

MEMORANDUM

To: Burlington Board of School Commissioners
From: Tom Flanagan, Superintendent
CC: Bonnie Ryder, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
Date: December 6, 2022
Subject: Superintendent Goals Mid-Year Reflection for SY 2022-23

Purpose: The purpose of this memo is to present a mid-year reflection on the Superintendent's goals for the 2022-23 school year to the Board of School Commissioners. The document includes personal reflection on my goals for SY 22-23 up to November 30th and plans for continuing to work toward achieving these goals.

Superintendent's Goals for SY 2022-23

To develop SY 2022-23 Goals, I analyzed feedback from the 2021-22 Superintendent evaluation, reflected on my 2021-22 goals, and projected the priority areas of the strategic plan over the next year.

Based on this analysis and reflection, I set the following goals for the school year 2022-23.

- 1. Policy and Procedure Development:** Implement a process for updating, maintaining, and disseminating policies and procedures to ensure the District and Board are aligned with federal, state, and local requirements. Ensure policies are developed with an equity lens.

Status: On Track

Reflection: In my 21-22 evaluation, the domain of policy and procedure maintenance and dissemination was an area of growth. I have received feedback that our systems need to be strengthened in order to achieve our strategic priorities, and this first goal will be important in setting a strong foundation that will allow us to focus on being student-centered. My theory of action is that developing better systems will allow us to better implement the strategic plan, using the principles of co-creating and radical inclusion. Implementing this plan will be critical to the success of the district.

This year, I have identified our new Executive Director of Human Resources as the responsible party for leading this work stream. We have set and held regular policy committee meetings to ensure the board and District work collaboratively and deliberately to address this critical area of work. We are close to finalizing Policy Title A30: Development and Adoption of School Board Policies and have a second read of this policy on December 2, 2022. This policy includes the use of a board-approved Equity Tool that will ensure our process of developing and adopting policies is equitable and considers the impact of our policies on those who have been most historically marginalized by our system. In addition to this, I have co-created a process for [procedure development](#) with my Cabinet to ensure our procedures are developed collaboratively, aligned to policies, and are clear to staff, students, and the community. As of



DISTRICT OFFICES

Tom Flanagan, Superintendent
150 Colchester Avenue
Burlington, VT 05401
802-865-5332
tflanagan@bsdvt.org

this writing, we have taken up multiple policies, the Board has passed two policies, and the District has developed procedures for two policies (Volunteer Procedures & Attendance Procedures).

The next step in this goal area is to bring a comprehensive recommendation to the board in January of policies the district recommends we should update, sunset, and develop with a corresponding schedule.

- 2. Strategic Plan Implementation:** Develop a Strategic Plan Steering Committee that utilizes the principle of radical inclusion and equity, and create priority area teams that develop and monitor key strategies and metrics of the plan.

Status: On Track

Reflection: In my hiring process, the community and school board were clear that an organized strategic plan with metrics and clear lines of accountability and responsibility was a core expectation. I agree that this is the foundation of our work and that all of our decisions should be aligned to our strategic priorities. Now that we have a [strategic plan](#), the first year (SY 2022-23) of implementation will be critical, as one of the key concerns from our Guiding Coalition who developed the plan was that we would not follow through with implementation.

We have developed our Strategic Planning Steering Committee using the principle of radical inclusion and have met twice this fall. The Steering Committee includes 10 teachers, 10 students, 14 educators, and one community member. In these convenings, we reviewed the overall strategic plan and the steering committee's role in shepherding our work on the plan. We also dug into the first priority area, Well Being and Belonging, to begin to develop strategies. Victor Prussack, our Coordinator of Engagement, has been leading the Strategic Planning implementation, carrying on in his leadership role developing the strategic plan.

In addition to the Steering committee, we have identified leads for each of the priority areas and those leads have developed and begun work on the strategies that align with the goal areas. These are cross-functional working teams. The one priority area that still needs identified leadership is Priority Area 1: Well Being and Belonging. The vision is that our new Executive Director of Student Supports will lead this work with a newly developed position (funded through IDEA resources), called the Associate Director of Wellness. These are two positions that we need to fill. In the meantime, we are developing strategies with various working groups for this priority area. Most recently, I have been working with my Teacher Advisory Group to develop strategies for educator well-being. All said, the implementation of the strategic plan is moving ahead at full speed.

- 3. Equity and Deep Learning (Priority Area 2: Deeper Learning for Every Student):** Implement new literacy curricular materials K-5.

Status: Complete

Reflection: A 2020-21 literacy review of BSD schools showed that our literacy practices needed more support and resources to ensure we effectively teach students to read at the critical early elementary age. A strong literacy program that meets the needs of all students in BSD is a core equity strategy and a key strategy of Priority Area 2: Deeper Learning for Every Student. To address this priority, we used ESSER funds in Spring-Summer 2022 to invest in high-quality curricular materials and embedded professional learning in instructional practices that prioritize deeper learning through systematic phonics instruction, knowledge building, and a joy for reading and exploration.

In August of 2022, we began a successful implementation of these new literacy practices using materials and professional learning from American Reading Company (ARC). These practices and materials directly align to Priority Area 3: Deeper Learning for Every Student in that they include systematic phonics instruction, individualized assessment, conferencing, goal setting, and learning plans for each student. In addition, each K-5 teacher in our district has set a goal for each student's literacy growth as part of their annual goal setting. This shift in the way we approach literacy instruction has been a big lift. Stephanie Phillips, our Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, has led this shift and she has worked closely with school-based instructional coaches and principals to ensure the initial shift is happening successfully. All teachers are using the materials and receiving coaching from ARC and school-based instructional coaches. We are pleased with the start and working to ensure this happens as an adaptive shift that has a lasting impact on reducing disparities and improving the learning experience of all of our students.

- 4. High School Design (Priority Area 3: Reimagined High School):** Develop a plan such that the citizens of Burlington approve a bond to build the new BHS/BTC.

Status: Complete

Reflection: We just had a very important bond vote that the citizens of Burlington approved in November 2022. This campaign took significant time, resources and effort, and it will set the foundation for Priority Area 3: Reimagined High School. We achieved this goal with nearly 76% of the votes in the November election. This was a true team effort, with Russ Elek, our Communications and Public Relations Specialist, leading the efforts from the District side. This goal was achieved with significant leadership and collaboration from the Burlington Board of School Commissioners and Board Chair Clare Wool.