

Lowell Public Schools

Strategic Planning Update

Alignment with the Portrait of a Graduate Grant

January 15, 2020



Strategic Planning Initiative: Developing the Five-Year Plan for the Lowell Public Schools

Why: In order for LPS to maximize its potential as a mission-driven, well-functioning, student-focused organization, there must be a coordinated and agreed upon set of priorities and a sequence by which these priorities are pursued.



Strategic Planning Initiative: Developing the Five-Year Plan for the Lowell Public Schools

Recapping previous discussions:

Upon Superintendent Boyd's entry into LPS he engaged in an **extensive listening tour** across the district that included dozens of small group sessions and community forums aimed at assessing the community's educational priorities.

Based on the information from the listening tour, on October 2, 2019, the superintendent presented an update to the school committee on the foundation of a long-term strategic plan that would anchor the district's work around **four thematic goal areas**, specifically:

- Improve academic achievement
- Improve operational efficiency
- Ensure safe and welcoming school environments
- Increase community engagement and empowerment of families

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Recapping previous discussions (cont.):

As discussed at the November 20, 2019 Lowell School Committee meeting, the four strategic priorities identified as the basis for continuous improvement across the four goal areas are:

1. Expanding **early learning** opportunities
2. Increasing **access to high-performing seats** across LPS
3. **Aligning high school** curriculum and programming with post-secondary opportunities
4. Leveraging Lowell's rich diversity through a renewed **commitment to equity**

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Appointment of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee

- In November/December 2019 the administration solicited volunteers to participate in the development of the strategic plan. Over 50 individuals submitted their name and expressed interest in participating.
- Priority was placed on inclusivity and ensuring that underrepresented voices, untapped networks and diverse stakeholder groups have a seat at this decision-making table.
- The Strategic Planning Steering Committee is composed of approximately 25 individuals, with half representing LPS staff (both building-based and central office) and approximately half representing the greater Lowell community (families, non-profit organizations, local business, and institutions of post-secondary education).

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Connecting the Strategic Plan process to the Portrait of a Graduate initiative:

- Lowell Public Schools in partnership with Project Learn has been awarded a Portrait of a Graduate grant by the Barr Foundation to develop a community-driven definition of “student success”.
- This grant will enable the district to implement a robust student, family and community engagement process resulting in the articulation of a definition of “student success” that reflects the hopes, values and expectations of the community at large – prioritizing the voices of our students and families.
- The aim is to ensure that upon completion of their PreK-12 education, students are fully equipped with the core academic knowledge and skills, **as well as** core competencies, values, dispositions and mind-sets which are needed to be successful in college, career and an increasingly global community.
- The *Portrait of a Graduate* initiative will be interwoven within the strategic planning project in that the articulation of the *academic knowledge, skills, values, competencies, dispositions and mindsets* will serve as the foundation of the mission and vision for the Lowell Public Schools.

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Strategic Planning Work Moving Forward:

- Strategic Planning Steering Committee mapping of community meetings and initial articulation of potential mission and vision statements.
- Community and staff forums to receive feedback on the strategic priorities and to help solicit input about potential challenges.
- Convening of working groups to identify specific action steps necessary to advance strategic priorities of (1) expanding early learning opportunities, (2) increasing access to high-performing seats, (3) aligning high school programming, and (4) better leveraging Lowell's diversity.



Priorities/Goal Areas	Early Learning	High-Performing School Access	Secondary/Post-Secondary Alignment	Leveraging Diversity/Equity Commitment
Academic Improvement	<i>First step:</i> <i>Challenges:</i> <i>Success looks like:</i>	<i>First step:</i> <i>Challenges:</i> <i>Success looks like:</i>	<i>First step:</i> <i>Challenges:</i> <i>Success looks like:</i>	<i>First step:</i> <i>Challenges:</i> <i>Success looks like:</i>
Operational Efficiency	<i>First step:</i> <i>Challenges:</i> <i>Success looks like:</i>	<i>First step:</i> <i>Challenges:</i> <i>Success looks like:</i>	<i>First step:</i> <i>Challenges:</i> <i>Success looks like:</i>	<i>First step:</i> <i>Challenges:</i> <i>Success looks like:</i>
Safe and Welcoming Culture	<i>First step:</i> <i>Challenges:</i> <i>Success looks like:</i>	<i>First step:</i> <i>Challenges:</i> <i>Success looks like:</i>	<i>First step:</i> <i>Challenges:</i> <i>Success looks like:</i>	<i>First step:</i> <i>Challenges:</i> <i>Success looks like:</i>
Empower Family and Community Partnerships	<i>First step:</i> <i>Challenges:</i> <i>Success looks like:</i>	<i>First step:</i> <i>Challenges:</i> <i>Success looks like:</i>	<i>First step:</i> <i>Challenges:</i> <i>Success looks like:</i>	<i>First step:</i> <i>Challenges:</i> <i>Success looks like:</i>

Example of matrix to be used during sessions.



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A Note on the Superintendent's Upcoming School Visits for Teachers and School-based Staff:

- Meetings will be open to LPS staff and will take place at all buildings
- LPS staff may attend any meeting at any building
- Attendance is voluntary
- Meetings will last one-hour and generally be scheduled immediately following the end of the school day
- Online/Virtual meeting options will also be scheduled for staff unable to attend in person

Itinerary for Superintendent School Visits:

- Brief presentation and follow-up to last fall's listening session on the four goal areas (academics, operational efficiency, safe/welcoming environments, and parent and community engagement)
- Dissemination of worksheets discussing four strategic priorities
- Facilitated discussion to hear feedback on potential challenges and areas of concern related to the four strategic priorities of (1) expanding early learning opportunities, (2) increasing access to high-performing seats, (3) aligning high school programming, and (4) better leveraging Lowell's diversity

Supt's Entry Listening Tour



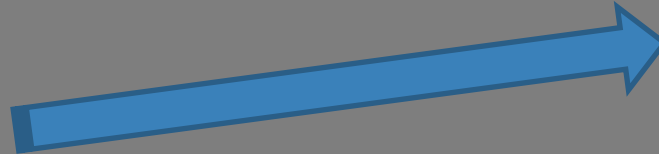
Steering Committee



Student & Family Focus Groups / Staff Session / Community Forums/Staff Sessions



Working Groups



Steering Committee



Superintendent



**Strategic Planning
Sequencing**



Lowell School Committee