



# Strategic Planning

Preparing for the Future - Part 3  
Fall 2016





# Overview

The first three presentations covered:

- Gateway's Challenges in planning for the future
- The implications of these challenges moving forward
- The general paradigm of education from a national/international perspective
- The Gateway leadership team's perspectives on education





# Gateway's Vision and Mission

District Vision: The Gateway Regional School District will provide an exemplary education that challenges all students in an instructional setting appropriate to their needs.

Overarching Goal/Mission: The Gateway Regional School District will focus on teaching and assessing those skills our students need to thrive as 21st century learners, workers and citizens. All GRSD students will be:

- i. Academically proficient;
- ii. Effective communicators and collaborators;
- iii. Globally aware, independent, responsible learners and citizens; and
- iv. Critical and creative thinkers, innovators and problem solvers.





## Theory of Action (fundamental belief about what will lead to long-term success in the district following our vision and mission statements)

- × The primary aim of education is not to enable students to do well in school, but to help them do well in the lives they lead outside of school.
- × In order to meet this focus, staff will engage every student in meaningful, authentic and rigorous work through the use of innovative instructional practices and technologies that will motivate students to be self-directed and inquisitive lifelong learners.
  - + *Learning should have its roots in -*
    - *Meaning, not just memory*
    - *Engagement, not simply transmission*
    - *Inquiry, not only compliance*
    - *Exploration, not just acquisition*
    - *Personalization, not simply uniformity*
    - *Collaboration, not only competition*
    - *Trust, not doubt*
- × To support this the school committee in conjunction with school staff shall create budgets that are predictable, reflect educational expectations, are supportive of student performance, and meet student needs.





## Priorities (broad areas of focus to support the Theory of Action)

1. Develop project based learning around 21st Century Skills and Whole Child Theory that supports state curriculum frameworks (see [21st Century Rubrics](#); [November Learning](#) Resouces; [curriculum frameworks](#)).
2. Model and foster a positive and supportive working and learning environment for all school community members and create opportunities for parents and community members to fulfill their essential roles as actively engaged partners in supporting student achievement and outcomes for student success.
3. Review sustainability issues and ways to become more creative and efficient over the next 10 years while supporting a budget amount that's sufficient to meet student needs and school/district priorities.





## Measurable Goals (related to district priorities)

- Measure student achievement including:
  - Various measures currently being included in teacher DDM's
  - The use of 21st Century Skills;
  - Whole Child Education.
- Implement project based learning to include:
  - Student focused learning
  - Cross-grade, integrated disciplinary approach to inquiry based instruction
  - Use online instruction, dual enrollment, internships, and blended learning opportunities
  - Leverage existing technology to allow students a wide access to information and in working collaboratively with others (ages, schools, companies, states, countries)
- Provide increased time for collaboration and professional development to:
  - Develop staff members as teacher leaders
  - Allow staff to develop a more flexible schedule
  - Increase use of outside 'experts' as volunteers (including online use of information, lessons, etc.)
  - Integrate specialists into a multi-grade, cross-disciplinary, inquiry/problem solving approach to education making instruction relevant and integrating 21st Century Skills
  - Increase engagement with parents and community members to support student engagement and achievement
  - Increase leadership from all students towards citizenship
- Hire a consulting firm to review district operations and use this information to develop opportunities for cost effective district sustainability.
- Develop, support, and approve operating budgets that account for state and federal requirements, allow schools and the district to meet student needs, and support the overall mission of the district.





## Initiatives (specific projects related to Priorities that help to achieve the Measurable Goals)

### *1. End Of Year Class/School Activities*

1. High School Level - all final exams given at the same time, i.e., all underclassmen take exams when seniors do. This means the last 2 to 3 weeks of school become project based, team oriented, and student focused learning
2. Middle School - much has already been discussed related to going project based learning and the idea of themed activities (i.e., HogWarts) could be expanded especially as we're moving to the MS model of shared, joint grouping so much like the high school except perhaps more interdisciplinary and perhaps looking at developing mini-capstone projects with the potential of developing a transitional capstone project at the end of 8th grade
3. Elementary Schools - field days, spirit week, themed days - continue to support cross disciplinary projects (Class, Grade, School)

This provides opportunities to get everyone involved and to use the district's resources of technology, volunteers, support staff, parents and potentially some community project involvement. We see less use of films and videos being watched and more of them being produced, of groups of students working together on an area of interest, of 2 to 3 weeks of focused work rather than a 'waiting' for school to be over atmosphere for both students and staff.





## Initiatives (specific projects related to Priorities that help to achieve the Measurable Goals)

### *II. Changing Instruction and Use of Resources*

1. Research, develop, and implement a plan to increase online learning from grades 6 to 12 using content area teachers to monitor classes related to their specialty for one period per day for each subject area as a pilot to expanding this to more staff and students
2. Research, develop, and implement opportunities for 'home school' students to be 'enrolled' primarily through online learning yet participate in various activities and classes
3. Pilot opportunities that would allow students to use project based learning plans to substitute or enhance graduation requirements through using project based study in a directed study, developing internships/externships projects, or developing an independent study (teacher directing students doing various educational endeavors - independent study, online learning, etc)
4. Provide a process for granting PE credit for athletes that doesn't require individual waivers
5. Look at alternatives to a 180-day school year
  - a. Develop and implement the idea of a 'blizzard bag' for snow days and getting this approved by the DESE for the 16-17 school year
  - b. Develop a proposal to have some shortened weeks from January to March (fewer days, longer hours) to pilot time on learning and student performance (17-18 school year)
  - c. Develop a plan for a less than 180-day school year, gain approval by unions, and present to DESE for implementation in the 18-19 school year
  - d. Alternatively, develop a less than 180-day school calendar that extends vacations and changes summer vacation





## Initiatives (specific projects related to Priorities that help to achieve the Measurable Goals)

### *III. Involvement, Leadership, Engagement*

1. Host working meetings with staff to review how to increase:
  - a. Staff involvement in school/district activities
  - b. Staff leadership roles in the schools and district
  - c. Student engagement in creating a safe and positive school environment
2. Continue “Gateway 2025” meetings and the “Communication Council” to:
  - a. Increase parent and community involvement in school and district activities
  - b. Provide additional information regarding the implementation of the planning process
  - c. Improve communications with the greater community, staff, students, and parents
  - d. Engage parents and community members in assessing student performance





## Initiatives (specific projects related to Priorities that help to achieve the Measurable Goals)

### *IV. Finances*

1. Develop potential ways to increase student opportunities while becoming more cost efficient by:
  - a. Working with a consultant to review district operations
  - b. Develop potential methods to decrease costs including:
    - i. Changes in educational delivery
    - ii. Changes in the school day/year
    - iii. Decrease school choice out
    - iv. Providing more services inhouse
    - v. Reviewing transportation options
    - vi. Changes in operational practices
  - c. Increase revenue to include:
    - i. Increasing school choice in
    - ii. Working with Small/Rural Schools collaborative
    - iii. Supporting Chapter 70 and 71 changes
    - iv. Review fee schedules

