

3-Year Strategic Operating Plan



Table of Contents

Introduction from Superintendent Adamowski.....	3
Purpose and Background of the Strategic Operating Plan.....	5
Hartford Public Schools 2012 Goals and Objectives	6
Goal 1: High Academic Achievement	10
Goal 2: School Accountability and Empowerment	19
Goal 3: Effective School Leaders	23
Goal 4: Effective Teachers	26
Goal 5: Equitable Allocation of Resources.....	30
Goal 6: Strong Parent / Community Communication and Collaboration	33
Goal 7: Positive School Climate	37
Goal 8: All Choice System of Schools	40
Goal 9: District Reform Sustainability	44
APPENDIX.....	48
A1. HPS Vision and Mission.....	49
A2. HPS Board of Education Purpose, Core Beliefs and Commitments	50
A3. HPS Board of Education Theory of Action Policy	52
A4. HPS School Performance Matrix	53
A5. HPS District Performance Targets	54
A6. Nine Working Group Participants	55

Introduction from Superintendent Adamowski

Hartford’s education reform occurs in the following context: according to the most recent census, on a per-capita basis, Hartford is America’s second poorest city while capital of its second wealthiest state. Ninety percent of the children served by the public schools of Hartford qualify for free or reduced lunch. Almost 20% have special needs and 17% are English language learners. With sixty-eight language groups, we are a city of immigrants and refugees, seeking the American Dream.

Results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) suggest that Connecticut has the widest achievement gap of any state in the U.S. Until recently, Hartford has been the poster child of Connecticut’s achievement gap.

Connecticut’s worst-in-the-nation achievement gap is defined by extreme income disparities among the state’s 167 school districts. According to the recent report on The State of Connecticut Education by the independent think-tank ConnCAN, low-income African American elementary students score 21.3 points lower than higher-income African American students on state assessments. Low-income Hispanic students score 28.2 points lower than higher-income Hispanic students. Low-income Caucasian students score 27.2 points lower than higher-income Caucasian students.

Connecticut’s achievement gap is a creation of state policy that segregates low-income, high-need students in a few urban school districts. Thus far, state policy leaders have been unable and/or unwilling to enact policy measures that would attenuate income segregation or effectively compensate for it. Obvious solutions include creating a county or regional school district, providing a level of state education funding commensurate to needs, and/or enabling socio-economic integration by creating availability of low-income housing in wealthy suburbs. While these are issues that the State cannot escape in the long-term, the only short-term prospect for narrowing the achievement gap lies in our ability to change and reinvent ourselves as a system of high-poverty, high-performing schools, very different from what we were or what we are today. Our ability to succeed at this redesign constitutes the last best hope of Hartford’s school children for a place in our global economy. It is the fundamental reason why we must change.

Change at this scale requires a reform strategy. Ours stands on two complementary pillars established by the Board of Education: A Managed Performance Empowerment (MPE) theory of action that defines our district’s relationship with each school on the basis of its performance, and development of an “all choice” system of schools which creates and sustains a larger number of high-performing schools.

The MPE Theory of Action assumes that schools must have both autonomy and accountability to promote higher performance. It rewards effective teaching and leadership by creating a direct relationship between a school’s academic performance and its operational autonomy. High-performing schools make all key staffing decisions and decide how the school’s resources should be allocated. They are entitled to this level of autonomy as long as they are achieving results in terms of student achievement. Schools whose students do not achieve at the proficient level are subject to increasing levels of intervention from the central

office. If no improvement occurs, the school is redesigned and replaced with a higher-performing school model. The exchange of autonomy for accountability is an essential idea in this theory of change. If school leaders are to be responsible for results, they must have a full opportunity to manage the inputs and processes that determine those results. The School Performance Matrix shows the autonomy status for existing district schools based on their relative performance and rates of improvement from 2007-2008. (See Appendix).

An All Choice System means that all families have a greater opportunity to decide where their children attend school. It rests, in part, on the recognition that the act of making an educational choice helps to inspire commitment among students and families. Choice also recognizes diversity in learning interests, needs and values. Encouraging students to pursue their interests is an important way to tap learning potential. Small schools specializing in subject matter like law and government, engineering, nursing, and global communication are an important component of new school development because the opportunity to choose and pursue a particular course of study often engages and motivates students in ways that more generalized programs do not.

The Strategic Operating Plan (the Plan) defines how Hartford's reform strategy will be carried out during the next three years and what we will give priority to accomplishing during the school years 2009-10 through 2011-12. The nine goal areas define the big things that will become the characteristics of the Hartford Public Schools as systemic change occurs. The objectives give clear definition and meaning to each goal. The strategies in the plan represent our current best thinking as to the greatest levers toward accomplishing the objectives subject to our experience. The measures enable us to assess the degree of our success in achieving the Plan's objectives.

To a significant extent, the Plan provides an initial roadmap for achieving our vision: "...a system of high-performing distinctive schools of choice. The attainment of Hartford students in reading, math, science and college readiness will be reflective of the high educational outcomes of the State of Connecticut."

Steven J. Adamowski, Ph.D
Superintendent
November 18, 2008

Purpose and Background of the Strategic Operating Plan

In December of 2007, the district received a Connecticut Department of Education-sponsored report from Cambridge Education that detailed many of the strengths of our fledging reform and opportunities for growth. This report highlighted the need for a multi-year strategic plan. This Plan is designed to operationalize much of the work that we had already begun and explicitly outline the major goals that need to be accomplished to move our reform forward.

The Plan must bring the foundations of our reform – the Managed Performance Empowerment (MPE) theory of action and an All Choice System of Schools – to life for all of our constituents. We believe that a culture where leaders are empowered with autonomy and parents with choice creates the ideal environment for student achievement. It is crucial that, through this Plan, our students, parents, staff, community partners, and financial supporters understand how the district is creating a culture that is ultimately defined by the achievement of students.

The overall structure of the Plan is simple and ensures the measurability of the efforts we will undertake. We begin with nine high-level goals selected by the Board of Education (BOE) as the district's priorities. Every goal has a set of measurable objectives and aligned strategies designed to accomplish our overarching aims. The district will - annually in the summer - report on the measures articulated in this Plan in order to track the progress of our reform.

We recognize that this is a living, breathing document and that many elements within these pages may and will ultimately change. We stand ready to meet the challenges that this change will bring and are excited at the growth opportunity each turn in the road provides us. Most importantly, we must never forget the singular purpose of this work; closing the achievement gap to enable our children to be future leaders and participants in the global economy.

Hartford Public Schools 2012 Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: High Academic Achievement

1. On the Grades 3-8 CMT in Reading, Mathematics, Writing and Science the average grade level gain in the percentage of students scoring at or above proficiency will be at least
 - a. 12 percentage points for all students
 - b. 21 percentage points for students identified as special education
 - c. 18 percentage points for students identified as English Language Learners
2. On the Grade 10 CAPT in Reading, Mathematics, Writing and Science, the gain in the percentage of students scoring at or above proficiency will be at least
 - a. 12 percentage points for all students
 - b. 21 percentage points for students identified as special education
 - c. 18 percentage points for students identified as English Language Learners
3. The percentage of students graduating within 4-5 years will increase by at least 12 percentage points.
4. The percentage of students attending two-and four-year institutions will increase by 5%.
5. On the Grades K-3 DRA2 in Reading, the average grade level gain in the percentage of students at or above proficiency, between September and May annually, will be at least
 - a. 4 percentage points for all students
 - b. 7 percentage points for students identified as special education
 - c. 6 percentage points for students identified as English Language Learners
6. On the District Benchmark Assessment in Reading, the average grade level gain in the percentage of students at or above proficiency, between September and May annually, will be at least
 - a. 4 percentage points for general education students
 - b. 7 percentage points for students identified as special education
 - c. 6 percentage points for students identified as English Language Learners
7. On the District Benchmark Assessment in Writing, the average grade level gain in the percentage of students at or above proficiency, between September and May annually, will be at least
 - a. 4 percentage points for general education students

- b. 7 percentage points for students identified as special education
 - c. 6 percentage points for students identified as English Language Learners
8. On the District Benchmark Assessment in Mathematics, the average grade level gain in the percentage of students at or above proficiency, between September and May annually, will be at least
 - a. 4 percentage points for general education students
 - b. 7 percentage points for students identified as special education
 - c. 6 percentage points for students identified as English Language Learners
 9. On the District Benchmark Assessment in Science, the average grade level gain in the percentage of students at or above proficiency, between September and May annually, will be at least
 - a. 4 percentage points for general education students
 - b. 7 percentage points for students identified as special education
 - c. 6 percentage points for students identified as English Language Learners
 10. On the Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL) for pre-Kindergarten students, the average gain in the percentage of students at or above proficiency will be at least 4 percentage points annually from September to May.
 11. Align community resources in the arts and sciences with curriculum and course development.
 12. At least 90% of all Individual Education Plans will be rated at or above the effective range on the IEP rubric.

Goal 2: School Accountability and Empowerment

1. All schools below an OSI of 70 will demonstrate an increase of 12 points over three years.
2. The percent of students meeting district performance targets will increase by 4% annually, in order to close the achievement gap.
3. Eighty percent of Hartford Public Schools will be in the autonomous range of the School Accountability Matrix by the end of 2012.

Goal 3: Effective School Leaders

1. All school leaders will attain an overall score at or above the effective range on the School Leader Rubric (SLR) by their 3rd year of employment as a principal.
2. The quality and effectiveness of professional development and support will result in the advancement of school leaders towards the effective range on the SLR.

3. The district will internally and externally recruit, develop, and retain effective school leaders that reflect the diversity of the community to a greater degree with a goal of having an effective principal in every school.

Goal 4: Effective Teachers

1. All teachers will attain an overall score at or above the effective range on the Effective Teacher Rubric (ETR) by their 3rd year of employment as a teacher.
2. The quality and effectiveness of professional development and support will result in the advancement of teachers towards the effective range on the ETR.
3. The district will internally and externally recruit, develop, and retain effective teachers that reflect the diversity of the community to a greater degree with a goal of having an effective teacher in every classroom.

Goal 5: Equitable Allocation of Resources

1. The district and schools shall operate in a fiscally responsible manner and align their resources to this Plan.
2. At least seventy percent of the general funds operating budget will be equitably distributed to schools pursuant to choice and respective student needs.
3. Close the equity gap at all schools through the SBB process.
4. Grant funds will be appropriately aligned to support the achievement of district performance targets and Plan goals.
5. In collaboration with the City of Hartford, a long-range Facilities Management Plan (FMP) will be developed that supports an All-Choice System of Schools.

Goal 6: Strong Parent / Community Communication and Collaboration

1. Increase the level of parental and community involvement in each child's education.
2. Improve the level of satisfaction of parents, families and students with their schools.
3. High performing community partnerships will exist at all schools.
4. All autonomous schools will establish School Governance Councils (SGCs).
5. Increase the level of parent satisfaction with the effectiveness of the district PPT process.

Goal 7: Positive School Climate

1. All schools will provide a positive climate and safe environment
2. All schools will implement programs to develop student character and life skills preparing our students to be competitive in the global economy
3. Increase instructional time by improving classroom management

Goal 8: All Choice System of Schools

1. The district will create an all-choice system of schools where families and students can engage in informed choice options for an inter-district or intra-district school.
2. The district will annually increase the percentage of students choosing an intra-district school in order to attain the demand principle of the 2008 *Sheff* stipulation.
3. The district will annually increase the percentage of students receiving one of their first three school choices at transitional entry grade levels in the inter or intra-district application process.
4. There will be a representative population of students receiving special education and English Language Learner services at all inter- and intra-district schools

Goal 9: District Reform Sustainability

1. Develop a succession plan for the Superintendent and key senior management positions.
2. Develop and adopt required Reform Governance in Action (RGA) reform policies.
3. Establish a Board of Education and senior cabinet induction and sustainability plan that enables HPS to continue reform governance work.
4. Develop a three-year financial plan aligned to the Plan and update annually.
5. Work in collaboration with the local education fund (Achieve Hartford) to sustain district reform.
6. Focus and align community partnerships and donor grants that support and enhance the greatest points of leverage for closing the achievement gap.
7. Achieve annual progress on the measures of the Plan.



Goal 1: High Academic Achievement

A. Overview

As stated in our district mission, our “system of schools exists to provide all students with access to participation in a global economy through attainment of Academic Standards of the State of Connecticut and readiness for post-secondary education.” Historically, Hartford students have achieved at levels well below the state average. In order to close the achievement gap within the next decade, our reform plan includes accelerating achievement at a rate that exceeds that of the state and rewarding gains with increased school autonomy.

Systemically, we focus on six achievement metrics that, when considered comprehensively, track the life cycle of a Hartford student through our schools:

- 3rd grade Reading as measured by the CMT
- 4th grade Math as measured by the CMT
- 5th grade Writing as measured by the CMT
- 7th grade Math as measured by the CMT
- 8th grade Science as measured by the CMT
- 10th grade CAPT (Reading and Writing)

In 2008, third grade students demonstrated a 3.2% increase in reading, while student mathematics performance improved 7.5% in grade 4 and 8.8% in grade 7. These new gains reveal that the early results of our reforms are encouraging and reinforce our core beliefs and strategies. In order to establish a pattern of consistent growth, it is imperative that we plan for, design and implement rigorous curriculum and academic supports that nurture each student’s innate capacity to achieve.

We further recognize that our special education and ELL students, when successfully targeted and served through the proactive use of intervention data, will accelerate the progress of HPS. Thus, these high-level metrics, coupled with our supplemental strategies, comprise the bulk of our objectives for High Academic Achievement.

B. Objectives

1. On the Grades 3-8 CMT in Reading, Mathematics, Writing and Science the average grade level gain in the percentage of students scoring at or above proficiency will be at least
 - a. 12 percentage points for all students
 - b. 21 percentage points for students identified as special education
 - c. 18 percentage points for students identified as English Language Learners

2. On the Grade 10 CAPT in Reading, Mathematics, Writing and Science, the gain in the percentage of students scoring at or above proficiency will be at least
 - a. 12 percentage points for all students
 - b. 21 percentage points for students identified as special education
 - c. 18 percentage points for students identified as English Language Learners
3. The percentage of students graduating within 4-5 years will increase by at least 12 percentage points.
4. The percentage of students attending two-and four-year institutions will increase by 5%.
5. On the Grades K-3 DRA2 in Reading, the average grade level gain in the percentage of students at or above proficiency, between September and May annually, will be at least
 - a. 4 percentage points for all students
 - b. 7 percentage points for students identified as special education
 - c. 6 percentage points for students identified as English Language Learners
6. On the District Benchmark Assessment in Reading, the average grade level gain in the percentage of students at or above proficiency, between September and May annually, will be at least
 - a. 4 percentage points for general education students
 - b. 7 percentage points for students identified as special education
 - c. 6 percentage points for students identified as English Language Learners
7. On the District Benchmark Assessment in Writing, the average grade level gain in the percentage of students at or above proficiency, between September and May annually, will be at least
 - a. 4 percentage points for general education students
 - b. 7 percentage points for students identified as special education
 - c. 6 percentage points for students identified as English Language Learners
8. On the District Benchmark Assessment in Mathematics, the average grade level gain in the percentage of students at or above proficiency, between September and May annually, will be at least
 - a. 4 percentage points for general education students
 - b. 7 percentage points for students identified as special education
 - c. 6 percentage points for students identified as English Language Learners

9. On the District Benchmark Assessment in Science, the average grade level gain in the percentage of students at or above proficiency, between September and May annually, will be at least
 - a. 4 percentage points for general education students
 - b. 7 percentage points for students identified as special education
 - c. 6 percentage points for students identified as English Language Learners
10. On the Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL) for pre-Kindergarten students, the average gain in the percentage of students at or above proficiency will be at least 4 percentage points annually from September to May.
11. Align community resources in the arts and sciences with curriculum and course development.
12. At least 90% of all Individual Education Plans will be rated at or above the effective range on the IEP rubric.

C. Strategies

1. Implement a comprehensive, research-based, prek-12 district curriculum (standards and/or Grade Level Expectations, instructional strategies, assessments) for reading, math, writing, and science that flows seamlessly from one grade level to the next.
Accountable: Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009
2. Implement a web-accessible curriculum.
Accountable: Deputy Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009
3. Include alternate forms of assessments and varied instructional strategies in the curriculum that meet a variety of student learning styles, and cultural and language origins.
Accountable: Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009
4. Implement curriculum that integrates priority standards for literacy, numeracy, science, and social studies for grades K-5.
Accountable: Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009
5. Implement comprehensive, research-based K-12 English as a Second Language (ESL) curriculum.
Accountable: Deputy Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009
6. Create incentives for schools to transition ELL students to mainstream classes after 30 months of services.
Accountable: Deputy Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009

7. Establish effective school-based data teams to improve student achievement as a result of analyzing state, district, and school data.

Accountable: Assistant Superintendents, Deputy Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009

8. Implement a comprehensive Professional Development plan that:

- a. Prepares the curriculum writing team (standards, instructional strategies, assessments)
- b. Prepares teachers to implement curriculum effectively including the use of embedded curricular assessments to inform differentiated instruction.
- c. Prepares teachers to understand the alignment of curriculum from grade level to grade level.
- d. Prepares administrators and teachers to implement effective school-based data teams.
- e. Prepares principals and instructional leaders to monitor curriculum implementation effectively.
- f. Uses the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) framework including Hartford's work on Powerful Practices

Accountable: Chief Academic Officer
Director of Professional Learning
Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Fall 2009

9. Provide school administrators and staff with mandatory Professional Development regarding:

- a. Federal and state laws in special education
- b. PPT process and district PPT rubric
- c. IEP design and district IEP rubric use
- d. Curriculum modifications and accommodations
- e. Transition planning
- f. Low incidence disabilities
- g. Prevention and intervention
- h. Effective instruction
- i. Behavior management

Accountable: Assistant Superintendent of Learning Support Services
Director of Special Education
Director of Professional Learning **Start Date:** Fall 2009

10. Implement Professional Development sessions to train paraprofessional in best practices for supporting student learning.

Accountable: Assistant Superintendent of Learning Support Services
Director of Special Education
Director of Professional Learning **Start Date:** Fall 2009

11. Adopt guidelines for paraprofessional/adult support to comply with state and federal laws and best professional practices for supporting student learning.

Accountable: Assistant Superintendent of Learning Support Services
Director of Special Education
Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Fall 2009

12. Effectively meet the learning needs of children age three and older who require special education and related services.

Accountable: Assistant Superintendent of Learning Support Services
Director of Special Education
Assistant Superintendent of Elementary **Start Date:** Fall 2009

13. Develop and implement a rubric to assess student's Individual Education Plans and provide feedback to Planning and Placement Teams regarding the quality of the IEP.

Accountable: Assistant Superintendent of Learning Support Services
Director of Special Education
Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Fall 2009

14. Develop and implement a plan to meet the needs of students who require transition services beyond the typical age of graduation.

Accountable: Assistant Superintendent of Learning Support Services
Director of Special Education
Assistant Superintendent of Secondary **Start Date:** Fall 2009

15. Audit quarterly reviews of IEP goals and objectives will be done to ensure mastery of targeted skills for students receiving special education services.

Accountable: Assistant Superintendent of Learning Support Services
Director of Special Education
Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Fall 2009

16. Decrease the over-identification of male students for special education services

Accountable: Assistant Superintendents
Deputy Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2010

17. Implement a curriculum review process for improving curriculum based on student achievement data and teacher input.

Accountable: Chief Academic Officer
Deputy Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009

18. Implement a system of intensive early intervention for students for whom quality core instruction is insufficient to meet their learning needs. These interventions will use scientifically validated instruction that is continuously and effectively monitored and modified based on student response.

Accountable: Chief Academic Officer
Deputy Chief Academic Officer

Director of Special Education **Start Date:** Fall 2009

19. Monitor and support all schools in the creation and implementation of effective programming for students who are English Language Learners.
Accountable: Deputy Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009
20. Design, implement, monitor and adjust curriculum modifications and accommodations in individual education plans including the goals and objectives to assure mastery of targeted skills for students receiving special education.
Accountable: Director of Special Education **Start Date:** Fall 2009
21. Develop and implement a college counseling program grades 6-12 to prepare all students for post-secondary enrollment.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Fall 2009
22. Develop parent brochures that inform parents of what students need to know and be able to do at each grade level for all core content areas.
Accountable: Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009
23. Create an Arts Task Force to make recommendations for the utilization of community arts resources as a vehicle to raise student achievement.
Accountable: Chief Academic Officer, **Start Date:** Fall 2009
Director of Strategic Partnerships
24. Create and implement a plan for building academic partnerships with external organizations (e.g., *The Connecticut Science Center*) in support of district educational goals.
Accountable: Chief Academic Officer, **Start Date:** Spring 2008
Director of Strategic Partnerships
Assistant Superintendent of School Design
25. Expand and align secondary World Language course offerings with graduation requirements.
Accountable: Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Spring 2009
26. A research-based homework policy will be developed and implemented.
Accountable: Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009
27. All schools will increase instructional time to meet the needs of all students.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendents, **Start Date:** Fall 2009
Chief Financial Officer
28. Develop and implement a plan for improving visual and performing arts instruction that contributes to raising the level of academic achievement of our students.
Accountable: Chief Academic Officer

Director of Strategic Partnerships **Start Date:** Fall 2009

29. Develop an early kindergarten program to increase our student's readiness level for a K-12 education.

Accountable: Chief Academic Officer
Assistant Superintendents

Start Date: Fall 2009

D. Measures

1. Student achievement in Reading, Writing, Mathematics and Science for grades 3-8 will be measured by proficiency on the CMT.
(3-year measure, tracked annually)
2. Student achievement in Reading, Writing, Mathematics and Science for grade 10 will be measured by proficiency on the CAPT.
(3-year measure, tracked annually)
3. The percentage of students graduating within 4-5 years will be measured by applying the National Governors Association methodology.
(Annual Measure)
4. We will measure the percentage of students attending two-year and four-year institutions using the National Clearinghouse Database.
(Annual Measure)
5. Student achievement in reading for grades K-3 will be measured by proficiency on the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA 2).
(Annual Measure)
6. Student achievement in Reading for grades 3-8 will be measured by proficiency on the District Benchmark Assessment.
(Annual Measure)
7. Student achievement in Writing for grades K-8 will be measured by proficiency on the District Benchmark Assessment.
(Annual Measure)
8. Student achievement in Mathematics for grades K-8 will be measured by proficiency on the District Benchmark Assessment.
(Annual Measure)
9. Student achievement in Science for grades 5-8 will be measured by proficiency on the District Benchmark Assessment.
(Annual Measure)

10. Kindergarten readiness for pre-K students will be measured by proficiency on the Developmental Indicators of the Assessment of Learning (DIAL).
(Annual Measure)

11. Two part measure:

- a. The number of high school students utilizing community arts resources to complete the required 2 credits in Fine Arts for graduation
- b. The number of middle grade curriculum units which include connections with science-related organizations

(Annual Measures)

12. 90% of student Individual Education Plans will be effective as measured by the district IEP rubric.

(Annual Measure)



Goal 2: School Accountability and Empowerment

A. Overview

The Board of Education has adopted a Managed/Performance Empowerment theory of action based on beliefs about the conditions that best promote learning. Under this theory of action, high performing schools have the autonomy to make curricular, budget and other operational decisions while lower performing schools are under the direction of a central office based intervention team. Schools that consistently perform at very low levels are redesigned.

School performance is determined using a measure called the Overall School Index (OSI). This metric includes all grades and content areas measured by our state assessments. A school's OSI is calculated annually and used to place the school on the district performance matrix (see appendix).

- OSI of 70 or above = Goal
- OSI 60-69 = High Proficient
- OSI 50-59 = Proficient
- OSI 40-49 = Below Proficient
- OSI below 40 = Substantially below proficient

In order to determine a school's level of autonomy the current year OSI and the change in OSI from the previous year is used (see appendix).

In addition to the OSI the district annually sets nine targets in key performance areas (see below) focused on closing the achievement gap between Hartford and the State of Connecticut. These targets are set annually and designed to demonstrate how Hartford Public Schools will close the achievement gap with the State of Connecticut by making incremental gains over the span of a child's school experience.

- Grade 3 Reading
- Grade 4 Mathematics
- Grade 5 Writing
- Grade 7 Math
- Grade 8 Science
- Grade 10 Reading & Writing
- Graduation rate (using National Governors Association method)
- Post-Secondary enrollment: (at 2 & 4 year institutions)
- Improvement of School Performance (OSI)

Both the OSI and performance targets are used by the district data team (cabinet) and Board of Education to measure our progress toward improving schools and closing the achievement gap.

B. Objectives

1. All schools below an OSI of 70 will demonstrate an increase of 12 points over three years.
2. The percent of students meeting district performance targets will increase by 4% annually, in order to close the achievement gap.
3. Eighty percent of Hartford Public Schools will be in the autonomous range of the School Accountability Matrix by the end of 2012.

C. Strategies

1. Develop and refine the supervision/empowerment plan for the supervision of principals in alignment with the M/PE theory of action.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Spring 2009
2. Principals of schools with an OSI below 70 will develop an annual strategic plan for a 4 point increase in their OSI and a 4 % increase in the district performance targets appropriate to the grade levels in their school.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Fall 2009
3. Principals will be provided opportunities to share effective strategies to increase OSI and meet district performance targets.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Fall 2009
4. The district will align compensation incentives with school growth on OSI and district performance targets.
Accountable: Chief Human Resources Officer
Chief Financial Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009
5. Schools with an OSI of 40 or less for two consecutive years will be redesigned.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendent of School Design
Start Date: Fall 2009
6. Schools with an OSI of 49 or less will be provided with significant district level support and oversight, including a research-based curriculum and leadership coaching to improve student achievement.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Fall 2009

D. Measures

1. Annual school performance on the School Accountability Matrix
(Annual Measure)
2. Annual school performance on the District Performance Targets

(Annual Measure)

3. The percent of schools in the autonomous range of the School Accountability Matrix
(3-year measure, tracked annually)



Goal 3: Effective School Leaders

A. Overview

Research reveals that effective principal leadership is one of the most significant factors that promote student achievement. The inverse is also true: poor leadership can actually impede student growth (Waters, Marzano, McNulty). In order to close the achievement gap, it is critical that principals focus on key levers to lead the reform efforts in our schools and advance student achievement.

The expectations we hold for our principals has to be matched by equal expectations from the district to provide resources to these leaders. This begins with a clear articulation of performance indicators supplemented by focused and relevant professional learning opportunities.

Our reform efforts call for new models of instruction and school design. We will continue to support current leaders and attract and develop new leaders with diverse experiences in order to significantly raise student achievement and close the achievement gap.

B. Objectives

1. All school leaders will attain an overall score at or above the effective range on the School Leader Rubric (SLR) by their 3rd year of employment as a principal.
2. The quality and effectiveness of professional development and support will result in the advancement of school leaders towards the effective range on the SLR.
3. The district will internally and externally recruit, develop, and retain effective school leaders that reflect the diversity of the community to a greater degree with a goal of having an effective principal in every school.

C. Strategies

1. Convene a Leadership Development Team to:
 - a. Develop and implement the SLR aligned with Connecticut's Common Core of Leading and the district Mission, Vision, Theory of Action, and Core Beliefs and Commitments.
 - b. Use the SLR to review and revise the district school leader evaluation process.
 - c. Revise the evaluation process to include the SLR in placing administrators who score below the effective range into the intervention phase.
 - d. Pilot a research-based 360 degree evaluation instrument for principals

Accountable: Chief Academic Officer
Assistant Superintendents

Start Date: Spring 2009

2. Create a system for collecting, tracking and analyzing SLR data at the district level.
Accountable: Deputy Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Spring 2009
3. Design Professional Development based on student performance and SLR data.
Accountable: Director of Professional Learning
Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Spring 2009
4. Provide supports to new school leaders in the form of:
 - a. Training effective school leaders to become mentors
 - b. Providing each new leader with a mentor
 - c. Implementing an induction program based on the SLR indicators**Accountable:** Chief Academic Officer
Director of Professional Learning **Start Date:** Spring 2009
5. Develop and implement a comprehensive plan, with supports and incentives, to recruit and retain internal and external effective leaders.
Accountable: Chief Human Resources Officer **Start Date:** Spring 2009
6. Identify and develop a cadre of aspiring school leaders.
Accountable: Chief Academic Officer
Director of Professional Learning
Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Spring 2009
7. Align climate survey to the SLR
Accountable: Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Fall 2009
8. Principals of schools in the goal range will have the option of using the 360-degree feedback evaluation format.
Accountable: Chief Human Resources Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009

D. Measures

1. Objectives 1, 2: The percent of school leaders in their third year of employment as a principal, who have scored at or above the effective range on the SLR.
(3-year measure, tracked annually)
2. Objective 3: The number of school leaders recruited internally & externally by the district.
(3-year measure, tracked annually)
3. Objective 3: The number of potential school leaders enrolled in the Leadership Academy.
(3-year measure, tracked annually)



Goal 4: Effective Teachers

A. Overview

Research validates what most educators intuitively believe: quality teaching is the most important factor affecting student learning. Studies have shown that the most effective teachers produce gains of about 53 percentage points in student achievement over one year, while ineffective teachers show an average gain of 14 percentage points. Both of these figures are in stark contrast to the average gain of 34 points for most students in a single year (Marzano, Haycock, Sanders, Wright). If our goal is to close the achievement gap then we must do everything in our power to have an effective or highly effective teacher in every classroom.

The expectations we hold for our teachers has to be matched by equal expectations from the district to provide resources to these teachers. This begins with a clear articulation of performance indicators supplemented by focused and relevant professional learning opportunities.

Our reform efforts call for new models of instruction and school design. We will continue to support current teachers and attract and develop new teachers with diverse experiences in order to significantly raise student achievement and close the achievement gap.

B. Objectives

1. All teachers will attain an overall score at or above the effective range on the Effective Teacher Rubric (ETR) by their 3rd year of employment as a teacher.
2. The quality and effectiveness of professional development and support will result in the advancement of teachers towards the effective range on the ETR.
3. The district will internally and externally recruit, develop, and retain effective teachers that reflect the diversity of the community to a greater degree with a goal of having an effective teacher in every classroom.

C. Strategies

1. Convene a Teacher Evaluation Development Team to:
 - a. Develop and implement an ETR that is aligned with the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching and the district Mission, Vision, Theory of Action, Core Beliefs, and Commitments.
 - b. Use the ETR to review and revise the district teacher evaluation process.
 - c. Revise the evaluation process to include the ETR in placing teachers who score below the effective range into the intervention phase.

Accountable: Chief Academic Officer
Director of Professional Learning
Assistant Superintendents

Start Date: Spring 2009

2. Create a system for collecting and tracking the ETR data at the school and district levels.
Accountable: Deputy Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Spring 2009
3. Develop and implement school and district Professional Development Plans based on the ETR.
Accountable: Director of Professional Learning **Start Date:** Fall 2009
4. Provide supports to new teachers in the form of:
 - a. A two-year teacher induction program aligned with the ETR
 - b. An effective building-based mentor**Accountable:** Chief Academic Officer
Director of Professional Learning **Start Date:** Spring 2009
5. Move the hiring timelines forward in the district calendar to assure that recruitment is coordinated with the school resource allocation process in order to maximize the applicant pool.
Accountable: Chief Human Resources Officer **Start Date:** Spring 2009
6. Develop and implement a recruiting plan for new teachers which would include:
 - a. Establishing and maintaining a total of 100 Teach for America (TFA) corps members annually
 - b. Creating out-of-state college recruiting program targeting diverse candidates and candidates for hard-to-fill areas
 - c. Creating a recruitment incentive program for current Hartford teachers to attract experienced teachers (minimum of 5 years experience) from other CT school districts
 - e. Targeting and providing a signing bonus for Hartford alumni students returning to teach for HPS**Accountable:** Chief Human Resources Officer
Director of Strategic Partnerships **Start Date:** Fall 2009
7. Recognize elementary teachers whose students meet proficient levels in Reading and Math on the CMT
Accountable: Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Fall 2009
8. Recognize secondary teachers whose students meet proficient levels on the end of course assessments in the core content areas.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Fall 2009
9. Hire all staff, with the exception of unanticipated vacancies, prior to June 1st of the coming school year.
Accountable: Chief Human Resources Officer **Start Date:** Spring 2009

10. Conduct exit interviews and use results to revise practices around the retention of effective teachers.
Accountable: Chief Human Resources Officer **Start Date:** Spring 2009
11. Survey new teachers annually to determine their reasons for joining the district, the quality of their teaching experience, and supports needed to enhance retention.
Accountable: Chief Human Resources Officer **Start Date:** Spring 2009
12. Provide career-enhancing and leadership opportunities for experienced teachers (3+ years of experience)
Accountable: Chief Human Resources Officer, **Start Date:** Spring 2009
Director of Professional Learning
13. Create position of Associate Teacher
Accountable: Chief Human Resources Officer **Start Date:** Spring 2009
14. Teachers of schools in the goal range will have the option of using the 360-degree feedback evaluation format.
Accountable: Chief Human Resources Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009

D. Measures

1. Objectives 1 and 2 will be measured by the number of teachers who have scored at or above the effective range on the ETR
(3-year measure, tracked annually)
2. Objective 3 will be measured by the percentage of teachers with 5-15 years of experience
(3-year measure, tracked annually)



Goal 5: Equitable Allocation of Resources

A. Overview

Giving families choices over which school they would like their child to attend presents financial challenges to a district. Thus, given the centrality of Choice in our reform strategy, changing the way we fund our schools became necessary. We undertook the work to transition the district into a Student Based Budgeting (SBB) model in 2007. Not coincidentally, this method also goes a long way to close the equity gap in our school system. We embark upon phase 2 of Student Based budgeting in 2008 emboldened by our first-year achievements:

- Reached the 66% school-funding target (34% central office)
- Decentralized the school budget development process
- Closed 33% of the equity gap through the implementation of SBB

While we are proud of narrowing the equity gap by such a significant margin, we know that much work remains. SBB has only been applied to a portion of our General Funds budget. Part of the remaining work has to do with the funding that we term *Special Funds*; that is, Federal and State grant dollars such as *Title I* and *Priority Schools District*. We strive to take our administration of these monies beyond simple compliance and ensure that we are maximizing their alignment and impact with our reform strategy.

Finally, we have set forth objectives in this plan that will allow us to collaborate more effectively with the City of Hartford around facilities management and maintenance. A Facilities Management Plan informed by both the city and the school system will help to alleviate much of the property management challenges our principals face today.

B. Objectives

1. The district and schools shall operate in a fiscally responsible manner and align their resources to this Plan.
2. At least seventy percent of the general funds operating budget will be equitably distributed to schools pursuant to choice and respective student needs.
3. Close the equity gap at all schools through the SBB process.
4. At least 90% of grant funds will be appropriately aligned to support the achievement of district performance targets and Plan goals.
5. In collaboration with the City of Hartford, a long-range Facilities Management Plan (FMP) will be developed that supports an All-Choice System of Schools.

C. Strategies

1. The district will implement a multi-phase student-based budgeting methodology that provides equity in funding across all schools.
Accountable: Chief Financial Officer **Start Date:** Ongoing
2. The district will employ “best practices” in its financial management.
Accountable: Chief Financial Officer **Start Date:** Ongoing
3. Grant funding will be aligned to support the achievement of district performance targets and Plan objectives and strategies.
Accountable: Chief Financial Officer **Start Date:** Ongoing
4. In autonomous schools, the School Governance Councils will annually approve a school budget aligned to the School’s Accountability Plan.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Fall 2009
5. Facilities will be constructed or renovated to support school design specifications and community needs and will be consistent with the FMP for all schools.
Accountable: Chief Financial Officer **Start Date:** Ongoing
Assistant Superintendent School Design
6. Adopt criteria for the provision of special education transportation.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendent of Learning Support Services
Director of Special Education
Chief Operating Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009

D. Measures

1. Budgets aligned to the Plan and balanced annually
(Annual Measure)
2. The percent of general budget funding distributed to schools
(Annual Measure)
3. The equity gap is eliminated
(Annual Measure)
4. The percent of grant funds aligned to the achievement of district performance targets and the objectives in the Plan
(Annual Measure)
5. A Facilities Management Plan that supports the district’s evolution to an All Choice System of Schools
(Annual Measure)



Goal 6: Strong Parent / Community Communication and Collaboration

A. Overview

Implicit in our Theory of Action is the idea that change is urgent for our system of schools. This necessary pace makes it vital that our key stakeholders understand our reform and we have the support of parents and community members of the city of Hartford. This support hinges largely on our ability to clearly communicate the scope and focus of our reform efforts.

A formal communication plan is now in place, with constant communication to staff and parents. Now is the time to build on the plan, strengthen collaboration with our families and continue to weave our reform into the fabric of our community.

As school-level empowerment is a cornerstone of our reform, the establishment of School Governance Councils at all autonomous schools will be a significant step for our system. These decision-making bodies made up of parents, school staff, and community members will serve as thought partners to our schools. Schools that have not yet earned autonomy will continue to use their current vehicles for community and parental engagement (e.g. PTOs and School Improvement Teams).

In the spring of the 2007-2008 school year we piloted a parent satisfaction survey in nine of our schools. Although limited in coverage and scope, this survey offered key learnings that we will use in our district-wide roll out and provide a way to measure parent perceptions and satisfaction. In addition, we will gauge the impact of our communication and reform efforts on our families.

B. Objectives

1. Increase the level of parental and community involvement in each child's education.
2. Improve the level of satisfaction of parents, families and students with their schools.
3. High performing community partnerships will exist at all schools.
4. All autonomous schools will establish School Governance Councils (SGCs).
5. Increase the level of parent satisfaction with the effectiveness of the district PPT process.

C. Strategies

1. As part of its School Accountability Plan, every school will create a School/Family/Community Partnership Plan in alignment with the National PTO Standards and in compliance with Title I guidelines where applicable

- Accountable:** Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Summer 2009
2. Training for parents, students, and school leadership at autonomous schools will be provided to ensure the understanding of the role of SGCs.
Accountable: Director of Professional Learning
Special Assistant to the Superintendent
Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Spring 2009
3. Parents will be informed annually about the academic performance of their child's school (State Assessments and District Performance Targets).
Accountable: Deputy Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Spring 2009
Communications
4. Parents will be informed about their child's progress on State Assessments and District Benchmarks Assessments.
Accountable: Chief Academic Officer, **Start Date:** Fall 2009
Deputy Chief Academic Officer
5. Parent brochures will clearly outline what children will need to know and be able to do at each grade level in the core content areas.
Accountable: Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009
6. A climate and satisfaction survey will be designed and results will be improved by 4% annually in the areas of:
1. Awareness of child's level of achievement
 2. Awareness of child's school's level of achievement
 3. Satisfaction with leadership and direction provided by administrators at their child's school
 4. Satisfaction with the quality of each child's education
 5. Satisfaction that each child is being challenged to his/her highest potential
 6. Satisfaction with responsiveness to requests and keeping parents informed
 7. Satisfaction with being provided with the information needed to make an informed school choice
- Accountable:** Deputy Chief Academic Officer
Communications
Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Spring 2009
7. A School Governance Council Policy that describes the roles and responsibilities of its members will be developed and implemented.
Accountable: Superintendent **Start Date:** Spring 2009
8. A School Partnership Policy will be developed and implemented
Accountable: Director of Strategic Partnerships **Start Date:** Fall 2008

9. All parents will be provided with the opportunity for training to understand the processes, rights and responsibilities regarding their special needs children.
Accountable: Parent Ombudsman
Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Fall 2009

10. All parents will have appropriate information and documentation prior to making decisions about or attending a PPT regarding their child so that they can make informed decisions regarding their child's educational plan.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendent of Learning Support Services
Parent Ombudsman
Director of Special Education **Start Date:** Fall 2009

11. Develop and implement a rubric to assess the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) process and provide feedback to Planning and Placement Teams regarding the quality of their process.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendent of Learning Support Services
Director of Special Education
Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Fall 2009

12. A Community Schools Policy will be developed and implemented
Accountable: Director of Strategic Partnerships **Start Date:** Fall 2008

D. Measures

1. Tracking of the following data points:
 1. Student Attendance
 2. Accurate Contact Info
 3. Attendance at Parent Teacher Conferences
 4. On-time participation in the school Choice process**(Annual Measures)**

2. Results of the district-wide Climate and Satisfaction survey
(Annual Measure)

3. The percentage of schools with School/Family/Community Partnership plans that have measurable goals aligned to the school accountability plan
(3-year measure, tracked annually)

4. The percentage of autonomous schools with School Governance Councils
(3-year measure, tracked annually)

5. 90% of Planning and Placement Team meetings will be effective as measured by the district PPT rubric
(Annual Measure)



Goal 7: Positive School Climate

A. Overview

The district will create a system-wide culture that welcomes, understands and embraces its legal and moral responsibility to educate all children. It is imperative that we create a school climate that provides the opportunity for all students to reach their full potential. One of our highest priorities is to support students and parents by providing school staff with the tools and resources that will enable them to deliver quality, rigorous, and relevant instruction in a safe and nurturing environment. Implicit in realizing this goal is the understanding that positive student and staff relationships and an orderly school environment must be in place in order to achieve academic success.

In order to provide a safe and healthy learning environment, there must be written emergency operations plans that comply with city, state and federal regulations. These plans must be clearly communicated to all stakeholders.

B. Objectives

1. All schools will provide a positive climate and safe environment
2. All schools will implement programs to develop student character and life skills preparing our students to be competitive in the global economy
3. Increase instructional time by improving classroom management

C. Strategies

1. Each K-8 school will identify and implement a character education program
Accountable: Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Spring 2009
2. Each High School will implement a program to develop student-staff relationships and student life skills
Accountable: Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Spring 2009
3. Administer the Climate and Satisfaction Survey annually for parents, guardians, staff, and students.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Spring 2009
4. Every school will develop a Compact allowing parents and students to clearly understand the expectations of being part of their school's community
Accountable: Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Fall 2009
5. Review, update, and submit for approval the HPS Emergency Operations Plan to ensure compliance with city, state, and federal regulations beginning Fall 2009.
Accountable: Chief Operating Officer **Start Date:** Ongoing

6. Align the School Safety Plans to the HPS Emergency Operation Plan.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendents
Chief Operating Officer **Start Date:** Spring 2009
7. Transition the current reactive Security Officers role to a proactive role of Safety Officer.
Accountable: Chief Operating Officer **Start Date:** Spring 2009
8. Provide professional development annually for administrators to review updated policies and procedures on school safety
Accountable: Chief Operating Officer
Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Spring 2009
9. Review attendance, office referrals and suspension data monthly to adjust the Comprehensive School Climate Plan
Accountable: Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Ongoing
10. Provide professional development for administrators and teachers focused on classroom management, effective discipline interventions and the development of a continuum of services that meet the needs of disruptive students
Accountable: Assistant Superintendent of Learning Support Services
Assistant Superintendents
Director of Professional Learning **Start Date:** Fall 2009
11. Review current policies and procedures for in-school suspension programs and develop and modify the programs as needed.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendents **Start Date:** Spring 2009

D. Measures

1. Two part measure:
 - a) Annual Climate and Satisfaction survey results
 - b) Average annual attendance increase**(3-year measure, tracked annually)**
2. Percent of classroom-initiated suspensions
(3-year measure, tracked annually)



Goal 8: All Choice System of Schools

A. Overview

The Hartford Public Schools (HPS) believes that families make decisions about which school to attend primarily based on the following five criteria:

1. A school's track record of high academic achievement
2. Proximity to home
3. School design (school theme, course offerings)
4. Historical and traditional ties to the school, principal, and teachers
5. Other personal family reasons

While families and students make school choices based on what is personally most important to them, it is understood that all families want high quality, high achieving schools that will prepare their children for future success.

Therefore, the district's directive is clear. The HPS must create new high-performing schools with a focus on state standards and college readiness. Using a diverse provider strategy, HPS will evolve over time to an all-choice system of schools. Two choice models will be employed:

- Inter-district choice schools will provide regional opportunities for the integration of city and suburban students.
- Intra-district choice schools will provide preference to students of their neighborhood with remaining seats available to other Hartford students. Parents will have the choice of a greater number of schools within transportation zones.

Failure to create such a system with high-quality options within the city's boundaries would render HPS incapable of meeting the 2008 Sheff stipulation's demand model. This stipulation calls for at least 80% of Hartford minority students who desire a "reduced isolation setting" to receive a satisfactory school choice by 2013. Alternatively, the demand would be satisfied if 41% of Hartford's minority students are enrolled in Open Choice or magnet schools instead of neighborhood choice schools.

B. Objectives

1. The district will create an all-choice system of schools where families and students can engage in informed choice options for an inter-district or intra-district school.
2. The district will annually increase the percentage of students choosing an intra-district school in order to attain the demand principle of the 2008 *Sheff* stipulation.

3. The district will annually increase the percentage of students receiving one of their first three school choices at transitional entry grade levels in the inter or intra-district application process.
4. There will be a representative population of students receiving special education and English Language Learner services at all inter- and intra-district schools

C. Strategies

1. The district will implement the Board-adopted, 5-year framework for an all-choice system of schools.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendent of School Design
Start Date: Ongoing
2. The district will design an informational campaign that promotes Hartford families' choice of an intra-district school
Accountable: Communications
Hartford Director of Regional School Choice Office
Start Date: Fall 2009
3. The district will inform families of the expected placement probabilities of each school choice available
Accountable: Assistant Superintendent of School Design
Hartford Director of Regional School Choice Office
Start Date: Fall 2009
4. The district will design procedures and protocols that clarify "all-choice" and assure a fair and informed choice process for students and families.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendent of School Design
Start Date: Fall 2009
5. Inter-and intra-district choice schools will implement sufficient interventions to support students and families who choose to attend each school.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendent for Learning Support Services
Assistant Superintendents
Deputy Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009
6. In the spring of 2009, the district will establish baseline data for students receiving one of their first three school choices into transitional entry grade levels.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendent of School Design
Deputy Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Spring 2009
7. The district will annually review student enrollment data by zone to ensure adequate capacity.
Accountable: Assistant Superintendent of School Design
Deputy Chief Academic Officer **Start Date:** Fall 2009

8. The district will develop a zone-based transportation plan in alignment with the all-choice process.

Accountable: Chief Operating Officer

Start Date: Ongoing

9. Collect data on students exiting magnet schools to determine percentage of English Language Learner or special education

Accountable: Deputy Chief Academic Officer

Hartford Director of Regional School Choice Office

Assistant Superintendent for Learning Support Services

Start Date: Spring 2009

D. Measures

1. The percent of families and students that engage in the choice process
(Annual Measure)
2. The percent of families choosing an intra-district education
(3-year measure, tracked annually)
3. The percent of families and students receiving one of their first three school choices at transitional grade level in the inter or intra-district application process
(Annual Measure)
4. The percent of special education and English Language Learners in inter and intra-district schools
(3-year measure, tracked annually)



Goal 9: District Reform Sustainability

A. Overview

“Every community embarking on a serious reform strategy needs a long-lasting civic reform oversight group. Without such a group [...] reforms are inevitably short-lived and poorly executed. Members of a civic oversight group should include community institutions committed to the city’s future, not to the interest groups that normally dominate education policy.”

It Takes A City: Getting Serious About Urban School Reform, Paul Hill, Brookings Institution Press, 2000

Across the country, school systems that have embarked on significant reform efforts have found themselves in dire straits when appropriate steps are not taken to ensure the long-term sustainability of the work beyond the tenure of a single Superintendent, Mayor and Boards of Education. The City of Hartford is no different from any city that has taken on a major reform. As such, at the same time that we are engaged in this work, we have taken the necessary steps to ensure that this reform will transcend the leadership of any single person.

For a long time Hartford Public Schools saw incredible unrest and instability at the leadership level. Critical observers of the school system typically note that the school system has seen ten superintendents since 1990, a failed attempt to hire a private company to manage the district, a State takeover and return to local control. The people of the City of Hartford cannot afford the school system to once again fail.

Paul Hill, a leading scholar in school reform, shows that a reform can be started from within a system but it must be sustained externally. He says, “Every reform effort has something to offer, but not all components needed are there to sustain comprehensive education reform.” He suggests that powerful reform efforts must include: 1) incentives for school performance, 2) investments in school capacity, and 3) arrangements for school freedom of choice. As such, any successful reform plan that will be sustained over time must include the following:

- Strong Leadership
- A Diverse Provider Strategy
- A Community-Partnership Strategy

The long-term success of this work must ultimately be owned by the community we seek to serve. This section outlines what measures we are taking to make sure that this work will be sustained over time.

B. Objectives

1. Develop a succession plan for the Superintendent and key senior management positions.
2. Develop and adopt required Reform Governance in Action (RGA) reform policies.

3. Establish a Board of Education and senior cabinet induction and sustainability plan that enables HPS to continue reform governance work.
4. Develop a three-year financial plan aligned to the Plan and update annually.
5. Work in collaboration with the local education fund (Achieve Hartford) to sustain district reform.
6. Focus and align community partnerships and donor grants that support and enhance the greatest points of leverage for closing the achievement gap.
7. Achieve annual progress on the measures of the Plan.

C. Strategies

1. Create a written process and timeline for the succession of the Superintendent.
Accountable: Superintendent
 Board of Education **Start Date:** Spring 2010
2. Create a succession plan for key senior management positions
Accountable: Superintendent **Start Date:** Fall 2009
3. Insulate the new school development process from the operating budget through the establishment of the Ingenuity Fund.
Accountable: Director of Strategic Partnerships
 Assistant Superintendent of School Design **Start Date:** Ongoing
4. Provide an induction training program for new BOE and senior cabinet members
Accountable: Superintendent **Start Date:** Fall 2009
5. Provide a sustainability training program for existing BOE and senior cabinet members
Accountable: Superintendent **Start Date:** Fall 2009
6. Establish a clear collaboration process with the Local Education Fund.
Accountable: Superintendent
 Director of Strategic Partnerships **Start Date:** Fall 2009
7. Align community partnerships and donor grants in five key strategic areas:
 1. Teacher Quality
 2. Principal Quality
 3. New School Development
 4. Extended Instructional Day/Year
 5. Literacy**Accountable:** Director of Strategic Partnerships **Start Date:** Ongoing

8. Quarterly cabinet review of the strategies in the Plan as a reporting mechanism to the Superintendent.
Accountable: Chief Academic Officer
Special Assistant to the Superintendent
Start Date: Summer 2009
9. An Annual Progress Report based on the measures in the Plan will be provided to the BOE
Accountable: Superintendent
Start Date: Fall 2009
10. BOE goals for years 2010-2012 will be derived from the objectives of this Plan
Accountable: Chief Academic Officer
Special Assistant to the Superintendent
Start Date: Summer 2009

D. Measures

1. A succession plan for the Superintendent will be adopted by the BOE
(Annual Measure)
2. Completion of required Board RGA reform policies
(Annual Measure)
3. Two part measure:
 - a. Completion of the induction program by all new BOE and senior cabinet members during the course of their first 18 months of service
 - b. Completion of the sustainability training by all existing BOE and senior cabinet members**(Annual Measure)**
4. A three year financial plan and annual updates will be approved by the BOE
(Annual Measure)
5. An active and fully developed LEF functioning as an external reform partner
(Annual Measure)
6. Percentage of community Partnerships and donor grants aligned to one of the five strategic areas intended to close the achievement gap
(Annual Measure)
7. Progress on the measures of the Plan will be presented to the BOE at the annual Board Retreat
(Annual Measure)

APPENDIX

A1. HPS Vision and Mission

VISION

From a bureaucratic, dysfunctional, low performing school system to...

...a system of high performing, distinctive schools of choice. The attainment of Hartford students in reading, math, science and college readiness will be reflective of the high educational outcomes of the State of Connecticut.

MISSION

Hartford's system of schools exists to provide all students with access to participation in a global economy through attainment of Academic Standards of the State of Connecticut and readiness for post-secondary education.

A2. HPS Board of Education Purpose, Core Beliefs and Commitments

Purpose: To significantly improve the performance of Hartford students, we the members of the Hartford Public Schools Board of Education commit ourselves to fundamental restructuring and reform of the Hartford school district, guided by the following Core Beliefs and Commitments. Our core business is teaching and learning; therefore, we exist to support the relationship between the teacher and the student.

1. We believe all students can learn at or above grade level.

The capacity to learn is not determined or limited by race, family income, native language, gender, sexual orientation, or area of residence.

- The district will provide rigorous instruction in a safe environment that allows every child to learn at or above grade level.
- All of our schools will provide an educationally supportive and appropriate environment to ensure learning.
- All children will graduate high school having successfully completed a career and college-ready curriculum.

2. We believe that the achievement gap must and can be eliminated, by each student reaching their learning potential.

Our district exists in the state with the largest achievement gap in the nation; therefore, we must provide equal access to rigorous instruction, regardless of race, family income, native language, gender, sexual orientation, or area of residence. Providing equal access to rigorous instruction for every child may require the investment of unequal resources to ensure an equitable outcome – readiness for post-secondary education and participation in a global economy.

- We will provide equal access to rigorous instruction to all children in order to eliminate the achievement gap.
- We will increase the financial resources directed to the classroom.
- We commit to continue to work towards providing all students with access to a diverse and integrated learning environment, in order to properly prepare students for participation in the global economy and post-secondary education.

3. We believe schools have an enormous impact on students' lives.

Parents and caregivers are responsible for sending their students to school ready to learn. The school district is responsible for educating all students, regardless of family support or involvement.

- Students have an obligation to come to school ready to learn, but the district will not abandon those who do not and must search for ways to reach them.
- We will ensure a qualified teacher delivering rigorous instruction is in every classroom, and every school will have a qualified principal who is an instructional leader.
- Hartford schools will be driven by student performance, not by mere compliance with regulations.

- Specific incentive systems will be established to reward improvement. Schools demonstrating significant student achievement will be empowered and encouraged to be innovative.
- All of our actions will be driven by student performance.

4. We believe that all parents must be empowered to play an active role in their students' education.

- Our schools will develop effective partnerships with parents and caregivers – based upon trust and respect – that engage the school and the parent/caregiver in a plan of action to promote the “best interest” of the child.
- The district will provide parents/caregivers with quality choices of schools for their children.

5. We believe that community collaboration is fundamental to achieving and sustaining excellence.

Improving the educational outcomes for our students will require support from all segments of our community including parents, caregivers, businesses, elected and appointed officials, civic and faith-based organizations, along with the district’s leaders, staff, and students. Principals must dynamically engage parents/caregivers and community in the lives of our students and schools.

- The district will partner with business, civic and faith-based organizations to ensure support for achieving and sustaining excellence.
- Schools will be responsive and accountable to their communities, providing parents/caregivers and members of the community (and where appropriate, students) with formal, structured input into decision-making through school-based councils.

A3. HPS Board of Education Theory of Action Policy

Purpose

To accomplish its Core Beliefs and Commitments the Board sets forth a theory of action that restructures and reforms the Hartford Public Schools. The theory of action provides direction to set goals, strategic plans, budgets and effective administrative actions.

Definition

The theory of action set forth in policy by the district is built on beliefs about how students learn, the conditions that best promote learning and the policies, management systems, and culture that promote quality educational services for all students.

Theory of Action

Given the wide range of performance of the Hartford Public Schools and the district's achievement gap, the district will employ a managed performance theory of action that defines each school's level of autonomy based on student achievement.

1. High performing and significantly improving schools earn autonomy.
2. Low performing schools are subject to district intervention or redesign or replacement.
3. New and redesigned schools are granted autonomy conditioned upon continuous improvement of student achievement.

The Goal

The Hartford Public Schools will evolve over time to a total system of high performing schools driven by student and parental/guardian choice. Two choice models will be employed:

1. Inter-district choice schools will provide regional opportunities for the integration of city and suburban students.
2. Intra-district choice schools will provide preference to students of their neighborhood with remaining seats available to other Hartford students. Parents would have the option of a greater number of schools within transportation zones.

Students will be equitably funded according to their needs and these funds will follow the student to their school of choice. Within the portfolio of choices available there will be a number of external providers or public and private school partnerships.

Board Oversight

The Board will review the performance of each school annually to determine its status and take action according to policy.

The Superintendent will provide a theory of action status and the evaluation report to the Board quarterly. The reports may include but should not be limited to information regarding the state of the District's accomplishments, curricular issues, professional development, student assessment and intervention strategies.

A4. HPS School Performance Matrix

HARTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2008-2009 SCHOOL PERFORMANCE MATRIX Based on 2008 Results of CMT and CAPT						
		2007 TO 2008 RATE OF IMPROVEMENT				
		Improving > + 3.0	No Significant Change + 3.0 to - 3.0	Declining < - 3.0	New and Redesigned Schools	
R E L A T I V E P E R F O R M A N C E	Goal Range: OSI 70+	Classical	Hartford Magnet Middle Capital Preparatory University High Sport & Medical Sciences †		Autonomous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •AF Hartford •Breakthrough II •Burns Latino Studies Academy •Culinary Arts Academy •Annie Fisher Montessori School •M. D. Fox CommPACT School •Global Communications Academy/IB •HPHS Freshmen Academy •HPHS Nursing Academy •HPHS Law & Government Academy •HPHS Academy of Engineering & Green Technology •Milner Core Knowledge Academy <p>Note: New and Redesigned schools will be ranked on the 2009-2010 School Performance Matrix by Overall School Index (OSI).</p>
	High Proficient: OSI 60 to 69	Webster † Dwight †	Breakthrough Parkville		Defined Autonomy	
	Proficient: OSI 50 to 59	Pathways † Hooker † Naylor Wish † West Middle † Fisher † Kinsella †	Rawson Kennelly Batchelder			
	Below Proficient: OSI 40 to 49	McDonough † M. L. King † Sanchez †	Simpson Waverly Bulkeley High Moylan Bellizzi Middle	Burr ↓	Intervention	
	Substantially Below: OSI below 40	Weaver High †	SAND Betances	Clark ↓ Fox Middle Quirk Middle	Redesign	
		† Moved up one or more levels of autonomy		↓ Moved down one or more levels of autonomy		

A5. HPS District Performance Targets

2011-2012 DISTRICT PERFORMANCE TARGETS		
MEASURE	2009 BASELINE	2011-2012 TARGET
3 RD GRADE READING	37.3%	49.3%
4 TH GRADE MATHEMATICS	50.0%+	62.0%
5 TH GRADE WRITING	64.8%	76.8%
7 TH GRADE MATHEMATICS	52.6%+	64.6%
8 TH GRADE SCIENCE	35.3%	47.3%
10 TH GRADE CAPT READING WRITING	57.8% 65.9%+	69.8% 77.9%
% COHORT GRADUATING IN 4/5 YRS	37% 43%+	49% 55%

A6. Nine Working Group Participants

High Academic Achievement

-Bethany Silver
 -Penny MacCormack
 -Sandra Inga
 -Sharon Heyman
 -Jennifer Allen
 -Pat Staszko
 -Marge Swaye
 -Mary Beth Russo

School Accountability & Empowerment

-Penny MacCormack
 -Bethany Silver
 -Gloria DeJesus
 -Regina Blake
 -Leslyee Frederick

Effective School Leaders

-Joan Massey
 -Penny MacCormack
 -Christina Kishimoto
 -Tim Sullivan
 -Jennifer Allen
 -Tyrone Richardson

Effective Teachers

-James Thompson
 -Dee Cole
 -Josie Smith
 -Tom Faniel
 -Tim Sullivan
 -Brenda Greene
 -Michael Boisvert
 -Sally Biggs
 -Ellen Stoltz
 -Freeman Burr
 -Joan Massey

Equitable Allocation of Resources

-Paula Altieri
 -Ebbie Parsons
 -Maureen Colman
 -Bethany Silver
 -Victor De La Paz

Strong Parent/Community Comm. & Collaboration

-Nancy Benben
 -Marta Bentham
 -Kelvin Roldan
 -Ronald Jarret
 -Lourdes Fonseca
 -Miguel Pabon
 -Mayra Esquilin
 -Milly Arciniegas

Positive School Climate

-Miriam Morales-Taylor
 -Joe Sikora
 -Leon McKinley
 -Jennifer Allen
 -Milly Arciniegas
 -Denise Tillman
 -Junetta Mitchell & children
 -E. Brad Noel
 -Alex Nardone
 -Winston Johnson

All Choice System of Schools

-Christina Kishimoto
 -Ebbie Parsons
 -Treda Collier
 -E. Brad Noel
 -Pat Staszko
 -Chris Leone

District Reform Sustainability

-Dr. Adamowski
 -Penny MacCormack
 -Victor De La Paz
 -Kelvin Roldan
 -BOE Input

Version: February 12, 2009