The increased focus on monitoring and use of evidence is likely to be overwhelming for the assistant superintendents and district improvement committee. They have yet to work out a way to efficiently digest and process all this information.

The first year of this was heavily focused on developing the skills, learning how to write goals, etc. Every school is doing this, but they are just developing the real skills of drilling into data and writing stronger goals. In Carroll's words, 'Encouragement and support got us this far, now monitoring will help get us home to a better process and outcome.'

SEP and district plans are being developed at the same time, so they don't yet do a strong job of informing one another. But a quarterly reporting schedule should force quarterly revisions, and eventually the plans will catch up with one another.

Strategy #3

We will build and sustain the capacity of each school to implement focused school education plans.

Result Statement # 3.2



Implementation completed or ongoing

Develop a process for monitoring, adjusting and updating the School Education Plans.

Action Steps

- 3.2.1** Establish a *standing* committee to include a cross-section of district personnel
- The committee will assist schools in the planning/writing of SEP reflecting Tier I [*is made up of system-wide indicators*], Tier II [*consists of school-based indicators*], and Tier III [*is a narrative description of the schools' successes and challenges*] indicators per district and state guidelines
 - The committee will monitor and support schools in the implementation of SEP reflecting Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III indicators per district and state guidelines
- 3.2.2** Schools will monitor, adjust and update SEP quarterly
- Provide professional development to schools to address use of CPA rubric, as well as federal and state guidelines

What's been done?

We met with Terry Carroll on 12/11/07, and she indicated these steps were completed. While the process continues to strengthen, the structure for reporting and monitoring is in place. Professional development is ongoing.

Where can we see it?

SEPs, District Education Plan Reporting Form (evidence included)

Phase 2. Schedule visits to schools (possibly the same schools as in Action Step 1) and review the evidence binder with the principal or an administrator. Seek specific evidence of changes or refinements to the SEP based on data, as well as feedback from the district office.

Success, barriers, unexpected consequences?

Carroll feels a lot of work remains to be done in terms of the monitoring piece. This staff-intensive piece comes at a time when staffing is limited.

Strategy #3

We will build and sustain the capacity of each school to implement focused school education plans.

Result Statement # 3.3



Implementation completed or ongoing

Design and provide professional development experiences to engage school and district personnel in a continuous cycle of strategic planning and improvement.

Action Steps

3.3.1 The *standing* committee will develop and implement an annual calendar of professional development sessions to include:

- need assessments
- data analysis
- priority setting and goals
- developing action strategies
- milestones, benchmarks and evaluations
- CPA rubric

3.3.2 The *standing* committee will use professional development evaluations to improve participants' understanding.

What's been done?

Superintendent Ramos has been leading this effort by planning and offering a series of focused study/conversations with his leadership teams and administrators. When we met in October 2007, he reviewed the work done to date around the district Theory of Action and how it is used as a driver to move the district forward through a shared vision. Common study groups have been implemented around *Seven Habits (Covey)*; *Change Forces and Leadership and Sustainability (Fullan)*; and *Good to Great (Collins)*. Ramos has expressed the need for help in developing and implementing these skills. IFL has picked up some of this district work.

We met with Henry Kelly on 11/28/07 to explore his role in this effort. Kelly expressed frustration in moving professional development towards a systematic, cyclical model that consistently upgrades the skill of existing staff, while supporting the integration of staff new to the district. We also discussed the tensions between school-based and district-based professional development.

A master PD schedule exists for the year. IFL has provided professional development for principals, literacy coaches, and other administrators but it has not yet effectively penetrated the classrooms.

Software that simplifies the scheduling process for substitutes has recently been implemented, and this should allow teachers to participate in more professional development opportunities.

Software has also been put into place that simplifies the CEU reporting process across the district.

We spoke to Theresa Carroll about this step as well. Carroll expressed her view that this step is intimately tied to the SEP process and is really part of the district strategic planning – helping the SEPs become a strategic tool. This is already reflected in some of the districtwide training, but will move deeper into practice as time goes on.

Where can we see it?

District professional development calendar.

Phase 2. Schedule visits to schools (possibly the same schools as in Action Step 1) and review the evidence binder with the principal or an administrator. Seek specific evidence of changes or refinements to the SEP based on data, as well as feedback from the district office.

Success, barriers, unexpected outcomes?

Strategy #4

We will develop and implement a variety of accountability models that address performance at all levels of the school district and among community partners.

Result Statement # 4.1



Implementation stalled or not started

Develop over the first year an Integrated Accountability Plan for the District that aligns with the Strategic School Plan. (The Integrated Accountability Plan will: define accountability; identify key measures and standards of accountability across existing models; and identify staff responsible for the various parts of the Integrated Accountability Plan.)

Action Steps

- 4.1.1 Organize an Accountability Task Force comprised of community partners and District staff from all levels of the School District and Board members;
- 4.1.2 Provide education and training to Accountability Task Force regarding its charge; and develop consensus on the definition of accountability;
- 4.1.3 Develop inventory of accountability models by identifying current models operating in the School District; who is responsible; gaps and overlap among current accountability models; frequency and adequacy of assessment; and degree to which they drive decisions;
- 4.1.4 Assess alignment and integration of accountability models with the Strategic School Plan and other school plans;
- 4.1.5 Identify practices and changes to make overall accountability system and various accountability models more effective;
- 4.1.6 Draft Integrated Accountability Plan that includes definition of accountability, accountability measures, and periodic public reports;
- 4.1.7 Present draft Integrated Accountability Plan for comment at a public Education Accountability Forum;
- 4.1.8 Finalize Integrated Accountability Plan based on feedback from Education Accountability Forum.

What's been done?

Dr. Ramos described this step as the “Accountability for Learning Initiative.” When we met with Henry Kelly on 11/28/07 he described this as a ‘biggie’ that should create a mechanism to ensure accountability within the district, as well as across the community.

Kelly described the background of the development of this step. The community was pressing for more coherence and accountability, and ways to ensure that all the pieces of the strategic plan were moving forward in mutually supportive ways. There is also a need to hold individuals accountable for progress.

We met with Marilyn Ondrasik on 12/12/07 and she provided further background. A number of accountability systems exist, though they do not integrate or support one another. She felt the community wants to see progress, and wants someone to be accountable for the progress.

The Task Force has not been formed yet, and oversight of this task force is viewed as a large responsibility that will require a great deal of focused time and effort. Ondrasik believes this task force should include members from the community and people outside the district who may have different views and ‘think outside the box’.

A number of accountability mechanisms do exist. Each teacher is required to complete a PD/staff evaluation form, with identified goals and objectives that are tied to district and/or school education plans. A common lens for administrator accountability has been developed (with the assistance of UCLA SMP) but it hasn’t been implemented yet. Administrators are in the process of developing a supervisory instrument with a different focus from evaluation instruments. The Center for Performance Assessment (CPA) is working with the district on a model for using data to inform accountability.

The new budget process (being rolled out) requires specific funding requests to be tied back to the Strategic Plan.

A position (Director of Accountability) has been created and posted, funded through a state Commissioner’s Grant – though no applications were received. Dr. Ramos and others believe filling this position is key to moving this work forward. Ramos has asked the state for permission to carry this funding over to next year, and is considering distributing some of the responsibilities across other positions.

This process and report on the Strategic Plan implementation represents an initial step in creating accountability mechanisms.

Where can we see it?

Phase 2. Follow up with Dr. Ramos on the progress or planning for the establishment of the Task Force and the plans for a Director of Accountability.

Success, barriers, unexpected consequences?

Mr. Kelly believes this cannot be accomplished with hiring a full time administrator to oversee its’ development, but the budget and Board direction make this unlikely to happen this year. Some of the progress might be started with the help of a ‘teacher on assignment’, but overall

direction really needs to be provided by someone who is skilled in the politics of dealing with the multiple players.

Strategy #4

We will develop and implement a variety of accountability models that address performance at all levels of the school district and among community partners.

Result Statement # 4.2



Implementation stalled or not started

Develop over the first year an Integrated Accountability Plan for the elected Board of Education, by elected Board of Education members working jointly with staff from the school district. (The Integrated Accountability Plan will identify responsibilities for the elected Board of Education, the Superintendent of Schools and joint responsibilities for both to enhance collaboration to ensure educational excellence for Bridgeport public school children.)

Action Steps

- 4.2.1 Establish a committee of the elected Board of Education to work with the Superintendent of Schools or his designee to develop an accountability plan for the elected Board of Education;
- 4.2.2 Retain independent entity to provide examples of model operating procedures, policies, and responsibilities and to provide guidance, such as Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE);
- 4.2.3 Identify responsibilities and accountability measures for elected Board of Education, Superintendent of Schools, and joint responsibilities;
- 4.2.4 Draft plan for inclusion in Integrated Accountability Plan that identifies responsibilities, accountability measures; and periodic public reports;
- 4.2.5 Present draft plan at a public Education Accountability Forum (same Forum as for Result 1) to explain draft plan and seek feedback;
- 4.2.6 Finalize Integrated Accountability Plan.

What's been done?

We met with Marilyn Ondrasik on 12/12/07. Her feeling is that the school board is not engaged in the strategic plan at this point, and does not spend time discussing school improvement issues. We also met with Robert Rader of CABE on 12/17/07, and he echoed the sentiment that this step is not moving forward.

Rader conducted two retreats with the Board last year (the final one was May 8) to discuss roles and responsibilities of board members, along with a plan for accountability. These meetings were described as somewhat contentious, but with opportunities to move forward. Rader states he has provided the Board with sample policies and regulations, and had promised to meet with

them again to help structure the adoption of policies. He sees the first priority as the adoption of Board by-laws. Despite a number of telephone calls and email contacts with the Board, no one has gotten back to him to schedule the follow-up work.

Where can we see it?

Phase 2. Follow up with Superintendent Ramos to discuss Board progress.

Success, barriers, unexpected consequences?

Ondrasik believes the school board members need training and support to assume greater ownership of the plan and be accountable for it. An understanding of how other school boards do this would be helpful.

Rader and CAFE have provided numerous sample policies and has repeatedly offered to help the Board address what he sees as a lack of formal policy structure leading to ineffective meetings. As one example he cited the fact that there is no mechanism for Board committees to report back to the entire Board – issues are raised, referred to committee, and then never come back for action or adoption. One of the tools he has offered is a Team Leadership Accountability tool that would be used in conjunction with a Board self-assessment and Superintendent Evaluation, that may provide at least a model for an accountability structure. CAFE and CAPSS have also developed a joint governance statement that helps to clarify the separate responsibilities of the board and the superintendent. He feels this could be very helpful.

Funding is not a barrier here – Bridgeport is a member of CAFE and the state has provided additional funding to support this work. The sample policy manuals have already been paid for. Dr. Ramos believes this strategy has not ‘matured’ because of board reluctance to proceed. In his words, the board “must be complicit in this step, and open to the work.”

Strategy #5

We will develop and sustain results oriented leadership among administrators, principals, teachers, parents, students, and community program staff.

Result Statement # 5.4



Implementation underway

The Superintendent's cabinet will develop a greater capacity to lead the district's mission and strategic plan through gaining experience, knowledge, and skills on how to think strategically.

Action Plans

5.4.1 Provide assistance from an outside expert(s) to facilitate all strategic thinking training sessions and work with the coordinator identified in 5.1.1. Expert(s) should have extensive experience in development of leadership and strategic thinking for cabinet level administrators preferably within public, unionized institutions. Expert(s) preferably have no current relationship with Bridgeport Public School District.

5.4.2 Develop the scope and sequence of the training activities through a collaborative dialogue between the facilitator(s) and the cabinet.

5.4.3 Establish a calendar for the purpose of conducting strategic thinking training sessions.

5.4.4 Acquire the locations for all training sessions.

5.4.5 Deliver the training to the cabinet.

5.4.6 Demonstrate strategic thinking.

5.4.7 Design measures and mechanisms for measuring application of the cabinet's knowledge, skills, and attitudes gained through the training sessions.

5.4.8 Conduct an annual assessment of the progress made in the use of strategic thinking for the purpose of implementing the strategic plan and other district operation objectives.

5.4.9 Redesign the training sessions for the following year based on the results from 5.4.7 and 5.4.8.

What's been done?

When we met with Superintendent Ramos in October 2007 he told us he is currently seeking funding for a consultant to support the implementation of this step. He is specifically considering the Connecticut Center for School Change.

We followed up with Assistant Superintendent Doug Hiscox on December 4, 2007. Hiscox explained this step is intended to help with the implementation of the overall strategic plan – by helping administrators and executives think strategically.

Ramos has secured agreement with the Graustein Foundation (David Nee) and The Connecticut Center for School Change (Andrew Lachman) to partner, and fund, this activity. The details have been discussed, and Ramos is awaiting a response and plan from the partners.

Where can we see it?

Phase 2. Follow up with Superintendent Ramos once the plan is delivered.

Success, barriers, unexpected consequences?

Identifying a consultant who could accomplish this effectively, and finding funding to support it, remains unaddressed. Hiscox expressed his belief that this is a difficult task, requiring someone who can understand the dynamics of the administrative team and meet their unique needs. Bringing a ‘canned’ program to promote strategic thinking is not likely to achieve the desired results.

Strategy #6

We will create and sustain multiple ways for families to be involved in education of their children in the home and at school.

Result Statement #6.1



Implementation completed or ongoing

Provide a genuine parent friendly climate at all schools facilitated by the school administrator

Action Steps

- 6.1.1 Use SERC to train all School Leadership Team members in the National Network of Partnership, Schools Welcoming Model * other suitable family involvement model.
- 6.1.2 Train principals to engage and greet students/parents.
- 6.1.3 Train teachers to engage parents on keeping open communications regarding their child's positive and negative behavior (there should be no surprises for parents). Parents should also be trained in keeping teachers informed of their child's behavior.
- 6.1.4 Post clear directions to reach key locations inside the school.
- 6.1.5 Ensure all parent information reflects languages spoken within the school
- 6.1.6 Establish a system of accountability to monitor the implementation of the Welcoming Families Model.
- 6.1.7 Monitor teacher and administration implementation of the model through report cards.

What's been done?

Superintendent Ramos expressed his belief that we are 'down that road' and making good progress on this step when we met in October 2007. We met with Lisa Pavlich, Coordinator of the Parent Resource Center, on November 28, 2007. Pavlich was a member of the Strategy #6 plan development team.

Planning for SERC-led training (National Network of Partnership Schools – NNPS) is proceeding, with an organizational meeting scheduled for early in December. Bridgeport will be highlighted as a pilot NNPS district, and the program is supported in part through state funding.

NNPS is a comprehensive program that is designed to develop and maintain strong programs of school, family and community partnerships, based at Johns Hopkins University. Pavlich is looking for funds to hire a full time NNPS coordinator, a requirement for participation in the program. The coordinator will be supported by district funds, and provide training and support for school leadership teams, as well as creating and maintaining an accountability system. The coordinator will report to Meredith Robson.

The Welcoming Schools program (NNPS) was chosen as an effective model to make connections more solvent and creative. The search for an effective program preceded the development of the Strategic Plan.

The implementation of the NNPS model (scheduled for this year) should address action steps 6.1.1 through 6.1.6 – though there are ongoing activities that already address each of these in part. The Parent Center, through school-based PACs and home school coordinators work with each school to create a welcoming and parent-friendly environment. The PC has also conducted cultural diversity training at the principals meetings, and this initiative continues.

PACs (Parent Advisory Committees, similar to a PTA or PTO) exist at each school, and Pavlich meets with the PAC Executive Committee (the presidents from each school) on a monthly basis. She describes her role as supportive, helping to address issues they surface. The Parent Resource Center hosts an annual PAC conference, drawing 400 parents last year. They also support ‘parent recognition awards’ every few months.

We also spoke with Meredith Robson about NNPS, and she confirmed what Pavlich shared. Robson has allocated Title I funds to help support the cost of the coordinator.

Action step 6.1.7 (Monitor teacher and administration implementation of the model through report cards) remains unclear and unaddressed at this point. Pavlich told us she is not sure how this will be (or could be) done. Robson echoed the confusion over this step, though believes it is related to the NNPS accountability work and will become clear once the program is up and running in September 2008.

We spoke with John DiDonato about this piece as well on 12/12/07, and he indicated he is not involved in the implementation.

Though not scheduled for implementation this year, there is also some progress on other areas of Strategy #6 – most notably 6.3 (creating a set of recommendations for a comprehensive family involvement program) and 6.5 (develop a weekly School Public Access Television program). The set of recommendations should arise from the implementation of the NNPS model, and there is a working committee already meeting to plan and implement a cable TV program.

Where can we see it?

Phase 2. Meet with the new coordinator and secure a list of scheduled implementation activities and participants. With the coordinator, develop an understanding of what monitoring and accountability processes are built into this model.

Success, barriers, unexpected consequences?

In some important ways, the Strategic Plan has simply provided recognition of many initiatives that were already underway. Other than the NNPS training, the Parent Resource Center will continue to do what it has been doing.

Pavlich is struggling to find a way to evaluate the impact of programs offered at the center (GED and adult education). While she routinely collects anecdotal information she would like a way to monitor the longer term impact – how former adult students are doing. Do the programs lead to better employment? Is there any short or long term impact on the children of adult students?

Strategy #7

We will create and sustain partnerships with individuals, businesses, post-secondary institutions, elected officials, community organizations and parents to enhance student success.

Result Statement #7.1



Implementation completed or ongoing

Establish a formal relationship between Bridgeport Public Schools and National Network of Partnership Schools.

Action Steps

7.1.1 Action Team #7 will continue to share information about the opportunities and tools available through NNPS with interested parties, including PACs, principals, teachers, etc., to advance strong partnerships between the broad Bridgeport community and the Bridgeport Public School System.

7.1.2 While sharing NNPS information with principals, and others throughout the District and community, make sure everyone has a clear understanding of the supporting work required of them to insure that Bridgeport will be an active and effective participant in NNPS.

7.1.3 Analyze the cost and benefits related to NNPS's ability to offer Bridgeport Schools a process, along with the resources and tools necessary to create and sustain active partnerships. Each school partnership must support the Board of Education's mission and focus on reinforcing the education work plans for the District and the schools.

7.1.4 Work with NNPS and the Connecticut Department of Education to ensure that services and training provided can be adapted to meet Bridgeport's needs and focuses on reinforcing education plans for schools and the district.

7.1.5 Seek Superintendent's approval on establishing a partnership with NNPS.

7.1.6 Formally establish membership with the National Network of Partnership Schools.

What's been done?

Superintendent Ramos expressed confidence that this step was in progress when we met in October 2007. We followed up by meeting with August Serra of General Electric (community partner) on December 5, 2007.

Gus Serra, co-chair of the Strategy #7 committee, expressed his feeling that this step was about accountability and transparency for community partners. The National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) was chosen as a partner because the program appears simple and comprehensive. His hope is that NNPS will help them manage school leadership teams, bringing tools to evaluate the effectiveness, work more effectively, share best practices, provide regular communication and training. He expressed frustration that it has taken this long to get off the

ground, and told us he would have preferred piloting it on a small basis to waiting for a full time coordinator to come on board. He also expressed frustration at a perceived lack of communication and feedback on where this program is right now.

We also interviewed Alma Maya on 12/11/07, and she confirmed that this is completed.

See Action Plan 6.1. These action steps (7.1.1 through 7.1.6) have been accomplished.

Where can we see it?

Phase 2. Confirmation of this step should be seen through the beginning activities in 6.1. Discuss community communication mechanisms with the new coordinator.

Success, barriers, unexpected consequences?


Situating the NNPS program in the Parent Center may minimize the profile of community partners. Minimally there is a need for better communication and possibly involvement on the part of community partners.

Ms Maya is also concerned that school leadership teams, PACs, PTAs, and other existing organizations be integrated into this effort. This will prevent duplication of efforts, and provide a 'historical' view to the work.

The superintendent is arranging a site visit to the Miami Dade Parent Training Center, inclusive of staff, community and board members. This site has been identified as a center of excellence and this visit will provide an opportunity for learning about an exemplary program.

Strategy #7

We will create and sustain partnerships with individuals, businesses, post-secondary institutions, elected officials, community organizations and parents to enhance student success.

Result Statement #7.2  **Implementation proceeding, but a caution – the role of the committee has not be defined, or if it has it has not been well communicated.**

Establish a Bridgeport Schools Strategic Action liaison committee, to support the Board of Education and school administrators as District strategic plans are implemented.

Action Steps

7.2.1 Form a collaborative committee that may include representatives from all Action Teams, community partners and elected officials.

7.2.2 Design the role of the Strategic Action liaison committee so that the committee serves as an advocate, supporting and facilitating the implementation of appropriate Action Plans by District Leadership.

7.2.3 Research/review Board of Education by-laws for special committee requirements and seek Superintendent's support.

7.2.4 Prepare a proposal for establishing the liaison committee, including a charge to be given to the committee.

7.2.5 Secure Board approval.

7.2.6 Establish committee structure, leadership, meeting schedule.

7.2.7 Report regularly to the Superintendent to identify advocacy initiatives that will help support the implementation of the District's strategic plans.

What's been done?

The Superintendent expressed confidence that this was done, and in fact the completion of this committee's work resulted in the prioritized action steps for the current year (the basis of this report).

August Serra of General Electric participated as a member of the Strategic Action liaison committee. The committee met for two days and established priorities. In his words, this committee was put into place in a 'low-key' way and remains ad hoc, without a structure or defined body of work. He would like to see it move into a more formalized body that meets quarterly and reports on implementation progress to the Board.

We also spoke with Meredith Robson about this committee and she expressed her belief that this committee would be in place for the next several years, meeting as required. However she felt the membership might change as the implementation moves forward. She noted that the recent Cambridge visiting team discussed the need for a regular report to the Board on the progress of implementation.

Robert Francis of RYASAP, a member of this committee, shared his insight that the committee could and should be used as advocates with the board and larger community to promote implementation, building on established relationships. He believes this committee could be used effectively as a 'tool' by the Superintendent to promote and accomplish the action steps.

Dr. Ramos plans to convene this committee to share this report on implementation, and to clarify its' ongoing role. This meeting will be facilitated by Rocco Rainone and Marilyn Gounaris. This meeting should be scheduled in February.

Where can we see it?

Bridgeport Public School Strategic Action Plan Implementation Schedule (2007-08 School Year).

Phase 2. Follow up with Superintendent Ramos on the outcomes of the February meeting.

Success, barriers, unexpected consequences?

The ongoing role and responsibilities of the Liaison Committee needs to be explicitly stated and communicated to the members.

Strategy #8

We will refine and sustain a variety of approaches to ensure the safety and security of all schools and nurture the social and emotional health of the students, and families served by the school district.

Result Statement #8.1



Implementation completed or ongoing

Provide interventions to decrease the number of unwanted teen pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections and high risk sexual behaviors among students whose parents have enrolled them in Bridgeport School Based Health Centers (SBHCs).

Action Steps

- 8.1.1 Distribute consent forms for these interventions to all parents of students currently enrolled in the SBHCs with an option to decline.
- 8.1.2 Identify students who would benefit from expanded abstinence counseling and reproductive services.
- 8.1.3 Educate students on skills for refusing sexual advances and prevention of unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.
- 8.1.4 Screen students, as medically indicated, who present to the SBHCs for high risk sexual behaviors maintaining students' confidentiality as governed by CT State statutes.
- 8.1.5 Complete an individualized intervention collaboratively between student and Nurse practitioner in accordance with appropriate medical standards.
- 8.1.6 Prescribe and/or dispense on site limited contraceptive choices to reduce the number of teen pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections.
- 8.1.7 Provide individualized follow-up and education for each student according to standards of care.
- 8.1.8 Maintain confidential medical records for each student per HIPAA guidelines.
- 8.1.9 Refer students to outside agencies and providers as needed.
- 8.1.10 Recruit nursing students from a local university to evaluate gathered data.
- 8.1.11 Evaluate differences in teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection rates before and after program implementation.
- 8.1.12 Present evaluation data will be presented to a joint committee of members from

the Bridgeport Public Schools and Department of Public Health.

What's been done?

Superintendent Ramos expressed confidence that this step is completed when we met in October. We followed up with Kate Gredinger (Supervisor, School Based Health Services, City of Bridgeport Department of Health and Human Services) on November 28, 2007.

School-based health clinics (SBHC) are providing services at 10 Bridgeport schools (Central HS, Harding HS, Bassick HS, Columbus, Roosevelt, Blackham, Read, Dunbar, JFK, and Marin). Although these clinics were in existence before the Strategic Plan was unveiled, the Plan served as a catalyst for several policy changes. The most notable change is the provision of supplies and counseling related to birth control. A dental program is also available to all SBHC members (dental operators are located at 7 of the 10 sites). According to Ms. Gredinger, the SBHCs are providing services that comprehensively address action steps 8.1.1 through 8.1.9 above.

SBHCs are staffed by nurse practitioners, social workers, medical assistants, and outreach workers, and they are under the supervision of the health department. School nurses remain in place, and often provide assessments and referrals to the SBHCs. The philosophy underlying this program is that children cannot achieve academically unless they are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy. Gredinger worked on the development of the strategic plan, and action steps were devised to specifically address high teen pregnancy and STI rate among Bridgeport students. She told us that right now there are 30 pregnant women receiving services at Central High School.

Funding for the SBHCs is provided through the city and the CT Department of Health. During the summer months, any child who is enrolled in the Bridgeport Public Schools can take advantage of the services, but during the school year the services are limited to students who have a signed, parental consent form and attend one of the ten schools with a SBHC. Young, pregnant women who have not entered high school yet have the option of attending Read School, allowing them to take advantage of SBHC services. There is also one full-time social worker employed by the Board of Education who works exclusively with pregnant and parenting teens in the district.

Parental consent forms were revised to reflect the new district policy on the provision of birth control services. A letter explaining the new services went out to 4,000 parents last summer – all families of students who were 13 or older. This letter gave parents the opportunity to opt out of all SBHC services for their child. These changes have now been incorporated into the general consent forms sent home with students on an annual basis. Forms are distributed in English, Spanish, and Portuguese and require a parental signature before services are provided.

Student referrals come from within the schools, and the availability is spreading by 'word of mouth'. Advertising the availability of services is being done cautiously because of the potential for highly charged, negative publicity. The cost of birth control supplies has been supported through funds from Planned Parenthood (at the high school) and by an anonymous donation (at the middle school).

Data on the effectiveness of this program is being collected, with the help of students from Yale University. Data from the high schools is being entered into an existing database at Planned Parenthood, with the Health Department collecting and storing data on K-8 schools in their own database. The Health Department expects to take a first look at the data early in 2008, with a comprehensive report prepared for presentation to the school board in June 2008.

Meredith Robson signs off on grant funds that support the SBHCs, but is not involved in the operational aspects.

Where can we see it?

Phase 2. Meet with Gredinger (and/or her replacement) to review data early in 2008.

Success, barriers, unexpected consequences?

Gredinger is concerned about being able to sustain funding for birth control supplies. She expects the demand for program services to grow as word spreads and more students take advantage of the services. Planned Parenthood and donations have supported the program thus far, but she doesn't see this level of funding as capable of meeting anticipated demands. Thus, other opportunities for additional funding will be explored in order to continue providing this service to SBHC members.

Strategy #8

We will refine and sustain a variety of approaches to ensure the safety and security of all schools and nurture the social and emotional health of the students, and families served by the school district.

Result Statement #8.3



Implementation completed or ongoing

Establish a youth governed teen learning/recreation center available to them during non-school hours.

Action Steps

8.3.1 Establish an advisory committee comprised of representatives from the Bridgeport Public Schools and City departments who will recruit and support high school students in the development of a teen learning/recreation center that will operate between the hours of 2:00 pm and 11:00 pm during the week and various times over the weekend.

8.3.2 Ensure that students make up at least half of the membership on the Advisory Committee.

8.3.3 Convene a meeting with high school principals, advisory committee and student leadership to determine level of interest and support in pursuing this proposed project.

8.3.4 Develop a timeline for youth recruitment.

8.3.5 Support a youth driven design for a teen learning/recreation center.

8.3.6 Support will be provided by the Advisory Committee in helping youth develop schedules, budgets, and presentations for fund raising purposes.

8.3.7 Review and approval of final design and youth leaders responsible for program implementation.

What's been done?

Superintendent Ramos told us in October 2007 that the teen learning/recreation center is up and running. We met with Tammy Papa on December 5, 2007, and she echoed this sentiment. She did add, however, that it is not yet functioning at the level they know it can. The center is open until 10 pm and on the weekends. An advisory group is in place, representing parents and youth. This group meets weekly (the staff) and monthly with community members.

The BOE puts no money toward this effort. The program is funded through Lighthouse special revenue and a grant through the State Department of Office and Policy Management.

Where can we see it?

Phase 2. Follow up with Papa for evaluation and implementation data collected, and to arrange for a youth site visit.

Success, barriers, unexpected consequences?

There have been some difficulties in forging partnerships with the Housing Authority that need to be worked out. Stronger collaboration with the Rec Department could result in better and more comprehensive delivery of services.

Strategy #8

We will refine and sustain a variety of approaches to ensure the safety and security of all schools and nurture the social and emotional health of the students, and families served by the school district.

Result Statement #8.9



Implementation completed or ongoing

Provide ½ day professional development opportunity for each school's Student Assistance Team on the use of a Social Emotional Matrix. A Social Emotional Matrix provides a snapshot of the social emotional programs operating in the district and the information needed to implement strategies that address the needs of children, youth, families and enhance a positive school culture.

Action Steps:

8.9.1 Survey the Student Assistance Teams of the schools that were participant to the 2006/2007 school year pilot that incorporated the use of the Social Emotional Matrix.

8.9.2 Develop training module based upon survey conducted in Step 1 to be used for half day professional development opportunity.

8.9.3 Provide brief overview of the Social Emotional Matrix training module for all district principals.

8.9.4 Schedule and implement half day professional development session for all Student Assistance Teams.

8.9.5 Schedule weekly visits for a period of two months to all schools to include technical support on the implementation of the Social Emotional Matrix.

What's been done?

We met with John DiDonato on 12/12/07 to discuss this step. The Social Emotional Matrix is a tool used to filter all interventions, based on the Positive Behavioral Intervention Systems (PBIS) model. The tool has been developed and is in use at 17 schools (all of the Bassick cluster schools, 2 from the Central Cluster and 5 from the Harding cluster). His stated goal is to reach all schools next year, and he is working to integrate the SEM with the SEP to make it an 'invisible' program. Hopefully the SEM becomes part of practice, not a separate program.

Meredith Robson supports this in terms of allocating grant funds, but is not involved in the operational aspects.

Where can we see it?

Phase 2. Visit 5 selected schools where implementation is ongoing for administrator and teacher interviews. If appropriate, student or classroom observations, using a rubric developed by DiDonato. Meet with DiDonato to understand what sort of evaluation data and feedback he may already be collecting.

Success, barriers, unexpected consequences?

DiDonato states that social and emotional literacy are given the same priority as literacy and numeracy, though he believes they must all be approached together. He'd like to see social workers, guidance counselors and psychologists take on a more proactive, less reactive role.

Strategy #9

We will communicate the importance of improving public education in Bridgeport to the Greater Bridgeport Community and design and implement a plan to obtain additional resources from the state, city, federal governments and other resource opportunities.

Result Statement #9.5



Implementation just beginning

Establish an internal marketing and public relations office that is truly dedicated to the Bridgeport Public School System.

Action Steps

9.5.1 Establish a steering committee comprised of stakeholders to develop an action plan for this newly created department.

9.5.2 Seek out corporations and/or foundations to assist in funding this new position/team.

9.5.3 Work with this team to assist in the promotion of the message contained within this strategy.

What's been done?

An individual has been hired to oversee this process and begin implementation.

Where can we see it?

Meet with the new Public Relations individual.

Successes, barriers, unexpected consequences?

Strategy #9

We will communicate the importance of improving public education in Bridgeport to the Greater Bridgeport Community and design and implement a plan to obtain additional resources from the state, city, federal governments and other resource opportunities.

Result Statement #9.6



Implementation just beginning

Develop and deliver a public service campaign focused on adults who are not parents in the Greater Bridgeport Community.

Action Steps

9.6.1 Define and agree upon set criteria that can be used to identify successful programs.

9.6.2 Identify and promote programs that succeed in the Bridgeport Schools in spite of funding issues.

9.6.3 Hold focus groups in Fairfield, Westport, Greenwich, Stamford, and Norwalk that would seek to identify existing perceptions about the impact of the Bridgeport Public School system on neighboring communities and to test possible messages about the importance of urban public schools to the region. These sessions would be facilitated by the United Way. Possible themes: Investment in the future, common good, it takes a village, business needs workers, etc.

9.6.4 Interview key stakeholders including elected officials to help identify parent leaders.

9.6.5 Select parent leaders from these communities who would be willing to work with a media consultant to create a messaging campaign from the interview and the focus groups.

9.6.6 Identify and select a national and local media company/consultant to work on this campaign.

What's been done?

An individual has been hired to oversee this process and begin implementation.

Where can we see it?

Meet with the new Public Relations individual.

Successes, barriers, unexpected consequences?

Strategy #9

We will communicate the importance of improving public education in Bridgeport to the Greater Bridgeport Community and design and implement a plan to obtain additional resources from the state, city, federal governments and other resource opportunities.

Result Statement #9.7



Implementation just beginning

Develop and deliver an organized campaign for the State General Assembly.

Action Steps

9.7.1 Recruit a Steering Committee of residents and stakeholders to oversee the development of a campaign to increase support for the Bridgeport Public Schools.

9.7.2 Establish a formal relationship with the Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition and the United Way to promote equitable funding for education in the Bridgeport Public Schools.

9.7.3 Research aggregate cost that each of these towns (Fairfield, Westport, Greenwich, Stamford, Darien, and New Canaan) pay to support “safety net” and other reactive social programs in Bridgeport, such as TANF, Food Stamps, SAGA, Mental Health and Addictions Services, Pregnancy Prevention, Unemployment, Incarcerations, etc.

9.7.4 Use this research to create a white paper that describes the rationale for supporting the improvement of the Bridgeport Public Schools (the white paper is a succinct core message with research highlights).

9.7.5 Use the rationale and data to create news releases and Letters to the editor.

9.7.6 Use the rationale and data to create report for lawmakers.

9.7.7 Meet with the Bridgeport State Representatives, Senators and the Mayor to reach consensus on a campaign to advocate for more resources at the state level.

9.7.8 Identify and/or develop legislators and key lawmakers who can help garner additional resources to Bridgeport.

9.7.9 Try to recruit “white knight” lobbyist to work on issue.

9.7.10 Develop materials/fact sheets in support of position based upon white paper.

9.7.11 Recruit and train local representatives – students, residents, education officials – to deliver messages.

9.7.12 Implement campaign to State General Assembly.

What's been done?

An individual has been hired to oversee this process and begin implementation.

Where can we see it?

Meet with the new Public Relations individual.

Successes, barriers, unexpected consequences?

Strategy # 10

We will create and sustain a financial operating system that will enable resources to be utilized efficiently and effectively and design and implement a plan to obtain additional resources from the State, City, and Federal governments and other resource opportunities.

Result Statement #10.1



Implementation completed or ongoing

Budget and its management will be separated from the City of Bridgeport's budget and its management by September 1, 2007.

Action Steps

10.1.1 RFP Committee interviews budget separation project consultants on January 30, 2007 and February 5, 2007.

10.1.2 February 10, 2007: RFP Committee selects consultant.

10.1.3 February 12, 2007: Board of Education approves selection.

10.1.4 February 14, 2007: BRBC signs Letter of Agreement with consultant.

10.1.5 February 15, 2007: Consultant begins work.

10.1.6 May 15, 2007: Consultant report submitted to BRBC, Mayor, and Board of Education.

10.1.7 May 30 2007: Secure commitments of funds to enable implementation of consultant's report.

10.1.8 June 1, 2007 – September 1, 2007: Implementation period.

What's been done?

We met with Robert Henry on December 4, 2007, and he provided us with some background to the development of these action steps. Accurately understanding and tracking financial data across the district is difficult because there are multiple, siloed software and data tracking management systems in use (e.g. Genesis for personnel, Advantage for district financial). A new, integrated financial management system will allow district personnel to report more efficiently and effectively. Being able to separate district and city finances supports this overall objective, by making both the source and the use of funds more transparent.

Steps 10.1.1 through 10.1.7 have been accomplished. The consulting firm McConnell, Jones, Lanier and Murphy (MJLM) was engaged and completed their report, submitted to the City of Bridgeport and the Board of Education on May 21, 2007. This report includes detailed implementation strategies.

The timetable for the implementation period (step 10.1.8) has been pushed back, and is now expected to be completed by April 2008. A Request for Proposal for Project Management Services was issued earlier this year, seeking a point person for implementation. Specifically, it describes the scope of work as: “The selected Project Manager will be charged with implementing the set of recommendations contained within the May 21, 2007 report from pages 33 to 48, beginning with number 2 on page 33. The Project Manager would be fully responsible for designing the implementation, creating the plan for implementation and taking the necessary steps, in full consultation with the appropriate City of Bridgeport and Board of Education personnel in order for full implementation of the cited recommendations to be accomplished.” According to the RFP, this assignment will commence on January 2, 2008 and be completed by March 30, 2008. Responses to this RFP have been received and are currently being reviewed, with the expectation that a contractor will be selected shortly.

The work being done under this action step (10.1) is intertwined with the work of action steps 10.2 and 10.3, and in important ways is a precursor to accomplishing other Strategy 10 outcomes. Phase 1 (the consultant report) is completed, and Phase 2 (implementation of the consultant recommendations) is about to commence.

Where can we see it?

MJLM completed a report entitled *Final Report on the Steps to Enhanced Financial Autonomy Between the City of Bridgeport and the Board of Education* on May 21, 2007. Detailed implementation strategies are included, beginning on page 33 of this report.

A signed, letter of agreement between the City and Board of Education dated October 27, 2006. This letter demonstrates the commitment of all parties and the Bridgeport Regional Business Council to accomplishing these steps, resulting in the RFP for Project Management Services, with a closing date of December 12, 2007.

Phase 2. Follow up with consultant once they begin work to understand how implementation is proceeding.

Success, barriers, unexpected consequences?

Barriers (delays) include funding and approval by all parties.

Strategy # 10

We will create and sustain a financial and operational system that will enable resources to be utilized efficiently and effectively and design and implement a plan to obtain additional resources from the State, City, and Federal governments and other resource opportunities.

Result Statement # 10.2



Implementation completed or ongoing

Prepare and disseminate monthly, an easy to understand combined operating and grant fund budget document that will allow any reader to track the Board's revenue and expenses in order to create transparency for its finances.

Assumption: New financial software will be implemented in conjunction with these steps.

Action Steps

10.2.1 Analyze and document existing data needs and structures for the combined budget document.

10.2.2 Determine priority of data needs of the community and the Board of Education while checking availability of financial data.

10.2.3 Create a document that will show the reader the revenue and expenses While keeping formats standard, user friendly and consistent.

10.2.4 Prepare and distribute a sample document for review and feedback.

10.2.5 Formalize format and timing of document distribution.

10.2.6 Publish schedule for document dissemination

10.2.7 Determine audience list for distribution

- The City department/official designated by the Mayor
- The Committees of the City Council
- The Bridgeport Regional Business Council
- Members of the City's State Delegation
- Advertise the availability of the financial reports to through mailings, media, and/or public forums

10.2.8 Disseminate document.

What's been done?

As included in the strategic plan, there is an assumption that new financial software must be implemented in order to fully realize this outcome. We met with Robert Henry on December 4,

2007 for an update on this step. An RFQ (#MIB068B – *Evaluation of the Current Financial Process and Procedures*) has been issued and responses are being reviewed. Based on this, a plan for a new, integrated financial system that will support operations and reporting is expected to be available early in 2009. As specified in the RFQ, the resulting plan is intended to manage the interests of the city as well as the interests of the Board of Education.

In the absence of a new financial system, financial reporting is on-going and temporary efforts to align current systems are in place. Monthly financial reports (budget line allocation changes and financial status) are on the Superintendent's Reporting Schedule, prepared and submitted by Julio Molleda. Quarterly reports on Special Funds are also on this current reporting schedule, prepared and submitted by Meredith Robson.

We spoke with Robson on December 5, and she confirmed her role in preparing quarterly grant reporting, echoing the difficulty she has in collecting and analyzing data.

When reports go on the Superintendent's reporting calendar, they are disseminated as part of Board minutes and during work with City Financial Committees. While no one is intentionally excluded from this distribution, the intent of Action Step 10.2.7 hasn't yet been fully realized.

Where can we see it?

RFQ #MIB068B.

Bridgeport Public School System Annual Reporting Schedule (2007-08) shows dates for projected financial reporting.

October 18, 2007 report to the Superintendent on FY07-08 First Quarter Financial Status Report: General Budget and FY07-08 State and Federal Grants Reports.

Phase 2. Follow up with Robert Henry to determine what steps, if any, are being used to improve reporting and communication during the coming year.

Success, barriers, unexpected consequences?

The switch to accurate, timely monthly reporting will happen automatically when the new software system is in place in 2009.

On the grant reporting side, Meredith Robson explained the difficulties she has in collecting accurate data, and the time it takes to hand massage and compile needed information. She would like to be more involved on a daily basis with the business administration division, though they do speak frequently and work together well. Robson reports to Henry Kelly, and Molleda to Robert Henry – a structure she feels may not work strategically to support true integration. She also pointed out that some private contributions go directly to schools and the current financial reporting structure means she may, or may not, be aware of it.

Strategy # 10

We will create and sustain a financial and operational system that will enable resources to be utilized efficiently and effectively and design and implement a plan to obtain additional resources from the State, City, and Federal governments and other resource opportunities.

Result Statement #10.3 **Implementation proceeding, but a caution – funding for the \$1.5 million system is not yet secured.**

Fully analyze the deployment of school system resources and operational systems reviewed for efficiencies by April 30, 2008.

Action Steps

10.3.1 Secure Board of Education, City administration and City Council approval, contingent upon implementation of budget separation project (PHASE 2) and funding plan, of an operational review scan, and contingent upon the results of that, a full operational and management review process by May 30, 2007. (if the scan does not uncover measurable opportunities for efficiencies, the full review will not be sought).

10.3.2 Create a committee to draft an RFP for consultant services for an operational and management review scan (PHASE 3), as well as a complete operational and management review (PHASE 4) of the school system by April 15, 2007.

10.3.3 Secure business community funding for the operational scan by May 30, 2007.

10.3.4 Build a community coalition to support the operation and management review project by August 15, 2007.

10.3.5 Finalize a funding plan for the full Review project by July 30, 2007.

10.3.6 Appoint an RFP review committee by July 15, 2007.

10.3.7 Solicit consultant proposal for operational and management review scan and full review (two separate contracts) by August 15, 2007.

10.3.8 Select a consultant and secure approval of City and Board of Education of Consultant selection by September 30, 2007 (same date that is targeted for full implementation for budget separation project).

10.3.9 Sign contract with consultant by October 1, 2007.

10.3.10 October 1, 2007 to November 30, 2007: Consultant's Operation and Management review scan of the School System.

10.3.11 Presentation of scan results to the City and Board of Education by December 15, 2007 for determination to proceed with full review (PHASE 4).

10.3.12 December 15, 2007 to April 30, 2008. Consultant's work on full operational and management review of the School System (completion targeted in line with FY 2008 budget process)

What's been done?

We met with Robert Henry on December 4, 2007. The items under this action step are tied to Results Statement 10.1 – and are viewed as Phases 3 and 4 of ongoing work. Phase 3 (operational and management review scan) will commence in January with the award of the contract described under Action Step 10.1. Mr. Henry stressed that the district is not wedded to the plan for Phase 3 and 4, but will adapt and adopt the plan in accordance with the contractor findings and recommendations.

As described under Action Step 10.1, Phase 3 is not expected to be completed until April 2008.

Where can we see it?

Phase 2. Follow up with Robert Henry to determine what steps, if any, are being used to improve reporting and communication during the coming year; and evidence of positive working relationships between the City and the BOE.

Success, barriers, unexpected consequences?

There is a better working relationship among the involved parties at the City and Board of Education, bolstered in part by new personnel and the change of administration on the City side. There is increased dialogue among the participants and a better working relationship.

The \$1.5 million price tag for the new financial system has not been budgeted. This potentially will be funded by the BRBC, State Department of Education, Board of Education and the City of Bridgeport.