

Board of Education Work Session
Monday, January 20, 2025 4:00 PM

Virginia Moon Administrative Center
8545 Park Dr
Ralston, NE 68127-3621

Agenda

1. Call To Order
Speaker(s): Board President
2. Strategic Plan Presentation and Review
Speaker(s): Various
3. Adjourn

Strategic Plan



2024 - 2029

Staff Presentation
October 2024



Plan Development

- **Board of Education Retreats**
 - Analysis of current achievement and attendance data
 - Identification of areas in need of improvement
 - Review of former Strategic Plan
- **Survey Data from Staff, Students, Parents and Community**
 - Survey results reviewed and categorized based on similarities
 - Refined data evaluated by Teaching and Learning subcommittee, Cabinet, and Board of Education
- **School Improvement/Cognia Visit and ELEOT data**
 - Data from our five-year school improvement visit and ELEOT information (self-evaluation) was gathered and reviewed

THANK
YOU!





Educational Purpose

A community dedicated to achieving excellence through purposeful instruction and nurturing a climate of hope and inclusion.



District Vision

Cultivating resilient citizens prepared for the diverse demands of the future.



Strategic Goals

Please reference Page 2 of your Strategic Plan document.





Action Steps

Please reference Page 3 of your Strategic Plan document.



TEACHING & LEARNING

Develop an instructional framework to strengthen consistency in PK-12 educational quality.

Create an engaging learning environment that inspires creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving among PK-12 students, leading to improved technology skills and academic success.

Embrace diversity, promote inclusion, and ensure that all students, regardless of background or ability, have the support and resources they need to thrive academically and personally throughout their PK-12 journey and into adulthood.



STAFFING, SUPPORT, & LEADERSHIP

Enhance our current candidate pool to include more staff that resemble our student body.

Create a climate and culture that best fosters engagement, safety and belonging.

Continue to build upon our internal employment pipeline by sponsoring internships, leadership in education classes, and paraprofessional to teacher programs.

Offer professional development opportunities which are timely and relevant to staff from induction to retirement.

Cultivate an environment that supports staff retention through a culture of distributed leadership, teamwork, and staff engagement.



COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

Foster community participation and engagement by developing strategies to promote two-way communication with members of our community.

Expand partnerships with local businesses, government entities, non-profit organizations and community leaders (school business partnership program).

Expand relationships with community organizations to provide support services, resources and opportunities for staff, students and families.

Empower parents and families to become more active in their children's education by involving them more thoroughly in the educational experience.

Utilize multiple communication strategies to keep our patrons, families and staff informed and engaged with our current goals, initiatives and achievements.

Continue to develop engagement from our alumni through newsletters, awards and scholarship opportunities.



FINANCE/FACILITIES

Continue to assess and identify areas of our facilities in need of improvement, including life safety, comfort, air quality and conduciveness to learning.

Develop a repair/replacement schedule for roofing, HVAC and technology replacement.

Create and maintain a district budget that addresses short- and long-term planning strategies, including the equitable distribution of resources and the effective utilization of budget management strategies.

Identify areas of opportunity for cost reduction and efficiency improvement.

Continue to seek alternative sources of funding, including state and federal grants, local grants, sponsorships, rebates, donations and other funding opportunities.

Maintain and expand our current technology infrastructure to offer equitable, age-appropriate access.

Key Steps: Teaching & Learning

- Develop an Instructional Framework to strengthen consistency in PK-12 educational quality
- Create an engaging learning environment (inspire creativity and problem-solving, improve academic use of ed tech).
- Embrace diversity, promote inclusion, ensure all will thrive academically and personally.



[Teaching & Learning Strategies](#)

Key Steps: Staffing, Support & Leadership

- Continue to refine opportunities for internal recruitment
- Implement a BIPOC Employee Resource Group to assist with recruiting and retention initiatives
- Continue to conduct surveys to gather information on the perception of climate and safety
- Support of attendance initiatives at the classroom, building and district level



Key Steps: Finance/Facilities

- Review our budget and cash management strategies
- Conduct a review of the current state of our facilities and conduct a facility study to allow the district to identify and fund future repairs/improvements
- Identify areas of inefficiencies and adjust accordingly
- Continue to fund our existing technology programs, with a continued focus on identifying trends in educational technology



Key Steps: Community Collaboration

- Work with Building Administration for ideas to better engage families @ PT Conferences, Open House, etc.
- Analyze District Emails & Develop Family & Staff Communication Survey
- Develop School/Business Partnership Program
- Continue & build upon involvement in community events
- Outreach plan to engage, develop, strengthen relationships with community service providers
- Enhance RHS Alumni outreach & engagement
- New website & mobile app
- Additional documents translated into multiple languages
- Additional direct mail pieces to our entire school community, promoting events/happenings in our district



Questions?



Ralston Public Schools

MTSS Attendance Interventions



Background

- 90% youth in detention are truant
- 80% of dropouts were chronically truant in the last year
- 80% dropouts are arrested within 5 years
- 3% adults in corrections are proficient in reading
- Most common survey answer to how/why I dropped out:

“Nobody noticed I was gone.”
“Nobody seemed to care.”



5 Factors for Predicting a Non-Graduate

- Absent more than 1 month
- 2+ years below grade level in English or Math
- Special education needs not met
- Repeating 9th grade (insufficient credits)



What your Community Can Do to End Its Dropout Crisis: Learnings from Research and Practice,"
Robert Belfanz, May 2007

High Risk to Dropout of School

- 80% or less attendance in 6th grade
- Failing math in 6th grade
- Failing English in 6th grade
- OSS in 6th grade



“Preventing Student Disengagement and Keeping Students on the Graduation Path in Urban Middle-Grades: Early Identification and Effective Interventions” Robert Balfanz, Lisa Herzog and Douglas Maclver.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

5 Components to model community programs

- **Parental Involvement**
- Meaningful sanctions/consequences
- Meaningful incentives
- **Ongoing school-based truancy reduction programs**
- Involvement of community resources



O'Connor, A., Peterson, R.L. & Strawhun, J. (2014, March). Truancy reduction: Strategy Brief. Lincoln, NE: Student Engagement Project, University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the Nebraska Department of Education. <http://k12engagement.unl.edu/truancy-reduction>

Problematic Absenteeism

- > 10% absent over 15 weeks (Education)
- > 25% absent for two weeks (Criminal Justice)
- Family duress regarding attendance > 2 weeks (Psychology)



Kearney, C.A. (2002). Identifying the Function of School Refusal Behavior: A Revision of the School Refusal Assessment Scale. *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment*, 24(4)

NRS 79-209

- Meetings with parent and student - collaborative plan
- Contributing health and mental health factors
- Educational counseling/assessment
- Evaluation
- Referral for socioeconomic needs
- Referral to other community resources
- Restorative justice practices

(affirmative defense to prosecution if all not addressed)



RPS Attendance Process

- Daily notifications from attendance office
- **5 day teacher calls by HR (to build relationship)**
- Log attendance-related contacts with student/parent
- 10 day letter home to legal guardian/s, offering support
- 15 day letter home to legal guardian/s, request to contact school

- Attendance Intervention Team
 - Counselor call student down
 - Counselor call parent
 - Counselor request for meeting
 - Admin request for meeting
 - IEP case manager, EL program contacts

- Attendance meetings
 - Address all statutory requirements vs request to withdraw 16-17 year old

- 20 unexcused absences + failure of collaborative plan
 - 20 day notification letter
 - County Attorney Referral



5 Day Teacher Calls (Build Relationship)

- Nobody wants to make a bad news call. This isn't that.
- Know who the student is before you call
- Tell a story or give an example
- Ask a question
- A parent wants to know that you know who their child is



5 Day Teacher Calls (Build Relationships)

- “This is Mrs.J, Cody’s ____ teacher at Ralston High School. I’m just calling to let you know I missed Cody when he was absent a few times this semester because I really enjoy having him in my class (enjoyed getting to know him). I’ve noticed he:
- shows real talent at ____
- really helps me with ____
- is a student I appreciate because ____
- really seems to like ____
- gets excited about ____
- encourages me to ____
- reminds me to ____
- makes me feel ____
- Does Cody ever talk about school or my class?
- How do you think school is going for him this year?



Reflection Exercise - 4 Levels of Staff Interaction

- Intentional Disinviting
 - Frustration, justification (focus on natural consequences)
- Unintentionally Disinviting
 - Well meaning but perceived as thoughtless, insensitive
- Unintentionally Inviting
 - Lack consistency but behave in ways that result in students feeling welcome and invited
 - Accidentally stumble into success, don't know what to do when it doesn't work
- Intentionally Inviting
 - Perceive, choose, act with consistency and sensitivity, appears effortless
 - Serious, sustained and planned



Douglas / Sarpy County Attorney

- Nolle pros due to age (17) or credits
- Nolle pros due to open docket
- Nolle pros due to insufficient evidence/intervention
- K-6 (educational neglect) 7th-12th (truancy)
- Diversion meeting scheduled
 - Attendance monitored by JAC (Douglas), or PASS (Sarpy)
 - Close successfully, or sent back to County Attorney
- File in court
 - Probation vs out of home placement
- Records sealed



Superintendent's Plan

- Annual meeting with County Attorneys
- MOEC workgroup
 - Monthly agenda item - issues/strategies
 - Semi annual LCC districts (data, initiatives, strategies, partnerships)
 - 1+ meetings with county attorneys, diversion, courts
 - 1+ meetings with community agencies
- MTSS
 - Tier 1 - all students
 - Tier 2 - approaching 10% chronic absenteeism
 - Tier 3 - >10% chronic absenteeism who have not responded to intervention



RHS Chronic Absenteeism Rate

- Percent of students >10% absent for any reason
- 2017-2018 26.67%
- 2018-2019 28.86%
- COVID
- 2021-2022 45.73%
- 2022-2023 42.33%
- 2023-2024 44.96%



Meaningful Consequences

- Tardy procedure (warnings, detentions)
- Unexcused/skips (warnings, detentions, ISS)
- Purpose of 5 day calls
- Round ups to LectC during passing periods (past)
- Activity restriction (homecoming)
- Bathroom sweeps
- Sweep known hiding places
- Escorts
- Pass restriction
- New E-pass system



Targeted “Meaningful” Incentives

- Periodic (not annual) perfect attendance recognition
- September Attendance Awareness month
 - HR leaderboard competition on display (pizza, kick-off traveling trophy)
 - R+ “watch list” students who are < 10% absent
 - RHS and district public awareness campaign (social media calendar)
- Define and R+ improved attendance.
 - > 10% attendance list → <10% attendance list. Over date range
- Surprise R+ for <10% (popcorn, nachos)
- Free-pass (for students with anxiety)
- Positive attendance referrals
- “Bring anything to school day” - influences attendance
- Students chosen to play up-tempo music during passing period



R+ Ideas

- Popcorn, Nachos, Pizza
- Certificate
- Photo in office
- Preferred parking space
- Free time in gym/outside
- MarioKart tournament
- Smile, thumbs-up, mouthing “thank you”, side conversation acknowledging life is difficult, proud of you for making it.

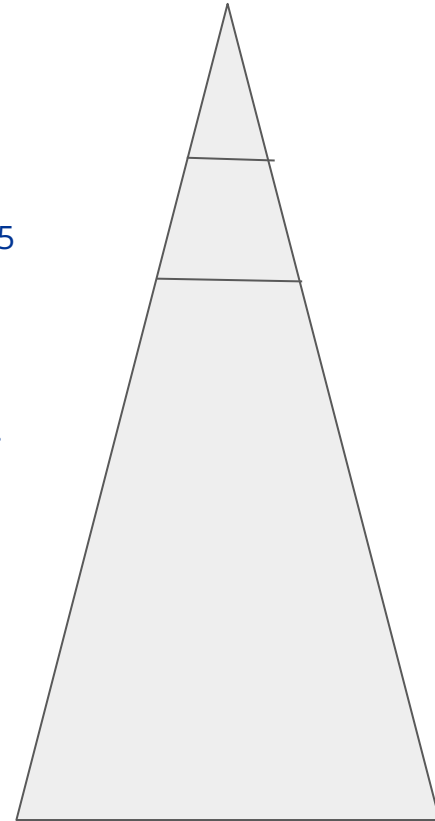


RHS and MTSS Attendance

Tier 3 (20+ days) Student meetings w/ counselors, collaborative parent attendance plan meetings addressing statutory requirements toward referral to County Attorney.

Tier 2: (10-19 days) Targeted daily personal phone calls; periodic teacher/counselor calls in communication log (SIMS); 10 day and 15 day letters; identify, document, address barriers as discovered/disclosed; attendance team monitoring and documentation in counseling maintenance; student/parent meetings; referral to resources; targeted incentive programs (recognition) for improvement (<10%) and targeted consequences.

Tier 1: (all students) Daily attendance blackboard calls; advisement 5 day calls; attendance referenced in course syllabi; accurate attendance records in each class/block; school-wide incentives; district wide communication (i.e. superintendent messaging); Attendance Awareness Month (September); social media posts and recognitions; homeroom competitions; leader boards; traveling trophy; engagement activities (music in passing period, bring anything to school, etc.)



Board of Education Retreat Agenda

Blumfield Media Center

January 20, 2025

- I. Opening (JB)
- II. Strategic Plan Review (10/15 presentation) (JB et. al)
- III. Review of Strategic Plan Action Steps
 - a. Action steps defined document, accountability
- IV. Next steps for Strategic Plan
 - A. Teaching and Learning
 1. Develop instructional framework to strengthen consistency in PK-12 educational quality. (SZG)
 2. Create an engaging learning environment that inspires creativity, collaboration and problem-solving among PK-12 students, leading to improved technology skills and academic success. (AH)
 3. Embrace diversity, promote inclusion, and ensure all students, regardless of background or ability, have the support and resources they need to thrive academically and personally throughout their PK-12 journey and into adulthood. (MS)
 - B. Community Collaboration
 1. Foster community participation and engagement by developing strategies to promote two-way communication with members of our community (JF)
 - a. 2024 - 2025
 - b. 2026 and beyond
 2. Expand partnerships with local businesses, government, non-profit organizations and community leaders (JF/JB)

3. Expand relationships with community organizations to provide support services, resources and opportunities for staff, students and families (JF)
4. Empower parents and families to become more actively involved in their child's education (JF/AN)
5. Utilize multiple communication strategies to keep our patrons, families and staff informed and engaged with our current goals, initiatives and achievements (JF/AN)
6. Continue to grow and develop engagement in our alumni association through newsletters, awards and scholarship opportunities (AN)

C. Finance/Facilities

1. Finish bond projects, new facility assessment study 2027
 - a. Presentation of bond work to be completed, scope of work for RHS, MB, KW, WW, BL, RMS (JB)
2. Review [long term debt payment](#) and reduction (schedule) (AB)
3. [Roof](#) and [Tech](#) (Develop by 1/2025) replacement schedule (AB)
4. FY 24 distribution of funds report (Oct. BOE meeting) (AB)
5. Grant \$'s received report (Oct. BOE meeting) (AB)
6. Report on de-implemented initiatives/[contracts](#) being discontinued (July BOE meeting) (Multiple)

D. HR, Staffing, Support and Leadership

1. Review hiring data based on position and ethnicity (Date? HR/Finance Subcommittee only?) (MR)
2. Review hiring and recruitment efforts including internal programming (MR)
3. Frameworks Survey (AH) [Perceptual Survey – Nebraska Department of Education](#)
4. Culture measurement - Exit/Stay interview (MR)
Measurement of distributed leadership, teamwork and staff engagement. - Stay interview (MR)
5. Attendance reports on a quarterly basis to the BOE, each building to report initiatives as a part of their CIP. (JB, MS, AB),

6. Review Professional Development feedback data (report to Teaching and Learning Subcommittee?) (AH/SZG)
 - a. [PL Feedback 2024-2025](#)

V. Conclusion