

## **STRATEGY 6**

*We will use all assessment data to drive academically rigorous instruction, Pre-K to 12, to improve the performance of every learner.*

### **ACTION TEAM MEMBERS**

#### Co-Leaders:

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#### Team Members:

Faye Andrews, Commissioner, Youth & Family Services  
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## **STRATEGY 6**

*We will use all assessment data to drive academically rigorous instruction, Pre-K-12, to improve the performance of every student.*

### **RESULT STATEMENTS**

6.1 Provide school level and district wide training for building and district administrators, teachers and instructional support staff in the use and application of a variety of assessment to target instruction that will promote students academic success.

6.2 Provide a series of trainings and information (written, face-to-face, web based) to support parents, students, family, community members and other stakeholders in their efforts to read, understand and interpret student, building and district reports presented in a variety of formats (SED report cards, student ISR etc.).

6.3 Develop a data warehouse system that allows for the collection of individual student assessment and other pertinent data points (i.e. absenteeism, mobility, # of elementary schools attended, services provided, etc.) that can be accessed by teachers, administrators and staff for the purpose of making informed academic program decisions.

6.4 Develop a program evaluation tool (template) that can be applied to existing programs that would assist in establishing programmatic benchmarks that determine the success of the program. This tool must use both student and program expense data to help inform decision making for future programming.

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### **RESULT STATEMENT 6.1**

**Provide school level and district wide training for building and district administrators, teachers and instructional support staff in the use and application of a variety of assessment to target instruction that will promote students academic success.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

- 6.1.1 Identify and compile all available assessment tools currently being used district-wide.
- 6.1.2 Assess the format of each assessment tool (e.g. hard copies, electronic, spreadsheets, raw data vs. clean data).
- 6.1.3 Identify current and anticipated technical needs (software, hardware, manpower, user proficiency)
- 6.1.4 Identify key elements contained in all assessment tools, e.g. what is being measured, when measured, etc.
- 6.1.5 Identify the purpose of each assessment tool and how it is intended to assist the district.
- 6.1.6 Create a glossary of commonly used terms for all currently utilized assessment tools.
- 6.1.7 Identify all sources of explanatory information currently available, e.g. interpretation instructions from NYSED.
- 6.1.8 Identify other agencies or departments who are currently conducting/using training on assessment tools, e.g. ACSD, NYSUT.
- 6.1.9 Identify current district staff skilled in assessment tool interpretation and use (particularly how results from different assessment tools can be integrated to form a more complete understanding of student achievement and areas for improvement).
- 6.1.10 Create a training staff who will develop in-person and web-based training tools. (Turn-key model)
- 6.1.11 Set schedule for development of written training module (online, hard copy) for each assessment tool.
- 6.1.12 Create written training modules for each assessment tool, using MS Word, PowerPoint, MS Publisher, etc.

- 6.1.13 Pilot training document with select administrators, teachers, and staff.
- 6.1.14 Modify training document based on information obtained through pilot process.
- 6.1.15 Finalize all training documents and print materials.
- 6.1.16 Create training evaluation tool to be administered following training. Include similar questionnaire for web-based training materials.
- 6.1.17 Identify the universe of trainees, e.g. numbers of teachers, administrators, etc. along with basic demographic information, e.g. which school and grade or subject area for each teacher/assistant teacher.
- 6.1.18 Identify venues for in-person trainings, e.g., at staff meetings, teacher conference days.
- 6.1.19 Determine whether trainings will be offered as requested or if they will be targeted, such as cross training involving teachers with administrators or teachers only.
- 6.1.20 Create a training schedule e.g., by grade level or by school depending on how trainees will be grouped.
- 6.1.21 Advertise training, including purpose and materials that will be presented.
- 6.1.22 Maintain a list of trainees, perhaps allowing those who have completed the training to become “assessment tool experts” within their school, grade level or subject area.
- 6.1.23 Communicate lists of trained staff to buildings.
- 6.1.24 Develop method for updating information regarding changes in assessment tools, or reporting (e.g. when new items are added or new scoring indices are created).
- 6.1.25 Collect training evaluation tools and maintain database of responses to modify future training.
- 6.1.26 Develop a method to update new employees who need training.

## **COST BENEFIT ESTIMATION**

### **TANGIBLE COSTS**

- Time for review of reports and assessment data.  
4 staff members 40 hours totaling 160 hours
- Printing, copy and presentation materials \$5,000
- Creation of Training Materials  
4 staff members 40 hours totaling 160 hours
- Time for training of all staff.  
4 Staff members 25 hours totaling 100 hours
- Creation of evaluation tool  
2 staff members 40 hours totaling 80 hours.

### **TANGIBLE BENEFITS**

- Staff will have a common terminology related to testing, assessment and reporting
- Greater availability of information to inform decisions to make curriculum and instruction adjustments.

### **INTANGIBLE COSTS**

- Need for increase skill set by all staff to interpret all data
- Resistance of staff to learning new information
- Increase need for additional professional development on all levels for staff

### **INTANGIBLE BENEFITS**

- Greater understanding of assessments administered to all students
- Increase in staff knowledge and comfort when reviewing data
- Staff will use this new understanding of assessment information to make adjustments in instruction

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### **Result Statement 6.2**

**Provide a series of trainings and information (written, face-to-face, web based) to support parents, students, family, community members and other stakeholders in their efforts to read, understand and interpret student, building and district reports presented in a variety of formats (SED report cards, student ISR etc.).**

### **ACTION STEPS**

6.2.1 Create a team to identify relevant reports related to student achievement and district accountability.

6.2.2 Identify and compile all current district and SED reports related to district accountability and student achievement.

6.2.3 Identify anticipated release dates of each report.

6.2.4 Identify what each report measures.

6.2.5 Outline contents of reports.

6.2.6 Use team members to create informational documents to describe each report for dissemination to stakeholders later in the process.

6.2.7 Create a glossary of commonly used terms for all current district and SED reports.

6.2.8 Develop a set of informational tools or materials, both electronic (web-based) and hard copy that will explain what each report measures and how it is used in district decision-making, and how it can be used by other stakeholders.

6.2.9 Use concrete examples using information and data contained in the actual district and state reports when developing informational tools/materials.

6.2.10 Make certain that language used in informational tools/materials is geared to the intended audience (e.g., minimize jargon, use plain language).

6.2.11 Identify current avenues for parent/community and district communication for information dissemination (e.g., PTA, district website, PAL, YMCA and JCC after school programs, mentoring programs, SDM, Citywide PTA, parent support groups, Public Library Branches, school board meetings, newspaper, newsletters, teacher conferences, etc.)

6.2.12 Disseminate information tools/materials, working within the district and with other community partners, through avenues sited above (6.2.11)

6.2.13 Identify training sites for the further dissemination of informational tools/materials

6.2.14 Developing a training protocol and evaluation tools, taking into account the different need of different stakeholders, to further articulate the current uses of each relevant report

6.2.15 Formulate a training schedule

6.2.16 Publicize the schedule through various media, e.g., district website, public access broadcast, various television stations, media advisories, etc.

6.2.17 Conduct in-person trainings at identified training sites

6.2.18 Disseminate, complete and collect training evaluation tools

6.2.19 Gather and analyze evaluation tool results

6.2.20 Formulate recommendations for future rollouts (e.g., additional information to be included, additional avenues for dissemination, suggestions to make information more user-friendly)

6.2.21 Incorporate recommendations in future informational trainings and training tools/materials

6.2.22 Continue rollouts of most current district and SED reports related to district accountability and student achievement

## **COST BENEFIT ESTIMATION**

### **TANGIBLE COSTS**

- Time for review of reports and assessment data.  
2 staff members 20 hours totaling 60 hours
- Time to create informational materials, both hard copy and web-based, and training evaluation tool
- Out reach to community and public  
2 staff members 40 hours totaling 80 hours
- Creation of Training Materials  
4 staff members 40 hours totaling 160 hours
- Initial cost of producing hard copy materials  
500 four page documents @ \$.25 a page totaling \$500
- Creation of evaluation tool  
2 staff members 40 hours totaling 80 hours

### **TANGIBLE BENEFITS**

- A complete listing and description of all assessment and testing reports
- A glossary of common terminology related to testing, assessment and reporting
- Development of training materials for parents and stakeholders
- Consistent and planned training opportunities for parents and community to receive information
- More resources available through a variety of sources
- Increased number of community members who are well-informed regarding student achievement and district accountability as measured by attendance at in-person trainings
- Clarification on what specific reports are of greatest concern to community stakeholders as identified in evaluations conducted following in-person trainings

### **INTANGIBLE COSTS**

- Staff discontentment over additional responsibilities
- Additional pressure on other departments to help with collection, preparation and dissemination of information
- Increased administrative oversight demands
- Criticism of district policy and practice when “negative” student achievement or district accountability information is more widely circulated
- Increase in anxiety, uncertainty and concern amongst community stakeholders when “negative” student achievement or district accountability information is presented
- Need to re-assure community stakeholders that “negative” information is being and will continue to be systematically addressed by the district
- Increased comparisons between the Albany City School District’s performance and other surrounding districts

## **INTANGIBLE BENEFITS**

- Parents will have more information available to help them assist their child at home and in school
- Opportunity to highlight positive student achievement and district accountability information
- Less suspicion amongst community members that district is “hiding” negative student achievement or district accountability information
- Stronger partnerships between district and community stakeholders in setting direction to increase student achievement using commonly understood assessment and accountability data
- Greater understanding of student assessment and district accountability data by community stakeholders
- Greater understanding regarding the connection between student testing, student achievement and curriculum development
- Strengthened partnerships between district and community partners who assist in disseminating information and providing training locations

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### **RESULTS STATEMENT 6.3**

***Develop a data warehouse system that allows for the collection of individual student assessment and other pertinent data points (i.e. absenteeism, mobility, number of elementary schools attended, services provided, etc.) that can be accessed by teachers, administrators and staff for the purpose of making informed academic program decisions.***

### **ACTION PLAN**

- 6.3.1 Identify all data sources currently available to the district and the format that the data is presented (e.g., electronic and hard copy)
- 6.3.2 Review current District software programs, which house all types of student data, to assess capabilities and capacity
- 6.3.3 Determine specific district data needs based on Student Performance Standards outlined in the District's Strategic Direction
- 6.3.4 Identify data points that should be included in the data warehouse
- 6.3.5 Compile information on current internal and commercial software, as well as systems used in other school districts, that collect and assess student performance
- 6.3.6 Determine which software program or data system would best meet district needs, including scope of information and ability for systems to interface with current district software programs and cost analysis.
- 6.3.7 Evaluate implementation costs, including software, training costs, upgrade costs, maintenance costs, consulting costs, at a minimum
- 6.3.8 Identify and hire staff for various phases of implementation/maintenance and on-going database management, based on an assessment of their current skill level, expected skill level, and knowledge of existing systems.
- 6.3.10 Develop time line for implementation in consultation with staff and/or vendor(s)
- 6.3.11 Input data into data warehouse on a timely and consistent bases
- 6.3.12 Determine training needs for staff including Administrators, Teachers, Teaching Assistants, and support staff
- 6.3.13 Develop, pilot, modify and produce a training model to enable staff to use data to increase student achievement.

- 6.3.14 Create an evaluation tool to be administered following rollout of data warehouse.
- 6.3.15 Determine base line data points for comparison and evaluation of data warehouse effectiveness.
- 6.3.16 Train all staff.
- 6.3.17 Implement data warehouse program.
- 6.3.18 Gather and analyze results from evaluation tool as compared to base line data.
- 6.3.19 Evaluate data warehouse program to determine: usage; utility in informing curriculum development and modification of instruction; and program's ability to assist meeting student performance standards
- 6.3.20 Adjust data needs as necessary

## **COST BENEFIT ESTIMATION**

### **TANGIBLE COSTS**

- Time to define project and develop job descriptions for new staff  
3 staff members 80 hours totaling 240 hours
- Time to assist new staff in collecting data sources from district offices  
5 staff members 40 hours totaling 200 hours
- Costs associated with purchase of additional software  
\$50,000-\$100,000
- Project Coordinator salary and benefits - \$120,000
- Computer programmer salary and benefits- \$77,500

### **TANGIBLE BENEFITS**

- Improved access to student data for all staff
- Greater availability of information to inform decisions to make curriculum and instruction adjustments
- Greater access to data for Counselors and Teachers for placement of students transitioning from Elementary to Middle School and Middle School to High School
- Improve student performance, 20% increase in the number of students reaching Level 3 on grades 3-8 ELA and Math
- 15% increase in number of students meeting graduation requirements

### **INTANGIBLE COSTS**

- Staff resentment of additional duties associated with learning a new software program
- Increase responsibility for oversight by the technology department
- Need for increase skill set by all staff to interpret all data
- Increase need for additional professional development on all levels for staff

### **INTANGIBLE BENEFITS**

- Increase in teacher knowledge of student performance
- Increased confidence by staff that the decisions are being made based on specific data
- Improved parent perspective that academic decisions are based on solid data
- Increase in staff knowledge of student data and information

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### **Results Statement 6.4**

**Develop a program evaluation tool (template) that can be applied to existing programs that would assist in establishing programmatic benchmarks that determine the success of the program. This tool must use both student and program expense data to help inform decision making for future programming.**

### **ACTION PLAN**

6.4.1 Review the overall district mission to identify key goals to be accomplished by district programs (i.e. student performance, closing achievement gap, parental and community involvement)

6.4.2 Define the different types of programs offered by the district to include grant funded, general fund, community/district initiatives etc.

6.4.3 Identify the programs that will be evaluated with this tool

6.4.4 Collect, assess, review and evaluate tools utilized currently to evaluate programs

6.4.5 Identify the key criteria currently being used in these evaluation tools, including both qualitative and quantitative measures

6.4.6 Evaluate whether these measures and tools align with the key district goals

6.4.7 Modify and consolidate existing program evaluation tools to conform to a district wide evaluation tool.

6.4.8 Develop guidelines for the purpose of evaluating programs. The guidelines should reflect the criteria outlined in the Student Performance Standards in the Strategic Direction.

6.4.9 Identify the standard criteria to be included in the program evaluation guidelines (i.e. demographics, student current and past performance, costs, student/teacher ratio, training needs, identified resources, budget/actual comparative information)

6.4.10 Develop a standard format (template)

6.4.11 Provide overview training for template utilization

## **COST BENEFIT ESTIMATION**

### **TANGIBLE COSTS**

- Time for a review of the all programs offered in the district that address the key goals outlined  
3 Staff members 40 hours totaling 120 hours
- Team work to define District program types  
3 Staff members 10 hours totaling 30 hours
- Team work to identify evaluation instruments and programs that will be evaluated  
3 Staff members 20 hours totaling 60 hours
- Team work to develop guidelines that reflect Student Performance Standards  
3 Staff members 20 hours totaling 60 hours
- Team work to develop district tool for evaluation  
3 Staff members 40 hours totaling 120 hours
- District Program Evaluator salary and benefits \$77,000

### **TANGIBLE BENEFITS**

- A complete list of all programs and their types would be completed
- All programs that address achievement would be identified
- A standard instrument would be developed that could be used with criteria
- Budget decisions would be based on quantifiable data

### **INTANGIBLE COSTS**

- Staff members would have to do a lot of the leg work to collect information and this could take them away from their regular work
- Increase need for training

### **INTANGIBLE BENEFITS**

- Better decision making based on sound criteria
- Consistency of required data for evaluation of programs
- More accountability for staff who are project coordinators