

2009 - 2010

# ANNUAL REPORT



Downers Grove Grade School District 58  
We Envision. We Seek. We Believe.

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## FOREWORD

It is our pleasure to present to you the 2009-2010 Annual Report for Downers Grove Grade School District 58. The strong involvement of our parents and our community partners in education enables us to succeed in providing the best possible educational experience for each and every child.

Our staff is committed to helping each student excel to the best of their ability. They care deeply not only about our students' academic development, but also about the well being of each child as a whole person.

We invite you to take a few minutes and review our Annual Report and learn for yourself how we continually work to improve the ways in which we serve our students and the community. We could not be more proud of our schools and the work of our students and staff.

We thank you for your interest in the District and the support of our children and our schools. Children truly are our future.



Paul C. Zaander  
Superintendent

## District 58 Mission Statement

The mission of District 58, in partnership with parents and community, is to challenge each child by providing quality educational programs and support services in safe, nurturing environments in order to prepare all students to be lifelong learners and contributing members of society.

# 2009-2010 BOARD OF EDUCATION GOALS

## STRATEGIC GOALS TO IMPLEMENT, MONITOR, AND EVALUATE THE DISTRICT 58 STRATEGIC PLAN

The Board of Education recognizes that a strategic plan prescribes a long range direction for the District. To successfully implement that plan it will be necessary to take incremental steps over a period of time. It is the Board's intention that the Strategic Goals will be evaluated annually.

- **Apply Best Programs and Practices**

The phrase "best programs and practices" refers to innovative, tried and tested programs and practices that have gained educational credibility and are proven in their effectiveness. The District will systemically review, over an extended period of time, its programs and practices in order to put in place the most effective overall educational program.

- **Utilize the School Improvement Process as a Tool for Educational Assessment and Change**

The School Improvement Process allows each school community to assess their progress in relation to the State Learning Standards and the District's Quality Educational Program contained in the District's Strategic Plan. Based on this assessment, each school, using collaborative decision-making with community involvement, will design and implement the necessary changes to achieve these indicators of success.

- **Attain Fiscal Integrity**

The financial integrity and fiscal responsibility of the District needs to be ensured by developing, approving, and operating a balanced budget. In order to achieve fiscal integrity and to meet the District's Vision and Mission, the District will work to enhance its current revenue sources and modify its resource allocation method.

- **Align Policies and Practices**

At the initial stage of a Strategic Plan implementation, it is necessary to examine where the District is in relation to where the Plan directs the District to go. In order to support the instruction and learning environments, the District will align all policies, practices, services, resources, and personnel with the Strategic Plan.

# STRATEGIC GOALS ACTION PLAN 2009-2010

## Apply Best Programs and Practices

To enter into a stakeholder driven Strategic Planning process to aid the District in the development of long range planning by:

- Interviewing and recommending a consultant to guide the District through the Strategic Planning process,
- Holding a Board Retreat to help articulate the Board's desired outcomes of a Strategic Planning process,
- Holding stakeholder meetings to provide input into the development of the Strategic Plan,
- Creating a Strategic Plan document,
- Presenting the Strategic Plan to the Board of Education,
- Determining the next steps to be taken for the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Provide support for the development of the District's Language Arts Curriculum and plan District-wide staff development programs to support teachers' implementation of the Best Programs and Practices as they relate by:

- Aligning assessments to Illinois Learning Standards,
- Building an understanding of instructional strategies and conceptual teaching,
- Developing lesson formats with a focus on the essential understanding,
- Developing grade-level standards,
- Selecting the appropriate materials for Board adoption.

Continue to utilize resources available through ISBE to support the District-wide implementation of the Response to Interventions (RtI) initiative in 2010-2011 by:

- Implementing the District's RtI plan as required by ISBE with input from the District's RtI Committee,
- Continuing focused professional development activities for all District administrators and all certified staff, including building further understanding of the Problem Solving model and the three tier model of intervention, and AIMSweb training,
- Implementing additional scientifically research based reading intervention programs, K-8,
- Expanding the implementation of the RtI/Problem Solving model from three to six schools; Highland, Kingsley, O'Neill, Hillcrest, El Sierra, and Henry Puffer.

Utilize the curriculum review and development process to evaluate and renew the District's music program by:

- Establishing a curriculum committee comprised of parents, teachers and administrators,
- Researching best practice in music education,
- Evaluating current music program,
- Developing grade-level standards,
- Selecting appropriate materials for Board adoption.

Provide support for the implementation of the District's Standards-Based Report Card by:

- Implementing District-wide staff development to align instruction and assessment with the report card learning standards, K-6,
- Implementing District-wide staff development to support teachers in the use of the abd electronic reporting system, K-6,
- Continuing to build an understanding of the critical attributes of standards-based reporting at the middle school level,
- Implementing the foundational principals of standards-based grading, Gr. 7 & 8,
- Communicating with parents about the Standards-Based Report Card through PTA presentations and articles in school newsletters.

Review and develop the District's programs that address students' social and emotional learning (SEL) by:

- Providing staff development on social emotional learning (district-wide),
- Working with the SEL committee (year two) to study this area,
- Expanding the staff's knowledge and understanding of the Illinois Social Emotional Learning Standards,
- Exploring program options at the building level to address any identified needs and develop systematic support for students,
- Collaborating with community organizations to determine potential resources that can assist students' growth in this area.

Provide support for the implementation of the District's Physical Education Curriculum and implement staff development programs to support teachers' implementation of the Best Programs and Practices as they relate by:

- Developing lesson formats with a focus on alignment to the Illinois Physical Development Learning Standards,
- Aligning lessons and assessments to the Illinois Physical Development Learning Standards,
- Implementing staff development to support implementation,
- Studying students' improvement of physical fitness levels and identifying fitness areas to target for instruction.

Evaluate and refine the District's Mentoring/Induction Program to improve the level of support provided for new staff members by:

- Working in partnership with the DuPage County ROE (Regional Office of Education) to provide training for a new group of mentors,
- Reviewing and updating the District 58 Mentoring/Induction handbooks,
- Providing training for all administrators in effective induction and mentoring practices and the administrator's role in the process,
- Facilitating meetings throughout the school year to provide support and resources for mentors,
- Monitoring the program throughout the year to gain feedback about program needs and effectiveness.



Evaluate and refine the District's Communication Plan to increase the level of community engagement by:

- ❑ Promoting and marketing District 58's new e-newsletter, *Communicate 58*, with a goal of increasing subscriptions among parents and in the community,
- ❑ Continuing to find ways to use the District's website, including the Community Relations page, as a communications tool, and directing people to the site via other communications vehicles,
- ❑ Creating media relations/communications brochures/booklets for staff and PTAs,
- ❑ Researching and obtaining training in order to film, produce and edit short informational videos for airing on Downers Grove's cable station and the District's website.

Continue to support the integration of technology into the curriculum by:

- ❑ Providing after school technology classes for in-district credit,
- ❑ Designing and implementing a technology mini-conference for teachers,
- ❑ Implementing a technology workshop for administrators,
- ❑ Providing a series of workshops to support the implementation of the new report cards.

### **Utilize the School Improvement Process as a Tool for Educational Assessment and Change**

The school improvement teams will identify and evaluate indicators of school success as a means of utilizing programs and practices that create continuous improvement in student achievement by:

- ❑ Establishing school level teams which include teachers, parents, and administrators,
- ❑ Utilizing indicators that include test score data, grades, attendance, discipline referrals, and school climate surveys.

### **Attain Fiscal Integrity.**

Systemically establish a plan to address the long-term financial needs of the District by:

- ❑ Working through the Financial Advisory Committee to increase community understanding and program options,
- ❑ Continuing to utilize an outside consultant to analyze the District's financial status,
- ❑ Finalize the funding plan (life safety bonds) for the District's short-term building/infrastructure needs,
- ❑ Establish a project schedule for optimizing the use of bond proceeds.

Continue to monitor, evaluate, and expand the Nutrikids lunch program by:

- ❑ Utilizing the free/reduced priced lunch application approval program,
- ❑ Exploring the expansion of the service to middle school staff,
- ❑ Increasing student participation through increased communication with parents and students.

Provide training and ongoing support to new District administrators and new building secretaries by:

- ❑ Conducting a Business Office Workshop for new principals, assistant principals, and building secretaries prior to the start of school. This workshop will offer an overview of Business Office and central office procedures and functions as well as convey support to the buildings.

Complete the collective bargaining process between Downers Grove Educational Support Personnel (DGESP) by:

- ❑ Establishing meeting dates with DGESP,
- ❑ Working collaboratively with DGESP to identify and address concerns and issues,
- ❑ Coming to resolution on final new agreement and related understandings.

Work with the accounting firm of Miller, Cooper, & Co. for a smooth transition of District auditors.

Work with actuary Tim Sharpe in order to comply with new GASB 45 audit requirements.

Bid regular education transportation for services beginning in 2010-2011:

- ❑ During this process the business office will look for ways to reduce transportation costs.

### **Align Policies and Practices**

Align District policies to legal requirements by:

- ❑ Understanding new State requirement for school district policy,
- ❑ Evaluating potential need for new district policy,
- ❑ Meeting monthly to review, refine, or draft new policy,
- ❑ Recommending policy to the full Board of Education for adoption.

# STRATEGIC GOALS ACTION PLAN 2009-2010

## Apply Best Programs and Practices

- ◇ *To enter into a stakeholder driven Strategic Planning process to aid the District in the development of long range planning by:*

### **Process Used / Accomplishments:**

- *Interviewing and recommending a consultant to guide the District through the Strategic Planning process,*
- *Holding a Board Retreat to help articulate the Board's desired outcomes of a Strategic Planning process,*
- *Holding stakeholder meetings to provide input into the development of the Strategic Plan,*
- *Creating a Strategic Plan document,*
- *Presenting the Strategic Plan to the Board of Education,*
- *Determining the next steps to be taken for the implementation of the Strategic Plan.*

As District 58 works to define its priorities and direction for the next five years, the development of a revised Strategic Plan is a key component of the process.

Last fall, a team interviewed five potential consultants who could help guide the District in creating an updated Strategic Plan. Due to a number of unanticipated events that required immediate attention from the Board and administrative team, we were unable to make further substantive progress until April 2010, when a Board retreat was held.

At this retreat, Board members outlined their expectations and goals for the Strategic Plan process, and defined the components they wanted it to address. Board members also decided it would be appropriate for the launch of the Strategic Planning process to coincide with the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year, and that a steering committee would be formed to oversee and guide the process.

The members of this committee, which include administrators, teachers, and community members, were selected this summer and participated in an initial planning meeting with our consultant in mid-August.

At the April retreat, the Board decided to initiate the Strategic Plan process with a community-wide survey. This will set the stage for a daylong community meeting designed to engage our stakeholders and delve more deeply into feedback received from the survey. We plan to make the survey available to the community in late September 2010.

### Apply Best Programs and Practices

- ◇ *Provide support for the development of the District's Language Arts Curriculum and plan District-wide staff development programs to support teachers' implementation of the Best Programs and Practices as they relate by:*

#### **Process Used / Accomplishments:**

- *Aligning assessments to Illinois Learning Standards,*
- *Building an understanding of instructional strategies and conceptual teaching,*
- *Developing lesson formats with a focus on the essential understanding,*
- *Developing grade-level standards,*
- *Selecting the appropriate materials for Board adoption.*

The Language Arts Curriculum Committee developed a comprehensive writing framework and created writing rubrics aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards for each type of composition (expository, narrative, and persuasive) in order to provide students with strong writing models. The writing program adopted, *Great Source*, effectively integrates the *6+1 Traits of Writing* with the State's Standards, while developing our students as writers.

The Committee also created rubrics to develop students' oral speaking and research skills. The Oral Presentation Rubrics and Research Rubrics provide students with strong models of the attributes that are critical to be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The Language Arts Committee also adopted a new handwriting program, Zaner-Bloser. Explicit handwriting instruction will continue to be provided in preschool through third grade.

The Committee provided a half-day staff development session on May 18, 2010 covering the new language arts curriculum. National consultants from both Write Source and Zaner-Bloser reviewed their instructional materials with the teaching staff by grade level. Prior to the start of the inservice, all teachers received the adopted materials. On August 23, 2010 a second staff development session was planned to provide an opportunity for the teachers to participate in classroom lessons thanks to presentations by both the Language Arts Committee members and the national consultants.

## **Apply Best Programs and Practices**

- ◇ *Continue to utilize resources available through ISBE to support the District-wide implementation of the Response to Interventions (RtI) initiative in 2010-2011 by:*

### **Process Used / Accomplishments:**

- *Implementing the District's RtI plan as required by ISBE with input from the District's RtI Committee,*
- *Continuing focused professional development activities for all District administrators and all certified staff, including building further understanding of the Problem Solving model and the three tier model of intervention, and AIMSweb training,*
- *Implementing additional scientifically research based reading intervention programs, K-8,*
- *Expanding the implementation of the RtI/Problem Solving model from three to six schools; Highland, Kingsley, O'Neill, Hillcrest, El Sierra, and Henry Puffer.*

Each District 58 school began to use student data as part of the problem solving process to make decisions pertaining to instruction both at the core level (Tiers I and II) as well as for individual students (Tier III). For the six schools utilizing AIMSweb curriculum based measures this past year, data in all areas of reading was utilized for problem solving purposes. Math data was collected to establish a baseline of data for future planning. A coaching model was used to provide ongoing support to individual school RtI teams. The remaining seven schools used the reading fluency data that the District has collected for the past seven years to look at reading instruction. Benchmark data is collected three times per year for universal screening purposes, and progress monitoring data is collected more frequently for targeted groups of students as well as individual students to determine the effectiveness of interventions that are being used.

Focused professional development activities for the 2009-2010 school year included sending a team of ten administrators and staff to a national RtI conference in Salt Lake City, Utah in September. This training opportunity allowed this team to advance their work in the District that they began after attending the same conference in September of 2008. Additionally, two half-day training sessions were provided to each school's RtI team focusing in on the problem solving process and identification of interventions. Staff with specific district-wide responsibilities related to RtI implementation participated in various professional development opportunities sponsored through the ROE (Regional Office of Education), SASSED (School Association for Special Education in DuPage County), and the IASPIRE/ISBE (Alliance for School-based Problem-solving & Intervention Resources in Education) RtI Training Initiative, including the IASPIRE Spring Conference held at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois in May. Additionally, 29 staff members participated in a two-day training session in late August 2009 related to the Wilson Reading System, a

scientifically research-based Tier II reading intervention. Two reading specialists participated in a yearlong training program in SLANT, a highly specialized Tier III reading intervention. In May, staff from the remaining seven schools received initial training for the AIMSweb software program. Monthly collaboration meetings were held for members of each school's RtI team to share experiences, ask questions, and provide mutual support.

For the 2009-2010 school year, the District acquired the following reading interventions for district-wide implementation: *Wilson Reading, Earobics, Read Naturally, Bridges to Literature, and Jolly Phonics.*

### **Apply Best Programs and Practices**

- ◇ *Utilize the curriculum review and development process to evaluate and renew the District's music program by:*

#### **Process Used / Accomplishments:**

- *Establishing a curriculum committee comprised of parents, teachers and administrators,*
- *Researching best practice in music education,*
- *Evaluating current music program,*
- *Developing grade-level standards,*
- *Selecting appropriate materials for Board adoption.*

The elementary vocal music teachers revised the District's music curriculum. A scope and sequence aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards was developed and common assessments tied to the State Standards were created.

The Board of Education approved the adoption of the Silver-Burdett's *Making Music* program for grades 1 - 6 earlier this year. On May 23, 2010, the elementary vocal music teachers received the newly adopted music program, *Making Music*. A half-day inservice provided an opportunity for the elementary vocal music teachers to identify additional opportunities to engage students in making music while meeting the State Learning Standards.

### **Apply Best Programs and Practices**

- ◇ *Provide support for the implementation of the District's Standards-Based Report Card by:*

#### **Process Used / Accomplishments:**

- *Implementing District-wide staff development to align instruction and assessment with the report card learning standards, K-6,*
- *Implementing District-wide staff development to support teachers in the use of the abd electronic reporting system, K-6,*
- *Continuing to build an understanding of the critical attributes of standards-based reporting at the middle school level,*
- *Implementing the foundational principals of standards-based grading, Gr. 7 & 8,*
- *Communicating with parents about the Standards-Based Report Card through PTA presentations and articles in school newsletters.*

Seven grade-level workshops took place since May 2009 to ensure a successful transition to the use of a new standards-based report card in grades K-6. In addition, prior to the first Parent-Teacher Conference, an informational presentation was shared with each elementary school's PTA. Two informational presentations were also given to PTA Presidents during PTA/Administrative meetings held at the Administrative Service Center. Finally, parent meetings were scheduled as requested by individual PTAs.



## Apply Best Programs and Practices

- ◇ *Review and develop the District's programs that address students' social and emotional learning (SEL) by:*

### **Process Used / Accomplishments:**

- *Providing staff development on social emotional learning (district-wide),*

The Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Committee planned and developed a framework for District-wide staff development. The Committee prepared an overview of social emotional learning as well as activities to be used during staff development sessions at each building. The District-wide staff development sessions took place on February 26, 2010, with each building planning follow-up sessions at the building level.

- *Working with the SEL committee (year two) to study this area,*

The SEL Committee included classroom teachers from various buildings, special area teachers, social workers, counselors, parents, and both building- and District-level administrators. The SEL Committee met four times throughout the 2009-2010 school year to review research and best practice, to review existing efforts in this area, to analyze the State Standards in relation to classroom activities, and to explore classroom resources that support the social emotional development of children.

- *Expanding the staff's knowledge and understanding of the Illinois Social Emotional Learning Standards,*

During the 2009-2010 school year, all District 58 staff members were introduced to the Illinois Social Emotional Learning Standards. Staff members were provided background information regarding the rationale for the development of SEL standards, as well the research base that supports the positive impact on children.

- *Exploring program options at the building level to address any identified needs and develop systematic support for students,*

The Committee identified various resources to explore and pilot in the classroom setting. A number of staff members have begun to incorporate SEL lessons in the classroom. The school social workers have also developed lessons and partnered with classroom teachers to provide explicit instruction to groups of students. Future meetings will continue to build knowledge on this topic and establish District direction to address the Illinois Standards for Social and Emotional Learning. During the 2010-2011 school year, each building will identify a leadership team to facilitate the process.

- *Collaborating with community organizations to determine potential resources that can assist students' growth in this area.*

The District partnered with the DuPage County Regional Office of Education and the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) to provide additional opportunities for staff training and access to resources that will assist in supporting the social emotional development of children.

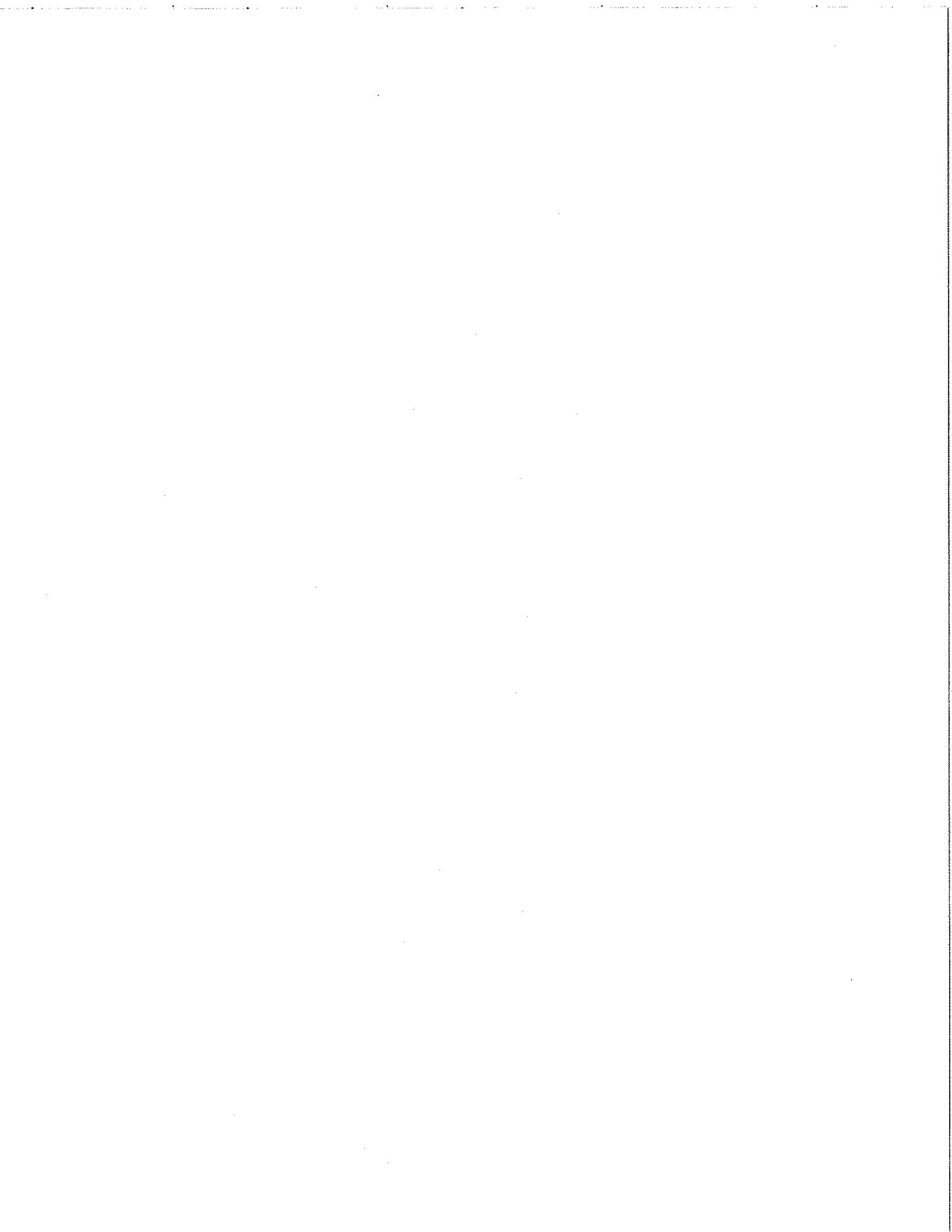
### **Apply Best Programs and Practices**

- ◇ *Provide support for the implementation of the District's Physical Education Curriculum and implement staff development programs to support teachers' implementation of the Best Programs and Practices as they relate by:*

#### **Process Used / Accomplishments:**

- *Developing lesson formats with a focus on alignment to the Illinois Physical Development Learning Standards,*
- *Aligning lessons and assessments to the Illinois Physical Development Learning Standards,*
- *Implementing staff development to support implementation,*
- *Studying students' improvement of physical fitness levels and identifying fitness areas to target for instruction.*

During the 2009-2010 school year, the standards-aligned Physical Education curriculum was implemented by the P.E. teachers, K-8, following a two-year curriculum committee process. The Physical Education teachers also analyzed their students' fitness levels this year in order to help identify fitness areas to target for instruction. Students' fitness levels continued to be communicated to both students and parents and a historical trend data analysis was completed as needed. The 2<sup>nd</sup> annual District-wide Fitness Fair to promote wellness occurred on February 24, 2010 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at O'Neill Middle School. Attendance by families more than doubled compared to the first Fitness Fair, which took place last year.



## Apply Best Programs and Practices

- ◇ *Evaluate and refine the District's Mentoring/Induction Program to improve the level of support provided for new staff members by:*

### **Process Used / Accomplishments:**

- *Working in partnership with the DuPage County ROE (Regional Office of Education) to provide training for a new group of mentors,*

The District provided the opportunity for 19 certified staff members to participate in a mentor training program during the 2009-2010 school year. Staff members attended five training sessions conducted by the DuPage County ROE mentor program trainers.

- *Reviewing and updating the District 58 Mentoring/Induction handbooks,*

The District 58 Mentoring/Induction Handbook was reviewed and revised based on feedback from trained mentors, new teachers, administrators, and ROE staff members. The changes to the handbook were made in an effort to develop a document that is a valuable resource guide for both mentors and new staff members. The handbook also comprises the ISBE (Illinois State Board of Education) required components for mentor and induction programs.

- *Providing training for all administrators in effective induction and mentoring practices and the administrator's role in the process,*

The District 58 administrative team participated in an Administrators' Academy on October 27, 2009. The academy provided administrators with an overview of effective induction and mentoring practices for new teachers, including the administrators' role in the process.

- *Facilitating meetings throughout the school year to provide support and resources for mentors,*

The District conducted meetings with the mentors on August 20, 2009; December 9, 2009; and February 18, 2010 to clarify expectations, gain feedback, and provide support and/or necessary resources to assist them in working with new staff members. There is also ongoing communication between mentors, new teachers, and administrators, facilitating a system of ongoing support that contributes to a successful transition to the District.

- *Monitoring the program throughout the year to gain feedback about program needs and effectiveness.*

Throughout the year, feedback was gathered from mentors, new teachers, and building administrators to make decisions about program needs and effectiveness. Input was also gathered from second-year teachers at meetings held on August 12, 2009 and February 18, 2010. The feedback from the various groups has been useful in identifying strengths of the program, areas to consider revising, and new ideas to incorporate in the future.

## Apply Best Programs and Practices

- ◇ *Evaluate and refine the District's Communication Plan to increase the level of community engagement by:*

### **Process Used / Accomplishments:**

- *Promoting and marketing District 58's new e-newsletter, Communicate 58, with a goal of increasing subscriptions among parents and in the community,*

Communicate 58 is yet another way to communicate what is going on in the District and at our schools and a way to continue building community awareness and support for our staff and students. Since the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year, the Communications Department boosted the Communicate 58 subscriber base from approximately 350 to nearly 1,500.

The Communications Department promoted Communicate 58 in a variety of ways. The Department placed flyers at the Administrative Service Center and the school buildings, as well as at the Downers Grove Public Library, Park District, Rec Center and Village Hall; made public announcements at area events; sent out ConnectED e-mails at the beginning of each semester, encouraging parents to sign up and providing a link to our online e-news archives; placed announcements on the website, as well as in *Bridges*, the *Back to School Report*, *Between Bridges*, and the *Loop*; made sign-up sheets available at Curriculum Nights and open houses; and worked with local newspapers and blogs to have articles about Communicate 58 printed.

The goal has been to send Communicate 58 newsletters once a month since last May using a program called Constant Contact. Use of a program such as this one allows the District to see how many people are actually opening and reading the publication and those articles being read, which is data that is not available with printed material. The "rate of opens" for Communicate 58 is not a hard and fast number; subscribers to certain e-mail programs have the ability to read the newsletter without actually clicking to open it. That said, District 58's numbers still look fantastic. According to data provided by Constant Contact, the average open rate for Government Agencies is 23%; Communicate 58 has logged an average overall open rate of over 67%. This indicates that there is high interest in the information and the format in which it is provided.

Communicate 58 received an Award of Merit in the 2009 Communications Contest sponsored by the Illinois chapter of the National School Public Relations Association (INSPRA). In addition, Communicate 58 was one of two school district newsletters nationwide to be chosen as a featured communication in a national Constant Contact campaign due to the high rate of readership and content/visual appeal of our e-newsletter.

- *Continuing to find ways to use the District's website, including the Community Relations page, as a communications tool, and directing people to the site via other communications vehicles,*

The Communications Department continues to work closely with the Technology Department to keep the District 58 website up to date with stories about the District and keep the Community Relations page up to date with stories and photo galleries from all 13 schools as well as the Education Foundation. This is another tool to help us build support for our district, students, and staff.

Communicate 58 has helped to draw people to the District's website for more information. The e-newsletter regularly includes links to stories and photos on the District 58 main page, as well as featured headlines and galleries on the Community Relations page. In partnership with the Technology Department, new headlines and galleries are being added constantly.

Residents are also visiting the Community Relations flyer distribution page, which includes information regarding our current backpack flyer program as well as the e-flyer program to which we will transition during the 2010-2011 year. Flyers are approved for distribution twice a month; each organization is asked to e-mail flyers in a PDF format for posting on the District website. Recent editions of Communicate 58 have included a link to the flyer postings as well as listings of new postings.

A short article in the spring edition of *Bridges* directed residents to the Community Relations web page for even more stories and photos from District 58. These stories and photos come in part from the Communications Department's visits to the school buildings, as well as from staff submissions through the SHARE (Schools Helping Awareness by Reporting Excellence) Network.

District 58 is now available on Twitter, which allows the Communications Department to provide "quick-hit" announcements on topics ranging from parent workshops, audio streaming of board meetings, preschool registration, the new cell phone law, and Education Foundation news, along with an accompanying link to drive people to the District website for more information. To date, District 58 has more than 150 followers and has issued more than 150 Tweets.

- *Creating media relations/communications brochures/booklets for staff and PTAs,*

This past summer, the Communications Department created a tri-fold brochure to be used as a guide for staff. It explained how to get in touch with the Department, outlined the many ways in which news stories and photos from the schools are shared, and listed other ways in which the Communications Department supports staff. The Department designed and distributed an eight-page booklet for PTAs entitled "Working Together to Get the Word Out." It included information about the services provided by the Communications Department and the publications it produces, as well as tips for working with the media.



- *Researching and obtaining training in order to film, produce and edit short informational videos for airing on Downers Grove's cable station and the District's website.*

This past fall, the Communications Coordinator secured video equipment training from the production supervisor of the Village of Downers Grove's cable station, DGTV, and took advantage of networking opportunities available through INSPRA to learn from those who have been successfully using video as a communications tool. This past spring, the Communications Department filmed, edited, and produced a five-minute video about District 58's annual Author Fest, which was screened during the March PTA Council/Administrative meeting and is available for viewing through the District's website. The hope is to make further use of video as a communications tool in the years to come.

## Apply Best Programs and Practices

- ◇ *Continue to support the integration of technology into the curriculum by:*

### **Process Used / Accomplishments:**

- *Providing after school technology classes for in-district credit,*

Five technology classes for credit were offered this year. In addition, several after school workshops were offered at Longfellow and at individual buildings. These workshops were designed to meet the specific needs of building personnel, to address specific needs such as report cards, or to review software applications.

- *Designing and implementing a technology mini-conference for teachers,*

A technology mini-conference was held on April 30, 2010 at O'Neill Middle School. It was a success based on participant evaluations. There was a keynote speaker and 64 technology presentations on 46 different topics. District 58 faculty members presented all except four of the sessions.

- *Implementing a technology workshop for administrators,*

A technology workshop for administrators was held on August 6, 2009. It was an overview of technology currently available and the use of technology to support teaching and learning in the classroom.

- *Providing a series of workshops to support the implementation of the new report cards.*

Report card information was disseminated at grade level meetings, which were held in early Fall 2009. In addition, three separate sessions were held at each building during the first and second quarters. Open Labs were also held each Tuesday throughout the year to answer specific questions.

## Utilize the School Improvement Process as a Tool for Educational Assessment and Change

- ◇ *The school improvement teams will identify and evaluate indicators of school success as a means of utilizing programs and practices that create continuous improvement in student achievement by:*

### **Process Used / Accomplishments:**

- *Establishing school level teams which include teachers, parents, and administrators,*
- *Utilizing indicators that include test score data, grades, attendance, discipline referrals, and school climate surveys.*

Each school established a school improvement team consisting of parents, teachers, and the principal. School level teams analyzed data to identify their school's strengths as well as areas requiring improvement. This school year, several schools identified writing as an instructional area to improve and scheduled Jim Gates from the ROE to provide information to their teachers about ISAT (Illinois Standards Achievement Test) writing.

An analysis of the 2010 reading, math, and science ISAT data revealed that overall the percentage of students in the District who met or exceeded standards improved in each of these curriculum areas. In addition, at every grade level tested, the percentage of students who met or exceeded standards either remained the same or improved from 2009 to 2010. Overall, in these three areas, 93% of District 58 students scored in the meets or exceeds standards categories.

## **Attain Fiscal Integrity**

- ◇ *Systemically establish a plan to address the long-term financial needs of the District by:*

### **Process Used / Accomplishments:**

- *Working through the Financial Advisory Committee to increase community understanding and program options,*

The administration continued to work, on a regular basis, with the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC). The goal was to continue to keep the community informed regarding the status of the District's finances and to increase community understanding of school district finance. Recent meetings have focused on the Life Safety program and the need for additional new life safety amendments, the outcome of the FY10 budget, and the status of the proposed FY11 budget.

- *Continuing to utilize an outside consultant to analyze the District's financial status,*

The District continued to utilize the PMA Financial Planning Program model for comparative short-term data and for long-range projections. The latest PMA forecast was received in February 2010 for use in the April 2010 Board of Education Financial Workshop.

- *Finalize the funding plan (life safety bonds) for the District's short-term building/infrastructure needs,*

The funding plan (Life Safety bonds) for the Life Safety facilities needs of the District has been developed with the help of the FAC. The bonds have been sold and the projects are being addressed in a systematic way.

- *Establish a project schedule for optimizing the use of bond proceeds.*

A project schedule has been developed for the use of the Life Safety bonds. The project schedule for the summer of 2010 included roof replacements at El Sierra, Belle Aire, and Kingsley. In addition, light standard replacements, chimney repairs, and plumbing projects are in queue for this summer. All projects are underway and due to be completed in a timely manner. All projects took advantage of the current intense competition among contractors for work.

### **Attain Fiscal Integrity**

- ◇ *Continue to monitor, evaluate, and expand the Nutrikids lunch program by:*

#### **Process Used / Accomplishments:**

- *Utilizing the free/reduced priced lunch application approval program,*

District 58 utilized the free/reduced priced lunch software, which resulted in application paperwork being completed much quicker and, in turn, provided benefits to qualifying students faster. Using this software also reduced the amount of paperwork school secretaries and principals had to prepare at the beginning of the school year.

- *Exploring the expansion of the service to middle school staff,*

This feature was not utilized given that staff interest was not a driving force.

- *Increasing student participation through increased communication with parents and students.*

The number of families using the Nutrikids lunch program has increased since the system was implemented in October 2008. During the 2008-2009 school year, Nutrikids deposits totaled approximately \$45,000; Nutrikids deposits for 2009-2010 totaled more than \$90,000.

### **Attain Fiscal Integrity**

- ◇ *Provide training and ongoing support to new District administrators and new building secretaries by:*

#### **Process Used / Accomplishments:**

- *Conducting a Business Office Workshop for new principals, assistant principals, and building secretaries prior to the start of school. This workshop will offer an overview of Business Office and central office procedures and functions as well as convey support to the buildings.*

A Business Office Workshop was conducted on August 11, 2009. Eleven administrators and secretaries attended the workshop. Topics included procedures for payroll, budgeting, purchasing and community relations.

### **Attain Fiscal Integrity**

- ◇ *Complete the collective bargaining process between Downers Grove Educational Support Personnel (DGESP) by:*

#### **Process Used / Accomplishments:**

- *Establishing meeting dates with DGESP,*
- *Working collaboratively with DGESP to identify and address concerns and issues,*
- *Coming to resolution on final new agreement and related understandings.*

Collective bargaining with the Downers Grove Educational Support Personnel (DGESP) is in its final stages.

### **Attain Fiscal Integrity**

- ◇ *Work with the accounting firm of Miller, Cooper, & Co. for a smooth transition of District auditors.*

Although it took longer than expected to receive the completed audit, the Business Office staff has worked successfully with Miller, Cooper, & Co., for a smooth transition.

### **Attain Fiscal Integrity**

- ◇ *Work with actuary Tim Sharpe in order to comply with new GASB 45 audit requirements.*

The Business Office staff has worked successfully with Tim Sharpe, in order to comply with the new GASB 45 actuarial audit requirements identifying post retirement benefits liability.

### **Attain Fiscal Integrity**

- ◇ *Bid regular education transportation for services beginning in 2010-2011:*

#### **Process Used / Accomplishments:**

- *During this process the business office will look for ways to reduce transportation costs.*

A one-year contract extension was negotiated for 2010-2011. A bid for transportation services will be completed in the fall of 2010 for 2011-2012 services. Districts 58, 99 & 68 are working together to combine bid specifications.

## Align Policies and Practices

◇ *Align District policies to legal requirements by:*

### **Process Used / Accomplishments:**

- *Understanding new State requirement for school district policy,*
- *Evaluating potential need for new district policy,*
- *Meeting monthly to review, refine, or draft new policy,*
- *Recommending policy to the full Board of Education for adoption.*

The District Policy Committee continued to meet monthly. Reviewed and/or revised policies have been written in the following areas:

Policy #1160 – **Community Relations** – Requests for Information

Policy #2002 – **Administration** – Organizational Chart

Policy #4013 – **Personnel** – Computer Network and Internet Safety, Access and Use

Policy #5103 – **Students** – Transfers

Policy #5137 – **Students** – Electronic Paging and Cellular Telecommunication Devices

Policy #5138 – **Students** – Harassment, Bullying, and Intimidation

Policy #5139.1 – **Students** – Equal Educational Opportunities

Policy #6111 – **Instruction** - Computer Network and Internet Safety, Access and Use

Policy #8244 – **Internal Board Operations** - Determining Agenda