

AGENDA & CONFIDENTIAL MEMO
BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING

MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2024
6:30 PM

HADLEY JR. HIGH SCHOOL,
240 HAWTHORNE BLVD,
GLEN ELLYN, IL 60137

- I. **Call to Order**
- II. **Strategic Plan Midpoint Review Progress Report**
- III. **Public Participation**
- IV. **Upcoming Meetings**
 - **Monday, December 16, 2024, Regular Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m.**
 - **Monday, January 13, 2025, Regular Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m.**
 - **Monday, February 10, 2025, Regular Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m.**
- V. **Adjourn to Closed Session**
- VI. **Return to Open Session**
- VII. **Adjournment**

Superintendent Dr. Melissa Kaczowski

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

GLEN ELLYN SCHOOL DISTRICT 41 BOARD OF EDUCATION

MEETING FORMAT

- 90 minutes in length
- Meetings start with a quick review of the norms, setting context/introducing the topic, introducing any guest speakers/presenters
- Presentations
- Conversations and questions start with Board members and then anyone wishing to speak should address the Board President who will serve as chair of the meeting. Board President will invite other Board members or District Administration to respond to questions as appropriate
- If there is a need to add items to the COW meeting because they are urgent, we will still commit to a 90 minute format
- If the discussion wraps up sooner than 90 minutes the meeting will adjourn



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

GLEN ELLYN SCHOOL DISTRICT 41 BOARD OF EDUCATION

MEETING FORMAT (CONT.)

- If an audience member fails to comply with the norms or refuses to follow the conversation topic (or otherwise disrupts the meeting), the Board President will redirect the behavior. If the behavior continues, the Board President (or designee) will call for a recess. When the meeting adjourns, the Board President will remind everyone of the norms and seek to continue the meeting. If unable to, the meeting will be adjourned.
- Depending on the topic, appropriate District administration will be invited to attend.
- GEEA & AFSCME leadership will be invited to attend



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

GLEN ELLYN SCHOOL DISTRICT 41 BOARD OF EDUCATION

NORMS

Meeting norms are the standards you set for working together positively and productively as a group. They should provide a guideline for behavior. Sometimes, these are behaviors that may be considered common sense without being expressly articulated.

- One person speaks at a time
- Phones are set to silent, and used only if necessary
- Assume positive presuppositions about others in the room
- Ask questions to seek clarity; not with the intent to be critical
- Make comments that are about agenda topics only
- Do not make comments about people
- Everyone gets the opportunity to speak once before allowing for second and third opportunities
- If you think it, say it respectfully
- Questions/comments are future focused and not evaluations of past actions/decisions. Question/comments should be concise and to the point



A FUTURE 4 EVERY 1

STUDENTS ARE AT THE HEART OF ALL DECISIONS

GLENN ELLYN SCHOOL DISTRICT 41 STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2027



Glen Ellyn School District 41

Mid-Point Strategic Plan Review Report

December 2, 2024

Completed by:

Dr. Karen Sullivan

District Support Specialist

DuPage Regional Office of Education



INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

After a long pause due to the pandemic beginning in March 2020, District 41 re-engaged in a Strategic Planning Process in the fall of 2021. After a collaborative process with a number of committees and involvement from all stakeholder groups, the Glen Ellyn School District 41 School Board approved their 2022-2027 Strategic Plan on April 18, 2022. The core purpose of the plan is the following:

This strategic plan challenges us, as a community, to embrace bold goals for every child in Glen Ellyn School District 41. It is driven by our deep belief in our students' abilities and by their own aspirations for their future. The core purpose of our strategic plan is to accelerate academic growth, improve student learning outcomes, and close opportunity and achievement gaps. These strategic priorities, goals, and target objectives are in service of that central focus- to ensure social, emotional, and cognitive success for all students today, in preparation for their tomorrow which allow students to build relationships and focus on learning

As the district approaches the two and a half year mark of the current plan, the DuPage Regional Office of Education was asked to facilitate the beginning of a mid-point review process. A mid-point review of a school district's strategic plan is an essential process that helps ensure that the district is on track to meet the goals, and it allows for adjustments in response to changing circumstances. According to best practices, the key reasons to conduct a review include:

- Assessing Progress and Impact
- Identify Strengths and Areas for Improvement
- Adapt to Changing Circumstances
- Incorporate Stakeholder Feedback
- Course Corrections
- Reaffirm or Adjust Goals
- Budget Alignment
- Accountability
- Celebrate Success

Overall, a mid-point review is a proactive way to ensure the strategic plan remains a living document that evolves to meet the district's goals and challenges.

The DuPage Regional Office of Education would like to thank all of the subcommittee members who participated in the mid-point review subcommittee meetings. The willingness of the subcommittee members to engage and provide candid feedback was essential to the work. We particularly thank Superintendent Dr. Jeff McHugh and Nancy Mogk, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, for their work to provide background information and documents as well as to communicate and arrange logistics for the meetings.

PURPOSE

This report presents the findings from the qualitative data collection activities completed with the “umbrella subcommittees” identified as part of the Glen Ellyn School District 41 Strategic Plan Update Structure. The data contained herein were obtained from the input received during one hour in person meetings with each of the following subcommittees: Language Programs, Equity, Student Services, and Community Advisory groups. The meetings were held at the Glen Ellyn School District 41 Administrative Office.

PROCESS

Qualitative perception data was gathered from subcommittee members through facilitated questions structured to assist the district in reviewing its vision, mission, values, foundational pillars, strategic priorities, objectives, measures/metrics, and targets.

Subcommittee members were divided into small groups to respond and build on each others’ thoughts and ideas. Participants were asked to respond to the following questions:

- Reviewing the Big Picture
 - Is the big picture represented by the vision, mission, values and foundational pillars still valid?
- Reviewing the Plan
 - Are our objectives still relevant?
 - Is there a need to prioritize and/or consolidate certain objectives for the next two years of the plan?
 - What measures or metrics are we using?
 - Have we set realistic targets?
 - Do any of our measures/metrics or targets need to be adjusted or changed?
 - Do we have the data we need to support our answers?
- Reviewing How We Monitor and Communicate
 - Do we have an effective structure for monitoring progress of the strategic plan?
 - Are we communicating our performance on the strategic plan adequately, clearly, and effectively?

DATA ANALYSIS

Dr. Karen Sullivan facilitated the mid-point review meetings with the subcommittee groups. Data was captured by each small group via a spreadsheet and is categorized as qualitative research, so findings must be based on the words and phrases of the participants and not the opinions of the facilitator.

PARTICIPANTS

The numbers of participants by subcommittee are listed in the charts below. A total of 40 people participated. Subcommittee membership includes district staff members, parents, and Board members. It should be emphasized that the data is neither a scientific sampling nor should they necessarily be viewed as representing the majority of opinion of the respective groups to which they are attributed.

SUBCOMMITTEE	MEETING DATE AND TIME	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Equity	10/23/2024 5:00 PM	11
Language Programs	10/23/2024 6:30 PM	8
Student Services	11/12/2024 5:00 PM	8
Community Advisory	11/14/2024 6:30 PM	13

OVERALL FINDINGS AND THEMES

Big Picture: Vision, Mission, Values, and Foundational Pillars

Overall, the participants felt that the vision, mission, values, and foundational pillars were still very much relevant to the work of the district. There were some suggestions for language tweaks and simplifying the wording but no major issues were identified. There was some confusion about whether or not a Portrait of a District 41 Student had been developed as part of the original process.

The Strategic Plan

Overall, the participants felt that the objectives identified within the strategic plan were still relevant and represented the important work of the district. The following themes about the plan emerged from the subcommittees:

- **Complexity & Clarity**

The plan is perceived as overly complicated, wordy, lacking measurable benchmarks, and missing actionable steps. Simplification and prioritization might be helpful.

- **Prioritization**

Too many goals and objectives can dilute focus. Stakeholders suggest prioritizing or consolidating goals to emphasize key areas like academic growth, SEL, and diversity to make it more actionable and increase efficiency.

- **Metrics & Targets**

Metrics for success are unclear, inconsistent, or missing. The plan appears to lack clear, realistic targets and measurable outcomes aligned with the goals.

- **Language & Accessibility**

Educational jargon is excessive. Stakeholders recommend simpler, more inclusive language that defines key terms (e.g., inclusion, growth-focused learning).

Goal-Specific Feedback:

Goal 1 (Growth-Focused Learning)

- Valid but missing specific metrics for growth and measures for diverse learners, including EL and dual-language students. Need clarity on how growth is measured.
- Needs emphasis on individualized success, achievement gaps, and realistic targets.
- Need for targeted strategies to address achievement gaps and individualized success definitions.

Goal 2 (Safe and Inclusive Environments)

- DEI efforts need better integration and actionable strategies.
- Clarity needed on terms like "safe" and "inclusive." Consider replacing "DEI" with "belonging."
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion practices need clearer implementation and updated language to emphasize belonging.

Goal 3 (Social-Emotional Learning - SEL)

- Limited SEL implementation, lack of data, tools, and staff training.
- Need better systems for consistent, long-term execution.
- Suggest combining with Goal #2 due to overlaps in focus on student well-being.

Goal 4 (Early Learning and Facilities)

- Progress noted with full-day kindergarten but requires updates for pre-school and articulation between early childhood and K.
- Objectives should align with realistic space limitations and long-term facility planning.

Goal 5 (Future-Ready Skills):

- Lacks clear definition and measurable objectives.
- Technology use and "future-ready" needs rethinking post-COVID.
- Objectives are too broad and need specific definitions for skills like digital competence.
- Recommend combining with Goal #1 to streamline priorities.

Goal 6 (Community Partnerships)

- Objectives are meaningful but not widely implemented. Needs focus on actionable strategies and district-wide involvement.
- Partnerships and initiatives are happening inconsistently across the district.
- Needs greater district-wide involvement, clarity on priorities (e.g., welcome center), and measurable impact metrics.

Monitoring and Communication

Overall subcommittee participants indicated that elements of the monitoring and communication structure are in place but there is significant room for improvement in this specific area. The following themes were found across the groups:

- **Confusion and Lack of Clarity**

The communication and monitoring structures for the strategic plan are confusing, even for staff. Subcommittees' roles and objectives are unclear, with little understanding of how their work aligns with overall district goals and other groups in the structure. There was some concern about redundancy in the monitoring and communication structure. Participants also felt that the strategic plan itself is not clearly shared or understood across stakeholders, including staff and the community.

- **Monitoring Challenges**

There are no clear targets, goals, or measurements for progress monitoring. Internal monitoring structures are not fully understood, and much of the work appears disjointed or redundant. Specific goals (e.g., Goals 3-6) lack clarity or actionable steps, with some efforts appearing subjective rather than data-driven.

- **Communication Gaps**

Communication to the board appears to be effective, but broader dissemination and alignment with staff and other stakeholders are lacking. External tools, such as a data dashboard, exist but are underutilized due to insufficient explanation and clarity about their purpose. The strategic plan does not seem fully integrated into existing district communications or school-level plans.

- **Community Engagement Issues**

Communication about the plan with the wider community is not consistently integrated into existing communication structures and could be improved. For example, a simplified summary of the plan, such as a one-page version for non-educators, would be more accessible.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER REVIEW

The qualitative data collection findings from the subcommittees indicated that the current strategic plan contained appropriate goals and objectives to guide the work of the district for the next several years. However, this component of the mid-point review found areas that could be improved to provide more disciplined implementation through simplification and prioritization, clear, transparent, and ongoing monitoring, and improved communication with all stakeholders. Potential recommendations to be considered include:

- **Simplification and Prioritization**

There was a consistent theme to simplify the plan through consolidation of goals and objectives with overlapping themes into fewer, more focused areas (e.g., academics, social/emotional, community) to enhance clarity and effectiveness. The need for clearly identified actionable steps for the objectives is needed. Defining and clarifying key terms and updating language to reflect current understanding (e.g., belonging, inclusion) was

a consistent theme. Simplifying language with less educational jargon to ensure understanding across stakeholders was suggested.

- **Identify and/or Enhance Metrics**

The subcommittees identified a need for clear metrics, targets, and benchmarks to increase transparency and understanding of the data and progress monitoring. The dashboard needs to clearly and effectively communicate the progress the district is making toward the strategic plan goals to all stakeholders. There should be clear expectations for who is responsible for implementation of the work and for progress reporting.

- **Improve Monitoring of the Plan**

There was significant confusion among subcommittee participants about how the strategic plan monitoring structure was actually supposed to work and what their role in the structure was supposed to be. Alignment and accountability across all of the committees was a concern. A review of the current structure and its effectiveness might be an appropriate next step of the mid-point review process.

- **Improve Communication of the Plan**

The need for improved communication about the strategic plan and its implementation progress with both internal and external stakeholders was identified. Suggestions included providing a clear summary of the strategic plan (e.g., a one-page overview for non-educators), aligning the strategic plan with existing district communication tools and strategies, making the plan visible and tangible (e.g., post vision statements in classrooms, newsletters, email signatures), and improving the dashboard reporting system.

CONCLUSION

This component of the mid-point review of Glen Ellyn School District 41's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan has provided valuable insights into both its strengths and areas for improvement. While the plan's goals and objectives remain relevant and reflective of the district's priorities, there is a clear need for simplification, enhanced clarity, and more actionable metrics to ensure effective implementation and monitoring. Stakeholders have identified opportunities to consolidate overlapping goals, define key terms, and streamline communication processes to better align with the community's needs. By addressing these challenges—particularly in the areas of monitoring progress, clarifying accountability, and improving communication—the district can strengthen the impact of its strategic plan and maintain its focus on academic growth, equity, and social-emotional well-being. As this review highlights, refining the plan and its execution is essential to ensuring that the district's ambitious goals are realized and that all students are prepared for a successful future.