



# Mid-Year Report

Ephrata Area School District  
January 17, 2022

## Introduction

In a normal year, the purpose of this Annual Mid-Year Report is to provide a current overview of the Ephrata Area School District and status updates through the lens of the five key District elements. Over the years, it has been beneficial to use this report as an opportunity to look back on some highlights of the work accomplished in the past, report the present work underway, and share potential future opportunities. In addition to presenting this report to the Board of Directors during the January workshop, this report will be shared with the District community when it is posted on the District website.

For the second year in a row, the pandemic and everything associated with it has negatively impacted our ability to provide a “normal experience” within our schools. Specific initiatives have been slowed, and, in some case, halted due to the context in which we have operated this year. Despite this reality, we have continued to remind ourselves of the theme for this year, to remain ***focused and adaptable***. Focused on what is most important for our students while being adaptable to the shifting parameters governing how we may proceed has been our theme since the start of the year and will remain so throughout the conclusion for the 2021-2022 school year.

## 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”*

## **Shared Beliefs**

This collection of statements is intended to reflect our current understanding of our context and the relevant ideals that are essential to consider in our work. These beliefs serve as common influences in the decisions we make and the direction in which we proceed.

1. Public Education is the SHARED PARTNERSHIP among student, family, school, and community.
2. TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS help support the social/emotional needs of our students and are essential to our overall success.
3. A HIGHLY SKILLED, COMPASSIONATE, and EMPATHETIC STAFF is an invaluable component of our school district.
4. TECHNOLOGY can be a powerful instructional and learning tool.
5. The rapidly changing world increases the importance of SKILLS and DISPOSITIONS.
6. Learning happens most rapidly when it is PERSONALLY RELEVANT and AUTHENTIC.
7. A GROWTH MINDSET should be modeled and promoted.

## **Five Key Elements of the System**

1. Students are the fundamental purpose for public education, and preparing them to be LIFE READY by the time they leave us is our ultimate goal. Graduates prepared to be contributing and productive members of society are the outcome of achieving our Mission.
2. Staff members, at every level, are the most important factor to directly impact the student experience. Developing and maintaining positive relationships, supporting teachers and staff members, and responding to needs and concerns is one of the key responsibilities of District Administration.
3. Our comprehensive Instructional Program is the path to achieving our Mission. Through continued efforts to incorporate modern tools, engaging instructional techniques, and meaningful targets as outlined in the Life Ready Graduate profile, we strive to provide each student a relevant learning experience that is unique to his/her strengths, needs, interests, and aspirations.
4. Effective Organizational Operations emphasize an alignment among the various systems within the District. Additionally, establishment and maintenance of a safe and efficient physical environment paired with a culture that rewards innovation and strategic risk-taking are priorities within this element.
5. Relationships with individuals and groups, both within and throughout the District community, are important in our ability to realize our Vision. Through active memberships

in professional networks and organizations aligned with our work, we can learn with and influence the external factors that impact public education.

### **Past, Present, and Future Analysis**

Using these Five Key Elements as the lens for reflection, what follows is a condensed list of highlights that represent key accomplishments from the past, which are ongoing, and a few topics of work presently underway. Additionally, three opportunities in the foreseeable future are provided for each area as a reminder of the continuous improvement element of our District culture. While many of the items presented involve more than one Key Element, an attempt has been made to present each in the category that is most aligned with the topic.

- **Greyed** throughout this section are initiatives that have been substantially impacted, cancelled, postponed, or re-invented due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related parameters.
- Conversely, items **highlighted** in yellow indicate significant accomplishments were achieved in the respective area despite the pandemic cloud that remains overhead.
- Throughout the Mid-Year Report, to demonstrate alignment among the Five Key Elements framework and our District Shared Beliefs, each item within the body of this report is tagged with a corresponding Shared Belief (SB) number.

## Students

<b>Past &amp; Ongoing</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Student Government &amp; Assistant Superintendent Advisory Council</u> meetings (SB1)</li> <li>2. <u>Coding Contest and Computer Science events</u> (SB4)</li> <li>3. <u>Mounts Tech Support</u> (SB4)</li> <li>4. <u>Life Ready Graduate (LRG) Certificate Program</u> (SB5)</li> <li>5. <u>Attollo Programs</u> (SB7)</li> <li>6. <u>LRG Dispositions integration</u> in Family Groups and Disposition Days (SB5)</li> <li>7. <u>Inclusion of student voice in decision making</u> (SB1)</li> <li>8. <u>Expand the number and variety of internship opportunities</u> (SB6)</li> <li>9. Provide opportunities for students to <u>demonstrate mastery of content in authentic ways</u> personalized to the student through curriculum redesign (SB6)</li> </ol>
<b>Present</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Empower students to more <u>actively participate in education decisions impacting</u> what and how they prepare for productive adult life through the use of a digital career portfolio and Cornerstones at the High School (SB6)</li> <li>2. Identify and organize instructional activities, feedback opportunities, and collections of evidence for each grade-level and subject area/course with respect of each of the <u>12 traits of the Life Ready Graduate profile</u> (SB5)</li> <li>3. Create two Student Engagement Facilitator positions to support the elevation of student engagement and belonging for all students in an environment and academic programs that inspire students to reach their full potential (SB2)</li> <li>4. Online Course plan with Ephrata High School, using Ephrata Area Education Foundation fiscal support, to support every graduate completing a virtual course prior to graduation (SB4)</li> <li>5. Implement resources for understanding and supporting student Social and Emotional perspectives and needs (SB2)</li> </ol>
<b>Future</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expand the <u>inclusion of students</u> to lead and represent the District in presentations at the local, regional, and national levels (SB2)</li> <li>2. Involve students in reflective dialogue about the topics of <u>Engagement and Belonging</u> and how their individual experiences can inform our collective work at supporting ALL student toward reaching their full potential (SB2)</li> <li>3. Launch the "<u>Ephrata Innovates</u>" program for students to offer suggestions and pilot programs that are more closely aligned to the District Vision, Mission, Shared Beliefs, and the features of the Life Ready Graduate (SB2)</li> </ol>

Progress was significantly impacted by COVID

Significant accomplishments achieved

## Staff

<b>Past &amp; Ongoing</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Professional Learning training full- and half-days built to support the EASD Instructional Model</u> (SB3)</li> <li>2. <u>Building Visitation days</u> (SB2)</li> <li>3. <u>Leadership Team Development Meetings and book studies</u> (SB3)</li> <li>4. <u>Life Ready Graduate continued implementation</u> (SB5)</li> <li>5. <u>Reflective Planning Teams</u> for all professional staff (SB7)</li> <li>6. Providing <u>leadership opportunities, direction, and support to teachers</u> in the restructuring of the curriculum to include competencies and learning targets for all existing course content (SB3)</li> <li>7. Creating <u>opportunities for cross-district collaboration</u> through the development of an annual multi-district Professional Learning Day (SB3)</li> </ol>
<b>Present</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Launch Week adjusted schedule and keynote featuring Bill Daggett connecting our current work of staff and the national needs of the present and future workplace</u> (SB3)</li> <li>2. <u>Substitute Teacher Incentives to increase substitute fill rate and preserve professional staff planning time</u> (SB3)</li> <li>3. <u>Training on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion</u> for staff in order to recognize how our actions and the context of experiences can impact the results students produce (SB7)</li> <li>4. Continue <u>working with outside supports to help inform the next steps</u> in our journey to clarify our Instructional Model, implement a Competency-Based curriculum, and work to personalize learning (SB7)</li> <li>5. <u>Collaboratively Develop a Portrait of a Leader</u> to highlight the traits of an effective EASD leader in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (SB3)</li> <li>6. Work with instructional staff to <u>refine our proficiency scale</u> and apply it to evidence collected for each of the Life Ready Graduate profile traits to provide real-time progress updates (SB6)</li> </ol>
<b>Future</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Provide more intensive and differentiated support</u> on instructional practices for teachers at every expertise level through a targeted and coherent Professional Learning Plan (SB3)</li> <li>2. <u>Collaboratively Develop a Portrait of an Educator</u> to highlight the traits of an effective EASD teacher in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (SB3)</li> <li>3. <u>Use of tools like “My Voice”</u> to elevate teacher voice in building and district leadership (SB1)</li> </ol>

Progress was significantly impacted by COVID

Significant accomplishments achieved

## Instructional Programs

<b>Past &amp; Ongoing</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Refine the Life Ready Graduate profile and certificate process</u> (SB5)</li> <li>2. <u>Offer Personal Finance and Civics virtual mini courses</u> (SB1)</li> <li>3. <u>Increase Ephrata Middle School elective options</u> (SB4)</li> <li>4. <u>Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support</u> (SB3)</li> <li>5. <u>Consistently apply the EASD Instructional Model</u> (SB6)</li> <li>6. <u>Restructuring the curriculum</u> to include competencies and learning targets for all existing course content as well as the features of the LRG profile (SB5)</li> </ol>
<b>Present</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Finalizing and leading the implementation of Cornerstone projects</u> at each grade-level, consistent with District criteria and apply the LRG themes authentically (SB6)</li> <li>2. <u>Record local employers</u> describing the importance and prevalence of the LRG traits in a series of professional-quality videos paid for by the Teacher in the Workplace grant</li> <li>3. <u>Creating a data-dashboard</u> to provide live access to student progress toward each feature of the Life Ready Graduate profile (SB4)</li> <li>4. Identify and <u>organize instructional activities, feedback opportunities, and collected evidence</u> for each grade-level and subject area/course for each of 12 Life Ready Graduate profile traits (SB5)</li> <li>5. <u>Professional Learning Plan for educators</u> with instructional coaches built in alignment with the PDE requirements for LEA selected measures, LRG Implementation, and reflective planning team focus areas</li> <li>6. <u>Re-envision the instructional and curricular program at Ephrata High School</u> to achieve the goal of having every student earn at least one college credit, industry credential, or work-ready certificate prior to graduation (SB6)</li> </ol>
<b>Future</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Identify programs/resources/curriculum/partners</u> to improve the appropriate Social and Emotional Learning needs for all students within the District (SB3)</li> <li>2. <u>Assemble a course for substitute teachers</u> to complete highlighting the Life Ready Graduate targets and EASD Instructional Model (SB3)</li> <li>3. <u>Engage students</u> in the evaluation and reflection process for relevant elements within the instructional program (SB6)</li> </ol>

Progress was significantly impacted by COVID

Significant accomplishments achieved

## Organizational Operations

<b>Past &amp; Ongoing</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Monitor and improve the safety and security of all facilities</u> (SB1)</li> <li>2. <u>Continuing to use the Virtual Substitute Teacher</u> (SB3)</li> <li>3. <u>Leverage flexible furniture and collaboration spaces</u> (SB2)</li> <li>4. <u>Critically examining foreseeable facility needs</u> (SB1)</li> <li>5. <u>Planning and implementing a late start-time schedule</u> (SB1)</li> <li>6. <u>Worked with architects</u> to engage relevant stakeholders in the design work to meet the needs of the music program, EHS@Washington programs, Technology Services, Student Support Services, and the Board Room (SB1)</li> <li>7. Work with our finance agency to <u>structure constructions costs</u> in a way that can work with our current and future annual budget needs, without causing any drastic change in operations or property tax rate (SB1)</li> </ol>
<b>Present</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Created a Health and Safety Plan</u> that allows us to react to the continuing mitigation guidance and requirements (SB2)</li> <li>2. <u>Work with architects and contractors on the addition/renovation project to accommodate the growing needs of the music program, EVA, Technology Services, Student Support Services, and the Board Room</u> (SB1)</li> <li>3. <u>Continue to strengthen safety procedures and facility needs and improve preparedness for unforeseen safety and security challenges</u> (SB1)</li> <li>4. <u>Successful completion the Collective Bargaining Process resulting in a four-year agreement</u> (SB1)</li> <li>5. Developed <u>multi-layered plans to leverage ESSER funding</u> to support efforts to recover from the effects of the pandemic (SB1)</li> <li>6. Explore <u>Long-term Facilities Plan</u> for Mountaineer Field and Softball operations (SB1)</li> </ol>
<b>Future</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Potentially expand the Virtual Substitute Teacher</u> program so students can engage in non-time-sensitive course content for unplanned absences (SB4)</li> <li>2. Begin to research and consider options for the <u>Washington Street property</u> following relocation of those programs currently housed at that location (SB1)</li> <li>3. <u>Engage students</u> in the evaluation and reflection process for relevant elements of our organizational operations (SB6)</li> </ol>

Progress was significantly impacted by COVID

Significant accomplishments achieved

## Relationships

<b>Past &amp; Ongoing</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Increased communication quantity and transparency levels</u> (SB2)</li> <li>2. <u>Collaboration with local districts and community partners</u> (SB1)</li> <li>3. <u>Supporting other districts interested in Life Ready Graduate</u> (SB1)</li> <li>4. <u>Continuing to expand partnerships connected to the Ephrata High School internship program</u> (SB6)</li> <li>5. <u>Ongoing communication and advocacy with elected officials</u> (SB1)</li> <li>6. <u>Worked closely with the Ephrata Area Education Foundation</u> during the selection of and transition to a new Executive Director (SB1)</li> </ol>
<b>Present</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Hosting collaboration events and site visits</u> to share expertise and strengthen relationships with others interested in making similar progress across many areas (SB1)</li> <li>2. <u>Regionalize the Life Ready Graduate Certificate</u> for students and employers beyond EASD by serving on the Career Ready Lancaster Council with emphasis on Communication, Teamwork, Integrity, Problem-Solving, and Resilience (SB5)</li> <li>3. <u>Continue to build the EASD brand</u> by presenting at local, regional, and national educational events and sharing District success stories (SB3)</li> <li>4. <u>Maintain a strong relationship with the teachers' union (EAEA)</u> through transparent communication and shared problem-solving (SB2)</li> <li>5. <u>High 5 Initiative - Career Ready Lancaster</u> project for regionalizing elements of the LRG to increase opportunities for our graduates (SB5)</li> <li>6. Continue to <u>engage members of the community as Cornerstone Partners</u>, collaborating with administration, teachers and students in their respective area of expertise (SB1)</li> <li>7. <u>Developing an after-school program for Intermediate School students</u> in cooperation with the DOVE Westgate Church (SB1)</li> <li>8. <u>CRL! Partnership</u> with Thaddeus Stevens using the EASD proficiency scales for the High 5 traits with incoming students (SB5)</li> </ol>
<b>Future</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Formalize partnerships in fiscal support of Cornerstone projects</u> at each grade-level K-8 so that students have a series of positive experiences with community organizations as they move through our district (SB6)</li> <li>2. <u>Work with local universities and national experts</u> to explore and pilot accelerated paths to a teacher certificate and alternate staffing models (SB3)</li> <li>3. Partner with LRG Certificate endorsers to provide <u>competency embedded internship and co-op placements</u> that allow students to gain experience, earn required credits, and earn a paycheck simultaneously</li> </ol>

Progress was significantly impacted by COVID

Significant accomplishments achieved