

NOCSES EAGLES

February, 2014



North Olmsted City Schools Strategic Plan

The 2020 Initiative

Building Our Future Together



Dear Community Members, Parents and Staff,

On September 18, 2013, the Board of Education authorized me to initiate a strategic planning process that would build upon the accomplishments of the district and provide direction for future success. It is my pleasure to share with you the results of countless hours of hard work and reflective thinking on the part of educational and community leaders in the North Olmsted City School District. The product is contained in this document - ***The 2020 Initiative: Building our Future Together.***



In October 2013, a process was launched to engage community members, parents and staff in shaping the future of the North Olmsted City Schools through various activities asking them to assess the system's strengths and areas of opportunities for growth and development. A Strategic Planning Steering Committee made up of a representative cross section of the schools and community was formed. The committee's varied backgrounds and experience were valuable assets as they worked together during numerous meetings and work sessions. The members participated in visioning and brainstorming activities while discussing and analyzing the data collected from surveys and community forums.

Six focus areas were identified including *Facilities, Technology, Instructional Program and Practices, Community Engagement, Finance, and Operations and Services*. Goals, strategies and objectives were developed to ensure that every child attending the North Olmsted City Schools is successful and leaves school "College and Career Ready."

The vision for our school district is captured in the phrase ***A Premier Learning Community!*** Simply put, we want to be the best! We refuse to settle for less and are willing to work hard to make sure we get there.

Our visioning process identified several attitudes and values that capture this sentiment. Our staff wants our kids to leave school full of *Resilience* - the confidence they can overcome any obstacle in their way if they just work hard enough. We want them to have *Hope* and the belief that they can achieve anything they set their hearts and mind to do. And we want to instill in them an attitude of *Caring* for themselves and others – to make this world a better place.

The stakes today could not be any higher. Our children need to be prepared to compete in an increasingly complex, diverse and competitive world. Their future, and the future of our schools and community are at a critical crossroads. This is our blueprint. It provides the building blocks necessary to meet the tremendous challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Now is time for action and we are anxious to get busy with the important work of ***Building our Future Together.***

I look forward to working with you to make the vision contained in ***The 2020 Initiative*** a reality!

Sincerely,

Michael E. Zalar, Ph.D.
Superintendent



PURPOSE

The North Olmsted City School District provides an environment where learning comes first. Students master essential learning skills, demonstrate civic responsibility, prepare for post-secondary education and careers, and engage in positive personal development. Parents are invested in their student's education. Employees recognize the value of their individual contributions and commit to excellence. The community of North Olmsted supports the educational process.

VISIONING PROCESS

Early in the strategic planning process, the North Olmsted City Schools teachers and administrators were posed three questions as part of a visioning activity. Their answers, along with input from the strategic planning steering committee, have informed the development of the vision statement for the North Olmsted City Schools.

Question #1: What are the most important outcomes we want for our kids as a result of going through the North Olmsted City Schools?

We want our students to be college and career ready.

We want our students to become productive, responsible and engaged citizens.

We want our students to be lifelong learners who can think critically, creatively, and know how to solve problems.

Question #2: What are the two or three most important things we want our children to have learned in the North Olmsted City Schools?

The values of grit, perseverance and effort.

The value of believing in themselves.

The values of honesty, integrity and character.

Question #3: What do we want our students to carry away with them, perhaps for the rest of their lives, that might not have happened without the systematic attention we all paid to it?

Care: The importance of caring for themselves, others and society as a whole.

Hope: The unwavering belief that anything is possible and the future is unlimited.

Resilience: The confidence and ability to overcome any challenge that will come their way.

VISION STATEMENT

This plan puts forth an overarching vision for the North Olmsted City Schools that is captured in the statement: **A Premier Learning Community.** *Premier* reflects the district's commitment to excellence and to being the best school district possible. *Learning* describes our basic mission of providing a high quality 21st century educational program for all students. *Community* captures the idea that our vision is only possible when everyone is working together towards a common cause: doing what's best for kids!

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the North Olmsted City Schools – a partnership of students, staff, parents and the community dedicated to excellence – is to ensure that all students acquire the skills and knowledge to thrive in their future education and work by providing superior educators, programs and services, and expectations which maximize each student's abilities and aspirations.

“Our mission is focused on the individual success of each student. We want every graduate of the North Olmsted City Schools to be ready for college, career and life in a twenty first century global economy.”

Dr. Michael E. Zalar, Superintendent

CORE VALUES

The core values of the North Olmsted City School District are as follows:

INVITATIONAL: We value an inviting, vibrant and safe educational environment.

LEARNING: We value learning through rigorous, high-quality instruction, focused student support, and engaging student activities.

ENGAGEMENT: We value an engaging, collegial atmosphere with professional, ethical and respectful interactions that enhance learning in the schools and the community.

DIVERSITY: We value the unique experiences of individuals and the diversity of the North Olmsted community.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT: We value continuous improvement in all areas of the school district operations through encouraging data-based decision making, effective innovation, appropriate use of technology, responsible stewardship of financial and human resources, and professional development for faculty and staff.



Strategic Goals & Goal Strategies

INTRODUCTION

The rules are changing for what our students will need to know when they graduate to be ready for college or a career.

This Strategic Plan is a data-driven roadmap designed to give our students the competitive advantage necessary to meet the needs and challenges they will face.

The Strategic Plan design eliminates “silos” and creates guidelines for the major focus areas based on the difficult questions the committee asked. The answers will provide the framework for moving forward to become a Premier Learning Community.

The general strategy proposed here for the continued achievement of the mission and vision of the North Olmsted City Schools is captured by three words: engagement, effectiveness and efficiency.

(1) Engage the community of North Olmsted in the process of preparing for the future of our schools.

Keeping an eye firmly fixed on the continued strong academic performance of our students that the community has come to expect. This plan proposes to create and maintain greater connectivity among all school and community stakeholders.

(2) Effectiveness is all about performance. It’s about completing activities and achieving goals. This plan proposes goals that will allow students to complete their K-12 education and graduate from an environment where they feel safe, both physically and emotionally, and where they are not only encouraged to succeed but are expected to succeed.

(3) Efficiency is doing things right. This plan proposes a careful and systemic approach to the process of educating the students of North Olmsted. It takes a close look at the extent to which time, effort and cost is well used for the intended purpose. Many of the goals imply a specific outcome that will maximize efficiency and minimize waste, expense or unnecessary effort.

FACILITIES

Our buildings are inefficient, require extensive maintenance and are not cost effective. We have not invested in new facilities in almost 50 years. Do our current facilities and operational structure meet the demands and future needs of our students for a 21st century education?

Conduct a comprehensive master plan and renovation study of all district facilities.

- Commission professional architectural services to facilitate a comprehensive facilities study.
- Conduct a needs assessment of all district facilities.
- Convene a steering committee of key community stakeholders to review the process and engage the community.
- Make recommendations to the Board of Education regarding current and future facilities planning.

Determine the most efficient and cost-effective way to distribute the student population and district resources to meet educational goals.

- Develop building grade reconfiguration scenarios that are fiscally responsible and align with academic goals.
 - Develop redistricting scenarios based on revised school boundary lines.
 - Develop a map of revised school boundary lines.
 - Make recommendations to the Board of Education regarding the reconfiguration and redistricting plan.
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TECHNOLOGY

Technology is no longer “nice” to have – it is a required skill integrated into every area of our lives. Do we have the needed infrastructure, support and staff skill set to make sure our students will graduate with up-to-date and emerging technology knowledge?

Maximize efficient and effective uses of technology across all areas of school district operation.

- Investigate and encourage the use of using new and emerging technology in the classroom.
- Promote and support the use of emerging technology through the development of a mini grant program for teachers.
- Automate district operational practices when possible to increase efficiency as well as convenience for users and reduce costs.
- Review tech staffing requirements, job descriptions and expectations for current tech staff to ensure efficiency and cost effectiveness.
- Provide professional development opportunities for staff and teachers to investigate instructional technologies and encourage the use of emerging technology in the classroom.

Develop a 3-5 year technology plan for the school district.

- Convene a technology committee made up of representatives from each building as well as the technology administrative team.
- Develop a hardware and software purchasing, maintenance and replacement plan.
- Develop and maintain an accurate and more efficient inventory system for all hardware and all software.
- Upgrade networking resources and services to wirelessly connect all classrooms, teacher work areas and offices within the school district.
- Purchase computers needed for students to participate in required online state assessments.
- Research best practices and develop policies and procedures in pursuit of a district-wide BYOD initiative.
- Provide technology necessary for implementation of non-core academic content state standards in the area of the arts, music and physical education.

Study and analyze the district capabilities in all areas affected by technology.

- Conduct a full technology audit – both hardware and teacher integration levels.
- Proceed with action plans based on the results of the Tech Audit and Tech Plan.

Creating Success
|Care| |Hope| |Resilience| |College and Career Readiness|

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM AND PRACTICES

The district is consistently top rated for student achievement by the Ohio Department of Education. Are we providing the best instruction to increase student growth and in-depth understanding that will make them successful in their 21st century world?

Develop a comprehensive school improvement plan designed to increase student growth and achievement, engage students and transform the district into a learning organization.

- District leaders will participate in the Ohio School Change Leadership Academy presented by the Schlechty Center.
- Conduct a book study with the administrative leadership team using the book “Engaging Students: The Next Level of Working on the Work” by Phillip C. Schlechty.
- Provide ongoing professional development to support teacher growth and development related to the use of effective instructional practices and varied assessments.
- Implement the Ohio Improvement Process at all levels.
- Improve and expand district initiatives utilizing research-based practices such as Response To Intervention (RTI) and Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) designed to improve student achievement.
- Implement a teacher evaluation system aligned to the Ohio standards for teaching professionals.
- Develop courses of study to include Ohio’s New Learning Standards for all subjects.
- Develop, implement and monitor the effectiveness of instructional programming for all students as well as specific subgroups such as English Language Learners, Students with Disabilities, Lowest 20% of Students, Gifted & Talented.
- Explore and develop a more robust early childhood education program to better serve the needs of the parents and children in the community.
- Explore and develop better connections and build partnerships with community-based early childhood education providers to enhance the educational experience for all.
- Explore and develop a continuum of educational options to better meet the educational, psychological and social needs of our most severe at risk students.

Implement and monitor the use of effective research-based instructional and assessment practices.

- Provide high quality professional development (HQPD) about assessment literacy.
- Provide HQPD about the use of data to inform instruction.
- Implement and monitor the use of clear learning targets and effective feedback, including the development of a common understanding of these practices.
- Develop, implement and monitor the use of assessments to inform instruction and curricular decisions.
- Review and implement effective grading practices and policies.
- Provide an efficient and effective means to collect, store, and retrieve student data.

All students will graduate from high school college and/or career ready and be prepared for success in a global economy.

- Provide varied options for earning college credit.
 - Explore the expansion of World Languages, Advanced Placement and PSEO opportunities for students.
 - Establish graduation credit requirements that are rigorous and realistic to ensure NOCS students are career and college ready.
 - Maintain and establish new partnerships with outside organizations and agencies to increase opportunities for students to earn real-world experience and/or industry credentials.
 - Explore and develop an option for an alternative school within NOCS or in partnership with a neighboring school district.
 - Develop a career and college readiness course of study K-12 to assist students with creating a career and/or college readiness plan.
 - Implement and monitor 21st Century skills across all grades and courses of study.
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Assess and monitor the effectiveness of ALL school district processes and initiatives.

- Evaluate the student and teacher schedule used by the school.
- Consider alternative arrangements of teacher and student time within the day.
- Examine district processes to determine if technology can improve efficiency.

Expand the services and opportunities to ensure each high-achieving student reaches his/her highest potential.

- Evaluate gifted and acceleration identification processes to ensure eligible students have access to gifted services and/or acceleration opportunities, including those from under-represented populations.
- Implement and monitor the effectiveness of our district gifted servicing to ensure compliance with state policies and growth for high-achieving students.
- Expand and monitor the effectiveness of our district acceleration and enrichment opportunities to ensure growth for high-achieving students.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of and relevancy to post-secondary education of Advanced Placement and Honors course offerings, including enrollment trends.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The district is a vital part of the North Olmsted community and will continue to be successful with their support. How can we increase our level of meaningful involvement with the community?

Increase the school district's level of engagement with the community of North Olmsted.

- Form a Superintendent's Advisory Committee with key community stakeholders, including parents, business partners, city officials, alumni, and community members.
- Continue to grow our NOCS partnership with the City of North Olmsted by working with their Economic Development department to host a lunch or breakfast at Springvale with area realtors, business leaders, bankers, builders, Great Northern Mall management and Chamber of Commerce members to promote North Olmsted.
- Invite the North Olmsted faith communities to meet with school and city officials to share information and explore ways to work together for the betterment of the community.
- Establish a Speaker's Bureau of students, parents, alumni, staff and community members to strengthen public awareness of school issues, increase understanding of its operations, and educate the community about how the district helps keep the community vital.
- Utilize the Alliance's Quality Profile template on what a high quality district includes and looks like.

Connect with the 80% of the population who do not have children in our schools – seniors, empty nesters, young couples, private and charter school students, singles, new residents, older children living at home with their parents.

- Construct a questionnaire on how they would like to receive information and what they would like to know.
 - Create a quick pocket guide/fact book about our district that could also be used by the Speaker's Bureau as a leave behind.
 - Work with the High School to produce a NOHS fact book/guide on why students make North Olmsted High School their school of choice.
 - Generate a yearly financial newsletter to distribute to all residents and businesses.
 - Work with the City of North Olmsted on a promotional video about the community as part of the upcoming Bicentennial celebration in 2015. (North Olmsted was founded in 1815.)
 - Host a Realtor Day in North Olmsted and invite realtors to board school busses for a tour of the neighborhoods, including a stop at the schools.
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Increase our level of outreach and engagement with our parents.

Provide opportunities for parent education; e.g., a “Parent University” several times per year starting with a forum on safety in 2014. (Common Core Standards; Reading Guarantee; Instructional Technology, etc.)
Continue to work with our PTA Council to increase their involvement with district initiatives.
Engage parents and help them fully understand what a 21st century K-12 education looks like.

Develop a school and community-based approach to building healthy developmental assets in all students K-12.

- Establish a core team to research asset awareness in the school community.
- Partner with the greater community to communicate the asset building framework and use of the common language of developmental assets.
- Provide training and staff development in the area of developmental assets.
- Survey students and establish baseline data of the current state of developmental assets in all schools.
- Incorporate asset building activities into school communities.

FINANCE

The community provides support for a \$55 million budget, and expects the district to be good stewards of their investment. How can we align the strategic and financial resources they provide with the educational priorities of the district?

Incorporate resources from operating levy, permanent improvement levy and/or other sources to implement the strategic plan.

- Continue to evaluate district revenue and expenses from current fiscal year through future fiscal years.
- Continue to evaluate district historical financial information regarding revenue and expenditures specific to buildings and department budgets (i.e., Permanent Improvement, Textbooks, Professional Development, Technology etc.)
- Develop a long-term financial plan for the district (Revenue and Expenditures.)

Develop a 3-5 year capital improvement plan with accompanying financial information which utilizes the permanent improvement fund.

- Prioritize capital improvement projects based upon needs assessment and the Master Plan.
- Develop a budget and schedule of capital improvement activities based upon the school year calendar and available permanent improvement funds.

Communicate financial information to the community to ensure transparency, accountability and good fiscal stewardship.

- Communicate financial data in a manner that makes it understandable to the general public.
- Provide financial information for district website.
- Collaborate with the Communications Director to publish an annual financial newsletter and statement to the community.

Conduct annual analysis of financial data from the Ohio Department of Education to compare the school district with similar school districts to determine cost-effectiveness.

- Conduct a comprehensive analysis of all district expenses based on industry best practices to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness.
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OPERATIONS & SERVICES

The district maintains a large footprint of buildings and services in the community. How can we improve our operational efficiency and delivery of services to maximize our resources and add value to the community?

Conduct a comprehensive analysis of all district support services, including transportation, food services and custodial/maintenance operations, to determine areas in need of improvements related to efficiency and cost effectiveness.

- Develop and implement a process to identify similar districts and benchmark best practices related to operations and services.

Implement a Lean Six Sigma approach to continuous quality improvement of all district business operations and service systems.

- Provide professional development in Lean Six Sigma continuous quality improvement model for key district personnel.
- Evaluate all district business operation systems and functions using the Lean Six Sigma framework.
- Promote and drive Lean Six Sigma behavior throughout the organization focusing on eliminating waste and adding value to the customer.

Develop a Balanced Scorecard as a strategy to clarify, communicate and align key district goals, objectives and strategic initiatives.

- Collaborate with key district personnel to develop objectives and performance measures to be included on Balanced Scorecard.

Conduct a comprehensive analysis of the current organizational structure of the school district to determine the best strategic use of district resources.

- Conduct a comprehensive staffing audit and compare with benchmarked best practices of similar districts.
- Collect data consisting of similar district organizational charts and job descriptions.
- Redesign district organizational structure to include new job functions, descriptions and roles based upon best practices of similar districts.

Conduct a comprehensive safety audit of all district facilities to determine gaps in the current safety plan.

- Commission a consultant to facilitate the study and ensure objective data and best practice recommendations.
- Prioritize the list of recommendations and share with the Safety Committee.
- Present recommendations to the Board of Education for approval.

Creating Success
|Care| |Hope| |Resilience| |College and Career Readiness|

Strategic Planning Steering Committee

Jackie Chavez Anderson, Administrator, NO Senior Center
Jan Belz, Retired Polaris Director/Resident
Patrick Bunch, First Energy Corp./Parent
Marty Clancy, Business Owner/Resident
Annie Dorsey, Marketing Director, Westfield Gr. Northern Mall
Betsy Drenski, Administrator, NO Recreation Center
Jamie Gallagher, Chief of Police, North Olmsted
Chris Glassburn, Resident/Alumnus
Jeff Herwick, Fifth Third Bank/Chamber President
Nicole Dailey Jones, President, City Council/Parent
Jerry Kasarcik, Business/Parent
Kevin Kennedy, Mayor of North Olmsted
John Kraft, Business/Resident
Tom MacMillan, Pastor, John Knox Presbyterian Church
Doug Miller, Director of Community Outreach, Polaris
Robert Morris III, President, Robert Morris Cadillac-Buick-GMC
Ken Neuzil, Retired Teacher/Kiwanis/Resident
Beth Roshetko, Academic Boosters/Resident
Tim Smith, Business/Resident
Kim Stanko, Birch Primary School Secretary/Resident
Eve Uhland, Realtor/Education Foundation/Resident
Kim Wenger, Director of Planning & Development for NO/Alumnus
Chris Wetmore, Administrator, NO Recreation Center
Linda Schuler, Resident

NORTH OLMSTED CITY SCHOOLS

Dr. Michael E. Zalar, Superintendent
Robert Matson, CPA, District Treasurer
Terry Groden, Board of Education/Parent
Linda Cleary, Board of Education/Parent
Larry Orrach, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Vera Brewer, Director of Communications
Nancy Burce, Coordinator of Instructional Technology
Jeff Stanton, Principal, NO High School
Tom Dreiling, Principal, NO Middle School
Chris Caleris, Principal, Butternut Primary School
Scott Moore, Principal, Chestnut Intermediate School
Mike Ptacek, Athletic Director
Kathy Alm, Director of Transportation
Michelle Kocar, Learning Resource Supervisor
Lisa Ryan Curtin, Director of Pupil Services
Michael McDade, Director of Business Services
Michael Diamond, Director of Human Resources
Melanie Reilly, NOEA/Teacher
Rich Bauer, NOEA/Teacher
Paul Yackee, OAPSE
Jim Carbone, School Resource Officer
Terese D'Amico – Principal, Pine Intermediate School
Frank Samerigo, Coordinator, Pupil Services

**North Olmsted City Schools
Board of Education:**

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Vice President

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Mrs. Joanne DiCarlo
Member

Mr. Thomas Herbster
Member

Michael E. Zalar, Ph.D.
Superintendent

Robert Matson, CPA
District Treasurer

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