



FY17 STRATEGIC PLAN COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Strategic Plan provides the direction needed to facilitate change that will allow the District to fulfill its vision and mission. This Executive Summary highlights the progress made during FY17, which was the District's third full year of plan implementation.

A focus on continuous improvement keeps the Strategic Plan updated and flexible. Instrumental to the successful implementation of the Strategic Plan, the District continuously measures and assesses its performance. The FY17 quarterly Strategic Planning sessions for each division were held on October 6, 2016 and April 13, 2017. In addition, the FY17 Mid-Year Review was conducted on January 20, 2017. The FY17 Comprehensive Review was conducted on September 7, 2017 and information will be shared with the Board of Education. The Comprehensive Review will assist the District with a continued evaluation of achievement of long-term strategies for decision-making, resource allocation, and Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) development. This focus on continuous improvement will keep the Strategic Plan updated and flexible, as the on-going reviews inform course corrections to ensure long-term success.

Continuous Improvement Planning System training sessions were offered to all schools in June 2016. Using a case study, participants engaged in the well-defined components and processes used in continuous improvement planning. This included understanding the appropriate uses of various types and sources of data and designing collaborative processes to develop and implement a Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP). Built into this system are monitoring cycles to review progress, reflect on processes, and identify actions to refine implementation of strategies. Monitoring cycles were held in October-November 2016 and March 2017.

The FY17 results of the strategic planning efforts yielded District achievements as well as opportunities for improvement. The highlights listed below are not meant to be a comprehensive accounting of this year's successes. Rather, it details high impact, system-level progress that moves the District closer to realizing its vision and mission.

Goal Area I: Student Success with Equity and Access

The DeKalb County School District experienced an increase in student achievement during the 2016-2017 school year due to the profound impact of the Superintendent's initiatives and strong implementation efforts from the district and school teams. In the 2017 school year, Board approval was received for the new DCSD curriculum and work began in earnest to develop the curriculum for all core subjects. Along with the new curriculum, a classroom walkthrough rubric and lesson plan template were developed. While the full impact of the new curriculum will not be realized until 2018-2019, student growth and the DCSD graduation rate of growth exceeded the state average. Further, the implementation of 23 STEM and STEAM programs focused on problem-based learning are providing students with Deep Teaching and Learning for long-term student success. The work of additional curriculum development in CTAE and non-core subjects is fully underway and will ensure that every student in DeKalb County School District receives rigorous and quality teaching and learning each day.

Goal Area II: Stakeholder Engagement

The efforts that took place in the area of Stakeholder Engagement contains some of the strongest leading indicators that will impact future student success. The concerted effort to improve males and females of color attendance and to reduce discipline in-school and out-of-school suspension rates ensured more of our at-risk students were attending school and participating in quality classroom instruction.

According to the 2012 Pew Report “Digital Differences,” only 62% of people in households making less than \$30,000 a year used the internet, compared with 90% of those making at least \$50,000-74,999 and 97% of those making more than \$75,000. The Information Technology Division has worked tirelessly to obliterate the digital divide. The Learning Management System was rolled out so that every teacher and student who attended DCSD schools in 2016-2017 had access to the software, hardware, and the tools necessary for Deep Teaching and Learning.

Goal Area III: Staff Efficacy and Excellence

The Human Capital Management division has focused on ensuring every classroom has a qualified teacher at the beginning of the school year. While additional efforts have taken place, there are still areas where the district has struggled to hire ‘difficult-to-fill’ positions. The division has increased its data collection and has worked to find trends and reasons why classified and non-classified staff are leaving the district. As a result of more effective training programs for non-certified staff, we have witnessed an increase in the work quality of non-certified staff as indicated on their performance reviews.

Goal Area IV: Internal and External Communication

DCSD has an entire Goal Area focused on communications. The Division of Communications and Community Relations has a major role in communicating the strategic work of the district. Throughout the FY17 school year, the Communications team supported student achievement and success through Cyber Safety Day, MBK/OSK, Spring Break learning, School Choice Expos, STEM certifications, FLEX Academy, The Bridge, and Family Engagement initiatives. Further, work has continued to enhance school/district unity and stakeholder communications through co-branding and logo development for 21 additional schools and a multi-channel marketing campaign encouraging student engagement and school/district pride.

Goal Area V: Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency

In the Goal Area of Organization Effectiveness and Efficiency, DCSD has been highly focused on cost reductions so that increased resources are available for the students and retaining quality staff. The Finance division’s efforts continued to create more effective and efficient budgetary expenditure controls in FY17. For the third year in a row, the fund balance has improved. It is nearing the levels it was prior to the economic downturn of recent years. The district has also achieved an AA Moody Bond Rating. This provides significant cost savings to the district in terms of borrowing money for future growth projects. The Operations division has focused on increasing bus safety and also improving the age and condition of the bus fleet. Further, there has been an incredible effort to complete work requests in a quick turn-around so the impact to students and staff is minimized. Legal Affairs is working diligently to close out workman’s comp claims in a timely manner to ensure that staff get back to work which further decreased the drain on the financial resources. This fiscal conservation has allowed for the DCSD Board of Education to provide staff raises that are competitive with the other metro school districts, thus allowing the district to hire quality faculty and staff.

The FY18 performance measures (SMART goals), targets, initiatives, and actions steps have been informed by the FY17 results. Rigorous monitoring and data collection cycles will assist in identifying and driving improvement efforts in the District. Assessing progress, developing plans, implementing plans, and monitoring interventions are processes that will be sustained and happen continuously.