



2016-2017 Mid-Year Report

Ephrata Area School District
January 23, 2017

Introduction

The purpose of the Annual Mid-Year Report is to provide a current overview of the District and status updates on key District elements. Additionally, it has been beneficial for the District Superintendent to use this report midway through the year as an opportunity to look back on the work accomplished in the past, assess the present status of work underway, and refine and share the vision forward. In addition to presenting this report to the Board of Directors during the January workshop, this report in its entirety will be shared with the District community when it is posted on the District website. This year, we will review the Mission and Vision of the Ephrata Area School District, examine Five Key Elements of the District related to the past, present and future highlighting significant accomplishments and opportunities.

Mission of the Ephrata Area School District

It is the mission of the Ephrata Area School District to provide all students a secure learning environment and exemplary academic programs that inspire all students to reach their full potential.

District Vision

“Achieving Success, One Student at a Time”

Five Key Elements of the System

1. Students are the fundamental purpose for our organization’s existence and preparing them to be contributing and productive members of our society is the outcome of achieving our mission.
2. The performance of our Staff at all levels is the single-most determining factor to impact the student experience. Supporting teachers and staff members at reaching ever-increasing expectations is one of the key responsibilities of district leadership.
3. Our comprehensive Instructional Program represents the “what” and “how” we achieve our Mission. Through continued efforts to incorporate the use of new tools, techniques and targets throughout the District, we strive to provide each student an experience that is unique to his/her strengths, needs, interests and future goals.
4. Organizational Operations represent the alignment between and among the different components of the District. In addition to the importance of alignment and consistency is the culture that results from the way in which we operate.
5. Partnerships with individuals and groups both within and throughout the District community are important in our ability to realize our Vision. Through the establishment and/or involvement in varied networks and organizations, we can influence many of the external factors that impact the District.

Past, Present, and Future Analysis

Using these Five Key Elements as the lens for reflection and analysis, what follows is a summary of the work accomplished, presently underway, and highlights relevant to the past and present. Additionally, opportunities in the foreseeable future are provided as a reminder of the continuous improvement element of the District culture. It is important to note that while many of the items presented involve more than one of the Key Elements, an attempt has been made to present each in the category that is most aligned with the topic.

Students

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| Past | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Continued Celebrations</u> of individual and group performance successes in all extra-curricular activities • <u>Grading Practices “Charge”</u> to have a “fully endorsed and supported” system for the grading process to better reflect levels of mastery attained • <u>Early Childhood and Kindergarten progress</u> is continuing through the work of the P2P programs, collaborative grant activities, and the Kindergarten study group work • <u>Expansion of technology availability and integration</u> to increase meaningful engagement at all levels K-12 |
| Present | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary progress of <u>practical application of technology-based tools</u> to increase connections and relevance of content and learning processes • Growth Mindset and the <u>“What are You Becoming?” Campaign</u> have served to help elevate the importance of having a growth mindset as adults and supporting students in their growth • Starting last spring, <u>student government meetings</u> at the High School feature a monthly meeting with the Superintendent to engage students in the dialogue about how to continually improve our District • <u>Small Adjustments to the schedule</u> at the Middle School to provide opportunity for students to have choice to better reflect their interests in the Related Arts blocks • <u>Expand the use of Twitter to high school students</u> to share innovative practices with the larger community (@GoMountsStudent) • <u>Increasing Coding and Computer Science experiences</u> through curricular and extra-curricular work • <u>Created Mounts Tech Support</u> program for students to engage in the application of technical and customer service skills |
| Future | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploration of an <u>“Open Campus” model</u> for qualifying juniors and seniors to provide more autonomy and independent/group work by students to help them be prepared for the next step in their learning journey • Provide expanded opportunities for <u>students at all levels to have a voice</u> in the significant decisions that impact their experience through surveys, regular meetings, student contests, and design challenges. • More significant changes to schedules to allow students easier access to have <u>collaborative and independent study opportunities</u> throughout the District |

Staff

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| Past | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Training on Growth Mindset</u> from co-founder of Mindset Works, Eduardo Briceno for entire professional staff and a small group session for administrative team • <u>Leadership Team Members completed a book study</u> using “In Praise of American Educators” by Rick DuFour • <u>Bullying Awareness and prevention training with Barbara Coloroso</u> • Secondary progress of the <u>practical application of technology-based tools</u> to increase connections and relevance of content and learning process moving from optional to accountable |
| Present | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued support of the <u>Professional Learning Community (PLC) Process</u> - Collaborative Team planning occurring every two weeks where teachers who share the same or similar content go through a three-step process to examine the results of previous instruction, determine the impact of their efforts on student learning, and collaboratively plan for the next period of instruction and assessment • Continuation of the Growth Mindset and the “<u>What are You Becoming?</u>” Campaign have served to help elevate the importance of having a growth mindset as adults and supporting students in their growth (#BecomingEASD) • Continue <u>Building Visitation days</u> including conversations and regular classroom walkthroughs with building principals • Created a <u>Coaching Cohort</u> established with regular meetings to share challenges and progress with influencing • Provided <u>Half-Day Staff Development Training</u> to review and make explicit the connections among our Mission, Vision, what we value, and the changes we are trying to make in the overall District programming. • <u>Expanding the Guiding Coalition</u> membership beyond those who integrate technology to include a cross representative group of innovative teachers to advance our collective understanding of improving instructional design and student engagement • Continued development of procedural safeguards within the <u>Human Resources Department</u> to correct errors and close gaps related to the significant mandates placed on school districts by the many authoritative bodies that govern public schools • <u>Leadership Team book studies</u> using “The 4 Disciplines of Execution” by Chris McChesney and “The Energy Bus” by Jon Gordon • Launched <u>Mountaineer Academy</u> that currently features 12 modules related to District priorities |
| Future | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing a regional <u>Shadow a Student</u> effort to get 100+ administrators in the Central PA Region to participate • <u>Expanding the available resources in Mountaineer Academy</u> to support additional areas of need and interest for current and future teachers • Increase the number of <u>Half-Day Professional Development</u> opportunities • Organize and provide training on <u>Project Based Learning and Life Ready Graduate</u> content skills and dispositions • Continued support of <u>new instructional tools, targets and techniques</u> for all staff • Participating on a panel for <u>Aspiring Leaders</u> at the Intermediate Unit |

Instructional Programs

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| Past | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brought the educational documentary film <u>Most Likely To Succeed (MLTS)</u> to our region and incorporated a panel discussion on the misalignment of the present factory model of education and the needs of our students in order for them to be prepared for their future • Established a “<u>Guiding Coalition</u>” comprised of teachers and administrators from all buildings to explore the emerging role of technology in our District and effective strategies to improve meaningful engagement • Coordination of the Foundation-funded summer <u>virtual course development</u> to allow for students to continue progress toward course goals when they are not able to attend class |
| Present | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued progress of <u>practical application of technology-based tools</u> to increase connections and relevance of content and learning process • Development of <u>Life-Ready Graduate profile</u> and process to achieve additional recognition and communicate the phase-in of new expectations • Designing two <u>virtual mini-courses</u> related to priority areas of Personal Finance and Civics that will be included in a certificate program as part of the graduation requirements • Integrating ideas for the <u>incorporation of more STEM/STEAM</u> into current courses and possible electives at the HS and MS levels • Working with a <u>Math Curricular Expert</u> to improve alignment with standards and identify areas for instructional adjustment throughout the K-6 continuum • Training a cohort of teachers using virtual tools to employ a “<u>collegiate</u>” model of instructional design where learning takes place face-to-face and virtually throughout the year |
| Future | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploration of additional <u>STEAM programming</u> for the Elementary, Intermediate and Middle levels • Implementation of <u>Life Ready Graduate</u> certificate program • <u>Additional Adjustments to the Related Arts schedules</u> at the Intermediate and Middle School to offer a coherent set of opportunities for students reflective of their interests • <u>Expanded Use of our Learning Management System (LMS)</u> to offer virtual course modules for community members • <u>Update P2P Academy</u> course content to reflect present resources and needs • Continue exploring the possibility of a <u>Virtual Snow Day Plan at the secondary level</u> through the strategic use of our LMS |

Organizational Operations

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| Past | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Improved the Safety and Security of the Buildings</u> through the installation of an upgraded security system, additional cameras, and an identification checking system for all visitors • Completed the necessary improvements to the <u>Track and EIS/MS Athletic Facilities</u> with work finished by the start of the Fall 2016 athletic season • Completed and maintaining a comprehensive <u>Master Plan of Facilities</u>, including the present condition and warranty status for major structures and systems of the District |
| Present | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Continuing significant progress of the governance processes</u> between the Board and the Administration • Working with local law enforcement and other traffic experts to <u>reconfigure the main high school and District parking and traffic patterns</u> to improve efficiency and safety of students, employees and guests • Exploring the needs and possibilities for the <u>reconfiguration of the Media Center</u> in the high school to better reflect the 21st Century skills and modern learning tools presently in use by EHS students • Conducting weekly <u>Customer Service Survey</u> with visitors within each of our school buildings • Designing a <u>consistent District sign format</u> for all District properties that may include digital messaging to better represent our District brand and communicate with our community • <u>Implementing the Virtual Substitute Teacher</u> program to allow for increased consistency of the instructional program for planned absences at EHS • <u>Implementing an incentive program</u> for referrals for hard to fill positions • Conducting a <u>School Climate study</u> at the MS and HS in collaboration with IU13 |
| Future | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the needs and possibilities for the <u>EIMS Media Center</u> to better reflect the 21st Century skills and modern learning tools presently in use by students in that building • Completing the pre-bid work associated with the <u>EIS/MS Tennis Facilities</u> in order to have work complete by the start of the Fall 2017 athletic season • <u>Expand the Virtual Substitute Teacher</u> program to allow for students to engage in non-time-sensitive course content for unplanned absences |

Partnerships

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| Past | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held our <u>District Legislative Breakfast</u> featuring student highlights in areas beyond what is state-mandated or tested • Increased <u>communication and transparency</u> with the community through the development and use of the customer service survey, Community Happenings page, and the Public Presentations page • Supported the significant growth of the <u>Ephrata Area Education Foundation</u> • Established and maintaining a productive relationship with the <u>War Memorial Association</u> |
| Present | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of the <u>AASA Digital Consortium</u> which focuses on leveraging the digital learning tools to improve student engagement and learning • Hosted an <u>EdLeader21 forum and networking event</u> for member districts and other interested district administrators • <u>Working with officials at the Ephrata National Bank</u> to make adjustments to the Hibshman Scholarship to have it be better aligned to the intentions of the program • Serving as the <u>PASA Resolutions Committee</u> representative for the IU13 Superintendents • Member of the <u>Center for Digital Education Superintendent’s Advisory Council</u> • <u>Regular communications with elected officials</u> regarding proposed legislation and more recently the confirmation hearings for the United States Secretary of Education • <u>Continuing conversations with IU13 and other forward-thinking districts</u> on the re-imagination of the education system |
| Future | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibly joining the <u>Lancaster STEM Alliance</u> • Starting in July, will be a member of the <u>PIAA Board of Control</u> representing the Superintendents of IU13 • <u>Realtor Meeting</u> Scheduled for March 9, 2017 to share the highlights of the District aimed at promoting the Ephrata community as a place for families to thrive and their children to receive an exemplary education • Continued work with <u>Junior Achievement</u> on the existing internship program and STEM events as well as expansion to include a Personal Finance event |