Niles Township District for Special Education

Strategic Plan
2022-2026

Mission Statement: At NTDSE, we collaborate with member districts and families to promote success and independence for all students.

Vision Statement: Empowering All to Achieve

Belief Statements: At NTDSE, we
- BELIEVE in the potential of all students
- STRIVE for equity and inclusivity
- HONOR diversity
- CULTIVATE collaborative relationships with families, staff, districts, and community
- PROVIDE high-quality professional learning opportunities for continuous growth
- IMPLEMENT evidence-based practices through a continuum of individualized learning opportunities
- ADVOCATE for public policy and legislation benefiting students with disabilities

Goal 1 - Excellence in Service

Provide service to our districts, communities, and families which meets or exceeds standards.

Objective	Activities	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Objective 1.A.					
Define standards of excellence in collaboration with stakeholders for District Services and Family & Community Engagement.	• Form committees to determine standards of excellence.	- Family Community Engagement Committee Developed	- Objective shared with committees Input collected from Parent survey and satisfaction survey to drive the development of standards	Family Engagement subcommittee has determined the groups to include and are refining questions to add to existing surveys.	
	• Identify the timeline for the review cycle.				
Objective 1.B.					
Implement the review cycle for continuous improvement.	• Develop measurement tools to identify strengths and areas for growth.		- Satisfaction Survey and Parent Survey completed	Refining measurement tool	
	• Disseminate surveys to develop feedback.		- Satisfaction survey sent 12/2023 Parent survey sent 3/2024	Spring 2025 Parent & Staff Surveys Winter 2025 District Surveys	
	• Analyze feedback to respond to needs.		- Feedback analyzed 3/2024		
	• Publish outcome data.				

Objective 1.C.					
Continuously review and refine standards of excellence to ensure NTDSE is fulfilling our mission, vision, core values, and beliefs.	● Reconvene committee to review progress.			Annually review	
	● Identify goals for continued development.				

Goal 2 - High Impact Programming

Engage all learners in evidence-based practices that will have a dynamic impact on their lifelong outcomes.

Objective	Activities	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Objective 2.A.					
Implement a curricular review process to ensure the implementation of high-quality programming in NTDSE programs.	• Identify evidence-based practices.	-Continue to explore PEAK programming throughout NTDSE classrooms.	-Partnered with a National expert to support the implementation of the PEAK / LIFE program -Implementation of CFC program resources in Language Arts, Math, and Science including Fundations -Implemented Reading Mastery Transformations -Offered year-long professional learning on the Unique Learning System - Explore the AIM approach in	-Full implementation of PEAK across Project CLASS programming. Annual assessments of skills for students occurring. -Coaches receive ongoing consultation -Development of precursor curriculum to support implementation in LIFE programming -AIM approach consistent across ABLE and Transition -Everyday Speech	

| | | | | ABLE classrooms

-Explore Everyday Speech across Satellite classrooms | implementation and alignment to year-long scope and sequence

-NTDSE participation in the CFC Literacy review process | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ● Analyze data to identify strengths and areas for growth. | | | - Collect baseline data regarding AIM needs

- Administer academic assessment to gather baseline data in conjunction with CFC | -Utilize the ALCOT to assess classroom traits related to evidence-based curriculum and interventions with measurable outcomes

-ALCOT pilot across Satellite and Molloy classrooms through peer observation partnerships | |
| | ● Adjust instructional approaches as needed. | | | | -Use ALCOT results to adjust instructional approaches and plan professional learning as appropriate | |
| | ● Publish outcome data. | | | | | |

Objective 2.B.					
Develop a common coaching framework to support the implementation of evidence-based practices.	• Review the instructional coaching framework to ensure consistency.	-Development of an Instructional Coaching Framework that encompasses a continuum of coaching services within NTDSE and Member Districts	- Utilize the Coaching Goal Framework to prioritize district needs and coaching supports -Certification and Supervision of RBTs (50 paras certified, currently 24 at NTDSE, 2 in D69, 4 in D73.5)	Goal Met- ongoing	
	• Develop an instructional coaching playbook to support the implementation of professional learning.		- Network with Member Districts to facilitate the development of Instructional Playbooks	Goal Met- ongoing	
Objective 2.C.					
Identify the impact of professional learning on NTDSE educator practices.	• Develop guidelines for the implementation of instructional classroom practices.	-NTDSE Classroom Practice Profiles include a continuum of coaching services.	- Satellite Early Release focused on the implementation of Practice Profiles including self-reflection	-Consistent instructional blocks for Molloy - Use of common curriculum	
	• Develop program goals to measure the implementation of targeted areas.		- Survey teachers to identify areas of growth and current strengths regarding	- Develop a survey to identify program goals	

				curriculum and programming		
	● Identify prioritized strategies for implementation.			- Develop a Professional Learning Plan for 2025 focused on curriculum needs		
	● Review and publish implementation outcomes.					

Goal 3 - Building a Connected Community
Expand connections with the community to increase engagement, opportunities, and accessibility.

Objective	Activities	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Objective 3.A.					
Increase family support and home/school connections.	• Survey families to determine needs and wants.	- Completed survey for parent group topics	- Updated survey for parent group topics to drive schedule of events - IEP survey (ongoing) to improve teaming with families	- IEP Surveys after IEP meetings continued. Working to provide multi-lingual access. - Created the Family IEP Report in Parent Square. -Used results from 2024 survey to drive parent events for the 2024-25 school year	
	• Promote parent involvement in school events.	-SeeSaw -Email -Newsletter -IEP Meetings	- Parent Square - Email - Newsletters (Executive Director, Molloy News, Early Childhood, Satellite, Family Resource) - IEP Meetings	-Team members are reaching out to parents on an individual basis.. -Community Events Newsletter is sent out monthly.	

				-District Newsletter is sent out monthly.	
	● Increase opportunities to support families.	-Parent PD & Events -Childcare for Events -Contract with a psychiatrist/ psychologist -Summer parent resource fair -Virtual opportunities	- Family Support Specialist - Provide translation and interpretation to families -Summer/ family resource fair live document - Connecting families with outside services (e.g. clothing closet, food pantry, medical diagnostics) - Home visits - Creating materials (e.g. visual supports, checklists) for families to use at home - Family PD & Events - Childcare for Events - Contract with a psychiatrist/ psychologist - Virtual opportunities (e.g. Planning for your Child's Future)	-Established a partnership with UIC to provide medical diagnostic evaluations at NTDSE -Responded parent requests to have a calendar view of parent events. -Provided an opportunity for parents to attend a Mobile ID clinic and receive their ID. - Transition Meetings to support students and families who are aging out. -Toys for Tots	

Objective 3.B.

Engage in community events, coalitions, and initiatives.	• Provide learning opportunities for the community.	-SEED	- SEED - Reframing Best Practices in Early Childhood Conference in partnership with the ECA - Presentation at IAASE - Outreach at D219 - Outreach at Oakton - Recruitment fairs: IASPA, UIUC, Oakton - PREPaRE Training - Mental Health First Aid - Emotional Poverty - I Love You Guys (summer 2024) - LAN Luncheon - Sub Networking	- Planning for your Child's Legal and Financial Future - Sign Language 5 week course -Behavior/Limit Setting -CPR/First Aid - Communication Devices -Processing your child's diagnosis and/or disability/ How and when to share their child's diagnosis - Toileting -Transition to Middle School	
	• Partner with local organizations and participate in community events.	-ECA -Metropolitan Family Services -D219 -Local Libraries -MG Police -Resource Fair -MNASR -Cultural Fair -Clothing Closet -Food Pantry -Knights of Columbus	Partnerships: - Luries - ECA - Childcare Centers - MNASR Molloy Summer Camp - Metropolitan Family Services - D219 - Oakton - Multiple University Partnerships	- Continue with the mentioned partnerships. - Morton Grove Knitting Club -Deaf-Blind Project -Partnership with member district community events (72, 73)	

			- Local Libraries - MG Police - MCC - Clothing Closet - Food Pantry - Niles Township Government - Rustic Falls Volunteer Opportunities: - Cultural Fair - Clothing Closet - Food Pantry - Will's Place - Knights of Columbus - Cradles to Crayons - Feed My Starving Children - Toiletry Drive for Refugees		
Objective 3.C.					
Ensure staff connectedness.	● Form or expand existing committees to address staff satisfaction.	-Committee Fair hosted in conjunction with Institute Day	- Equity Committee (EPIC) - Wellness Committee - Sunshine Committee - Social Media Committee - Family Engagement Committee	-Continue committees -AI Committee -Mentoring Program -Paraprofessional Team meetings	
	● Develop tools to assess staff satisfaction and connection.	-Staff Satisfaction Survey sent Feb. 2023	- Staff Satisfaction Survey sent Feb. 2024	-Use survey information to drive decision-making.	

			-Rating scale within survey	- Rating scale within a survey - Paraprofessional Survey sent out April 2024 - Stay Interviews	-Continue surveys	
	● Analyze feedback and respond to needs.		-Currently analyzing feedback to assist with FY24 planning	- 100% of responses from IEP survey Strongly Agree or Agree with all statements included in the survey - All feedback from families was positive for the 2023-2024 school year based on the survey results - Parent Group survey analyzed, plan for 2024-2025 to include related service in Parent Groups - Currently analyzing staff feedback to assist with FY25 planning	-Continue; will update in June 2025.	

Goal 4 - Fiscal Stewardship
Maintain fiscal health and transparency of the NTDSE finances.

Objective	Activities	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Objective 4.A.					
Review the NTDSE financial model.	• Form committees to review the NTDSE Articles of Agreement.	-Complete- 3 committees. All districts represented.	Completed	-Completed	
	• Determine necessary updates to the Articles of Agreement to best meet the evolving needs of NTDSE and the member districts.	-Complete- worked with the committees and NTDSE attorney.	Completed	-Completed	
	• Update Articles of Agreement and implement identified changes.	-Articles Updated. Currently being reviewed by the NTDSE GB and will go to districts for district approval.	Updated Articles approved by member districts and NTDSE GB March 2023	-Completed	
	• Publish updated Articles of Agreement	-July 1, 2023		-Completed	
Objective 4.B.					
Identify funding sources to support district financial health.	• Secure state & federal revenue, as well as grant opportunities.	Obtained FY 23 School Project Maintenance Grant, continued tracking of DECO grant	Received additional DCEO grant for 150K, received FY24 School Project Maintenance grant and Elevation	-Continue to look for new grant opportunities, -Monitor HFS and Medicaid changes to maximize reimbursement.	

			Educators grant for ELL.	-Applied for School Project Maintenance Grant for FY 25	
	● Assess and adjust costs related to NTDSE programs such as employee benefits, transportation, and technology.	-Currently negotiating union contract.	Settled 3-year CBA 2023-2026	-Implement SPA updates to maximize Medicaid reimbursement -Monitor implementation of SB 3606 on behalf of member districts	

Objective 4.C.					
Respond to the needs of NTDSE and its member districts.	● Monitor student enrollment for the purposes of staffing.	-In a 3-year district look back, the total Niles Township Elementary population has decreased by 1% (102 students). NTDSE has increased the total population by 22% (68 students).	Continuing enrollment monitoring of NTDSE and member district enrollment. Ongoing discussions on ways NTDSE will continue to support member districts' special ed service needs.	-Studying enrollment and space needs. Considering off-site space. -Create programs responding to district needs	
	● Support districts with financial guidance as it relates to special education.	-Annually present student service data to encourage districts to build internal capacity.	Continue to annually present student service data to encourage districts to build internal capacity.	-Onboard new Business managers -SB 3606 oversight -Support districts with contracted services	

Goal 5 - Advocacy and Action
Advocate for students, families, and educators to improve the lives of students with disabilities.

Objective	Activities	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Objective 5.A.					
Empower students to advocate for themselves in school and the community.	• Provide age-appropriate opportunities for students to understand their diverse learning needs and promote healthy behavior and choices.	-Exploring curriculum to support self-advocacy.	- Utilized outside consultant to develop consensus around Transition Planning - Formed a work group composed of teachers and mental health providers	Transition Curriculum and resources completed. Consistent implementation across Middle School programming to develop meaningful goals and transition plans. -Transition survey for parents created and disseminated prior to 8th grade annual reviews.	
	• Explicitly teach students to self-advocate.	-IEP Goals -Teaching community awareness and safety	- Utilized outside consultant to provide Transition Planning Professional Learning for Middle/High School Teachers		

			and Mental Health Team		
	● Increase student participation in IEP meetings.	-Provide video presentations at IEP meetings. -Inviting students to attend IEP meetings.	- Summer Curriculum Project for work group to follow up on Transition Planning for 24-25	-Report out on the number of students who have attended their IEPs or participated via a video/slide during the 24-25 school year in June.	
Objective 5.B.					
Educate families on how to obtain and utilize resources for their students.	● Offer learning opportunities that are responsive to family and staff feedback.	-Resource Fair -Parent Group -Financial Planning -Communication Devices -Safety in the Community and Home. -CRP and First Aid -ASL -Toilet Training -Supporting Feeding -Social Skills	- Resource document with virtual support from Family Support Specialist - Monthly newsletter for families including community events - Monthly family networking opportunities with childcare provided - Monthly fliers with Family Learning Opportunities - Electronic calendar for	Monthly Community Newsletter Parent Support Group Parent Events Piloting intake meetings to identify family needs and develop plans for support Virtual session on Planning for your Child's Legal and Financial Future Mental Health team sharing PUNS link with families	

			family events and registration - ASL, AAC, CPR, First Aid, Recreation Strategies for Blind Students		
	● Partner with local resources to provide training for families.	-Friend Squad at the Library -Legal and Financial Planning -Resource Fair	- Friend Squad at the Library - Legal and Financial Planning - Virtual Resource Fair	-Continue and see above	
Objective 5.C.					
Participate at the local, state, and national levels to improve policies for students with disabilities.	● Inform stakeholders of updated policies that impact education.	-Provide legislative updates to district leadership and Board members.	SB3606- Equalized funding, plan time bill, and Cook County Tax Ordinance have been hot bills NTDSE has focused its energies.	-Executive Director active in ED RED, IAASE Legislative Committee, and the CASE Federal Committee -Administrators and staff present at State and National Conferences -Executive Director participating in Special Education Leadership Institute	

	● Encourage educators to be champions for individuals with disabilities by taking action at the local, state, and national levels on relevant legislation.		SB3606- shared consistently with stakeholders, and NTDSE presented to the Education Committee. Work with local legislatures, ED RED, and IAASE lobbyist to ensure NTDSE's voice is heard.	-Continue to share information that impacts educators and families. Encourage and teach educators how to advocate to ensure their voice is heard.	
	● Share knowledge of best practices by delivering learning opportunities at the local, state, and national levels.	-Administrators and staff presenting at local, state, and National conferences. (IAASE, Closing the Gap, ASHA, DEC, Vision Conference)	Staff and administrators presented at local, state, and National conferences (AHSA, IAER, DePaul University, United Leukodystrophy Foundation, IAASE, Peer Support Network for Creative Arts, and Oakton).	Staff and Administrators continue to present at the State, Local and National level. Including Triple I, IAASE, CASE, ASHA, etc.	

Goal 6 - Maintain Optimal Learning Environments

Create learning environments to meet the evolving needs of our students.

Objective	Activities	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Objective 6.A.					
Promote the increased usage of the facilities by welcoming all stakeholders while maintaining its safety and security.	• Identify opportunities for community use.	-Currently identify partnerships to utilize space	The following community organizations have used our facility: - Infinity Basketball - MCC - Will's Place - ECC -ECA	The following community organizations have used our facility: - Infinity Basketball - MCC - Will's Place - ECC -ECA - Staff Pickle Ball	The following community organizations have used our facility: - Special Olympics - MCC - Will's Place - ECC -ECA - Staff Pickle Ball

	• Share community events in the district community newsletter.	-Community events are shared in the monthly parent newsletter, NTDSEmpowers	- Community events are shared in the monthly parent newsletter, NTDSEmpowers Parent Square communication	--Community events are shared in the monthly parent newsletter, NTDSEmpowers Parent Square communication	Community events are shared in the -Classroom monthly newsletters -District Weekly Family Newsletter - Principals' Monthly Newsletter - Social Workders Weekly Family and Community Events Newsletter
Objective 6.B.					
Provide a safe and secure learning environment.	• Create updated long-range and preventative maintenance plans.		- Selected a new architect (Arcon) in Jan. 2024 and have identified priorities. Arcon is developing a long-range plan for NTDSE, Estimated completion May 2024	-Worked with ARCON to identify needs in POD 4 -Complete work in POD 4 -Look at additional space options for increased enrollment	
	• Update the district's facility and security plans and implement changes annually.		- I Love You Guys and PREPaRE training are ongoing. - Will implement I Love You Guys at Molloy starting in August 2024.	-Verkada imaging alert is ongoing. -I love you Guys -Prepare- trained 2 individuals to be trainers -Unified emergency response plan -Safe School ID -Verifent is ongoing.	

				- Worked with the Village to complete a Unified Emergency Response Plan in August 2023. - Practiced the Emergency Response Plan with other MG school districts and MGPD		
	● Create a schedule to update classroom equipment (e.g. furniture, technology).	Technology lifecycle - 4 years laptops, 5 years PCs, 10 years SMART Boards	- Assess current technology inventory and performance to determine if any adjustments are needed to the existing lifecycle timelines.	-Technology inventory reviewed. -No timeline adjustments are needed.	
	● Ensure students' safety online, virtually, and within the building.	New Verkada cameras and door access control system, firewall protection, web content filtering	- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of student safety initiatives regularly, gathering feedback from stakeholders and adjusting the strategies as necessary to ensure continuous improvement	-Firewall rules are assessed quarterly and will continue to do that. -Additional gaming websites are being blocked monthly. -Verkada guest was implemented at the front door. -Locker room doors were	

				configured for fobbing -An alarm was placed on the Cafe doors -hanged door locks for one-way entry	
	● Maintain confidentiality around student and staff personal information.	MFA security on all student and staff information systems	- Strengthen user authentication such as MFA to prevent unauthorized access to confidential data. Working on offsite web filtering to extend cybersecurity protections beyond the district's network perimeter	-Implemented strong passwords for Email system. -Data loss prevention was enabled on email platform. -SSO was enabled for Embrace	
Objective 6.C.					
Provide technology opportunities to promote collaboration and creativity.	● Conduct an ongoing assessment of the district's technology and prioritize upgrades based on needs.	Ongoing cybersecurity phishing campaigns, Beginning creation of Incident Response Plan, planning Pen Test, Cowbell Cyber cyber insurance monitoring	Foster a culture of cybersecurity awareness and accountability throughout the organization, emphasizing the importance of proactive risk management and collective responsibility in safeguarding	-AI Committee -Phishing campaigns are ongoing - Emails are being sent to users failing the campaigns.	

			sensitive data and resources		
	● Utilize technology that allows optimal productivity and flexible learning spaces.	New mobile SMART Boards in classrooms, new VoIP phone system, Google Meet video conferencing, new videoconference setups in conference rooms	Monitor usage data and feedback from users to identify areas for improvement and provide ongoing support and resources to address challenges and promote effective utilization	-Analyze feedback on boards	
	● Enhance collaboration among teams within the district.	Google Meet video conferencing, VoIP phone system, Google Workspace for Education upgrade, Google Shared Drives	Promote the effective utilization of collaboration tools such as Google Meet Video Conferencing, VOIP Phone System, Google Workspace for Education upgrades, and Google Shared Drive to facilitate communication and collaboration among teams within the district	-AI Committee -Google Meets -Zoom -Spectrum VOIP -Magic School AI	

Goal 7 - Diversity & Inclusivity

Embrace the racial, ethnic, gender, religious, and/or socio-economic diversity of our district to reflect the values of the NTDSE Community.

Objective	Activities	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Objective 7.A.					
Recruit, develop, and retain high-quality educators that represent students' linguistic and cultural diversity.	• Review current demographic data of the NTDSE community.			-Bamboo have all staff update info in Bamboo. - Fill out Emergency form and racial profile	
	• Improve current procedures to attract individuals who reflect our student population.	-D219 Student Education Partnership -Attend virtual and in-person career fairs		-Attend career fairs and partner with universities to provide opportunities for staff -ALP track -EL Center -Referral Bonus -Grants and partnerships with Universities- specifically UIC and Oakton -Identified individuals to grow our vision program. -Retaining paras through a robust onboarding process.	

	● Seek professional learning for the leadership team to ensure an inclusive workplace.	-Communication Styles and Cultivating Team Relationships Training in August 2023		- Culture Rise - Leaders Eat Last	
Objective 7.B.					
Conduct educator, family, and community training to support diverse student populations.	● Review current demographic data of NTDSE students and families.	-EL Audit completed in Spring 2023.	- Reviewed findings of EL Audit - Summer curriculum project to expand home access to home language on student communication devices and classroom materials. - Continued commitment of service providers to obtain EL endorsement	-Expand EL certification opportunities -Work with the union to identify EL as a priority for certification and reimbursement	
	● Develop learning opportunities that support diversity, equity, and inclusive practices.	-Equity book clubs -SEED -Gender 101 -Partnership with MCC	- EPIC (Equitable Practices and Inclusion Committee) Podcast Club, EPIC Newsletters - Adopt improved curricular materials that provide more	-SLP neurodiversity PD (e.g. Stephanie Boron). Continue EPIC - Monthly focus on targeted learning opportunities for staff	

			diverse representation		
Objective 7.C.					
Highlight diversity within the curriculum.	• Prioritize materials that reflect the student population. Include diversity requirements in all program review cycles.	-Equity Committee providing monthly themes that highlight diversity and inclusivity within the curriculum. -Expanded classroom libraries to include diverse books.	- Summer Curriculum Project to revamp Ability Awareness and Inclusive Practices. - Continued work with EPIC including monthly newsletters.	-Look at Unique and align additional reading/viewing materials -Transformations has increased more equitable representation - Continue EPIC newsletters with a monthly focus on targeted opportunities for students	