



District 2009-10 Focused Goals Mid-Year Update

Palo Alto Unified School District

Our Mission is to enable all students to:

- Strive for academic excellence;
- Acquire the knowledge and skills that support learning;
- Value creativity and life-long learning;
- Demonstrate respect for self and others; and
- Participate meaningfully in our democratic society and interdependent global community.

Strategic Plan Areas

- Academic Excellence and Learning
- Staff Recruitment and Development
- Budget Trends and Infrastructure
- Governance and Communication

January 26, 2010

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Strategic Plan Areas

- Urgent issues for the second semester
 - Budget challenges
 - Hiring and District organization

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Academic Excellence and Learning

Seek ways to improve our collective social-emotional support for students

- Community conversations
- Review and discussion around consistency for the Living Skills Class
- Additional training for counselors and other student support personnel
- Raise level of discussion around importance of sleep in determining physical/social/emotional health
- K-12 coordination of social-emotional teaching and learning

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Academic Excellence and Learning

Community Conversations

- Multiple individuals, groups, written materials, and dialog
- Partnerships and coalitions under leadership of City of Palo Alto
- Additional district staff this year, and more training for staff, especially counselors and psychologists
- More information at Project Safety Net:
http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/depts/csd/community_and_family_resources/safetynet/default.asp

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Academic Excellence and Learning

Living Skills

- Revamp/refresh of curriculum with input from outside groups as well as teachers from both schools
- Additional four-day training for summer school teachers
- Two, three-week opportunities for students to take class in summer school
- Gunn is exploring online class for upperclassmen

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Academic Excellence and Learning

Sleep and K-12 Coordination of social-emotional teaching and learning

- Exploring this issue at both high schools and attempting to balance it with the other bell schedule priorities
- Discussion at elementary school principals meetings and K-12 meetings around social-emotional teaching and learning

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Academic Excellence and Learning

Continue discussions and efforts around college readiness, graduation requirements, and maintaining excellence at secondary schools

- Review of student success in college through surveys – *Note: Not yet undertaken*
- Examination of graduation requirements versus college admissions requirements as well as student a-g completion rates – *Note: Ongoing discussions taking place, but no recommendations from staff at this time. We are improving our data.*

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Academic Excellence and Learning

Improve math instruction and support implementation of new math materials (K-12)

- Review of reporting math progress to elementary students' parents
- Intensive professional development for elementary school teachers and administrators and their integration into math program
- Summer planning time for secondary math teachers around new materials and their integration into math program
- Implementation of *Everyday Math* calendar reviewed by Board on April 28, 2009

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Academic Excellence and Learning

Improve math instruction and support implementation of new math materials (K-12) (continued)

- These activities were completed or are underway
- An evaluation of *Everyday Math* curriculum will take place in the spring as part of the strategic plan

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Staff Recruitment and Development

Enhance culture and build structures around improved staff development for all employees

- Continued conversations with teachers and other staff regarding training and development needs – *Note: These conversations are taking place.*
- Setting budget priority around professional development – *Note: We continue to see this as a high priority for one-time funds in difficult budget times.*
- Examination of best practices in professional development, particularly at the secondary level – *Note: We continue this examination.*

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Budget Trends and Infrastructure

Act as careful stewards of district fiscal resources (operating funds, Strong Schools Bond funds, and parent donations)

- Solve structural deficit issues – *More work to be done in upcoming months.*
- Address explosive growth in health benefit costs
 - Health benefit costs up 139% over 7 years
 - *Note: Costs for 2010 are projected to be up only .5%*
- Continue to move building program forward
 - *Building program is moving forward in exciting ways.*

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Budget Trends and Infrastructure

Renew Parcel Tax that ensures a steady source of local funding

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Governance and Communication

Complete review and revamping of the district's Board Policies

- Note: The major portion of this board policy review and revamp is completed. Staff still has work to do on administrative regulations and important board policies.*

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Strategic Plan Review

- *Strategic Plan Adopted May 27, 2008, with help of McKinsey & Company*
- *Expectation that plan would be reviewed every two years*
- *McKinsey & Company prepared to support this review effort*

Strategic Plan Review

- February/March – interview and group meetings with key stakeholders
- March – surveys of parents, teachers, and students
- April – study session with Board to review Staff/McKinsey Strategic Plan review report

Activities Around Focused Goals

- ✓ Introduce at June 23, 2009, Board meeting
- ✓ Discussion during Board August 3-4 Retreat
- ✓ Discussions with school leaders August 5-24
- ✓ August 25 Board discussion of Focused Goals
- ✓ September 8 Board approval of 2009-10 Focused Goals
- ✓ January 26 Board Mid-year Update
 - June 2010 final report to Board

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