

Albany Area Schools ISD 745

A Community of Successful Learners



30 Forest Ave. P.O. Box 40 Albany, Minnesota 56307

Phone 320-845-2171 Fax 320-845-4017

Website: www.albany.k12.mn.us

Albany Area Schools Independent School District 745 **A Community of Successful Learners**

District 745 – Albany Area Schools **Local World’s Best Workforce Plan**

The World’s Best Workforce Plan (state statute, section 120B.11) is a comprehensive, long-term strategic plan to support and improve teaching and learning with the ultimate goal of creating the world’s best workforce. It is intended to serve as a foundational document that aligns educational initiatives that serve students pre-k through high school. It is based on five goals:

- All students are ready for school
- Close all achievement gaps
- All third graders can read at grade level
- All students are ready for career and college
- All students graduate from high school

Albany’s World’s Best Workforce Plan serves as a blueprint that demonstrates how current district initiatives and plans work together in a concerted effort to create a quality workforce equipped with the necessary skills for the 21st century.

I. Goals and Benchmarks for Instruction and Student Achievement

The Albany Area school district has an established structure of strategic systematic goal setting which aims to align all district, School Board, site specific, and staff development goals toward the district’s vision. Each of the components of this structure is described briefly below. Documents which provide a detailed and comprehensive description of each element are referenced.

Albany Strategic Plan 2011–2016 (available on district website at www.albany.k12.mn.us)

Albany has a five year Strategic Plan with the most current developed during the 2010–2011 school year through a series of meetings and work sessions which included parents, community representatives, school board members, school staff and administration. A comprehensive needs assessment was conducted and the results were used to guide the development of the district’s Mission Statement, Vision, Strategic Directions and Strategic Plan.

Albany District Staff Development Goals

The District Staff Development Committee is charged with structuring professional development intending to improve instruction and ultimately student achievement. This committee is comprised of teacher representatives from each building, one classified staff member, one principal, one parent representative, two school board representatives, and the staff development coordinator. Working together they develop district staff development goals which align with the district’s Strategic Plan, School Board goals, and site-specific goals. The district staff development goals direct all building staff development goals and plans toward Albany Area Schools’ vision.

Albany Student Achievement Benchmarks

All sites have a minimum expectation to increase each score by 5%.

SCHOOL	MMR	READING PROFICIENCY	MATH PROFICIENCY
High School	73.46	71	58
Junior High	50.70	45	60
Avon Elementary	60.51	67	76
Albany Elementary	62.19	62	70

Albany Area School Board Goals (available on district website at www.albany.k12.mn.us)

The Albany Board of Education, after taking input from various stakeholder groups including teaching staff, administrative staff, parents and students, develop the goals annually that are consistent with the Strategic Plan of the district. These goals are intended to drive the work of the Building Leadership Teams (BLTs), the Professional Learning Community structure (PLCs), and the District Staff Development Committee.

Areas of focus include the following:

- Emphasize a contemporary, rigorous curriculum that is well articulated and leads to increased student achievement
- Provide support for technology integration to transform teaching and learning
- Evaluate the impact of the block schedule on teaching and learning at the secondary school
- Increase the proficiency level in reading for all students

Site Specific Goals (available on district website at www.albany.k12.mn.us)

Albany Secondary School (7–12)

- Common Assessments
- Increase Reading Proficiency
- Technology Integration

Albany Elementary (1–6)

- Increase Reading Proficiency
- Increase Math Proficiency
- Technology Integration

Avon Elementary (K–6)

- Increase Reading Proficiency
- Increase Math Proficiency
- Technology Integration

Early Childhood Program

- Student Achievement in Language and Literacy
- Social and Emotional Development
- Program Communication

Building Leadership Teams (BLTs)

Continuous Improvement decisions in each building are guided by a Building Leadership Team that includes the building principal and teachers elected by their peers. Each BLT is charged with developing action plans in their building that reflect the intent of the Board Goals. Their focus, as is the focus of the Board, is on student achievement and closing any gap that might exist between students on Free and Reduced Lunch and those that are not.

BLTs direct the activities of the building PLCs that work directly on improving instructional strategies and student achievement as related to Board and District Goals. PLCs establish SMART goals to articulate the direction of their activities.

The BLT is responsible for developing SMART goals to guide their building's efforts towards increasing student achievement. Committee members analyze disaggregated student achievement results and growth data for all grade levels and student sub-groups served, and then set yearly student achievement goals. In addition, the committee assists in the planning, organizing, and carrying out of staff development plans necessary for curriculum, instruction or programming modifications for students not meeting grade level expectations.

Each year the BLTs report progress to the Board and suggest future needs that the Board considers in developing the next year's goals.

II. Assessing and Evaluating Student Progress

Albany Area Schools Assessment System:

Albany Area Schools implements a comprehensive system of assessments that incorporate local, state, and national measures. The focus of our coordinated plan is to promote student academic growth and achievement while ensuring accountability for student progress toward career and college readiness standards. A variety of tools are used to measure students' progress with grade level standards: formative classroom assessments, STAR Reading and Math benchmarks, and required measures such as the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments. At an individual student level, assessment data is regularly used to screen, progress monitor, determine program placement, diagnose learning difficulties, guide instruction, and inform parents of student progress. A district profile of achievement is reviewed by stakeholders to evaluate the effectiveness of our curriculum, assess staff development needs, and examine state and federal accountability results.

III. Assessing and Evaluating Instruction and Curriculum

Curriculum & Instruction Review Process

Albany Area Schools employs a comprehensive system to periodically review and evaluate the effectiveness of all district curriculum and instruction. The primary goal of the district's curriculum review process is to develop a rigorous and relevant curriculum that positively impacts student achievement.

Teacher Evaluation System (available on district website at www.albany.k12.mn.us)

The goal of the Albany Area Schools' teacher evaluation system is to articulate expectations, assess performance in all domains, and to continue in the development of high performing teachers capable of delivering outstanding education that improves the quality of teaching and learning.

Principal Evaluation (available on district website at www.albany.k12.mn.us)

Albany has a comprehensive principal evaluation system designed to evaluate principals in five domains. The superintendent evaluates principals based on school performance data, state level and school performance measures, and feedback from staff and parents. The evaluation involves principal self-reflection, goal setting, and a professional growth plan.

IV. Strategies for Improving Instruction and Curriculum

Comprehensive plans for district/school improvement are developed and /or revised annually and focus on increasing student achievement by enhancing instruction, upgrading curriculum, and developing effective programming. Each of the various improvement plans and support systems are described briefly below. Documents which provide a detailed and comprehensive description of each element are referenced.

District Staff Development Focus: Student Achievement Through Instructional Achievement

In an effort to close the achievement gap between our higher performing and lower performing students while maintaining high expectations for all students, the Albany Area school district develops an annual staff development plan to organize staff development activities that improves the instructional strategies of certified and classified staff. The goal of these activities is to improve student performance by improving instructional performance. Staff development practices will align with district, School Board, and site-specific goals.

Building Leadership Teams: (BLTs)

BLTs evaluate the needs of each building and then structures staff development activities that serve the needs to that particular building. These activities must be focused on and driven by the Board Goals. Building improvement plans are developed as SMART goals which serve as action plans to achieve the goals set by the Board. Each year the BLTs report progress to the Board and suggest future needs that the Board considers in developing the next year's goals.

Professional Learning Communities: (PLCs)

Each of our four school sites, under the guidance of its respective BLT, meets regularly as a professional learning community, organized in PLC teams. They are engaged in implementing action plans to address the site and district goals. These PLC teams meet twice a month.

Curriculum Development

The primary goal of the Albany Area Schools' curriculum development process is to develop relevant and rigorous curricula in which the agreed-upon essential content and skills are delivered within the allocated instructional time. The cyclic review involves teacher collaboration, parent/community member input, reflective inquiry, and decision-making based on Best Practices, current research, district data, and state/federal mandates. The process results in a living document that describes content, skills, and assessments both within a grade level and/or content area and across grade levels. Curriculum is tightly aligned to meet MN State standards and national standards. Albany Area Schools believes that a guaranteed and viable curriculum has a strong correlation to student achievement.

2014–2015 School Year Curriculum Area Focus (Seven-Year Cycle)

- Year 1 (Research) Science and World Languages

- Year 2 (Writing) Business, English Language Arts, Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS), and Technical Education

- Year 3 (Implementing) English Language Arts (Step Up to Writing, gr. 3–8)

- Year 4 (Evaluating) Math, Social Studies, and Special Education

- Years 5–7 (Maintaining) Fine Arts, Health/Physical Education

Achievement and Integration Grant

Albany Area Schools is a grant recipient with Minnesota's Achievement and Integration program. The purpose of this new program is to support racial and economic integration, increase student achievement and reduce academic disparities in Minnesota's public schools. Albany Area Schools is eligible for this grant as an adjoining neighbor to the racially isolated school district of Melrose.

Our approved actions for 2014 – 2017 include the following:

- Literacy Interventionists in the elementary schools to support reading intervention activities and provide direct instruction to K–3 students.
- Family Literacy events for families from both Albany and Melrose school district with Early Childhood through 1st grade students, to increase readiness for Kindergarten, and to increase the percentage of 4 year olds enrolled in pre-school.
- Summer programming, including literacy interventions, with the collaborative schools, including the racially isolated district of Melrose.

Title I Program

Title I is a federally funded program that provides financial assistance to districts and schools based on percentages of low income families. The purpose of Title 1 is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high quality education and meet challenging state academic standards. Title 1 grants provide schools with supplementary funding to enhance the teaching and learning of children.

- Albany Area Schools receives targeted assistance funds which are allocated to Albany Elementary School.
- Funds are used to provide high quality interventions in Reading and Math to students who would benefit from extra support.
- Title I provides Family Outreach programs and support to families in temporary housing.
- For more information on Albany Area Schools Title I programs please see our website: <http://dist745title1.weebly.com/>

Career Readiness

Albany Area Schools engages students in career readiness with a vibrant program of career exploration beginning in ninth grade. Students, guided by the counseling department and a required quarter course called “Career Exploration,” culminate by mapping out a four-year course of study that will help prepare them for career decision-making. Community engagement, post-secondary exposure, and internships all serve to provide students with a frame

of reference and information for what they need to accomplish in high school and beyond.

Special Education

Albany Area Schools supports and maintains a comprehensive Special Education program designed to identify qualified students and to develop and deliver an individual learning program suited to the specific needs of the students. Each student's cognitive, social, and emotional needs are developed and advanced to the fullest extent possible. The program culminates in a seamless transition plan that will launch the student into adult life at the most productive stage possible.

Gifted and Talented

The Albany District supports and promotes a Gifted and Talented program K-6 that allows qualified students to challenge themselves beyond the regularly adopted curriculum. This pullout program exposes students to challenging and rigorous activities that stretch their imagination and creativity.

V. Report Requirements

To meet the report requirements Albany Area Schools teaching and learning department will do the following:

- Title the report "District 745- Albany Area Schools Local World's Best Workforce Plan."
- Place the report on the district's web page.
- Submit an electronic summary to the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education by October 1 of each year.
- Draft an annual budget based on the district's improvement plan and submit to the superintendent of schools each May.
- Survey parents about their connection to and level of satisfaction with schools. The annual survey will be conducted in the spring and will be placed on the district website. An automated caller will invite parents of students in grades preK-12 to take the survey. Paper copies will be available in all school offices. Results will be published in the newsletter, reviewed by the administrative team, and shared with staff via building administrators. District staff development committee and site BLTs will use the data from the survey to inform improvement plans.

World's Best Workforce Committee Members

Community Members – Toni Hudock, Jannell Boeckerman, Kim Hahn & Jen Lecy

Teachers – Sheila Kost, Jacob Boone, Kelly Klasen, Stefanie Rothstein, Nancy Trehey, Barb Fischer & Steve Stromme

Administration – Ann Schultz, Cassie Nentl & Greg Johnson