



SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Strategic Planning Workshop
August 4, 2022

Rodman Administrative Building
Room 33A
Thursday, August 4, 2022
9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Present: Chair Kristian Merenda
Vice Chair Kendall O'Halloran (left at 10:10 a.m.)
Maureen Moran, Clerk
Laura Arboleda
Derek Folan, Superintendent
Sarah Shannon, Assistant Superintendent
Steve Marshall, Director of Finance and Operations
Julie Shore, Director of Technology and Digital Learning
Meghan Byrne, Interim Director of Student Services
Josh Fogel, District Analytics Manager
Scott Borstel, Teaching and Learning Alliance
Gary Maestras, Teaching and Learning Alliance

Materials shared at the workshop included Canton Public Schools 2022-23 District Goals (DRAFT Rev.2)

The workshop began at 9:10 a.m.

Teaching and Learning Alliance's Scott Borstel and Gary Maestas shared with the School Committee their roles with TLA and their educational backgrounds; both had been ended their careers as superintendents and they have spent 40 years and 34 years, respectively, in education.

Superintendent Folan, Mr. Borstel and Mr. Maestas updated committee members on the district leadership's two-day retreat, which TLA facilitated. The retreat focused on schools, family and staff, with the goals of developing chemistry among the team, fostering collaboration, and identifying deliverables. The group also discussed what items fell within one-year goals and what should be identified in a long-term strategic plan. Mr. Fogel was identified as tracking key action items and areas for follow up.

Chair Merenda thanked district leadership and TLA for their work, and reiterated the School Committee's charge of "doing what's best for most."

Mr. Borstel informed the School Committee that both district leadership and TLA understood School Committee's priorities included applying SMART goals to proposed district action plans and aligning the existing district framework pillars with the DESE superintendent evaluation document. He cited challenges to pillar alignment include the CPS mission, vision and values, which are a decade old and may not reflect today's district, as well as the need for stakeholder input. He recommended waiting until January 2023 to allow for stakeholder input before making changes. He urged caution around expectations for increase rigor, saying there only so much that can be done with school beginning on

Aug. 31. He discussed developing a dashboard with Mr. Fogel, as well as the need to develop structures that allow deeper work

Mr. Borstel shared with the School Committee that the focus must be on the “instructional core,” namely students; content/curricula; and staff. Data collection is an essential element of planning, but he emphasized that too great a focus on planning and assessment can get in the way of the actual work needed for improvement so that students can learn. A fundamental question to consider is how data and a district dashboard inform what impacts students.

Members heard that transforming a district is typically a three-year process.

Superintendent Folan outlined that his 2022-2023 plan includes one goal per pillar, with the exception of priority #1, Achieving Educational Excellence and Equity for All, which has two. He said the Central Office team was reluctant to remove the Strategic Framework pillars and replace them with the DESE evaluation pillars. He stated he would map the standards to the pillars so commonsense, logical threads exist for School Committee when members conduct the superintendent evaluation process. He anticipates the equity audit will be a significant acceleration point. He acknowledged the lack of a system to track behaviors at the elementary level, and inconsistencies around rigor exist in the district.

In reviewing the draft district goals presented by Superintendent Folan, School Committee members offered positive feedback on priority #4/Management and Operations, the focus on identifying a new student information system (SIS) and the fact that the draft document reflects School Committee members’ feedback from Superintendent Folan’s summative review.

School Committee members raised questions and offered feedback concerning the plan’s need for more-specific timelines and ownership of key actions; priorities that don’t align with the DESE superintendent evaluation documents and how user-friendly the terms are to parents and families; the need for a regular timeline of family and staff surveys, to determine whether CPS stakeholders are aware of progress being made; the need for discipline and identifying additional supports staff may need, including additional staff; tackling racism head on; and identifying the need for concrete data and metrics that support assertions of improvement and change.

Superintendent Folan and Mr. Borstel identified a “theory of action,” namely that tasks require specifics and metrics to identify and indicate completion.

The workshop concluded at 11:55 a.m.