# MADISON METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

July 16, 2009

## MEMORANDUM

To:         Members of the Board of Education

From:       Daniel A. Nerad, Superintendent

Subject:    **Strategic Plan – Response to Board Member Questions**

Attached is the first round of answers to Board member questions about the Strategic Plan. Administration co-chairs provided the answers to the questions for their Action Team. This is truly a work in progress. The Management Team as a whole has not had an opportunity to review or discuss these responses. Some responses may change as a result of both Board discussion and Management Team discussion. Our focus for this round was on the specific question around Action Steps.

Some of the questions are much better suited to a discussion format rather than a straight question and answer format. Some of the information, both questions and work of the committee, will be developed as work groups begin implementation.

## Strategic Plan Responses to the BOE
### July 15, 2009

## Student Action Plan

**1)    Student Action Plan – Achievement for All Students (page 28)**

### Action Step 1 (page 29)

**Ed Hughes**
**"Define what a successful graduate looks like." What does this mean? Could this be made more specific?**
"Define what a successful graduate looks likes" will be the definition needed to create a successful individual learning plan for all students. It will be a goal in which programming is built around.

**Lucy Mathiak**
**What is meant by "skills for life long learning" and by "performance in core content areas?" What are core content areas? Who decides? What standards are applied to set the bar for our curricular offerings and for measuring student achievement? How does this relate to DPI standards? Wouldn't it be good to make sure that our students meet DPI's amazingly low standards for high school graduation as a starting point?**
The student action team discussed the Deweyean concept of life long learning and the skills/ habits of mind (e.g., problem-solving, critical thinking, organization and planning) individuals need to be successful in school and in life. The ultimate goal was to determine a way to measure success for all of our students and in particular address the achievement gap. The student action team discussed the importance of understanding what a "successful MMSD student" looks like. What skills do we want to see in our students? What will our outcome data show if our students have the skills they need to be successful beyond? This work will be coupled with the work of the curriculum group relative to 21st century skills.

### Action Steps 2 and 3 (page 30)
**Lucy Mathiak**
**What do we mean by "ensuring that ALL students reach their highest potential"? The language seems to focus on students who do not perform, or who struggle to perform at grade level. What about "average" students? What about students who function 2 or more years above grade level in one or more areas of study? The text does not seem to reflect what it would mean for them to reach their highest levels.**
This section refers to all students in the district. The action steps within this section suggest that all students, K-12, develop an Individual Learning Plan. This plan will support students who need to catch up to meet the standards at their grade level as well as making sure those who have met the standards have the means to go beyond. The intent of individual learning plans is to assist all students in achieving the next level of challenge.

### Action Step 3 (page 30)

**Arlene Silveira**
**Can you provide an example of what an ILP might look like at the elementary, middle, and high school levels?**

**Ed Hughes**
**How are individual learning plans likely to enhance student achievement? What is the problem or deficit that they are meant to address?**

Representatives from K-12 went to the University of Wisconsin-Madison workshop in July to explore WISCareers, an electronic Individual Learning Plan. The program is an electronic template which a student populates beginning at grade four. Prior to grade four a binder portfolio is used to capture student goals. Research indicates that if teachers and parents create goals for student on a yearly basis, students will understand what is expected of them and teachers will understand how to build on prior knowledge of the student and take them to the next level of performance. Examples of the ILP will be available in the fall.

**Arlene Silveira**
**Measurable action step #1 "Define what a successful MMSD graduate 'looks like' is a #1 priority. Measurable action step #3 "Determine the multiple pathways to success for our MMSD students based on our definition of a successful MMSD graduate" is a #3 priority. I think this one is very important. I am interested in knowing why the action team put it as a #3 priority?**

The reason that defining measurable action steps was given number one priority is because a definition is needed prior to determiningg the pathways. Both were of importance for the committee. We can look at making multiple pathways a higher priority.

**Maya Cole**
**Is the implementation of the ILP for all students dependent on MTI approval? This seems a big task to take on and I would think we would need a 5-year plan for this to succeed. Can we step back and look at a more realistic goal of getting every teacher to use Infinite Campus?**

Achievement for all students is addressed by an Individual Learning Plan. This is goal setting for all students much like we do goal setting for a school in the School Improvement Plan. Elementary teachers do not use Infinite Campus for keeping track of daily or monthly grades. If students have Individual Learning Plans, there is more accountability on the teachers.

**Arlene Silveira**
**How does the work from the REal grant teams tie in with numbers 2 and 3 above? Should the REal grants be referenced in this section?**
The REal grant will be part of the plan developed. This action step is the "big idea" the planning of the process brings in what is working in MMSD and what is needed.

**Action Step 4 (page 30)**

**Arlene Silveira**
**"Determine the multiple pathways to success for our MMSD students based on our definition of a successful MMSD graduate." The visible result is the creation of a multiple pathways document and creation and implementation of communication and marketing plan related to multiple pathways. This confuses me. Is the end result the creation of documents? When are the pathways applied to the kids?**

Once the plan is developed, after the definition is created, the plan is then implemented. This is a process which will take many months to complete, communicate and provide professional development around. There are several steps involved with this action item.

**Maya Cole**
**We should already have much of the inventory of pathways available in the district. I thought we had talked about the "map of our current pathways" in the P&A committee meetings recently. I can see needing to work on determining gaps based on a new definition of success. I am confused, however, that the establishment of additional pathways is part of the strategic plan. Isn't this a Board decision?**

We do not have a "pathway plan" in place for the district. Once the plan is developed, after the successful graduate definition is created, the plan is then implemented. This is a process which will take many months to complete, communicate and provide professional development around. There are several steps involved with this action item.

### Action Step 5 (page 31)

**Maya Cole**
**Don't we already have information on high school completion rates? Do we have some sort of follow-up on post-secondary continuing education of our students?**

Yes. However the student action team desires a much more robust data set relative to our student outcomes. In addition, this team stressed the importance of both qualitative and quantitative data, data that is used for ongoing program improvement.

**Maya Cole**
**I thought the district could provide us with all of the internal and standardized assessments at this point.**

Yes. However, the student action team discussed the importance of a consistent data set to be used crossed district. The team discussed the importance of ongoing progress monitoring student by student but also using data in a disaggregated manner to ensure we are addressing the achievement gap and pushing each student to meet their next level of challenge.

## 2) Student Action Plan – Relationships

**Arlene Silveira**
**"Reorganize the necessary centralized roles and departmental functions to better coordinate community resource support in schools, improve communication to agencies, institutions, and businesses, and provide greater equity of 'outside' resources across MMSD schools." This is a priority #3. In the Resource/Capacity Action Plan, measurable action step #2 states, "Analyze possible partnerships and collaborations (private, public, CESA) which might aid in more efficient delivery of service." This is a priority #1. Seems like these 2 actions have flipped priorities. Need the roles and functions first.**

The group chose the first priority because we need to see what agencies exist within our organization and where we have a void. Once this is done, the goal is to reorganize how the

district works, communicates, etc. with these agencies and to the schools. Every school accesses external support based on what the social worker, psychologist, nurse, after school program coordinator, principal, or counselor in the building knows. We want to provide a list of all partnerships and supports to make sure students receive the adequate response to their needs verses relying on what staff in the building understand is available. In addition, these resources and supports change on a regular basis. Building in a mechanism to ensure timely and accurate information is necessary.

**Lucy Mathiak**
**I am not sure what this action step means.**
The student action team recommended that a work group come together to address questions such as this recognizing that this was best decided at a later stage.

## Action step 4 (page 33)

**Ed Hughes**
**Please provide some examples of "activities and programs that build and enhance a sense of community for students."**

Building community is critical in helping children feel connected to the classroom peers and teachers. Often, in education certain children are marginalized for many reasons (race, language, ability, gender, etc). In addition, we are academic institutions with a focus on teaching and learning. Hence, many staff are unsure how to "build community" while still addressing all the academic standards. Building community can be done while simultaneously ensuring all of our students gain the skills they need to be productive citizens. Our goal is to assist all of our staff in understanding how to go about building and sustaining community within the classroom and school. Hence, this action step is a prerequisite to learning. A specific example would be the "9th graders only" day at the beginning of the school year.

## Action Step 5 (page 33)

**Maya Cole**
**It seems we missed a step in that there is no visible result that first measures how these school structures actually "improve learning." How will we measure success?**

Our district is currently implementing various structures (e.g., small team at Sherman, houses at Sennett, looping at various schools) as an effort to support and enhance student achievement and relationships between students and teachers, students and students, and teachers and families. That being said, the student action team believed we should take a more critical look at what we currently do as well as consider structures that may be serving as a catalyst to "double" student achievement in others districts and bring these to scale of data supports their efficacy.

## Action Step 6 (page 33)

**Ed Hughes**
**Please provide some examples of the "community resource support" mentioned in step 6.**
**Please explain the concern about inequity of "outside" resources across MMSD schools.**

A response will be provided.

## 3)  Student Action Plan – Transitions

**Action Step 1 (page 34)**

**Arlene Silveira**
**"The definitions of each transition category will be communicated across the district."**
**This is the #1 priority.  What does this mean?  What constitutes a definition?  Is it a plan?**

The definitions of Home to School, etc are at the top of this Action Plan. The BOE was not given the most recent copy which outlines all of the definitions, they are only partially there. These definitions will be communicated to principals and staff as well as shared with students and our families so that transition plans will be part of the School Improvement Plan at all levels.

**Arlene Silveira**
**There is no mention of 4-year old kindergarten.**

There was purposely no mention of 4K since the group did not know the feasibility of the program and did not want to build it in the plan if in case it did not happen. The general response covers Special Education Early Childhood transitions and preschool program transitioning which is void in elementary schools. If 4K becomes a reality, this plan will address that transition. Note, the student action team spent a great deal of time discussing 4K and how implementation will undoubtedly enhance our student outcomes.

**Action Step 3 (page 35)**

**Maya Cole**
**Are we to assume we will measure (how?) all of these different transitions within 5 years?**
**The ILP is mentioned again.**

There are many queries within this question.  Many of these questions (e.g., how many students with have an ILP within a given year, how will we roll out the ILPs, what is the role of parents in the transition process versus what is the role of our schools) will need to be addressed by the work groups assigned to these specific charges.

**Action Step 4 (page 35)**

**Maya Cole**
**Can we also add some sort of instrument to measure post-secondary and workforce success?  There are multiple measures already created by the folks at ACT.**

We currently do this for our students with disabilities.  This is a good recommendation and something the student action team discussed.

# Curriculum Action Plan

## 1)    Curriculum Action Plan - Accelerated Learning (page 37)

### Action Steps 1-3 (pages 37-38)

**Ed Hughes**
**Do the action steps contemplate additional differentiated instruction in all classes or specific advances classes, or both?**

The intent of the action steps described in accelerated learning is to map out the current K-12 continuum of opportunities for students in all areas to determine if there are gaps or inconsistencies. If gaps or inconsistencies are identified, additional courses, including specific advanced classes, could be developed.

**Arlene Silveira**
**The priority rankings are hard to understand without associated time-frames. In this measurable objective, there are 3 action steps. What are the chances of accomplishing a #3 priority?**

The priority ranking was set by the Strategic Plan- Curriculum Committee. Priority 1 indicates tasks will be accomplished within 1 year. Priority 2-3 may be accomplished within 2-3 years.

**Arlene Silveira**
**Would this be a place to reference the TAG Plan?**

**Ed Hughes**
**It seems to me that the upcoming TAG Plan should be integrated into this action plan so that additional steps regarding identification and other initiatives can be incorporated, including a goal to comply with state law.**

Accelerated learning is closely associated with the TAG Plan. The steps of analyzing advanced courses, increasing consistency and reducing barriers to access are key to the TAG Plan. In addition, the TAG Plan focuses on increasing enrollment for traditionally under-represented students in advanced courses.

**Arlene Silveira**
**I don't know where in the plan we should about the courses available for our kids. Would this be the place to reference the Fine Arts Task Force?**

The Fine Arts Task Force will also map out curricular offerings. In addition to the curricular map, the Fine Arts Task Force Recommendations will include a plan to determine if current courses are adequate and funded appropriately while creating financial scenarios for enhancing courses and adding course offerings if needed.

**Arlene Silveira**
**Math Task Force –same as above.**

The Math Task Force Response addresses accelerated student learning.

**Maya Cole**
**I thought these action steps (1-2) were addressed already through various discussions with staff. Is there no such document available now? This first step should be easy to obtain from administrative staff. Please indicate a timeline and what outcome we are talking about for this step**

Course titles and descriptions are available for middle and high schools. Course titles and descriptions are not sufficient to capture student learning outcomes or progression. Action step #1 describes a process to map out the student learning outcomes and progression of each content area K-12. This document will provide a consistent description of our K-12 curriculum for purposes of sharing student learning outcomes with families and the community, course selection and determining accelerated (TAG) opportunities.

**Lucy Mathiak**
**What does the highlighted text mean? Especially the last clause. In English?**

Accelerated learning has two implications:

1 – To catch students up - to ensure that when students need to catch up, the courses or lessons that they are provided are going to "catch them up" as quickly as possible. Remedial courses should be as targeted and as brief as possible to remediate just the skills/knowledge that the student is lacking. Entire courses and course sequences should not be designed to keep students behind. For example, a one-year Algebra course should not be made into a two year course. Rather, if students need a great deal of help to catch up, there needs to be explicit focus on the specific skills required.

2 – Allow students to move to the next level of challenge if they are able to demonstrate above grade level mastery. This specifically refers to TAG.

### Action Step 5 (page 38)

**Maya Cole**
**I need this broken down into English. What are we intending to accomplish?**

Vertical teams are groups of teachers who work and plan together to develop a more consistent progression within a content area (math, science) to increase the number of students who will be ready for advanced courses. MMSD vertical teams consist of both middle and high school teachers grouped together by feeder schools.

## 2)  Curriculum Action Plan - Authentic Assessment (page 39)

**Ed Hughes**
**Would approving the authentic assessment action steps imply endorsement of a change to standards-based report cards for high schoolers?**

To what extent, if at all, does the Authentic Assessment objective have an impact on standards-based report cards? More specifically, does this objective (and associated action steps) imply a change in high school report cards?

The outcome of standards-based report cards for high school was not identified or discussed by the Curriculum Action Team. We would have to take a look at this.

**Maya Cole**
**Please explain authentic assessment in layman's terms. How long? How much? Is this possible with MTI? Are we talking about our own assessments? Why not programs already available like MAP? How will Authentic Assessment and IC mesh with current structure?**

Authentic assessments measure what is actually taught in the classroom in terms of real-life applications. An example of an authentic assessment currently used in our district is the Writing Assessment. They are particularly helpful for students and teachers to get timely feedback about student learning. Teacher teams will be directly involved in creating authentic assessments.

MMSD is in the process of researching commercially produced assessment tools, such as MAP, Explore, and specific talented and gifted assessments. We will consider purchasing and implementing existing tools that meet our district needs.

Additional assessment information can be incorporated into Infinite Campus.

**Lucy Mathiak**
**I'm not sure I fully understand this one. The definition seems to focus on the student activity rather than the assessment of whether the learning goal has been met. All of the items enumerated are wonderful teaching techniques, but I am concerned that there be a relationship between the activity and quality content...Great projects in all of these examples, but what did the student learn that was authentic if the basic information was wrong?**

Quality and accuracy of the content is critical. This applies to both curriculum and assessment. This will need to be monitored.

**Ed Hughes**
**As a general comment, I find these actions steps hard to understand in that I do not have a sense of what the end goal is. Also, my sense is that "authentic assessment" as described in the plan is inherently more subjective that WKCE scores, and so it is difficult for me to see how increased authentic assessment will allow for much in the way of longitudinal, value-added or other sorts of comparisons, or provide much of a basis for measuring student progress toward district learning objectives. What am I missing?**

Authentic assessments will be both valid (measuring that they intend to measure) and reliable (measures/scores are consistent). Current examples used in MMSD are the District Writing Assessment. Research and Evaluation will support the development and district monitoring of these assessments. Authentic assessment is part of measuring student learning. Other measures must still be used.

**Beth Moss**
Can we change to "project based" or "across academic subjects"? Again, way too many steps.

Is the question to change the name of authentic assessments?

## 3) Curriculum Action Plan - Cultural Relevance (page 41)

**Arlene Silveira**
I do not like the argument that we are primarily focusing on African American kids because the other kids (i.e. Hispanic) get ELL money, etc. The ELL funding argument that is being propagated in the community is not acceptable.

The action steps are the recommendations of the Strategic Plan Curriculum Committee. We can look at broadening and making reference to other groups.

**Ed Hughes**
Identify similar sorts of divisions that currently exist, and explain what "other student groups in MMSD" are being referred to.

The action steps are the recommendations of the Strategic Plan Curriculum Committee. The action team concluded that supports currently exist for special education, English language learners and TAG students.

**Lucy Mathiak**
What do we mean by "culturally relevant"? Are there principles and standards that could provide guidelines? Who decides what is culturally relevant? WHO is included in cultural relevance?

There are several fields of research that inform cultural relevance and multicultural education. The work in this action plan will be informed and guided through collaboration with experts in the field and nationally recognized research-based practices.

### Action Step 1 (page 41)
**Maya Cole**
Where will the current goal for staff diversity fit into this step? Are we reverting back to simply doing a walk-through of buildings to count bodies?

Action Step 1 walk-throughs are intended to ensure that classrooms actually look and demonstrate diversity. Walk-throughs for this purpose would focus on curricular materials, posters, student work samples, etc.

### Action Step 4 (page 42)
**Arlene Silveira**
What is the vision for the Division of Cultural Relevance (p. 43)? # people? Structure?

**Lucy Mathiak**
**Could you explain what this Division refers to? Which groups would it serve? Where would it be located? What is mean by "equitable to the supports provided to other students groups in MMSD"? If it means the unfortunate assumption that culturally relevant education is met by ELL for native Spanish speakers or Hmong students, do we really want to approve this as part of a plan?**

The vision of the Division of Cultural Relevance is one of building staff expertise and ability to apply principles of multi-cultural research and practice to their teaching. The practices implemented will benefit all students.

### Action Step 5 (page 42)
**Ed Hughes**
**I don't know what the "language acquisition model" in action step 5 refers to. Can this be explained?**

A language acquisition model will identify specific strategies to build oral and written language comprehension and production cross-cultures. This model will benefit students from all cultures and languages.

### Action Steps 8-9 (page 43)
**Maya Cole**
**How will this differ from our current practice in the SIP?**

This action step states that all buildings will include a specific plan to improve cultural relevance. The plan will be included in SIP. Currently, strategies to improve cultural relevance are embedded into improvement efforts.

### Action Step 9 (page 43)
**Arlene Silveira**
**Move Action Step # 9 to Organizational Systems**

Yes, we can consider this move.

### Action Step 10 (page 43)
**Arlene Silveira**
**Please explain the current function of SHRAC.**

**Lucy Mathiak**
**What is this (SHRAC)? Does the board know about it? I'm not tracking here. If it does exist, who are its members?**

**Ed Hughes**
**There are references in the action steps to "SHRAC." I assume this refers to the Superintendent's Human Resource Advisory Council. What is the composition and role of this group? Why would this group have a role to play in this action step? Why would "explore expanding the role of SHRAC as an advisory group" be a priority 1 item?**

The Superintendent's Human Relations Advisory Committee (SHRAC) is to inform and advise the Superintendent on issues related to race and equity. The intention of this action step is to

include community voice on an on-going basis using existing structures. Community input is needed from the onset of this work.

## 4)    Curriculum Action Plan - Flexible Instruction (page 44)

**Arlene Silveira**
**Is "flexible Instruction" the latest term for differentiation or differentiated teaching/team teaching? If so, we have been doing this for a while in the district. Do we have any evaluation of how this is working?**

**Lucy Mathiak**
**Please define "flexible instruction (and in civilian terms vs. eduspeak, please).**

**Ed Hughes**
**To what extent, if at all, does the "flexible instruction" action plan contemplate less "pull out" instruction for special ed students?**

Flexible instruction is similar to other terms, such as differentiation and universal design. All of these terms mean that teachers begin with explicit standards and/or curricular goals for a unit or course. Teachers then design multiple ways to teach and multiple learning experiences for students for all core standards and/or curricular goals. Flexible instruction is best planned in teams composed of regular education, special education, and ESL teachers so that many aspects of diverse learners, including options for students above/below grade level, are addressed in the original design of lessons. In classrooms with flexible instruction, various groups of students can work together, share and learn from each other even when the different groups of students might be working on slightly different types of experiences.

Although there is no explicit evaluation of how this is currently working, one of the highest priorities of teachers is the time to engage in this type of collaborative professional work.

**Ed Hughes**
**What does "multiple entry points" mean?**

Multiple entry points mean that lessons are designed so that content is introduced in a variety of ways. This allows students to begin their own learning at the place in which they are ready to begin. For the same lesson/content, there are different ways to introduce and begin the learning process depending upon student readiness and background knowledge.

**Beth Moss**
**ILPs and IEPs both should require this so we have to do it if those 2 are used. Also, IEPs are not mentioned.**

Flexible instruction is a component of individualizing instruction. Therefore, flexible instruction will be supported and reflected in ILPs and IEPs.

**Beth Moss**
**Is curriculum in flexible instruction aligned to the standards? Is that listed?**

All MMSD curricula must be aligned to the standards.

**Lucy Mathiak**
**Does this include TAG?**

All students include TAG students.

**Maya Cole**
**Please show how this will differ from current practice in the district with the same department administering the program. Please indicate what the "different avenues" will look like, their cost and an approximate number of staff support for this type of change.**

In order to ensure that all students are able to access and understand the curriculum, a collaborative and district-wide effort is required. All departments collaborate to design and provide professional development to promote and encourage an instructional strategy as powerful as flexible instruction.

## 5) Curriculum Action Plan - Participatory Education (page 46)

**Arlene Silveira**
**To what extent does a learner "participate actively in decision-making"? An example would be helpful.**

**Ed Hughes**
**Please provide an example of how elementary school students would "co-design learning activities and assessment"? Middle school students? High school students? In this intended for all classes?**

In participatory education, teachers design lessons to be driven by student thinking and alter content based on student response. In addition, Teachers ask open-ended questions, probe initial responses for deeper understanding and provide students time to construct relationships and mental models in order to internalize new ideas. The content, curriculum and assessment can be influenced by student perspectives. It is not "learn whatever you want" approach with the teacher playing a minimal role.

**Maya Cole**
**Provide background research for this type of educational model at the elementary level. What is the cost to implement this change throughout the district and what are the specific intended outcomes? Are we measuring student to student relationships? Engagement to the curriculum? Alternative approaches to at-risk populations? Is it to make students feel better that they have a voice in instruction? I don't see how we will be able to manage this new educational approach.**

**Lucy Mathiak**
**Please explain the relationship between service learning and participatory education? Are we talking about service learning as a part but not all of a course? All of a course? Would this be service learning for credit? Who will determine whether the service learning aligns**

with curricular standards and required content? What are the liability implications of off campus service learning (I know we do it, but have we talked about the liability?)

Participatory education is part of a comprehensive approach to improving student learning. Service learning shares many components of participatory education. A review of the research on service learning for K-12 students can be provided. DPI has recently published a document to inform and guide service learning that aligns with content standards. The delivery model for MMSD will be developed using DPI guidelines and teacher involvement. Liability issues will need to be addressed.

## 6)    Curriculum Action Plan - Rigor (page 48)

**Arlene Silveira**
**The definition of rigor is stated as follows: "Rigor refers to the appropriate and worthwhile challenges with respect to the intellectual processes of an assignment for students based on the essential and enduring knowledge of the coursework or task". What does this mean in practical terms?**

**Marj Passman**
**I do not want to wordsmith all the hours of work community members put in already, but some definitions need to be refined – rigor.**

**Maya Cole**
**Please define rigor.**

Generally speaking, rigor as an educational term means three (3) things:
1. Curriculum will focus on core content area knowledge (depth of knowledge)
2. Instruction is designed to encourage high level thinking skills (e.g. Bloom's taxonomy)
3. Instruction is designed so students actively use the knowledge they are learning (students apply learning to real tasks)

**Ed Hughes**
**I don't know what is meant by essential and enduring understandings. Are there understandings currently taught in our classrooms that are not essential and enduring?**

Within all content areas, there is a continuum of information. This continuum ranges from pieces of information that are worth being familiar to big ideas that we want students to "get inside of " and retain after they have forgotten many of the details. Essential and enduring understandings refer to the big ideas that students will be able to remember and use long after they have forgotten many of the details.

**Ed Hughes**
**Can you provide an example of a "curricular map"?**

A curricular map details the core content and standards addressed through a K-12 progression. Curricular maps can be content specific and can also be used to map concepts that run through multiple content areas and grade levels.

**Maya Cole**
**Are we creating our own curriculum mapping tool or purchasing something?**

A web-based product called "Eclipse" was purchased in 2008. Multiple sets of standards can be loaded into Eclipse.

**Maya Cole**
**How will our assessment tools align with DPI 21st Century Learning Standards and NAEP?**

Assessment tools chosen or created must align with state and national standards.

**Lucy Mathiak**
**Is there any relationship between "rigor" and DPI or national standards? Is there any relationship between "rigor" and content?**

Rigor comes from delving into standards as deeply as students are able to go. Rigor is achieved by applying high level thinking skills to standards-based educational experiences.

## General Questions

**Ed Hughes**
**If we were to adopt these [action steps], what specific changes in the way our schools are operating would we be endorsing.**

In plain terms, the Curriculum Action Plans outline a plan to:
- identify what is important to learn
- ratchet up the important aspects of the learning
- ensure that the learning is relevant and rigorous for our diverse students
- listen to our student voice
- realize one size does not fill all
- and carefully monitor the learning process to be sure we are indeed educating all students.

**Marj Passman**
**I do not want to wordsmith all the hours of work community members put in already, but some definitions need to be refined – 21st Century Skills.**

**Beth Moss**
**In one district plan I saw the use of the phrase "international standards". Would that cover 21st Century skills/global readiness/etc?**

Learning and innovation skills increasingly are being recognized as the skills that separate students who are prepared for increasingly complex life and work environments in the 21st century, and those who are not. A focus on creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration is essential to prepare students for the future. 21st Century Skills are focused on thinking and application. They compliment and strengthen content standards. (See Appendix).

**Lucy Mathiak**
**What is the relationship between culturally relevant learning and rigorous and/or accelerated learning opportunities?**

Cultural relevance, rigor and accelerated learning are components of a comprehensive approach to improving student achievement. Cultural relevance deals with teacher's ability to connect with students. Rigor deals with the quality and depth of content. Accelerating learning focuses on students accessing the most appropriate level of learning opportunities along the K-12 continuum.

**Arlene Silveira**
**It appears that African American students and the Culturally Relevant actions were the only group/action that were fleshed out in detail. Where will we have detailed plans for our other students?**

The Curriculum Action Team felt strongly that all students means all students. African American students were specifically mentioned in one area in response to the achievement gap issue, which was the highest ranked critical issue. Increasing academic achievement for other groups of students need to be addressed.

## Staff Action Plan

1)    Staff Action Plan - Professional Development (page 51)

**Arlene Silveira**
**Measurable action step #2 is on page 52 and action step #4 is on page 53.  Is action step #3 missing?**
No.  They were incorrectly numbered.

**Arlene Silveira**
**In the Professional Development Staff Action Plan there are references in the different action steps and measurable objectives to instructional staff, teachers, staff, and other staff. Are these different groups of people or are they meant to refer to the same group of people?  Who falls into the "instructional staff" group?**

**Lucy Mathiak**
**Please define what you mean by staff.**

In the broadest sense, staff refers to all who are employed by MMSD to serve children. Professional development is relevant whether you have the classification of "teacher" or "food service worker".  When the term "instructional staff" is used, it was specifically in the context of providing professional development to those who must deliver culturally relevant instructional practices. This would include all adults who interact with students directly in regard to their education.

**Arlene Silvera**
**The term "culturally" is used often throughout the plan.  Can you provide a definition of this term?**

**Ed Hughes**
**The district will collaborate with the community to develop inclusive culturally responsive schools.  What does this mean?**

This is a question that is raised in many different parts of the plan.  Please see the glossary attached to the "Curriculum" strategic priority.

**Lucy Mathiak**
**Is the intent to increase teaching and learning skills? Or is it to develop those skills specifically in relation to developing a multiculturally competent staff?**

The wording of the staff priority is such that it focuses more directly on the skills needed to engage a diverse student body.  One would hope, however, that any improvement in general leadership and teaching skills would be beneficial to all.

**Action Step 5 (page 54)**
**Ed Hughes**
**The district will implement supervision and evaluation procedures...To what extent, if at all, would such procedures be affected or constrained by the CBA?**

The CBA allows for the evaluation of teachers. It specifies the areas in which they should be evaluated and it states that any changes in the forms used to evaluate to be given to MTI (not approved by them). This is constraining but not a complete roadblock.

### Action Step 8 (page 56)
**Ed Hughes**
**The district will develop systems and approaches to coordinate and link separate and specific professional development initiative for teachers and other staff. What does this mean?**
This is a move towards a more efficient and effective way of ensuring that professional development is linked specifically to the strategic plan, is done in a manner that is cost effective, is designed for adult learning, and has immediate and accountable application,

## 2)    Staff Action Plan - Recruiting and Retaining Staff (page 58)

**Arlene Silvera**
**In the recruiting and retaining staff there are many references to "teachers". Shouldn't this be broadened?**
Yes.

**Arlene Silveira**
**Should there be an action step that focuses on identifying and recruiting administrators?**
Yes.

**Lucy Mathiak**
**Do we have specific institutions in mind? Before we get too excited about local programs, it might be good to look at the enrollments and successful degree completion of students of color enrolled at UW-Madison, other system schools and Edgewood. And then do some research about alternative recruiting pools in neighboring states.**
Partnerships should include our local institutions, but also those in neighboring states of similar climate and weather.

### Action Step 9 (page 59)
**Ed Hughes**
**Reinstitute the Grow Our Own Administrator Program. When did this program exist? Why was it ended? What is the measurable evidence that it was successful before?**

This program was in existence from the late 90's to the mid 2000's. It was cut for budget purposes. There are multiple examples of current principals who were graduates of the Grow Our Own Administrator Program.

## Resource/Capacity Action Plan

The version of the action plans for this area was re-ordered from the version initially provided to the Board of Education. The action team felt strongly that their order was the appropriate sequence in which to read the actions.

Version provided to the Board of Education (June 15, 2009):

1) Prioritize and allocate resources effectively and equitably
2) Pursue necessary resources
3) Conduct rigorous evaluations of programs, services, and personnel

Current version on the web page (July 21, 2009):

1) Conduct rigorous evaluations of programs, services, and personnel
2) Prioritize and allocate resources effectively and equitably
3) Pursue necessary resources

The information provided below is organized by the current version on the web.

### General Statements

**Beth Moss**
**Much on data analysis that is necessary for our community. How to quantify "success?"**

It is important to point out and understand that success shouldn't be driven by one action plan or strategic priority. Each strategic priority will play a major part in defining success, but in the end, success will be defined by the entire workings of the strategic plan and not one specific priority.

## Resource/Capacity Action Plan – Measurable Objective #1 – Conduct rigorous evaluations of programs, services, and personnel (pages 61 and 62).

**Maya Cole**
**All Action Steps –**
**It seems the first line of attack for implementing rigorous evaluation of program area and business functions would be to come up with a quick method of data collection. This does not seem to be our strong point.**

**This seems to be a costly and time-consuming process that will take many resources away from our administrative staff. I would prefer we go out of house for this step. I would like to see the business community or the city included in this step and not the School of Education.**

**General Questions:**

**Please define who the external partners will be in these new evaluation methods if we choose to do this work on our own.**

External partners could include the UW-Madison, other research agencies, or other school districts in a collaborative partnership, e.g., Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN).

**How will we prioritize among the steps of which all but two are priority one? Please give a listing of staff involved, cost and timeline.**

The action team worked very hard at trying to achieve consensus on priority. Detailed operational plans have yet to be developed, but will be by administration.

**Can we submit an RFP? Could we work with area districts to get the cost down?**

There are many options to be explored. The action team did not discuss any specific approaches.

**In addition, we are now asking to "leverage time… to analyze data." Is MTI on board for this? What is our strategy to accomplish this? Will this work be one-time or ongoing?**

The action team considered this an on-going activity, and could be leveraged through innovative ideas for creating release time. It should complement existing school improvement planning efforts and data workshops that involve staff.

## Resource/Capacity Action Plan - Measurable Objective #2 - Prioritize and Allocate Resources (page 63)

**Arlene Silveira**
**It would be helpful to have the Master Facilities Plan cross-referenced in this section.**

**Maya Cole**
**My biggest concern is a need for a timeline and plan of action to address the critical issue. "More rigorous resource allocation based on effectiveness." How are we specifically going to do this?**

This specific statement and action plan is driven by an assumption that a model and/or system will be created to help this process. This model/system will for the first time take into account things such as measures, outcomes, time, etc., rather than financial data driving the decision making process. We will have to work with other school districts and select outside entities to aid our development of this process based upon what data would be necessary to provide accurate and relevant information.

**All Action Steps –**
**The measurable goal of prioritizing and allocating resources effectively and equitably seems like a large task to take on with not much clarity in how we will accomplish this enormous task.**

**General Questions:**
**Can we consider going outside the system to do this work? I would like some follow-up discussion as to how we could accomplish this in-house. Have we considered using an outside source that could help us plan better to align resources to support student success? Are there business partners that we could use as a free service?**

Outside partners should be considered as appropriate when internal resources are not available or appropriate. The action team discussed collaborative partnerships as important aspects of such work.

**How will the Equity Task Force Report fit in here?**

This should be explored.

**Does this action plan cover all programs and services and personnel in the district? Why were there no details or specifics? Can we reference and include reports that we have so far (Building Maintenance, Tech Plan, Food Services Report, etc.)?**

Alignment of the strategic plan should be made in conjunction with all other functional plans.

**Please include a description of the process for evaluating staff and personnel as a part of this plan. I would like to include something that we can bring to the community that shows we have some sort of oversight in the fact that personnel are being evaluated on a regular basis. Is the current administrative staff in support of this change?**

The committee did not describe any details about how to operationalize this system.

**Are we going to measure academic outcomes? Priority 1 is to measure system-wide, and pilot a program beginning with business and non-instructional operations.**

Academic outcomes were included in the discussion by the Action Team along with non-instructional outcomes.

**I would like to see the Strategic Plan focus the business/non-instructional part of the system to support instructional operations (i.e. the classroom) and our student goals for success. Why is this not our number one priority?**

The Board will establish the final prioritization of all action steps.

**When will we measure instructional operations as they relate to effectiveness? I believe the work of Marguerite Roza gets to the heart of this issue. In the School Finance Redesign Project, *Allocation Anatomy: How District Policies That Deploy Resources Can Support (or Undermine) District Reform Strategies*, May 15, 2008. (See http://www.crpe.org/cs/crpe/view/csr_pubs/230 ) Particularly helpful on these points are: Table 1, pg. 3; pg. 7, What Gets Allocated; and, Table 2, pg. 12 of the report.**

**How will we determine: What gets allocated? The reporting authority? Who is accountable for practices that dictate the flow of resources – centralized or school-based? What type of reform strategy do we intend to implement – decentralized, centralized, formula or a combination of all three? How will our allocation processes fit together to support our strategies to better serve our diverse body of students?**

Instructional operations were included as part of the discussion among the Action Team. How to conduct the appropriate measurement remains to be determined. Recommendations should come

from administration on these matters. The referenced resources can be included in this exploration, and are appreciated.

**Arlene Silveira**
**Measurable Action Step #1 (page 63) - "Tie budgetary decisions to system-wide measurement tool." This references Madison Measures from the City of Madison. Does this measurement tool have to be purchased? Are their licensing fees? Could you give us an example of what a tool like this would tell us?**

**Ed Hughes**
**Measurable Action Step #1 (page 63) - "Tie budgetary decisions to a system-wide measurement tool..." Can you provide examples of such a system wide measure tool?**

At this time we don't have a specific model or analysis tool that would function system wide. Research would have to be completed on the topic and most likely a functional tool would have to be developed in house to provide this information. This tool is meant to break down barriers of isolation that are perceived to exist between financial cost information and outcome based information, marrying the two to provide a full picture to the Board of Education.

Madison Measures is a system of establishing operational benchmarks of specific department performance. The measures align to the operational objectives of the department. Trends are monitored over time, generally annually. Comparisons are made to external benchmarks, e.g., other cities, when appropriate. It is a locally developed set of measures that does not use external consulting resources.

The 2009 Madison Measures document is posted at this web site:

http://www.cityofmadison.com/mayor/projects/documents/MadisonMeasures-2009.pdf

**Arlene Silveira**
**Measurable Action Step #3 (page 63) - "Conduct secondary research to determine what is effective, focusing on rigorous research models." The visible result is that every plan for program implementation will be accompanied by a bibliography of high quality current research. This seems really broad. Everything we do will have to be accompanied by a bibliography of high quality current research? What does this mean? Can it be narrowed down a bit?**

**Lucy Mathiak**
**Measurable Action Step #3, (page 63) – "Conduct secondary research to determine what is effective, focusing on rigorous research models; draw upon UW resources for learning about what other districts have done." Do we miss out by focusing on UW resources? Wouldn't we want to do some benchmarking via WASB, the Lighthouse Project, etc.? Do we not want to consult, as appropriate, studies by the National Research Council or other like organizations?**

**"Every plan for program implementation will be accompanied by a bibliography of high quality current research." Who decides high quality current research? Who will prepare such bibliographies? Does this preclude innovative programs for which there won't be research because the program is being imagined for the first time?**

**Ed Hughes**
**Measurable Action Step #3, (page 63) – "Conduct secondary research..." Who is proposed to undertake such research?**

It was discussed that instructional and support interventions should be selected for implementation in part and as appropriate based on established effects grounded in rigorous research. The U.S. Department of Education maintains a web site called "The What Works Clearinghouse" that identifies interventions which have been validated based on the "scientifically research based" methods called for under No Child Left behind (NCLB). There are other sites that compile results of research as well. The bibliographies do not have to be exhaustingly lengthy documents, bit they should inform the District's deployment. For example, if the prior research suggests that implementation should be conducted in a specific manner in order to achieve the desired effects then the professional development associated with the intervention within the District should stress these facts and deployment at the school level should be contingent on using these approaches. The action step is recommending that there be some background investigation of possible interventions prior to moving forward, and that the basis for moving forward is strong effects found elsewhere. However, the call for conducting secondary research should not preclude the possibility of implementing completely new interventions if there is other compelling factors that suggest the new intervention may achieve significant effects. There will be circumstances where novel ideas are created within the District, and this should be nurtured.

The UW-Madison is only one resource that could be called on for informing us of intervention effectiveness. It is referenced because it is conveniently located and has acted as a partner with MMSD in many areas. Other entities can also serve in this capacity.


## Resource/Capacity Action Plan - Measurable Objective #3 - Pursue Necessary Resources (page 64)

**Arlene Silveira**
**There are an awful lot of "1" priorities (10 of 14 action steps) in this measurable objective. Is this realistic?**

The committee worked hard at trying to prioritize the action steps. It was difficult to find steps that were not important to all committee members.

**Maya Cole**
**All Action Steps –**
**Please give examples of external partners. We spent a lot of time describing/defining what a partnership is in the district. I would like to see us use this work in the Strategic Plan.**

Examples of external partners that were talked about were the local business community, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, local non-profit organizations, and other municipal entities. These examples are not meant to be all encompassing, but show examples of how we believe we can learn from other entities in our pursuit of resources.

**I would like to see us incorporate an action step that addresses how we will sustain this effort over time.**

**Ed Hughes**
**Measurable Action Step #1 (page 64) "Develop ongoing strategies to identify resources that leverage outcomes." What does this mean? Examples?**

The intent of this statement is to get at creating a system that can help/aid in identification of resources. Many times our pursuit of resources is driven by our need to provide a program or service. I believe this aims at identifying resources through a system that isn't driven by a specific program need, but rather a more thoughtful process.

Examples are embedded within our system currently, but currently we are struggling with our Food Service program. Conversations have already began within the community, administration, and board of education relevant to pursuit of resources to help pay for certain programs. This "system" would hopefully identify resources relevant to food service well before there was a problem that forced our district to react.

**Arlene Silveira**
**Measurable Action Step #3 (page 64) "Use data to develop marketing/branding mechanisms and strategies in order to, for example, retain current students and recruit new students to the MMSD." This does not really fit under a measurable objective of "Pursue Necessary Resources." This is redundant with the Organization/Systems Action Plan that focused on Communication about the MMSD. Namely, Measurable Actions Steps #1 (p. 69) and #4 (p. 70). I think it best fits in the Organization/Systems Action Plan.**

**Maya Cole**
**The marketing/branding aspect of this strategy could go in the communication section of the Strategic Plan.**

## Organizations/Systems Action Plan

## 1)        Organizations/Systems Action Plan---Accountability

### Action Step 1 (page 66)
**Lucy Mathiak**
**Have we considered the possibility that people who speak another language as their first language, may not READ the language? Have we ever checked to see if the multilingual written translations are effective or used?**

Current practice is to send both the English version and translated version to households where a different language is listed. We will have to do more checking on the level of use of translated materials.

**Lucy Mathiak**
**Does this assume that our PTO/As are functional with high levels of participation? Does this assume that our PTO/A's are representative of the parents and students in our school communities?**

PTO/As are seen as one way to reach a group of stakeholders. There was an understanding among committee members that there is great variation between schools around how PTO/As function and who attends and that our reach will be beyond PTO/As.

**Arlene Silveira**
**The measurable action step in the first objective (page 66) refers to "stakeholders." Can we add an action step that identifies the "stakeholders"? I think it would be helpful to have a publicly agreed upon list of stakeholders.**

**Lucy Mathiak**
**Who are our Stakeholders? How are they identified and by whom? Do we include people who are not parents?**

The committee discussed stakeholders in the broadest sense and used the term to reflect all members. Yes, we can add an action step to define stakeholders and allow for board input and approval. The lists generated from the Superintendent search and Strategic Plan would be a good place to start. We definitely will include people who do not have children in school.

**Arlene Silveira**
**Measurable Action step 2 (page 67) states, "MMSD will have a consistent, structured and ongoing process for telling stakeholders how well the district is doing." This was given a #2 priority. I would like consideration to moving this up to a #1 priority. I think the performance of the district is critical to communicate.**

Yes, we can the priority from level 2 to level 1.

**Beth Moss**
**I do not see the need to have both Actions Steps 1 and 2. Page 66 and 67**

The intent of Action step 1 is to be able to tell **"what"** the district is doing. Action step 2 is to be able to tell progress, how "well or not well" we are doing. Action step 3 is to **"listen and get feed back"** from the community.

## Action Step 3 (page 67)
**Lucy Mathiak**
**How are we doing on requesting the placement data for MMSD graduates from the people who do the testing for all UW system campuses? Has the request been made? And did it include variables such as type of math curriculum?**

We have not put in this request yet.

**Lucy Mathiak**
**What would we view as reasonable good attendance at an engagement session? (without counting BOE members or district staff?)**

The committee did not specifically talk about number of people. This is something we can build into the process. It is true below a certain number it does not seen productive to have MMSD engagement sessions. The committee did talk about trying to go to existing groups.

## 2)	Organizations/Systems Action Plan - Climate (page 68)

**Beth Moss**
**PBS is not mentioned.**

Action Step Number 4 is intended to cover the various techniques used such as the Above and Below the Line model, Positive Behavior Intervention System, Student Intervention Management System, code of conduct and others.

**Ed Hughes**
**All schools in the district will collaborate with community based organizations and agencies to foster a safe, bully-free community." Which organizations and agencies? What form would such collaboration take?**

The specifics will need to be determined as we move into implementation, but should include community centers, after-school care providers, and mental health and social service agencies that support MMSD students.

## 3)	Organizations/Systems Action Plan—Communication About MMSD

## Action Step 1 (page 69)
**Lucy Mathiak**
**How will these groups be selected and why?**

The specific groups will be determined as we implement this action step. We would start with the groups we have used in the past such as the superintendent search, strategic planning and various task forces. We would identify which groups are missing and expand from there.

Arlene Silveira
Measurable action step #1- development of an annual communication plan (page 69).
Under resources needed it references realigning the public information office on this task. I
think we need to use an external group/agency to develop the initial plan which should
include branding. They would not have to do the tactical work but I think it is important
for us to have assistance in messaging and message delivery models. We went out to RFP
on a communication plan before Dr. Nerad started. It was one of Art Rainwater's goals.
We decided not to move forward because we had a new superintendent starting and we felt
it important that he/she was involved in the communications plan.

We are in agreement around the need to develop a marketing plan through the use of an external
group. This is the intent of what needs to be done under the communication plan. We can add
language to reflect using an external group to help develop the plan.


## 4) Organizations/Systems Action Plan—Cooperation/Collaboration

Action Step 1 (page 71)
Lucy Mathiak
How was the dollar amount of $60,000 arrived at for the annual leadership conference?

This is our estimate of the total cost for the first day back inservice day for all staff. We are
doing the first one this year that involves staff as presenters in a conference like setting. A more
precise cost will be available after the August 31 conference.

Arlene Silveira
Measurable action step # 4 (page 70) – study trends in out of district transfers, etc. This is
very important and should be a prerequisite to the communication plan.

We will reorder the steps listed to reflect this. Both steps are priority 1.

Arlene Silvera
I think it is important to include a measurable action step that evaluates different methods
of communication to stakeholders. We need to get beyond just the MMSD web site and
MMSD today.

We can add this step. This could also be part of the work done around the communication plan.

Arelene Silveira
Measurable action steps #3 and #4 (page 71-72). They state, respectively: "Build systems
that will allow students to access course selections from other schools." "Expand
technology or virtual classes and options to increase the district's ability to meet diverse
learning styles." Although taking classes from other districts and expanding virtual
learning may be important, there are many other options we need to explore. I don't think
these 2 specific options should be called out separately. I would eliminate action #3
(selections from other schools) and modify #4 to read something like: "evaluate educational
options to increase the district's ability to meet diverse learning styles." "Expand
technology" could be added as another action but would need a better descriptor.

The intent of "other schools" in this case was schools within MMSD. So more options for students to take courses at other high schools. We will take a look at revising the language and changing the language of the action step.

**Arlene Silveira**
**In measurable action step #5 (page 72) it states, "Build systems or forums for coordinating staffing discussions to improve efficiencies." Is this supposed to say "staff" rather than "staffing" or is the intent to have forums to discuss staffing?**

It should read staff discussions. We will change it.

## 5) Organizations/Systems Action Plan—Decision-Making (page 73)

**Beth Moss**
**Much of this will come under an effective communications plan thus is redundant.**

**Arlene Silveira**
**"The BOE, superintendent and other MMSD administrators will make direct link to the strategic plan when making decisions and determining priorities." As not every decision we will relate to the strategic plan, I think this action step needs to be clarified. What types of decisions?**

We could add language "as appropriate." The intent was to link as many decisions and priorities to the strategic plan as possible. It is true not all decisions or situations will fit under this model.

<u>Action Step 4 (page 73)</u>
**Lucy Mathiak**
**Do we assume that our PTO/As are the definitive source of input? Are there other groups we should meet with? How would this intersect with other board responsibilities, including the school liaison roles?**

PTO/As are seen as one group. As we move forward with this action step other groups will need to be identified. It does seem this activity fits nicely with the board school liaison role. Details of that intersection would need to be worked out.

## 6) Organizations/Systems Action Plan—Partnerships

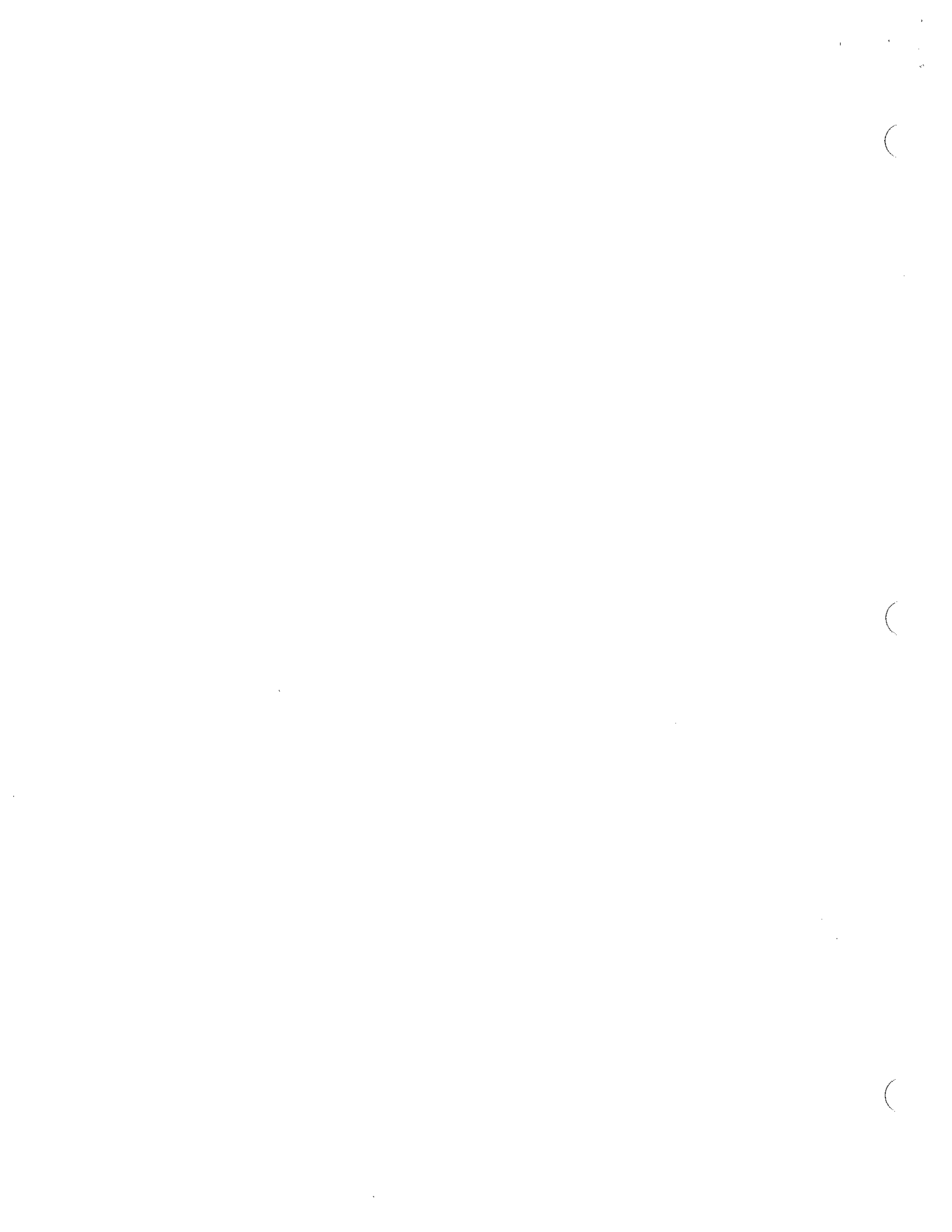<u>Action Step 1 (page 75)</u>
**Lucy Mathiak**
**Is the intent for-credit or enrichment programming? If credit is to be received, how will the academic content, rigor, and alignment with DPI requirements be assessed and verified?**

The intent is for these activities to be both enrichment and credit earning opportunities. For the credit earning opportunities, content, rigor and alignment will have to be developed for all situations.

**Arlene Silveira**

**We have many different types of existing relationships and they are not referenced in this section. Do we need to incorporate them into the plan? For example, will selection of our Fund 80 partners in the future be required to support the strategic plan?**

In part this is a question back for the board. As much as possible activities should be linked to the strategic plan.

**Glossary of Terms**
*Updated 4/16/09*

**Accelerated learning**

A pathway of learning options that allows all students to proceed at the learning rate appropriate to their need and readily access their next level of achievement regardless of grade level or age (e.g. post secondary credit, TAG programming, online options); educational options that allow students to close the gap among peers as quickly as possible; a pathway of learning that does not permit interventions to intentionally add time/course sequences to maintain gaps.

**Authentic assessment**

Assessment strategies that are aligned with the primary goals of instruction; authentic assessments may include: portfolios, lab practical exams, performances; long-term projects; public exhibitions

**Comprehensive**

A selection of courses and educational opportunities that allow all students to follow a pathway that is productive for their interests and helps prepare them for their post-secondary options

**Culturally relevant**

Culturally relevant teaching is a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Culturally responsive teaching is defined as using the cultural characteristics, experiences and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively (Gay, 2002).

**Curriculum**

Curriculum, instruction and assessment are a package; one component cannot function adequately without attention to each of the others. An excellent curriculum cannot achieve what is intended unless it is well taught and appropriately addressed. Realizing that the enacted curriculum is jointly constructed by the teacher and students as they interact with instructional materials, the selection of materials that will best facilitate construction of student knowledge is one of the teacher's most important tasks. A curriculum is not a text book or a set of materials, but the selection of investigations, the sequencing of them, the assessment of understandings gleaned from pursuit of the tasks at hand and the additional planning for capitalizing on the learning that takes place as a results of the explorations." (p. 37 Planning Curriculum in Mathematics, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2001).

**Educational model**

The guiding principles, beliefs and structure that defines the educational experience of a particular system

**Flexible instruction**

Responsive to individual student strengths and needs through learning experiences that are relevant, engaging and require critical thinking from all students. Differentiation; a wide repertoire of teaching strategies that are used regularly to ensure that students' different strengths and learning preferences are recognized and nurtured, core instructional practice includes a variety of teaching strategies in all classes/courses

**Participatory education**

An educational system that honors and recognizes the value of student options, choices and input into the curricula and teaching practices; includes students in leadership roles

**Revolutionize**

Completely re-design; energize; alter; dramatically change the educational system to improve experiences, achievement and outcomes for all students

**Rigor**

Appropriate and worthwhile challenges with respect to the intellectual processes of an assignment for all students, essential and enduring coursework or task

**Support**

Providing counseling, services, encouragement, and curricular scaffolding to allow students to succeed, mentorship

# 21st Century Learning Skills
## Partnership for 21st Century Learning Skills

## Creativity and Innovation

*Think Creatively*

- Use a wide range of idea creation techniques (such as brainstorming)
- Create new and worthwhile ideas (both incremental and radical concepts)
- Elaborate, refine, analyze and evaluate their own ideas in order to improve and maximize creative efforts

*Work Creatively with Others*

- Develop, implement and communicate new ideas to others effectively
- Be open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives; incorporate group input and feedback into the work
- Demonstrate originality and inventiveness in work and understand the real world limits to adopting new ideas
- View failure as an opportunity to learn; understand that creativity and innovation is a long-term, cyclical process of small successes and frequent mistakes

*□Implement Innovations*

- Act on creative ideas to make a tangible and useful contribution to the field in which the innovation will occur

## Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

*Reason Effectively*

- Use various types of reasoning (inductive, deductive, etc.) as appropriate to the situation

*Use Systems Thinking*

- Analyze how parts of a whole interact with each other to produce overall outcomes in complex systems

*Make Judgments and Decisions*

- Effectively analyze and evaluate evidence, arguments, claims and beliefs
- Analyze and evaluate major alternative points of view
- Synthesize and make connections between information and arguments
- Interpret information and draw conclusions based on the best analysis
- Reflect critically on learning experiences and processes

*Solve Problems*

- Solve different kinds of non-familiar problems in both conventional and innovative ways
- Identify and ask significant questions that clarify various points of view and lead to better solutions

## Communication and Collaboration

*Communicate Clearly*

- Articulate thoughts and ideas effectively using oral, written and nonverbal communication skills in a variety of forms and contexts
- Listen effectively to decipher meaning, including knowledge, values, attitudes and intentions
- Use communication for a range of purposes (e.g. to inform, instruct, motivate and persuade)
- Utilize multiple media and technologies, and know how to judge their effectiveness a priori as well as assess their impact
- Communicate effectively in diverse environments (including multi-lingual)

*Collaborate with Others*

- Demonstrate ability to work effectively and respectfully with diverse teams
- Exercise flexibility and willingness to be helpful in making necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal
- Assume shared responsibility for collaborative work, and value the individual contributions made by each team member