

Piedmont Unified School District Shaping Our Future Initiative

April 28, 2010

Background

It has been over ten years since the Piedmont Unified School District (PUSD) engaged a representative group of the broad educational community (teachers, support staff, parents, community members, students, administrators, and school Board members) in a long-range planning process. Over the last three months, with generous support from the Piedmont Educational Foundation, the school district engaged a new group of seventy representatives from the broad educational community to discuss what is important in our school system's future program delivery to students. Over the course of two full-day meetings, a set of themes emerged, intended to provide broad directional guidance as PUSD plans for the ongoing delivery of an excellent educational program to the community's children.

Our Current Educational Program

Before setting our sights on the future, it is important to take stock of our current educational program. PUSD is a public school system of approximately 2,500 students, with over 340 employees, and six schools: three elementary schools, a middle school, and a traditional and alternative high school.

As described in the District's 2009-10 educational program goal, PUSD is committed to "cultivate a learning community where students are engaged in their learning, strive for excellence, and are supported to achieve to their fullest potential."

Piedmont's core academic program is intended to cultivate intellectually curious and independent learners. A quality teaching staff works hard to provide a comprehensive, rigorous and relevant K-12 curriculum to all students. As students progress through this curriculum, the District strives to provide them with appropriate support to help them acquire mastery of the California content standards and achieve to their fullest potential.

Themes Of Our Vision

Over a decade ago, the long-term planning conversations centered on "the what" of learning. Today, with a focus on continuous growth in student achievement in a rapidly changing world, the planning conversations shifted to "the how" of learning. Building on the strength of the current program and crafting a vision for the school system, six major themes emerged:

Academic Excellence
Individual Potential
Resilience

Program Adaptability
Global Citizenry
Community Building

Key to the Report Format Below:

Theme Description:

A brief summary description is provided for each vision theme.

In Process Examples:

We provide a robust offering of programs and services to students in our school district. For each theme, we list programs, services, or personnel who currently address the identified theme. This is not an exhaustive list. We are in the process of adding additional items.

Interests for the Future:

The Planning Group spent time in small and large group discussions thinking about what we might have in the future to realize a given theme. These lists are by no means prescriptive or limiting. In addition, the order of items listed does not reflect a set of priorities discussed by the group.

Themes of Our Vision - continued

Supporting Academic Excellence

By creating a breadth and depth of engaging learning opportunities for all students, continue to inspire, teach, and support students of all levels of learning to:

- acquire mastery of the California content standards;
- cultivate critical thinking skills; and
- achieve to one's fullest potential

In Process Examples:

Comprehensive academic program including AP and Honors classes; New academic pathways in secondary level math and science; Well-trained teachers, librarians, technology and resource specialists, and counselors; Professional development and collaboration time; Elementary enrichment (math, science, art, music); MHS; GATE; Special Education; Secondary elective program; Child Study Teams/Student Study Teams; Field trips; Tutoring; Wellness Center; Peer advising and tutorials; Co-teaching at PMS and PHS; PHS Department Awards

Interests for the Future:

Study Hall during school hours; Cluster grouping in classes; Additional AP classes; Outside learning resources; Expanding secondary awards and recognition; Consistent implementation of authentic assessments including student portfolios

Maximizing Individual Potential

Recognizing that each student has unique passions, motivations, and strengths, help students to individualize their education and achieve to their fullest potential.

In Process Examples:

Comprehensive academic program including AP and Honors classes; New academic pathways in secondary level math and science; Well-trained teachers, librarians, technology and resource specialists, and counselors; Professional development and

collaboration time; Elementary enrichment (math, science, art, music); MHS; GATE; Special Education; Secondary elective program; Child Study Teams/Student Study Teams; Field trips; Tutoring; Wellness Center; Peer advising and tutorials; Co-teaching at PMS and PHS; PHS Department Awards

Interests for the Future:

Inter-disciplinary and project-based learning; Experiential learning; Personalized education plans for all students; Career inventories; Life skills in High School; Internships/Mentorships; Social skills programming for all in middle school

Developing Resilience

Create a culture of learning in the schools, where students feel safe taking risks, being flexible, innovative, and adaptable, and taking on new challenges. In addition to following students through assessments and benchmarks, offer social skills development and counseling support, so students are prepared to meet real world challenges in their lives with resilience.

In Process Examples:

Quality classroom instruction and support; K-12 counseling program; Wellness Center; Peer Mediators; Youth Educators; Associated Student Body; Other Student Clubs; Elementary level social skills development and conflict resolution programs (e.g., PEP, Lifeskills, Cooperative Adventures); Diversity Day; Garden Project; Child Study Teams/Student Study Teams

Interests for the Future:

Expand relations with other schools; Expand parent education; Internships/Service Learning; Alternative education in middle school

Promoting Program Adaptability

With an emphasis on continuous growth and effective communications, reflect on the relevance and effectiveness of educational programs in a rapidly changing world in order to create learning opportunities that are comprehensive, innovative, dynamic, and sustainable.

In Process Examples:

Professional development and teacher collaboration time; District goals and action plan; Goal setting for teacher evaluations, and development of the technology and library plans; Site Council; Curriculum Forum; Piedmont Educational Foundation and Parent Support Groups funding special projects/programs; Co-teaching; Common assessment; Differentiated instruction; Academic pathways

Interests for the Future:

Flexible program that adapts to progress, 21st century readiness, culture, and technological advances; Survey students; Value change with incentives; Block schedule for PMS; More collaboration time for staff; Facilitated collaboration time

Cultivating A Global Citizenry

Cultivate students to become engaged and interested citizens in the larger global community.

In Process Examples:

Diversity Day; Cultures week; Courses (e.g. Modern World History; Economics, Civics), Field trips; Sports; Reading Buddies program; Green Team; Piedmont Appreciating Diversity Committee; Exchange students; 7- 12 World Languages; Piedmont Language School; ASB; Community service; K-12 library and technology programs

Interests for the Future:

News feeds from around the world in classrooms; Entrepreneurship opportunities; Expand student exchange; K-12 world language instruction; Alignment with International Baccalaureate Standards; Global Sabbatical

Building K-12 Community

Develop collaborations across groups in the K-12 educational community to stay informed and to participate in the development and maintenance of programs and practices that support the District's mission, vision, and goals.

In Process Examples:

Site Councils; ASB; Student Clubs/Groups; Curriculum Forum; Special Education Advisory Committee; GATE Advisory Committee; Budget Advisory Committee; Transition Meetings at sites; Parcel Tax Citizens Advisory Committee; Transition meetings at sites; Piedmont Educational Foundation; Association of Parents Clubs of Piedmont; Board of Education

Interests for the Future:

Build relations with schools outside the District; Talent shows; Band experiences; Promote core values of inclusion and kindness; Service learning; Promote local eco-awareness; Connecting to the cyberworld; Mentorships; Develop resource parents

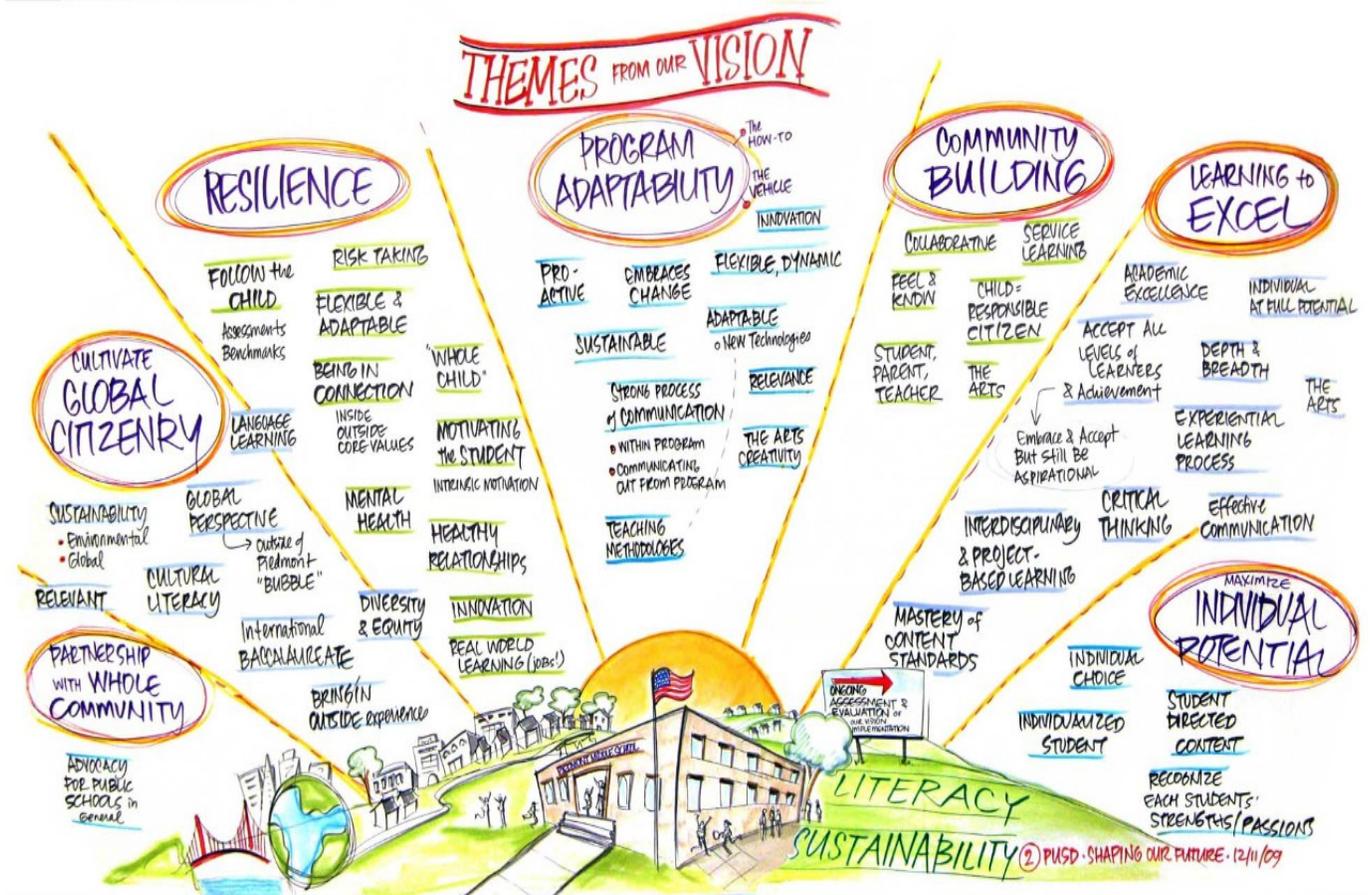
Where do we go from here?

The work of the Planning Team will guide a host of activities, work, and decisions that will be made over the next days, months, and years ahead.

It is important that we sustain our conversations through ongoing discussions in our schools, at district-wide meetings, during employee association negotiations, school Board meetings, community advisory committee meetings, and budget advisory committee meetings.

The expression, "Be the change" was raised at our last meeting. Listen and be on the look-out for opportunities to support the themes that we have developed over the course of two intense collaborative work days. Be a mentor to a colleague, volunteer, or peer. Share with others the insights, questions, and ideas that you have gained from our conversations.

Help Shape Our Future.



How will our work connect to other planning efforts in our district?

There are a number of working groups in our district that will be affected by our work. It will be important for us to work in collaboration with one another as we endure tough economic times.

Group	Responsibilities
ASB	-Organizes events to promote school spirit & positive school climate -Supports student clubs
Board of Education	-Reviews and evaluates policy -Provides vision and direction -Establishes annual goals and works in collaboration with the Superintendent to support an Action Plan to address the goals -Develops guiding principles and priorities for the budget -Approves the budgets, employee and other contracts
Budget Advisory	-Learns about K-12 program impact on PUSD budget -Communicates understanding of budget to stakeholder groups -Provides advisory support during budget development
Citizens Oversight Committee for Bond Program	-Reviews construction expenditures -Confirms that funds are being spent in accordance with voter authorization -Prepare annual report to the community of their findings or recommendations
Curriculum Forum	-Reviews curriculum and textbook adoption
District English Learners Advisory Committee	-Provides advisory support to district and school administration on English Learner program issues
Diversity and Respect Task Force	-Reviews and promotes exemplary practices related to diversity and respect
Employee Association Executive Boards & Committees	-Negotiates instructional calendar, compensation (salary & benefits), and working conditions -Gathers comparative data on salary and benefits in other districts -Uses interest-based bargaining in working with PUSD and during negotiations
GATE Advisory	-Offers advisory support during implementation of GATE Plan -Helps evaluate the GATE Plan
Parcel Tax Advisory	-Confirms that parcel tax funds are being spent for purposes approved by voters -Prepares annual report to the community of their findings or recommendations -Serves in advisory capacity to Board to help review and project financial needs of district w/respect to whether and in what amount parcel tax should be levied -Provides additional evaluations or recommendations based on specific questions from the Board
Parent Clubs, Piedmont Ed	-Fundraises to provide K-12 funding to support school programs -Provides input to school administration of program priorities

Foundation & Support Groups	-Offers communications support to parent community and community at-large -Provides grants to support school & district priorities & programs
Special Education Advisory	-Provides advisory support to district and school administration on Special Education program issues
Site Councils	-Reviews programs and offers advisory support to administration for continuous growth -Sets goals in Single-wide Plan for Student Achievement -Evaluates progress relative to plan
School Staff, Administrative Team, Common Planning & Department Meetings	-Reflects on curriculum, instruction, assessment, and intervention practices -Reviews and shares student achievement data -Promotes positive school site and district climate -Provides recommendations to the Superintendent and Board on matters related to program changes, textbook adoptions, and district curriculum

Acknowledgements

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President, Lance Fong, PEF Board Members Lupe Dryburgh, Dana Serleth, Ann Trutner

Members of the Planning Group who represent the broader educational community of students, teachers, parents, Board members, community members, administrators, support staff, and employee associations of our school district

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President, Ray Gadbois, Vice President, Roy Tolles, Board Members Martha Jones, June Monach, Rick Raushenbush