

STRATEGY 3

We will assess and redesign all aspects of the high school with the community to ensure academic rigor and high-level student performance.

ACTION TEAM MEMBERS

Co-Leaders:

Maxine Fantroy-Ford, Principal – Albany High School
Jackie Carrese, Former Instructional Supervisor for Science
Dr. Tresa Diggs, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education

Team Members:

Tony Armlin – Armlin, Damon & McMordie
Kimberly Baker, Guidance Counselor – Albany High School
Dr. Katherine Briar Lawson, Dean – School of Social Welfare, SUNY
Judy Collins, Assistant Principal – Harriet Gibbons High School
Earl Davis, Teacher – Albany High School
Lucia Gutierrez, Teacher – Albany High School
Alicia Holt-Riley, Teacher – Harriet Gibbons High School
Angelena Rouse-McCarthy, Student - Albany High School
Esther Thornton- Former Co-President – City Council PTA
Michelle Washington, Parent – Albany High School Student

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We will assess and redesign all aspects of the high school with the community to ensure academic rigor and high-level student performance.

RESULT STATEMENTS

3.1 Develop, design and implement a formal advisory/mentorship program to be built into all student schedules to foster true and positive relationships between students and faculty.

3.2 Create smaller learning communities for all Albany High School Students.

3.3 Redesign the high school facility to support the creation of smaller learning communities.

3.4 Provide mandatory professional training development for all administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals that will help them work with economically and culturally diverse students to ensure academic rigor and higher-level student performance.

3.5 Implement a series of programs to inform, engage, and increase participation of all students to enroll in and pass at least one advanced course of study prior to graduation.

3.6 Create a full service community resource center to provide parents/guardians with opportunities to interact with staff, to become familiar with program and curricular requirements for graduation and to participate/support their child in achieving success.

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RESULT STATEMENT 3.1

Develop, design, and implement a formal advisory/mentorship program to be built into all student schedules to foster true and positive relationships between students and faculty.

ACTION STEPS

3.1.1. Create a committee with representatives from all community stakeholders, including but not limited to: students, parents, teachers, union representatives, high school administrators to carry out the committee charge.

3.1.2. Provide regular, on-going communication about the work of the committee to the large school community, including parents, faculty, and staff.

3.1.3 Conduct a student needs assessment (focus groups, survey) that asks about satisfaction, school culture, challenges, goals and dreams for themselves and the school, including feelings about academic success. An existing tool could be used. Questions could include long-term goals, social issues.

3.1.4 Conduct a staff needs assessment that parallels the student one for use in planning the advisory program.

3.1.5 Use the results of the needs assessment to determine short and long terms program goals

3.1.6 Research and analyze successful advisory programs in comparable high school environments (i.e. Poland Regional High School advisory program; research reported by Linda Darling Hammond in ASCD May 2008)

3.1.7 Use the research findings to identify components of a successful program that would fit this school culture.

3.1.8 Select, refine, design the program and develop a program proposal including the following:

- a. Short and long term goals
- b. Program description (including what are the experiences for students)
- c. Clarification of roles and responsibilities (who does what when) and policy guidelines (e.g. FAQ for how to handle a variety of situations)
- d. Orientation and training for adults (teachers and parents) and students (and other relevant parties, e.g. outside mentors)
- e. Discuss how students will be assigned
- f. Include an evaluation of the program and the impact on the students

3.1.9 Develop implementation time-line (implementation will depend on the program selected/designed)

3.1.10 Design and conduct evaluation

COST BENEFIT ESTIMATION

TANGIBLE COSTS

- Incentives
- Cultural enrichment activities (e.g. field trips)—transportation, tickets, extra staff time if after school
- Training/PD—perhaps through a summer institute for staff, which would involve summer stipends but no lost teaching time
- Coordinator position (if needed)—depends if the position is a faculty position, similar to Department head or whether it is a new hire, and whether it is full or part time. A district coordinator for a recent grant manager was advertised as \$80,000 FTE
- Researcher to conduct Needs Assessment—consultants cost approximately \$1000/day (total cost for developing and conducting a survey and writing a summary report, approximately \$2000); minimal extra expense for materials if focus groups are involved—approximately \$300 for incentives for the students - i.e. movie tickets—and a tape recorder--\$65
- Evaluator—consultants cost approximately \$1000/per day. A district evaluation position would be a professional salary, \$90,000+

TANGIBLE BENEFITS

- Improved student relationships with adults
- Improved climate and culture
- Improved student motivation
- Increased academic student success
- Improved attendance
- Decrease in disciplinary referrals
- Decrease in drop out rate

INTANGIBLE COSTS

- Time

INTANGIBLE BENEFITS

- Student growth and maturity
- Create improved relationships between students and adults in the school

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RESULT STATEMENT 3.2

Create smaller learning communities for all Albany High School Students.

ACTION STEPS

3.2.1. Identify a high school restructuring team with representatives from all community stakeholders, including but not limited to: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education, High School Principal, Assistant Principal for Abrookin Extended Day Program, Principal and Assistant Principal of Harriet Gibbons Small Learning Community, representatives of academic and guidance departments, family services, community members, parents, and students. Secure an expert with extensive experience (both process and model) in high school restructuring to support the work of the restructuring team. ** Identify a person to assist with managing the work across committees and oversee public outreach, a Strategic Planning Coordinator (see Action Plan 3.3).

3.2.2. Collect and assess available research and recent district experience with smaller learning communities (visit Restructuring Albany High School document, 2005).

3.2.3. Secure an expert with extensive experience (both process and model) in high school restructuring to support the work of the educational restructuring team.

3.2.4. Identify a person to assist with managing the work across committees and oversee public outreach, a Strategic Planning coordinator, a Facilities representative or representative from the project planning Committee (See action plan 3.3).

3.2.5. Review the research compiled by the educational restructuring team, and define key terms such as smaller learning communities, houses, personalization, looping, and comprehensive high school. Research other successful high school restructuring efforts and identify key factors that contribute to the success of such efforts (An “expert” may be able to summarize the research and present successful programs from similar schools).

3.2.6 Develop a set of working principles that will provide the basis for restructuring the high school that account for serving all students, personalization, academic rigor, high student achievement, and providing a safe physical and emotional environment (visit Restructuring Albany High School document, 2005) and that also applies knowledge about best practices in such restructuring efforts (see High Schools for equity: Policy supports for student learning in communities of color, Friedlaender and Darling-Hammond, 2007* available:

www.srnleads.org/resources/publications/pdf/hsfe/hsfe_report.pdf)

3.2.7 Identify facility needs to accommodate teaching and learning in smaller communities, i.e. plan for facilities in light of current structure or proposed modifications.

3.2.8 Conduct an intensive two-day workshop to help design the plan and ensure stakeholder support. The workshop participants will describe in detail Design high school restructuring proposal “What Would the Restructured High School Look Like?” including organizational structure, staffing patterns, educational offerings/courses of study, student assignments to smaller learning communities, and facility modifications driven by the academic program prior to November budget cycle for 2009-2010. Note: there is a need to prepare budget forecasts for key cost factors in the restructuring efforts.

3.2.9 Extend and refine design resulting from the two-day workshop by using work groups that will complete the necessary tasks described in the steps that follow.

3.2.10 Develop a detailed restructuring proposal: activities, orientation for adults (teachers and parents) and students, training for relevant parties.

3.2.11 Develop the criteria and process to assign students to smaller learning communities.

3.2.12 Refine educational offerings and delivery systems consistent with smaller learning communities.

3.2.13 Identify professional development needs and develop programs to meet those needs.

3.2.14 Identify facility needs to accommodate teaching and learning in smaller communities and plan for necessary facilities adjustment in light of current structure or proposed modifications.

3.2.15 Create a timeline by utilizing an expert in high school restructuring (as referenced above) to devise an implementation schedule that includes a timeline for all activities in the appropriate sequence for restructuring the high school into smaller learning communities.

3.2.16 Develop a communication plan for the wider school community with an emphasis on students and parents that provides for:

- a. Defined collaboration and communication within the organizational structure
- b. A series of “information sessions” utilizing the hearing and speaking models developed by the communications office to communicate the restructuring design
- c. A series of “staff conversations” at the high school to introduce the working principles guiding restructuring, presenting the definitions and concepts necessary to understand the proposed restructuring design

3.2.17 Design appropriate roll out plan

3.2.18 Implement the rollout plan

3.2.19 Evaluate the progress of the implementation efforts

** For example, there is a School Redesign Network (SRN Leads) through Stanford University under the leadership of Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond, an expert in school change and restructuring. SRN both conducts research and assists comprehensive high schools in the restructuring process. There is a school change series that we recommend the committee participate in. The School change series begins with participation in a High School Change Institute followed by California School Change Study Tours—these are designed for a team of up to 12 people from a school district. A team could include Board members, district staff and high school administrators and teachers. Information about the program can be found on the following websites:

<http://www.srnleads.org/about/mission.html>

<http://www.srnleads.org/partners/leads.html>

<http://www.srnleads.org/learning-events/current.html>

http://www.srnleads.org/press/news/newsweek_hillsdale.html

COST BENEFIT ESTIMATION

TANGIBLE COSTS

- Facility Renovation/Building Costs (see Results Statement 3.3)
- Professional Development cost (including staff time, materials and conferences— Research* suggests that funding should be provided for 10 days a year of professional development for teachers, though a summer learning as well as time during the week for teachers to plan and problem solve together); alternatively, the District could offer 11-month teacher contracts. The additional time would be used for PD, curriculum and action research design, and data analysis and planning (Tech Valley High School teachers work an 11-month contract).
- Communication/community outreach; marketing
- Kick off planning event—fee for use of building, refreshments, advertising, perhaps transportation and child care for parent participants
- Coordinator for work groups (district rate FTE: \$80,000)
- Consultants/experts—approximately \$1000/day plus expenses. Alternatively, the school change/restructuring process could participate in the SRN Leads process, which would likely be comparable to a dedicated consultant, provide cutting expertise to the district, and allow the district to be part of a cohort/support network with other school involved in a similar process. The cost for participation in the SRN LEADS School Change Series is approximately \$20,000 for a team of up to 12 people plus travel expenses. They also offer study visits for \$250 per participant, plus travel.***
- Curriculum development—part of the PD costs
- Site visits as part of planning—some site visit costs will be small if the site is local; to visit similar schools might require travel and more expense. (e.g. sending 10 teachers to Boston for 3 days to look at 3 schools would cost approximately \$2500 which includes a rental van and gas, hotels with double occupancy—if possible—and a per diem food stipend). Site visits are also part of the expert consultation through SRN LEADS if that option is chosen.
- Evaluation –consultants cost approximately \$1000/per day. A district evaluation position would be a professional salary, \$90,000+

TANGIBLE COSTS

- Improved academic outcomes for students
- Decreased drop out rate
- Improved school climate and culture
- Improved image of the school in the community

INTANGIBLE COSTS

- Time
- Commitment
- Give up old patterns and expectations

INTANGIBLE BENEFITS

- Improved relationship with students, adults and the community
- Improved PR
- Improved school morale
- Learn new ways to do things

* Freidlaender, D., and Darling-Hammond, L. with Andree, A., Lewis-Charp, H., McCloskey, L., Richardson, N., et. al. (2007) High schools for equity: Policy supports for student learning in communities of color. Stanford: CA: School Redesign Network at Stanford University.

Available: www.srnleads.org/resources/publications/pdf/hsfe/hsfe_report.pdf

* Darling-Hammond, L., and Friedlaender, D., (2008) Creating excellent and equitable schools in Education Leadership. Volume 65, No 8, pages 14-21.

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We will assess and redesign all aspects of the high school with the community to ensure academic rigor and high-level student performance.

RESULT STATEMENT 3.3

Redesign the high school facility to support the creation of smaller learning communities for all students.

ACTION STEPS

3.3.1 Charge the Superintendent with developing a High School Facilities Capital Improvement Referendum Plan. The plan will improve, reconstruct, restructure or expand the district's facilities to effectively and efficiently support the Albany High School educational program. The referendum shall be adopted by the Board of Education within 12 months of adopting the Strategic Plan but not later than December 31, 2009 for subsequent presentation to the district's voters.

3.3.2 Develop the work plan to include" an assessment of all prior high school restructuring proposals: the designation if a project manager (i.e. an independent architectural consultant) to guide the pre-referendum process; the selection of an architectural/educational consultant team through an RFP process; and the creation of the Project Planning Steering Committee. The Project Planning Steering Committee shall be comprised of members of the Board of Education, district administration, teachers, staff, parents, students and community members. All work plan steps will include Board approval.

3.3.3 Develop steps of a referendum master plan to be collaboratively designed by the Architectural/Educational Team and the Project Planning Steering Committee within 10 months. It is important to note that the Project Planning Steering Committee needs to be supportive, responsive to and coordinated with the activities and results of the Educational Restructuring Committee as outlined in action plan 3.2.

3.3.4 Conduct studies, assessments and investigations to develop and prepare referendum plan.

3.3.5 Make presentations to the Board of Education on the proposed referendum as necessary to develop a well-defined plan.

3.3.6 Follow the procedures that adhere to the public referendum requirements in the City of Albany.

3.3.7 Adopt the referendum by the Board of Education.

3.3.8 Submit the referendum to the voters of the Albany district.

COST BENEFIT ESTIMATION

TANGIBLE COSTS

- Time and effort invested by assigned district staff, Board of Education members, parents, community members, students and others in development of the High School Facilities Capital Improvement Referendum Plan. Quantification of this cost difficult but not impossible once the members of the planning teams and committees are finalized.
- Services and related expenses of a Project Planning Coordinator, Planning Consultants including: Architects, Engineers, Financial Planners, Attorneys, Educational Consultants for a 12 month period to prepare the Referendum Plan with estimated cost of \$500,000 to \$750,000.
- Use of District Facilities to conduct meetings, public presentations, etc. with an estimated cost of \$100 to \$500 per meeting with an estimated number of 50 or more meetings over the 12 month period.

TANGIBLE BENEFITS

- Provides a definitive plan for voter approval or rejection (as is required by law prior to undertaking capital improvement projects) to improve the district's facilities as required to sustain and improve an effective high school educational program.
- Provides a process in which educational program objectives, best practices, and smaller learning community concepts drive the facilities planning and improvement process.
- Provides a collaborative and inclusive process for planning facilities improvements in conjunction with the development of an improved and re-defined High School educational program.
- Provides a definitive timeframe in which the planning effort must be conducted and clear and well-articulated plan must be adopted for presentation to the district's voters.
- Ends a 10-year period of review, discussion and consideration of possible improvements to High School facilities with the creation and adoption of a definitive plan for voter approval or rejection.

INTANGIBLE COSTS

- Time and effort invested by district staff, Board of Education members, parents, community members, students and others not directly assigned to the planning effort but who need to participate in the planning.
- Loss of Time on the Board of Education's monthly agendas which needs to be dedicated to this planning process making it a focused priority.

INTANGIBLE BENEFITS

- Provides a path forward to resolve long-standing facility deficiencies and continued deterioration with an action plan providing students, parents, the community, faculty, staff and administration with a plan to provide adequate and sufficient classrooms, support space and other facilities/amenities designed to provide safe, sustainable and healthy learning environments where students can be better known, better served, better supervised and can succeed.

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RESULT STATEMENT 3.4

Provide mandatory professional development for all administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals that will help them work with economically and culturally diverse students to ensure academic rigor and higher-level student performance.

ACTION STEPS

3.4.1 Create a High School Professional Development team, members shall include but not limited to, Director of Instruction, HS administrator, teachers and union members, paraprofessionals.

3.4.2 Align professional development opportunities to the results identified based on needs assessments already conducted including NUA, Culturally Responsive Classrooms, and Diversity Council Initiatives-- PD opportunities will be aligned to the results identified.

3.4.3 Align professional development activities should be aligned with National Staff Development Council Standards and District Professional Development Plan

3.4.4 Examine overlap with existing HS PDP—budget, calendar, schedule - and eliminate redundancies to streamline professional development offering

3.4.5 Design training modules to address needs identified by previous assessments (see 3.4.2).

3.4.6 Implement professional development through different options:

- a. Design methods for providing PD, including options for extending time that may include a combination of those listed below, such as:
 - i. During the school day—examine opportunities within the current school schedule
 - ii. Into the evening
 - iii. Summer institutes
 - iv. On-line options
 - v. Mentoring from other institutions

3.4.7 Present for approval to appropriate parties

3.4.8 Conduct evaluation

- a. Overall impact:
 - i. On the school program
 - ii. On teacher growth
 - iii. Student satisfaction and achievement
- b. Session by session

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

TANGIBLE COSTS

- Stipends if PD is beyond the current time frame of 1 hour/month
- Internal/External presenters—approximately \$1000 per day plus expenses; specific workshops may be on a per person cost basis or team (e.g. \$350 for a team of 3, each additional person \$100)
- Workshop materials and supplies (consumables)
- Evaluator—consultants cost approximately \$1000/per day. A district evaluation position would be a professional salary, \$90,000+

TANGIBLE BENEFITS

- Building capacity within the staff
- Increased teacher sense of professional community
- Improved teaching practices
- Increased student learning
- Increased student satisfaction
- Teacher retention
- Decrease in drop out rate
- Improved school climate/culture

INTANGIBLE BENEFITS

- Contribution toward 20 hours of district PD for administrators and teachers, 15 hours for paraprofessional staff, and 175 hours needed over 5 years for new teachers.

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RESULT STATEMENT 3.5

Implement a series of programs to inform, encourage, and increase participation of all students to enroll in and pass at least one advanced course of study prior to graduation

ACTION STEPS

3.5.1 Create a committee. Members of the committee shall include all stakeholders and include but not be limited to, representatives from the vertical integration committee, representatives from the middle school, teachers, parents and students to carry out the steps of the plan.

3.5.2 Identify all students not enrolled in or not passing advanced courses and conduct a needs assessment (what motivates you, hobbies, future goals, plans)

3.5.3 Conduct a needs assessment with these students, i.e. ask them the questions about what motivates them, such as:

- a. What is keeping you from taking more advanced courses?
- b. What would it take to get you there? (What can parents do? What can counselors do? What can teachers do?)

3.5.4 Develop a comprehensive program based on results of student focus groups that may include the following components:

- a. Peer recruitment
- b. Adult support, i.e. teachers, non-teachers referenced in result statement 3.1
- c. Advisory (connection to future opportunities) referenced in result statement 3.1
- d. Tutoring

3.5.5 Determine the number of courses needed and number of teachers needed to teach them.

3.5.6 Provide the professional development/training needed

- a. PD for teachers—giving teachers the necessary tools to teach to higher level

3.5.7 Conduct program evaluation

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

TANGIBLE COSTS

- Test Fees for students (already part of AHS budget)
- Materials (including student prep materials) approximately \$25/per student
- Professional development/training costs (refer to result statement 3.4)
- Class materials--\$150
- PD—refer to results statement 3.4
- Focus group facilitator (to conduct the focus groups and write a report) \$2000
- Evaluator— consultants cost approximately \$1000/per day. A district evaluation position would be a professional salary, \$90,000+

TANGIBLE BENEFITS

- Increase the number of students taking advanced courses who are ready to go to college and who will be successful in college
- Improved academic outcomes/achievement for students

INTANGIBLE COSTS

- Time

INTANGIBLE BENEFITS

- Increased teacher capacity
- Improved teacher morale
- Improved school climate and culture
- Increased student confidence, self-esteem
- Improved community perceptions of school

STRATEGY 3

We will assess and redesign all aspects of the high school with the community to ensure academic rigor and high-level student performance.

RESULT STATEMENT 3.6

Create a full service community resource center to provide parents/guardians with opportunities to interact with staff, to become familiar with program and curricular requirements for graduation and to participate/support their child in academics achieving success.

ACTION STEPS

3.6.1 Explore existing CSDA full service school models as well as research national full service schools models

3.6.2 Create a full service school steering committee. Members shall include all relevant stakeholder and include but not be limited to, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, HS administrator, teachers, community service providers in health and human service areas, parents and students.*

3.6.3 Conduct a parent and student needs assessment/focus group with a service needs focus in order to understand what they would like to see at full service resource center

3.6.4 Create guiding principles that incorporates parent and youth led initiatives to support student achievement.

3.6.5 Use data to design program components such as parent and youth based approaches to support student academic achievement; and youth outreach programs to address absenteeism, homework tutoring, and addressing service needs.

- a. The plan should address service integration as it relates to the family-youth community center—ensuring that services are streamlined, not duplicative, and are comprehensive, including a central entry point for services (e.g. single registration form)
- b. There should be a mechanism for service providers to meet to ensure that seamless service integration is occurring

3.6.6 Develop policies and protocols for student referrals.

3.6.7 Design training for service providers for how to link services to academic achievement and how to foster academic achievement and accountability to teachers

3.6.8 Design a marketing strategy for the full service center.

3.6.9 Conduct program evaluation

* Professionals in the field of youth engagement believe that parent and youth voices should predominate in the design and implementation plan, and therefore should constitute a significant presence on the committee.

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

TANGIBLE COSTS

- Incentives (e.g. time, \$\$)
- Stipends for parent and youth
- Facility modification (refer to results statement 3.3)
- Researcher to conduct needs assessment of parents and students—consultants cost approximately \$1000/day
- Evaluator—consultants cost approximately \$1000/day. A district evaluation position would be a professional salary, \$90,000+

TANGIBLE BENEFITS

- Rapid and tailored responses to high need youth and parents
- Decrease disciplinary problems
- Increased attendance
- Increased school safety
- Improved parental involvement in academic achievement
- Improved services for parents and youth with a focus on needs as well as academic success
- Improved academic outcomes achievement
- Improved after school opportunities

INTANGIBLE COSTS

- Co-location of community service providers

INTANGIBLE BENEFITS

- Greater sense of efficacy among teachers
- Greater sense of success among youth and parents
- Improved community school relations