

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT 159
2019-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN



DEVELOPED BY OUR STAKEHOLDERS

CELEBRATING



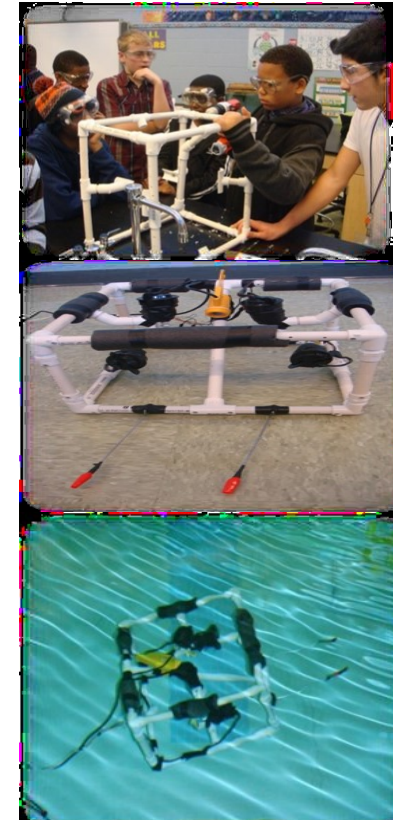
YEARS OF LEARNING & ENGAGEMENT
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT 159

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT 159

2019-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

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Message from the Superintendent of Elementary School District 159



To the Elementary School District 159 Community,

As we embark upon establishing the future of our school district, we will focus on those priorities identified during the strategic planning process. In doing so, we will ensure that the needs of our students and communities are acknowledged and addressed in a holistic manner.

As we strive to create a culture of excellence and innovative opportunities for our students, our continuous improvement efforts will extend throughout the entire school district. We recognize that the strength of our school district lies within all of us working collaboratively. Inasmuch, we will enhance our partnerships with the community and utilize the various resources available to us.

This strategic plan is a living document that will be continually updated and edited to reflect the progress of our goals and objectives. It will be a source of reference and reaffirm to us, our mission, vision, and core values.

I look forward to working with the entire school district community as we restore the excellence, reclaim our status as a leader in education innovation, and revitalize all of our stakeholders as we begin working on the future of our school district.

Our strategic plan would not be possible without the participation of our focus groups, numerous interviews with community members, and those that completed our online survey. Thank you for your input! I appreciate you!

As we celebrate the 150th anniversary of our school district, I honor all who have come before me. I am proud of the opportunity to contribute to the success of our school district. Thank you to the district community and the Board of Education for your support and trust in me.

Dr. Mable Alfred, Superintendent of Schools



Message from the Board President of Elementary School District 159



To the Elementary School District 159 Community,

On behalf of the Board of Education, I am pleased to present the strategic plan for our school district. It goes without saying that without a clear vision for the future of our school district, we will not have the ability to provide our students with the excellence in education that they require. Our goal is to ensure that when our students matriculate to high school, they are well prepared and on target for college and career.

As a school district and community with high expectations, the importance of identifying processes and procedures that will enable us to increase the education attainment of our students is our priority. We know that our students are among the brightest students in the State of Illinois and we are committed to providing each of them with a quality education that we can be proud of.



I often reflect about the great programs within our district and smile because I know that while there is always room for improvement, we are headed in the right direction. Our underwater robotics program is among the best in the Midwest. Our elementary school Saturday coding program is one of only a few in Cook County. Our girls and boys track and basketball teams continue to be top ranked in their divisions. In March, two of our eight grade students competed in the Annual Regional Exposition of the Illinois Junior Academy of Science, where they became semi-finalist. They advanced to compete with and be judged amongst Illinois' most elite students and received the Silver Award. Our students are public servants who participate in Cancer Walks, Red Nose Day, and April Food's Day, all of which benefit others in need.

Our strategic plan is a roadmap to more success stories. We as a Board, are committed to ensuring our students and community are proud of the school district.

A special thank-you to everyone who participated in the strategic planning process.



Dr. William S. McClinton,

President, Elementary School District 159 Board of Education

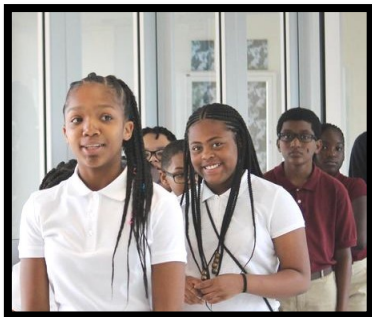
The Elementary School District 159 Story



Elementary School District 159 (the “District”) is located in Cook County, Illinois and serves portions of the communities of Matteson, Richton Park, and Tinley Park. The student population of 1,935 is served by five sites: four grade schools- Woodgate, Armstrong, Yates, Sieden Prairie and one middle school, Colin Powell. The district’s Administration Center is located on Vollmer Road on the site of the original two-room Sieden Prairie Schoolhouse, originally built in 1869.

Our District prides itself on its excellent program offerings including an award-winning band, National Champion Heritage Bowl tradition, and numerous South Suburban junior high school athletic honors. Art, music, physical education, and technology are core programs in all schools and our middle school offers strong foreign language and speech programs.

Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, we are implementing a dual language program. In addition, a district-wide full-day preschool for all program will begin Fall 2019 and is a commitment to give our youngest children their best start for learning. We provide a full range of services for students with special needs and educational programs are individually designed to meet each student’s needs



Colin Powell Middle School underwater robotics program is among the best in the Midwest and has received awards, won several championships and has often competed against high schools over the past several years. Our middle school also has a state-of-the-art applied technology lab with a broadcast and production studio. In our effort to provide students with every opportunity to stay abreast of technology, we also offer a 10-week Saturday coding class for elementary students. Our students and staff have 24/7 access to a technology learning and working environment. We are entering the fifth year (2019-2020) of a five year 1:1 initiative which has provided every student with a mobile device.

Elementary School District 159 supports several community outreach initiatives including Red Nose Day in partnership with Walgreens and Cancer Walks and April Foods Day in partnership with the United Way, Sickle Cell research. Our commitment service above self resulted in a partnership with the Timber Ridge Mobile Community, which is an unincorporated area of Matteson. In January of 2018, we partnered with Timber Ridge to address some of their needs. Working together throughout the year, we transform a rarely used room on the premises of the administration building into the Timber Ridge Community Resource Center. We donated 8 computers, wall art, and approximately 200 books. About 800 additional books were donated by community members and Half Price Books. In the Summer of 2019, we partnered again to establish the Timber Ridge Adult Learning Center and provided Chromebooks, books and wall art.



Elementary School District 159 also has a strong Family & Community Engagement Program that hosts monthly workshops geared towards parent involvement and student achievement. The district’s Superintendent’s Advisory Group and PTO are key to the outreach and programs we create to achieve maximum community support. This year, we are celebrating our 150th anniversary throughout the year with the theme, “Honoring the Past, Embracing the Future.”

Elementary School District 159 Student Data

The following is the district compiled student achievement information from 2017, 2018 and 2019 NWEA MAP data in Reading and Math for grades 1-8:

- Composite score data for each building indicates gains in reading composite scores for 40% (2 out of 5) of the schools. The range of gains in reading achievement are between 7-8% in each of the two identified buildings.
- Preliminary PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) data did not support the gains in reading performance. However, in contrast, a 3% decrease was identified in the overall performance of all schools.
- All data indicates that reading performance continues to be an area in need of improvement across the district.
- Multiple initiatives, including strategic professional development focused on leveraging technology resources and support during daily instruction and ongoing professional development opportunities which support teachers, will guide the district-wide improvement efforts to increase reading achievement.
- Overall, when comparing composite scores for each building, the data indicated a decrease in math performance at three of the five schools.
- One building (20% of the schools districtwide) consistently showed an increase in math performance. However, the 3% math increase is not statistically significant.
- Both reading and math continue to be areas identified for district-wide improvement efforts.

Plan of Action:

As we move forward, multiple initiatives have been identified to strengthen instructional pedagogy, increase student engagement, and carefully monitor strategic efforts aimed at improving both math and reading performance across all grade levels. With the development and implementation of the Strategic Planning efforts, ESD 159 will continue to make achievement a priority for district-wide improvement. Reading, math, science and technology integration remain at the forefront of the district's planning efforts. As we begin our strategic initiatives, there will be an increased focus on rigor, data, high expectations, and accountability in order to move the district forward in the attainment of its student achievement goals and objectives.

Elementary School District 159 Strategic Planning Initiative

During the 2018-2019 school year, the District partnered with Hazzard Young Attea Group, Inc.(HYA), a third-party research firm, to develop a strategic plan to document the current state of the District and to determine its future direction based on stakeholder values and best practices. Involvement of stakeholders from every corner of the community resulted in the establishment of a strategic plan to support decision-making and to align workforce and resources around student outcomes. Responses from individuals, focus groups and an online survey resulted in 346 stakeholders contributing to the process. The strategic planning process was designed to authentically engage stakeholders including students, parents, teachers, administrators, staff, and community residents, in articulating organizational priorities and stakeholder values. The research-based method of strategic planning adopted by Elementary School District 159 Board of Education will allow the District to create their own future, focused on students, through rigorous organizational assessment, followed by operational execution. **The tables provided below represent the breakdown of stakeholders who participated in the Strategic Planning process.**

Strategic Planning Data Sources: Input from 346 Stakeholders			
Table 1: Interviewed Participants		Table 2: Focus Group Participants	
Stakeholder Group		Stakeholder Group	
ESD159 Board Members	6	District Administrators	13
ESD159 Superintendent	1	District Staff	10
Rich Township HS BOE	3	District Employees	45
Rich Township HS District 227 Administrators	14	PTO/Superintendent Advisory	12
Total: 24		Colin Powell 8th Grade Students	25
		Community Members	32
		Elected Officials	8
		Total: 145	
Table 3: Online Survey Respondents			
<u>Stakeholder Group</u>	<u>Survey Responses</u>	<u>Stakeholder Group</u>	<u>Survey Responses</u>
Students	8	Community Members	28
Parents	63	Support	15
Administrators	16	Teachers	47
		Total: 177	

What Elementary School District 159 Stakeholders Shared



In collaboration with Elementary District 159 Leadership Team, Hazzard, Young and Attea (HYA) engaged in several focus groups representing 166 total participants. An online Strategic Planning Survey was administered for three weeks during May and June, 2019. 177 individuals completed the online survey. This analysis of the results is designed to provide information for the Strategic Planning team to establish a clear vision, identify goals, determine priorities and establish a course of action to achieve the District 159 mission, vision and goals. Moreover, with this information the district can build consensus around what matters, and channel resources accordingly in order to ensure a maximum return on investments.

In the online survey analysis which follows, the students, support staff, administrators, and community members are counted in the aggregate data (TOTAL) but generally not disaggregated because of the small sample size of some groups. Results for all groups were disaggregated, however, on the questions regarding the top four priorities and statements regarding the state of the district. The two largest groups, parents and teachers were disaggregated on all questions and HYA found it valuable to compare differences in their responses if these differences were greater than twenty percentage points.



In nearly every focus group, participants shared they wanted District 159 to return to the time when parents viewed 159 as a “destination” district, where families moved to raise a family because of the district academic reputation and focus on students. Focus group participants were pleased that the current board and administration are reestablishing student success as its primary mission. HYA heard on many occasions community dissatisfaction regarding prior Board decisions.

The results of the online survey along with the information gathered from the focus groups indicated the “community” as represented by parents, community members, students and staff placed high value in the use of technology available to students and technology infrastructure, and the extensive athletic and extracurricular programs, especially the music programs. On numerous occasions HYA heard stories about the music program and how much the band is a source of community pride. Participants felt the schools were safe for teaching and learning and appreciated the services provided by the respective municipal government, police and fire departments.



There is a perceived frustration among several stakeholder groups regarding the lack of meaningful communication especially related to human resources and employment. Focus group participants shared concerns regarding the absence of a long-term curriculum plan. Teachers and administrators expressed dissatisfaction with the level and extent of professional development provided to staff.



Parents expressed dissatisfaction regarding the unprofessional attitude of some staff and the lack of staff taking responsibility for actions or lack of action from the administration. Furthermore, parents shared that their students could be better prepared for high school, and that they are confused about how students are assessed (grades). Parents and teachers shared that the district has inconsistent student discipline policies between the schools and grade levels and that the student code of conduct is not fully adhered to by building principals.

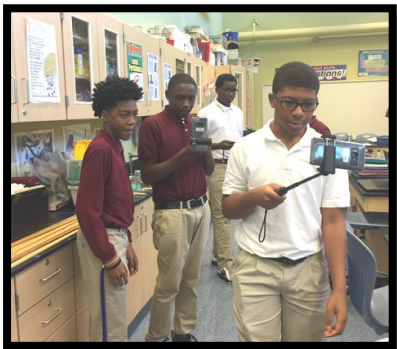
Based upon the online survey, the highest priority is the selection and retention of quality teachers and administrators. All six groups ranked this area as needing immediate attention. Teachers and administrators shared concern that some of the best staff have moved on to other higher paying districts. Yet HYA also heard on numerous occasions staff recognition that their employee benefit package is one of the best in the area. While HYA could not determine if the retention rate of the teaching staff exceeded area norms, it was apparent that the high turnover of the District's Director of Finance is an area that needed attention. Many persons expressed appreciation for the district's financial stability.



Based upon the online survey data and further collaborated by the focus groups, academic rigor and academic expectations is the second highest district's priority at this time. There is a discrepancy between staff and parents regarding the rigor of academic expectations. Based upon the results of the online survey the majority of parents (70%) and administrators (75%) feel the district needs to better prepare students for the next grade level and ultimately college and career readiness compared to 55% of the teachers.

The third and fourth priorities were a tie from the online survey data representing 38 percent of the total respondents. Those areas were: Addressing the achievement gap and Addressing students' social and emotional needs. 63% of students indicated they felt the district should be more proactive in addressing the students mental health needs, which next to hiring and retaining quality staff was the students highest priority.

Focus group participants desired to see Spanish instruction expanded to other grade levels in the district. Parents expressed concern with how the gifted children were being addressed and some were not pleased with the experiences their gifted child was receiving.



Both parents and teachers shared with HYA that special needs students should receive increased instructional services. Some participants felt housing a large number of students with special needs in one school limited mainstreaming opportunities. Teachers felt there needed to be additional social workers, nurses and counselors available in District 159.



Communication within the District and out to the community was mentioned in nearly every focus group as an area in need of growth. In the focus groups, participants shared that while communication itself is important trust and confidence have been eroded due to a failure to communicate

There is a high level of passion and desire to see improvement in the frequency and completeness of communication. Messages parents receive from the District, principals and classroom teachers often are viewed as highly variable depending who on is communicating and which school they represent, adding to the confusion. Parents in general want to know more of what is happening in the schools, especially regarding the challenges. There exist opportunities to reach out more strategically to communicate and engage the community, in general, including the teachers, employees and parents of future students.



The large number of neutral responses on the online survey is a concern for HYA. The fact that so many stakeholders do not have an opinion may be a result of not being informed or choosing to be disengaged from the district, and/or a host of external circumstances and conditions that make District 159 a relatively low priority. We recommend the district make intense efforts to improve the quality and quality of communication.

Another significant concern is the low rating on key items such as vision, quality and quantity of education and some core curriculum items. HYA has learned from Ambrose Model of Complex Change that lack of vision leads to confusion. This in turn can lead to disengagement. We recommend District 159 create and communicate a clear and compelling mission and vision along with a set of core beliefs. Just this step alone will increase engagement in and support for the system.



A second significant concern is that less than one in three stakeholders say the quality of education and related curriculum areas including math, science, and social studies are above average. The fact that the number of stakeholders rating these three curricular areas unsatisfactory or poor is greater than those rating them good or excellent is a red flag. We recommend the district take a hard look at these subject areas to identify where improvement is needed, engage stakeholders in creating an improvement plan, and clearly and frequently communicate any actions regarding curricular initiatives.

A final concern is that there are so many differences between parent and teachers perceptions and opinions. HYA is particularly worried that while half the parents agree the district is heading in the right direction less than one in five teachers do. Conversely, more than half the teachers believe they are held accountable to high standards while less than a fourth of the parents do. There are significant gaps in perceptions of the buildings.



While the majority of teachers agree that there is sufficient infrastructure, the majority of parents disagree, and the majority of parents agree the facilities are well-maintained while three out of four teachers disagree. Such differences are likely due to a lack of clear, consistent and frequent communication. HYA heard a shared frustration from principals regarding building cleanliness and failure to have a thoughtful district facility management plan.

It is in the best interest of students to have all stakeholders align on matters that directly impact students, thus we recommend that district leadership actively seek to identify how to improve communication and actively demonstrate what they are doing to inform and align all parties. Working collaboratively with a shared vision and common priorities, stakeholders can make tangible changes that lead to enduring positive differences.

There are numerous accolades for the District 159 schools. The district is to be commended for ensuring ample opportunities for participation in athletics and extracurricular activities. The music program is definitely a source of considerable community pride. Likewise, the technology infrastructure and the school's use of technology is a strength. Even the students shared with HYA how much they appreciated having the means to use technology which is always reliable and available to complete assignments.



Ideally there will be ways to leverage these strengths into curricular improvements. The future for District 159 is bright. The district has the foresight, courage, and grit to participate in the strategic planning process. The large participation of persons participating in the Focus Groups exceeded HYA expectations.

With the administration's leadership, the Board's active support, and parent, student, staff, and community engagement, we know that a solid three to five year plan can be successfully developed and implemented. We hope that this report has provided data and information to both inform and inspire action.



Elementary School District 159 Community Online Survey Results



In collaboration with the Elementary District 159 Leadership Team, Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates (HYA) administered a Strategic Planning Survey for a total of three weeks during May and June of 2019. This analysis of the results was completed by the HYA home office and is designed to provide information for the Strategic Planning team to establish a clear vision, identify goals, determine priorities, and determine a course of action to achieve their goals. Moreover, with this information District 159 can build a consensus around what matters, and channel resources accordingly in order to ensure a maximum return on investments. The full survey results are in the Appendix.

Methodology and Participation:

The survey was an online survey. The link was widely shared with parents, staff, and students through a variety of media. In analyzing the results, we did not find any attempt to “game” the instrument by taking the survey more than once. While this cannot be done on one device, it is possible for one individual could take the survey on multiple devices, but we did not find any evidence or occurrence of that on this survey.

In the analysis which follows, the students, support staff, administrators, and community members were counted in aggregate data (TOTAL) but generally not disaggregated because of the small sample sizes of each group. Results for all groups were disaggregated, however, on the questions regarding the top four priorities and statements regarding the state of the district. The two largest groups, parents and teachers were disaggregated on all questions and HYA found it valuable to compare differences in their responses if these differences were larger than twenty percentage points.



Part 1, Table 1: Percentage of Respondents Who Agree/Strongly Agree with Statements

DISAGGREGATED AND TOTAL PERCENTAGES OF AGREES AND DISAGREES	PERCENTAGE of Respondents Who Agree/Strongly Agree with Statement							3 highest (+)
	Parent	Teacher	Admin	Support	Student	Community	Total	3 lowest (-)
The district provides a clear, compelling vision for the future	21	13	31	29	50	15	21	---
The district is heading in the right direction	47	17	44	40	50	33	36	
The district has high standards for student performance	40	30	44	47	75	25	38	
The district makes decisions based on data and research	27	43	38	33	50	22	33	
The district is working to close the achievement gap	38	37	50	33	75	29	39	
The district provides a well-rounded educational experience for all students	38	30	25	50	63	22	34	
Teachers personalize instructional strategies to address individual learning needs, special education and gif	39	66	31	29	75	15	43	
District schools are safe	68	51	73	53	50	62	61	+
Social and emotional needs of students are being addressed	37	26	27	31	13	31	29	
Students are on a track to be ready for the next grade and ultimately college and career ready	33	15	40	20	50	4	24	---
Technology is integrated into the classroom	71	87	60	86	63	50	72	+
The district engages the community as a partner to improve the school system	43	34	67	40	38	41	42	
There is transparent communication from the school district	18	7	20	13	13	12	13	---
The district engages with diverse racial, cultural, and socio-economic groups	31	38	33	27	38	22	32	
Facilities are well maintained	61	26	47	40	63	42	46	
The district is fiscally responsible	30	11	47	33	38	38	28	
The district employs effective teachers, administrators, and support staff	35	51	47	33	50	23	42	
Employees are held accountable to high standards	23	55	40	53	25	15	35	
District technology infrastructure is sufficient to support use of technology in the classroom	37	70	47	47	63	23	47	+
KEY								
RED = More than a 20 point difference between parents and teachers								
YELLOW = More than a 10 point difference between parents and teachers								

Part 1, Table 2: Number of Respondents Who Agree/Strongly Agree with Statements

RATIOS: AGREES TO DISAGREES	NUMBER of Respondents			Ratio of
	Disagrees	Agrees	Neutral	Agrees/Disagrees
The district provides a clear, compelling vision for the future	85	36	54	0.42
The district is heading in the right direction	63	63	47	1.00
The district has high standards for student performance	55	66	55	1.20
<i>The district makes decisions based on data and research</i>	56	58	61	1.04
The district is working to close the achievement gap	51	68	57	1.33
The district provides a well-rounded educational experience for all students	65	60	49	0.92
Teachers personalize instructional strategies to address individual learning needs, special education and gift	55	74	45	1.35
District schools are safe	32	106	36	3.31
Social and emotional needs of students are being addressed	70	50	53	0.71
Students are on a track to be ready for the next grade and ultimately college and career ready	69	42	63	0.61
Technology is integrated into the classroom	18	125	30	6.94
The district engages the community as a partner to improve the school system	52	73	50	1.40
There is transparent communication from the school district	82	23	57	0.28
<i>The district engages with diverse racial, cultural, and socio-economic groups</i>	58	55	60	0.95
Facilities are well maintained	60	79	34	1.32
The district is fiscally responsible	69	48	53	0.70
The district employs effective teachers, administrators, and support staff	50	72	50	1.44
Employees are held accountable to high standards	60	60	51	1.00
District technology infrastructure is sufficient to support use of technology in the classroom	32	81	60	2.53
KEY				
GREEN = Ratios of Agrees to Disagrees is more than 2:1				
YELLOW = Ratios of Agrees to Disagrees is less than one				
RED = Ratios of Agrees to Disagrees is less than 0.5 meaning RATIO OF DISAGREES TO AGREES IS MORE THAN 2:1				
ITALICS = Number of NEUTRAL higher than either Disagrees or Agrees				

Part 2, Table 1: Ranking the Top Four Priorities

PRIORITIES	PERCENTAGE of Respondents Who Made This a Top 4 Priority							# of Groups
	Parent	Teacher	Admin	Support	Student **	Community	Total	Ranking
								As Top 4
Addressing the Achievement Gap	44	--	--	--	--	32	38	1
Addressing students' social and emotional needs	--	47	38	60	63	--	38	4
Ensuring a well-rounded experience for all students	46	--	--	33	--	32	--	2
Hiring and retaining quality teacher and administrators	59	77	69	80	63	75	69	6
Preparing students for the next grade and ultimately college and career ready	70	55	75	--	--	65	61	4
Providing a safe environment for students and employees	--	47	50	--	--	--	--	2
Providing individualized instruction for students	--	--	--	40	38	--	--	2
Maintaining a positive relationship with the community	--	--	--	33	--	--	--	1
* NOTE: a dash (--) indicates it was not one of the Top 4 Priorities								
** NOTE: Only three are listed for students because several had 25% and that is too low a percentage to be considered a priority								
KEY								
RED = HIGHEST PRIORITY								
YELLOW = SECOND HIGHEST PRIORITY								

Part 3, Table 1: Rating Aspects of the District: All Stakeholders

ALL RESPONDENTS	Number of Respondents			Ratio of G/E	Percentage	3 best (+)
	Unsat/Poor	Good/Excellent	Average	to U/P	Good/Exc	3 worst(--)
Overall Quality of Education	40	45	73	1.13	28%	
AP/ talented and/or gifted	47	50	53	1.06	33%	
Spec.Ed.	41	41	56	1.00	30%	
ELL	47	32	56	0.68	24%	
CareerEducation	62	19	58	0.31	14%	--
ELA	35	51	79	1.46	31%	
Math	57	33	68	0.58	21%	--
Science	50	40	71	0.80	25%	
Soc. Studies	51	41	68	0.80	26%	
Fine Arts	44	59	51	1.34	38%	
Phys Ed	32	65	62	2.03	41%	
World Languages	84	21	38	0.25	15%	--
Athletics and Intramurals	23	81	51	3.52	52%	+
Extra-curricular	31	77	50	2.48	49%	+
Student Services (Counseling, Soc. Wk, Nurse)	66	40	49	0.61	26%	
Library	24	79	61	3.29	48%	+
KEY						
GREEN= More than 50% rated good or excellent						
YELLOW = Less than 25% rated good or excellent						
RED = less than 20% rated good or excellent						

Part 3, Table 2: Rating Aspects of the District: Teachers

TEACHERS	Number of Respondents			Ratio of G/E	Percentage	3 best (+)
	Unsat/Poor	Good/Excellent	Average	to U/P	Good/Exc	3 worst(--)
Overall Quality of Education	10	14	21	1.40	31%	
AP/ talented and/or gifted	9	23	11	2.56	53%	+
Spec.Ed.	10	14	19	1.40	33%	
ELL	13	8	17	0.62	21%	
Career Education	18	4	16	0.22	11%	--
ELA	12	18	15	1.50	40%	
Math	16	14	15	0.88	31%	
Science	18	9	18	0.50	20%	--
Soc. Studies	20	16	14	0.80	32%	
Fine Arts	14	17	12	1.21	40%	
Phys Ed	8	20	16	2.50	45%	
World Languages	21	7	11	0.33	18%	--
Athletics and Intramurals	3	27	13	9.00	63%	+
Extra-curricular	9	24	12	2.67	53%	+
Student Services (Counseling, Soc. Wk, Nurse)	26	11	8	0.42	24%	--
Library	10	16	19	1.60	36%	
KEY						
GREEN= More than 50% rated good or excellent						
YELLOW = Less than 25% rated good or excellent						
RED = less than 20% rated good or excellent						

Part 3, Table 3: Rating Aspects of the District: Parents

PARENTS	Number of Respondents			Ratio of G/E	Percentage	3 best (+)
	Unsat/Poor	Good/Excellent	Average	to U/P	Good/Exc	3 worst(--)
Overall Quality of Education	16	15	26	0.94	26%	
AP/ talented and/or gifted	21	15	15	0.71	29%	
Spec.Ed.	14	12	18	0.86	27%	
ELL	15	10	17	0.67	24%	-- *
Career Education	24	5	20	0.21	10%	--
ELA	15	18	28	1.20	30%	
Math	20	14	27	0.70	23%	-- *
Science	18	19	25	1.06	31%	
Soc. Studies	16	18	26	1.13	30%	
Fine Arts	16	22	19	1.38	39%	
Phys Ed	10	25	25	2.50	42%	
World Languages	38	3	14	0.08	5%	--
Athletics and Intramurals	13	22	21	1.69	39%	+
Extra-curricular	15	25	17	1.67	44%	+
Student Services (Counseling, Soc. Wk, Nurse)	21	14	23	0.67	24%	
Library	8	32	21	4.00	52%	+
NOTE: * The two ratios and percentages for ELL and Math are basically equal						
KEY						
GREEN= More than 50% rated good or excellent						
YELLOW = Less than 25% rated good or excellent						
RED = less than 20% rated good or excellent						

Mission and Vision Statements

Our Mission and Vision was established in a workshop setting with eleven stakeholders and facilitated by Shelia Friday, project manager for the development of the strategic plan. The diverse members of the Strategic Mission and Vision Team included community members, parents, district administrators and staff, and a representative from Rich Township High School District 227.

Mission Statement

The purpose of the mission statement is to provide a written purpose of the organization. It should say what you want to do, for who you want do it for and the benefit.

Mission Statement

To educate, empower, and inspire the whole-child.

Vision Statement

A vision statement is a future focused description of how the organization will accomplish established purpose and goals

Vision Statement

Elementary School District 159 will establish a shared culture that fosters a student-centered approach to learning and personal development using best practices and educational resources.

Core Values

Our Core Values were established in a workshop setting with eleven stakeholders and facilitated by Shelia Friday, project manager for the development of the strategic plan. The diverse members of the Strategic Mission and Vision Team included community members, parents, district administrators and staff, and a representative from Rich Township High School District 227. The team established, edited, and reaffirmed the following seven core values:

1. Student-Centered

We believe in creating a culture of excellence in which the whole child is challenged to achieve their greatest potential



2. Transparency

We believe that transparency is of paramount importance and should be facilitated to the greatest possible extent, in order to establish trust between all district stakeholders.

4. Integrity

We will pursue our mission in an open, honest, and ethical manner focusing on the education and best interest of our students.



3. Innovation

We believe in innovative educational opportunities that set the foundation for preparing our students to be life-long learners who are college and career ready.

5. Mutual Respect

We believe all voices are heard, valued and can be expressed in a safe environment between all stakeholders.

6. Accountability

We believe in being accountable for our actions and decisions with respect to student achievement and fiscal responsibilities.

7. Partnership

We believe in creating an inclusive educational environment that encourages the participation of every stakeholder.

Embracing Our Future - Looking Forward.....Our Goals & Objectives

GOAL 1: To maximize the academic and personal growth of each District child.			
Objective	Action	Timeline	Person Responsible
1a. Provide collaborative professional learning practices focusing on data driven professional learning communities and job-embedded professional development.	Conduct needs assessment.	Aug. 2019	Academic Achievement Subcommittee
	Identify on-going topics based on data analysis.	Aug—Sept. 2019	Asst. Supt. Curriculum & Instruction and Instructional Leadership Team
	Publish Calendar of Topics.	Sept. 2019	Certified Staff
	Certified staff participate in professional development sessions.	Oct. 2019—Oct. 2020	Certified Staff and Principals
	Certified staff implement (identified) topics during daily instruction.	Aug. 2019—On-going	Admin. Team
	Conduct informal walk-throughs to assess daily instruction.	Sept. / Dec. / Feb. / April 2019-2020	Admin. Team
1b. Develop a partnership with Rich Township High School District 227 to guarantee delivery of high quality instruction to ensure college and career readiness of all students.	Establish partnership between Admin Teams.	Sept. 2019	Admin. Team from ESD 159 and RTHSD 227
	Participate in Articulation Opportunities with 227 to define collaborative efforts.	Sept.—Oct. 2019	Admin. Representatives
	P-D-S-A Collaborative efforts as a “pilot” program.	Oct. 2019—Feb. 2020	Admin. Representatives
	Monitor and refine “pilot” collaborative efforts.	Mar. 2020—May 2020	Admin. Representatives
	Define implementation for collaboration program.	Fall 2019	Admin. Representatives

GOAL 1: To maximize the academic and personal growth of each District child.

Objective	Action	Timeline	Person Responsible
1c. Examine the quality of programs and standards for gifted learners as identified by the Association for the Gifted of the Council of Exceptional Children (CEC-TAG.)	Begin evaluation process.	Fall 2020	Assistant Superintendent
1d. Assess and respond to the social emotional needs of students.	Establish partnership with GSU/ Consultant.	Sept. 2019	Director of Student Services and Team
	Overview of Trauma-Informed and SEL Classrooms.	Sept. 2019	Administrative Team
	Provide teacher/classroom support on SEL standards.	Oct. 2019—Jan. 2020	Administrative Team
	Collect data on classroom procedures that incorporate SEL (pre/post).	April—May 2020	Administrative Team
	Determine feasibility of program.	Aug.— Sept. 2019	Administrative Team
1e. Establish a long range plan to expand dual language program.	Establish Dual Language Committee.	Sept. 2019	Asst. Supt./Bilingual Director
	Benefits, Schedule, Examine program models, observe best practices.	Sept. 2019—Jan. 2020	Asst. Supt./ Bilingual Director
	Establish “pilot” program.	Feb. 2020	Dual Language Committee
	P-D-S-A “pilot” program.	Feb.—May 2020	Dual Language Committee
	Monitor “pilot” program with revisions.	Feb.—May 2020	Dual Language Committee
	Present model program.	April 2020	Dual Language Committee

GOAL 1: To maximize the academic and personal growth of each District child.

Objective	Action	Timeline	Person Responsible
<p>1f. Reexamine the roles, responsibilities and effectiveness of instructional coaches and support leaders.</p>	Participatory Data Analysis to define targets.	Aug./ Jan./May 2019-2020	Asst. Supt./ Curriculum & Instruction Admin./Instructional Leadership Team
	Research/Prep in targeted areas to provide teacher support.	Sept. 2019	Curriculum & Instruction Admin. and Instructional Leadership Team
	Conduct professional development sessions in targeted areas.	Oct. 2019—Oct. 2020	Curriculum & Instruction Admin. And Instructional Leadership Team
	Complete demonstration lessons in targeted areas.	Nov. 2019—May 2020	Instructional Leadership Team
	Monitor data (including schedules) on targeted areas and instruction.	Aug./Monthly	Curriculum & Instruction Admin./ Instructional Leadership Team
	Teacher surveys on instructional support received.	April 2020	Certified Staff
	Recommendations for FY 21 on roles/responsibilities, return on investment, etc.	May/June 2020	Asst. Supt./ Curriculum & Instruction Admin./Instructional Leadership Team
<p>1g. Define 'student success' at each grade level K through 8.</p>	Conduct grade-level articulation meetings.	Fall 2019—2020	AA Subcommittee
<p>1h. Develop and implement a 21st century digital age learning model.</p>	Create a framework for 21st Century learning and implementation.	Fall 2019—2020	In collaboration with Department of Technology

GOAL 2: To establish on-going and transparent communication with a stakeholders.

Objective	Action	Timeline	Person Responsible
2a. Increase effective communication within the school district.	Create a communication process with each school to ensure information about special events, programs and accomplishments are shared with the community.	Sept. 2019—On-going	School & Community Development Coordinator/Public Relations
2b. Utilize social media to showcase students and staff.	Create quarterly District newsletter to be mailed to all ESD 159 community members.	Aug. 2019—Quarterly	School & Community Development Coordinator/Public Relations
	Create Facebook and Twitter accounts to highlight the School District.	Oct. 2019—On-going	School & Community Development Coordinator/Public Relations and Staff/Member of the 21st Century Technology Team
	Post and monitor Facebook and Twitter accounts.	Oct. 2019—On-going	School & Community Coordinator/Public Relations
2c. Meet regularly with community partners including Home Owner Associations, faith-based, municipalities, other appropriate partners.	Establish a Communication Committee that will attend various community meetings and report School District events and positive programs.	Oct. 2019—On-going	School & Community Development Coordinator/Public Relations and Communication Committee
2d. Communicate with parents through frequent email blast.	Utilize Remind and other applications to send emails to parents.	Oct. 2020—On-going	School & Community Development Coordinator/Public Relation along with Director of Technology

GOAL 2: To establish on-going and transparent communication with a stakeholders.

Objective	Action	Timeline	Person Responsible
2e. Televisе Board meetings.	Begin to livestream board meeting.	Oct. 2019—On-going	Director of Technology
2f. Develop an internal and external communication plan and encourage stakeholder feedback.	Develop an internal newsletter.	Oct. 2019—On-going	School & Community Development Coordinator/Public Relations
	Create quarterly District newsletter to be mailed to all ESD 159 community members.	Aug. 2019—On-going	School & Community Development Coordinator/Public Relations
	Create various district-wide forms of communication.	Aug. 2019—On-going	School & Community Development Coordinator/Public Relations
2g. Implement and monitor a district policy to respond to stakeholders within 24 hours.	Draft a policy which would address each category of correspondence: teacher/parent, principal/parent, District Office/Stakeholder.	Dec. 2019—On-going	School & Community Coordinator/ Public Relations and Communication Committee
2h. Develop an online FOIA request form with posted district responses.	Place FOIA request on the District's website.	Nov. 2019	FOIA Officer/Director of Technology
2i. Maintain up-to-date and accurate information on the District's website.	Update the District's website as needed.	Aug. 2019—On-going	School & Community Coordinator/ Public Relations will identify items to be included and replaced. Director of Technology will ensure that all items are added or replaced as requested.

GOAL 3. To create and maintain an effective business operation system.

Objective	Action	Timeline	Person Responsible
3a. Conduct a comprehensive external fiscal audit.	Perform a financial statement analysis and review financial management procedures and protocols.	Aug. 2019—On-going. Financial audit prepared annually.	Director of Finance & Business Operations
3b. Review hiring practices, and the need for possible salary and benefit adjustments.	Allow principals to be part of the hiring process.	On-going. HR law changes will dictate when changes are needed.	Director of Finance & Business Operations
	Provide a qualified applicant pool, and set parameters to properly vet candidates and independent contractors.	On-going	Director of Finance & Business Operations
	Provide timely hiring decisions so that we don't lose qualified candidates.	On-going	Director of Finance & Business Operations
	Implement procedures to ensure clear communication and regular touch points with candidates and employees.	Oct. 2019—On-going	Director of Finance & Business Operations
	3c. Engage outside professional financial management review and investment services which include implementing standard financial planning services for public institutions.	Reorganize the HR department to provide employees with greater clarity on their roles.	Sept. 2019
Review financial performance on a quarterly basis to ensure excess funds are appropriately invested on the district's behalf.		Quarterly beginning Aug. 2019—On-going, annual reviews.	Director of Finance & Business Operations
Review the budgeting, investment, and tax levy processes to align with long term financial goals.		Aug. 2019—On-going	Director of Finance & Business Operations
3d. Audit current contracted services including Transportation, Food Services, Special Education Transportation, Waste Management.	Engage auditors in a timely manner, and ensure open lines of communication with auditor to assess internal control weaknesses and address accordingly.	Aug. 2019—On-going, based on contract expiration for the identified service.	Director of Finance & Business Operations

GOAL 3. To create and maintain an effective business operation system.

Objective	Action	Timeline	Person Responsible
3e. Solicit and review proposals for district legal services.	Prepare RFP's and solicitations in compliance with governmental standards.	On-going, based on the length of the contract term agreed upon by the BOE.	Director of Finance & Business Operations
	Review and compare proposals from a variety of providers to ensure the district is receiving the most cost effective legal services.	On-going, based on the length of the contract term agreed upon by the BOE.	Director of Finance & Business Operations
3f. Post online Human Resources Guide.	Review current HR Resources Guide, update and work with the Technology department to post online.	April-May 2020	Director of Finance & Business Operations
3g. Implement recommendations from IASBO audit.	Speak with auditors to ensure a clear understanding of the requirements of IASBO audit and implement accordingly.	Jan. 2020	Director of Finance & Business Operations
3h. Implement cross training.	Identify staff members who can be cross trained with other staff members, keeping in mind the segregation of duties requirement as required under GASB and GAAS.	Jan. 2020	Director of Finance & Business Operations
	Implement cross training among staff members in accordance with this guidance.	Feb. 2020	Director of Finance & Business Operations

GOAL 3. To create and maintain an effective business operation system.			
Objective	Action	Timeline	Person Responsible
3i. Implement a Board policy to reduce nepotism when hiring new employees.	Work with the Superintendent to determine the best way to engage the BOE in a discussion as it relates to hiring new employees and work to implement a hiring policy that aligns with the BOE's recommendations	Feb. 2020	Director of Finance & Business Operations
3j. Administer an employee engagement survey to current and exiting employees.	Work with current HR staff to determine industry best practices and standards for entrance and exit interviews and implement in accordance with these standards.	Dec. 2019	Director of Finance & Business Operations

GOAL 4. To create and maintain a 21st Century learning environment throughout the School District.			
Objective	Action	Timeline	Person Responsible
4a. Ensure that the School District infrastructure can support 21st Century Technology.	Conduct feasibility and accessibility survey of the School District infrastructure.	Aug.. 2019—On-going	Director of Technology
4b. Establish training and development for all stakeholders aligned to 21st Century Technology.	Create a framework to establish uniformity and training calendar.	Oct. 2019—June 2020/ On-going	Director of Technology, Assist. Director of Technology Integration. 21st Century Technology Committee
4c. Integrate 21st Century Technology with the curriculum.	Create a framework to establish uniformity and training calendar working with the Assistant Superintendent.	Jan. 2020—June 2020	Assist. Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction, Director of Technology, Assist. Director of Technology Integration
4d. Establish check and balance for 21st Century Technology.	Review 21st Century initiatives.	Dec. 2019—On-going	Director of Technology and Assist. Director of Technology Integration
	Survey and monitor 21st Century initiatives.	Mar. 2020—On-going	Director of Technology and Assist. Director of Technology Integration
	Identify and retain technology staff at each building.	Aug. 2019—On-going	Director of Technology, Assist. Director of Technology Integration

Portrait of an Elementary School District 159 Graduate

Stakeholders of District 159 were asked to describe the knowledge, skills and characteristics they hope students develop throughout their time in the District. The following portrait of a graduate emerged.

At the end of 8th grade, our students will:

- Accept all cultures and have the ability to be mindful and respectful of different viewpoints
- Be accountable for personal actions
- Be aware of their unique skills and gifts
- Be bilingual
- Be confident and goal oriented
- Be knowledgeable in core subject areas
- Be proficient in digital and financial literacy
- Be proficient in oral and written communication skills
- Be organized and manage time well
- Be resourceful and resilient
- Be responsible decision makers
- Develop a healthy perspective of self and relationships with others
- Develop critical thinking skills, especially for solving complex problems
- Enjoy learning and understand that learning is a lifelong endurance
- Have a global perspective on life and realize there is a place for them to make a contribution
- Have the ability to love people and forgive
- Have strong morals and character
- Learn collaboration skills so they can work effectively with others and in teams
- Obtain the necessary academic experiences needed to prepare for college and career

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Stakeholders View of Elementary School District 159 Strengths and Growth Areas

Appendix B: Summary of Elementary School District 159 Focus Group Notes

Appendix C: HYA Strategic Planning Meeting notes

Stakeholders View of Elementary School District 159 Strengths and Growth Areas

1. Strengths of Elementary School District 159 in Alphabetical Order

- a. Athletics and extracurricular activities
- b. Safe Schools
- c. Technology and infrastructure

2. Growth Areas of Elementary School District 159 in Alphabetical Order

- a. Academic rigor and academic expectations
- b. Addressing the achievement gap
- c. Addressing students' social and emotional needs
- d. Create a clear and compelling vision for the future
- e. Selection and retention of quality teachers and administrators

Summary of Elementary School District 159 Focus Group Notes

Areas Identified For Growth**1. Communication**

- a. Late information to parents, staff
- b. Teachers receive late notice regarding vacancies
- c. Which kids are selected for summer school
- d. Teachers receiving letters with wrong name, address
- e. Information communicated is not clear
- f. Previous board squelched district communication
- g. Board infighting yields negative press
- h. Seek Data from stakeholders
- i. Transparency
- j. Televis board meetings
- k. Good working relationship between board and superintendent
- l. Focus on kids rather than adults

2. Human Resources

- a. Recruitment/retention of highly qualified staff
- b. Board nepotism
- c. Lack of procedures for hiring, evaluating, and discipline of staff
- d. Failure to use existing handbooks
- e. Nonexistent or late Communication
- f. Decisions are not data driven (programs and staff performance do not drive practices)
- g. Happy with benefits but not salaries

3. Strengths of the School District

- a. Music/Fine Arts programs
- b. Co-Curricular programs
- c. Community partnerships
- d. Staff/parent Volunteerism
- e. Unique curricular programs (aquatic robotics, STEM especially at Colin Powell)
- f. Technical infrastructure
- g. Stable district finances
- h. Schools safe
- i. Family focused events in the community

4. Skills/Characteristics of an Eighth Grade Student

- a. Life long learner
- b. “Beyond ready for high school”
- c. Critical thinkers
- d. Empathetic
- e. Leaders
- f. Good communicators (written/oral)
- g. Problem solvers
- h. Strong work ethic
- i. 21st Century technical skills
- j. Goal oriented
- k. Effective research skills

5. Student Achievement

- a. Below proficient
- b. Data not used to drive increases in student achievement
- c. Curriculum implementation within/across buildings
- d. Professional development is not linked to curriculum implementation
- e. Social emotional needs of students not addressed
- f. Special education kids are segregated
- g. Gifted kids segregated in one school
- h. Spanish expanded to elementary schools
- i. Transition plans between elementary to middle to high school
- j. Uniform concerns?
- k. District recognition of student achievement

6. Business Management

- a. Forensic audit
- b. Review of outsourced services (food service, B&G, transportation)
- c. Link spending to student achievement
- d. Long term plan for building repairs, technology upgrades, curriculum support
- e. Transparency

7. Community Concerns

- a. Stronger working relationship with District 227
- b. Leverage relationships with governmental bodies (access district facilities by community groups)
- c. Truancy
- d. Joint Board of education training with 227 and other feeder districts
- e. Lack of accountability (staff, students, parents)

7. Stakeholders Vision for the School District

- a. A district of choice rather than default
- b. Elementary School District 159 is back and better than ever
- c. A District of “Pride and Excellence”
- d. A District with the heart to move students forward
- e. A District that places children first
- f. A District where people live, work, play, and stay
- g. A destination District
- h. A District that attracts businesses

HYA recommends the following areas for the District 159 Strategic Plan:

1. Student Achievement

- a. Grade level professional development
- b. Dual partnerships with feeder high school
- c. Data driven gifted education
- d. Address Social Emotional Learning needs of students
- e. Long term plan for dual language program
- f. Reexamine the role and responsibilities of instructional coaches and instructional support leaders
- g. Define “student success”
- h. Equip students to be proficient in 21st century learning skills

2. Transparent Communication

- a. Distribute district communication (newsletters) 4 x a year
- b. Implement social media to showcase students and staff
- c. Develop meaningful regular meetings with district organizations including Home Owners Association, Faith Based Community
- d. Frequent email blasts to parents
- e. Televis Board meetings
- f. Develop an internal and external communication plan and encourage feedback
- g. Implement a district policy that all communication will be answered within 24 hours excluding weekends and holidays
- h. Develop an online Freedom of Information Act request form and post responses on line.

3. Business & Operations

- a. Conduct an external fiscal audit that is more comprehensive from prior audits
- b. Examine hiring practices and salary increases not recommended by the administration but approved by the prior Board of Education
- c. Engage an outside professional financial management review and investment services including implementing standard financial planning services for public institutions
- d. Audit current contracted services including Transportation, Food Services, Special Education Transportation, Waste Management
- e. Solicit proposals for district legal services as a priority
- f. Implement and post online Human Resource Guide
- g. Implement recommendations from Illinois Association of School Business Officials audit
- h. Implement cross-training of business departments
- i. Implement a new Board policy on hiring of new employees to reduce nepotism
- j. Conduct an annual tool to receive employee suggestions and recommendations
- k. Establish an exit interview document and process



Colin Powell Middle School Championship 6th Grade Cadet Band

Elementary School District 159 Administrative Leadership Team

Dr. Mable Alfred, Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Denean Adams, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessments

Dr. William Johnson, Assistant Superintendent of Diversity & Accountability

Dr. Lisa Woods, Director of Pupil Services

Dr. Demetria Brown, Director of Business Operations

Mr. Eddie Short, Director of Technology

Mr. Dwight Major, Director of Buildings & Grounds

Ms. Kimberly Johnson, Assistant Director of Technology Integration

Mrs. Agurann Bates, Curriculum and Instruction Administrator



Mrs. Shelia Friday, School & Community Development Coordinator/Public Relations

Mrs. Miriam McCoy, Bilingual & ESL Program Coordinator

Ms. Melaan Peterson, Math & Science Coordinator

School Principals

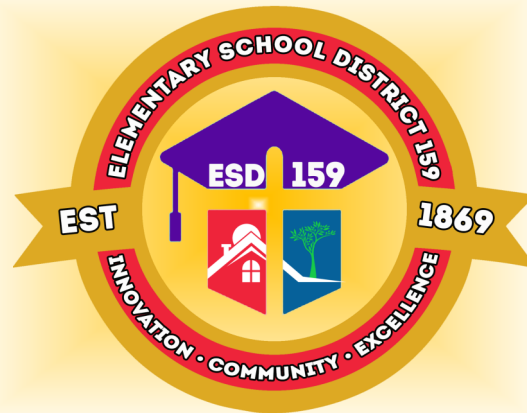
Mrs. LaTonya McCaskill, Principal of Sieden Prairie Elementary School

Mrs. Shahran Spears-Etherly, Principal of Neil Armstrong Elementary School

Dr. Antonia Hill, Principal of Woodgate Elementary School

Mr. Vincent Payne, Principal of Colin Powell Middle School

Ms. LaWanda Gordon, Interim Principal of Marya Yates



To our stakeholders, thanks so much for your input. You are the guiding force for our future!

Thank you to Dr. Connie Collins and Dr. Ken Arndt from HYA for your facilitation and guidance through our strategic planning process.

Designed by Shelia M. Friday, MPA, GPC—Elementary School District 159, School & Community Development Coordinator and Public Relations