High Schools of the Future

November 27, 2006
My Agenda

- The District’s Mission
- The District’s Vision
- The District’s Approach
The District’s Mission

Our mission is to assure that every student has the knowledge and skills needed for academic achievement and a successful life.
The District’s Vision

A district where

- all students have the academic and interpersonal skills to become independent learners capable of making informed decisions in our multi-cultural world.

- race, class, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or home language of origin other than English, do not predict academic achievement.

- the learning environment is emotionally and physically safe and orderly, and the contributions of all are valued and respected.
The District’s Approach

In pursuit of this vision, we will

- establish and maintain a culture that builds and values relationships, engages everyone positively and creatively, and respects the contributions of all.

- provide a culturally relevant, rigorous curriculum that is anti-racist, anti-biased and engages students in meaningful, real world learning through research-based instructional practices that reflect district and state academic standards.

- employ and retain highly competent and diverse staff who are engaged in ongoing professional development.

- use our resources efficiently and strategically.
The Foundation
Where Are We Now?

- Serving Many Students Well
  - Graduation Rates Increasing for All Students
  - 4 Year and 2 Year College Attendance
Our Current High School Culture

- Totally Independent and autonomous
- Reform in their own way as individual projects
  - Smaller Learning Communities (Relationships)
  - Smaller Learning Communities (Academic)
  - Core Classes
  - 4-Block Schedule
- Individually Unique
What Do We Have to Build On?

- Strong and Competent Building Leadership
- Highly Qualified & Committed Staff
- Expert Teaching and Learning Staff
- Local Experience Reforming the Elementary Schools
- National Experts at University of Wisconsin
- Large Body of National High School Reform Literature
National Reform History

- Over 40 Years Old
- Many different approaches in the past
  - Flexible Modular Schedules
  - Essential Schools Movement
  - Ability Grouping
  - “Un-tracking”
  - Many Others
Current National Reform Efforts

- National Association for Secondary School Principals
- American Youth Policy Forum
- Schools for a New Society
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- Aspen Foundation
- Carnegie Corporation of New York’s Schools for a New Society
- National High School Alliance
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
- Many others
The Future

- Jobs in 2047 – A world we can’t imagine
  - Learning to Learn
  - Collaborative Work
  - Diverse Workforce
  - Global Economy
  - Other Changes - UNPREDICTABLE
Where are we Going?
Create a System of Changes

*not an unrelated series of projects*

- The changes create a system of **best practices** in:
  - instruction
  - assessment
  - academic support and intervention

- The changes must be based on **high standards** for all students.

- The changes focus on **teaching and learning in the Classroom**
  - Transition content focus to individual student focus
  - Embrace child by child approaches
  - Use multiple strategies to differentiate instruction
  - Use on-going assessments to inform instruction

- The changes are implemented and supported through an **intensive focused professional development** program
Professional Development

Knowledge Acquisition  Imbedded Coaches

Highly Skilled Teachers

Successful Reader

Pre-School Literacy

Balanced Literacy

Diagnostic Assessment

15:1 Class Size

Continual Monitoring

Extended Learning

One on One Tutoring

Student/Teacher Relationships

Planned Interventions
The Structure for Change
The Educational Framework

- Student engagement, learning and relationships are equally important;
- Systematic, district-wide supports and interventions are critical; and
- A collaborative culture in which adults share responsibility for all students is essential.
Engagement

To Better Meet the Needs Of All Students We Must:

- Implement a system of positive behavior supports and interventions *(IN PROCESS)*
- Create ways to connect *every* student to the life of the school
- Enable Positive Transitions that promote engagement including
  - Transitioning from Middle School
  - Transitioning from Other Schools and School Systems
  - Transitioning from Other Institutions
- Create Effective Interventions for poor attendance *(IN PROCESS)*
Learning

To Better Meet the Needs Of All Students We Must:

- Provide:
  - academic support to students who are struggling to be successful in the typical class.
  - accelerated opportunities for students who are advanced beyond the curriculum at their chronological age
  - additional curriculum for students who are motivated to explore the curriculum deeper than the typical class
  - learning strategies that support ELL students to be successful in the typical classroom
  - implement Individual Educational Plans for students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment
  - a range of learning environments for students who are not successful in the large comprehensive high school
- Motivate students to access more advanced work
- Employ differentiation models to provide access to a wide range of opportunities for students in the typical curriculum
Learning

To Better Meet the Needs Of All Students We Must:

- As Professional Staff
  - Participate in **Intensive Professional Development** to improve teaching and learning
  - **Collaborate** with the other staff members serving the same students
  - **Eliminate the barriers** to each child reaching their potential change the classroom approach - Teaching children not subjects
  - Teach to defined **standards**
  - Use **Multiple Instructional Strategies** based on best practice research
Learning

To Better Meet the Needs Of All Students We Must:

- As a district
  - Provide **focused professional development** for:
    - acquisition of knowledge of best practices
    - Application of knowledge in the classroom supported by on-the-job coaching
  - Create and implement **common district assessments** at the Course Level
  - Enhance the **Instep Process** to provide better methods of determining when students need to be accelerated beyond the age appropriate curriculum
  - Create a **standards based report card** for all subjects
  - Continue to **evaluate and refine** our current approaches to the high school experience
Relationships

To Better Meet the Needs Of All Students we must:

- Create positive relationships between every student and the adults in the school
- Instill in all staff the belief that relationships are as important as pedagogy in student learning
- Utilize our diversity of race and culture to prepare all of our students to live and work effectively in the multicultural society they will lead.
This is the Beginning
Most Importantly – **A BLANK SLATE**
The Steering Committee

- Create Steering Committee
  - Assistant Superintendent/Secondary Schools, Chair
  - Executive Director Teaching and Learning
  - Executive Director Educational Services
  - Executive Director Student Services
  - High School Principals
  - University of Wisconsin-Madison Staff
  - Edgewood College Staff
  - MATC staff

- Define Specific Areas of Study
  - Steering Committee
  - Board of Education
The Topic Specific Subcommittees

- Develop Staff/UW/Edgewood Topic Specific and Writing Subcommittees
  - Topic Specific Teaching and Learning Instructional Resource Teachers
  - Topic Specific Educational Services Program Support Teachers
  - Student Services and Counseling Staff
  - University of Wisconsin-Madison Topic Specific Experts
  - Edgewood College Topic Specific Experts
  - MATC Topic Specific Experts
The Process – 1st Draft

- Listening sessions at each high school
- Literature Review
  - Topic Specific Subcommittees
- Prepare Preliminary Draft
  - Writing Subcommittee
- Preliminary Draft for BOE Review
- Public Input Sessions
  - Students
  - Broader Community
  - Parents
  - Recent Alumni
  - District Staff
The Process – 2\textsuperscript{nd} Draft

- Prepare 2\textsuperscript{nd} Draft
  - Writing Subcommittee
- 2\textsuperscript{nd} draft for BOE review
- Public Input Sessions
  - Same as Public Input on First Draft
- Prepare Final Draft
- Final Draft to BOE
The End