

## **Shaping Our Future. Education Planning and Priority Setting**

10/7/2009

*The purpose of this document is to describe the collaborative planning process for the Board so members can refine and approve the approach to this planning effort.*

### **Outline**

1. Questions for the Board
2. Timeframe
3. Overview
4. Seeding the Planning Conversation
5. Collaborative Planning Group Meeting
6. Process for the Future

### **Questions for the Board**

1. What would you like to learn from the educational community?
2. Who do you want to hear from?
3. What outcomes would support your decision making in the future?
4. How can we engage the larger community into the future?
5. What leadership role will the board play during this planning effort?

### **Timeframe**

Design Team Planning—August-September

Board Refinement and Input—Oct. 7

Collaborative Planning Forum—Oct. 23 and December 11 (and maybe a follow-up in January)

Final documents developed in December for Board Use in January

### **Overview**

#### **Why do this planning effort?**

This planning process is an opportunity to revisit the District's strategic plan and envision a future of going from *Good to Great* (Collins, 2001). Piedmont as an educational community has been operating with the following high level priorities: (1) maintain the depth and breadth of our education program and (2) recruit and retain a qualified staff with competitive compensation. Given restrained financial times, it may not be possible to meet both of these two priorities, i.e. can we balance the budget over the next several years without cutting further into educational programs. The planning goals are to grapple with and revisit district priorities to prepare for the future; create shared ownership and responsibility within the educational community; and to ensure fiscal solvency.

### **How will the planning occur? Who will be involved?**

The Board's public engagement subcommittee has partnered with the Piedmont Educational Foundation and school district staff to develop the initial thinking about how the planning process will occur. A Collaborative Design team has met several times to "plan the planning". They have been thinking about who should participate in the planning exercise, how should the planning effort be communicated to others, and how will the outputs of the planning process be used. The goal of the design team is to "get it right:" to clarify how the planning outcomes will be used and to be certain that the board is fully briefed on work-to-date. The actual planning discussion will take place during two meetings with a diverse group of participants representing staff, educational leaders, parents, students, and community organizations interested in education.

### **What will be the outcomes?**

The outcomes of the planning process are three:

- **Mission & Guiding Principles** that the board and administrators could use to determine if programs are a part of the District's agreed-to priorities
- **Programmatic Priorities:** Parents, staff, community and board members would have consensus on the priority and focus of education programs, directing resources appropriately
- **Process:** Collaborative Implementation that would guide continuous improvement of decision-making structures and processes for ongoing collaboration, priority setting and review

### **What role will the Board have in planning?**

The Board will refine the planning approach (presented in this document), provide leadership during planning by seeding the conversation with its ideas, and participate in the two Collaborative Planning Group meetings.

### **How will the outcomes of the planning be used?**

The Board will be able to use the outcomes of the planning process to inform its decision making, particularly in early 2010 when difficult decisions on the budget must be made. The District and the community can use the process crafted to manage future planning dilemmas and issues.

### **Seeding the Planning Process**

One thing the Design Team and Board can do is "seed" the planning process by thinking in advance about possible guiding principles and a list of priorities that planning participants would discuss. *These are tentative ideas to help shape the planning process—principles will be developed and refined throughout the planning process.*

# Collaborative Planning Group Meeting Overview

## Two One-Day Meetings

### Day 1

Preparatory Background Materials to be Provided

#### Outcomes

- Data to craft principles
- Identify the categories of priorities for the next meeting

#### Agenda Items

1. High level discussion with graphic recorder to create ideas to be used to craft principles. *What do we want for the future of Piedmont? What do we value about the District?*
2. Revisit the Mission Statement
3. Begin to discuss the dilemma that the District faces shrinking State funding for education while seeking to maintain both program and competitive compensation
4. Confirm or modify the categories for the priorities discussion at the subsequent meeting (are the types of programs and issues for which choices have to be made clearly identified)

### Day 2

#### Outcomes

Revisit Day 1 Outcomes:

- Draft Principles & Revised Mission if Appropriate
- Process for Future Collaboration
- Priorities

#### Agenda Items

1. Review principles and mission
2. Prioritization of priorities
3. Consider process for future collaboration

## Possible Process for Future Planning

One goal of planning is to identify a process to institutionalize collaborative governance in the school community. This is a first step at defining what that might look like.

- We work as a team with administrators, teachers, parents, and students throughout the process
- We begin the analysis and discussions at site level, then expand to district-wide analysis and discussion
- We collect and analyze relevant data as needed to evaluate the effectiveness of our program
- We determine the relative strengths and weaknesses of the program and identify opportunities for continuous improvement
- We determine the strategic goals and criteria to be used in making final recommendations and decision
- We identify a range of possible actions or changes which could help to improve the program
- We evaluate the pros and cons of each alternative in light of our guiding principles, strategic goals, and resources
- We collect representative input from administrators, teachers, parents, and students regarding options
- Our educators make the final presentation and recommendations to the Board of Education
- Our Board of Education makes the final decision on changes to program