



Pittsburgh
Public Schools



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PITTSBURGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS UNVEILS GUIDE TO THE FUTURE WITH “2017-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN: EXPECT GREAT THINGS”

Unprecedented community input process, data review and third-party analysis developed the plan’s long-term outcomes, strategic themes, initiatives and performance measures to be phased in with continuous monitoring

PITTSBURGH, April 27, 2017 – A five-year strategic plan to guide the future of Pittsburgh Public Schools sets forth four desired long-term outcomes, with four strategic themes and 19 initiatives to achieve those changes, which include eliminating achievement disparities and improving professional development for teachers and staff. Superintendent Anthony Hamlet revealed the *2017-2022 Strategic Plan: Expect Great Things* during a ceremony at Heinz Field involving PPS students and the induction of seven members into the District’s 2017 Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame.

“The city of Pittsburgh has always been known for its grit, its hardworking spirit, and its ability to keep reinventing itself. Now is the time to reinvent Pittsburgh Public Schools and put the Pittsburgh perseverance to work,” Dr. Hamlet said in his welcome to attendees.

The plan caps nine months of review and strategic planning that began with Dr. Hamlet’s “Look, Listen and Learn” tour in August 2016, in which he visited the District’s 54 schools, two Center Schools, and met with staff. The District held nine public listening sessions across the city and provided four special listening opportunities to the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers (PFT) union membership, principals, the faith-based community and high school students. Participants at these sessions and in an online survey offered input on District assets that must be sustained, areas needing improvement, and programs or solutions the District should consider.

“Throughout this history-making community process, we received feedback from more than 3,500 individuals, to help us prioritize the needs of PPS stakeholders and top priority areas for improving student proficiency,” Dr. Hamlet said. “We couldn’t be prouder of this tremendous community feedback, which augmented our thorough review of data and an important third-party analysis by the Council of the Great City Schools. All of this guided our development of a succinct, focused and logical strategic plan. We also identified Theme Teams who helped develop the objectives and strategic initiatives to achieve our goals.”

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The plan outlines steps needed to reach each of these long-term outcomes:

- Increase proficiency in literacy for all students
- Increase proficiency in math for all students
- Ensure all students are equipped with skills to succeed in college, career and life
- Eliminate racial disparity in achievement levels of African-American students.

The plan also includes specific targets for achievement to measure success each year through 2022. The four strategic themes are:

- Create a positive and supportive school culture
- Develop and implement a rigorous, aligned instructional system
- Provide appropriate instructional support for teachers and staff
- Foster a culture of high performance for all employees.

Strategic initiatives will be phased in over three years to ensure sufficient staff capacity, strong implementation planning and continuous monitoring. In year one (May 2017 through June 2017), nine strategic initiatives will begin to be implemented. Each initiative is led by an action team of 5-8 staff members, with support from an advisory committee. System-wide communication will ensure transparency, buy-in and accountability. Superintendent Hamlet will provide regular process updates to inform staff and the public.

“Since my first day on the job, my priority has been to create a student-focused culture that is built on continuous improvement,” Dr. Hamlet said. “That’s why performance measures are so important to this plan – we need to ensure that we stay on track to improve student achievement and give every child the supports and opportunities to be successful after graduation. This is our opportunity to align with the growing Pittsburgh marketplace and develop well-rounded, academically prepared graduates who can compete locally, nationally, and globally.”

PPS Board President Dr. Regina Holley praised the teamwork and community-oriented process involved with developing the plan.

“Improving our schools and students’ learning is a process that involves all of us in the community. I look for many positive things to happen over the next few years,” Dr. Holley said. “My colleagues and I have charged Superintendent Hamlet with developing critical initiatives, such as community schools and restorative practices, to help children, their teachers, and families. I know that this District can step up as a leader. We have a passion for educating students and a commitment to make great things happen.”

Essential to the development of the plan was a 2016 report by the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS), which provided an honest assessment of the PPS organization and compared the District to high-performing urban districts across the country.

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“This process was both enlightening and encouraging,” Dr. Hamlet said. “By diving into our organization, we were able to see the challenges and opportunities for change. We discovered that despite some shortcomings, we are a District with talented, committed educators and staff who want the best for all Pittsburgh Public students – a chance to graduate from our schools prepared for college, career, and life. We expect great things will come from that.”

Participants in the Strategic Plan ceremony included the Pittsburgh Perry Junior ROTC Color Guard and Major Christopher Augustine for Posting of the Colors; the All-City Choir presenting the Star-Spangled Banner; a welcome by Roman Ramsey, a senior at Pittsburgh Perry; and “Anything Goes” presented by Pittsburgh CAPA

In line with the theme “Expect Great Things,” those inducted into the 2017 Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame are: Dr. Justin Meyer, a professor in the Division of Biology at the University of California -San Diego; Dr. Rahmon Hart Sr., Director of Community Relations at Rivers Casino; Pittsburgh City Councilwoman Natalia Rudiak; Tamara Whiting, the national sales manager for Cincinnati USA and founder of the nonprofit SisterFriend, Inc.; Samantha Paige Davis, field engagement manager for YWCA USA and founder of the nonprofit Black Swan Academy; Anna Tarka-Dinunzio, a second-grade teacher at Pittsburgh Phillips and dedicated advocate for her students; and Tony and Grammy Award-winning actor, singer, director, composer and playwright Billy Porter.

The full *2017-2022 Strategic Plan: Expect Great Things* can be found on the District’s website: www.ppsstrategicplan.org.

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