

Education Committee and Supplementary Regular Meeting



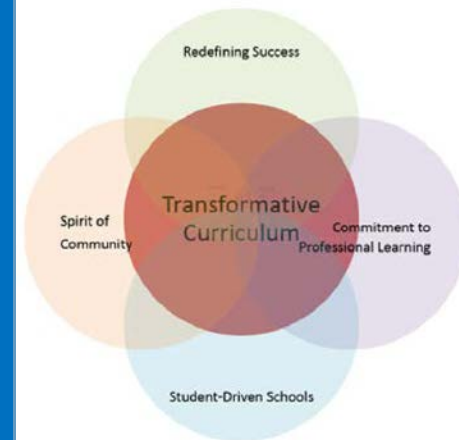
MAY 8, 2017

LOWER MERION SCHOOL DISTRICT

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

May 8, 2017

ALL FORWARD
STRATEGIC PATHWAYS FOR
LOWER MERION SCHOOL DISTRICT





The Plan: Process and Product

Process: The Strategic Plan drives our thinking, influences our planning, and shapes our decision-making.

Product: Several ideas, projects, and products have emerged from the plan. Some are complete, some are developing, and others are yet to come.

Upcoming Product → Executive Summary 2016-17

Communicating Progress on the Strategic Plan



Public Board Meeting Updates:

- October 2016
- January 2017
- March 2017
- May 2017

Newsletters and Updates to Staff/Community:

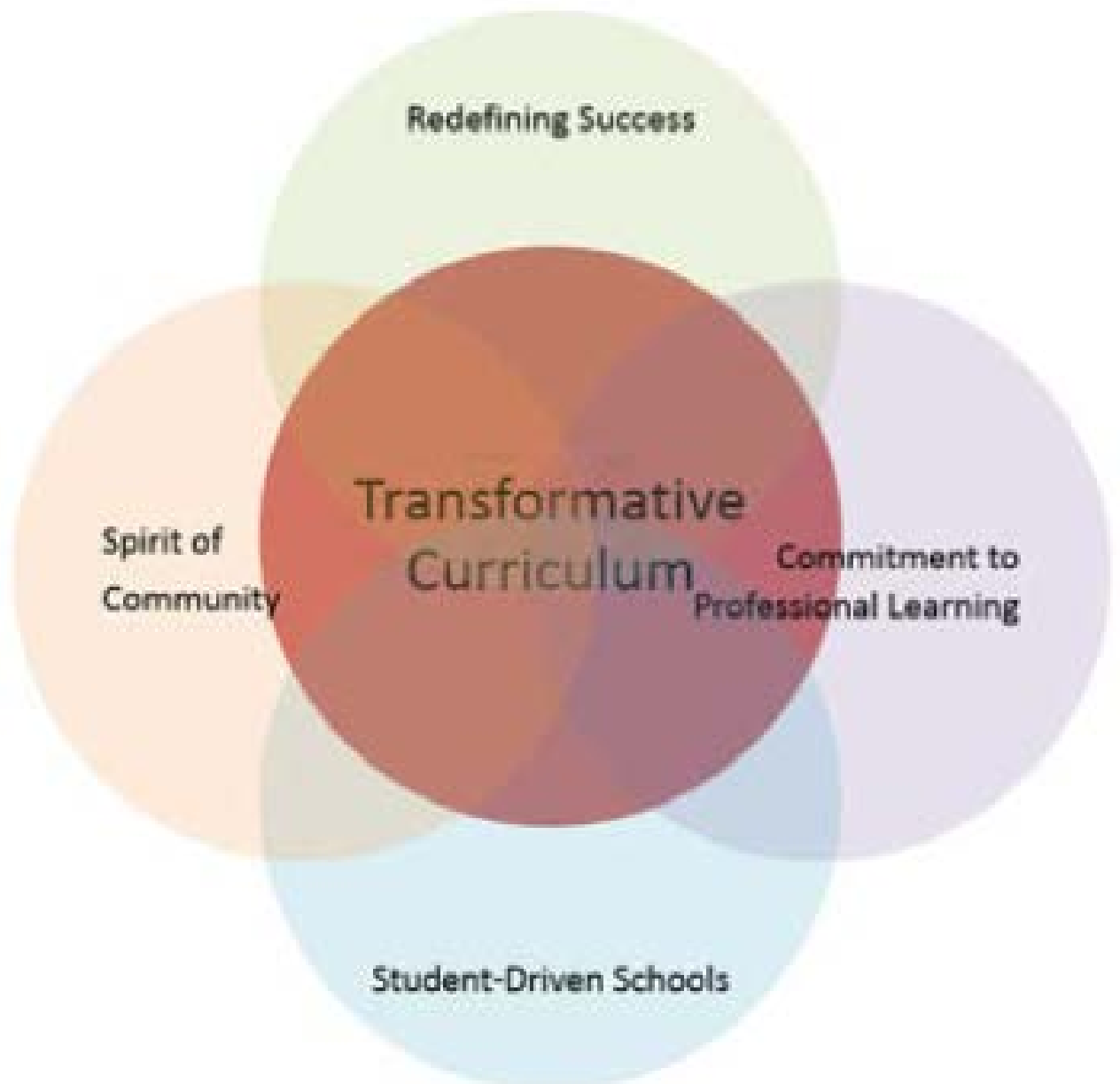
- August 2016
- November 2016
- January 2017

Upcoming Product → Executive Summary 2016-17

Executive Summary

Update on progress for the 2016-2017 school year

Pathway Teams



Executive Summary 2016-2017



Pathway Teams explored a range of topics throughout the 2016-2017 school year. The purpose of the Executive Summary is to provide an overview of these explorations including background information, current situation, and recommendations. Some of these explorations resulted in recommended actionable steps for the district to pursue, others call for further investigation, and others resulted in a recommendation to not move forward at this time.

Executive Summary for the 2016-2017 School Year

Pathway work for the year was captured in summary briefs by each area of exploration throughout the year and compiled. (April 2017)



Summaries will be synthesized and presented as an Executive Summary document. This will be sent to the board, pathway participants, and steering committee members. (May 2017)



Steering Committee will reconvene, feedback will be gathered, and the Executive Summary document will be revised. (May 31 – June 10, 2017)



Executive Summary for 2016-2017 will be finalized and disseminated to the community, including families, staff, and students. Summary will be placed on website. (June 2017)

Executive Summary 2016-2017



The Executive Summary recommendations, with stakeholder feedback, influence action moving forward by:

- Driving the ongoing pathway work
- Informing new explorations and research
- Establishing priorities for 2017-2018 and beyond
- Informing administration about potential administrative steps or actions that may need to occur

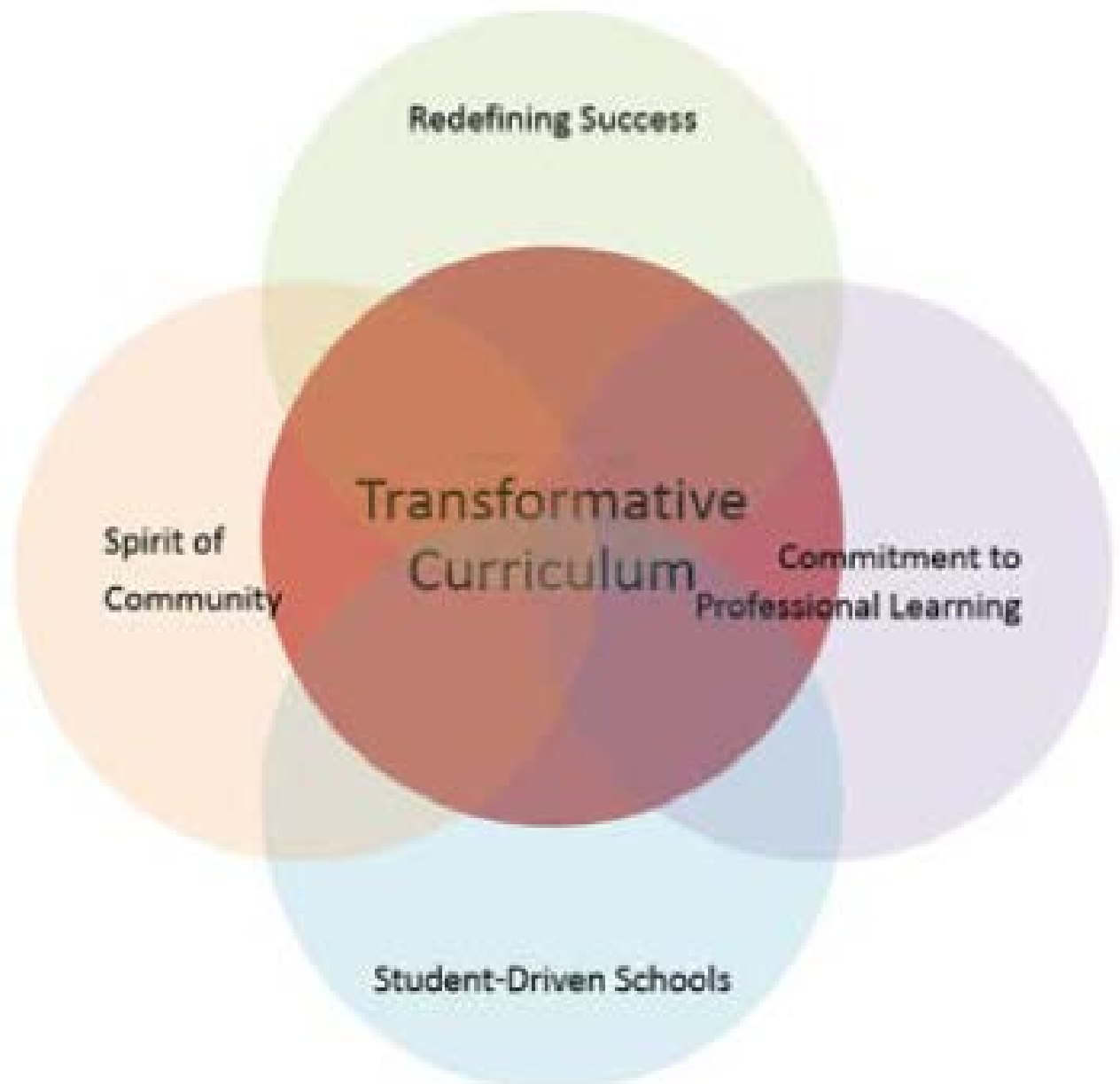
Pathway recommendations are not formal requests for board action or policy change

ALL FORWARD
STRATEGIC PATHWAYS FOR
LOWER MERION SCHOOL DISTRICT



Pathway Teams

Pathways



Transformative Curriculum

Exploration for 2016-17	Status and Recommendation
Transformative Goals	Established - will continue to drive curriculum revision and instruction
Upgrading Instructional Units	Established – Embed in practice moving forward, include assessment upgrades
K12 Computer Science	Ongoing – Systematize guaranteed coding, programming experiences
Maker Mentality/Makerspace	Ongoing – Systematize guaranteed maker experiences to enhance K-6 experiences
HS Pathways for Learning	Ongoing – Framework created; further vetting needed; propose to board in fall
HS Interdisciplinary Programs	Long-Term – Further explore in 17-18 for proposal in 18-19
Writing Center (High Schools)	Ongoing – Framework created; propose to CCoB on May 31, 2017
K12 Digital Portfolio for Student Work	Long-Term – Further explore in 17-18 for pilot to begin in 18-19

Transformative Curriculum

2016-2017 Celebrations & Accomplishments :

- Adoption of Transfer/Transformative Goals
- Engagement in the Unit Upgrade process
- Creation of Makerspaces in all elementary schools
- Adoption of new Computer Science Seminar course
- Adoption of new Communication Design course

Transformative Goals will more Prominently Drive our Curricular and Instructional Practices

Transformative Goals

Within and beyond the school walls, learners independently seek to:

Personal

- Explore and develop personal interests, inquiries, and passions.
- Craft communication through choices informed by audience and purpose, strategic uses of evidence, and command of language.
- Set learning goal(s) that are pursued and evaluated until the goal(s) are realized or new ideas emerge.

Cultural

- Navigate diverse sources and perspectives to reach discerning and thoughtful understandings.
- Advocate for self and others by drawing on compassion and courage to speak up for what is right and just.
- Share stories, ideas, and points of view while engaging others to think interdependently and act collectively.

Global

- Use processes (e.g., design thinking, creative problem solving, and systems thinking) to develop solutions and understand that failure is an integral part of the learning process.
- Investigate challenging contemporary global and local issues by pursuing questions or lines of thinking.
- Make informed choices that support the physical, social, and emotional health and well-being of self, community, and society.

Upgrading Instructional Units

- A ***Transformative Curriculum***, rooted in teacher-created Transformative Goals, drive the curriculum and its upgrade. Upgrading is an ongoing process.
- Our entire teaching staff focused on the learning experiences they aspire to deliver to students by engaging in “unit upgrades” – taking a unit that they teach and making it better by aligning it with the Transformative Goals.
- Pathway recommends further systematizing this to be regularly included in teacher practice and to devote professional learning time to upgrade units by improving the system of assessments within an instructional unit.

Computer Science, Maker Mentality, and Coding

- Curriculum revision is underway for computer science K-8.
- Guaranteed coding, programming, app creation, and STEM experiences are being built into the curriculum, not only in Computers and Tech Ed Classes, but also as threads across all disciplines.
- Existing units are being reviewed and revised to include STEM experiences that are designed to enhance the unit.
- Maker mentality is being fostered by embedding guaranteed maker experiences for students.
- Makerspaces are being improved to include maker materials such as robotics, Legos, KNEX, clay and 3D printers will be available in each school in 17-18.

Redefining Success

Exploration for 2016-17	Status and Recommendation
Grade Weighting	Ongoing – Recommendations from pathway to change; further internal vetting and community feedback needed; propose in 2017-18 for 2018-19 adoption
Class Rank	Ongoing – Recommendations from pathway to change; further internal vetting and community feedback needed; propose in 2017-18 for 2018-19 adoption
Valedictorian and Salutatorian	Ongoing – Recommendations from pathway to change; further internal vetting and community feedback needed; propose in 2017-18 for 2018-19 adoption
Grade Point Average	Ongoing – Recommendations from pathway to change; further internal vetting and community feedback needed; propose in 2017-18 for 2018-19 adoption
Elementary Report Cards	Ongoing – Framework for 17-18 pilot created; propose to CCoB on May 31, 2017
Skill-Based Grade Reporting	Ongoing – Prototype in 2017; continue in 2017-18

Redefining Success

2016-2017 Celebrations & Accomplishments :

- Revised secondary grading scale as we examine grading practices more broadly
- Created AP testing calendar to help minimize assessment conflicts
- Initiated several prototypes:
 - ❑ quarterless grading
 - ❑ mastery quizzes in chemistry
 - ❑ live art portfolio magazine across four art courses
 - ❑ blended learning in Spanish course
 - ❑ standards-based assessments in a Spanish Class
 - ❑ a teacher/student Computer Science Course collaboration

Grading & Grade Reporting

Grading recommendations

- Several Grading recommendations were forwarded from the Redefining Success pathway (grade weighting, class rank, GPA inclusion for all courses, and valedictorian/salutatorian). There are strong interconnections between these aspects of grade reporting. These will be more deeply vetted and the community, students, and staff will be brought more fully into the dialogue.
- If these are pursued, actions will require more formal policy revision.
- There is no proposal at this time for 2017-18 adoption. Will be revisited in the fall of 2017 for possible proposals to be in effect in 2018-2019.

Elementary Report Cards

Elementary Report Cards

- Several teachers have collaborated with the pathway team and curriculum team to construct a new model for the report card to include:
 - ❑ Improved readability
 - ❑ Expanded narrative
 - ❑ Closer alignment with standards
 - ❑ Expanded reporting to define success more broadly, including fostering a growth mindset, innovation, and other measures of habits of mind

- This will be formally presented at the May 31, 2017 CCoB meeting for adoption of pilot in one elementary grade for 2017-2018.



Student-Driven Schools

Exploration for 2016-17	Status and Recommendation
Ninth Grade Transition	Ongoing – Recommendations from pathway to investigate and visit a model school over 2017-18 for 2018 adoption
Elementary Student-Driven Learning Plans	Ongoing –Further explore a framework for student goal-setting over 2017-2018
Genius Hour	Ongoing – Piloting Genius hour by grade level in grade K-6 for 2017-2018
Elementary and Middle School Electives	Established – MS electives introduced and expanded for grades 6-8 for 2017-18
Physical Education Waivers for HS Students in Interscholastic Athletics	Complete – Not pursuing this further, but other recommendations emerged for program enhancements
Student-Voice	Ongoing – Currently with the Go Team for systematic implementation

Student-Driven Schools

Celebrations & Accomplishments for 2016- 2017:

- Conducted Student Focus Groups at all three levels
- Expanded course choice for students at the middle school with the middle school schedule adoption for 17-18
- Prototyped Genius Hour at the middle school level
- Increased Elementary School physical activity time

Student-Driven Learning Plans

Elementary Student-Driven Learning Plans

- Spring Conferences at the Elementary School are student-led conferences with goal-setting.
- Guided by the transformative goals, students should be the drivers of the goal-setting, crafting these long-term goals and reporting on progress throughout the year. This entire process is led by students.
- Subcommittee work to expand this is underway and will continue throughout the 2017-2018 school year and to recommend to the Go Team for assistance with implementation.
- Goal-setting with secondary students will be explored and prototyped during the 2017-2018 year.

Commitment to Professional Learning

Exploration for 2016-17	Status and Recommendation
Instructional Coaching Model	Ongoing – Recommendations from pathway to develop the framework and plan PD for 2017-18 with a proposed 2018-19 adoption. Anticipated requests for Board action in the fall.
Assessment Literacy	Ongoing – Increased focus on Assessment Literacy and Design with accompanying Professional Learning during 2017-18
Lesson Study	Ongoing – Developing a lesson study protocol to operationalize within PLC's over the 2017-18 year
Long-Term Professional Learning Plan	Ongoing – The framework for a three year plan is in place and will be shared with staff and the board in early summer.

Commitment to Professional Learning

Celebrations & Accomplishments for 2016- 2017:

- Held EdCamps as a professional learning model at every building and will be doing so district-wide in June.
- Moving professional learning towards a more job-embedded model
- The pathway team read *Drive* by Daniel Pink and applied the ideals to inform the tenets of our professional learning plan
 - ❑ What drives people?
 - ❑ Sense of Purpose, Desire for Mastery, & Autonomy

Spirit of Community

Exploration for 2016-17	Status and Recommendation
Community Engagement Management System	Ongoing – Recommendation to adopt Raiser’s Edge as the core Community Engagement Management System
Community Resource Network	Ongoing – The operationalization of the network will continue with intentionally connecting community resources with district personnel to enhance student experiences

Spirit of Community

Celebrations & Accomplishments for 2016- 2017:

- Met with key communicators and constituent groups throughout the year (young alumni, university leadership, realtors, faith leaders)
- Developed Community Resource Network to support curricular and co-curricular experiences and provide guidance on development and engagement initiatives
- Enhanced communication among/between Education Foundation of LM (EFLM), Inter-School Council (ISC), Alumni Association, & District
- Launched new LMSD Website

Community Resource Network

Community Resource Network:

- Developing a network made up of community members representing an array of disciplines and interests.

- The network will support:
 - ❑ Sharing new and interesting ideas in their disciplines that may be applicable to the school environment
 - ❑ Soliciting support of colleagues and friends to serve as a larger group of Volunteers
 - ❑ Compiling a comprehensive database of Volunteers in various disciplines
 - ❑ Developing an annual event to highlight coordinated efforts between the CRN and District

Research & Development

Research & Development:

- Three subcommittees were formed under the Research & Development umbrella of the plan
- These subcommittees each researched a specific topic independent of the work of the pathway teams
- The three subcommittees for 2016-17:
 - ❑ Recess at the Elementary School
 - ❑ Mindfulness in the Schools
 - ❑ Adolescent Sleep and School Start Times

Research & Development: Recess at Elementary School

Recess at the Elementary School

The committee explored the issue of recess and physical activity in the elementary schools and made recommendations via a whitepaper that has been submitted to the Superintendent of Schools. Recommendations included:

- Add an additional 15-minute Physical Activity period for elementary students during the school day. This is being piloted in all six Elementary Schools.
- The Recess and Physical Activity periods should be a protected part of a student's day
- A standard inclement weather policy should be developed
- Continue providing training for Recess Staff using the Responsive Classroom Model.

The Recess committee continues to meet and will be gathering feedback on the physical activity pilot for the 16-17 school year. This feedback will help inform a formal recommendation for the 2017-18 school year.

Research & Development: Mindfulness in the Schools

Mindfulness in the Schools

The Taskforce continues to examine empirical and scholarly research to determine the benefits of incorporating mindfulness practices in our schools. The work has included a district-wide staff survey, observation of existing practices in the district, and study and/or observation of schools and organizations that have implemented mindfulness practices.

The Taskforce will prepare a Whitepaper for presentation by June 2017. This will include a definition of mindfulness, a summary of the research, and recommendations for greater inclusion of mindfulness in our schools. Specific evidence-based models and an approach to implementation will be recommended in the whitepaper.

As there are differences in both research and practice of mindfulness between children and adults, some recommendations will be specific for staff and others for the school-aged population.

Research & Development: Adolescent Sleep & School Start Times

Adolescent Sleep and School Start Time

Tasked to gather research and LMSD information to inform ongoing conversations about the effect of school start time on adolescent sleep.

Community surveys and focus groups will be analyzed in conjunction with broader research and the district's transportation study. The taskforce will deliver an informational brief for the Superintendent and Board of School Directors in Fall 2017. In addition, the committee recommends the development of a communications plan to share information in a way that will broaden and deepen the community's understanding of research surrounding adolescent sleep deprivation, family and community strategies for combatting sleep deprivation, and the logistical challenges and potential solutions for changing school start times.

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Questions?

